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Staking Claims: The Kenyan Newspaper Sector, 1899 – 1990

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

in History

by

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

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Professor Edward A. Alpers, Chair

This dissertation examines the establishment and publication of various Kenyan newspapers between 1899 and 1990. It argues that most were established to enable the interests that controlled them to permeate the political field and other sectors of the economy that sometimes had little or nothing to do with newspapers or the media. That is, newspapers acted as bases from which to affect various centres of power. This meant that the enterprises behind these publications focused their efforts on lobbying the most powerful and influential political players towards positions that favoured the goals of their owners. At the same time, newspapers served as media for the production of conformity, steering public opinion towards those positions. The dissertation also includes a study of the government press during the period under examination as an entity that was also eager to 'stake a claim' in the psyche of its targeted audiences. This enabled the governments concerned to encourage compliance with their policies in an attempt to ensure the continuation of the status quo or the enhancement of their power and influence.

This dissertation of Phoebe Atieno Musandu is approved.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AS (African Standard, Mombasa Times and Uganda Argus)

BEA (British East Africa)

CPK (Church of the Province of Kenya)

CT (*Colonial Times*)

CMS (Church Missionary Society)

CNC (Chief Native Commissioner)

COTU (Central Organisation of Trade Unions, Kenya)

DC (*Daily Chronicle*)

DIO (District Information Officer)

DN (*Daily Nation*)

EAA (East African Association)

EAC (*East African Chronicle*)

EAINC (East African Indian National Congress)

EAS (*East African Standard*)

EAUM (*East Africa and Uganda Mail*)

IBEAC (Imperial British East Africa Company)

IPS (Industrial Promotion Services)

KDM (*Kenya Daily Mail*)

KA (Kikuyu Association)

KADU (Kenya African Democratic Union)

KANU (Kenya African National Union)

KCA (Kikuyu Central Association)

KIC (Kenya Indian Congress)

KNA (Kenya News Agency)

KPU (Kenya People's Union)

KT (*Kenya Times*)

LEGCO (Legislative Council)

MAC (Murumbi Africana Collection)

MFM (Microfilm)

MLC (Member of the Legislative Council)

MP (Member of Parliament)

NCCK (National Council of Churches of Kenya)

NT (*Nairobi Times*)

PC (Provincial Commissioner)

PCEA (Presbyterian Church of East Africa)

PIO (Provincial Information Officer)

Rs. (rupees)

TN (*The Nation*)

TS (*The Standard*)

VC (Vigilance Committee)

YKA (Young Kikuyu Association)

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NEWSPAPERS: RAISON D'ETRE?
Introduction and Overview

1902 - East Africa Protectorate: An Indian real estate and shipping magnate establishes "The African Standard, Mombasa Times and Uganda Argus," the first non-European owned newspaper in East Africa.

1912 – East Africa Protectorate: A Mr. Shaw rides into the territory, dragging a safe behind him on an oxcart, and sets up a tiny two-room branch of the Standard Bank of South Africa. One room is for the safe and one room (complete with a hip bath behind the business counter) is for him. [1]

Why would the clearly astute and successful Indian businessman even consider embarking on a maverick venture such as a newspaper in an economic environment that ten years later still presented significant challenges?

Alibhai Jeevanjee sent the first edition of *The African Standard, Mombasa Times and Uganda Argus* to the press on 15 November 1902. He published it in English although he could neither read nor write the language. This choice was undoubtedly carefully calculated; English was the language spoken by the tiny yet immensely powerful ruling minority in the newly established East Africa Protectorate, the predecessor to modern Kenya. Jeevanjee hired English editor and reporter W.H. Tiller to manage the publication at its offices in the hot and humid yet picturesque coastal town of Mombasa. Two Europeans bought the paper in 1905 and it changed hands two more times as it grew into one of the largest and most successful dailies in Eastern and Central Africa. Eventually, Kenya came to support a wide range of other secular newspapers, both private and official. This dissertation investigates the politico-economic motivations and circumstances behind the formation and management of Kenya's newspaper industry between 1898 and 1990. It specifically examines how the interaction between those factors and Government interests influenced newspaper content.

[1] Elspeth Huxley, *The Mottled Lizard*. London: Chatto & Windus, 1962, p.232.

There is a scarcity of scholarly works concerning East Africa's media institutions. Although footnotes in scholarly literature on Kenya regularly cite newspapers, there is a dearth of material on the country's media institutions themselves. Yet newspapers are much more than news chronicles. As products of human enterprise they reflect the aspirations and intentions of their publishers, and the consequences of these ought to be studied. It is only then that we can begin to understand the impact of the print press and, more generally, the media on African societies.

The questions investigated in this study are: what was the impetus for the establishment of Kenyan newspapers? What were their goals? And how did the pursuit of these goals manifest themselves in the newspaper's editorial positions and content in general? My research shows that owners, and in some instances strong-willed editors, staked out spheres of influence from which to affect centres of political power. Their actions complemented their quests to secure financial gains from the publications themselves. When the newspapers' aims or the manner in which they pursued them collided with, competed with, or threatened those in power, suppression ensued. This either took the form of outright bans, conformity with the Government's demands, or the adoption of carefully moderated stances. These final two measures ensured the newspapers' survival, secured their ability to champion the interests of their owners, and allowed each to survive as a business. Newspapers thus focused their efforts on lobbying the most powerful and influential political players towards positions that favoured the goals of their owners. In addition, they served as a medium for the production of conformity, steering public opinion towards these positions. Also of interest is the government press during the period under examination as an entity that was also interested in 'staking a claim' in the psyche of its targeted audiences. This

enabled the administrations concerned to encourage compliance with their policies and ensure the continuation of the status quo or the enhancement of their power.

Thus, although this project is primarily a contribution to Kenyan press history, it is also a contribution to Kenyan political and economic history. Generally the latter are examined through the lenses of race and ethnicity.[2] In colonial Kenya, "race" was divided into four categories: European, Asian, Arab, and African.[3] According to the British government's colonial policy Europeans in the colony were not to establish a dominion. Instead, they were tasked with "stewardship" of the country for the Africans. In the decades following 1901, British settlers and sympathetic colonial officials incessantly sought to free themselves from the metropole's policy. Meanwhile, Africans suffered under the burdens that the "stewardship" placed on their land, labor and dignity as Asians also seethed at their subordinate status in the colony. Consequently, the desire to assert politico-economic demands resulted in protest and advocacy from all segments of the population.

Historians have extensively researched and written on the varying forms of advocacy and protest present in the colonial era by different peoples of Kenya. Focus is usually centered on non-governmental associations (for example the Convention of Associations) as well as African political parties and religious protest movements.[4] In addition, much has also been written on the colony's European-dominated legislative council (LEGCO), and the militant Mau Mau

[2] See for example, Paul Mosley, *The Settler Economies: Studies in the Economic History of Kenya and Southern Rhodesia, 1900 – 1963*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983; Apollo Njonjo, "The Africanisation of the 'White Highlands:' A Study of Agrarian Class Struggles in Kenya." (Ph.D. dissertation), Princeton University, 1997; William Ochieng' and Robert Maxon, *An Economic History of Kenya*. Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, Ltd., 1992; David Himbara, *Kenyan Capitalists, the State and Development.* Boulder: L, Rienner Publishers, 1994.

[3] These were organised in descending order of importance. Sometimes Africans and Arabs were grouped together.

[4] See for example, George Bennett, "The Development of Political Organisations in Kenya" *Political Studies*, vol. 5, issue 2, June 1957, pp. 113 – 130; Cynthia Hoehler-Fatton, *Women of Fire and Spirit: History, Faith and Gender in Roho Religion in Western Kenya.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1996; Bethwell Ogot and William Ochieng' (eds.), *Kenya: The Making of a Nation: A Hundred years of Kenya's History, 1895 – 1995.* Maseno: Institute of Research & Postgraduate Studies, Maseno University, 2000; Galia Sabar, *Church, State and Society in Kenya: From Mediation to Opposition, 1963 – 1993.* London; Portland Oregon: Routledge, 2002.

movement of Central Kenya which emerged after the Second World War.[5] Newspapers are often cited as an important platform of protest or advocacy in these studies, but this role has rarely been researched and explored. Furthermore, Kenyan historiography has barely touched on the newspaper sector as a commercial entity or as a vehicle for politico-economic influence. Moreover, the few works on Kenyan press history that do exist have thus far focused on issues of freedom of the press. This dissertation elucidates the crucial political and economic role of Kenya's newspapers since their late nineteenth century debut. A study of newspapers from 1899 to 1990 follows the sector through both the colonial and postcolonial eras. I end the study in 1990, the decade in which the country's major newspaper companies forayed into broadcast journalism.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Wider Context: Politico-economic Literature on Kenya

The scholarly literature on politics and economics enables me to provide a context for my study as it illuminates the various sites of politico-economic subordination and competition that I hypothesise were manifested in the print press in various forms. It also reveals the different sectors of the economy scholars have studied most extensively – agriculture and manufacturing. First, the relevant literature has been largely concerned with the ownership, distribution and redistribution of land and labour from 1895 vis-à-vis race. Second, there have also been studies focusing on the entry of Asians, and later, Africans into what was a European-dominated manufacturing sector.

[5] Tabitha Kanogo, *Squatters and the Roots of Mau Mau, 1905-63*. London: James Currey, 1987; Bruce Berman and John Lonsdale, *Unhappy Valley: Conflict in Kenya and Africa*, 2 vols. London: James Currey, 1992; David Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged: The Dirty War in Kenya and the End of the Empire*. New York; London: W.W. Norton & Co., 2005; Sloan Mahone,. "The Psychology of Rebellion: Colonial Medical Responses to Dissent in British East Africa," *Journal of African History* (2006), 47, pp: 241 – 258.

In early works such as G. Mungeam's *British Rule in Kenya, 1895 – 1912* and M.P.K. Sorrenson's *Origins of European Settlement in Kenya*, the authors study the introduction of European capitalism to the East African hinterland to the general disadvantage of Africans.[6] They generally trace the onset of European capitalism to the construction of the Kenya-Uganda Railway (1895 – 1901) in an attempt to enhance coastal trade with the interior, particularly the lands of the Great Lakes region, as well as to secure the headwaters of the Nile for Egypt and its colonial ruler Britain. The trade, however, eventually proved to be too feeble. The railway's construction left the protectorate's rulers desperate for means to recoup the costs of its construction and to turn it into a self-sustaining profit venture. Eventually, they settled on the alienation of land in the hope that European settlers would exploit it for the benefit of the government's coffers. It also left them with what was to become the "Indian Problem": a consequence of bringing Indian labourers to the colony to aid in the railway's construction. Many chose to stay on and became successful small-scale retailers with a few, such as future newspaper owner Alibhai Jevanjee, becoming relatively wealthy.

Scholars have studied the numerous strategies that were exercised to combat, and for the settler to defend and further exploit, the inequitable exploitation and distribution of the country's resources. Richard Frost's *Race Against Time* and Donald Rothchild's *Racial Bargaining in Independent Kenya* provide detailed insights into the different strategies employed by Asians and Europeans.[7] The latter successfully pressured the colonial government into providing them with the Legislative Council (LEGCO), in addition to establishing numerous farmers' associations

[6] Gordon Mungeam, *British Rule in Kenya, 1895 – 1912: The Establishment of Administration in the East Africa Protectorate*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1966; M. P. K. Sorrenson, *Origins of European Settlement in Kenya*. Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1968.

[7] Richard Frost, *Race Against Time: Human Relations and Politics in Kenya Before Independence.* London: Rex Collings, 1978; Donald Rothchild, *Racial Bargaining in Independent Kenya: A Study of Minorities and Decolonization*. London, New York: Published for the Institute of Race Relations by Oxford University Press, 1973.

and marketing bodies. Asians also had organisations which they employed in the struggle for rights to own land and to ameliorate their general racial subordination. These included the East African Indian National Congress and the Kenya Muslim League. Africans formed political parties that were largely ethnically oriented such as the Ukambani Members Association and the Kikuyu Central Association, as well as trade unions.[8] Some also broke away from mainstream Christian denominations to establish independent churches and schools in protest of the status quo. After World War II, a particularly violent and militant movement against the British, the Mau Mau, was established in the forests of Central Kenya. It is said to have expedited the country's journey to independence and the movement's establishment, goals, functions and impact have been the source of numerous scholarly debates over the years.[9] All these racial groups had newspapers, but European settlers had the biggest and the most influential one in their corner.

There have also been various theoretical attempts to explicate colonial and postcolonial Kenyan or East African politico-economics. These include works such as E.A. Brett's *Colonialism and Underdevelopment in East Africa,* Roger van Zwanenberg's *An Economic History of Kenya and Uganda,* and Colin Leys' *Underdevelopment in Kenya*.[10] As is evident

[8] J. S. Mangat, *A History of the Asians in East Africa: c. 1886 – 1945.* London: Oxford University Press, 1969; Bethwell Ogot, *Politics and Nationalism in Colonial Kenya*. Nairobi: East African Publishing House for Historical Association of Kenya, 1972; Robert Gregory, *South Asians in East Africa: an Economic and Social History, 1890-1980.* Boulder: Westview Press, 1993; Robert Tignor, *Capitalism and Nationalism at the End of Empire: State and Business in Decolonizing Egypt, Nigeria and Kenya, 1945 – 1963.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998.

[9] Carl Rosberg and John Nottingham, *The Myth of "Mau Mau": Nationalism in Kenya.* Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1966; Kanogo, *Squatters and the Roots of Mau Mau* 1987; Frank Furedi, *The Mau Mau War in Perspective*. London: J. Currey, Athens: Ohio University Press, 1989; E. S. Atieno-Odhiambo and John Londsdale (eds.) *Mau Mau and Nationhood: Arms, Authority and Narration*. Oxford: James Currey; Nairobi: EAEP; Athens: Ohio University Press, 2003.

[10] E. A. Brett, *Colonialism and Underdevelopment in East Africa: the Politics of Economic Change, 1919 – 1939.* London: Heinemann, 1983; Roger van Zwanenberg, *An Economic History of Kenya and Uganda: 1800 – 1970*. London: MacMillan, 1976; Colin Leys, *Underdevelopment in Kenya: the Political Economy of Neo-Colonialism, 1964 -71*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974.

from some of their titles, these works are attempts to apply Dependency Theory to the East African context with the African as both victim and opportunistic villain. Van Zwanenberg explains that the goals of the colonial state were to ensure that the colony could support itself financially and that it could provide high returns on capital invested from metropolitan sources. In addition, the colony's economy was generally set up to produce mostly raw agricultural commodities for export to Britain so that the metropole could reduce its dependency on foreign sources that were beyond its control. The government therefore went out of its way to support settler farming and the marketing of its products. Leys argues that as Kenya was transitioning to independence and in the ensuing years, Britain ensured that those to whom they handed over power had vested interests in the status quo in which the colony served the metropole's needs and remained at the periphery of world trade. Although he studies both the agricultural and manufacturing sectors, his focus is mostly on the former. In the agricultural sector for instance, he explains that resettlement schemes, large-farm transfers, credit facilities and land registration activities in the fifties were all geared towards the creation of an African bourgeoisie, specifically a Central Kenyan bourgeoisie, in the place of the European farmer. The new bourgeoisie thus plugged into the preexisting system, willingly co-existed with European-owned plantations, ranches, and corporations while at a subordinate economic level they used politics to expand and protect their wealth to the disadvantage of Africans in other regions of Kenya. In 1978 Colin Leys revised his argument to argue that there were indeed some areas of true indigenous capital accumulation in peripheral countries. His new stance dismayed scholars such as Rafael Kaplinsky, who in 1980 criticised him for retreating from his previous position by

using new statistical data as well as a re-evaluation of Leys' own data.[11] However, Leys was not to be deterred and in 1996 he went ahead and eulogised classic Dependista paradigms and other development theories in *The Rise and Fall of Development Theory*, but perceptively with less certainty of the future of sustained economic growth at the periphery than he did in 1978.[12]

In *The Development of Corporate Capitalism in Kenya*, Nicola Swainson also focuses on the integration of Kenya into the capitalist system between 1918 and 1977 while arguing that evidence showed the presence of genuine growth of indigenous capital in opposition to Leys' initial stand on the matter.[13] Her case studies focus on cash crop production, minerals and the manufacturing sector. Swainson argues that Kenya's incorporation into the capitalist system was forced, but she is also of the opinion that theoretical schemas that assume all socio-political relations that govern economics in the "neo-colony" to be localised manifestations of metropolitan policy are overly generalising of local conditions. Scholars, she argues, ought not to ignore the "relative autonomy" of politics as well as the differing patterns of accumulation and class differentiation.[14] Her work is also important because it draws attention to the fact that there were sites of political and economic contestation amongst Africans. That is, Africans were not a homogenous whole and they, too, had interests that resulted in social differentiation and competition. Gavin Kitching, in *Class and Economic Change in Kenya: The Making of An African Petite Bourgeoisie, 1905-1970,* traces the emergence of Kenya's indigenous accumulators more fully, but in contrast to Swainson his analyses are based on a Marxist

[11] Raphael Kaplinsky, "Capitalist Accumulation in the Periphery: the Kenyan Case Re-Examined," *Review of African Political Economy*, vol. 7, no. 17, 1980, pp. 83 – 105.
[12] Colin Leys, *The Rise and Fall of Development Theory*. Nairobi: EAEP; Bloomington: Indiana University Press; James Currey: 1996.
[13] Nicola Swainson, *The Development of Corporate Capitalism in Kenya: 1918 – 1977*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980.
[14] Ibid., p. 16.

framework.[15] Both Swainson and Kitching's arguments have prompted me to seek as close a study as possible of the backgrounds of newspaper owners over the years. These backgrounds are key to determining what were their varying as well as competing interests and how these in turn guided how newspapers positioned themselves editorially.

Bruce Berman and John Londsdale, in a collection of 12 papers published as *Unhappy Valley: Conflict in Kenya and Africa,* also explore the differing patterns of social accumulation and differentiation that emerged amongst Africans, particularly those of Central Kenya.[16] Although they use a variety of theoretical frameworks to study colonial Kenyan socio-economic phenomena, they call attention to the inadequacy of some of these theories which, as argued by Swainson, gloss over social differences that were critical in the forging of various protest strategies, including the Mau Mau. Especially interesting is John Londsdale's chapter, "The Moral Economy of Mau Mau," in which he undertakes to study colonial Kikuyu literature including Kikuyu newspapers, religious literature and political tracts to study the manner in which what he identifies as this particular ethnic group's middle class used the written word to articulate their own politico-economic interests.

In the same year as *Unhappy Valley*, William Ochieng and Robert Maxon published *An Economic History of Kenya*.[17] This book is comprised of 26 papers that span from 1895 to the 1980s. It is unique in that some of the authors explore areas of Kenyan economic history that scholars have barely studied, for example transport and communications, tourism, financial and monetary policy in colonial as well as modern Kenya. R. T. Ogonda's chapters on "Colonial

[15] Gavin Kitching, *Class and Economic Change in Kenya: The Making of an African Petite Bourgeoisie.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980.
[16] Bruce Berman and John Lonsdale, *Unhappy Valley: Conflict in Kenya and Africa*. 2 vols.. London: James Currey, 1992.
[17] William Ochieng' and Robert Maxon (eds.), *Economic History of Kenya*. Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, Ltd., 1992.

Transport and Communications" and "Post-Independence Trends in Development of Transport and Communications" contain very brief surveys of Kenya's mass media in general. For the colonial era, Ogonda conducts a short overview of the major publications established for different segments of the population.[18] As regards the postcolonial era, he is particularly interested in the independent government's attempts to establish newspapers in the rural areas as part of its policy of "gradual indigenization of newspaper publication" and what he considers to be the freedoms enjoyed by Kenya's newspapers.[19] However, as the press is but a small segment of each chapter that essentially takes on all sectors of transport and communications within the country, his treatment of it is understandably limited. This makes it impossible for him to expand on disputable claims such as his statement that "Kenya has distinguished herself as a country where freedom of the press is protected under the constitution as well as in practice."[20] As is evident in the analyses of Kenya's postcolonial newspaper sector in this dissertation, it is difficult to argue that journalists were able to practice their craft freely during the period under examination.

The hypotheses of this study demand the consideration of newspapers not only as information media, but also as instruments for the penetration of other sectors in the country's economy over time. Locating my study amidst Kenyan politico-economic literature is therefore most appropriate.

Newspaper Literature

Although this dissertation is not a comparative study, I find it useful to locate it in the wider context of Anglophone press history and thus include a review of press history literature in

[18] R. T. Ogonda, "Post-Independence Trends in Development of Transport and Communications," in Ochieng' and Maxon, *An Economic History*, p. 137.
[19] Ibid., p. 325.
[20] Ibid., p. 325.

the West, specifically in Britain and the United States of America, as their press histories provide a useful context in which to understand African newspaper history. This is not only because historical studies of the African press are few and far between, but also because in many ways, journalistic developments in the above two countries determined the nature of the press institutions that were eventually established in the coastlands of nineteenth century West Africa and other African regions that came to be Anglophone colonies and later independent states. In addition, the circumstantial differences in which the newspaper developed in Africa, Europe and America have brought to the fore critical issues on newspaper ownership which in turn were crucial to the formulation of my research questions. Before beginning this literary review in earnest, it is prudent to highlight Piers Brendon's observation that although the press that eventually emerged in nineteenth century United States was more vibrant and enjoyed more freedom than its contemporaneous counterpart in Britain, they generally shared a common language and heritage.[21] As a result, from the late seventeenth century when the first newspaper was published in America, numerous journalistic influences were traded back and forth across the Atlantic. Therefore, although only Britain eventually became a colonial power in Africa, it is important to study literature on press developments in both countries because of the integrated nature of those developments.

Various works, some dating to the nineteenth century, on the early history of the British and American newspaper sector are important not only for their elucidation of an industry in its infancy, but also of its struggle for press freedom. The institutionalisation of press freedom in the United States and later Britain is a preamble of sorts to the treatment of that factor in Britain's future colonies, including those in Africa. As will be seen below, press freedom remains an area of great concern to scholars of colonial and postcolonial African press history. A classical text as

[21] Piers Brendon, *The Life and Death of the Press Barons*. New York: Atheneum, 1983, p. 2.

far as early British journalistic history is concerned is Charles Peabody's *English Journalism and the Men Who Have Made It* in which the author not only vividly walks the reader through the press institutions that made London's Fleet Street famous, but also introduces the reader to the challenges of government regulation affecting seventeenth century newspapers.[22] Peabody's detailed history also devotes considerable space to matters of press censure. More recent works that cover similar subjects include Hannah Baker's *Newspapers, Politics and Public Opinion in Late Eighteenth-Century England* and edited volumes such as *Press, Politics and the Public Sphere in Europe and North America, 1760 – 1820.*[23]

Studies of the early press in the North American colonies also shed light on a press environment that endured British governmental suppression and chronic harassment before the emergence of a press with considerable freedoms after independence. Relevant works in this regard are Richard Brown's *The Strength of the People: The Idea of an Informed Citizentry in America: 1650 – 1870* and Eric Burns' *Infamous Scribblers: The Founding Fathers and The Rowdy Beginnings of American Journalism*, amongst others.[24] These works return to Benjamin Harris' unsuccessful attempt to publish and establish the *Publick Occurences, Both Foreign and Domestick* in 1690 as the first American newspaper. They illuminate the manner in which the right to criticise government was established in the 1730s, as well as the politicisation and subsequent partisan nature of eighteenth century American newspapers in the decades leading to and following the American Declaration of Independence. Of interest to me is the manner in which the journalist's right to criticise the state in the interest of society was eventually

[22] Charles Peabody, *English Journalism and the Men Who Have Made It*. London, Paris, New York: Cassell, Petter, Gaplin & Co., 1882.
[23] Hannah Barker, *Newspapers, Politics and English Society, 1695 – 1855, Themes in British Social History.* Harlow: Longman, 2000; Hannah Barker and Simon Burrows (eds.), *Press, Politics and the Public Sphere in Europe and North America, 1760 – 1820.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
[24] Richard Brown, *The Strength of a People: the Idea of an Informed Citizenry in America, 1650 – 1870.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996; Eric Burns, *Infamous Scribblers: The Founding Fathers and The Rowdy Beginnings of American Journalism.* New York: Public Affairs, 2006.

recognised in early nineteenth century Britain, partly as a result of the American breakthrough in this regard. It helps explain why Britain as a colonial power in Africa, sometimes tolerated the publication of local African language newspapers that were "outspokenly critical" of the government.[25]

A variety of literature treats the nineteenth century, particularly from 1830 onwards, as a chronological marker for the emergence of independent newspaper owners and the popularisation of the newspaper industry. The independent newspaper (free from state and partisan patronage) took root fastest in the United States and press histories such as George Douglas' *The Golden Age of the Newspaper* and Piers Brendon's *The Life and Death of the Press Barons* are comprised largely of chapters devoted to the study of British and American newspaper founders in that era.[26] Douglas treats James Bennett (New York *Herald*; 1835) and Horace Greely (*Tribune*; 1841) as the editor-owners of publications that revolutionised the American newspaper industry. The two arch rivals endeavored to guard the independence of their newspapers as well as to modify their content in a manner that made them more attractive and affordable to the less "genteel" strata of society. Scottish "gentleman" Bennett, for example, was exclusively interested in making money from his paper. After studying his intended audience and noting a penchant for gossip and sensational writing he proceeded to design a newspaper with the aim of maximising returns from that market. The resulting journal was largely for the entertainment of the reader. Greely, on the other hand, who was less educated and "always looked like an unmade bed," was nevertheless an idealist who used his paper as a platform to campaign for his pet politico-economic issues.[27] Journalistic developments in the

[25] Oginga Odinga, *Not Yet Uhuru*. London: Ibadan: Nairobi: Heinemann Educational Books, 1967, p. 82.
[26] George Douglas, *The Golden Age of the Newspaper*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1999; Brendon, *Life and Death of the Press Barons*.
[27] Douglas, *The Golden Age of the Newspaper*, p. 24.

