

## 'LIFE' DOES NOT ALWAYS MEAN 'LIFE'

The Life President paced up and down his spacious office. *For years he had bestrode his mineral-rich country like a Colossus (Simile)*. But he was not a happy man. The elections had not gone the way he expected. The Socialist Party had received as many votes as his own Freedom Party. In fact many observers thought that the opposition parties had received more than half the popular vote. The Life President had not *thrown any light on the situation (Complex Metaphor)*.

Mrs Clinton, the U.S. Secretary of State, had 'advised' him to share power with the Socialists. She had told him that their Ambassador had reported increasing unrest in the country. He had replied that he had been elected 'Life President'; and, as far as he was concerned, 'Life' meant 'Life'. However he did not want to lose US aid.

The Life President peered out the window at the harbour below. He noticed some small specks on the horizon. A closer look confirmed that they were naval vessels - probably U.S naval vessels. But he was not going to be intimidated. He had won several elections in his time. He felt that the public supported him because *he had fought like a lion against colonialism (Explicit Simile)*.

In a grubby little office full of empty Castle Lager bottles, Mr Kamanga, the Socialist leader, was becoming increasingly impatient. What was the old bopper up to? Why hadn't he 'phoned him to discuss power-sharing? He could not cling on to power on his own in the light of these election results.

Mr Kamanga was familiar with the local prison. He had sampled its hospitality on several occasions. This had caused him to drink more than was good for him. In fact *he was often as drunk as a skunk (Stereotypical Simile)*. But his time had now come! He felt that the recession had caused people to turn to his party; and the election results had confirmed this.

The Life President 'phoned Mr Kamanga on Friday afternoon. He asked him to come up to State House on Monday morning. He planned to offer him a few minor ministerial posts, whilst keeping all the key ministries for himself. Mr Kamanga accepted the invitation straight away. Then he *stepped up to the plate and grabbed the bull by the horns (Mixed Metaphor)*.

He arranged two public meetings at the Uhuru Stadium - one on Saturday and one on Sunday. At the Saturday meeting he demolished the President's economic record. He could sense the growing anger of the crowd. On Sunday he discussed his plans for the future. These included improved incentives for small businesses, higher unemployment pay, and pensions at 60. These proposals were well received.

On Monday morning Mr Kamanga made his way up to State House on foot. He was accompanied by a growing band of supporters, some carrying loud speakers. The Life President could hear angry chants as they approached State House. He was on the defensive now. He felt obliged to offer Mr Kamanga the Department of Finance and other key Ministries. But he refused to offer him what he really wanted - the new post of Prime Minister.

At this stage Mr Kamanga asked for an adjournment. He made his way out to his large band of supporters at the gate. The angry chants were soon replaced by even louder demands for the President's resignation. These could be heard over a wide area. The Life President realised that he had been out-manoeuvred. *He was flopping like a fish on a line (Simile)*. He had no choice now but to appoint Mr Kamanga as Prime Minister. He was obliged also to accept reduced powers for the Presidency. His humiliation was complete; but Mr Kamanga was feeling *as proud as a peacock (Stereotypical Simile)*.

Too late *the Life President had learnt a lesson as subtle as a sledgehammer (Ironic Simile)* that in politics 'Life does not always mean Life'.

**Eric Browett**  
April 2009



