

POLICY STATEMENT No. 6

Prime Minister's
New Year message
to the Nation

DECEMBER 31, 1981

ZIMBABWE

*Published by the Ministry of Information and Tourism,
P.O. Box 8232, Causeway, Zimbabwe.*

DECEMBER, 1981

Printed by the Government Printer, Salisbury

Once again it is my honour and privilege to address you all on this important occasion marking the end of the year 1981 and the beginning of 1982. The occasion enables you and me to review the past year in relation, first, to the tasks we set ourselves and, second, to our national performance.

Naturally, in rendering such an account, there will be a credit side as well as a debit side. Put differently, our national performance graph for the year 1981, will, as it charts the trends, show its own peaks and troughs. But I am sure that on balance we have much more to our credit and much more to be proud of than our enemies and opponents might want to admit in our favour.

As you are aware, our national theme for the year 1981 has been the consolidation of the people's power which we attained in 1980. The question you will readily ask me and which I am bound to answer is: Have we really succeeded in consolidating the people's power?

My ready reply is, yes, we have, and thanks to you all for your co-operation. We reckoned that as a matter of priority, the securing of maximum peace would not only strengthen the new democratic political order we have created but that it would also provide an atmosphere conducive to increased performance in all our socio-economic sectors.

But crucial to the attainment of optimum peace was always the task of integrating our forces, which task I now gladly report as having been successfully accomplished, for we now have a single command.

True, we have had some quarrels and fights between some army components resulting in the tragic loss of innocent lives, but greater commitment to unity and peace now exists than before. I trust that there will be no further Entumbanes, Connemaras, or Chitungwizas. May I congratulate all the three components—former ZANLA, ZIPRA and Rhodesian Army and their commanders—on a job well done. And may I once again thank our good friends the British instructors for the wonderful role they have played. There remains, however, some disloyal and subversive elements in all our security forces which must be weeded out of the army, air force and police force if they are to be trusted as loyal and dependable forces. A purge of these forces is absolutely necessary so the country is rid of enemy agents and defenders of the old political order.

My government has succeeded over the year in reducing the crime rate especially in respect of such crimes as armed robberies, stock thefts, political assaults, kangaroo courts, and other minor offences. We should compliment our police force for having succeeded in the most difficult of circumstances, in maintaining law and order.

The spirit of co-operation between the people and the police is absolutely necessary if criminal offences are to be brought to light and offenders successfully prosecuted. A lot of suspicion and mistrust, although

to a much lesser extent than last year, still exists. Of course, the work of the honest policeman is made much harder by the actions of such characters as Varkevisser and others who are our vowed enemies and are the paid agents of the racist regime in Pretoria.

In the public service, tremendous progress has been made in fulfilling the President's directive on African advancement. Although there are still several ministries calling for improvement, there are now happily substantial numbers of Africans occupying senior posts in the Public Service as a whole. There are 13 African permanent secretaries out of 30; 45 deputy permanent secretaries out of 86; 80 under-secretaries out of 161 and even many more at the lower echelons of the Public Service.

Advancement is an on-going process and we hope that further steps will be taken in 1982 to ensure that the complexion of the Public Service reflects the new reality of majority rule in the country. This quantitative change must also be accompanied by qualitative change. Accordingly, seminars and training schemes have become a more common feature in 1981 than they previously were. They certainly assist the process of qualitative transformation aimed at the progressive improvement of standards and the acquiring of greater experience.

In terms of the programmes and endeavours of the various ministries in furtherance of set governmental policies, I am delighted to say that our collective performance has been laudable. Perhaps the most important ministerial task over the year has been that of the Ministry of Lands, Resettlement and Rural Development to allocate more land to the peasants. Although substantial allocations have been made, much more ground remains to be covered than that which has been covered.

Much more land than is warranted remains in the hands of commercial farmers and large tracts of that land must be turned over to the peasants in 1982.

The agricultural performance of the peasant community or communal sector was most spectacular and bumper maize and cotton harvests were realized, thus resulting in most peasant families earning increased incomes. I wish to congratulate our peasant community, therefore, on this remarkable achievement. I now urge them to work hard once again this year so they can build on their present incomes and improve their general welfare.

