The Party System and Party Politics in Zambia: Continuities Past, Present and Future

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ABSTRACT
Zambia's record of democracy in the 1990s has been much criticized, at home and abroad. The government of the ruling party, the Movement for Multi-Party Democracy (MMD) has been accused of perpetuating the hallmarks of the *de jure* one-party state of the Second Republic (1972-91). Critics claim that one-party dominance by the MMD under President Chiluba's leadership has almost returned the country to a *de-facto* one-party state. This paper argues there are indeed significant continuities with the past. However, since 1990 the party system has resembled more closely a 'predominant party system'. Far from being a legacy of the Second Republic's one-party-state, its ancestry, and other aspects of contemporary party politics, can be traced back much earlier, even as far back as colonial times. They owe more to enduring patterns of formal institutions and informal practice influencing political behaviour over a longer period than just the Second Republic. In Zambia as elsewhere in Africa democratization requires political organisation to provide strong compensation for the unfavourable socio-economic conditions. For sustainable democracy the political opposition must take its responsibilities more seriously. The paper concludes by reflecting on the party system's likely contribution to democratic transition and consolidation in Zambia beyond the 2001 general elections.
**Introduction**

In Africa, where socio-economic conditions do not favour stable democracy, it has been said that political organizing carries a heavy responsibility for making democratization a success.¹ Almost everywhere political parties, especially a competitive party system, are prominent among the political features analysts agree are essential to democratic consolidation, even where the liberalization of an authoritarian regime and democratic transition have been propelled by other means. In December 1990 Zambia re-established the legality of political pluralism, so closing the Second Republic which was a *de jure* one-party state. Presidential and parliamentary elections were held in 1991. A further round involving 11 parties took place in 1996. A third general contest is due in late 2001. Since 1991 the Movement for Multi-Party Democracy (MMD) has formed the government, and its leader, Frederick Chiluba, has been president, in a constitutional system combining presidential with parliamentary characteristics. Following the 1991 elections former President Kaunda's United National independence Party (UNIP) was granted official opposition status, despite failing to win the qualifying number of parliamentary seats. Chiluba is ineligible to stand for a third term; and there are signs of growing flux in the party system. The complexion of the government after 2001 is uncertain. Zambia's political leaders might be called on to display new skills of political management if the country is to make further progress in political terms.

As the 1990s unfolded an increasing number of observers expressed disappointment with the slow pace of democratization in Zambia’s Third Republic. Many claimed to see evidence of a decline in the quality of democracy.² The parties were central to that diagnosis. The critics said the MMD government bore the hallmarks of the Second Republic. For example Chikulo referred to a 'de facto one-party state'. The Lusaka-based Inter African Network for Human Rights and Development (AFRONET) began its human rights report (1999) by saying the 'legacy of the one-party system is still with Zambia', before speculating that the democracy is 'in danger of becoming a mere pseudo-democracy with a hegemonic party system ill-distinguished' from its predecessor. The country's Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP) claimed the political tendencies of people in power are 'an exact replay of a one party system mentality'.³ The scale of the MMD's electoral victories - securing 125 of the 150 elected seats in the National Assembly in 1991, and 131 seats in 1996 when the main potential rival, UNIP boycotted the election along with six extremely small parties, is what makes this possible. UNIP did not take part in 1996 because Kaunda was barred from
contesting the republican presidency by a constitutional amendment, passed by the MMD-dominated parliament earlier, which required candidates and their parents to be of Zambian origin. The MMD's hold on local government is no less strong, retaining a clear majority of seats in all councils in eight of Zambia's nine provinces in the 1998 local elections, with Eastern Province - UNIP's heartland - the sole exception. In Zambia today we could easily apply the tag 'dominant party system' that is so often heard in a South African context, where the African National Congress can count on the lion's share of votes and elected representatives.  

In *Parties and Party Systems* (1976) Sartori provided one of the most enduring and often-cited analyses in political science. He carefully distinguished between parties and party systems - systems of interactions resulting from inter-party competition. He reasoned that the label 'dominant' should be reserved for a particular category of party, namely whatever major party outdistances the other parties in whichever type of party system, and that to do otherwise confuses the issue. He also commented on the fluidity of party systems in the newer polities. He characterised Zambia in 1962-68 as a 'polyparty system' and in 1968-72 as being closer to dominant non-authoritarianism - the fluid equivalent of a predominant party system in more 'consolidated' situations. Zambia then adopted the party-state system of the Second Republic. Today, Zambia's situation resembles much more closely Sartori's idea of a predominant system, where one party commands, alone and over time, the absolute majority of seats, than a 'hegemonic system'. The crucial difference is that a predominant system concedes the possibility of alternation of parties in power, even though alternation might look unlikely. In a hegemonic system alternation cannot occur and is not even envisaged; if opposition exists at all it is at most a licensed opposition.

Sartori's definitions are not wholly unambiguous. He describes a hegemonic system as one where opposition parties are not permitted to compete with the dominant party on an equal basis. That situation resembles Zambia for at least part of the 1990s. The MMD has used its control over public resources and access to state owned media to partisan advantage; the police, allegedly acting under political direction, have applied their powers to prohibit political rallies and meetings in a discriminatory fashion. These and other tactics have disadvantaged the opposition in parliamentary by-elections since the controversial general election of 1996. The opposition presently comprises UNIP, the United Party for National Development (UPND) which was formed by Anderson Mazoka in 1998, the National Party (NP), and the
Zambia Alliance for Progress (an amalgam of small parties principally the Zambia Democratic Congress-ZDC, which won two parliamentary seats out of the 141 it contested in 1996, and the National Lima Party which contested 83 seats without success. ZAP is headed by Dean Mung'omba, an unsuccessful presidential challenger in 1996). These are the most noteworthy of 24 registered parties, the majority being parties in name only, together with the Republican Party (RP). The RP was announced in August 2000 by Ben Mwila, formerly one of Chiluba's closest associates - an 'uncle' and financial backer from very early days - following his expulsion from the MMD for 'anti-party activities'. The National Assembly also contains a sprinkling of Independents, some of whom will probably (re)join a party as the next general election draws near.

