

Name: Alert ID: TMML2024035256680 THE media rants by Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Information, Media and Broadcasting Services, George Charamba against the swop by the Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission (Zacc) on parastatals to investigate corruption and other nefarious activities by senior employees of these state-affiliated organisations smacks of contempt of court, criminal abuse of office and attempts at obstructing the course of justice. It is common knowledge that Charamba has been fingered in some shady deals at the Premier Service Medical Aid Society (PSMAS) which the Zacc is currently investigating where about \$22.8 million has been abused in a shameless top management allowance granting spree during the tenure of Curthbert Dube at the medical aid society. That fact alone should have forced Charamba to refrain and recuse himself from commenting on an investigation that is likely to rope him in as a suspect. Furthermore, as a senior civil servant and a Presidential Spokesperson, one would have thought Charamba knows one or two things about separation of powers and the need for the executive to allow independent statutory bodies the autonomy to do their work without undue pressure from unscrupulous characters like him who stink of all the missing billions in this country. But Charamba, in his typical bully fashion, is trying to absolve himself from allegations of dipping his pilfering hand in national coffers by raising the spectre of opposition regime change politics, threats to national security and other childish claims whose sonorous sound only amplifies the public's clamour that the corrupt should be crucified. There are things that Charamba inadvertently exposes through his rants in the Herald of 7 June 2016 which he also insinuates in his Nathaniel Manheru instalment of 04 June 2016. The fact of the matter is that Charamba has confirmed that Zanu PF is a patently corrupt organisation that gives sanctuary to very corrupt comprador bourgeoisies whose connection with the party is a symbiotic relationship wherein these characters loot and finance the party's electoral chicanery while the party returns the favour by forming a government that creates a safe haven for these heartless criminals. That the activities of these criminals, more often, result in avoidable deaths of the country's citizens through starvation, lack of medicines in hospitals, road traffic accidents on our potholed and narrow roads, stress and depression, does not matter to these "super patriots". Advertisement Sarcastically giving advice to Didymus Mutasa whom he depicts as an undecided political free spirit, Charamba opines that the veteran politician faces the dilemma of plunging "forward into opposition (politics) with all the threats of litigation from people he is supposed to be sharing the anti-ZanuPF fight with, or go back to the Zanu PF cell with all the ignominy but with all the security he solely needs". What comes out clearly in Charamba's interlocution above is that Zanu PF is a sanctuary for those running away from litigation for various unscrupulous activities ranging from politically motivated murders, looting of state funds, raping of minors and other such satanic acts that humanity loathes which Zanu PF thugs visit on the country's citizenry with guaranteed impunity. When Charamba alleges that the Zacc investigations officers, particularly Savious Kufandada, are opposition political functionaries, he also uncannily identifies the fight against corruption with opposition politics only, thereby affirming the allegation that the fight against corruption is never on the agenda of Zanu PF despite President Robert Mugabe's hypocritical condemnation of the vice. Charamba, as the President's mouthpiece, emboldens the public's perception that corruption is conceived, gestated and brooded in President Mugabe's bedroom and broadcast into the country through conniving surrogates in state enterprises. It is also a fact that its manifestation, through tenderpreneurship, primitive looting of parastatals, looting of Chiadzwa diamonds and the attendant parties and dinners that are thrown in faraway countries, is evidence that President Mugabe does not care a hoot about its debilitating effect to the economy and the country's citizens. It is sad that Charamba wants us to believe that the fact elections are due in two years' time, anyone who fights corruption is bent on causing a Zanu PF electoral defeat. Elections are won, not by glossing over an administration's inefficiencies but through delivering on promises and if Zanu PF presides over corruption, surely it should not be anywhere near state power in 2018. Corruption should be fought anytime of the year and the excuse of election day proximity is never a deterrent and this idea that anyone who dares fight corruption is guilty of treason or any such charge related to the security of the president and his looting team is not only criminal but very selfish. We have seen inquests done and investigations carried out during election time in other countries. Hillary Clinton was grilled for eleven hours about her e-mails scandal and Donald Trump is being investigated for fraud involving fake degrees offered by his Trump University, all these in the middle of a gruesome presidential primary

