

## "Mugabe Is Treasonous and Not A Hero"

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"That is treasonous incitement. You are the head of state. You call for an election and there you are going through the campaign while saying you will not accept the result unless it goes your way." - Edgar Tekere

My friend, who shall remain nameless, wonders why I always target the Black Russian, Dumiso Dabengwa, with criticism when there are so many politicians who are erring.

Senior Kusile/Mavambo advisors, Edgar Tekere and Dumiso Dabengwa in rebellious mood at start of party's first congress.

My simple answer is it that he is worth it. With some of the politicians it would be a waste of time to criticise or praise because they do not change, probably don't even think. The Black Russian proved that he could be his own man - following his conscience rather than political expedience. News that Dabengwa has openly gone against Simba Makoni and thrown his weight behind Morgan Tsvangirai only serves to prove the above point - any Zimbabwean who considers himself a leader should be saying that there is only one candidate to support. But Makoni would like to say, "If I am not the head of it, then it cannot be." Dabengwa stuck his neck out to support Makoni in the hope that his colleagues in Zanu (PF) would follow suite, but they did not - and the fact that his head could have been chopped off while he was sticking out his neck makes him a man of courage. The Liberation War commander's stance shows that his support for Simba Makoni was not predicated on any power deals or personality cults, but simply the desire to see an improvement in the lives of Zimbabweans. Makoni's candidacy, which was marketed as an attempt to save Zimbabwe, now comes under deeper scrutiny, especially how it was conceived - the need to save Zimbabwe was only identified when it became clear that the two MDC factions were not going to unite. It was therefore Makoni's own project for the presidency and, he thought that the opportunity had been presented by disunity in the two MDC's. He thought he could capture those who were unhappy with the failure of the unity talks and the disgruntled Zanu (PF) elements. As it turns out he only got the desperadoes, the opposition fringe elements, but among them also some well-meaning revolutionaries like Dabengwa. He is supporting Tsvangirai because, in his own words, he has seen that the Government of National Unity project, which they were pursuing through the Mavambo Project, is now doomed. Dabengwa said the Zanu (PF) people who Mavambo was discussing with on the need for a GNU failed to summon the courage to bring the proposal to "Gushungo" as his colleagues refer to Mugabe. Dabengwa now says it is better to prepare for the run-off by supporting Morgan Tsvangirai's bid, which would be in keeping with their Mavambo project's pledge not to support Mugabe, no matter what. His only fears, according to the Times article was that, "we must not be reckless in the way we do things as we might also become targets." My only contribution to that is that war veterans are already on the rampage, even in Matabeleland, and their tactic is not discriminating between those who have spoken or not spoken against Zanu (PF), especially in Matabeleland. Therefore everybody is a target. The only security that people can have is to speak out, identify themselves, identify the rogue elements in their communities, and ensure that everybody is watching everybody else's back, reporting any information about enemy movements and building community security that way. My other suggestion for Mavambo would be to now actively support Tsvangirai by campaigning, but this has now become a casualty of Makoni's attempt to position himself for a role in the unity government by maintaining the trust of Zanu-PF, which means he cannot openly back Tsvangirai. This is real old-fashioned opportunism, and an abuse of people's trust - the kind that can only happen when people follow personalities or political parties that are based on the unpronounced ideas of an individual. If Kusile/Mavambo is going to transform into a political party, its starting point should be to ask what it is that it wants to achieve. If it is to get rid of the Mugabe dictatorship and its corrupt system, then they should just join the Movement for Democratic Change and get rid of it in less than two weeks. And prepare to defend their vote. And if they really want to make a difference, then they should actually go out strongly and campaign for Morgan Tsvangirai to show Zanu (PF) that they are not afraid it, and that they are a quantify which Tsvangirai can also count on. As Tekere said, Mugabe, has messed himself up so much through violence and he cannot expect any battered old woman to her grandchildren to go and vote for Mugabe because she has been punished for voting for the opposition.

Tsvangirai is the one going to be President, despite his wishes to unite the country, he cannot just go and appoint people who have not done anything to support his campaign. Tekere also warned Mugabe against placing too much faith in the perceived support of the army, and he accused Mugabe of making treasonous statements by saying that he would unleash the military if people voted for the MDC. "That is treasonous incitement," he said. "You are the head of state. You call for an election and there you are going through the campaign while saying you will not accept the result unless it goes your way." Tekere also said he would support a GNU, only if Tsvangirai was the President. "Morgan Tsvangirai won the election and there is no doubt about that," Tekere said. "Let us not be hypocrites by suggesting that we want democracy while at the same time trying to deny Tsvangirai his well deserved victory." "If ever a government of national unity has to be established, the central figure has to be Tsvangirai," said Tekere. "We will all have to dance around him." Tekere's statement flies in the face of the leader of his party-in-formation, Makoni's position that he should be considered to head a government of national unity. Tekere also urged journalists to correctly record the history of violence that would inform posterity fully about Mugabe long after his death. "Mugabe is not a hero. I plead with you; we want to see the

pictures of the wounded and those with broken bones recorded.

“Let our children read about a history of the Mugabe era which will be full of people crippled through violence.” Meanwhile the Southern African Development Community, the African Union and the United Nations have been urged to urgently deploy human rights monitors to independently observe and report on the escalating political violence in Zimbabwe. The International Bar Association (IBA) said in a statement signed by its Executive Director, Mark Ellis: “It is time for the international community to take effective action to halt Robert Mugabe’s campaign of violence against those who oppose him. “To date, the international community’s response to the crisis in Zimbabwe has been feeble, and its condemnation ineffective and disheartening. “An international presence on the ground will help to protect people at the mercy of a volatile and dangerous regime, and it will send a clear message that those responsible for human rights violations will be held accountable,” he added. And student activists who were arrested last week in Bulawayo for “undermining police authority and undermining the office of the president” were released on bail of 20 billion – less than 2 British pounds of Zimbabwe’s worthless dollars. The two activists Trust Nhubu, Zwelithini Viki, who were arrested by police last week when they were training polling agents for the June 27 runoff presidential election, were remanded to 1 July 2008 out of custody. “We feel sorry for those who are continuing suppressing our freedoms and we warn that the day of reckoning is at hand,” said the spokesman for the Zimbabwe National Students Union (Zinasu), Blessing Vava. “ZINASU will remain focused and vigilant as we are counting down to the crucial runoff presidential election which the people of Zimbabwe will run over Robert Mugabe. “His recent threats for war are a farce and we warn him that the people of Zimbabwe will speak on June 27.”