According to Sartori, for the purpose of systems classification we can ignore electoral irregularities so long as it can be reasonably assumed that in a situation of fair competition the leading party would still attain the absolute majority of seats. This assumption applies to Zambia in the 1990s. Moreover even some of the smaller parties comply with Sartori's criteria of 'relevance' for determining whether a party counts and thence the number of parties the system contains. For although the MMD has not yet needed to invite other parties to join it in coalition government, it has behaved as if it believed they possessed, or could easily acquire, 'blackmail potential'. Their presence has impacted on the MMD's tactics of competition; in contrast, the dominant party in a hegemonic system would be unaffected. The opposition has not yet secured enough parliamentary seats to be able to veto government legislation, but the ruling party has interpreted the very existence of political competition as a real potential for opposition competitiveness. The opposition's weaknesses have not prevented the ruling party from feeling vulnerable, as evidenced by its determined approach to fighting hard and winning every by-election. This explains the harassment of some opposition leaders and the co-option of one or two others.

In late 1997 the authorities arrested and subsequently released without charge Mung'omba on suspicion of complicity in a failed coup attempt (October 1997); Kaunda too was detained, but later released after international diplomatic representations; and Roger Chongwe, leader of the Liberal Democratic Party, felt obliged to flee the country. At the end of the decade Wezi Kaunda, heir apparent to his father as UNIP leader, was assassinated. And although the finger of suspicion has been pointed at machinations inside and not just outside UNIP, the incident only added to existing fears about what MMD supporters might be
prepared to do in order to secure their cause. In contrast the MMD hierarchy has shown great willingness to recruit opponents and welcome former dissidents back into the fold, after they have experimented unsuccessfully with alternative parties. Some examples are Patrick Katyoka (ex-Congress for National Unity, formerly the Caucus for National Unity centred on Western Province) and Baldwin Nkumbula (ex-National Party). Enoch Kavindele too abandoned his creation, the United Democratic Front, to join MMD, and in November 2000 became the first ex-minister of an MMD cabinet to gain reappointment to a cabinet post - he is now responsible for health, an increasingly high profile issue area. None of this would be necessary in a hegemonic party system, where there is neither formal nor de facto competition for power - 'out' parties can never expect to become the 'in'. The Zambian situation is clearly different. Thus AFRONET's newspaper, The Monitor, in an election campaign preview could reckon that the likelihood of MMD losing the 2001 election exceeds its chances of retaining power. What is less clear is who is tipped to succeed, or whether any party is expected to emerge as clear winner. The possibility that the National Assembly will have a rather confused complexion cannot be wholly discounted, although the MMD's recent record of victories in parliamentary by-elections suggests it is likely to continue to prevail. The possibility that the party of the next president will not control a majority of seats in the legislature also cannot be completely ruled out. It would present a novel situation for Zambia.

The argument so far is that in order to comprehend party politics in the Third Republic we should respect Sartori's injunction to heed 'potentiality analysis', by which he meant an understanding placed in the context of the alternatives and recognising the principle and reality of 'anticipated reactions': 'In this perspective the decisive element is not actual competition, and, even less, high competitiveness, but whether competition is possible'. Within that framework, and to the extent that Zambia's contemporary party system is reminiscent of the past, the most striking reference point is not the Second Republic but more enduring historical evidence dating back at least as far as independence (1964), possibly even earlier.

*The Third Republic in the shadow of the past*

For much of the 1990s UNIP's continuing presence combined with respect for its former political might have marked it out as Zambia's main opposition party, notwithstanding the scale of its 1991 defeat. The belief persisted that UNIP could one day return to pose a credible challenge - because of its organisational presence and political experience, because of
Kaunda's stature and claim to be father of the nation, because of a belief that Zambia now embraces pluralism and UNIP appeared the most capable of investing that with practical meaning. Chiluba believed as much, even in the aftermath of the 1991 election victory that gave him almost 76 percent of the presidential vote. Indeed, later on signs of a UNIP revival, coming on top of the defections from MMD that produced the National Party (1993), are credited with panicking MMD MPs into legislating the 1996 constitutional amendments. Kebby Musokotwane, UNIP's new president after 1992, never enjoyed the full support of the party's inner circle; and after Kaunda resumed the party leadership in 1995 UNIP won a few parliamentary by-election victories outside Eastern Province.

UNIP has not been the sole opposition. Not long after taking office MMD experienced severe strains among the leading group that soon led to defections including some notable ministers, who formed the National Party. The pattern of events was unsurprising: 'historic movements are doomed to dissolve or, at least, to undergo a drastic metamorphosis if they are to play the game of competitive politics. History dictates such a fate'. Throughout the decade UNIP too has experienced constant internal tensions, revolving around competition between Kaunda's supporters, many of them preferring him to continue indefinitely as leader or one of his sons to succeed him, and other, usually younger rivals. Outside there has been a continual circulation of politicians, contributing to the emergence and in some cases later disappearance of small parties, proto-parties and political groups. Most of the leaders have at one time or another passed through MMD (including Kaunda's latest successor as UNIP president, Francis Nkhoma, who has yet to win over the party's full support). Prior to that many of them were successful UNIP politicians and held public office in the Second Republic. For example UPND's Mazoka managed Zambia Railways, before later joining MMD. It is a moot point whether this pattern of elite circulation can be considered as evidence of endemic factionalism, if only because factionalism is a contested term. In some definitions minimum thresholds (usually unspecified) of political organisation, commitment to common goals and persistence over time have to be reached first. In Zambia political careerism, competition over spoils, and personal traits offer more convincing explanations than serious disagreements over ideology and programme. So other terms such as clan, clique, personal followings, Sartori's 'fractionalism', or, even, 'friends and neighbours politics' (after the American political scientist V. O. Key) might be more appropriate. There were comparable patterns of political behaviour in the Second Republic but of necessity they were contained within the ruling party. Analysts of new democracies often explain the presence of factionalism, 'splittism' and proliferation of
parties as reactions to a preceding one-party state, where the prohibition on extra-party competition encouraged political differences to be channelled in particular ways.\textsuperscript{11} The Zambian phenomenon whereby many politicians now like to conceive of themselves as the president of a political party and envisage being the next republican president, and treat parties as personal vehicles to that end, is the Second Republic's most notably legacy to the contemporary party scene, rather than single-partyism. Even so, precursors can be found well before then, in the First Republic and even earlier.