In relation to social services, let me first refer to education. We have continued to live by our undertaking that primary education must be free, while secondary education, though not yet free, should be made available to all primary school leavers. The effect of this policy is clear. Whereas in 1979 there were 819 128 pupils in primary schools, there are now—in 1981—1 680 143 pupils. And whereas the secondary school population was 73 540 in 1979, it is now 144 735. We have now a total school population of 1 824 878 as against 892 668 in 1979.

Surely, this is phenomenal educational growth and development. More and more schools are being built in rural and urban areas. Maximum co-operation exists between the government and the peasant communities in rural areas and the responsibility to contribute significant in-puts to the social service infrastructure is being shared.

The spirit of self-reliance prevails throughout the rural areas. Education continues to be the state function claiming the most budgetary allocation—nearly \$300 million in 1981/82, or 16 per cent. of the budget.

Our Ministry of Health has also made enormous strides in its attempts to bring health care to the poorer and more remote people of our country. As you know there is now free medical care for all those earning a wage of less than \$150 a month. At the same time, our hospitals and clinics have now become as non-racial as our schools. This is as it should be, for people of one country should shun racial discrimination and aim at common facilities with common but high standards governing them.

Accordingly, government has refused to grant permission for the establishment of private hospitals which were threatening to mushroom in all our urban centres as a subtle means of circumventing non-racial hospitals.

Let me now turn to the need to bring utilities such as water, power, transport and telecommunication to the rural people. There have been difficult areas, because very little, if anything, had been done by the previous regimes in respect of them. Now, however, the Ministry of Roads, Road Traffic and Posts and Telecommunications has been working vigorously and with remarkable success on a network of rural roads so as to improve the rural transport system. More and more buses will in due course become available in the country.

There is still a great need for telephones in the rural areas. Water is a vital utility in the drier areas of the country and although a beginning has been made in creating water resources by way of bore-holes in some areas, this task is far from being satisfactorily tackled. There is a lot of water in our rivers as well as underground which, through the creation of a proper infrastructure, can be utilized for irrigation and domestic purposes. Government will exert its energies next year in this direction.

In the light of vanishing forests and bush, wood fuel is becoming a great problem in many areas, and the government will address itself to alternative sources of energy for use in the rural areas. The Ministry of Industry and Energy Development is examining the possible use of solar energy for domestic purposes in communal and other areas.

The problem of petrol and diesel which is exercising our minds is now well on the way to solution as we proceed to negotiate the tariff which must apply on the pipeline.

Our railway system has been faced with formidable problems which include a shortage of locomotive engines, a shortage of skills, and worn-out or obsolete equipment in the face of a shortage of spare parts. Government has paid very close and urgent attention to the railway system and has already imported both skills and diesel locomotive engines into the country. A great improvement should result from these efforts and there should certainly follow a greater volume of goods transported either way as exports and imports in 1982 than in 1981.

The most vital instruments in consolidating the power of the people are the Press, radio and television. The creation of the Mass Media Trust by the Ministry of Information and Tourism was a correct step in ensuring that our information mass media operate as viable instruments of service to the people by providing correct information and publicity.

But this has not always been the case. Our information media must surely seek to unite and not to divide the people; to promote positive thought rather than negative thinking; to enhance government policy rather than negate it; to be constructive rather than destructive; to go for serious news rather than for sensational stories; to publish truth rather than fiction; to be more knowledgeable rather than abysmally ignorant and finally they must always be conscious of the new political, social and economic order and its demands and suppress their apathetic or resistant attitudes.

The mass media, that is to say all those who work on our Press, radio and television, must live in the present and not in the past.

I am glad that the Ministry of Information and Tourism is working on a diffusion radio and television service and on the possibility of colour television next year. It is heartening to hear that our tourist industry is doing well and that the number of tourists this year has been the highest for years. We have plans under way to establish more hotels and develop more tourist resources.

One of the most significant steps taken by my government in consolidating the people's power was the creation of district, urban and rural councils comprising popularly elected members.

Power has now been given to the people at the local area level. This extension of democracy to the sphere of local government ensures the implementation of the principle that the people are, through their participation in local elections, indeed masters of their own destiny. Instead of colonial district commissioners, we now have sons of the soil selected by their own region as district commissioners.

Let us hope that there will always be harmonious relations between the councils and the people they should loyally serve as well as between the councils and the government, for both the central and local govern-

ments are there to serve the people. The people are our masters and we their servants.

