

## Chapter 4

# The Campaign

### Overview

The NEC designated an official campaign period which began on 29 August 1995 and ended at midnight on 28 October 1995. During this time the NEC-established guidelines for equal access to the state-owned media came into effect. A full treatment of how this affected the electoral process is discussed in Chapter 5.

We were told by the NEC that it had proposed a Code of Conduct for all political parties (modelled on past Commonwealth examples) in order to establish a framework for the conduct of the campaigning. This was rejected by the Opposition parties on the grounds that it was a CCM ploy to curb their activities. The Commission had invited the Opposition parties to provide a draft code themselves, but this had not been taken up.

By and large, the impact of the campaign conducted by each of the 13 contesting parties depended upon the relative size of the party and whether or not they were presenting a Presidential candidate. Sparse populations in the vast interior of Tanzania, and poor roads and communications, proved a major challenge to the ability of the new parties to campaign effectively across the country during the official campaign period.

Partly in response to this, and as a means of countering the ruling CCM's inherent advantages, all the four political parties contesting the Union Presidency – CCM, CUF, NCCR-Mageuzi, and UDP – planned their campaign schedules around the personal appearances of the candidates and their leading supporters throughout Tanzania.

Churches, prayer houses, and non-governmental organisations were at times caught up in the dynamic momentum of the campaign. The National Council for Women, Bawata, received a caution from President Mwinyi after complaints over the misuse of the Council by some of its leaders to serve political ends. Our Group heard from a number of interlocutors that certain religious leaders were campaigning for particular candidates even after the NEC had reminded the public that the Elections Act of 1985 proscribed the use of prayer houses as campaign venues and the use of religion in political campaigns. A statement issued by the Council of Catholic Bishops warned religious leaders against direct involvement in campaigning for candidates or parties, urging that they take a lead in voter education.

The ruling CCM fielded the largest number of candidates for the 232 directly-elected seats in the Union Parliament and, being the only party previously known to the electorate, its presence was well established throughout the country. Three other large parties, NCCR-Mageuzi (with 196 candidates), CUF (177), and CHADEMA (157), campaigned across the country but concentrated their efforts in those areas where their support was strongest.

Our Group was able to observe the last eight days of the campaign. Generally, the campaigns were conducted in good spirit: in some areas it was not unusual to see a row of two or three different party flags flying outside neighbouring stalls or shops. Poster-adorned vehicles with loud hailers plied the streets in the urban districts, and toured the villages and settlements in the rural areas. Stops were made to address the crowds which gathered, during which parliamentary candidates were presented to their voters and the profile of the presidential candidates promoted. Rallies varied in size and organisation throughout the country, and provided excellent opportunities for the parties to make contact with the voters at the grassroots level.

The new parties were often preoccupied with the mechanics of the transitional electoral process and therefore few policy themes emerged during the campaign. Some Opposition parties targeted the CCM government's record on delivering economic development, others raised the issue of corruption within the party and government, and the question of a tier of

government for mainland Tanganyika – the so-called 'third government' within the Union – was also canvassed. A 'first' for Tanzania was scored on 19 September 1995 when a three-and-a-half hour debate between the four presidential candidates sponsored by a local private media house was broadcast live on state-owned Radio Tanzania, the only radio station with truly national reach. During the programme, each candidate made an introductory speech covering their proposals for government, and this was followed by a question and answer session. The debate was keenly followed by voters as the candidates discussed a range of issues including the economy, development strategies, corruption and human rights. It was proposed that a further presentation by each of the presidential candidates should be broadcast on the last day of the campaign, but in the event this did not take place.

Rallies were held in the final hours of the campaign period by all the major contesting parties. The Presidential candidates of CCM, CUF and NCCR-Mageuzi addressed large crowds in Dar es Salaam on the eve of poll. In a number of regions around the country enthusiastic supporters turned out in numbers in stadiums, on open grounds, and in vehicle processions for the last time before polling day.