United States were subsequently aped by British newspaper owners, some of whom became press barons.

The emergence of the press baron is particularly important to African press history since a number of British- and U.S.-based newspaper owners did establish or buy newspapers in twentieth century Africa. Scholars use the term "press baron" generally to refer to entrepreneurs who established their own newspapers as well as bought other journals resulting in the ownership of newspaper chains. In addition to Douglas' and Brendon's books, the press baron is the subject of works such as Gerald Baldasty's *E. W. Scripps and the Business of Newspapers*, Susan Goldenberg's *The Thompson Empire*, Collin Brooks' *Fleet Street, Press Barons and Politics*, and Barbara Cloud's *The Business of Newspapers on the Western Frontier*.[28] These works tackle the advantages and disadvantages of the increased balkanisation of newspapers on both sides of the Atlantic by newspaper owners such as Randolph Hearst, Edward Scripps, Lord Northcliffe, Lord Beaverbrook, Lord Thompson, Robert Maxwell, Rupert Murdock and Eddy Shah. These barons sought to maximise their economies of scale as well as increase profits through the efficient management of newspapers. Works such as those of Piers Brendon and Simon Jenkin's *Newspapers: The Power and the Money* are important because they also contribute to debates on the phenomenon of the disappearance of individual newspaper owners and the emergence of newspapers as units within large public companies, some of which, for example, Roland Rowland's Lonrho conglomerate, eventually came to own major dailies in the UK and independent Kenya.[29] The above studies are also revealing of the vastly different motivations of newspaper owners. For some profit was the foremost motivator while for others the desire for

[28] Gerald Baldasty, *E. W. Scripps and the Business of Newspapers*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999; Susan Goldenberg, *The Thompson Empire*. Toronto; New York; Methuen, 1984; Colin Brooks, *Fleet Street, Press Barons and Politics: the Journals of Colin Brooks, 1932 – 1940*. London: Royal Historical Society, 1998; Barbara Cloud, *The Business of Newspapers on the Western Frontier*. Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1992.
[29] Simon Jenkins, *Newspapers: The Power and the Money.* London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1979.

prestige, for political influence, or for the dissemination of personal ideals were motivating factors of equal or even greater appeal.

The literature also converges on the 1800s as the era during which newspaper production in both Britain and America grew and newspapers came to resemble the newspaper of our age. Technological advances in paper making, printing, transportation, and communications greatly impacted the development of the press. As a result, some authors focus on the press and developments beyond the immediate industry that, however, impacted it greatly. Alvin Harlow's much cited *Old Wires and New Waves* and Ford Risley's article on "Newspapers and Timeliness: The Impact of the Telegraph and the Internet" that detail the development of telegraphy as well as its relevance to the newspaper industry are two examples of such works. Richard Kielbowicz's *News in the Mail: The Press, Post Office and Public Information: 1700 – 1860s* highlights the manner in which the betterment of post office infrastructure enhanced the distribution of newspapers. Other relevant monographs include Patricia Dooley's *The Technology of Journalism: Cultural Agents, Cultural Icons*, Daniel Headrick's *When Information Came of Age: Technologies of Knowledge in the Age of Reason and Revolution: 1700 – 1850*, and Douglas McMurtrie's renowned works that elaborate on print press developments (1924 and 1934 to mention but a few).[30] These technological advances enabled newspapers to increase their circulation greatly, to expand the amount and type of information each paper contained, and to adapt more effectively to the tastes of targeted audiences. Authors such as Frank Barton have argued that press environments of settler economies in Africa

[30] Alvin Harlow, *Old Wires and New Waves*. New York: London: D. Appleton – Century Co., 1936; Ford Risley, "Newspapers and Timeliness: The Impact of the Telegraph and the Internet," *American Journalism* 17, no.4, 2000, pp. 97 – 103; Richard Kielbowicz, *News in the Mail: The Press, Post Office and Public Information: 1700 – 1860s.* New York: Greenwood Press, 1989; Patricia Dooley, *Taking their Political Place: Journalists and the Making of an Occupation*. Greenwood Press, 1997; Daniel Headrick, *When information Came of Age: Technologies of Knowledge in the Age of Reason and Revolution: 1700 – 1850*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2000; Doughlas McMurtrie, *American Type Design in the Twentieth Century*. Chicago: R. O. Ballou,1924, and *The Printing Press Moves Westward*. St Paul: Private Printer, 1934.

benefited considerably from technology transfers that set high standards upon which postcolonial newspapers developed. The costs and benefits as well as the distribution of such transfers certainly warrant further investigation even though they are not subjects of study in this dissertation.[31]

Technological developments are also linked to the emergence of a crucial auxiliary service to the newspaper: news agencies. For instance, in Donald Read's *The Power of News: The History of Reuters, 1849-1989* it is clear that the founder of the Reuters' news agency, Paul Reuter, was quick to notice and take advantage of the electric telegraph's ability to hasten the transmission of news.[32] His entrepreneurial acumen converted this technological development into a profitable business venture that today supplies news to most of the world's major print press outlets. Reuters, however, is largely a supplier of news to financial markets and the role of the news agency as a contributor to the globalization of news and expansion of international trade is dealt with in Mark Alleyne's *News Revolution: Political and Economic Decisions about Global Information* and Oliver Boyd-Barrett and Terhi Rantanen's *The Globalization of News*.[33] In the latter text, the editors argue that the efficient dissemination of news played a crucial role in imperialism and the control of colonies and both continue to be an "essential lubricant" of financial transactions in and between markets.

Other scholars on both sides of the Atlantic have focused on the human resources aspect behind newspaper production. These studies include works on reporters and journalists of all kinds as well as those who staffed various stages of the printing process. They include works

[31] Frank Barton, *The Press in Africa*: *Persecution and Perseverance*. New York: Africana Publishing Co., 1979.
[32] Donald Read, *The Power of News: The History of Reuters, 1849 – 1989*. Oxford: New York: Oxford University Press, 1992.
[33] Mark Alleyne, News Revolution: Political and Economic Decisions about Global Information. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997; Oliver Boyd-Barret and Terhi Rantanen (eds.), *The Globalization of News*. London; Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1998.

such as Stanley Walker's *City Editor*, Patricia Dooley's *Taking Their Place: Journalists and the Making of an Occupation*, Richard Junger-Digbey's "The Main Rendezvous of Men for Men of the Press: The Life and Death of the Chicago Press Club: 1880 – 1987," and William Rainbolt's "The Image of Journalism in American Films, 1946 – 1976."[34] In these works, we encounter the journalist (almost exclusively male) who emerged as a professional of sorts in the nineteenth century. The reader is presented with reporters who were poorly trained and the image of the male reporter, unkempt and poorly educated as well as wanting in matters of social etiquette, dominated popular culture in Britain and the United States into the early twentieth century. Some scholars have focused on the subject of organized labor within the industry. For example, the problematic relationship between British labour unions and the newspaper owners of Fleet Street is the focus of Keith Sisson's *Industrial Relations in Fleet Street* and Graham Cleverley's *The Fleet Street Disaster*.[35] They demonstrate the manner in which British labor unions for a good part of the twentieth century were able to control the direction and rate of technological innovation on Fleet Street before Rupert Murdoch eventually outwitted them at *Wapping '86: The Strike that Broke Britain's Newspaper Unions*.[36] That the American or British newspaper owner prior to the late nineteenth century found himself (and occasionally herself) in want of

[34] Stanley Walker, *City Editor*. New York: Frederick A. Stokes, Co., 1934; Patricia Dooley, *Taking their Political Place: Journalists and the Making of an Occupation.* Greenwood Press, 1997; Richard Junger-Digbey, "The Main Rendezvous of Men for Men of the Press: The Life and Death of the Chicago Press Club, 1880-1987," *Journal of Illinois History* 1, 1998, pp.74 – 98; William Rainbolt, "The Image of Journalism in American Films, 1946 – 1976," Ph.D. dissertation, State University of New York – Albany, 2004.

[35] Keith Sisson, *Industrial Relations in Fleet Street: A Study in Pay Structure*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1975; Graham Cleverley, *The Fleet Street Disaster: British National Newspapers as a Case Study in Mismanagement***.** London: Constable; California: Sage Publications, 1976.

[36] Nic Oatridge, *Wapping '86: The Strike that Broke Britain's Newspaper Unions*. Coldtype, 2002; also http://www.coldtype.net/photo.html, Accessed 29 May 2007.

good reporters is a human resource issue that merits investigation in the African context. This applies to both European and non-European newspapers.[37]

Equally important are works that deal with the representation, advocacy for representation, under representation or less than appropriate representation of certain societal groups in the newspaper industry or in its actual output. Monographs such as Herbert Aptheker's radical *Abolitionism: A Revolutionary Movement* and Stanley Harrold's *The Rise of Aggressive Abolitionism: Addresses to the Slaves* include analyses that reveal the use of the press to support and help organize the anti-slavery movement in the United States. Some scholars have also studied the press of groups that for a long time received little attention from the academy, for instance Jane Rhodes' *Mary Ann Shadd Cary: The Black Press and Protest in the Nineteenth Century*.[38] This last book focuses on the struggles of a woman abolitionist against sexism, racism and slavery who at one time secretly edited an abolitionist publication. The entry of women into the newspaper world is the subject of Agnes Gottlieb's "Grit Your Teeth and Learn to Swear: Women in Journalistic Careers: 1850 – 1926". Her aptly titled paper takes us back to the era referred to above but from the perspective of women struggling to enter the "uncouth" world of newspapermen. Other works on women's journalistic history include Jinx Broussard's *Giving a Voice to the Voiceless: Four Black Women Journalists: 1890 – 1950*, Kay Mills' *A Place in the News: From the Women's Pages to the Front Pages*, and Eleanor Mills' *Journalistas: 100 Years of the Best Writing and Reporting by Women Journalists*.[39] The latter is an edited volume that

[37] An example of a female editor is Katharine Graham of the *Washington Post*. For a personal memoir see Katharine Graham, *Personal History*. New York: A. A. Knopf, 1997.

[38] Herbert Aptheker, *Abolitionism: A Revolutionary Movement*. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1989; Stanley Harrold, *The Rise of Aggressive Abolitionism: Addresses to the Slaves*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2004; Jane Rhodes, *Mary Ann Shadd Cary: The Black Press and Protest in the Nineteenth Century.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998.

[39] Agnes Gottlieb, "Grit Your Teeth and Learn to Swear: Women in Journalistic Careers, 1850 – 1926," *American Journalism* 18, 2001, pp. 53 -72; Jinx Broussard, *Giving a Voice to the Voiceless: Four Black Women Journalists: 1890 – 1950.* New York: Routledge, 2004; Kay Mills, *A Place in the News: From the Women's Pages to the Front*

contains numerous excerpts from twentieth century newspaper reports by British and American women. Insights gained from these works are particularly suggestive for my project even though I do not explore gender as either a subject or category of analysis. This is because my dissertation research involves the investigation of a press environment in which certain segments of the population were able to develop their own newspapers faster than and to the disadvantage of others. Nevertheless, a few women do feature in this dissertation, one as the editor of the first secular newspaper in British East Africa and two others as tactful correspondents to an independent 1920s African newspaper in central Kenya.

Literature on the African Press

Syntheses of relevance to African press history can be obtained from works that are global in scope. Examples of such works are Lloyd Sommerlad's *The Press in Developing Countries* and Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*.[40] Anderson posits that print capitalism in conjunction with print-languages played a major role in enabling large numbers of people in different parts of the world to relate to each other as members of nation-states following the dissipation of the power in traditional unifying factors such as theocratic monarchies. Print capitalism first took hold in the West and, according to Anderson, post–World War II bilingual intelligentsias in Asia and Africa quickly recognised its coagulative politico-economic power. They then set about exploiting this power to develop models of "nation-ess" that were used to propel various peoples towards nationalistic goals. Consequently, these nationalists were able to perpetuate their ideals by

Pages. New York: Columbia University Press, 1990; Eleanor Mills (ed.) *Journalistas: 100 Years of the Best Writing and Reporting by Women Journalists.* New York: Carroll and Graf, 2006.

[40] Lloyd Sommerlad, *The Press in Developing Countries*. Sydney: Sydney University Press, 1966; Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism.* London: New York: Verso, 1991.

avoiding print altogether, reaching both the literate and illiterate in a multiplicity of languages. His argument raises important questions for the press historian of Kenya that touch on the aspirations of the different owners of newspapers and the extent to which indigenous papers in its press environment were nationalistic, as well as the specific sectors of the population the press targeted.

In Africa, West Africa's press history, owing to its early establishment relative to other parts of the continent, has received more attention from scholars. Examples include Doyin Aboaba's "The Nigerian Press Under Military Rule," Clement Asante's *The Press in Ghana: Problems and Prospects*, Dayo Duyile's *Makers of Nigerian Press*, and Fred Omu's *Press and Politics in Nigeria: 1880 – 1937*.[41] These works focus on journalism in two countries that have had a long, vibrant but troubled history with governments that not infrequently have changed via military coups in the years following independence. The authors demonstrate that some governments have been more accommodating of press freedoms than others but that generally journalists have had to contend with capricious press environments. Indeed, much of the literature on the African press produced by journalists, sociologists, and political scientists in the nineties and beyond betrays a sense of vigilance born of decade upon decade of journalistic distress.[42]

[41] Doyin Aboaba, "The Nigerian Press Under Military Rule." (Ph.D. dissertation) State University of New York, 1979; Clement Asante, *The Press in Ghana: Problems and Prospects*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1996; Dayo Duyile, *Makers of Nigerian Press: An Historical Analysis of Newspaper Development, the Pioneer Heroes, the Modern Press Barons and the New Publishers from 1859 – 1987*. Nigeria: Gong Communications, 1987; Fred Omu, *Press and Politics in Nigeria: 1880 – 1937*. London: Longman, 1978.

[42] PFMD/WAJA. *State of the Press in West Africa: 1994 Rapport/Press Freedom Monitoring and Defence* – West Africa. Dakar: Press Freedom Monitoring and Defence in West Africa/West Africa Journalists Association 1995; SDLP/UJAO. *Mécanismes régionaux et internationaux de protection de la liberté de presse en Afrique de l'Ouest.* Dakar: Surveillance et défense de la liberté de presse en Afrique de l'Ouest./ l'Union des journalistes de l'Afrique de l'Ouest, 1994; Obong Attah, *Freedom of Expression: Prospects and Challenges*. Ikeja, Lagos: Center for Free Speech, 2005; Domitille Duplat,, *Liberté de la presse: responsabilité des médias, l'Afrique sur la voie de l'autorégulation.* Paris: GRET, 2002.

As the 1990s ushered in the era of multi-party politics in Africa, the democratic space available to the media in various countries expanded, but even then recent literature assessing such changes is cautious in its measurement of the strides that have been made.[43] Most of these works lack historical depth; nevertheless, they highlight the fragile nature of several African press environments in which newspapers appear and disappear at very high rates. They underscore the need for more concerted historical research into newspapers that have atrophied in the face of different challenges or flourished in spite of those challenges.

Further insight into those challenges may be gained from large-scale press histories on Africa. They include the first attempts to study Africa's press history and their ambitious continent-wide efforts may reflect the authors' realization of the dearth of scholarship on the subject. These attempts are breathless accounts that shunt the reader from one part of the continent to the other in a single monograph. Examples of such efforts are Rosalynde Ainslie's *The Press in Africa: Communications Past and Present* and *Frank Barton's The Press of Africa: Persecution and Perserverance*.[44] Ainslie's text is partitioned into chapters such as "West Africa: The Past," "Post-war Southern Africa," "East Africa" and so on. In Barton's text the reader is rapidly but vividly taken through the establishment of West Africa's first newspaper (*Royal Gazette and Sierra Leone Advertiser,* 1801) and then to Liberian Charles Force's first serious attempt to establish an independent newspaper (*Liberia Herald*, 1826) with a modest hand-operated press given to him as a gift by the Massachusetts Colonisation Society of Boston. Not counting African American returnees like Force, West Africa is the only region in Sub-

[43] Larry Diamond and Leonardo Morlino (eds.), *Assessing the Quality of Democracy*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005; Ampaw Akoto (ed.), *Legislation on Media, Speech and Expression in Ghana*. Accra: Media Foundation of West Africa, 2004; Jeanette Minnie (ed.), *So This is Democracy? Report on the State of the Media in Southern Africa 2003.* Windhoek: Media Institute of Southern Africa, 2004.
[44] Rosalynde Ainslie, *The Press in Africa: Communications Past and Present.* New York: Walker, 1966; Barton, *The Press in Africa*, 1979.

Saharan Africa which local Africans established newspapers before the late nineteenth century. Elsewhere, we meet the likes of South African William Fairbridge who in 1891 ran off the first handwritten copies of the *Mashonaland and Zambesian Times* using a German sausage skin filled with treacle and glue as a press roller in what was then Rhodesia.

Barton's central argument is that post-colonial Africa is "the expanding continent with the shrinking press" and dedicates his book "to Africa's smallest tribe, its newspapermen: An endangered species."[45] Just as is argued in this dissertation, Barton uses his book to argue that the African press was employed by both nationalists and settlers to assert their different views. However, once independence was won, the Nkurumahs, Kenyattas, Nyereres and Kaundas of Africa, knowing only too well the role the press had played in bringing about political change, wasted no time in implicitly or explicitly tightening their reins over them. The above works are important because their structure and continental approaches lend themselves to interregional comparative analyses. They also offer the first rare glimpses at Kenyan press history. The authors briefly outline Jevanjee's role in the establishment of *The Standard* and are generally of the opinion that the early years of Kenya's independence were characterized by journalistic caution, but in an environment where the newspaper industry enjoyed more freedom than was contemporaneously allowed to their counterparts in other regions of the continent.

There are other works on the African press of a smaller scale that are of relevance to this dissertation. In *War of Words, War of Stones* Jonathan Glassman relies considerably on magazines and newspapers to argue that a secular intelligentsia played a critical role in creating a deeply fissured society along ethnic lines out of Zanzibar's diverse population in the mid-

[45] Ibid., p. 11.

twentieth century.[46] Similarly, Andrew Ivaska relied heavily on print media to write *Cultured States* which examines youth culture in Dar es Salaam of the 1960s.[47] Most importantly, Ivaska gives an insightful discussion of his sources of evidence in the introduction which in conjunction with the development of his various arguments within the text is revealing of what can be achieved from print media-based historical research. Lastly, in *The Guardian* (1937 – 1963), James Zug argues that the anti-apartheid South African newspaper which the government harassed chronically was run by a staff who were proud not only of the contents of their newspaper but also of what they saw as their active role in the struggle against apartheid.[48] His book, just as those mentioned above regarding advocacy for various groups highlights the extent to which newspapers can be 'animated' to play an active role in pursing the goals of persons with all sorts of grievances.

In addition, Phillip Ochieng' has authored *I Accuse the Press* and Shiraz Durrani *Never be Silent: Publishing and Imperialism in Kenya: 1884 – 1963*.[49] Ochieng's book is unique in that it takes a different approach to matters of press freedom. He is in agreement with other scholars that African governments have stifled the growth and freedoms of several newspaper sectors over the years. However, using Kenya for most of his examples he argues that by being reluctant to openly address certain obstacles, e.g. political interference and the disadvantages of foreign press ownership, journalists have contributed to the stunting of their own sector because they have not been consistent in their agitation for press freedoms. Durrani's interest goes beyond the

[46] Jonathan Glassman, *War of Words, War of Stones: Racial Thought and Violence in Colonial Zanzibar*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011.
[47] Andrew Ivaska, *Cultured States: Youth, Gender, and Modern Style in 1960s Dar es Salaam*. Durham, N. C.: Duke University Press, 2011.
[48] James Zug, *The Guardian: The History of South Africa's Extraordinary Newspaper*. Michigan: Michigan University Press, 2007.
[49] Philip Ochieng', *I Accuse the Press: An Insider's View of the Media and Politics in Africa.* Nairobi: ACTS Press, 1992; Shiraz Durrani, *Never Be Silent: Publishing and Imperialism in Kenya, 1884 – 1963.* London: Vita Books; Jamaica, N.Y. : Mau Mau Research Centre, 2006.

newspaper sector, but it does contain useful data on several newspaper publications in the colonial era within the text and in its appendix of "selected lists of newspapers, publishers and activists covering colonial Kenya."[50] He generally highlights the role African and Asian publishing activities played in the struggles against British imperialism. He sees these activities as having been powerful forces in the galvanization of African and Asian "working classes" in their struggles against the British.

Works of relevance to the Kenyan press historian are also available in more recent continent-wide works. Examples of such works are Gunilla Faringer's *Press Freedom in Africa* and an edited volume on *Press Freedom and Communication in Africa*.[51] Faringer's work concentrates on Anglophone Africa (particularly Nigeria, Ghana and Kenya) in which, she argues, are some of Africa's best developed press systems. Her work is not a press history as such, but she does endeavour to bring historical perspectives into her analyses. For instance, she gives a brief history of the birth of the press in twentieth century Kenya and the challenges of the vernacular press in the years directly preceding the declaration of the State of Emergency in 1952. However, the focus of the book is the contemporaneous, specifically the manner in which the role of the press in Africa of the nineties should be understood in the context of mass media theories that conflict with the realities on the ground.