\textit{Precursors}

In the First Republic (1964-72) a similar situation existed, namely a leading party - UNIP - with a nationwide presence together with a principal challenger, Harry Nkumbula's African National Congress (ANC) whose political base was regionally concentrated, like UNIP today. But the ANC was not just resilient in Southern Province. In the 1968 parliamentary election it won 23 seats (to UNIP's 81) and had the potential to increase its challenge by extending its appeal in Western Province, for instance by working with the United Party (UP) - established there by Lozi-speakers after breaking away from UNIP in 1967. The UP was proscribed in 1968. In 1971 it seemed that rumours of an electoral pact between ANC - which ten years earlier was judged to be in a 'pathetic state of disorganisation and poverty'\textsuperscript{12} - and the new United Progressive Party (UPP) could jeopardise UNIP's dominance. The UPP, led by former UNIP vice-president Simon Kapwepwe, looked like taking support away from UNIP among Bemba-speakers on the Copperbelt and further north. Just such a scenario probably hastened Kaunda's decisions to ban the UPP, in 1972, and move to a one-party state. In August 2000 Mwila's exit from MMD and announcement of the Republican Party (the opening rally on the Copperbelt attracted 10,000 people), immediately sparked rumours of possible alliances or mergers with other opposition parties with heartlands elsewhere, including UPND (Southern Province) and, even, UNIP.

There are no grounds for thinking that history will come full circle in the sense of moves by MMD to legalise single-partyism in order to secure its own position. But the present combination of a predominant party system with fissiparous tendencies is a familiar one. UNIP itself came about as a result of Kaunda (who was ANC Secretary-General, 1953-58), Kapwepwe and up to 20 others leaving the ANC in October 1958 (the ANC became a party in 1954. It emerged from the Northern Rhodesia African Congress, which arose from divisions
in the nationalist movement in 1948). Kaunda's break-away group, initially calling itself Zambia African National Congress, was proscribed by the authorities in 1959. Two ex-ZANC groups subsequently reformed under the name UNIP. Historians differ over why ANC suffered defections, in 1958 and 1959. Mulford pinpointed disagreement over whether to compromise with the new 'Benson constitution' Britain was offering, which fell short of offering majority rule; Macpherson emphasised opposition 'on grounds of personality rather than policy'. Another feature of the period which resonated later, in the 1990s, was a short-lived proliferation of smaller African parties or proto-parties, like the African National Freedom Movement, United African Congress, and African Independence Party. Even earlier Northern Rhodesia's white community made a practical demonstration of political pluralism, from the late 1950s producing such parties as the Dominion Party, the Federal Party (which then merged into the United Federal Party-UFP), the Constitution Party (its successor being the multi-racial Central African Party), and the Liberal Party. There were also Independents and whites who chose to support the African political organisations; the whole being mirrored in a profusion of different churches as well - another feature that was to be carried forward, and which is very evident in Zambia's African churches today.

The territory's first truly national election, in 1962, was contested by four parties - UFP and ANC (these two formed an electoral alliance), UNIP and the Liberal Party, plus the tiny Rhodesia Republican Party. In the west, UFP formed a separate alliance with the royalist Barotse National Party. The transitional government from 1962 to 1964 comprised UNIP and ANC, to sideline the Europeans' UFP. But it was 'ridden by political manoeuvring and rent with internal dissent' (especially within the ANC) and constantly on the brink of internal dissolution. Unsurprisingly the parties competed head on in the 1964 election. The ANC, despite being much the weaker (a faction calling itself the People's Democratic Party drifted away but subsequently rejoined) still won ten seats to UNIP's 55, and subsequently rebuffed invitations to merge into UNIP (the National Progress Party - formerly UFP - won all ten seats reserved for Europeans). The Republic of Zambia was born. It arrived with a commitment to holding elections that has lasted ever since - general elections being staged in 1968, 1973; 1978; 1983; 1988; 1991; and 1996. It began with a pattern of political competition that was to outlive not just the onset of independence but the interregnum of the one-party state. This is the predominant party system with opposition housed mainly in one, distinctly secondary but not insignificant party together with incipient fractional tendencies all round.
Now as before, there is a latent dynamic in the party system. The possibility that power will be redistributed between the component parts cannot be ignored. So long as competition remains lawful the party in power cannot be certain of remaining so, if its performance in government disappoints. Although by the new millennium UNIP seems to be in terminal decline, it could be said that it did rather well to survive its massive defeat in 1991 and withdrawal from the 1996 parliamentary elections (then, UNIP's call to its supporters to destroy their voting cards was a repetition of ZANC's exhortation to Africans to boycott voter registration under the proposed Benson constitution, in 1959). The 1996 boycott was a major strategic error, marginalising the party even further at the national level. But, as the ANC was rather prematurely written off in the early 1960s, so perhaps UNIP should not be written off now, even though its chances of making a comeback, singly or in alliance with others, depend on the performance of the other opposition parties. If MMD were not returned to power by the elections in 2001 we could not be confident that the MMD will survive in its present form either. It is not yet institutionalised in the sense of having had to show adaptability in the face of great shocks (such as leadership succession, or loss of office). The extent of its affective linkages to important societal groups outside a narrow business constituency is unproven. Business figures could well gravitate towards another party if judged to be more instrumental to their financial and economic interests. The main political actors in Zambia have always tended to act situationally. And although critics claim there is no internal democracy in the MMD and see that as an unfortunate inheritance from the one-party-state, in reality Chiluba has struggled to build something resembling a party from a very disparate assortment of mutually jealous politicians and opposing socio-economic interests, while simultaneously furnishing the government. His leadership has been compared with Kaunda's centralising tendencies in UNIP, by expecting MMD MPs to toe the line in the National Assembly once the issues have been thrashed out in cabinet and caucus meetings of the parliamentary party. But according to western analysts of parties, in a "proper party", party members are expected to carry out party policy, especially in voting on issues in the legislature, where a perfectly cohesive party would vote unanimously.\(^{16}\)

*The political forces behind the party politics*

What determines the shape of party politics? Down the years that important question has generated considerable debate, which cannot be fully addressed here. What can be said is that the continuities found in Zambia reflect many factors that have existed more or less up to the
present day. For as it underwent redemocratization in 1990-91 Zambia was spared that 'orgy of institutional design, enhanced through academic tourism by scholar-advisers from established democracies' that marked other emerging democracies particularly among the post-communist states. Here, the influence of formal institutions will be briefly reviewed first, before proceeding to informal institutions and other reasons for the weakness of political opposition.