### **A Level Playing Field?**

The transition from a one-party to a multi-party system is often characterised by complaints that the incumbent government and ruling party enters the race with major advantages. These usually flow from the control of public appointments and the state-owned media; access to public vehicles and party-controlled public property; and access to public funds. In Tanzania, all these concerns featured in the complaints of the new Opposition parties, and were supported by independent assessments of the transition process contained, for example, in the Nyalali and Fimbo Commissions' Reports.

Our Group received detailed briefings on how the Government and the electoral authorities had attempted to correct at least two of these imbalances. The question of fair access to the state-owned media, as well as the private media, had been addressed by the NEC through the publication of guidelines. However, time and again we heard from the Opposition parties that there had been little attempt on the part of the NEC to ensure equitable access or balanced reporting even during the official campaign period.

In June 1995, the Government announced the size of the grants to be paid to the contesting political parties. Each party taking part in the Presidential election was to receive 5 million Tanzanian Shillings. At the parliamentary level, each party would receive 1 million Tanzanian Shillings per constituency for the contest, and 1 million Shillings towards administrative costs for each constituency won by a party. The Secretariat Planning Missions received, in August, complaints that the disbursement of these monies was the responsibility of the Prime Minister's Office and was therefore open to possible manipulation. Shortly thereafter, the responsibility for this disbursement was transferred to the office of the Registrar of Political Parties. However, on the eve of the elections, our Group received complaints that the political parties had received only half of the grants they had expected to assist them in campaigning.

### **Reports of Intimidation**

Although we did not witness any overt incidents of intimidation or harassment during the campaigning or on polling day itself, we did hear from NCCR-Mageuzi that it had documented proof that in some areas CCM activists had undertaken a "census of members" during the registration period, fuelling the perception that if a voter did not vote "the right way" it could be detected. NCCR-Mageuzi claimed that these acts of intimidation had been brought to the attention of the police, but no action was taken against the perpetrators. In one region, CCM officials complained that its public meetings had been interrupted by agents of another party. Complaints had been laid with the police and, according to the CCM, certain persons were being prosecuted in the courts.

One of our teams was told by a TEMCO regional co-ordinator that he had investigated the buying and destruction of voters' registration certificates by both CCM and NCCR-Mageuzi activists in that region. However, since both the buying and selling of a citizen's right to vote are

criminal offences, those involved had been unwilling to give evidence. Our Group received reports that CCM supporters were showing videos of the massacres in Rwanda and Burundi in the rural areas, warning that similar chaos would occur in Tanzania if the Opposition was elected to government. It was also alleged that CCM activists were telling their opponents' supporters that voting for different parties would take place on different days.

A number of interlocutors drew our attention to the *Nyumba Kumi Kumi* (Ten-House Cell/ 'ten-cell') system developed during the CCM's political monopoly. This system meant that the party's structure grew from very small units of organisation where official party leaders with considerable influence over the local population lived among the voters. However, it was suggested that at least in some areas, this network had been 'hijacked' by the new Opposition parties. We heard several allegations concerning the activities of certain 'ten-cell' leaders, but were unable to verify any of these.

### Rallies

In Tanzania, a political party is required to give 48 hours notice of its intention to hold a rally. The police could not in law prevent a rally from taking place without good reason, but there were a number of instances reported to us where they had apparently arbitrarily prevented rallies from taking place. Earlier in the campaign period, some disturbances had occurred particularly at Opposition rallies, and we were informed that the police were more likely to resort to the use of tear-gas in the supervision of Opposition rallies than in CCM gatherings.

Requests for permission to hold rallies in certain stadiums around the country had been opposed by the CCM on the grounds that the stadiums concerned belonged to the party. One functionary of the CCM defended his party's position of preventing the use of these stadiums by likening the situation to letting an enemy use your house to abuse you!

Notwithstanding these reported difficulties, huge rallies were held in Dar es Salaam as well as in other parts of the country. These rallies were generally peaceful and were conducted with considerable enthusiasm, as well as singing and dancing, particularly on the part of young people.



*Against a colourful backdrop of kangas, a political rally near Bukoba draws curious villagers*