The analysis of mass media theory is also the focus of Carla Heath's chapter on "Communication and Press Freedom in Kenya." Heath uses her paper to argue that Kenya's press environment is an amalgamation of three different traditions: liberal/commercial, in which press outlets are operated as business units and serve business interests; authoritarian/development, in which the press outlets paternalistically disseminate information;

[50] Durrani, *Never Be Silent*, pp. 252 – 266.
[51] Gunilla Faringer, *Press Freedom in Africa*. New York: Praeger, 1991 and Festus Eribo and William Jong-Ebot, (eds.), *Press Freedom and Communication in Africa.* Trenton, N.J.: Africa World Press, 1997.

and advocacy/protest, in which press outlets criticise the government for the benefit of the people. She bases her arguments on approaches to media studies developed by media scholars such as James Curran and Jean Seaton.[52] The liberal/commercial tradition, for example, is akin to Curran and Seaton's elaboration of the liberal-pluralistic approach, where the media plays a moderating role in an environment in which different societal interests compete for dominance. Though such works are important contributions towards the understanding of the African and Kenyan press, they do not alleviate the need for detailed historical studies.

My research aims to contribute to the modest body of historiographical works that have already been produced by those who have researched various African press histories. Kenya has one of Africa's most well developed newspaper sectors and there are lessons to be drawn from its strengths and weaknesses. This project is an important contribution because it aims to study Kenya's newspaper sector not just as an institution in the service of society, but as an institution with its own interests that at various times may conflict with those of the wider society.

METHODOLOGY

Research for this study was conducted at a number of archives between 2008 and 2009, as well as during the summers of 2010 and 2011. Most of it took place in Nairobi at the Kenya National Archives, the archives of the University of Nairobi and McMillan Library. A substantial portion was also undertaken at the Young Research Library of the University of California, Los Angeles. There was also a brief visit to the British Library, Colindale in the summer of 2009. At the Kenya National Archives, I obtained access to the records of the East African Indian National Congress that supported two publications and whose political activities were a considerable

[52] Carla Heath, "Communication and Press Freedom in Kenya," in *Press Freedom and Communication in Africa*, pp. 29 – 50; James Curran and Jean Seaton *Power without Responsibility: The Press, Broadcasting and New Media in Britain.* London; New York; Routledge, 2003.

preoccupation of a number of Asian newspapers for decades. It also has crucial government records on sedition and censorship that were particularly critical to examining the questions under examination vis-à-vis African newspapers. No corporate archive for a colonial-era African newspaper exists in Kenya. The same is true for the vast majority of newspapers in Kenya's history, but in the case of African newspapers copies of the publications themselves fared particularly badly as far as the historical record is concerned. Consequently, in the chapter dealing with African newspapers, government records were vital as were autobiographies of editor-owners where these were available. Ideally, this research would have benefitted from access to both the newspapers under examination as well as correspondence, minutes, reports and other relevant records of the enterprises that owned each publication. Where these were available largely as a consequence of a newspaper's interactions with the government, they were analysed and incorporated into the body of the relevant chapter. The Kenya National Archives also has extensive microfilmed copies of several newspapers, including those of *The Standard,* whose company turned over the first few decades of its newspaper holdings to the archives. The McMillan Library has the only known copies of the country's oldest secular newspaper, the *East Africa and Uganda Mail,* which was established in 1899. Of its six year lifespan, only about one and a half year's worth of issues are available from 1901 – 1903. The library also has extensive holdings of the country's European-owned dailies. In addition, McMillan Library holds a complete set of newspapers for the period under study for the newspaper of the Kenya African National Union party, the *Kenya Times* (1983 – 1990). At the University of Nairobi, I had access to what is quite possibly the most extensive holding of Kenyan Asian newspapers at any institution. The Young Research Library at the UCLA enabled me to continue my research on the *The Standard*, *The Daily Nation* and to some extent *The Kenya Times* while I was in Los

Angeles. As far as these newspapers were concerned, what was not available in the hard copy or microfilm holdings of the library was obtainable via Inter Library Loan. Through UCLA, I also enjoyed access to the Center for Research Libraries' high quality digitised copies of the *East African Standard, the Mombasa Times and Uganda Argus* (later renamed the *East African Standard)* from the year 1903 to 1916. The British Library, Colindale has a number of East African newspapers including the *East African Chronicle* which is one of the newspapers analysed in the third chapter of this dissertation.

As the research undertaken took on a corporate bent, some of the obstacles experienced are not surprising. For example, the country's largest and longest running media companies, the Nation Media Group and the Standard Group, did not grant access to their corporate records. As such, a major research challenge was not only that in most cases corporate archives of any sort did not exist but that even when they did exist it was not possible to access them. This problem is not new. Commenting on the difficulties historians of Africa may encounter when attempting to access corporate archives, Antony Hopkins remarks that it would be judicious for the companies concerned to provide access to their own records particularly because of the existence of related material that may already be a matter of public record (in this case the newspapers and archived correspondence with government). Thus, corporate records hold the potential of providing access to an alternative company perspective on a given matter. Hopkins also advises that "companies might well give some thought to the propositions that reticence tends to create the very suspicions it is supposed to avoid, and that semi-professional company histories carry little weight outside the members of a small group, some of whom have helped to create the

company's image in the first place."[53] Therefore, access to records serves more than just the interests of the historian.

As a consequence of the above challenges, I resorted to writing a press history based to a considerable extent on the close and detailed reading of a select number of newspapers to determine their political and economic postures and the rationales behind these postures. The newspaper as a source of responses to the questions under examination thereby took on an added significance. As the wider context of this study is Kenyan politico-economic history, for each newspaper periods of study matched to significant points in that history were mapped out beforehand. Nevertheless, this 'map' was not adhered to rigidly as in various instances relevant proceedings unique to the newspaper itself necessitated proper emphasis and treatment. It is also important to note that the goal of this study was never to give each and every newspaper that ever existed in Kenya that treatment. In his survey of the Kenyan newspaper scene, Shiraz Durrani identifies about 200 newspapers in Kenya over a period of about 100 years and this study deals with but a small fraction of that number. This dissertation also solely concerns itself with secular newspapers which means that although the oldest newspaper in what is today Kenya was the *Taveta Chronicle* and microfilm copies exist at the Kenya National Archives, it is not studied here as the Church Missionary Society published it. The goal for this study was to examine a number of newspapers with owners from the region's main racial groups. A selection from each was made based on its prominence in the context of their contemporaneous press environment. It is also true that the more prominent newspapers were able to weather time better and survive the historical record. I also limited the parameters of this study by eliminating sister publications. And so, for example, although the *Mombasa Times* was a major publication at the

[53] Antony Hopkins, "Imperial Business in Africa. Part II: Interpretations," *Journal of African History*, vol. 17, no. 2, 1976, pp. 267 – 290.

coast and it survived the historical record, it did not make the study's 'short list' because the East African Standard Ltd. owned it and the assumption here is that the same editorial policy that guided the contents of the *East African Standard* guided the contents of its sister publications. The newspapers that made the 'final cut' are therefore a small but significant fraction of newspapers that were published in Kenya. Moreover, that which was left out underscores the potential for further research.

It was not always possible to obtain complete citations of referenced newspapers. Newsprint is notorious for the fast pace of its deterioration. Microfilming can only act to arrest the image of newsprint before further deterioration. There is no remedy for faint newsprint, withered page corners (and with that precious page numbers), missing or torn pages, missing issues and poorly guillotined pages. Once the newspaper becomes the primary archive as is the case with this press history, a good dose of patience as well as long hours of sitting while squinting at all sorts of screens is inevitable. Screen filters became a necessity as did my first pair of spectacles. Digital photography is not accepted at all archives. At the archives of the University of Nairobi and McMillan Library, I was allowed to photograph bound volumes of newspaper hard copies. At the British Library, Colindale no photocopying or photography of the *East African Chronicle* was permitted. Relevant material had to be copied out by hand using pencil. At the Kenya National Archives, the microfilm readers had no printers. Digital photography was permitted as long as each shot was paid for but even this is not helpful when the quality of the microfilmed image is poor. At Young Research Library, printing was possible, the microfilm readers were modern and in excellent condition, however photography was not permitted. Besides, printing was not always an option when writing this press history. Printing a year's worth of newspapers, even with the subtraction of sports and entertainment pages, was

quite simply not practical. Sometimes six months worth of newsprint would result in a two-page analysis. As such I resorted to photography where permitted and printing a precious few pages when working at Young Research Library. When no photography was possible and accessing the same material at a later date was not feasible, I resorted to preliminary on-site synthesis of a pre-mapped subject and extensive note-taking.

The resulting work is organised into two parts. Part I deals with the newspaper sector in the colonial period while Part II deals with the newspaper sector in the postcolonial era. The first chapter focuses on the first two dailies; the *East Africa and Uganda Mail* and the *East African Standard, Mombasa Times and Uganda Argus*. It studies the lives of the newspaper owners (and one editor) closely before showing how their life experiences and ambitions propelled them towards newspaper publication and how they used the newspapers to attempt to fulfill those ambitions. A similar approach is taken in analysing the newspapers and owners of European, Asian and African newspapers in chapters Two, Three and Four. However, in these chapters links between newspaper owners and political organisations are also elucidated to demonstrate how newspapers intervened in the political arena in a bid to engineer the changes the interests behind them desired. The fifth chapter of Part I examines the government press in the colonial era. It considers the government as an entity with its own interests in promoting and maintaining a state of affairs that was conducive to the imperial concerns of the British Government.

Part II looks at the *East African Standard* and the *Daily Nation* in Chapters Six and Seven respectively, as the country was transitioning into independence and in the decades that followed. Of particular interest is not only how the enterprises behind the newspapers used the newspapers to advance their interests, but also how they positioned themselves vis-à-vis the Government to protect them. Chapter Eight studies the short-lived *Nairobi Times* of the

Stellascope Ltd. that though yearning for financial success found this a difficult goal to attain. Subsequent efforts to stay afloat pushed it further and further into the Government's hands. The Government's own press endeavours are the subject of Chapter Nine which not only looks at the postcolonial Government's efforts to secure the power of its ruling party through Government departments, but also through the employment of a combination of public and private resources to establish *Kenya Times* as the party's newspaper. The conclusion identifies the raison d'etre of the newspapers examined as the promotion of the political and economic interests of their owners.

OF DISCONTENT, CONTRACTUAL WARS AND THE BIRTHING OF SECULAR NEWSPAPERS: 1899 – 1905

As the Paper exposed mal-Administration and want of efficiency in different departments, so the foolish 'Craufurd-Hardinge Administration took it up as a personal affront instead of realizing it was but a pioneer pointing out deficits in the East Africa Protectorate Administration.[1]

The printing press is almost as necessary as the individual work of the planter, cattle raiser or miner to the welfare of what is practically a new land.[2]

In 1899 Kenya's first secular and independent newspaper, the European-owned and managed *East Africa and Uganda Mail (EAUM)*, was born in territory the British government had taken over and declared the British East Africa Protectorate in 1895. The declaration followed the failure of William Mackinnon's Imperial British East Africa Company to surmount the fiscal and administrative challenges it had encountered while attempting to consolidate their hold over territory the British now called their own.[3] Gerald Portal was offered the protectorate's highest administrative post – Political Agent and Consul-General – with its headquarters at Zanzibar, but by the time the newspaper was established Arthur Hardinge was holding the post. From this small island off the coast of East Africa, the Consul-General was to administer a territory that comprised all the land between Lake Victoria Nyanza and the Indian Ocean with Juba as its northernmost limit and the Umba River as its southern limit. The interior was inhabited by Africans of different ethnicities, some of whom had interacted with coastal Africans, Arabs and Indians for centuries as trade across the Indian Ocean trade thrived. At the time Hardinge's term commenced, amidst Zanzibar's Arab-African mélange could be found its nineteenth century arrivals: employees of the former Imperial British East Africa Company

[1] *East Africa and Uganda Mail* (*EAUM)*, "Honest and Dishonest Bankruptcy," vol. III, no. 18, 4 May 1901, p.4.
[2] *African Standard, The Mombasa Times and Uganda Argus (EAS)*, "Ourselves," vol. I, no. 1, Saturday 15 November 1902, p.4.
[3] Prior to the existence of the *EAUM* there was the government's *Official Gazette* and the Church Missionary Society's *Taveta Chronicle*. For a list of these and other publications see Shiraz Durrani, *Never be Silent: Publishing and Imperialism in Kenya, 1884 – 1963*. London: Vita Books, 2006.

(IBEA Co.), Indian entrepreneurs, a few European consuls and their staff, Christian missionaries as well as representatives of several commercial houses who were eager to make the most of the protectorate's resources.[4] These new arrivals, and those who followed them, were not oblivious of the extent to which British administration, capital and support, stewarded by its local representative, could aid their diverse endeavours. To different degrees, they were also conscious of their varying socio-economic statuses and the extent to which their backgrounds hindered or aided their pursuits. Whatever their circumstances, they all had expectations and when those expectations were not met expeditiously their lot yielded the first to choose the print press as a forum to prod and goad the local administration to meet their needs. The press would also act as a tool with which to engineer the socio-economic environment of the BEA to one in which they could maneouvre optimally in their pursuit of prosperity.

However, the man at the helm of the protectorate had priorities that did not directly tally with those who were eagerly awaiting infrastructural development and the formulation of government policies that would help them exploit the protectorate's resources and commence an appreciable flow of revenues into their coffers. This was because Arthur Hardinge's term in office was characterised by attempts to consolidate Britain's hold over the protectorate which entailed a focus on security and administrative issues.[5] In the years between 1895 and 1900, he was involved in putting down a Mazrui rebellion stemming from one faction's rejection of the IBEA Co. - appointed Sultan of Takaungu, located mid-way between Mombasa and Malindi. He also oversaw political and military incursions into Jubaland in a bid to control relations between the Ogaden, Borana and Oromo who inhabited the territory in an effort to subjugate them. In

[4] Arthur Hardinge, *A Diplomatist in the East*. London: Jonathan Cape Limited 1928, pp.80 – 131. For more background on the protectorate see: John Flint, "The wider background to partition and colonial occupation" and Marie de Kiewiet Hemphill, "The British sphere, 1884 – 94," in Roland Oliver and Gervase Mathew (eds.) *History of East Africa*, vol. I, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963, pp. 352 – 432.
[5] Ibid., pp. 80 - 240

addition, he was charged with carrying on Britain's anti-slavery efforts and overseeing the establishment of the protectorate's administrative machinery both at the coast and inland. At best, the latter was skeletal in its composition and, sketchy in its structure. This in turn bred the discontent that would lead one couple to employ the region's first secular and independent newspaper as a weapon against the administration.

"The Personal is Political" – and Publishable[6]

The owner of the *EAUM* was Charles Palmer, a Eurasian who resigned from the civil service in a huff to go into business. Palmer's first employer in the protectorate was actually the IBEA Co. in which he served first as a clerk and then as an accountant. The company had acquired a royal charter in 1888 to administer British East Africa comprising of territory on the mainland that the Sultan of Zanzibar and later the British had considered to be under his rule despite his very limited interaction with and influence in the interior. However, the company's administration was short lived because it found the financial costs of the expanded infrastructural and security duties delegated to it following the Brussels' Conference of 1889-1890 most onerous and costly. When it was incorporated in 1888, it had envisioned a corporate life of trade and adventure not of financially haemorrhaging developmental undertakings. As a result, although the company was able to construct amenities such as a prison, offices and a hospital at the coast as well as the setting up of the Mackinnon "Road" (a network of trading posts that stretched from the coast to Uganda) it was unwilling and unable to invest in infrastructure – most famously or infamously the Uganda Railway - without government aid in the form of public funds no matter how crucial it appeared to be to its own corporate health or that of the

[6] Carol Hanisch, "The Personal is Political," 1969. http://www.carolhanisch.org/CHwritings/PIP.html. Accessed on Wednesday 19 October 2011.

protectorate. Furthermore, the company's staffing was meagre, wracked by illness as well as loneliness, with the latter aspect being most keenly felt in the interior.[7]

As a member of the company's staff, Palmer was to hold several varied positions within the Company and later the protectorate government which was not unusual at that time since the small pool of employees resulted in them serving in diverse portfolios sequentially or simultaneously. Therefore, between the years 1893 and 1899, Charles Palmer served as the Assistant Superintendant of Marginal Plantations (1893), the Assistant Superintendant of Customs (1893), the Acting Chief of Customs and Deputy Governor of Jail (1893), the Acting Commissary of the East Africa Protectorate's Troops (1896), the Assistant Chief of Customs and Acting Governor of Jail (1897-8), the Protector of Immigrants (1897) and finally the Superintendant of Inland Revenue and Conservancy (1899).[8] He eventually resigned from the civil service in September 1900 in protest against what he viewed as rampant cronyism. He later wrote a letter to Sir Arthur Hardinge, giving his reasons for retiring from the civil service and requesting that he be given the pension due to him for his service to the Protectorate. His letter is as revealing of the problems that then beset the Protectorate's Administration — the lack of clear and fully functional administrative structures and bigotry — as it is of Palmer's frustrations. He enumerated his complaints thus:

1 Mr. Marsden's paying me *privately* for two and a half years at fifty pounds a year for Uganda Government work done.[9]

2 On joining the Administration Department, I was thus deprived of part of my salary for 6 months (see correspondence).

[7] For the company's official history, see P.L. Mcdermott, *British East Africa or IBEA*. London: Chapman and Hall, 1895. For an account by a former company employee see Charles Hobley, *Kenya: From Chartered Company to Crown Colony*. London: H.F. & G. Witherby, 1929. See also G. H. Mungeam, *British Rule in Kenya 1895 – 1912: The Establishment of Administration in the East Africa Protectorate*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966 for a historian's synthesis of the company's ventures and travails. See also John Galbraith, *McKinnon and East Africa 1878-1895; A Study in the 'New Imperialism.'* Cambridge [Eng.]: University Press, 1972.
[8] *EAUM*, "Only a Paper Award for 10 Years Pioneer Service, vol. III, no. 19, 11 May 1901, p.5.
[9] Italics are Palmer's.

3 On my return from furlough I was not appointed "Controller of Inland Revenue" as assumed I would be, in a letter I hold from Mr. Marsden.

4 Your appointment of me as Protector of Immigrants was never carried out.

5 Mr. Crauford's rude, open abuse in office, calling me an [sic] "half-caste" office boy.

6 Mr. MacDougall's following his example, and calling me in the Provincial Court while sitting as a Magistrate, a "pumpkin-headed Subordinate," [sic] simply because as Chief of the Inland Revenue I brought to his notice that a part of a Shamba on the island belonged to Government and not Liwali.

7 Though designated Superintendant of Inland Revenue and Conservancy and drawing three hundred pounds a year, being classified as a SUBORDINATE and my original salary being fixed by you in Sterling, converted into rupees, against my most earnest pleading, by Mr. Crauford.

For these and other reasons besides, but especially finding that I could never be recognized in this Government, having no hopes, I was compelled to retire and now seek at your hands as her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen Empress' Representative, the recognition due my service in the past.[10]

Although not much is available on Charles Palmer's personnel record or background in general, it is nevertheless evident that certain employees including those of mixed heritage such as he endured unfavourable terms of service in the administration. Official correspondence exchanged between the administration's officials prior to his retirement reveal an unstated policy of racial discrimination that disadvantaged non-European personnel including Eurasians. For example, in response to a dispatch from the Foreign Office regarding leave and pension rules and regulations, a protectorate official writing to Arthur Hardinge made it clear those he had subsequently drafted applied exclusively to Europeans. This was presumably because the region's climate had a particularly deleterious effect on the health of Europeans while African, Arab and Indian employees were accustomed to it. Nevertheless, the official also added that he had drafted the rules to "prevent misunderstanding in the future" by setting forth "the principle

[10] *EAUM,* "Only a Paper Award," p.5.

that the European Covenanted service enjoys special privileges that cannot be claimed by natives of Oriental countries or surpass employment departmentally in the lower grades of the Administration." He was certain that if this was not clarified beforehand, in the future "natives of India…will be claiming privileges in the matters of pension and rank that is not intended they should obtain."[11] In response, Arthur Hardinge cautioned against officially stating that the rules were drawn in accordance with race. He thought it "advisable as a matter of practice to draw a line between European and native officers" but warned that openly declaring such a policy could cause "heart burnings and jealousies especially in the case of Eurasians and Goanese who regard themselves on the strength of their scant European ancestry and Christian faith as Europeans." Instead he proposed that the pension and leave rules that favoured Europeans be categorised as rules pertaining to a covenanted class of public servants earning £250 a year. He observed that "very few native officers…draw so high a salary, none draw it in sterling, so that practically all our native Indian, and Arab, and African public servants would be brought without any offensive race distinction into Class II" while Europeans occupied Class I.[12] Thus, although we have only Charles Palmer's word that he was treated unjustly while in the employ of the Protectorate's administration, it is evident that as a Eurasian, the odds were stacked against him as far as career advancement and benefits were concerned.

In a bid to clarify that he was not at fault after his retirement from the civil service, Palmer published letters in the *EAUM* that he received from officials with whom he had worked that presented him as an assiduous employee. He wanted readers of the newspaper to view him

[11] PC/COAST/1/1/24, Correspondence from Protectorate Official (name not visible, title not included) to Arthur Hardinge, 11 February 1897. Nairobi: KNA.
[12] PC/COAST/1/1/24, Correspondence from Arthur Hardinge to the Marquess of Salisbury, 15 February 1897. Nairobi: KNA. The Rules and Regulations were subsequently drawn according to Hardinge's instructions, see PC/COAST.1/1/24, Regulations for Leave of Absence of Officers of the East African Protectorate, February 1897. Nairobi: KNA.

as one whose labours never earned him the rewards and respect that he deserved. The Commanding and British Resident of Wituland under whom Palmer worked as a buildings and stores supervisor found him to be of "great help," "willing" and "hardworking."[13] In a reference letter to Major Lugard, the Captain of Fort Elvira, Ngongo, praised Palmer's ability to carry out several responsibilities simultaneously while various dockets awaited permanent appointees. He found him to be intelligent and diligent and the Captain even quotes correspondence from Marsden, the Chief of Customs and Governor of Jail and Palmer's immediate supervisor, commending his second in-charge "for mastery of detail, intellectual ability and powers of organization," and adding that he had "never seen his display excelled and indeed rarely equaled."[14] Some testimonials are not addressed to Palmer specifically but to his immediate supervisor and his staff in general. Since Palmer was one of the jail's administrators, he took pride in these letters as well. For instance, in late January 1897, the Brigadier-General and the Officer Commanding Troops in Zanzibar, visited the jail in Mombasa and wrote a letter to Marsden praising him and his staff for its cleanliness and the general arrangements in place for the care of its inmates. Other correspondence praising the conditions of the island's penal institution came in from Arthur Hardinge himself as well as several military officials stationed along the East African Coast with some singling out Palmer for praise. The future proprietor of the *EAUM* was also the recipient of glowing tributes from groups such as the merchants of Mombasa and the Bishop of East Equatorial Africa. These testimonials were sent to Palmer whenever he moved from one post to another and several came in when he resigned.

Thus, Palmer considered himself at the very least a committed and hardworking civil servant. However, he felt frustrated by his inability to garner the promotions he thought he

[13] Ibid. p. 5.
[14] Ibid. p.5.

deserved and humiliated by officials who had insulted him because of his racial background by referring to him as "half-caste" and "pumpkin-headed." For all his effort and passion, Palmer's superiors would never see him as worthy of the higher echelons to which he sought to ascend. When he realised that this was the case, Palmer, who in 1897 had even considered moving to West Africa to serve in Major Lugard's administration, resigned, turned his back on any kind of government service and went into private business. He left a bitter and angry man and his bitterness was heightened when he did not receive the pension or service bonus to which he felt entitled. Arthur Hardinge's explanations that he did not meet the necessary requirements for a pension (retirement at the age of 55 or continuous service for 20 years) did nothing to mollify him.[15] He saw all this as the continuation of the discrimination he had suffered while serving in the administration. Charles Palmer eventually resolved to make a public complaint against the government in two weekly editions of the *EAUM*. He published all the testimonials he had received and sent to the Consul-General together with Hardinge's correspondence to him under the title "Only a Paper Award for 10 Years Pioneer Service."[16] This was just one of the many ways in which Palmer used and would use the newspaper to censure the administration in addition to attempting to rally public opinion around him or goals that he favoured. The *EAUM* was founded by an angry, discontented man and the paper never lost its antagonistic stance towards the government.