Two vital ministries, also charged with the task of organizing our communities so they can be components of the machinery for consolidating the people's power through various communal activities, production and construction programmes, intellectual, physical, emotional and moral development, are those of Community Development and Women's Affairs and Youth, Sport and Recreation.

The Ministry of Community Development and Women's Affairs is still in the process of laying down its infrastructure, but it has an enormous task to ensure the improvement of our families, by organizing classes in adult literacy and numeracy, by combining with the Ministry of Health in promoting health care, by organizing creches and nurseries, women's clubs, rural and urban small-scale co-operative industries, by co-ordinating all women's organizations, by promoting the removal of legal and traditional disabilities on women and by ensuring the establishment of full equality of sexes. Little has been done this year, but certainly a lot will be done next year.

The Ministry of Youth, Sport and Recreation has been very active in promoting sport and recreation in the country and I hope there will also be promoted in future sports and recreation for adults. The organization of the youth has begun well and several youth centres have now been established throughout the country to provide skills to our youths, especially to those who missed their schooling. As I have said before, the youth will also undergo para-military training at these camps in order to instil strict discipline into them, but also to train them in the defence of their country.

I have referred to the activities of the state in the communal areas, let me now refer to the worker, the man who keeps our mines, our farms, our factories, our shops and our offices going. It is through his labour that the farmers had a bumper harvest, through his labour that our mines produce minerals, through his labour that our factories produce goods. It is he who produces food, gold and shoes for us. To my party and government, the worker occupies a special place in our society because without him our economy cannot last a day.

Our Ministry of Labour and Social Services has thus been charged with the task of ensuring the full organization of the worker so that he can be more effective as a fighter for his rights, as a producer of our goods, as a joint owner with the peasant of our resources and as a revolutionary with a historical role to play in ensuring the unfolding of our socialist revolution.

Over the year, we have organized workers' committees, workers' councils, and established a national workers' organization—the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions embracing all unions.

In accordance with the Riddell Commission, we have now provided a new minimum wage of \$105 for industrial, mining and commercial workers, and \$50 for farm and domestic workers. Above the minimum, wages and salaries under \$20 000 a year have also been raised by varying declining percentages from 23 per cent.

Government is determined that the worker is given fair and just treatment. The exploitation of the worker for capitalist gains is an immoral and indefensible system resorted to for years by capitalists in our country. We cannot as a people's government, and as a government dedicated to socialism sustain this evil system. Equally, it is the responsibility of the state to ensure that reasonable control is kept on the consumer price structure and that exercise has made it necessary for us to freeze prices for the next three months until a mechanism for proper control is worked out.

The public sector performance is only one side of the story of our national performance. The private sector has also contributed immensely towards our socio-economic growth and development over the year. Commercial agriculture has, for example, realized bumper maize, tobacco and cotton harvests. Thus, agriculture, both commercial and peasant, is expected to contribute over 20 per cent. to real growth in 1982. The farmers deserve our congratulations and certainly the compliments of the season, including prayers for more rain, so they can have another good season.

As long as the farmer complies with the requirements of the state and plays the game, he need not entertain any fears.

However, there are still some farmers whose orientation needs radical change so they are able to comprehend that there is now a new political order to which they must quickly adjust.

Our mining sector has probably been the hardest hit of all our economic sectors. Two major factors have had adverse effects on the sector. The first of these is the depressed mineral market abroad with ever declining prices. The second has been our inability to transport the volume of products for export purposes. Zimbabwe Iron and Steel Company products have been the most affected, but with the progressive easing of the railway situation, we hope the position will improve considerably in the coming year. Because of these problems, there is bound to be in 1981 a decline in the total mineral sales from the figure of \$416 million attained in 1980.

The manufacturing sector last year was the greatest contributor to our growth rate of 14 per cent. This was due mainly to the maximum utilization of available productive capacity and might not have fared that well in 1981 because of the constraints on it deriving from lack of foreign currency, shortage of skilled labour and limited productive capacity.

The depressed mineral prices coupled with the strictures that we have experienced on our railway system have resulted in a deficit in our balance of payments. Accordingly, our reserves have been declining, although there is now a slight improvement. I am in no doubt that once our teething problems, especially the infrastructural ones, are over, our foreign trade will improve in terms of the volume of our exports.

The outlook, in our view, is quite bright, but government has committed itself to a system of the overall planning of the economy. Hence, we are currently discussing a three-year transitional national development plan formulated under the supervision and co-ordination of the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development. The plan provides for both public and possible private investment. It will be recalled that one of the most successful international events organized by government this year was the Zimbabwe Conference on Reconstruction and Development (ZIMCORD) held in March.

