We the people live our reality and the politicians in an Orwellian dystopia

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Catchy names like Building Bridges Initiative (BBI), Punguz Mizio, and whatever else Kenyan politicians come up with, have taken up our social and political space easily because of their accompanying mass hysteria and pomp that distracts from the things that matter. You know, the issues at hand. Apparent solutions for the greater public must have the people’s concerns at heart. There is nothing that tires the mind more than the issue of corruption, and paranoia.

And to avoid this, most Kenyans have put a shield around them when it comes to political machinations. They do not quite know what the real issues are, but they know that politicians are up to no good. They choose to live in ignorance. This is what our politics does to us every day.

So what narrative are Kenyan politicians driving currently? Perhaps the greater question should be: Was the Constitution written for a utopian society? The idea of Kenya rather than the real Kenya?

One of my favourite authors is George Orwell, the master of dystopia tales and I love his final book, 1984. His writing has influenced me to the point of that I tend to have a pessimistic view of even the very existence of democracies. And of our country.

Chapter one of the Kenya Constitution states: “We the people...” but as the International Democracy day was being marked on September 15, I questioned its true meaning. What people? All people? Or some people? Because democracy is about a majority, there is always a group feeling oppressed one way or another, because they don’t feel protected.

Because science and technology are politically aligned to the ruling elite, and make decisions for the multitudes. As I pondered on the words, “we the people” I wondered since when did Ken- ya care about the people? Is it that we hope that one day we will? We treat the Constitution as the BBI, we may know some verses, where they appear, when to quote them appropriately, but living life according to that law is a whole other duty.

The BBI task force has been collecting recommendations and views on national cohesion for the past year and a half. There was confusion as to where their office was based, they had no website to submit information online, not even a phone number for sharing letters or responding to SMS or other free messaging apps.

When it comes to building a country, measures to collect public opinion must be exhausted. It is a matter of great interest for all. But according to the BBI, that was not so important. They did host forums, but they were not as accessible as one would have thought.

For Punguz Mizio, it is interesting that the individual behind it was also very involved in coming up with our current Constitution. It is bad to change one’s mind, but this is the difference between night and day. The constitutionally provided spaces where people participate on issues is serving public participation.

Currently there are counties that have no standard regulations as to how to implement them. They are hap- hazed and it is not due to lack of in- formation, but what is worrying is the intentionality of how some are carried out. There is no participation, a certain number of people are called upon to at- tend a meeting, they receive participa- tion payment” transport, lunch and the meeting is duly adjourned with- out their input since all “input” was pre-prepared and passed.

The people’s opinion is not a matter of concern. We have not reached the level of having town hall engagements where people feel heard.

Apparently we believe that those who are learned know everything, which is a dreadful fallacy. It is difficult watching politicians clamouring for change of this or that law in an apparent sake of the people that we hardly see them get together when there is such a need to address real matters affecting not just us.

We the people might wonder how it is possible for them to “a” and “b” ignoring our real issues. But I suppose we will never know.