By 1901, the first page of the newspaper, which was devoted to advertising, regularly featured two firms: Alibhai Jeevanji's Messers Esmailjee, Jeevanji and Co. who presented themselves as wholesale and retail dealers in American petroleum and oil from their bases in

[15] See PC/COAST/1/1/82, for correspondence to Charles Palmer that upholds Hardinge's decision on this matter after his case was forwarded to the Marquess of Landsdowne, 16 January 1901. Nairobi: KNA.
[16] *EAUM*, "Only a Paper Award," p.5.

Mombasa and Zanzibar at favourable rates to "general orders," while the second was Charles Palmer who touted himself as a government auctioneer, estate agent, railway and general contractor, printer and publisher, bookseller and bookbinder as well as the fortnightly host of cash clearance sales.[17] However, the relationship between Jeevanjee and Palmer was more than that of co-advertisers on a newspaper page. They were both trying to make the most of opportunities that the budding protectorate could offer to entrepreneurs, but only one owned the protectorate's only secular newspaper and prime advertising medium. They were also aware of just how key the British government's policies and local undertakings were to their success. In the years to come, the two men knew that the government would generate the protectorate's prime contracts and its infrastructural investments would be indispensible to the growth and expansion of commerce. Theirs was a relationship that though cordial in the beginning, was to turn into a most volatile and bitter conflict that would lead the former to set up his own newspaper shortly before the end of the following year. Nevertheless, they did have one thing in common: the desire to use the print press to cultivate and protect their commercial interests. As such, newspapers to both men were more than enterprises set up for profits. They were axes that could be wielded in the clearing away of government bureaucracy and prejudice of both class and race that constrained their dash towards success. The newspaper could also be deployed to shield and protect that which their proprietors had already acquired from competitors and all sorts of nuisances.

Charles Palmer started the newspaper with the help of Olive Grey, an author who came to East Africa to engage in humanitarian work. Olive Grey came to the protectorate either from India or Australia. In her book of memoirs, *Kenya Pioneers,* Errol Trzebinski identifies her as an ex-Salvation Army major and locates her point of departure for East Africa in the latter.

[17] See for example advertisements on front page of *EAUM*, vol. III, no.2, 12 January 1901.

Melbourne and Sydney editions of *The War Cry*, the Salvation Army's weekly journal, bear eight articles related to an Olive Grey and her young son Ernest Grey who departed for India from Sydney in June 1887.[18] The two were part of a contingent of fourteen Salvation Army cadets and majors who travelled to India on the *S. S. Victoria* for missionary purposes. Prior to and during their journey to the sub-continent, they made an effort to immerse themselves in the study of Tamil language and culture and even adopted new names. Olive Grey became Cadet Nyana Poo (also Pu) and Ernest Grey became Cadet Sella Tambi.[19] The group visited different stations around Sydney to say farewell and their return to the country was not expected. A Salvation Army major bidding them farewell hoped that he would never see them again in New South Wales as "they had pledged their lives to the service of God in India, and had signed their names to the vow they had made." Consequently, if they were to ever meet again it would mean "a breach of the vow and a disgrace to the colours they pledged themselves under."[20] The contingent was a source of great pride for the Salvation Army in Sydney. This was particularly because its leaders were three Indian converts to Christianity whom the organisation had embraced shortly after their arrival in Sydney before proceeding to support them with funding and volunteers. Other Indian Contingents to England and America, observed *The War Cry*, had

[18]For the articles that refer to Olive Grey and/or Earnest Grey and the Indian Contingent see, *The War Cry*, "Farewell of the Indian Contingent from New South Wales," Melbourne Edition, 11 June 1887, (unidentifiable page number); *The War Cry*, "Farewell of the Indian Contingent," Sydney Edition, 11 June 1887, p. 2; *The War Cry*, "Good-bye to our officers who are going to India: Great March to the steamer" and "With Major Pollard and the Indian Contingent, Sydney Edition, 18 June 1887, p. 2; *The War Cry*, "Gazette" and "Fourteen Apostles," Melbourne Edition, 2 July 1887, (unidentifiable page number); *The War Cry*, "Farewell to our Indian Comrades and Volunteers," Melbourne Edition, p. 3; *The War Cry*, "Voices from the Sea," Melbourne Edition, 9 July 1887, (page number unidentifiable); *The War Cry*, "Out Indians," Melbourne Edition, 3 September 1887, p. 2 and *The War Cry*, "Arrival of the Australian Contingent in India," Melbourne Edition, 3 September 1887, p. 2. All from The Salvation Army Eastern Territory Heritage Preservation Centre (SAHPC), New South Wales, Australia.

[19] *The War Cry*, "Farewell of the Indian Contingent from New South Wales" and "Farewell of the Indian Contingent," Melbourne Edition, 11 June 1887. Australia: SAHPC, unidentifiable page and p. 2.

[20] *The War Cry*, "With Major Pollard and the Indian Contingent," Sydney Edition, 18 June 1887, p. 2.

been "headed by white men (English officers, who had become Indian leaders) and in neither case had the contingent received as much support.[21]

What happened in the intervening years is unclear. However, by the 1890s, Errol Trzebinski's Olive Grey, now referred to as an ex-Salvation Army major, was in BEA with Charles Palmer whom she is variously described as "living with" or her "common-law husband." The two were one of the protectorate's few interracial couples.[22] The likelihood that this is the same Olive Grey who left Australia for India in 1887 is very high and her religious background gives some credence to her later claims of charitable endeavours in East Africa. Perhaps her depature from India did in fact signify spiritual failure in her eyes or in the eyes of those she had left behind in Australia. The resulting social dislocation from the community she knew in New South Wales could have made her stay there untenable and she may have resolved to start her life afresh in a new land. Once the Palmer and Grey ventured into journalism, the former provided the newspaper's capital while latter ran the newspaper as its editor (or "editress" as she was known then). In sparse glimpses of Grey in recent literature focus is mainly on her role as the instigator of a slew of attacks against Allibhai Jeevanji that resulted in him opting to establish the protectorate's second secular newspaper.[23] Nonetheless, this literature and Grey's own writing begin to reveal a journalistic mission forged by her sense of belonging to the British Empire and the disappointments she encountered as she tried to establish herself in one territory within that empire. According to Olive Grey, she disembarked from a ship at the coast with a lot of optimism and belief in her ability to play her role in advancing the objectives of the British

[21] Ibid.
[22] Errol Trzebinski, *The Kenya Pioneers*. London: Heinemann, 1985, pp.40, 59 – 60. The other interracial couple mentioned in this book is Dr Henry Albert Boedeker and his wife. He too was Eurasian.
[23] See for example John Ndegwa, *Printing and Publishing in Kenya: An Outline of Development*. London: Scolma 1973, pp. 3 – 4. For a more nuanced depiction of Olive Grey, see Zarina Patel, *Challenge to Colonialism: The Struggle of Alibhai Mulla Jeevanje for Equal Rights in Kenya.* Nairobi: Publishers Distributors Services, 1997, pp. 30 – 36.

Empire by working with freed slaves.[24] However; it was not long after her arrival that she began suffering financial problems which she attributed to poor administration on the part of the protectorate's administrators.

In the first quarter of 1901, the *Official Gazette*, which was government-owned but also the only other secular English newspaper in the Protectorate, carried a notice declaring "Mrs. Olive Grey Bankrupt."[25] The *EAUM* took neither the notice nor the events leading up to it kindly for it laid all blame at the doorstep of the administration. In their view, the government had vindictively unleashed its machinery upon their "editress" in a bid to silence her for what it considered her rather odious stance towards the Protectorate's administrative authorities. In an effort to rally public opinion on her side, Grey fell back on her newspaper, specifically the edition of 4th May 1901, in which it put her case before the readers in a lengthy article arguing that "when exposed in all its nakedness, without a rag of the Law to cover it" her problems would make it clear that the protectorate's officials had persistently harassed her for two years for daring to set up an independent newspaper. Her problems had gone on during the "Craufurd-Hardinge eccentric administration" and the latest court proceedings had made them believe that there would be no change in the government's conduct under the "Eliot Administration."[26] Olive Grey displayed her contempt for BEA's officials by placing the phrase "Craufurd-Hardinge Administration" in quotes throughout her article for she did not feel that the Protectorate's officials had been actually administering it.

According to the *EAUM,* Olive Grey wanted to establish a colony for runaway slaves in the Ogaden. As the nineteenth century drew to a close, the Ogaden Somali, who occupied the

[24] *EAUM*, "Honest and Dishonest Bankruptcy," vol. III, no. 18, 4 May 1901, p.4.
[25] Ibid., p. 4. Copies of the actual gazette notice are unobtainable.
[26] Ibid., p.4, Clifford Craufurd was the Acting Commissioner of the protectorate after Hardinge's departure in 1900 and before his successor Charles Eliot took over.

territory between the Rivers Tana and Juba, were constantly raiding the Borana and Oromo to their north for slaves and cattle and were a thorn in the flesh of the budding British administration.[27] It is unclear exactly why Grey chose the Ogaden for her work but due to the turbulent nature of the region at that time, it is unlikely that she would have ever succeeded in establishing a colony in that area. A more feasible location would have been Kismayu where the British administration was better established and where runaway slaves could obtain certificates of freedom, or closer to Mombasa. Before departing from Australia, the newspaper informed its readers that she had sold part of her property and given some away and had over Rs.35,000 in gold and silver as well as a couple of thousands in the National Bank, Mombasa. If all had gone well, the newspaper seemed to be informing its readers, there would be no reason whatsoever for its editor to have gone bankrupt.

Grey was a great supporter of Britain's imperial project and her paternalism is most evident in her belief that her work with runaway slaves would not only have been a noble deed, but also "a blessing to the Government in civilising of these dreadful parts."[28] However, on her arrival at Mombasa Olive Grey was aghast at the scenes that met her. The last famine of that century was ravaging the area and it seemed to her that the government was oblivious to the suffering around them and found its actions or lack thereof most appalling. At this point, we are told, Grey changed her mission and made a decision to redirect her energies to the famine victims of Mombasa and its outlying areas. She got help from the future proprietor of her newspaper, Charles Palmer, then the Superintendent of Inland Revenue of the East Africa Protectorate, who went beyond the duties of his docket to set up six large sheds made of wattle and plastered with earth. Trees were cleared from the area and a street was created. They also set

[27] For an administrator's struggles with Jubaland see Arthur Hardinge. *A Diplomatist in the East*, pp. 216-240.
[28] *EAUM*, "Honest and Dishonest Bankruptcy," vol. III, no. 18, 4 May 1901, p.4.

up a small dispensary and constructed basic sanitation facilities. With no government help forthcoming, the pair relied on their own resources and donations. An Indian merchant donated Rs.100 and the local chemist supplied her with carbolic acid. Grey used her own finances to buy medicines, as well as thousands of rolls of calico and the alcohol that was administered to the dying who could not eat. She also claims that she had to source and purchase milk, meat and rice amongst other foods, which consumed a considerable chunk of her savings (Rs. 9,650). When the camp had been set up, Grey took charge of it and the paper approximates it had about 3,500 people including 80 infants whose mothers were too malnourished to feed them and 200 children in a very poor state of health as well as elderly people who needed a considerable amount of attention. Apparently around 380 people visited the dispensary every day. At the time, there was also a jigger epidemic and Grey was confronted by children with infected and deformed limbs on a daily basis. The tragedy was compounded by the loss of life including 3,000 on Mombasa Island who perished in the vicinity of the Consular buildings. As the famine went on, a smallpox epidemic erupted and the death rate spiraled upwards. Grey attributed the epidemic to the government's poor handling of the situation and warned that "those dead bodies Abel-like will cry out against those who let them perish."[29]

Although there is no independent record to corroborate Grey's account of her charitable deeds there is certainly proof of the famine she mentions in addition to evidence of an inadequate response on the part of the BEA's officials. In the first half of 1900, the administration was communicating losses caused by the death of livestock to London while the Principal Medical Officer was recommending measures to be taken to prevent the spread of small pox which had

[29] Ibid.

arrived in dhows from the Asian sub-continent.[30] Two years before, the administration was trying to prevent plague from spreading at the coast.[31] Olive Grey does not claim to have witnessed all the above problems. Nonetheless, it is plausible that the existence of small pox and the plague in combination with livestock deaths and other factors combined over a number of years to impact food production negatively and precipitated a famine. The timeline of events also matches her account. It is clear that by 1898 Olive Grey was already in BEA, Charles Palmer was still an official and a large area of the Nyika Plateau in the hinterland was in the throes of a famine. The administration's response was to make hay while the sun baked the earth by offering the famished food in exchange for their labour on "remunerative works." In his May 1898 letter to Vice-Consul Clifford Craufurd, Arthur Hardinge informed him of the Secretary of State's sanction for the food for labour scheme. He also urged him to keep proper records as the Treasury in London would be keen on ascertaining "the manner in which the money has been spent, the results which have been obtained and the ultimate results which may be expected from the outlay."[32] Consequently, Craufurd was to see to the "strict and careful supervision" of the works' labourers and contractors. Months later, the austere proposal was yet to be fully implemented as in September 1898, Hardinge sent Craufurd another letter. This time, he was sanctioning Craufurd's proposal to employ "distressed Wa-giriama on the relief works at Mombasa," right at the coast and not far from the administration's Zanzibar headquarters.[33] One

[30] PC/COAST/1/1/69/5, Correspondence reporting the Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs' response to BEA officials, 22 January 1900. Nairobi: KNA; PC/COAST/1/169, Correspondence from the Principal Medical Officer to the Commissioner and Consul General of BEA, 18 May 1900. Nairobi, KNA; and PC/COAST/1/1/69, Correspondence transmitting the Principle Medical Officer's report, 31 May 1900. Nairobi: KNA.
[31] PC/COAST/1/1/39/72, Correspondence from the Commissioner and Consul General to the Vice Consul, 26 January 1898. Nairobi: KNA.
[32] PC/COAST/1/1/39/73, Correspondence from the Consul General to the Vice-Consul, 24 May 1898. Nairobi: KNA.
[33] PC/COAST/1/1/39/126, Correspondence from the Consul General to the Vice-Consul, 9 September 1898. Nairobi, KNA.

can only conjecture what concerned observers could have been moved to do. What is clear is that the nature and pace of the administration's response gave the Greys and Palmers of the Protectorate much room to criticise it.

Olive Grey seems to have become increasingly frustrated and angry at the manner in which the government of the day handled the crisis. She considered the officials a shame upon Great Britain and its Empire. She was irked by the sight of the officials and their wives passing along the trolley line that she estimates was only about sixty feet from the camp on their way to play tennis in the afternoon on a daily basis. To add to this, the Acting Sub-Commissioner at Mombasa and the Acting Commissioner and Consul General never bothered to visit the camp or provided material and moral support. To her, they were a disappointment and an embarrassment — a stain in the fabric of the British Empire. The two men had "left Her Majesty's subjects to die like dogs," and had displayed negligence of a most shocking and distressing nature. She mourned the fate of the Protectorate in the hands of the inert officials Sir Arthur Hardinge had left in charge of the country at the close of his term. In the end, Grey and Palmer, united in their common disdain for the Protectorate's officials, resolved to establish the *East Africa and Uganda Mail*. Grey's mission was to call the attention of the British Government upon the "cruel wrongs and terrible sufferings of the people" wrought by the "Hardinge-Craufurd administration" in the hope that they would be corrected.[34] In her opinion, that deed was the harbinger of her tribulations as Crauford and his colleagues went out of their way to silence her publication.

Olive Grey squarely blamed the government for her bankruptcy tribulations. According to her its activities, geared towards silencing her, had resulted in a chain reaction that consumed whatever money she had left after her famine-related expenses. This set of problems apparently,

[34] *EAUM*, "Honest and Dishonest Bankruptcy," vol. III, no. 18, 4 May 1901, p.4.

began when the National Bank into which she had paid over 64 money orders since her arrival into the Protectorate seized 25 money orders belonging to her. It is unclear why the government took this action against her and all we have is Grey's assertion that the suffocation of her independent paper was the overriding motivation. To compel the return of her money orders, she was forced to make a journey to the island of Zanzibar for the purposes of hiring a lawyer and obtaining legal advice. Grey argued that her journey to Zanzibar was unavoidable because no lawyers in Mombasa were willing to take up a case against a government official. The trip, accommodation and legal expenses cost her yet more money. This particular case went on for six months and at the end of it Olive Grey emerged the victor as the Post Master General was ordered to pay a nominal fine for expenses.[35]

A second cause of her liquidity problems, the *EAUM* explains, were the delays she encountered when the government, working through a private company, slowed down the delivery of press machinery to the *EAUM* by the time that had been agreed on. Since she had already hired a manager and compositors she had to pay them without fail even when they were not working, as letting them go was a risky proposition because their skills were rarity in Mombasa. Eventually, Grey had to travel to Zanzibar once again, but this time it was to buy a complete plant; yet another unexpected expense. Her triumph however, only set off a third attempt at frustrating her printing enterprise. At this point, Craufurd allegedly befriended a man with whom he was previously at loggerheads. This time, she alleges that Arthur Marsden, a government official and businessman whose wide ranging influence and activities stretched "this small atom of humanity" and who was working in collusion with the Secretary to the Protectorate's Commissioner Sir Charles Eliot, manufactured a charge of libel against her newspaper. Grey alleges that the scheme was set off when the Commissioner's Secretary, who

[35] Ibid.

was then working as a district officer, wrote to the *EAUM* complaining about Marsden's subordinate, a certain Bultz. Eventually the newspaper claims the case cost Olive Grey more money in lawyer's fees as well as travelling expenses and even more when it was settled to her disadvantage.

Yet, more trouble lay ahead for Grey. According to the *EAUM*, during her court case Grey had helped a woman who was injured and in dire financial straits to bring her case into Court for purposes of compensation. Following this act of generosity, the newspaper explained that the Crown Prosecutor of the Protectorate then wrote to Olive Grey after she had been declared bankrupt inquiring into whether she would be willing to waive her claim over what this woman owed her in favour of another person to whom the woman in question also owed money. The editor responded in the affirmative. However, this was of course illegal after Grey was declared bankrupt and the *EAUM* asserted that the Crown Prosecutor was being malicious and "leading a lady into a trap, who did not understand legal technicalities." This action led to the court making the Final Decision of Bankruptcy against Grey, accusing her of attempting to cheat the receiver of her insolvent estate. Nevertheless, throughout the court case, Olive Grey maintained that she was not indebted to any individual and this included a certain Mr. Bultz whose claim she did not recognise. She also maintained that she had no money, land or property that the receiver could take over. There were further attempts to seize the newspaper and its printing press but these failed, for Olive Grey had transferred the ownership of the two to her son "well before there was any thought of a court case." The punctuation in the drafting of the deed made it clear that both belonged to her son and "the mark by which Mr. Turner, the Receiver of goods, thought he could seize the Paper, if not the Press – a comma short!"[36]

[36] Ibid.,pp. 4 – 5.

Other attempts Grey insists the administration made in a bid to further frustrate her, for example the court ordering the post office to seize and read her private letters for the two months following the case, failed. All in all, the paper blamed the government for Grey's insolvency and the depletion of the resources with which she had arrived in the protectorate. Her conscience was clear as her "bankruptcy" was only disturbing to the Crown Prosecutor and his colleagues whom she loathed. In the same edition, was a paragraph drenched in schadenfreude as the *EAUM* announced the "dissolution of the Mombasa Triumvirate" under its *Local Notes* section. It chuckled at the arrival of "the Day of Retribution," for its legal correspondent had learnt that a commission of inquiry had been set up to investigate Marsden's maladministration of the island's penal institution. The descent into irrelevance of a vaguely identified Muir was inevitable while Bultz was apparently in the prison's hospital, "disgusted with life, contemplates exchanging the terrestrial for the celestial globe, but has since changed his mind fearing his reception." [37] The extent to which the Administration was responsible for Grey's tribulations is unverifiable. What is clear is that she considered the Administration ill-intentioned, inefficient and oblivious to the full import of its duties in the protectorate. The *EAUM* enabled her to publicly vent her side of the story in a way the administration could not in terse *Official Gazette* snippets.

For Empire, For Business, For Battle

In spite of her problems, Grey remained in Mombasa to continue editing the newspaper and came to see her mission as being the constructive criticism of officialdom. This was perhaps also because the mission enabled her to continue lashing out against those she blamed for her problems. It did not seem to bother her that the government would strike back at her given her hard-line stance towards its faults:

[37] Ibid., *"Local Notes,"* p.6

> Still the Paper grew and flourished and Public Opinion was formed or brought to light from where it had lain so long in darkness. As the Paper exposed mal-Administration and want of efficiency in different departments, so the foolish 'Craufurd-Hardinge Administration took it up as a personal affront instead of realizing it was but a pioneer pointing out deficits in the East Africa Protectorate Administration.[38]

Olive Grey presented her critiques as being good for the administration even when they were vituperative. She maintained that she was determined to use her newspaper to prod the government into action for what she considered was the development and betterment of the protectorate even if it meant the deployment of ridicule and jest to bring attention to her cause. She viewed the role of her independent newspaper as the conscience of an administration where one was sorely lacking and whose organisation was fundamentally flawed. These flaws were problematic not only for the protectorate but also for Grey and Palmer who felt victimised by the status quo. We get a sense of just how diseased and pernicious to their interests the pair thought the government was in an editorial published shortly after the paper rose in defense of its editor.

About two months after standing up for Olive Grey, the *EAUM* dubbed the administration "headless" and one that was "led by amateurs who can only play at Law and Administration."[39] It proceeded to rail at the administration by arguing that it lacked a strong leader and had officials whose lack of professionalism was to blame for the woes of the protectorate. However, those general complaints were accompanied by volleys launched at officials who had in one way or another made life difficult for Grey and Palmer. In the *EAUM*'s opinion, while the cat was away, the mice led by the influential Clifford Craufurd were playing and were guilty of a long string of misdeeds. The Municipal Commissioner, first in line for critique, was accused of generally lacking in transparency and failing to account for the use of taxes with the paper decrying "taxation without representation." Not surprisingly, the month before, the paper had

[38] *EAUM*, "Honest and Dishonest Bankruptcy," vol. III, no. 18, 4 May 1901, p.4.
[39] *EAUM*, "A Headless Administration, vol. III, no. 27, July 6 1901, p.4.

reported on Charles Palmer's loss of a battle with the Municipal Commissioner regarding the breach of terms of a five-year contract to supply locomotive wood fuel.[40] Next was the Post Master General, who had withheld Grey's private letters in the wake of her bankruptcy declaration. The *EAUM* announced the need for a conscientious Post Master who could resist coercion into illegal acts from the courts. According to the editorial, the protectorate was also in urgent need of a new Police Commissioner as the present one was a lame duck while the Chief of Customs, the notorious Arthur Marsden, was too busy dabbling in a hundred and one irrelevancies as trade and commerce, those hallowed spheres that the *EAUM* so often extolled and in which its proprietor was a direct participant, suffered. To add to this, "amateurs" needed to be expelled from the courts and the appointment of a new Crown Prosecutor (to replace the acting prosecutor who had so tormented Olive Grey) was a matter of absolute urgency. Furthermore, it was a pity noted the paper, that Judge Hamilton, who had unjustly decided against Olive Grey in the bankruptcy trial, had been promoted from registrar to judge, an "exalted, sacred and responsible" position which he did not merit owing to what they considered a ghastly lack of integrity. The paper also noted the lack of a Protector of Immigrants, the post to which Sir Arthur Hardinge had appointed Palmer in 1897 but which was never carried out. Eventually it became one of Arthur Marsden's many posts and as a result the newspaper reported that thousands of sick, jigger-ridden Indians had been neglected or returned to India without due care and medical attention. The *EAUM* claimed to have cared for several diseased and hungry Indians with no government support and singled out the case of one Indian who was afraid of taking a wage dispute to court because, in a manner reminiscent of the lawyers Grey had encountered during her bankruptcy tribulations, he would not get a fair hearing as it was a case against "high officials." But above all, the newspaper called for a stronger Commissioner who

[40] *EAUM*, "Mr. Huebner of Nairobi," vol. III, no. 25, 22 June 1901, pp. 4- 5.

would govern from Mombasa instead of Zanzibar, one who was capable of resisting the influence of the "Mombasa triumvirate." As such, the editorial was also a cautionary note to the incoming Commissioner Sir Charles Elliot in the hope that he would be the new broom that would sweep away the protectorate's administrative dirt that the newspaper had exposed.

