

**THE BATTLE FOR A FREE PRESS IN ZAMBIA 1964 – 2008**

**By**

**Francis Chilufya Chanda**

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**DECLARATION**

I declare that this report has not been previously presented to this or any other University

NAME: .....

SIGNATURE: .....

DATE: .....

**APPROVAL**

This dissertation of **Francis Chilufya Chanda** is approved as partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Master of Communication for Development (MCD) Degree of the University of Zambia.

SUPERVISOR: .....

SIGNATURE: .....

DATE: .....

## **ABSTRACT**

Modern society is radically different from the way traditional societies were organised. Today the media plays an important and irreplaceable role. It checks and restrains the abuse of power by those entrusted with the task of running public affairs. This duty of the media in democratic societies is best and effectively carried out when the media operates independently without interference from the state.

In Zambia, the question of the freedom of the press has been a matter of struggle dating back to colonial rule. Zambia got its independence on 24<sup>th</sup> October 1964 with Kenneth Kaunda as the first President. Dr. Kaunda lost no time in turning the country into one party state. Kaunda and United National Independence Party (UNIP) held the corridors of power for 27 years until 1991 when the wind of change swept Zambia and the country reverted to multi-party politics. The Movement for Multi-party Democracy under the leadership of Fredrick FTJ Chiluba defeated UNIP and Kaunda in a landslide victory.

The MMD led government came in with a liberal approach system in which the media was assured total emancipation. This political and economic atmosphere gave a leeway for privately owned media to enter the market which was previously saturated by government controlled media. Under the Chiluba administration, there was a genuine benign feeling that at last there seems to be a greater hope for a free press in Zambia. This new impetus to restore media freedom by the MMD government at the beginning of their mandate was deemed to be a complete departure from Kaunda's autocratic rule.

The purpose of this study is to show that the battle for a free press in Zambia still continues and will probably continue for some time to come.

The method used in this research is triangulation which involves both qualitative and quantitative methodologies.

The findings of this research indicate that despite the good will shown by the MMD government to enact good media laws before and immediately after the MMD came into power, there has been

very little progress on the media landscape. The media in Zambia continues to operate under very awkward legal framework.

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**This study is dedicated to God the Father “Yahweh who made the earth, who formed it and set it firm—Yahweh is his name...” (Jer.33:2)**

**To him be glory, honour, majesty, dominion and praise!!**

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**ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

MCZ	-	Media Council of Zambia
ZIMA	-	Zambia Independent Media Council
CPU	-	Common Wealth Press Union
MLC	-	Media Liaison Committee
PAZA	-	Press Association of Zambia
ZUJ	-	Zambia Union of Journalists
ZAMWA	-	Zambia Media Women Association
MECOZ	-	Media Council of Zambia
MCB	-	Media Council Bill
IMC	-	Independent Media Council
IFJ	-	International Federation of Journalists

FIB	-	Freedom of Information Bill
ICCPR	-	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
HRW	-	Human Rights Watch
MMD	-	Movement for Multiparty Democracy
UNIP	-	United National Independence Party
MISA	-	Media Institute of Southern Africa
IBA	-	Independent Broadcasting Authority Act
ZNBC	-	Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation Act