Zambia is a unitary polity operating a presidential system with a centralised system of government. The threshold for registering a significant presence is high, and, while providing no absolute bar such a profile does not help new parties to gain a significant foothold. The electoral system, borrowed from colonial times, is another factor common to all three republics. The first-past-the post system has disadvantaged parties with support spread relatively thinly across the country, for example ZDC and National Lima Party in 1996, while benefiting politicians who in their enclaves make strong ethnic, local or regional appeals (NP in North-Western Province). The electoral system helps explain why the MMD's opponents won so few parliamentary seats in 1996 despite achieving nearly 40 per cent of the total vote. It has helped MMD win by-elections since. Reynolds calculates that under both a national and list system of proportional representation the MMD's parliamentary majority in 1996 would have been 36-38 seats, not the 112 it actually secured. Furthermore, presidential elections have a 'winner-takes-all' quality that can (but does not everywhere) discourage several reasonably strong parties from co-existing.

Also, in Zambia a constitutional-legal requirement dating from 1966 requires parliamentarians who leave the party on whose ticket they were elected (or who are expelled from that party) to re-contest their seat. This should serve to protect opposition parties from the temptation placed before their MPs to defect to the ruling party in the pursuit of government patronage. But it has not prevented defections by MMD MPs: 25 of the 47 parliamentary by-elections held between 1991 and April 1996 were caused by MPs changing party allegiance, and not by morbidity, although the rate for that too is high (a fact that retards building stable long-term party organisations). However the deterrent against 'crossing the floor' also inhibits small parliamentary parties from merging into a stronger one and helps explain the unwillingness of the National Party's MPs to dissolve their party into ZAP.

The ethnic dimension and informal institutions
Having considered formal institutions, what of the ethnic dimension of politics and other informal institutions? In an African context there is usually an ethnic basis of political cleavage and party competition, that connects to linguistic and regional differences. Certainly this has been and remains a factor in Zambia, which has 73 ethnic groups, seven officially recognised languages and 30 different dialects. Kaunda, with his strong sense of purpose to build 'one Zambia, one nation', feared that 'tribal' conflicts could pull UNIP apart. From early on he reckoned the opposing parties including break-away parties from UNIP would politicise tribal and ethnic differences in order to draw votes. The bedrock of ANC support was with the Tonga-speaking people of Southern Province. Traditionally the political elites of Western Province have flirted with their own vehicles for political representation, owing to a distinctive, long-standing grievance. After 1953 the Province, formerly known as Barotseland, had been a British protectorate within Northern Rhodesia. The London Agreement reached with Britain as part of independence in 1964 confirmed the region's special status bestowed by the Barotse Treaty (1890), so reserving certain powers to the litunga (royal ruler). It was later abrogated by the UNIP government. Consequently Akashambatwa Mbikusita-Lewanika's Agenda for Zambia (AZ) party is the clearest example now of a regional party, winning two seats in Western Province in 1996. Akashambatwa, one of the original founders of MMD and later of the National Party, campaigns for the restoration of regional autonomy, communal ownership and economic self-determination for the Province. He has gone so far as to present the case to the Southern African Development Community. But it would be wrong to presume strong unity of purpose even among the Lozi aristocracy, where there is a 'long history of political intrigue and rivalry between various sections of the royal family', let alone among the diverse peoples of the Province.

So, although ethnicity plays a part in politics and in the allocation of jobs and favours in the public service, its significance is not straightforward and should not be exaggerated. It helps to account for fractionalism within parties as much as the fissions and cleavages in the party system. Like UNIP in the past, MMD throughout the 1990s demonstrated genuine appeal across the whole country. And, just as no party since MMD has incorporated 'Movement' into their name, so nearly all of them have adopted labels with pan-territorial connotations (of the 24 parties registered in August 2000 six included 'National' and five 'United' in their title). Claims that a party or candidate is tribally-based are often negative allegations that are made about political opponents, especially in contests occurring outside their region, in order to
question the legitimacy of their campaign and harm their chances, rather than being a positive strategy of mobilisation strategy that politicians use to win support. In neither situation can the politics be explained fully by reducing it to an ethnic, tribal, or linguistic 'base'. On the contrary, it is the behaviour of politicians that supplies the primary force. This factor has seemingly contributed a centrifugal potential to the party system in all three Zambian republics but its extent and impact are neither as great nor as pernicious as in many other African states. In the Third as in the First Republic parties that put themselves in, or are painted into such a corner must form alliances across regions and ethnic constituencies if they are to maximise their political prospects. The point is even relevant to local politics, so significant are the patronage powers at the disposal of the central government/ruling party for use in securing electoral support at that level. As evidence Kaunda asked the foreign donors to consider funding development projects in Eastern Province separately, arguing that UNIP's political predominance there exposes the local authorities to politically-motivated exclusion from funding allocations by the ministries in Lusaka.

According to Ware political institutions make more difference to party development after democratization is well under way than during the early years. This claim, informed chiefly by experience in the North, refers to the formal institutions, which are often crafted by well-placed parties with a view to securing their own long-run advantage. But in Africa, there is a widely-held view that the real institutions of politics are informal relations of loyalty and patronage. It means that neo-patrimonialism is rife. Neo-patrimonialism translates into clientelism. Here is another feature of political life in Zambia - one with pre-colonial origins - that has shaped the parties and the party landscape down all the years. It influences the ruling party's ability to reinforce its position through manipulating public resources; it allows wealthy individuals to create their own parties or political groups; it enhances the centralisation of power within parties. It explains why numbers of party members and supporters often accompany prominent individuals when they change their allegiance from one party to another, as happens often. It accentuates the trait of presidentialism over and beyond the dispensation of powers formally provided for in the republic's constitution. A Zambian example is the Presidential Discretionary Fund which reserves budgetary allocations of around Kwacha 13 million annually, augmenting the president's patronage powers considerably. It has been deployed for partisan purposes. Among other things President Chiluba makes disbursements to local churches for their social work, not unusually prior to elections.
By comparison social cleavages such as class and deeply-held ideological convictions over the authoritative allocation of values have always played a considerably smaller role in determining political alignments than in most western (post-)industrial societies. Indeed, some analysts claim that Africa's parties tend to be so different from western examples that they should not be considered animals of the same species. It is true that Kaunda sought to fashion a distinctive set of social and political beliefs - humanism - for the party and the country. But this never took hold among the party elite or the masses. Among the politicians who launched MMD and furnished its first cabinet were some who represented strong beliefs, values and attitudes about the organisation of political, social and economic affairs. They ranged from politicians with autocratic inclinations and businesspersons with pro-market views to left-of-centre intellectuals, social 'progressives' and a few espousing liberal political views. Akashambatwa for example was and still is a critic of capitalism and third world dependency. Nevertheless, many were political opportunists. And, in the debates in the 1990s there is not much evidence to suggest that fundamental issues of principle differentiate the parties more now than they did in the period before independence, when political freedom was a common cause. The most clearly discernible difference lies in the rhetoric, with opposition figures invariably claiming to be more committed to liberal democracy and socio-economic development than the ruling party's performance suggests.