While Olive Grey's conduct could have made her appear disloyal to the protectorate, the editorials of the *EAUM* indicate that Grey considered herself a loyal subject of the Queen who was making her own small contribution towards the "advancement of civilisation" and prodding on those she viewed as laggards in their duties towards that mission. We see this in the manner in which she views the impact of the protectorate's administrative malaise above and in the general tone of her editorials. She always made it clear that the villains were local officials and not the British Crown. Her most explicit editorial in this regard was titled "The Queen," and was penned in the wake of Queen Victoria's death.[41] She calls Queen Victoria the "nation's mother" and mourns the loss of her "tact and ripened wisdom." The editorial is largely hagiographical and lengthy, taking up almost three quarters of a page and is specially bordered in bold, black lines. Her pride in Britain's Empire is evident as she praises "the noble woman who has ruled the greatest empire the world has ever known." Though the queen was dead and her son would soon be enthroned as king, she would not be forgotten as her flesh would "still wear the diadem and sway the sceptre over England's Empire, by sea and land, comprising many countries and people."[42] The editorial is heavy in hyperbole and very lavish in its praise of the manner in which the empire had expanded under the queen's leadership, but nevertheless does reveal Grey to have been a genuine devotee to the empire and its attendant goals.

[41] *EAUM,* "The Queen," vol. III, no. 4, 26 January 1901, p.4.
[42] Ibid.

Primary amongst those goals was the advancement of British commerce, a cause that was close to the heart of the *EAUM's* editor and even closer to that of its proprietor Charles Palmer. One of the reasons the editor had mourned the loss of life she encountered on her arrival at Mombasa was because it had resulted in the loss of so many of "our labourers and agriculturalists."[43] Grey and Palmer both felt like outsiders of the protectorate's small ruling class and the treatment they experienced at the hands of various officials simply reinforced this feeling. As editor of the *EAUM,* Olive Grey was a woman of modest means. Palmer, having retired from the civil service with little in his pocket, was struggling to find his feet in the business world. They both understood well that for them to become financially comfortable as individuals, they needed an administration that would be untiring in its efforts to create an environment that was conducive to trade and services auxiliary to trade, that is, an environment in which commerce could grow and thrive. Such an environment was one in which an individual's antecedents or class background did not matter - especially if one was British. Both Grey and Palmer considered themselves loyal Britons and clearly thought well of Britain. It is therefore significant that Grey considered one of the marks of a good administrator as being his ability to level class. An environment in which British commerce thrived was attractive to them not only because of the prosperity it brought to its actors, but also because it could also be a leveler of "silly distinctions that have made reasonable man a fool, and they bring in the dawn of a universal brotherhood," so that eventually the world would be fully integrated with "nation depending on nation."[44] They were brave words indeed, even though Grey hardly ever leaves one with the impression that it was desirable for Britain to ever depend on another nation even if it were mutually advantageous. She thought Edward VII most fortunate to be ascending to the

[43] *EAUM*, "Honest and Dishonest Bankruptcy," vol. III, no. 18, 4 May 1901, p.4.
[44] *EAUM,* "England's Commercial Pioneers," vol. III, no. 3, 19 January, 1901, p.4.

throne when he did for it was at a time when the United Kingdom was at its acme, when "monarchy has blended with imperialism" and "the little acorn [had turned] into a might oak." Britain had produced men such as Rhodes and Chamberlain and she added that it was courtesy of these men that "the British are waking up to the greatness of their destiny."[45] *EAUM* thus took great pride in the empire, had great hopes for its future in general, and its commercial potential in particular. Therefore, to the end of creating the environment they so longed for, Palmer and Grey employed the *EAUM* to call out the government's sluggish efforts or in some instances, outright failure to create an environment in which commerce might thrive. Palmer also used the newspaper to advertise his own businesses, as well as to fight those who frustrated his entrepreneurial ventures.

The call to governmental action was a major theme in the pages of the *EAUM*. Being very optimistic about Africa's wealth and its potential economic benefits to Britain, the paper was employed in a bid to promote this optimism to Britons at home and within the protectorate. They believed Africa was important because it could provide a vast new outlet for British goods and services as well as for its population. It was rich in valuable minerals, timber, wildlife, and human resources. Grey was encouraged by the transport and communication investments that Europe, but especially Great Britain in particular, had made on the continent such as telegraph lines and railways. She was also proud of its "khaki clad soldiers" for having made it possible for Britons to travel and trade with a good measure of security. The missionaries had worked with devotion but it was Britain's soldiers who had been able to "say thus and thus shall it be on this land."[46] Nevertheless, there was much to accomplish and plenty that remained for Britain to exploit. Grey and Palmer felt that there were many who did not share their optimism in Africa

[45] *EAUM*, "The King," vol. III, no. 5, 2 February 1901, p.4.
[46] *EAUM,* "Africa," vol. III, no. 11, 16 March 1901, p. 4.

because they were yet to understand its potent economic power. Their newspaper was but a small voice in the wilderness and they hoped that all would eventually come to share their vision for Africa's future and place in the British Empire. This vision was so important that despite the bellicosity of her governmental critiques from time to time, Grey was not beyond the use of less severe language in an attempt to inspire the wide scale structural change she sought for BEA.

In her editorial on "England's Commercial Pioneers," Grey praises unidentified British consulates for adroitly carrying out what appears to be her view of Britain's most important imperial goal: commerce. This is quite interesting given what she had declared was her primary goal for coming to East Africa; the establishment of freed slave settlements. She argued that just as British military installations across the world "with untiring zeal keep watch and ward over our possessions, just so the consuls and vice-consuls over its commerce."[47] She praised British administrative officials for not only managing lands their country had taken over but also for ensuring that "nothing of commercial interest escapes them." She considered them pioneers because they were adept at identifying the needs of new British "possessions" and communicating these needs to British merchants who in the absence of their wise counsel had to make do with their own congested markets. Grey wrote that it was due to their efforts that British capital poured into new lands, set up the necessary infrastructure, and contributed to the end of slavery as slaves allegedly became wage labourers of dignity. In British consulates, she elaborated, one could find "a splendid body of young and talented men" to whom Britain owed its greatness as it was their intelligence and toil that enabled its empire to grow and thrive. Nevertheless, judging from Grey's very low opinion of the protectorate's administration, it is obvious that she did not consider its leaders wise commercial pioneers. Her goal in writing this editorial was to have Hardinge and his colleagues compare themselves to the glowing praise she

[47] *EAUM,* "England's Commercial Pioneers," vol. III, no. 3, 19 January 1901, p.4.

had lavished on British consuls in general and come to the realisation that they were woefully wanting as administrators and discharging the duties of their dockets rather poorly. It was critical that the administration played its role, for the sooner an enabling commercial environment was created then the better for individual merchants such as Palmer who were waiting anxiously to exploit the varied opportunities that good infrastructure and auxiliary services would afford them.

The frustrations Palmer felt as a budding entrepreneur all found a place in the pages of the *EAUM* as critiques of government service and almost always were accompanied by suggestions they hoped the government would take up. As a government auctioneer and railway fuel contractor (the latter entailed supplying wood for fuel), Palmer must have felt the absence of efficient transport systems quite keenly. In "The Water-ways and Road-ways of the East Africa Protectorate," the editor argued that it was a waste of time for the protectorate to welcome trade and investment when there was no decent transport system.[48] Although the completion of the Uganda Railway would give the protectorate a strong central line running from the coast westwards to the then recently named Lake Victoria there were few branch roads connecting it to the interior. The paper mourned that there was only one road in the entire country, the Mackinnon Road. The protectorate needed roads that were well constructed and maintained and the editor implied that the administration had failed those who needed these facilities because they had strived to put up what she considered rather extravagant homes for its officials before roads that could enhance trade and contribute to the government's coffers. In addition, although animal transport was an option for entrepreneurs such as Palmer and even the government this mode had failed because the paper asserted, no proper care had been taken of the animals and they had been mistreated in the hands of reckless men "who acted in the same brutal, foolish

[48] *EAUM*, "The Water-ways and Road-ways of the East Africa Protectorate," vol. III, no. 12, 23 March 1901, p.4.

manner our own Cavalry have been doing in South Africa" resulting in the failure of this system. [49] Human porters had also suffered at the hands of reckless supervisors and the paper was saddened that the government had only stepped in when vital human resources had already perished. Moreover, the paper argued that the rivers Tana and Juba were also unfortunately lying idle when the government could have better exploited them as modes of transport by putting steamers on them. The paper argued that it was necessary for the government to move fast, deploying the necessary steamers with water police to provide security in addition to adding branch roads running into the main stations of the railway for the efficient movement of goods and the ultimate creation of a formidable market in the interior.

The *EAUM* also mourned the "loss of time and waste of money" that resulted from the lack of postal boxes or bags at a number of railway stations. Postal facilities were generally meagre and communication with people who lived at stations where these facilities were lacking was difficult and costly. For purposes of illustration, the newspaper explained that to post a letter to Mazeras which was but 14 miles away from Mombasa, one had to resort to a human carrier who took a total of 28 days for a return journey, wait about three days for a passenger train that could carry the letter, or spend money on telegrams. Interestingly, the paper chose to highlight the communication difficulties of contractors supplying wood to the railway and who employed large gangs of labourers to cut that wood. The editor observed that it was necessary for the contractor to communicate frequently with the labourers but doing so was then a slow and costly affair which hurt their businesses and by extension hampered the functions of the railway. To remedy this problem, the newspaper recommended that a postal box be attached to the passenger train that ran only three times a week. Such boxes would then be opened by the telegraph clerks located at various stations who could take out the correspondence sent to their stations before the

[49] Ibid., p.4.

train and its postal box departed for the next station. In this way, a desperate need would be met and "the hundred and one irritating troubles that the inhabitants of the small stations" felt would be dispelled.[50]

Perennial transport and communication problems are what led the *EAUM* to advocate for the establishment of a chamber of commerce in Mombasa arguing that pervasive "red tape ignorance" of infrastructural needs was asphyxiating the efforts of the protectorate's entrepreneurs. The paper zeroed in on the Traffic Department as it was then composed, asserting that it was oblivious to the needs of business and that it needed to acknowledge and tap into the wise counsel of those who were engaged in business and thus most capable of understanding the needs of their peers. It revisited its concerns regarding the protectorate's infrastructure, arguing that its enhancement would mean the growth of trade and by extension government revenue. The railway had brought about the improved exploitation of the hinterland's resources including "its choicest timber forests." What was lacking was the participation of entrepreneurs in government policy-making, that is, people who not only had the potential of guiding the administration towards commerce-friendly policies but who could also contribute towards infrastructural development if they had government recognition and support. For example, now that the main trunk line had been completed, the paper envisioned private capital investing in light lines, steamers and animal transport if the government permitted traders to establish boards of commerce or committees of commerce to manage them.

Of all infrastructural concerns the construction and management of the railway was the *EAUM's* major preoccupation. Firstly, the paper had a rather romanticised view of the railway and considered it the "greatest and grandest factor of civilisation" on which the "tireless iron horse" chugged on bravely as it went forth to spread "enlightenment" on those who were so

[50] *EAUM*, "Loss of Time and Waste of Money," vol. III, no. 19, 11 May 1901, p.4.

fortunate as to be on its glorious path.[51] They keenly followed the trunk line's tidings, reporting on its operations, all threats to its operations, the elimination of threats to its operations as well as doling out whatever advice they thought would enhance or improve its operations in almost each and every edition of the newspaper.[52] Secondly, Palmer himself successfully pursued contracts with the railway although he was not always able to benefit fully from them financially. In all his advertisements he always included, as one of his business interests, "railway and general contractor" and in June 1901, the *EAUM* published a report on "Mr. Huebner of Nairobi" in which it accused Huebner, the British Municipal Commissioner, of breaking the terms of a 5 year contract in which the two had undertaken to supply wood fuel to the railway as co-contractors. It was another example of the paper being deployed to directly confront a source of Palmer's commercial frustrations. He lost the case but in a place where the railway was a major generator of all sorts of business it was difficult for even an entrepreneur such as Palmer, who loathed government officials and held their running of the protectorate in disdain, to resist the pursuit of the attractive contracts its existence generated. He continued to advertise himself as a railway contractor and undoubtedly continued to compete for railway contracts.[53]

The *EAUM*'s vested interest in the country's railway line eventually led to its falling out with the man behind the company that had been Charles Palmer's front page co-advertiser in several newspaper editions: Alibhai Mulla Jeevanjee. According to his granddaughter and biographer Zarina Patel, Jeevanji was born in Karachi in 1856 to a family which belonged to the Daudi Bohra community. According to Patel, the community's introverted and conservative ways as well as familial problems caused him to flee from Karachi and sent him on a sojourn through various regions in British India during which his entrepreneurial ability blossomed and

[51] *EAUM,* "Lowering the Tone of the Service," vol. III, no. 2, 12 January 1901, p.4.
[52] Reference made to entire run of EAUM's 1901 editions.
[53]See for example front page advertisements of EAUM, vol. III, no. 25, 22 June 1901, p. 4.

encouraged him to seek even more opportunities in Australia. While there, Patel explains that he learnt about the commercial opportunities and economic potential of Africa from British officials and when his family tricked him into returning to Karachi, after which they engineered the winding up of his Australian businesses, he decided to go to East Africa to start his commercial ventures afresh.[54] In East Africa Patel writes that he quickly found his feet in Mombasa and, equipped with a knowledge of colloquial English, he deftly established relationships with officials of the IBEAC and won their confidence in his ability to do business with them when he successfully secured immigrant labour from India on their behalf in 1890 and continued to do so when need arose. The following year, he profitably pioneered stevedoring and dubashing in the protectorate and in 1897 landed a lucrative contract to supply rations for labourers and other goods to the Uganda Railway after both railway officials and a private contractor failed to do so efficiently and economically.[55] He also made various investments in real estate and won several government construction contracts. Jeevanjee lost the railway contract the same year he earned it but as Patel notes rightly, his involvement with the railway did not end immediately and actually continued for a few more years.[56]

His ease in winning government contracts in general, but more so his continued involvement in supplying the railway with various commodities after his contract ended, was the cause of his falling out with the *EAUM* and his establishment of the protectorate's second independent newspaper. However, for the duration of the case, the *EAUM* was advantageously positioned as the Protectorate's sole independent news source and it published lengthy verbatim reports of the court case in addition to commentaries. It obviously hoped that these would

[54] Zarina Patel. *Challenge to Colonialism: The Struggle of Alibhai Mulla Jeevanjee for Equal Rights in Kenya*. Nairobi: Publisher's Distribution Services [distributor], 1997, pp. 2 – 7.
[55] See Alibhoy Jeevanjee's testimony in *EAUM*, "Uganda Railway (Alleged Frauds)," vol. III, no. 23, 8 June 1901, p.4 for the commencement and end date of the contract.
[56] Zarina Patel, *Challenge to Colonialism*, pp. 13 – 23.

embarrass the administration and expose it as a biased, inefficient arbiter of commerce. Its version is all that is accessible to the historian and at the very least reveals much about Palmer and Grey's ongoing commercial frustrations which they blamed on the administration and their effort to fight it by proxy.[57]

The bone of contention was a tender to supply castor oil to the Uganda Railway that Jeevanjee had held before losing it to Charles Palmer in June 1900.[58] The tender Palmer got had no terms and conditions and after failing to get any from the railway, he transferred the lucrative contract to the Italian Colonial Trading Company the same year. Not surprisingly, the company encountered several hardships which resulted in it bringing a suit against the Secretary of State in 1901 claiming a sum of Rs.40,000 which they argued had been illegally cut out of payments the Uganda Railway owed to them as its castor oil contractors. They asserted that the railway's Chief Storekeeper had colluded with the former contractor Alibhai Jeevanjee from whom they had purchased 4,000 gallons of castor oil at Rs.10, which was about four times the price on the tender the Italian Company had won. The plaintiff's lawyer argued that the contract his client had inherited was poorly drawn up as it had no terms or conditions, which meant that the contractor was obliged to supply castor oil on a most unpredictable basis. As such the railway could theoretically go for months without requisitioning oil or requisition an extraordinarily large amount without prior notice to the contractor.

The unpredictability of the contract manifested itself in July 1900 when the railway ordered 5,200 gallons of oil as a matter of urgency. In August, the Uganda Railway ordered even more castor oil: 7,000 gallons. According to Acting Chief Storekeeper A. W. Reid's, ledger

[57] The KNA's inquiries to its records offices at Mombasa on this author's behalf in the summer of 2010 were unfruitful as the KNA, Nairobi was informed that court records dating to that period were unaccounted for and inaccessible.

[58] Verbatim record of the proceedings available in *EAUM*, "Uganda Railway (Alleged Frauds)," vol. III, no. 2, 1 June 1901, pp. 4 – 5 and *EAUM*, "Uganda Railway Alleged Frauds), vol. III, no. 23, 8 June 1901, pp. 4 – 6.

adduced as evidence in court, the number of gallons ordered in those months was well above the ordinary monthly average of 2,400 gallons. Reid explained that the above average order was due to an extra number of engines running that month but he was unable to account for the urgent nature of his order. As the representative of the Italian Company, F. Naish, explained in court, they found it extremely difficult to meet the railway's demands for oil and initially, could only do so fitfully. To begin with, their first order for oil in July from an Indian company got delayed in Bombay, leaving them with no option but to turn to the local market for supplies. However, in a move that can be seen as either vindictive and sly or foresighted and savvy, Jeevanjee had instructed his company to purchase all the castor oil in the protectorate's market after he had lost the railway contract.[59] When Naish approached Jeevanjee to purchase oil, he agreed to sell the oil to him at Rs. 10 a gallon, which was very high for a company that was invoicing the railway for Rs.2 to Rs.3 a gallon for the oil it supplied. Naish desperately tried to get Jeevanjee to reduce his rate but failed and the Italian Company eventually agreed to purchase oil from the former at the quoted rate. At this point, preserving the company's lucrative contract with the railway even at a loss in the short term appears to have been better than losing it altogether. However, before the transaction between the two parties could be completed, Jeevanjee reportedly changed his mind about selling the Italian Company his oil and Reid, who had somehow come to learn of his change of mind before the Italian Company and went on to place an order with Jeevanjee for the first 2,000 gallons of oil.

Meanwhile, Naish alleged that they experienced unusual difficulties in unloading the lighters that brought their oil in from Zanzibar in that critical month of July.[60] He explained to the court that when their first supplies from Zanzibar arrived that year, the company's landing

[59] Ibid., pp. 4 – 6. Ibrahimjee Jeevanjee denied having aggressively accumulated castor oil stocks. A. M. Jeevanjee said "if I accumulated a quantity of castor oil that is for my own lookout."
[60] The oil from Zanzibar was ordered to make up for the oil delayed in Bombay.

agents issued special instructions to Jeevanjee whose company was in charge of discharging barges, to give first priority to the discharging of the lighter that had transported the Italian Company's oil. However, it seemed to Naish that although the lighter that was carrying the Italian Company's oil was advantageously located, "Jeevanji would not pull it into the wharf" and when they his company finally did, "they seemed to pull it extra slowly." Naish was thus implying that Jeevanji had used his position as the Protectorate's dominant stevedore to further delay his oil supplies so as to make it possible for the Uganda Railway to purchase oil from the company that owned the only available local supplies in sufficient quantity, Jeevanjee's.

Eventually, the railway received 4,000 gallons of oil from Jeevanjee as it continued to obtain oil from the Italian Company, paying the latter regularly until November 1900 when it wrote to them demanding Rs.30,000 with no explanation. Another Rs. 10,000 was withheld from money owed to the Italian Co. for castor oil supplies. The railway, it seems, was demanding the money from the Italian Company for the inconvenience and uneconomical manner it had 'forced' them to purchase oil outside their contract. They had chosen to buy oil from a favoured ex-contractor but probably felt miffed by the extremely high rate at which he finally sold the oil to them. Based on the available testimonies for the Italian Colonial Company, the ugliness of the financial dent in their books was one that needed to be addressed as soon as possible and their current contractors were the most convenient scapegoats. To the Italian Company the Uganda Railway was not only colluding with Jeevanjee but was unwilling to foot the bill for the excessive profits they were putting into his pockets. For the *EAUM*, it was yet more proof that the Protectorate's officials were a most corrupt lot. They gave the suit's proceedings generous coverage and reported them with a mixture of enthusiasm and disgust. Charles Palmer sympathised with the Italian Company and his position was reflected in the paper's coverage of

the case. The suit was a reminder of his frustrated entrepreneurial efforts and the government officials whom he blamed squarely for his frustrations.

When the suit came to a close, the judge found that both Jeevanjee and the Italian Company were entitled to payments for the oil they had supplied under their different rates but the relationship between the *EAUM* and Jeevanjee had deteriorated beyond redemption.[61] In the weeks running up to, during and after the suit, the newspaper was vociferous and unrelenting in its critiques of government officials and by extension their relationship with Jeevanjee. The week before the paper started its verbatim publication of the court's proceedings, it promoted the coming edition as "most interesting" especially because of "the relative and collective responsibilities of certain officials being closely called to question."[62] Above a local note on Jeevanjee's farewell dinner prior to a trip to Europe, the paper informed its readers that it had heard his company had secured the Uganda Railway rations contract for the year 1902 while the Italian Colonial Trading Co., would supply salt. The paper claimed that the most lucrative contracts (castor oil and stores supplies) had only been advertised privately and would close in less than a week's time, a matter that must have irked Palmer.[63] Two weeks later, a stymied *EAUM* reported that instead of waiting for the conclusion of the castor oil suit the railway's Chief Engineer, George Whitehouse, had awarded the railway's stores contract to "his SUBORDINATES [sic] pet contractor, Mr. Jeevanjee."[64] Under a separate local note, it added that the Chief Engineer was bent on ensuring that Jeevanjee's firm remained the railway's foremost contractor regardless of evidence that was then emerging in court which demanded more caution as far as the railway's relationship with the entrepreneur was concerned. In

[61] *EAUM*, "Uganda Railway (Alleged Frauds)," vol. III, no. 23, 8 June 1901, p. 6 for judgment."
[62] *EAUM*, "Local Notes," vol. III, no. 19, 11 May 1901, p. 6.
[63] Ibid., p.6
[64] *EAUM*, "Local Notes," vol. III, no. 21, 25 May 1901, p.6. Caps are *EAUM*'s.

addition, railway and court officials were criticised in the *EAUM's* editorials and mocked in its humour section, "Telephone."[65] When the paper started its verbatim publication of the Castor Oil Suit on 1 June 1901, one familiar advertiser ceased to feature on its front page: Messers Esmailjee Jeevanji & Co. It is unclear who between the paper and Jeevanji put a halt to the advertisements. What is clear is that Jeevanji was now without advertising space in the protectorate's only newspaper. He also lacked a platform to defend himself and promote his commercial interests. The Castor Oil Saga had demonstrated to him the importance of having such a platform. An alternative had to be sought.

