



**New Prices
Effective
April 1, 2017**

Martin Cleaning Service

**Carpet & Upholstery
Cleaning
Residential &
Commercial Services**
Minimum Service CHG.
\$50.00
A small distance/travel
charge may be applied

CARPET CLEANING
2 Cleaning Areas or more
\$30.00 each Area

Pre-Spray Traffic Areas
(Includes: 1 small Hallway)
1 Cleaning Area (only)
\$50.00
Includes Pre-Spray Traffic Area
(Hallway Extra)

**Stairs (12-16 stairs - With
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Area/Oriental Rugs:
\$25.00 Minimum

Area/Oriental Rugs (Wool):
\$40.00 Minimum

Heavily Soiled Area:
\$10.00 each area
(Requiring Extensive Pre-Spraying)

UPHOLSTERY CLEANING

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Loveseat: \$49.00
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\$25.00 - \$49.00
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Other Services): \$5.00

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- Deodorizing & Pet Odor Treatment
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OPINION



Members of the Zimbabwean Parliament in Harare celebrate after Robert Mugabe's resignation. (AP photo)

Zimbabwe and Where it All Went Wrong

The people shall govern

BY FUNGAI KUMBULA

Emmerson Mnangagwa was sworn in as Zimbabwe's second president on Nov. 24, replacing his former boss Robert Mugabe who had led the nation in southern Africa since it gained political independence from Britain in 1980. For more than a decade, but more increasingly as the 1970's came to a close, Zanla and Zipra guerrillas had waged a war to give the African-majority the right to vote, a right that the successive settler colonial governments denied them.

So, when Mugabe was finally sworn in as Zimbabwe's first African prime minister in 1980, his election, seen as the culmination of the war, was cheered by millions not only in Zimbabwe but throughout Africa and the wider African community. Sadly, the circumstances surrounding his departure can only have left all these people wondering as to where it all went wrong.

I returned to Zimbabwe in 1981, leaving friends and colleagues at Portland State University (Black Studies and Biology Departments, African Students Association), Portland Observer, KOAP-TV, Black United Front, Talking Drum Bookstore, church, high school and other community groups and neighbors in northeast Portland.

Like thousands of others making the trek back home, I felt we had the golden opportunity to show the world how a modern African economy can be run, having learned from the errors our broth-

ers and sisters on the Continent had made, errors that hobbled Africa's development in spite of an abundance of riches.

The early years were encouraging: I remember bragging about the laboratory facilities at the University of Zimbabwe Medical School's Department of Immunology, where I worked, that they were comparable to those I had had access to at the then Charles Drew Post-Graduate Medical School at Martin Luther King Jr. Hospital in Los Angeles.

The words from the U.S. Declaration of Independence, "These truths are self-evident that all men (and women) are created equal with certain inalienable rights among which are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" were reverberating in my head, as they did to fellow returning residents in other sectors who were just as impressed.

Though coming off a protracted war, Zimbabwe's economy in the early going was still second only to apartheid South Africa's. Hope was infectious; everybody rolled up their sleeves and went to work and for the next decade. It seemed Zimbabwe's economy had started on a sustained upward trajectory. Zimbabwe was then known as the breadbasket of the 14-member Southern Africa Development Community and we used to entertain our brothers and sisters from around Africa traveling to Zimbabwe on shopping trips.

We also had experts from all over Africa, the U.N. and the rest of the world working in the country. With South Africa still under minority apartheid (Jim Crow) rule, Zimbabwe became an ex-

ample to the efforts to resolve South Africa's problems. One of the most damning indictments of Mugabe's 37 years at the helm was that Zimbabwe's 2017 gross domestic product had shrunk to half of what it had been in 1997. Even discounting population growth, these figures imply, on average, that every Zimbabwean is 50 percent poorer today than 20 years ago.

Throughout his 37-year reign, the bedrock of Mugabe's support has always been the security services (army, air force, police and intelligence) so it is instructive that, when the end came, it was the Zimbabwe Defense Forces that played a pivotal role. It all started with a falling out between two camps in the ruling Zanu-pf, one loyal to then vice president Mnangagwa and the other loyal to Grace Mugabe, the former president's wife, each jostling for its preferred candidate to succeed the 93-year-old Mugabe when he finally vacated Zimbabwe State House. As the battle intensified, Mugabe fired Mnangagwa as his deputy in both party and government, which seemed to leave the way for his wife to succeed him.

Mnangagwa fled Zimbabwe saying he feared for his life, and his supporters were purged from both party and government. The ZDF placed Mugabe under house arrest and on public broadcast announcements insisted that this was not a coup.

Mugabe refused to resign, as had been expected once the army presented him with his options. Veterans of the liberation war then called for demonstrations to demand Mugabe resign and Zimba-

bweans poured into the streets by the hundreds of thousands throughout the country. Still Mugabe remained defiant. Zanu-pf then met and voted to recall Mugabe (effectively withdrawing his mandate as leader) and called for Mnangagwa to be re-instated. Mugabe stayed put. Parliament met in joint session to debate a motion on impeachment and it was only during this debate that Mugabe sent his letter of resignation.

When the Zimbabwe Speaker of Parliament read the letter, the whole Assembly erupted in cheers, cries of joy and dancing, scenes that were repeated once the news filtered into the public gallery, the streets of Harare and, ultimately, the rest of the nation. Mnangagwa returned from exile, was appointed leader of Zanu-pf and ultimately sworn in as President of Zimbabwe.

While it is too early to tell whether Mugabe's departure actually heralds the dawn we mistakenly believed had arrived when we gained political independence nearly four decades ago, or it is another false start, this much is already clear: No post-Mugabe leader will ever again be allowed the same leeway to abuse our trust, impoverish our people, make us the laughing stock of the world.

The past heady few weeks have reignited that original fighting national spirit that delivered Zimbabwe in the first place. We owe it to our many supporters across the world, the African community, Africa, ourselves and our children.

Fungai N Kumbula is a former resident of Portland and Zimbabwe. He currently resides in Silver Spring, Md.