All things considered, then, understanding the weakness of the political opposition should be a major priority, and not solely for the Third Republic. In the predominant system that began when UNIP gained the leadership of the nationalist struggle opposition forces have more often than not posed a comparatively weak challenge when acting individually. The very uneven share of the total vote (not just seats) garnered in general elections by the ANC in 1962 and 1964 offer a testimony. So too do the one-sided outcomes of the 1991 and 1996 contests, although in the 1991 election it was the ruling party that was overwhelmed. The events of 1971 and 1996 might be considered exceptional. The steps taken by the governing party in 1971/2 to proscribe an opposition party and end pluralism by constitutional means, and then in 1996 changing the constitution to UNIP's disadvantage, both suggest that the party in power feared its position was eroding. But on both occasions such fears denoted panic, and may have been unsound. It was a calculation about the potential level of competition that spurred anticipatory action. In the Second Republic the country endured around 15 years of economic mismanagement and increasing impoverishment before serious political
consequences were visited on the ruling party, whereas elsewhere in Africa many ruling parties were brought down as a result of discontent, often by force. So, what other reasons are there for the tendency towards weak political opposition in the predominant system, and, more pertinent still, are they permanent?

The most obvious reason, already alluded to, is that when the threat potential (Sartori's 'blackmail potential') of the opposition begins to loom large in the ruling party's estimation that party takes measures to prevent it becoming more substantial. The ploys used by the MMD to prevent a level playing field have already been noted. Whereas formerly the slogan was it 'pays to vote UNIP' - support for UNIP being exchanged for non-repayable loans and material favours from the state - now it costs not to vote MMD, because such behaviour puts centrally-funded allocations at risk. As in the past, the state-owned and government-managed media give disproportionate coverage to the ruling party and to the president. Some other conditions impairing the actual and potential for vibrant political competition are less amenable to institutional engineering, such as the country's desperate poverty and weak public finances, which impose monetary constraints on the building of sustained political organisational capacity. There is no official funding of parties by the state. Opposition parties are at an immediate disadvantage so long as society's small wealthy stratum sees its interests as lying with the party in power.

The political culture of personal opportunism also prevents a long-term commitment to party-building where teamwork, inter-personal trust and a willingness to serve under others are requirements. The use of inflammatory language and the trading of personal abuse quite often at very senior levels within parties (and even inside the cabinet) are routine features of the contemporary political scene. They are long-established traditions, albeit accentuated in the 1990s by a heightened scramble for the spoils of office. The strong concern shown by Kaunda to building a strong, unified party with a large popular membership made the creation of UNIP unique. In the MMD Chiluba too recognised early on the importance of building party organisation and maintaining a certain minimum of 'discipline'. But in the earlier period the resolve that UNIP's leaders showed to put behind the 'bitter internecine strife' that formerly characterised the nationalist movement was fuelled by the party's mission at that time - political liberation. That powerful incentive is no longer available, and just as UNIP has become steadily less united so no adequate substitute for it has been found in any of the other parties, not even the MMD.
Looking ahead

The elective principle was first introduced to the indigenous inhabitants as far back as the 1940s, for the African Urban Advisory Councils and the national-level African Representative Council (1946). Soon Zambia will witness the tenth in an unbroken sequence of general elections. Events early on in the 1990s led commentators to rediscover that the country 'had a history of plural politics'. Zambia has now shown a commitment to party-based government for over 35 years. A return to a party-state is extremely unlikely, given the lessons the people have learned from their past and the current international climate, which presses strategically insignificant and aid-dependent countries like Zambia to be democratic. But in view of the record of the 1990s - a wasted decade for political opposition in Zambia - and the account given here of the First and Second Republics, what contribution can we expect the party system to make to democracy and democratization in the future?

Parties, more particularly a stable effective party system are conventionally regarded as an essential requisite of democratic consolidation. The question 'what are parties for?' might look naïve. But in analytical terms the services performed by parties individually and collectively are not identical, and in reality there is bound to be some variance from one country to another. The contributions that parties and party systems can make to democratization do not equate to how they might serve political life more generally. Questions that ask how parties in Zambia might improve the predominant system or its operation in the interests of democracy, or ask how the party system might be transformed into a more evenly balanced affair, or ask how a much more pluralistic arrangement could be brought about, are all different. They invite different answers. Questions about how opposition parties specifically might check government more effectively, and about the necessary conditions for this to happen, are different again. But in Zambia such questions are raised only rarely and they cannot all be explored here, and neither can the subject of what constitutes a feasible model of party organisation in a Zambian context. Instead just two issues, or more accurately two related features of an important issue, will be selected. These are, first the parties' relationship to civil society: good connections can give parties access to resources, programmatic guidance, organisational solidity, the possibility to transcend personalist-oriented politics, and a durability they might otherwise lack. The second comprises the
responsibilities that attach to being a political opposition, which in Zambia includes a willingness to learn from and, possibly, work more closely with civic associations.

Political parties and civil society

Many observers have remarked on the absence of strong links between Africa's parties and 'modern' civic organisations in society - a point that can be made in respect both of interest-based associations and cause (pressure) groups like human rights campaigners. The record of parliamentary politics in Zambia since independence bears this out. The relative convenience of garnering support by appealing to more traditional sources such as kin-based and ethnic identities and, more especially, clientelistic networks, offers a vivid contrast. Widner for one offers several reasons to explain the parties' dereliction in this regard. First, investing in appeals to civil society is risky where the government has powers to restrict association and assembly. This has some relevance to Zambia, where on occasions the authorities have subjected individual civic organisations to harassment. Yet it should be remembered that the MMD's founding was encouraged by and enjoyed the active participation of a considerable assortment of civic actors. These ranged from business groups to organised labour, churchmen, university students and academics - at a time when the legal and political climate was less liberal than now - even if the party's upper echelons were subsequently hijacked by a narrower coterie of ex-UNIP politicians and businesspeople.