Oiling the Wheels of Commerce: the *EAUM*'s Competitor Debuts

That alternative was born in November 1902 when Jeevanjee established the *East African Standard, Mombasa Times and Uganda Argus* that touted itself as the "the only non-official journal published in the English language in East Africa."[66] Its claim was a swipe at the challenges the *EAUM* editor faced as she worked with compositors whose English was wanting, a state that manifested itself in the multiple grammatical errors that found their way to the paper's printing press. Jeevanjee hired William Henry Tiller, aged 37, as his editor. Though he had never been to East Africa, the new editor had spent his entire adult life working as a journalist in various capacities and had just the right mix of travel history and career experiences that Jeevanji must have found most appealing for an editor who was going to have to start a newspaper from scratch and with no journalistic staff or even compositors.[67] Tiller had commenced his career by sending out articles to newspapers and at the age of 19 became the editor of a small provincial English newspaper. For unexplained reasons, he then left England for

[65] See for example, *EAUM* editorial and humour section of Ibid., p.4 and similar sections in *EAUM*, vol. III, no. 22, 1 June 1901.
[66] *AS* "Notice," vol. I, no. 12, Thursday 29 January 1903, p. 2.
[67] *AS*, "Editorial Notice," vol. I, no. 1, 15 November 1902, p.4 in which Tiller apologises for the errors in the first issue due to a lack of staff.

Ceylon where he managed and edited the *Ceylon Observer* before starting his own newspapers, *The Ceylon Daily* and *The Ceylon Weekly*. When these failed or did not satisfy him, he returned to England, worked for a number of newspapers there before departing once again for South Africa to serve as the *Cape Times'* parliamentary reporter and to work later in a broader capacity as the cable agent for South Africa during the Matebele War of 1900. After the war, he was employed as the editor or sub-editor of three different newspapers including the *Rhodesian Advertiser* before returning once again to England. While there he worked at the Exchange Telegraph Company and was working as the London News Agency's night editor when Jeevanjee contracted him to edit his newspaper in East Africa. However, Tiller, the married father of young children, did more than just work as the editor of Jeevanjee's newspaper. With the mix of ambition, optimism and hope of striking good fortune that was pervasive amongst many of the protectorate's new arrivals, he dabbled or attempted to dabble in a wide range of enterprises. He held a broker's license in his own name and conducted business under the name W. H. Tiller & Son. The business at one time or another dealt in everything from auctions, to the sale of pieces of Ugandan bark cloth of "very large…exceptionally fine quality, and form a most acceptable and novel present for friends at Home" to livestock and vegetables.[68] The editor also held unused money changer, goldsmith and silversmith licenses. He believed the protectorate was a haven of unexploited resources awaiting British capital and skill as the well as the promise of prosperity that their exploitation held for individuals such as he.

Jeevanjee granted Tiller almost unlimited editorial control and in due course the latter's perceptions about the protectorate's potential and those who were most capable of unleashing it – British settlers – came to dominate the paper. Obviously conscious of the harsh manner in which

[68] For advertisements see *AS*, vol. I, no. 14, Thursday 12 February 1903, p.2 and *AS*, vol. I, no. 33, Tuesday 28 April 1903, p. 2 and 5. Tiller later bought the *AS's* printing and bookbinding business. See *AS*, "Notice," vol. I, no. 61, Saturday 5 September 1903, p.2.

the *EAUM* had leveled its critiques against the protectorate's officials, in the paper's first editorial Tiller stated that the *EAS* would not "continuously carp at the Government" as this did little to engender good will between the government and those it was meant to serve. Instead, the paper would follow he termed as the "constitutional way of approaching Government" and would exclude "all vulgar and splenetic personalities" from its columns.[69] Tiller, too, was well aware of what British settlers felt they needed to succeed in the protectorate and he wanted to believe that the government would be responsive to those needs and be diligent in its efforts to meet them. Although he also added that the paper had no personal axes to grind, there was no mention of what was until then the only secular, independent, English newspaper and the *AS* from the very beginning preferred to act as if its contemporary did not exist at all. And yet for all their enmity, both latent and overt, the *EAUM* and the *AS* were hardly dissimilar in their socio-political and economic views. This was because Tiller's views of the BEA were not unlike those of Charles Palmer and Olive Grey, for as mentioned above he too saw in it great economic potential and shared their view as to who was best placed to exploit it. In his debut editorial, Tiller stated that he saw in the protectorate a country in which crop and animal husbandry could flourish and which was therefore an attractive destination for those who were looking to settle on and benefit from it financially. He believed the protectorate was one of the richest the British possessed in the world and believed that its attractions would enable it grow very fast. For that reason, Tiller argued that the young protectorate needed a newspaper and that "the printing press is almost as necessary as the individual work of the planter, cattle keeper or miner to the welfare of what is practically a new land."[70] The paper was going to provide an essential service to the young protectorate and in so doing was more than just a publication for profit.

[69] *AS*, "Ourselves," vol. I, no. 1, 15 November 1902, p.4.
[70] Ibid.

Some of the articles and editorials the *AS* published touched on issues that must have mattered to a businessman such as Jeevanjee, but the paper was overwhelmingly one that catered to the needs of Tiller's own entrepreneurial ambitions and frustrations as well as those of the European settler. He devoted most of his attention to agricultural and political issues as they pertained to settlers and in a manner reflecting his independence from the paper's proprietor, he even employed the pronoun "we" for the noun "settlers" in some of his editorials, for he saw himself as one of their number.[71] For instance, the question of representative government in the protectorate was a major bone of contention in the early years of the 20th century and the *AS* quickly made itself a participant in that debate. In "The Proper Way," the paper quoted Henry Clay who stated that "government is a trust, and the officers of the Government are trustees; and both the trust and the trustees are created for the benefit of the people." The *AS* then went on to add that "there is a mutual obligation for the settler and officers to co-operate for the good of the country."[72] Tiller's writing makes it clear that in his opinion "the people" exclusively meant "settlers," which as will be seen below meant both Asians and Europeans. In his opinion the government could only meet the needs of settlers if they played a role in policy-making, that is, if "the people" had what in Tiller's mind was a "popularly elected Government." He explained that while a representative body could not be put in place quickly, it was time for settlers to start working on a process that would eventually realise that goal. To start with, the paper suggested that settlers establish bodies with elected members who could advocate for their needs efficiently. In Mombasa he proposed a Chamber of Commerce, while in Nairobi he thought a Planter's or Farmers' Association for all settlers in the area and west towards Nakuru was more appropriate. There was already a European Association in Nairobi, but the name discomfited

[71] See for instance editorial in *EAS*,vol. I, no. 2, 22 November 1902, p. 4.
[72] *AS*, "The Proper Way," vol. I, no. 2, 22 November 1902, p.4.

Tiller, who was averse to a name that was only acting towards "the perpetuation of racial differences."[73] The association in Nairobi was essentially an agricultural association and needed to change its name accordingly. These bodies would then be well placed to elect delegates who could be sent to government to represent them in a council and their voices would have more weight than that of private individuals. Tiller revisited the issue frequently and exhorted his fellow settlers to end their lethargy on the matter.[74] On the eve of Secretary of State Joseph Chamberlain's visit to the protectorate, the *AS* exhorted the British government to make it a Crown Colony under the Colonial Office so that it could enjoy the autonomy that would come with such a designation.[75]

Notwithstanding his sensitivities, Africans do not appear to have even remotely featured in Tiller's mind as worthy of representative government and the newspaper treated matters that concerned them in a most cursory manner. As in the *EAUM*, Africans were rarely mentioned in the pages of the *AS*, featuring only as recipients of charitable European acts, when they were implicated in crime, when there were skirmishes or uprisings and the British were mounting military expeditions against them, or when they were expected to provide the land and labour settlers demanded. In a February edition, one page carried a report on the pomp and pageantry that had accompanied the Coronation Durbar at Delhi for "the King Emperor Edward the VII, under whose benign, merciful and just rule, we live in peace and prosperity" while on the opposite page "Whispers from Uganda" carried news of the British Government's expeditions against the Kavirondo and Bakedi that had netted them a bountiful 500 head of cattle then being offered for sale in Jinja. The "whispers" also carried news of the British Government's creation of large segregation camps for Africans suffering sleeping sickness and plague on the Ssese

[73] Ibid.
[74] *AS*, "Mr. Chamberlain's Visit," vol. I, no. 7, 24 December 1902, p. 4.
[75] *AS*, "Mr. Chamberlain," vol. I, no. 4, 4 December 1902, p. 4.

Islands of the Victoria Nyanza.[76] Later that month, the *AS* reported that a deputation of about 120 Giriama women had gone to the Collector to petition for payment of grain they had supplied to the authorities during the 1898-99 famine. The paper thought it best to end its brief paragraph on the incident by remarking that "an interesting photograph might have been obtained had a camera been available at the time."[77] Sometimes Africans were featured because they were deemed a nuisance in one way or another, for example, the manner in which a "dirty, malodorous Swahili" may explore the car of an Englishman parked outside a sports club while "equally objectionable specimens of humanity are playing with the Club racquets."[78] Africans therefore only featured in the press when they were required to serve European interests or were causing them discomfort in one way or another.

To cater for the growing agricultural settler community, there were columns dedicated to keeping them updated with information the paper thought was useful to them. Thus, there were trade columns that constantly fed readers with economic news from different parts of East Africa. These ranged from a cotton cultivation and sale conference in German East Africa to the sales figures of potatoes from Nairobi to southeast African ports such as Lourenço Marques and the inoculation of horses and cattle against rabies in Bulawayo.[79] There were also frequent and detailed columns with step by step instructions on how to cultivate crops such as tobacco, oranges, artichokes, beetroots and bananas [80] Some of these were quite lengthy and a series on a particular crop would be spread over several weeks. In addition, considerable attention was given

[76] *AS*, "Coronation Durbar at Delhi," and "Across the Lake" in "Whispers from Uganda," vol. I, no. 13, Thursday 5 February 1903, p. 2 and.3.
[77] *AS*, "A deputation from Giriama," vol. I, no. 15, Thursday 19 February 1903, p. 6
[78] *AS*, "The Treatment of Natives," vol. I, no. 35, Tuesday 5 May 1903, p.2.
[79] *AS*, "Cotton in German East Africa," in "Trade Notes," vol. I, no. 4, 4 December 1902, p. 6. For potatoes see *AS* vol. I, no. 5, 11 December 1902, p. 7, on rabies see *AS*, vol. I, no. 9, January 8 1903, p.6; on vegetables see vol. I, no. 16, 26 February 1903, p.8; on manure and oranges see vol. I, no. 29, 11 April 1903, p.3.
[80] See for example, *AS*, vol. I, no. 8, 1 January 1903, p. 6 on vegetables and vol. I, no. 17, 5 March 1903, no. 17, p. 6 on bananas.

to news and events in southern Africa, especially South Africa, for it inspired, taught and, ironically, at times even threatened the young protectorate's settlers. South Africa had what the *AS* considered a "Responsible Government," that was "representative" and in that respect was in every way what BEA was not but the newspaper believed it could be if its settlers were a more determined lot.[81] In its early days, the paper once gushed at the recognition of its existence in South Africa's *Cape Argus* newspaper, informing readers that it had called the *AS* "excellent" and drawn from its pages a great deal of complimentary information on East Africa for its special issue on "The Making of Africa." At the same time, the paper closely followed South Africa's economic developments, particularly its land and labour policies which at one time threatened the protectorate's labour base. As the 20th century dawned, South African mine owners were struggling against chronic labour shortages. One of its proposed remedies in 1903 was to import labour from East Africa, a proposal that was met with dismay by the protectorate's administrators, settlers and missionaries. The *AS* consistently campaigned against the proposal and urged the British government to resist the Rand Labour Association's attempts to compel it to open East Africa for the recruitment and export of African labour. It argued that the protectorate's "loyal Britons" were struggling in their efforts to prosper and the opening of the country to labour repatriation on top of other "vexatious restrictions" would be greatly discouraging and amounted to an "attempt to despoil East Africa and Uganda" for though East Africa was not as wealthy as South Africa "in the near future we shall require every available unit of labour." In April 1903, the paper berated the Rand Native Labour Association's for its most recent efforts to persuade Chamberlain to exhort the Foreign Office to permit it to recruit labour in East and Central Africa, recommending that it cast its eyes towards the country of

[81] *AS,* "The Making of Africa," vol. I, no. 8, 24 December 1902, p. 4.

origin of its proprietor, for "India, with it famine-stricken population, should provide the recruiting ground for labour for the new Colonies."[82]

There was also a formidable effort on the part of the *AS* to increase European settlement, though only the "appropriate" type of settler was welcome. The appropriate settlers were not only preferably British but were, especially in the eyes of the protectorate's financially comfortable and/or titled men, also wealthy. Thus, the paper was supportive of influential settler Lord Delamere's effort to encourage "settlers of our own race" to come to BEA and backed the *AS* launch of his essay writing competition on "The advantages that this country offers to the white settler for Agriculture, Planting and Stock Raising" with an editorial and a reprint in a subsequent edition of the paper.[83] However, it was most disparaging of a settlement proposal that did not fit the demographic blueprint that Tiller and European settlers had in mind for the future of the protectorate. In December 1902, Joseph Chamberlain visited the protectorate's highlands and thought their climate most suited to European settlement. At a time when Jews were fleeing massacres in Russia and Romania and other Jews had made their mark in the British Empire by investing heavily in South Africa's mines, Chamberlain offered Theodore Herzl, the leader of the Zionist movement, a home in East Africa for Eastern European Jews in a bid to marsal support within the Empire.[84] As soon as the *AS* learnt of the proposal in August 1903, it launched the most virulent attack yet on any issue in the course of its brief existence, decrying the lack of

[82] Ibid, 24 December 1902, p.5. and "South and East Africa" in vol. I, no. 17, Thursday 5 March 1903, p. 4; *AS*, "The Attempt to Despoil East Africa and Uganda," vol. I, no. 30, Saturday 18 April 1903, p.2. See also "Two Views" vol. I, no. 31, in Saturday 2 May 1903, p.2 criticising "Chamberlain's remarks during the recent debate in the House of Commons" during which the "Colonial Secretary adopted many of the specious arguments of the Rand Labour Association." For more on the Rand Native Labour Associaton and South Africa's recruitment efforts in general in East Africa and elsewhere see Alan Jeeves, *Migrant Labour in South Africa's Mining Economy: The Struggle for the Gold Mines' Labour Supply, 1890-1920*. Kingston [Ont.]: McGill-Queen's University Press, c. 1985, pp. 221-252.

[83] AS, "Advance East Africa," vol. I, no. 38, Saturday 16 May 1903, p.2 and *AS* "Lord Delamere's Suggestion," vol. I, no. 40, Saturday 23 May 1903, p.3.

[84] M.P.K. Sorrenson, *Origins of European Settlement in Kenya*. Nairobi, Oxford University Press, 1968, pp. 38 – 41. The scheme eventually collapsed when the Zionist organisation turned down the offer due to the financial implications of relocation and the determination to get a homeland in Palestine.

consultation with the protectorate's settlers in the course of the negotiations between the Zionist movement and the British government. Publishing under subheadings such as "The Country's Deathblow" and "Bloodshed!," the paper appears to have been even more incensed by word that the new settlers would be allocated land in the prime Rift Valley region that British settlers had been eyeing and were already purchasing. Lord Delamere was strongly opposed to the proposal, while Dr. A. E. Atkinson who had come to the protectorate as Lord Delamere's doctor and travel companion, termed the proposal "foolish even for the Foreign Office" (that had steadily denied them Colony status) adding that "we don't encourage English poor, why invite pauper aliens?"[85] In the weeks that followed, the *AS* was unrelenting in its critiques of the proposition, unleashing a rather putrid slew of editorials and attacks that were once again a far cry from Tiller's earlier calls for social tolerance. The paper gave generous coverage to Europeans and European meetings condemning the "threatened Jewish invasion" and generally made clear its contempt of any attempt to turn East Africa into a "halfway house to Palestine," "the new Jerusalem" or "Jewganda."[86] Forgetting they too were recent arrivals on land that belonged to others, Tiller argued that the British government had been wrong to invite Jews to settle on "what should be a heritage of England."[87] Generally, the feeling in the protectorate was that the administration had not done enough to inform preferred settlers of the opportunities available in the protectorate nor had it put in place adequate incentives to make their immigration more likely. Nevertheless, the situation was not as desperate as to require the immigration of races that the British in the protectorate viewed as unsuitable.

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[85] *AS*, "The Prey of the Spoiler," vol. I, no. 60, Saturday 29 August 1903, p. 4.See also AS, "To those responsible for the threatened Jewsih invasion," "The alien immigrant," "East Africa the 'New Zion'," and "The New Jerusalem," vol. 1, no. 63, Saturday 19 September 1903," p. 2, 3 and 6. Atkinson's initials obtained from Christine Nicholls, *Red Strangers: The White Tribe of Kenya*. London: Timewell Press Ltd., 2005, p. 66.

[86] *AS*, "The Threatened Jewish Invasion," no. 61, vol. I, Saturday 5 September 1903, p.5; *AS* "The Halfway House to Palestine," vol. I, no. 64, Saturday 26 September 1903, p.4; *AS*, "The New Jerusalem," no. 63, vol. I, Saturday 19 September 1903, p. 6.

[87] *AS*, "The New Jerusalem",vol. I, no. 63, Saturday 19 September 1903, p.6.

Not surprisingly, the *AS* was keen to play a role in getting more British settlers to come to the country. Europeans who came to the protectorate or chanced upon the newspaper elsewhere were fed a steady diet of information that it was hoped would encourage them to settle or aid them in their efforts to do so. In its first issue, the paper commenced its *Advance East Africa* series which was designed to keep the paper's target readers abreast on economic opportunities and raise their morale by celebrating progress on varied fronts. The first in the series reported on the East Africa Syndicate's discovery of soda in the protectorate as well as a separate discovery of what at the time appeared to be promising quantities of alluvial gold in Nandi. The paper added that what was then needed was coal, preferably at a point close to the Uganda railway. It noted that the protectorate's supply of wood fuel was not inexhaustible, especially since its consumption was bound to be heightened by the discovery of minerals and the protectorate's increased productivity in various fields.[88] It is under this series that the paper celebrated the eventual formation of Nairobi's Farmers' and Planters' Association while noting the role it had played in unceasingly advocating for the formation of such an organisation. In the months that followed the paper continued to give the Association's operations and correspondence generous coverage.[89] The electrification of Mombasa and the possibility of powering the *African Standard's* printing press with electricity at a cost that was considerably cheaper than that of Pretoria were also hailed in this series as was German East Africa's establishment of mails for the area of its territory bordering Lake Victoria Nyanza.[90] The paper noted that the system was not only of benefit to "our German friends," but also meant that mail from Mombasa would get to Mwanza much faster. Tiller however did not hide the fact he felt the government was lagging

[88] *EAS*, "Advance East Africa," vol. I, no. 1, 15 November 1902, p. 5.
[89] *EAS*, "Advance East Africa!" vol. I, no. 17, Thursday 5 March 1903, p. 1.
[90] *AS*, "Advance Mombasa," vol. I, no. 30, Saturday 18 April 1903, p.2; *AS*, "Advance East Africa 'German Mails via Mombasa'", vol. I, no. 33, Tuesday 28 April 1903, p.2.

in its support of the protectorate's entrepreneurs and the optimism of those who wanted to "Advance East Africa" was being dampened. He urged the government to reform land laws further to attract more settlers and make it less costly for farmers to import agricultural inputs.[91]

As seen above, Tiller never failed to use the *AS* to rail against the administration when he considered them neglectful or biased against challenges facing settlers. In a manner similar to Grey and often forgetting his debut editorial and adopting her aggressive tone, Tiller published articles that raised concerns over the protectorate's meagre infrastructural provisions and public services. He was persistent in his criticism of Mombasa's security problems and argued that the poor state of its "effete police force" was one of the main reasons crime troubled its residents. The police force was "too absurd even for a Gilbertian comedy" and "no burlesque on an English stage has ever approached the everyday life of the Mombasa *askari*."[92] Furthermore, sanitary conditions in Mombasa were so wanting that it was "a huge cesspit, exactly two miles by three miles, or whatever the measurement of the island is" and was in urgent need of a proper sewerage system.[93] Also, and undoubtedly thinking about his own offspring, he published an editorial scolding the administration for the absence of good European schools in East Africa. It was time for the government to build a school, preferably a boarding school, in a place with a climate deemed favourable for the European with Nairobi, Kikuyu and Nakuru being the best options. This would put an end to the separation of families for purposes of education as many settlers at the time opted to send their children, who often left with their mothers, to England, India and South Africa as their entrepreneurial and civil servant husbands were left behind "living a lonely bachelor's life." Even worse, those hoping that Mombasa's problems would be

[91] *AS,* "What we want," vol. I, no. 10, Thursday 15 January 1903, p.2.
[92] *AS,* "Police and Robberies," vol. I, no. 11, 22 January 1903, p.4. *Askari* is the Kiswahili word for police.
[93] *AS,* "Insanitary Mombasa," vol. I, no. 21, 17 March 1903, p. 4.

remedied were skeptical because its officials preferred to bask in "the heaven of officialdom."[94] Officers, in his opinion, were too preoccupied with issues concerning their uniforms, ceremonies and toothpicks to pay attention to the protectorate's problems.

Battle of the Presses and a Changing of the Guard

Tiller's writing did cause friction in various quarters. Lord Delamere, for example, attributed the slow and staggered arrival of settlers to the protectorate to the negative coverage the protectorate received in its own press. However, the editor was opposed to any suggestions that the *AS* minimise its coverage of the protectorate's problems arguing that it was necessary to keep the government on its toes when in the early days of its administration to prepare it for the responsibilities that would come in future as the protectorate grew. Furthermore, the problems the paper highlighted were genuine and in need of prompt governmental attention and their exposure could not be blamed for the slow arrival of colonists to East Africa.[95]

In addition, the paper's insistence on calling itself the only unofficial English news journal was rather irritating to the *EAUM*.[96] The claim had resulted in the two papers trading barbs, with the *EAUM* leading in the number of those it launched against the *AS*. The relationship between the two papers had also been further poisoned when Tiller had poached the foreman of the *EAUM*.[97] Their war of words culminated in a law suit for libel sparked by a letter sent to the *EAUM* by a certain Ex Uno Disce Omnes and published in the 23 May 1903 issue of the

[94] *AS*, "The Want of Schools in East Africa," no. 3, vol. I, 27 November 1903, p. 4; *AS* "Our Police Force," vol. I, no. 6, 18 December 1903, p.2,; *AS* "Our Effete Police Force,"vol. I, no. 10, Thursday 15 January 1903, p. 2; *AS* "The Want of Police Protection," vol. I, no. 14, Thursday 12 February 1903, p. 4; *AS* "The Heaven of Officialdom," vol. I, no. 15, Thursday 19 February 1903, p. 4.
[95] *AS*. "Advance East Africa", vol. I, no. 38, Saturday 16 May 1903, p. 2.
[96] *EAUM*, "A Public Lie," 10 January 1903, p.6 has an example of the notices *EAUM* placed in its papers objecting to the *AS*' insistence on calling itself the only non-official, English language paper in the protectorate.
[97] *EAUM*, "Fifth Anniversary of the 'East Africa and Uganda Mail," vol. (?), no. (?), 8 August 1903, p.4.

newspaper.[98] Only the *AS'* account of the saga is available, but even so it is revealing of the racial prejudices that underlay the newspaper's editorial policies and the ongoing hostility between it and the *EAUM*. *Ex uno disce omnes* is Latin for "from one person learns all persons," or more appropriately for the *EAUM's* implicit message "from one we can judge the rest," for the letter was meant to be an indictment of the *AS* as an establishment through its editor.[99] In the letter, Omnes accused Tiller of lacking in "tact" and "a sense of propriety" for he had no qualms about "putting his name to the editing of…unclean…filthy, literature as has disgraced the pages of the 'African Standard'."[100] In court, Tiller said he took particular exception to remarks that stated he was editing "unclean and filthy literature" as the *AS* had several contributors up-country and the remarks impugned their character. In addition, he was apparently most alarmed that the *EAUM* letter had exhorted the government to sanction the *AS* under the Obscene Literature Act and had encouraged Jeevanjee to free Mombasa of its "vile journalism." For all his forays into the entrepreneurial world, the three-year employment contract that Tiller had signed with the *AS* was his only source of steady income in the face of the vicissitudes that challenged the settler in a new land, nor had he forgotten that he served at the pleasure of Jeevanji. He was therefore very concerned about anything that amounted to "a deliberate attempt here to rob me of my bread and butter."[101] Thus, while the two newspapers had previously exchanged hostile words, Tiller was unwilling to tolerate any words that threatened the existence of the *AS* and his own future in the protectorate.