At this conference, a total sum of \$1,3 billion was pledged by various donor countries and organizations as aid to Zimbabwe. It is the intention of government to combine this aid with our own resources and then channel it to the various areas of reconstruction and development through the instrumentality of the three-year transitional national development plan. The funds will thus be spread over a three-year period. The plan, once agreed by cabinet, will be announced to the public.

ZIMCORD was only one expression of our multilateral relations with various countries of the world. Our external relations since independence have been excellent. We have, in 1981, continued to develop these relations on the basis of the principles of non-alignment and peaceful co-existence with our neighbours. The visits I have made to Asia, Scandinavia, Australia, the Balkans and, most recently, to Mozambique, speak of the close ties of friendship and co-operation between us and these countries. We are developing a system of mutual co-operation in trade, economic, technical, and cultural fields with many countries of the world.

In our region, we continue to be active participants in the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC) and as you are aware we hosted its last summit meeting in July at which Zimbabwe was accorded the privilege of providing an executive secretary for SADCC.

The maintenance of peace in our region is a collective function of all the countries which share borders including South Africa. But I am sure you know who the black sheep of our family is. South Africa should recognize the need for peace in this region and resist from sponsoring acts of sabotage against our democratic systems. She should in the furtherance of an even greater peace cease to be intransigent on Namibia and accept the right of that country to independence in terms of United Nations Resolution 435. At the same time, she should abandon her

inhuman policies of apartheid and do as we have done—establish a democratic political order based on majority rule.

I have, I am sure, provided you with some concrete pictures of our set goals, performance and problems over the year 1981. In some cases, I have also indicated what our intentions for the future are. Accordingly, I now wish to refer specifically to our plans for the future. I have already spoken about the channelling of ZIMCORD funds to our sectors through the modality of the three-year transitional national development plan.

The plan will be an embodiment, on the one hand, of set socio-economic objectives and, on the other, of the means of resources at our disposal aimed at achieving the set objectives. Because of our commitment to socialism, the plan will naturally chart a socialist direction, while recognizing areas of private enterprise not immediately amenable to socialism.

The policies that my government pursues emanate from the ruling party. ZANU (PF) has adopted socialism as its ideology. The last meeting of our central committee has taken fundamental decisions in respect of the relationship between the party and the government. Government in the sense of the cabinet will in future only adopt and influence those policies which the central committee of the party has approved. It is, therefore, decided that the following basic principles and tasks be reflected in our three-year plan, especially in respect of 1982:

1. That vaster land tracts be acquired from the commercial sector during 1982 for distribution to peasants on a planned geographical, systematic and scientific basis, including the creation of agricultural co-operatives;
2. That the state should participate in all sectors of the economy, as follows:
 - (a) in agriculture, through state farms and the establishment of agro-scientific industries;
 - (b) in mining, manufacturing and commerce, in crucial enterprises either on its own or by way of partnership with private enterprise;
 - (c) in public transport, both urban and rural.
3. That social services—education, health and housing—be expanded and intensified in 1982, especially through comprehensive building programmes;
4. That since water is a basic domestic utility and crucial to our agriculture, especially in dry areas, the process of water development and building of irrigation schemes be accelerated in all communal areas;
5. That people's co-operatives be established in the commercial and other possible areas;

6. That the process of organizing and developing the worker and the worker's role in production be intensified;
7. That the objectives and performance of private enterprise be regulated by the state to coincide with state objectives and social demands;
8. That programmes of developing skills be accelerated and made more systematic so as to accord with sectoral demands;
9. That the unemployed youth of the country be mobilized and be assigned to determined youth centres for training in skills and employment on self-reliance production and construction projects; and
10. That 1982 be regarded as the first year of our National Transformation.

These objectives and tasks cannot be fulfilled without co-operation from all of you, regardless of your colour, tribe or region. There must continue to be unity between the people and government. Above all, our set tasks cannot succeed without peace, law and order in the country. Be vigilant, therefore, in the interests of peace and in the interest of our security.

Join me, join government, join us in the process of national transformation.

Forward with the First Year of National Transformation!

Pamberi negore rekupindura zvinhu munyika!

Pamberi lomnyaka wokupendul' ilizwe!