Widner's second hypothesis is that the voluntary associations may be too small or too numerous and transient to promise many votes. Some of the Third Republic's most prominent lobby groups are small, Lusaka-based organisations, unrepresentative of society as a whole. But in 1991 the unions and churches probably exercised significant influence on popular voting behaviour. More recently several pro-democracy cause groups have been very active in trying to influence the political agenda. The Zambia Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) threw its organisational weight behind the MMD campaign (Chiluba was ZCTU Chairman-General from 1974 to 1991). In 1996 the farming community took part in the parliamentary elections in the shape of the National Lima Party.

Third, Widner surmises that civic association leaders could be too insecure to offer to deliver the members' votes. Again there is some evidence of this in Zambia. For instance the ZCTU's current chairman, Frederick Shamenda, only gained re-election after a bitterly fought
contest, and after appearing to receive government support. Pastor Nevers Mumba, for many years a popular television evangelist, has failed to make political progress with his party, the National Citizens (originally Christian) Coalition. Yet civic bodies have certainly been used as springboards for successful political careers, most notably by a number of ministers in the first MMD administration. Today almost without exception the main parties' leading figures have some background in business, including Mazoka (UPND), Mwila (RP) and Nkhoma (UNIP).

Finally, Widner's twin observations that too little is known about the associations' members and that the rural poor are not represented both resonate in Zambia, although the CCJP is articulate about poverty, and the National Farmers Union, although 80 percent of its funding is by large commercial growers, also purports to represent small peasant farmers, who comprise 80 percent of the members. The Union, whose lobbying has made an impression on government policy according to official sources, requires senior officers who enter politics to resign their post. No less pertinent, then, than the issues Widner raises is the question why do civic associations themselves not seek closer ties with opposition parties? Should they even entertain this as a goal?

In terms of the organisations that historically have represented socio-economic interest groups, the trade union movement is predominant. Yet, in the context of the harsh economic and industrial climate of the 1990s, when formal sector employment shrank from 400,000 to possibly around 150,000 now and public sector workers in particular witnessed large reductions in real terms pay, organised labour is the 'dog that did not bark'. The union movement is divided, as are the churches. Some unions have left the ZCTU to form the Federation of Free Trade Unions. In August 2000 Shamenda's sharp response to some colleagues urging members to vote against MMD was to maintain that although union leaders may speak on behalf of their own union, the ZCTU must not become politically involved. He argued that ZCTU's involvement in 1990-91 was directed towards restoring democracy - entrenching the freedom for opposition parties to oppose - and was not partisan. His reluctance to give government, or any party, a pretext for interfering in the organisation's internal affairs is understandable. In fact there is a sort of precedent from the earliest days. The organisation of industrial labour in Northern Rhodesia began with the mineworkers in the late 1940s. In the 1950s the first president of the African Mineworkers Union and later of the Northern Rhodesia African Trade Union Congress, Lawrence Katilungu, resisted appeals to call political strikes (some small unions who disagreed were expelled from the Congress).
During the First Republic organised labour remained wary of the parties. In the Second Republic the ZCTU resisted incorporation into UNIP as a subordinate wing comparable the party's Women's League or Youth League (although its Chairman-General, Frederick Chiluba, acquired the mantle of unofficial opposition leader).

The MMD's emergence as a coalition of support drawing on a fragmented constituency of civic associations and existing politicians could be an achievement that will be hard to emulate and quite possibly will remain unique. Critics would argue that the MMD’s record in office has done little to either cement the social capital or build trust in the politicians, both of which are requisite to constructing durable bonds between parties and civic actors. In short, the MMD has queered the pitch. Of course the MMD still retains support from some constituencies: budget measures in recent years have sought to appease commercial farmers; and Chiluba has warm relations with the more evangelical churches. But the civic associations that have attained most prominence in the 1990s have been bodies like the Zambia Independent Monitoring Team (ZIMT), Foundation for Democratic Process (FODEP), AFRONET and Women's Lobby Group. Brought together by the Non-governmental Organisation Co-ordinating Committee, and in combination with a vigorous independent press (*The Post; The Monitor*), they press the government to widen the political space, to respect independent criticism and provide a more level playing field for political opposition. They were particularly vocal around the time of the 1996 election, not just on the process and content of constitutional change but other issues like the shortcomings of the electoral register. Most recently they have focused on civil and political liberties, the abuse of human rights by the law enforcement agencies, and the case for strengthening the horizontal instruments of governmental accountability. By comparison the MMD's main political competitors have usually looked inept, self-engrossed and bereft of organisational cohesion, and lack viable-looking strategies for gaining power. Their choice of tactics too can be faulted, for example by walking out of the National Assembly debate on the constitution in 1996 UNIP’s MPs lost a 'golden opportunity to introduce amendments, some of which the MMD was willing to accept'.

Thus although on occasions the ruling authorities have perpetrated dominant-authoritarian practices, the MMD has also been able to dominate by default. Indeed, perhaps more remarkable than the infringements on wholly free and fair competition is the fact that the ruling party has not been driven to take even more extreme steps to harass, divide and undermine the political opposition, in the cause of preserving its leading position. The acknowledged policy failures of the government, most notably the continuing economic
weakness of the country and increasing poverty of the great majority of people notwithstanding the visibly growing riches of a very few, only make this all the more surprising. This brings us to the matter of responsible opposition.

While a handful of civic actors have been allowed to assume by default some of the burden of trying to make government accountable, they probably have little to gain by forming close ties with opposition parties. To do so would not only compromise their own independent role but could make them a more obvious target of harassment. No less important it would be likely to jeopardise the moral support they receive from international organisations like Human Rights Watch Africa and Amnesty International and the many funding links they enjoy with foreign governmental as well as non-governmental donors. The international community has developed significant channels of communication with civil society in Zambia over matters like governance and political reform. If only for diplomatic reasons that would become more problematic if there was no alternative but to involve the parties. Van Cranenburgh's claim that Africa's parties are unsuitable instruments of democratization and thereby useless vehicles for the international promotion of democracy might be an extreme view, but during the 1990s political aid to Zambia has indeed been switched from the parties to civic associations and institutions of 'good governance'.\textsuperscript{36} This could be a short-sighted.