[98] *AS*, "The 'Responsible Editor' Black-Balled," Saturday 23 May 1903, (volume and page number not listed; supplementary pull out).
[99] Babylon 9, *Latin Dictionary*, http://www.latin-dictionary.org/Ex_uno_disce_omnes. Accessed on Tuesday 18 October 2011.
[100] *AS*, "The 'Responsible Editor' Black-Balled," (volume and page number not not listed; supplementary pull out).
[101] *AS*, "Criminal Libel," vol. III, no. 76, Saturday 19 December 1903, p.2.

On their part, Charles Palmer and Olive Grey's lawyers, perhaps in a bid to gain official support, adduced several pieces of evidence that alleged Tiller had libeled the local administration in articles such as those cited above terming Mombasa police "effete," criticising officials for living in "the heaven of officialdom" as well as critiques the paper had made against government officials such as Charles Eliot. In addition, they cited attacks of a more personal nature that the *AS* had made against them. Palmer, for example, had been called a "tit willow" and an ex-convict, but probably more injurious to him and his wife were remarks that amounted to racial slurs against the *EAUM* and more so against its Eurasian proprietor. In response to the defense's exhibit (3g), an *AS* excerpt with its notice on being the only English journal, Tiller defended himself by saying that he did not mean to imply that the paper was government-sponsored but that it was published in "Baboo, pigeon or half-caste English." He then added that he was not referring to Palmer in his categorisation of the *EAUM's* language but was strictly referring to the newspaper and that the term "Baboo English" was a commonly used term in addition to being acceptable Fleet Street lingo. It was also a term that he himself had used in reference to the *EAUM*'s editing challenges on the pages of his newspaper.[102] Nevertheless, it is rather obvious that the paper's proprietor felt denigrated in the same way he had been when fellow civil servants had hurled racial slurs at him. Grey and Palmer were also offended by another article in which the editor responded to an alleged correspondent's query on the possibility of gaining social status by marrying a white woman. The *AS'* response to the "black man" — meaning Asian or Eurasian — who had written the letter was to refer to a certain "white woman" and "black man" who were reported to be living together in peace even though some

[102] Ibid.

men still pursued the woman in question.[103] The couple's union was not referred to as a marriage and the paper seems to imply that their union was not taken seriously or respected by the wider society. The *AS* also cautioned the man against marrying outside his race because the interracial couple he had cited was an exception to the norm adding that it could not "see that a marriage between the Asiatic and European races would be productive of good." In one other disparaging article, Tiller had resorted to stereotypes that feminised Asian men and equated the paper that was being run by his wife with the assistance of Asian compositors to a "harem" that he was then encouraged to shut down. In court, Tiller denied that the remarks were vulgar because there was nothing wrong with a man keeping a harem if his religion permitted it. He then feebly distanced Palmer from it without naming him by adding that he did not know of any Christian who kept a harem. Despite the *EAUM's* spirited defense, the suit was eventually settled to in favour of Tiller, who had sued for damages amounting to Rs. 5,000. The Mombasa Town Magistrate, William Carter, found that the *EAUM* had contravened the relevant section of the Indian Penal Code that was then in use in the protectorate by publishing a letter that was geared towards harming the *AS'* editor's reputation.

The following year, the *EAUM* went bankrupt and shortly after Jeevanjee sold his newspaper to entrepreneurs A.G. Anderson and F. Mayer. According to biographer Zarina Patel, the *AS* was debt free, had a circulation five times that of any other newspaper in the region and was being sold in Mombasa, Nairobi, Entebbe and London. She is unable to pinpoint the reasons behind the sale of a successful newspaper and suggests that perhaps Jeevanjee became

[103] "Black" in the protectorate's European circles then meant South Asian, Eurasian, Africans or interracial mixes that resulted in darker toned individuals. In Errol Trzebinski's *Kenya Pioneers* (1985) he writes that Eurasian Henry Boeddeker's skin was "almost black" (p.9) and that the European community in Mombasa used to refer to Charles Palmer as "that black man" (p.40). Those indigenous to the continent however, were more commonly referred to as Africans or natives. For an interesting correspondence on this matter see *AS*, "What is a Native?" vol. I, no. 9, 8 January 1903, p. 5.

increasingly uncomfortable with Tiller's writing that spared none including, embarrassingly, the British Foreign Office and sold the paper when his contract ended or when the challenge of publishing the *AS* was no longer present after the collapse of the *EAUM*. Either of these is plausible. Also possible is that after his editor's contract came to an end, Jeevanjee had to contend with the fact that he was unable to use the newspaper for the very reasons he had established it in the first place: to promote and defend his commercial interests. Jeevanjee's company had been a prominent and consistent advertiser in the *EAUM* but barely features in his own *AS*. In an effort to produce a newspaper that would always be a ready platform to present him and his interests covertly in the best possible light and yet be read by the protectorate's Europeans, its English-speakers who controlled it, administered it and generated its prime business opportunities, he had hired an Englishman to edit the paper. The man he had hired was one whose control over its contents was so complete he had no qualms writing for and as part of a demographic whose goals were highly exclusive of others, including Asians such as Jeevanjee. His company was also unable to advertise in his own newspaper with the same boldness, prominence and consistency with which it had done in the *EAUM* lest his British readers were reminded of the newspaper's "native" ownership and his financial success in the face of their struggles. Besides, as Patel explains, in the early 1900s, Jeevanjee was doing quite well in the real estate business since the administration's weak financial status made them rely on Asian capital more than they would have preferred. For the *EAUM*, when the end came it was less of a choice for its owners more a matter of course as a result of the weak capital bases of their newspaper as well as their other non-press related enterprises.

Despite the short life spans of their newspaper ventures, Grey, Palmer, Jeevanjee and Tiller's efforts are demonstrative of the extent to which individuals could create and control a

public forum to meet private ends: the press. They found themselves inhabiting a difficult as well as variously hostile environment and so the newspaper gave them a place to attempt to help forge its development into a more advantageous one. This is so even for Jeevanji who, despite his more distant relationship with the *AS* after its establishment, thought to start it in the first place with the lessons of the Castor Oil Saga ringing in his ears. He had experienced the powerlessness that came with not having a means with which to address the public in order to advance his own interests.

"POLITICAL APATHY IS COMMERCIAL ATROPHY"[1]
The *East African Standard*: 1904 – 1959

For it is only by persistence and reiteration that under the alien system of Government from which we suffer, progress can be recorded and the ends achieved.[2]

Criticism is needed to keep so deeply entrenched a Government up to standard; history has shown that it is too often, though not always, the only way, to persuade the Secretary of State and his agents to divest themselves of some of their power and to share it with the people. There are often long and peaceful periods when the Government gladly and willingly accepts advice, and when cooperation seems to be producing results, but there has been rarely, if ever, a time when as a direct result of that condition a Government of its own volition has said, in effect, that as a reward for good conduct the public will be given an increasing share of real responsibility, diminish[ing] the power of the Administration.[3]

In September 1923, following a period of heated debate during which European settlers had raised the tenor of their demands for racially exclusive rights and privileges of which they received but a few, the *EAS* made it clear that it did not intend to back down from political agitation. It had over the years offered the country's European settlers a forum for the publication of their views and served as an organising aid for their meetings and promoted their causes. That month, following calls from both the colony's Governor and Lord Delamere for Europeans to accept the terms of the Devonshire White Paper that, among other things, denied them the exalted place they had sought in the country's Legislative Council and made self-government ever more unlikely, the newspaper published a defense for its continued political advocacy. It explored two schools of thought on the relationship between politics and business. The first argued that those in business ought to focus on their commercial concerns to the exclusion of politicking while the second posited that business and politics were so intertwined that it was futile to work towards commercial success without seeking to better the colony as a whole. The

[1] *EAS*, "Public vigilance," no. 3958, Saturday 15 September 1923, p. 4.
[2] *EAS*, "The Commercial View," no. (not visible), Friday 14 December 1945, p. 5.
[3] *EAS*, "A useful shaking up," no. 9840, Tuesday 15 January 1946, p. 3.

EAS was firmly in support of the latter position and adduced as justification for its stance instances in which it claimed settlers' political agitation had brought change that benefitted commerce. One of these was their incessant call for the improved running of the railway, a vital structure in the economic life of the colony, which had resulted in the restructuring of its management for the better. In contrast, the editor argued that neighbouring Tanganyika, which it considered a British Colony "(mandate in name though it be)," lacked a settler population of considerable size that could exert its influence upon government and, according to the *EAS*, was therefore poorly managed. The paper observed that as government was not infallible, public opinion was vital in setting it right when it veered off course. This was more so following the publication of the Devonshire White Paper that declared the paramountcy of African interests, a move the editor derided as an "official cry…merely a 'wheeze' to counter or belittle the influence of the European settler in the colony." The press had the duty of giving voice to public opinion. At the same time, that opinion was not expressed without a filter, for the other responsibility of the press, it explained, was to "rectify extremist views and pare down the excrescences of shrieking voices."[4] The *EAS* had and would therefore continue to encourage European settlers to engage the Government so as to advocate for, promote, and safeguard their interests. When it deemed their voices too shrill for their own good, it would take it upon itself to dictate whatever it considered a more judicious tone that did not imperil the entire settler mission: the ultimate achievement of politico-economic independence, dominance, and security.

The owners of the *EAS* were A. G. Anderson, his wife, and R. F. Mayer with whom the couple had arrived at Mombasa in December 1900. According to the Andersons' son, C. B. Anderson, his parents had planned to travel farther inland to the territory of Uganda but their plans changed as a consequence of "tribal disturbances." At some point the group decided to

[4] *EAS*, "Public vigilance," no. 3958, Saturday 15 September 1923, p. 4.

extend their stay at the coastal town and even bought the Grand Hotel, which was the most prestigious hotel of the day in the British East Africa Protectorate. Anderson's father, however, was restless and soon struck out inland on his own to prospect for minerals and in search of reward in whatever commercial venture he could chance upon. For him the Protectorate was not only a world of possibilities but of unappreciated and undiscovered potential on the part of officials in East Africa and abroad. It is to this perception that his son attributes his decision to turn "the only newspaper in Mombasa from an ineffectual disseminator of gossip to a more forceful champion of enterprise and development."[5] Tiller would obviously disagree with this statement as he had striven to develop a publication that challenged the Protectorate's administration to deal with the problems he and other European settlers encountered. C.B. Anderson's inaccurate statement about the *EAS* must therefore be seen as one given by the son of its co-founder in an effort to establish a clear distinction of mission for the newspaper under new ownership. The three settlers bought the publication from Jevanjee and renamed it the *East African Standard* to signify its change in ownership. A. G. Anderson became the editor of the newspaper but his son explains that the other partners (Anderson's wife and Mayer) were both active in the management of the newspaper and its printing business. They launched their publication in a British protectorate to which settlers with adventurous spirits were trickling, determined to make or invest their fortunes in one of Britain's many imperial holdings. Several, just as Anderson, were bent on exploring opportunities in the interior and just like him they would encounter all sorts of hurdles and frustrations which they quickly attributed to administrative inertia.

[5] *EAS*, "Sixty years of evolution: changes in outlook and policy traced," in *EAS*, Diamond Jubliee Supplement, Friday 16 November 1962, p. i.

In 1905, Anderson and Mayer established the Mombasa (BEA) Trading and Development Syndicate, Ltd., which they regularly advertised in the *EAS*. It was evidently formed with an eye to making the most out of the commercial opportunities European settlement availed in all sectors of the economy. The firm promoted itself as wholesale and retail merchants, as well as general contractors, saw, grain and oil millers, planters, oil merchants, agents for several European alcohol and tobacco manufacturers, in addition to being clearing and forwarding agents. Sportsmen, explorers and settlers could get themselves fully kitted at the syndicate's stores where they could also have their game trophies cleaned, processed and shipped. The stores carried everything from boots and shoes for men and women to "tools of the best make" and furniture that could be paid for in installments.[6] Anderson and Mayer were evidently committed to making a financial success out of British East Africa in any way they could. It most certainly was not lost to them that the sort of enterprises they engaged in would be favoured by a thriving and secure settler population. The launch of a trades journal, *The East African Monthly Trade Journal*, as a sister publication of the *EAS* can be viewed as an effort by the three entrepreneurs to knit the budding European commercial community together. Although only the last page of the journal had a list of firms it recommended to the reader under the title "Commercial Intelligence," the entire journal contained information that made it a source of commercial intelligence for the targeted reader. It featured information on crop diseases, farming tips, advertisements for a wide range of firms, marketing reports, shipping information as well as local and international business news.[7] They recognised the potential of their publication to enhance communication amongst the country's entrepreneurs and what the attendant increase in

[6] *EAS*, "The Mombasa (B.E.A.) Trading and Development Syndicate Ltd., no. 132, Saturday 14 January 1905, p. 12.
[7] For the *EAS*'s highlight of another publication's praise of the new journal see *EAS*, "The Globe Trotter," no. 184, 13 January 1906, p. 10. The first copy of the journal was *The East African Monthly Trade Journal*, no. 1, vol. 1, February 1906. During its brief existence it was published on the first Tuesday of every month.

the rate of exchange of information, goods and services could do for economic growth and ultimately their own businesses. Anderson and Mayer were therefore colonists who identified with and actively sought to encourage the settlement and growth of other colonists.[8] As for the *EAS*, after the enterprise went public in March 1918, some of the "distinguished colonists" among them would be sitting on its first Board of Directors.[9]

Championing Settlement and the 'Appropriate' Sort of Settler

As it had when W. H. Tiller edited the Jeevanjee-owned publication, under Anderson and Mayer the *EAS* made it clear that colonists had to be those of the 'appropriate' kind. Thus, one of the "momentous events" of the year 1904 that the *East African Standard's* editor reviewed was the resignation of Sir Charles Eliot, whom it had come to embrace belatedly after the nature of his battles with the Foreign Office came to light regarding the possibility of Jewish settlement that had so haunted the colony's settlers at the beginning of that year. It tried to explain its continued opposition by arguing that the Jewish settlement proposition was detestable because Lord Landsdowne had taken a step that essentially "gave away our birthright" when he made what the newspaper claimed was the Europeans' best land available for Jewish immigrants. The editor also considered his move reprehensible because he believed the "pauper aliens from Russia" had neither the necessary finances to invest in their proposed homeland nor the agricultural knowledge and skills required to exploit the land effectively. For the *EAS*, only the proper type of settler was welcome to settle on the land that was the Briton's 'birthright,' and just

[8] *EAS*, "Our forward policy," no. 452, Saturday 4 March 1911, p. 12. In an editorial, the newspaper states unambiguously, "we believe as colonists…" A. G. Anderson also authored *Our Newest Colony: Being an account of British EAst Africa and its possibilities as a new land for settlement. A land where the out-croweded and heavily burdened tax-payer of the older civilization may seek a more simple and yet brighter life*. Nairobi: The East African Standard Press, 1910.
[9] *EAS*, "Sixty Years of Evolution: changes in outlook and policy traced," no. 452, Friday 16 November 1962, p. xiii.

as it had during the years Jeevanjee owned it, the publication would continue to use its pages to encourage the settler it deemed proper to make a home in the Protectorate.

As the *EAS* was determined to carve out a role for itself as promoter of European settlement in BEA, at the close of 1904 it also used its pages to focus on some positive moments that celebrated settlement, particularly well-capitalised settlement. It hoped these reports would encourage their emulation in East Africa and abroad. It recalled that Messers. Anderson and Mayer had transferred their Grand Hotel and Colonial Stores business to the "large and enterprising" Mombasa Trading and Development Syndicate, while the British Parliament had approved a subsidy to a line of East African steamships that had transported a record number of passenger trains, in turn leading to a sharp increase of claims at the Nairobi Land Office. Marsden in his capacity as a senior administrative official had also travelled to Britain where he had given interviews to various leading newspapers extolling the virtues of BEA which the reader was meant to understand would attract more settlers to the colony. The protectorate was developing fast. The future capital city —Nairobi— was experiencing a building boom, there were over 1,000 settlers farming land in the young town as well as around Nakuru in the Rift Valley; altogether more than twice that number had made their homes in the protectorate. In addition, there were those who were making great advances: Lord Delamere had imported cattle in such large numbers that several special cattle trains had to be used to transport them to his land, while three other settlers had "started what has since proved to be an extensive boom in this country" as a consequence of their knowledge of the land and their promotion of the protectorate in Southern Africa. Unfortunately, observed the editor, the Foreign Office had disappointed these three when it failed to support the agreement they had made with Charles Eliot.[10] This was most objectionable as it was precisely this sort of settler that the *EAS* would continue to promote as

[10] *EAS*, "The Year, 1904," vol. 5, no. 120, Saturday 31 December 1904, p. 6.

1905 dawned. In its Annual Parliamentary Report for 1907, the newspaper had celebrated the departure of, presumably, financially less endowed would-be settlers under the sub-title "The Weak are gone, the Strong Left." The trials and tribulations of arrival and settlement had separated the wheat from the chaff and those who remained were those "of a type more suited for the development of the country."[11] Their departure had also contributed to the improvement of land prices and generally stabilised the land market. In later issues, the newspaper used its pages to extoll the nature of the individual setter who was in its opinion of most value to the Protectorate.

The ideal immigrant to the protectorate brought with him a hefty purse. On the occasion of the 1907 launch of the British East Africa Corporation established with the support of the British Government for the cultivation of cotton in the Protectorate on a large scale, the *EAS* hailed the move under an editorial titled "Opening for Capitalists." It proclaimed its establishment as evidence of the fact that BEA "offers as great a scope for capitalists as any other portion of the British Empire." For the newspaper, the corporation's efforts were commendable for two main reasons. First, its founders were willing to make a massive investment of the sort the paper considered most apt for the protectorate but one of deferred returns on capital. Second, the corporation would be investing in a crop (cotton) the newspaper believed held much promise and that they christened "the Staff of Life." The corporation was valuable not only for the nature and scale of its own investment, but also for the example it would set for others of equal or greater financial capabilities.[12] The editor also used the occasion to call attention to other possibilities for large scale capital investment, specifically maize and rubber. It hailed maize in particular as a particularly good investment option given its widespread

[11] *EAS*, "Our Annual Parliamentary Report: Extracts and Criticism," vol. 11, no. 255, Saturday 25 May 1905, p. 6.
[12] *EAS*, "Opening for capitalists," vol. 9, no. 254, Saturday 18 May 1907, p. 10.

human and livestock consumption and accompanied its discussion of the crop with calculations of profits per acre that would accrue from the venture. It believed that cheap land the Government had alienated for European settlement in areas such as Taru Desert in southwestern Kenya but which had failed to attract buyers was particularly suited for the crop. However, only an investor who could finance the necessary irrigation schemes required for the cultivation of maize in addition to other inputs necessary for realising profitability could take on the challenge. Generally, the newspaper hoped that the success of the corporation would encourage others who could marshal financial resources on a similar scale. It is for this reason that the newspaper argued that their failure would be "a set back of a singularly disastrous character."[13] The corporation was yet to sink capital into the Protectorate's economy, but for the *EAS* the stakes were already high.

During this period, the ideal settler for the *EAS* continued to be the wealthy Englishman who brought not only his number to count among the European populace, but also the capital that would both ensure his success and enable him to shine as an example to other settlers. They included the likes of four individuals whose arrival from England the newspaper announced in its columns in January 1905 with great detail. The goods these "desirable settlers" brought to the Protectorate included the latest dairy equipment which the British Dairy Association recommended for the manufacture of butter and a variety of cheeses. They also brought with them over fifty of the finest varieties of Plymouth Rocks and Buff Orpington poultry as they were prime breeders and winners of several poultry exhibitions in England. In addition, they had a steam saw plant they planned on establishing as soon as possible and had arrived with all the construction materials they needed for setting up houses and a dairy that the newspaper went on to describe, several ploughs, mowing machines, horse rakes and chaff cutters. They were men of

[13] Ibid.

foresight who had reconnoitered the target location of their investments with the necessary thoroughness, had left nothing to chance and were a fine example to other settlers.[14]

However, the *EAS* lauded Lord Delamere as the archetype of the ideal settler, closely followed by Capt. Ewart S. Grogan in terms of 'settler-suitability.' In April of 1908, the newspaper gave plenty of space to the reproduction of a story Britain's *The Sunday Chronicle* had written on the Lord Delamere. He was the farthest thing from the "effete" nobleman stereotype that was the object of mockery for many, insisted the writer. Delamere was "a peer who can be commended for his vigorous manhood…a man as well as a lord, a worker and not merely a parasite…hunter, explorer and rancher." His success was supposedly a measure of his diligence and not his noble birth. In East Africa, he had come to fully embrace the life and ideals of a colonist so much so that his English aristocratic breeding had not prevented him from sprouting the colonist's liberal and democratic ideals in his "athletic" and "well-knit" constitution. Those ideals as espoused by Delamere were racially exclusive but this inconvenient matter was an issue that neither the *Sunday Chronicle* journalist nor his interviewee delved into. Under the subtitle "No place for small men," the newspaper had highlighted Delamere's take on the sort of settler who was best suited for life in East Africa: the well capitalised man. Those in the region were investing in it for the future and understood that benefits had to be deferred. It was a costly undertaking for which only the financially vigorous had a decent chance of attaining commercial success. The "small man" would have been welcome too, Delamere had remarked sympathetically, but he would lack the financial endurance and rigour to get his farm established as well as the subsequent multiple-year wait for his labours to bear fruit. The work of establishing the Protectorate was therefore that of 'big-men' who could afford luxury holidays in

[14] AS, "More desirable settlers," vol. 5, no. 131, Saturday 7 January 1905, p. 11. The four individuals are identified as Messers Marsh, Dickenson, Bramwell and Hoyten.

exotic places. They were men such as Delamere who was in fact speaking about himself when he told the interviewer that these sort of people "go out to shoot, take a liking of the country, and make up their mind to live there. They go to play and remain to work."[15]

Two weeks later, the newspaper published its own interview with Ewart Grogan who was no aristocrat, but educated at Winchester and Cambridge and was famous for his Cape to Cairo journey. He was also a former captain in the Royal Munster Fusiliers who had settled in BEA as a farming landowner, and was the president of the Colonists Association which was formed in 1902. By 1908, the British press was well acquainted with him as a consequence of an infamous encounter with the law.[16] Grogan was a perfect subject for the *EAS* interview as he not only appreciated the economic potential of BEA for Europeans but articulated it quite well. In response to a question about the suitability of the region for Europeans, Grogan plunged into a poetic flurry of words, proclaiming his certainty in the prosperity of the Protectorate's Europeans in their new home. "The Protectorate has a mighty citadel in its highlands which a white garrison can occupy and hold," he affirmed. "To what extent the white man can spread below the 5,000 ft. contour and persist, nobody can yet tell," he added cautiously, but he was sure science would step in at the most appropriate moment to favour their undertakings. More importantly, he had clearly stated that immigration to East Africa was for the individual with a "considerable capital sum" who could buy the rich lands that the Government had made available for purchase.[17]

The publication of the two interviews also gave the newspaper further opportunity to assail the administration by proxy for failing to act on various European grievances. Lord

[15] *EAS*, "Farming in the wilderness: a talk with Lord Delamere, Explorer, Hunter and Rancher," vol. 11, no. 300, Saturday 4 April 1908, p. 6. For more on Lord Delamere's life see Elspeth Huxley, *White Man's Country: Lord Delamere and the Making of Kenya,* two volumes. London: Macmillan and Co. Ltd., 1935.
[16] In 1907, he and one other settler, Russell Bowker, were imprisoned for flogging three Africans for what Britain's *Daily Mail* described as "native insolence to white women" outside a court house in Nairobi. *EAS*, "From the Daily Mail," no. 252, Saturday 4 May 1907 p.7.
[17] *EAS*, "Mr. E. S. Grogan and the 'Standard;' an interview," vol. 11, no. 289, Saturday 18 January 1908, p. 6.

