

We shared the thoughts below, ahead of the 2026 general election.

IDEOLOGY AND STRATEGY

We respond to a new restlessness in the elite and political class ahead of the 2026 general election — resulting in a knee-jerk dismissal of “Ideology” as an integral part of today’s world!

“Society is like a patient. To treat a patient, you must, first of all, carry out a diagnosis of what the problem of that person could be. Once you have correctly diagnosed the patient, you can make the prescription. If the diagnosis is wrong, the prescription cannot be right and if the prescription is not right, the patient cannot be cured.

Similarly, society must be accurately diagnosed. The tools that help you to understand society, the ideas that help you to understand society correctly, are what constitute ideology.

Having understood society well and its problems, you then make a prescription to treat the sickness. This is a strategy. Strategy is the plan to handle a problem: from A to Z, while tactics refer to handling portions of the problem: from A to B, etc.

Therefore, ideology is a systematic way of understanding society issues; strategy is a holistic plan to solve a problem from A to Z, from beginning to end.

Evolving a correct ideology could be easy if it were not for the parasitic interests that always strive to cloud issues with myths and diversions.

Otherwise, understanding the journey of man should be simple. You, as leaders of the National Resistance Movement and all our “priests” (cadres), should understand that journey.” (Yoweri K. Museveni, Chobe, February 2019).

BIOLOGY DOES NOT DEFINE IDEOLOGY

... ‘Each generation must out of relative obscurity discover its mission, fulfil it, or betray it.’ Frantz Fanon.

This quote from revolutionary Frantz Fanon (addressing the Second Congress of Black Writers in 1959) is quite often misused to justify any kind of juvenile adventure instigated by all manner of pretenders to the leadership of

The end of ideology?



the people.

This is how some of the political class and intelligentsia arrive at incredible positions, for example, that their mission is to ‘kick Museveni out, then all shall be well’; that their mission is to ‘take Uganda to the next level’; etc. When you ask them what the ‘next level’ means, they give you a blank look.

There is no ‘generation mission’ which exists outside of national specificities, outside of national historical tasks. When Fanon spoke at the Congress mentioned above, he was addressing himself to questions of national liberation, national consciousness and culture of people of colour — in the anti-colonial and anti-neo-colonial struggles, etc.

Naturally, as we grow older, we slow down. We are not able to do all the things we did when we were younger — or do them as quickly as we used to. Put differently, biology inevitably slows us down. But that is precisely why

revolutions painstakingly develop different echelons of ideological, political and technical cadres — to sustain the revolutionary process into the future. In this sense, when we speak about cohesion among different generations of cadres, the connecting thread is ideology, not biology.

The youthful enthusiasm and energy of younger people are very important. They are a vital physical force in any revolutionary process. It is impossible to do without them. Except, youth are a transient social category — they age every day. Younger people do not, in themselves, therefore, constitute a social class by virtue of being younger. Younger people do not espouse distinct social class interests or distinct world views or ideology by virtue of being younger people.

Herewith below, we flag several categories and concepts that indicate the central importance of ideological and political clarity in the struggle for transformation, rather than birth cohorts or generations.

First: We must locate ourselves in the journeys of various peoples from a backward to an advanced society. How far along that journey each person or community has moved defines our overall objective needs and tasks — not the different birth cohorts or generations to which we may belong. It does not matter how young or old slaves are — all are slaves. Serfs in a feudal order are serfs; it does not matter how old each is.

Second: How does a people or community produce and reproduce their means of sustenance and wealth? Who produces? Who appropriates the products of labour and surplus in such a community? These questions lead us straight to the social class composition of that society. They are of more fundamental import than who is older or younger than whom.

Third: When we return

to what is produced and how it is produced, we have come face to face with the productive forces of society. For example, more productive forces have been generated by humankind under capitalism over the last 500 years than all those generated in all preceding millennia. This, again, is of more fundamental import than who is older or younger than whom.

Fourth: What is the source of the ideas, thoughts, norms and values in human communities? Thought and consciousness are products of the human brain, in the same way man himself is a product of nature. Thought and consciousness, therefore, develop along with the totality of the development of the material and spiritual environment of human communities. They are not the products of how young or old individual members of the communities are.

Fifth: ...With the four points immediately above, we are moving into the realm of critical thought, of worldviews, of ideology. Random and sporadic thoughts do not constitute ideology. ‘Okugenda n’ ebigenda’ is not ideological — it is random thought, probably leading to anarchy and/or populism.

Ideology denotes a systematic, coherent and consistent appreciation of our reality, of our world... ideology has nothing to do with young or old we are. It certainly has nothing to do with appreciating society at the much lower level of social psychology, i.e., of everyday experience.

Ideology reflects definite socio-economic interests. It reflects objective reality, concrete historical reality, and concrete historical tasks. Ideology is the guide or compass to revolutionary action for fundamental transformation in the digital, nuclear, and space era. Birth cohorts are absolutely irrelevant here.”

The writer is a senior presidential advisor/political affairs (special duties) State House