For although during political transformation a country's rulers carry a heavy burden of responsibility for making democratic transition a success, the political opposition too has responsibilities, namely to perform the political functions customarily associated with the idea of parties in liberal democracies. These are functions that political scientists do not normally expect of other forms of organisation, not even factions (it is improbable that an even more highly fractionalised or faction-based system would offer a superior way to fulfil democracy's requirements, notwithstanding the current limitations of the party system), and certainly not by civic associations.\textsuperscript{37} Thus the democratic limitations and governance failings of the MMD government might ultimately prove to be a blessing for the opposition. They offer focal points around which there is an opportunity to coalesce and give some structure to political cleavage and shape for party alignment, at least for time being (economic failure under UNIP was finally able to perform a comparable role, in 1991). For up until now the political opposition too has failed Zambia and by its inattention to the most basic functions like researching and formulating credible policy alternatives and mobilising grass-roots support. In mitigation it can be said that Zambia is an example of Mkandawire's 'choiceless democracy'.\textsuperscript{38} Back in
1964 Molteno argued the principal reason why politicians turn to sectional social cleavages when recruiting support is the lack of alternative cleavages. Now, the narrowing of Zambia's economic and social policy options by international financial institutions makes it difficult for the parties to offer the electorate radically different solutions to the country's serious financial, economic and social problems. They can compete in the sense of opposing the people in power but have only very limited scope to contest government policy. Mkandawire's insight into how external constraints thereby conspire to maintain the very features of personalism, factionalism and clientelism that foreign observers presume to denounce is thus born out in Zambia. The ability of opposition to render the government accountable is reduced accordingly.

Nevertheless, nothing that has been said so far makes Zambia a one-party-dominant party system or one-party state. Far better to distinguish claims about the party system from claims about the position or standing of parties singly and, beyond that, to distinguish these from appraisals of the political style. A leading party might or might not display dominant-authoritarian party characteristics and in these respects could fluctuate over time, depending on how it calculates its partisan needs, on changes in the leadership and the leaders' strength of commitment to liberal democratic values. Different again, in analytical terms, are statements about the popular political culture, as exemplified in Bratton and Liatto-Katundu's discovery that the political culture of single-party rule in Zambia has left behind habits of obeisance and dependence with an inertia of their own. The central point about Zambia's experience is that it confirms a claim made by Chabal about Africa more widely: political pluralism does not guarantee accountability. The vital issue for Zambia's future then becomes whether the parties and party system will develop in ways that enhance liberal democratic values, or whether some other arrangement like a compact between civil society and foreign donors could be expected to take the strain?

Concluding remarks

In the developing world party systems have regularly survived interludes of authoritarian rule. The view that sees Zambia's return to political pluralism blighted by the influence of the one-party state, and the repetition of that state's political substance but not its formal legal-constitutional form, is misleading. Politicians obviously carry with them lessons and experiences from the past. But we should be impressed less by the idea that a former epoch
shapes later ones one than by the injunction to inquire into whatever circumstances and conditions make them all what they are - however great the similarities and dissimilarities. Moreover if we look back far enough significant continuities and parallels in party politics that antecede the Second Republic come to light. Thus the fundamentals of Zambia's party system have quite deep roots, although the constituent actors have changed over time.

Zambia's predominant party system has combined what for much of the time looks like a comparatively weak opposition with persistent tendencies towards fractionalism in all parties - the last-named feature, of necessity stood out most blatantly in the one-party situation but is not specific to era. Over the period as a whole there has been a dynamic in the party system. UNIP's succession to the ANC as leader of the nationalist struggle and the MMD's electoral defeat of UNIP were major shifts in the distribution of strength. On both occasions they were executed in relatively short order. At particular moments first UNIP and then MMD have judged their position to be vulnerable and reacted in ways that served to limit Zambia's attainment of democracy, most notably by effecting constitutional change, in 1972 and 1996. Even at other times the conduct of electoral politics especially by the ruling party has not been completely fair. In contrast to Bogaards' suggestion that in Africa it is the dominant party system, not fragmentation, that is ubiquitous and that its 'dysfunctions' threaten democracy, in Zambia it is the interaction of predominance and fractional tendencies that have provided the main source of weakness. Here, the relationship between cohesion in the leading party and its assessment of the competitiveness of the opposition cannot be summed up by a simple correlation such as for example a direct inverse relationship, not least because other variables intervene. Thus for instance although MMD suffered notable internal strains and prominent defections in the two years following its sweeping victories in the 1991 national and 1992 local elections, it has also exhibited serious rifts from late 1999 onwards. UNIP's decision to re-engage with electoral politics after 1996, the emergence of UPND which quickly showed itself capable of winning seats, and much talk of pre-election mergers (ZAP) and alliances might justify an expectation that MMD would now close ranks. After all, it faces the prospect of preparing to fight the 2001 elections without the benefit of Chiluba as presidential candidate. Yet in practice internal rivalry to head the queue to succeed Chiluba has caused considerable infighting. That the in-fighting has been very public risks damaging further the party's already battered reputation. Mwila's departure from MMD (he was accused of trying to build a personal party within MMD) together with a handful of MPs who supported him was only the most visible manifestation.
This prompts the question whether Zambia's party system will be more instrumental for democracy in the future, assuming there is no dramatic transformation of the economic situation or reconfiguration of society into sharply delineated and politically self-aware classes in the meantime. The most likely possibility is that both the system and the MMD's leading position within it will continue, probably with a somewhat reduced MMD majority in the National Assembly and a more vulnerable leader than Chiluba has turned out to be. But although opposition weaknesses might continue to benefit the MMD, the MMD's position and the available means to perpetuate it do not compare with UNIP's situation in the First Republic, for several reasons. First, MMD can never acquire the nationalist credentials that UNIP enjoyed. Second, Zambia's impoverished state and liberalised economic regime do not provide equivalent patronage resources and opportunities to those UNIP could wield before the copper price collapsed in the mid-1970s. Third, there is the growth of civil society. Fourth, MMD has not set out to be an inclusive party. Senior figures and other members have been allowed to leave freely (and some were expelled) and to set up in competition. Chiluba's legacy will be an unambiguous stated commitment to political pluralism, in contrast to the inclination towards single-partyism that Kaunda was suspected of harbouring even prior to independence. It is unlikely that MMD will be allowed to forget this. More important still is a fifth point: the people have now experienced a one-party state and found it wanting and, following 1991 they have demonstrated to themselves that they have the power to impose an alternation of power, peacefully. More specifically, they have learned to demystify leadership and to be suspicious of paternalistic leaders who would overtly seek additional presidential powers. Sixth, UNIP was able to turn a hostile regional environment into reasons for controlling and then prohibiting political opposition, on national security grounds. This facility no longer exists, notwithstanding the instability in neighbouring Angola and Democratic Republic of Congo. A final point is that the donor community not only frowns on elected governments infringing democratic methods in order to stay in power, but in Zambia's case (unlike in some other countries) it has already shown willing to apply aid sanctions to put the point across.