election in America. What is so special about Zimbabwean elections due in two years to warrant prosecution of thieves massacring the country's economy? Charamba's desperation to stop the Zacc investigation also displays his ignorance of basic legal provisions pertaining to the operation of the Zacc and the legal status of its employees. In his desperation, Charamba wants to make Zacc employees civil servants that he can boss around. Section 14 of the Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Act clearly spells out that employees of the commission are not civil servants and Charamba's desperate attempts to make them state employees, his juniors that should take orders from him, are not only ridiculous but depict him as a rattled and cornered rat clutching on some imaginary but foolish superiority complex as the last alternative to repel an imminent guillotine. Charamba also wants to behave as if it is illegal for the Zacc to carry out investigations on suspects for the purposes of facilitating an arrest or as a way of dispelling suspicions of malfeasance. The question that every right thinking Zimbabwean is asking now is, "why is Charamba behaving like a cornered rat? Is he hiding something?" What is clear is that he has something to hide and in his typical bully self, he is now inviting the army into the picture by bringing a completely alien and fictitious issue of Renamo bandits and suspected killing of Zimbabwean soldiers just to raise dust and muddy the waters in order to divert attention from the real issues at hand. Charamba has always tried to drag the army when transparency of state institutions comes under media scrutiny. He makes a habit of issuing threats about national security as if he is a security expert when in actual fact the purpose is to divert attention from the real issues at hand and protect criminals. The real threat to national security that Zimbabwe faces today relates to the activities of a coterie of individuals like Charamba who loot billions of state funds resulting in the impoverishment of the citizenry thereby increasing the likelihood of poverty induced insurrection. When he talks of ZBC "riding on a running CMED tender" to procure vehicles, the language smells of unscrupulousness and shady dealing. What Charamba has not told Zimbabweans is that his so-called "riding on a running CMED tender" was in actual fact an avenue to run away from the Zimbabwe Revenue Authority (Zimra) that had garnished the ZBC account previously. Charamba is also not honest on the issue of cabinet authority issued for the 35 vehicles that he is now hiding behind because the said authority, according to reliable sources, was granted for 20 Toyota Hilux vehicles yet ZBC bought 20 Ford Rangers. The cabinet authority also authorised ZBC to buy 15 Nissan Go vehicles for \$58 600 each yet the institution bought 5 Ford EcoSport at \$27 500 each although the money was provided for to procure the 15 Nissan Go vehicles. Documents that the whistle-blowers had, also reflect that that ZBC applied and was granted \$1 719 500-00 but procured vehicles worth \$978 200 leaving an unexplained \$741 300 that the Zacc suspects could have been misappropriated. The leaked Zacc affidavits also show that one of the institutions under investigations is Kingstons, a company which falls under Charamba's ministry and the anti-graft body has communication between Charamba and the parastatals' two-member board which authorised the sale of a Kingstons building at the corner of Mbuya Nehanda and Robert Mugabe streets for \$500 000. The mere fact that a public enterprise such as this one could run with just two people on its board boggles the mind. Does it mean each one of the two board members constituted a quorum and could therefore make decisions, on their own, to sale the institution's properties? The other issue that raises eyebrows that the Zacc unearthed is the \$200 000 purported payment made to businessman Jayesh Shah for an \$86 000 debt that Kingstons had with the businessman despite the existence of a High Court order which affirmed that the debt that Kingstons had with Shah, together with the interest that it had accrued amounted only to \$86 000, not the \$200 000 that the board authorised. So Charamba has a lot to hide and the best he should do as a potential suspect is to keep quiet and allow professionals to investigate the alleged corruption without fear or favour. Jealousy Mawarire is the Spokesperson for the Zimbabwe People First (Zim PF) party