But although the MMD should not realistically harbour expectations of matching UNIP's long tenure in government, the opposing politicians' ability to redefine the political agenda towards issues on which they can defeat the MMD will be crucial. They will have to play the game differently to MMD, if only because they do not enjoy equivalent patronage
resources and cannot hope to compete effectively on those terms. But their unimpressive record to date does not bode well. For sure, the 1991 election result was so overwhelming that for some years afterwards opposing politicians can be forgiven for being discouraged from mounting a vigorous challenge, given that the chances of being able to influence the government seemed so slim. The circumstances now are different, because there has been a decade of failure to deliver significant improvements in living standards, and the opposition must share some of the responsibility if it fails to make significant inroads into the MMD's position in the country.

Clearly political pluralism especially the predominant party system variety, does not guarantee accountable government. The current fashion in the study of democratization is to acknowledge that democracy requires more than merely electoralism. Sartori's view was that although predominant party systems belong to the genus of competitive systems they stand at the edge of that category; they belie low competitiveness. He also believed that the essential protective benefits that a competitive structure affords democracy follow mainly from the principle of 'anticipated reactions'.44 But the lesson from Zambia is that even when there has been at least one competitive election (1991) and it is not unusual for the challenge of the political opposition to be taken seriously (as around 1970 and since 1994), these conditions are not sufficient to institutionalise liberal democracy. In the 1990s a few civic associations have attempted to supply some of the deficiencies of organised political opposition. If opposition parties do not register significant electoral gains in 2001, Zambia might have to look more and more to civil society as the best available security for healthy democracy, even though (or because) the prospects for anchoring the parties more firmly in civil society are probably remote. However, even if the forces of opposition triumph at the polls, we still cannot be certain there would be much increase of political accountability by government, especially if a predominant party system remains intact and the MMD falls apart. Similarly an electoral outcome that necessitated political cohabitation between a president and a politically divided National Assembly, with no single party enjoying a clear and lasting majority, would launch Zambia into untried waters. Such a situation could be envisaged as a consequence of further reductions in an already reduced MMD majority after the next election, precipitated thereafter by parliamentary by-election defeats and defections by MMD MPs. Generally speaking a fragmented party system and divided legislature are believed to be highly problematic for stable government where the president is elected independently for a fixed term and possesses strong executive powers, as in Zambia. Zambia has no strong tradition of electoral alliances.
and can recall only one brief unhappy experience of coalition government. If today the opposition politicians can draw on no common ground other than a shared desire to replace MMD, then what are the chances that they could provide stable multi-party government and effective co-operation in the interests of accountable and good governance?
NOTES


4. The discourse dates from inter alia J. Coleman and C. Rosberg, Political Parties and National Integration in Tropical Africa (University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, 1966), where the majority of tropical Africa's new states were said to have either 'single-party political systems'/uniparty' states or 'one-party-dominant states', p. 4.


8. The Monitor No. 118, 4-10 August 2000.


15. Zambia's three most successful parties, ANC, UNIP and MMD have all shown loyalty to their founding leader. As early as 1991 a UNIP-commissioned report advised the need to change the party's old guard including its leader, yet a almost decade later Kaunda still commanded significant support from the party hierarchy. Close observers believe Chiluba will remain head of MMD, or exert informal leadership, after relinquishing the republican presidency.


24. 'The road to power lay through a man's ability to secure the loyalty of his relatives and the allegiance of strangers by judicious presents'. L. H. Gann, *The Birth of a Plural Society 1894-1914* (Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1958), p. 4.

25. Theorists of parties disagree about actual and potential competition: Sartori (Parties, p. 220) believes the latter is an important restraint on how governing parties behave,
whereas Ware claims that only the former offers a significant check, in A. Ware, *Citizens, Parties and the State* (Polity Press, Cambridge, 1987), p. 55.


27. Mulford, *Zambia*, p. 143, was 'struck by the emphasis given to party organisation from the outset by most of UNIP's top leaders'.


30. Apart from electioneering, voicing criticisms of the government in the independent media, and occasional involvement in court cases as defendants against the state or as witnesses in support of allegations against the government, opposition politicians have turned to the foreign donors to exert pressure on the government. For instance UNIP called on the donors to withhold programme support, and Nkhoma's decision to abandon this stance met some resistance inside the party. Other opposition figures repeatedly urged donors to attach more stringent political conditions to aid and rigorously enforce all of aid's conditionalities whenever the government appeared to be undermining liberal democracy and 'good governance'. Inside Zambia the opposition's contribution to political debate has often taken the form of personal attacks on Chiluba and other leading government figures. There is evidence that this alienates some potential supporters for an alternative to the MMD. But the Public Accounts Committee, which is chaired by the National Party's Sam Chipungu, has produced some highly critical reports, highlighting financial irregularities and mismanagement in the public sector. Parliament is discussed further in P. Burnell, 'The first two MMD administrations in Zambia: millenium dawn or millenium sunset?', *Contemporary Politics* (forthcoming).


33. The CCJP ('Comprehensive Statement', p. 8) notes the 'proliferation of Churches, coupled with the prominence accorded to small, personalised churches. .. a cacophony of voices speaking different things in the name of the Church'. Much earlier, Kenneth Kaunda held the Europeans responsible for the multiplication of rival Christian denominations in the country, in *Zambia Shall Be Free* (London, Heinemann Educational, 1962), p. 146.


37. 'parties and party competition produce external benefits which are important for the stability of a regime. No other organisations have quite this profile.' Ware, *Citizens*, p. 117. See also Sartori, *Parties*, p. 25.


44. Sartori, *Parties*, p. 219, adding 'A monopoly in the market remains a far cry from a monopoly without a market'...at least in politics'.

45. UNIP's antipathy to election alliances pre-dates independence; the Zambia Opposition Front, a coalition of minor parties in 1994, disintegrated before the 1996 elections. On the difficulties faced by stable inter-party legislative coalitions in (semi-)presidential systems see S. Mainwaring, 'Presidentialism, multipartism, and democracy. The difficult combination', *Comparative Political Studies* **26**, 2 (1993), pp. 198-228.