Delamere was concerned that it was not doing enough to keep Asians out of the prized highlands. Africans were apparently not an issue for Lord Delamere but Asians, most probably because he considered them better poised financially and politically to challenge the role the European was carving for himself in BEA, were intolerable. The Africans were apparently "all right" and the hut taxes they were paying were bearable as they were low. However, the Protectorate's Europeans were certain that they and Asians could never mix due to the existence of an undesirable race-specific phenomenon on the part of the Asian that he left unexplained. Nevertheless, it was imperative for the Government to act without further delay to restrict Indian immigration to the highlands or there would be "trouble," the exact nature of which also remained unelaborated. He however assured the interviewer that in pushing the Government to act on the matter Europeans were doing so in the interests of everybody and not for their own selfish reasons. The nobleman was also concerned that the Protectorate's land laws made it unnecessarily onerous for Europeans to acquire land and went on to cite them as a major contributory factor to the inability of the "small man" to invest in the Protectorate. Striking a note of optimism, he informed the interviewer that BEA's Europeans having recently met Winston Churchill were certain that they had his ear and that he would help them in their efforts to get the British Government to listen to them. In Churchill they thought they had the type of official the European settler found most useful; one who was intelligent, a keen observer, a man of "quick sympathies" who was "ready to be taught" and who had a "wonderful grasp of the existing conditions." In short, Winston Churchill appeared to be a pliable and easily manipulated individual who seemed poised to be readily accepting of their interpretation of events in Kenya and Delamere hoped to have him eating out of the settlers' palms.[18] Ewart Grogan was even

[18] *EAS*, "Farming in the wilderness: a talk with Lord Delamere, Explorer, Hunter and Rancher," vol. 11, no. 300, Saturday 4 April 1908, p. 6. Winston Churchill had an astute and more measured assessment about Great Britain and

more scathing in his assessment of the Government. According to him it was inefficient and a chronic source of frustration to settlers. He believed its inefficiency stemmed from the quantity and quality of personnel running the Protectorate's affairs. According to him, BEA was suffering from the penurious tendencies of British Colonial Administration praxis:

> We pay the designer of a ship much more highly than the pilot or even the navigating officer; yet we expect a State to be designed for the salary of a merchant's clerk, and we raise that salary proportionately as the post evolves towards its final stage of setting the fashion in neckties. It is absurd to spend five and a half millions on a railway, and not to have in its employ one man with sufficient intelligence to guess that a town might spring up somewhere along the 600 miles of its course.[19]

For Grogan, the settlers had to confront unnecessary challenges in their various enterprises because the country was being run by "cheap men, that most hideous of all false economies" who as a consequence of their weaknesses, compromised the foundations upon which new lands were built.[20] He singled out the Administrative Department for special criticism because he considered it the abode of feckless officials who haboured antagonisms to European settlement partly as a result of an overabundance of caution born of a desire to avoid repeating the mistakes of the IBEA Co.

In its bid to promote the settler's cause, the *EAS* adopted the Colonists Association to articulate their demands to the authorities.[21] In the years that would follow, the newspaper would cover its activities fastidiously, offer it counsel as it attempted to influence the direction of its decisions editorially, and would be the medium to which members would turn for a recapitulation of the proceedings of its meetings. By 1905, the association considered itself a

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its place in the world in the 20th century which was less rosy than the settlers were hoping. See for example, Winston S. Churchill, *A Roving Commission: My Early Life*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1940, pp. ix – x.

[19] *EAS*, "Mr. E. S. Grogan and the 'Standard;' an interview," vol. 11, no. 289, Saturday 18 January 1908, p. 6.

[20] Ibid.

[21] For more on political organisations in Kenya see, George Bennet, "The Development of Political Organisations in Kenya," *Political Studies*, vol. 5, issue 2, June 1957, pp. 113 – 130.

commercial failure but took comfort in what it viewed as its political achievements. At the time of its annual meeting in January of that year the organisation, which had started off as the Planters and Farmers Association, had 100 members under the leadership of Lord Delamere, up from the twenty or so it had at its establishment. According to its annual report, which the *EAS* published in full, the intention of its founders had been to restrict membership to farmers (middlemen were not welcome) and develop the association into an enterprise with the primary goal of enabling them to access markets for their produce. As such, the president of the organisation was tasked with approaching the East African Syndicate to obtain a loan that would enable members to market their produce in South Africa. The loan never came through, plans to use the association as a marketing instrument never took off, and the association appears to have resolved to restrict itself to agitating for changes in the aspects of the Protectorate's life that they considered a hindrance to their growth and development.

By 1903, the Planters and Farmers Association had ceased trying to operate as a marketing organisation. In the period that ensued, it acquired a distinct political character and counted amongst its successes getting Sir Charles Eliot to reconsider land laws with which they were dissatisfied. They did not obtain the desired amendments but the Commissioner seemed to have been lax in enforcing some laws that displeased the settlers and so, for example, the provision that settlers plant trees on their land was not enforced. With this minor success in hand, the settlers were then able to push back against regulations forbidding them to impound cattle that had trespassed on their property. They also scored a major victory when they successfully advocated to be permitted to import agricultural implements duty free. There was of course much more with which the association's members were not pleased. During its 1903 annual meeting, the organisation's Secretary read a letter from Lord Hindlip, a settler and ardent advocate of

settler causes, who urged the association to continue resisting efforts to resettle Jewish immigrants in the colony. He insisted he had no problem with Jews per se but was troubled that the scheme would result in "the lowest class of Russians" being brought into the country and who would then turn into a bother. The Association agreed. By then, it had already communicated their objections to the Foreign Secretary and the Commissioner. After further discussion, they resolved to send a petition to the House of Commons where they hoped to be more able to steer the Government away from the proposition. Labour was another key concern. The settlers felt the authorities were not doing enough to help them acquire and maintain labour. Contributors argued that because they could not restrict the movement of labour employers suffered when labourers left just as they were getting a grip on various tasks, and that the British overly protected the African in BEA in comparison to his colleagues in South Africa. The association also expressed its discontent with the continued use of Indian law as it was "the Englishman's right to be governed by his own laws," the use of Indian coinage and what they deemed to be high railway transportation costs.[22] While confident that the Protectorate would be granted a legislative body, CA members also expressed their determination to ensure there was adequate unofficial representation in the body that would result. The *EAS* dedicated two of its twelve pages to minutes of the CA's 1905 annual meeting with appropriate headings.[23] There was no opinion injected into the coverage of the key meeting however, in the weeks and months that followed; the *EAS* simply acted as the CA's textual echo, repeating many of the opinions that were expressed at that meeting. The CA's grievances were those of the *EAS.*

The newspaper's critiques of government ranged from the hostile and damning to the measured and controlled. Routine critiques touched on matters such as infrastructural

[22] *AS*, "The Colonists Association of BEA: Annual Meeting at Nairobi, vol. 5, no. 132, Saturday 14 March 1905, p. 5.
[23] Ibid., pp. 4-5.

development and government inefficiencies. The hostile and damning came from the newspaper itself as well as those to whom it gave space on its pages. They are evident, for example, in September 1912, when the *EAS*, frustrated by the inability of settlers to exert any meaningful influence on the LEGCO, attacked the body in an editorial titled "Our Farcical Council." The editor then proceeded to liken it to a "sop" that the British Government had given the colony to tamp down settler calls for elected representation. To make matters worse for the settlers, the newspaper insisted that the unofficial representatives the Governor nominated to the Council were individuals he knew would not give the Government a hard time – with the exception of Lord Delamere. Yet, the editor opined, even Delamere had been "beaten by the stone wall of defence just at a time when he should have more tightly girded his loins." He accused the other unofficial members of appearing more interested in making questionable trips to Europe instead of representing settler interests. The paper declared the nomination of representation a failure and argued that henceforth, any settler who accepted a nomination to the LEGCO just as others were fighting for elective positions was actually committing an act of treason.[24]

This severe tone is also evident in the newspaper's complaint about the Post Office neglecting to inform customers about the restoration of deferred cablegram services to India, which meant that customers had continued to send cables to India at full rate even after the Post Office restored the deferred cablegram service. The newspaper titled the brief report "Robbing the public," and commenced it acidly by observing that "there seems to be a stupid idea in the minds of officials of this Protectorate that nothing must be done to inform the public of what is going on." It went on to assail them for managing the country in the same way masters treated their serfs in Western Europe of the Middle Ages and for being unable to change as they were

[24] EAS, "Our Farcical Council," (vol. not indicated), no. 556, Saturday 7 September 1912, p. 16.

too deeply mired in red tape.[25] Later that month, speculation that a senior official was about to retire brought a plea from the newspaper for a more youthful and pragmatic replacement as "we have become sick to nauseating point of the automatic official who rigidly follows every letter of the law without recourse to common-sense views and discretion." Such officials were too diffident, lacked initiative, and the settlers had to constantly poke and prod them into action. They were akin to "the weak-eyed, broken spirited draught oxen seen in our streets guided by any little imp of darkness who happens to be balancing on his precarious perch and wielding the whip."[26] It also called on the British Government to shift the country's status from that of Protectorate to a colony as there were an ever increasing number of capable settlers.

The week after, the *EAS* found another proxy critic of the Government in Frank Douglas of South Africa, whose letter it prefaced by describing him as a "highly respected Colonist whose opinions carry considerable weight when expressed."[27] Although the *EAS* carried the obligatory caution above its correspondence columns that the opinions below were not necessarily its own, Douglas' opinions following a visit to the Protectorate found such resonance with those of the publication that it thought them worth what amounted to an endorsement. Douglas' spiel against the Government was provoked by the incarceration of his father-in-law, Russell Bowker, alongside Grogan for the notorious African flogging incident. After a prolonged discussion of the case he grouped it together with the policies of the administration as evidence of its poor running of the Protectorate's affairs. Just as his father-in-law's prison mate Ewart Grogan, he argued that the Protectorate was under the management of "small-minded inexperienced men on small salaries" and saw no remedy to this problem other than their

[25] *EAS*, "Robbing the public," (vol. not indicated), no. 588, Saturday 19 April 1913, p. 10.
[26] *EAS*, "Officialdom," (vol. not indicated), no. 589, Saturday 26 April 1913, p. 7.
[27] *EAS*, "Reasons why we are failing: a weak administration," vol. 9, no. 255, Saturday 25 May 1907, p. 11.

dismissal and presumably their replacement with officials who would do the settlers' bidding without hesitation. Douglas wanted the Protectorate to be led by a Governor who would essentially be able to resist pressure from London and, probably in light of Eliot's experiences, strong-willed sub-commissioners and subordinates. His call for what amounted to a demand for a governmental overhaul was accompanied with another for inquiries into the conduct of affairs in various departments such as the Veterinary and Judicial Departments (including the aftermath of the flogging incident) in addition to the Land Department. He shared the certainty of the Association in the commercially promising nature of BEA for Europeans but believed that the authorities had to step in more sympathetically and proactively to assist them in turning its resources into profitable ventures. The newspaper titled the correspondence: "Reasons Why We are Failing: A Weak Administration," and then posed the question, "Will H.E. Continue Shutting his Eyes to the Tricks of the Anti-Colonist Official?"[28] It was the paper's tacit acknowledgement that the letter was a harsh critique of an administration whose Governor the Europeans were fortunate to have as they had his ear. The problem was that he seemed unable to stand up to London when the Foreign Office's policies militated against their interests.

As noted above however, the newspaper was also quite capable of moderating its tone when criticising the Government.Yet even as it strived to position itself amongst the settlers as a more collected voice of reason it was not always able to modulate its acrid tone. Such efforts were nevertheless a necessity dictated by political expediency or its awareness of the potential counter-productivity of a constantly shrill tone. One such effort was quite elaborate and is revealing of the paper's key contemporaneous concerns on a wide range of critical socio-economic and political issues that it would repeat often in the years to come. It is also evident that these issues were solely critical in so far as their implementation or continued neglect

[28] Ibid.

advanced or imperiled the cause of the European. During June and July of 1907, the newspaper run a five-part editorial series on "Constructive Re-Organisation." The *EAS* stated that it was concerned that the range and number of items on the agenda of the LEGCO, such as the revised ordinances on land and customs in addition to routine matters, would leave little time for a genuine inquiry into the morass it insisted ran deep in the country's administrative structure. The first part of the series attacked the role of Provincial Commissioners (PCs) whom it considered obsolete and a waste of public resources. Of particular concern to the newspaper was the quasi-judicial role of the PC which meant they could develop cases against the accused in roles akin to those of a public prosecutor and then sit in judgment of the same case. Equally unacceptable to the newspaper was the frequent posting of these administrative officials from one province to another where they regularly revised policy towards Africans which for the *EAS* meant that Africans, would never master "the whiteman's policy" to the detriment of the European populace in general.[29]

In the second installment of the series, the newspaper turned itself towards the work of the Protectorate's District Commissioners, arguing that their roles were of crucial importance, embracing everything from the development of trade to transport in the areas under their jurisdiction. Yet, insisted the editor, the Government was guilty of undermining this function by appointing poorly trained, ill-equipped young men to dockets they did not understand. "A more crude method of colonising a country could hardly be conceived and the result has been only what might have been expected under the circumstances, a distressing failure," lamented the editor. He then went on to propose that their roles be better defined and that of Provincial Commissioners be transferred to Native Affairs Offices that would be located in each province with the duties of dealing exclusively with native affairs, particularly matters of tax and labour.

[29] *EAS*, "Constructive re-organisation (No. I)," vol. 9, no. 260, Saturday 29 June 1907, p. 10.

This action he felt, would ensure continuity in policy formulation and implementation in those all-important matters.[30] The paper dealt with native affairs in more depth two weeks later in an article that reiterated its stand on what it viewed as the lack of uniformity in the management of African affairs as well as the Government's failure to exact a price on Africans for what it counted as its service to their race. The editor theorised that the European had granted the African law and order as well as tranquility. He claimed that the European had pacified a tramautised land that violence, wrought by the cultural inclinations of competing groups, had made inhabitable and as a consequence Africans were now an idle lot as wars that were once upon a time a chronic phenomenon were no more. For that the African was indebted to the European and the editor argued that there were only two ways to exact the cost of their 'services' to Africans: taxation and religion. The hut tax was thus justifiable as would be an additional poll tax. That Europeans did not pay taxes was a matter of no consequence as they paid these indirectly in multiple ways – presumably Africans did not. Religion, on the other hand, served to teach the African that they were but "atoms living on a sufferance of an Almighty" and "their duty towards their neighbour is not a fantasy but a necessity." Acknowledging that matters of faith were not in the hands of the Government, the newspaper all the same recommended that the ideological nurturing of the native was too important and too delicate a matter to go unsupervised. The paper therefore recommended that the work of the church in this arena be supervised as the output of their labours were for the "common weal" and amounted to "public service."[31] Once again the existence of a Native Affairs Office would be indispensible to this function.

[30] *EAS*, "Constructive re-organisation (No. II)," vol. 9, no. 261, Saturday 6 July 1907, p. 10.
[31] *EAS*, "Constructive re-organisation (No. IV)," vol. 9, no. 263, Saturday 20 July 1907, p. 10.

The next administrative area to come under focus was the Public Works Department and that of the Railway, for which the newspaper provided its most detailed critique yet. To begin with, it deplored the fact that the two existed separately and advocated for their merger, arguing that this would enable the resulting department to benefit from economies of scale when making purchases from Crown Agents. In addition, the merger would eliminate the duplication of staff. Lastly, it zeroed in on the Railway's "temptation" to attain immediate profitability at the expense of the "future." To remedy this vice, the newspaper recommended the formation of a Board which would be charged with policy making for the Protectorate's public works. It recommended that the Board be composed of the Commissioner of Public Works as Chair, two official and two unofficial members of the LEGCO, specifying that one of the latter should represent agricultural interests. The paper claimed that the work of the Board would not usurp the executive functions of the department. However, its definition of the proposed board's functions seems to imply that sooner or later they would collide with those of executive officers, which would result in settlers having representatives with decision-making capacities on the Board of the colony's prime infrastructural investment. These decisions included setting the general policy of the railway and public works department, fixing the rates and fares of all railway traffic, overseeing the expenditure of any sum beyond £1,000, the expenditure for emergency works not provided for in the annual budget, all contracts and tenders of over £200, any change of organisation within the departments, any change resulting in the creation or abolition of positions costing more than £400, alterations in employees' terms of service, and any alteration of railway schedules for goods and passengers.[32]

The fifth and final segment of the series addressed the all important issue of land, specifically the state of the Land Department and the failure of the Government to act

[32] *EAS*, "Constructive re-organisation (No. III)," vol. 9, no. 262, Saturday 13 July 1907, p. 10.

comprehensively on the Report of the Land Commission which had sat three years before. Among the Commission's recommendations was the setting up of a Land Board which a Land Commissioner would chair. The board was supposed to be comprised of three ex-officio members and two nominees of the Governor. Instead, the Governor had only appointed a Land Commissioner and it troubled the *EAS* that the Protectorate's most valuable resource was now under the management of a single individual, especially because it condemned the Comissioner's land policies as flawed. Most reprehensible was what the editor referred to as his "adoption of a policy of feudal and commercial landlordism," which meant the Land Department had essentially focused its resources on "an endeavour to fill the highlands with pauper peasants," that is, small scale European farmers who needed African squatters to make their land allocations productive. The victims of this policy were private landowners and the editor observed that subsequent to the appointment of the Land Commissioner appeals on land issues at the Law Courts had increased. The paper also assailed the Survey Department's operations as disorganised and the cause of agonising delays to land applicants.[33] Generally, the issues covered in the series were the most irksome for settlers. Their continued inability to alter definitively the various administrative institutions and functions in a manner that pleased them were key motivating factors in their quest for autonomy. For the *EAS*, the desired changes and the general pursuit of influence in the corridors of power were always for the ultimate and exclusive benefit of the European. The needs of the "imps of darkness" and other "lesser" members of the human race were important to the extent that they enhanced or harmed European interests.

[33] *EAS*, "Constructive re-organisation (No. V)," vol. 9, no. 264, Saturday 27 July 1907, p. 10.

The *EAS'* Push for Self-Government

In May 1912, the newspaper welcomed news that the Lords of the British Treasury would end grants-in-aid to BEA. The Treasury was signaling that the country had improved its revenue generation capacity and the newspaper hailed the move as an epic moment in the Protectorate's history, then exhorted readers to work towards ensuring that they lived up to the expectations of the British Government. It praised three parties for the achievement: the settlers, who had worked hard and helped the Protectorate's economy grow; Governor Sir Percy Girouard, of whom the settlers were particularly fond as he had embraced their agenda fully and advocated for their interests; and lastly those who had campaigned for such a cut. Amongst the latter, it singled out "ourselves, the 'East African Standard,' who have in season and out of season, urged the desirability of giving us the opportunity of proving that British East African[sic] can, under a wisely considered financial programme, pay its own way for all time."[34] The following month, the newspaper expressed its dissatisfaction with the LEGCO official and unofficial members who, among other things, had failed to mention the ending of the grants-in-aid to the Protectorate. The paper insinuated that their omission was deliberate and in doing so, exposed a self-importance born of its preeminence as the journal of choice amongst Europeans by pondering their silence further. Had not the *EAS* published news on the matter? What excuse then could the LEGCO members have for being silent on such a crucial matter? For the first time it explicitly linked the ending of the grants with a call for the election of unofficial settler representatives to the LEGCO. The newspaper insisted that the Protectorate's enhanced financial responsibilities meant "enhanced requirements of the public of a fuller measure of representation." To the newspaper, it seemed the LEGCO was bent on ignoring a "monster petition" that the settlers had sent the Secretary of State for the Colonies demanding elected

[34] *EAS*, "The Grant-in-Aid," (vol. not indicated), no. 539, Saturday 11 May 1912, p. 16.

representation.[35] The newspaper continued to express its indignation at the British Government's reluctance to permit the settlers to have the elected representation they believed the country's financial position seemed to justify. When the Protectorate government accepted what the newspaper termed a "species of grant" for the purpose of enabling the railway to equip itself for the new undertaking of meeting the Magadi Soda Company's transport requirements with further loans promised, it was again moved to comment. The *EAS* was keen to ensure that such injections of capital did not denigrate the Protectorate's financial standing and with that a critical platform for demanding elected representation to oversee funding the country generated from within. It advised that the loans be serviced flawlessly to convince London that the colonists deserved "popular representation."[36] In the meantime, the newspaper would continue to be on the lookout for opportunities to advance the settler's cause for self-government.

Such an occasion arose when the Mombasa Chamber of Commerce wrote to the government-appointed Mombasa Township Committee to protest against the designation of only one harbour for the purposes of pratique. The measure had slowed down the movement of passengers and goods considerably to the dismay of the Chamber's members. The members apparently were of the opinion that the Township Committee was an inert, bureaucratic-ridden body with an obscure membership that was out of touch with the needs of the town and for recommending policies to the Government the repercussions of which it was incapable of understanding by virtue of its alleged unresponsiveness. It represented once again the Government's indifference to colonist's needs and interests. The *EAS* titled the report "That Ridiculous Body" and proceeded to deride the Committee as "the fabulous sea-serpent, [that] has been heard of before, but nobody could positively say that he had ever seen it or knew where it

[35] *EAS*, "The things that matter," (vol. not indicated), no. 542, Saturday 1 June 1912, p. 16.
[36] *EAS*, "Roads and representation," (vol. not indicated), no. 547, Saturday 6 July 1912, p. 16.

could be found." Its main problem argued the *EAS*, was that those sitting on the Committee lacked a genuine interest in the well-being of the town. Its breed of official membership came in for criticism again as evidence that a government free of colonist influence was inherently incapable of serving the colonist. The Township Committee for instance, was inefficient because:

> The several units, in their quasi-aldermanic role, have no civic status. As mere Government servants appointed in London they are little better than birds of passage. Here to-day and gone to Fantiland to-morrow. By the rules of the Colonial Office they are not allowed to acquire anything approaching a "stake" in the country such as property, which might give them substantial personal interests in the ADVANCEMENT OF THE COMMUNITY over which they are expected, under existing conditions to exercise certain nebulous powers of control and progressive influence. It even happens that some of these units are often young bachelors who live to enjoy a good time at home and are jealous of every day, between the present and the next furlough. Such an official cannot be esteemed as likely to avouch any zealous regard for B.E.A. community and even when married may be depended upon only to have a keen eye for the welfare of the big official compound or location.[37]

Thus, for the *EAS*, government officials lacked a stake in the well-being of the Protectorate and would never be interested in more than their own personal welfare and the bureaucratic fulfillment of their unhelpful terms of service. In the same article, the newspaper threw in an accusation against the Government asserting that it was guilty of complicity and had generally been neglectful of the health and sanitation needs of Mombasa. The newspaper, it noted, had to point out yet again that the miserly ways of the Government had permitted the island to sink into a poor state of health and hygiene. It was "rotten" and in need of radical change possible only at the hands of "European colonists being given a direct say in the Administration through enfranchisement and representation, if not control, in the Legislative Council, also by the inauguration of popularly elected Municipal Councils." Control of the LEGCO would of course

[37] *EAS*, "That ridiculous body," (vol. not indicated), no. 559, Saturday 28 December 1912, p. 17. Words in uppercase as in the newspaper.

amount to self-government that London had made clear it would not cede easily. The newspaper thus only implied it by highlighting settlers' demands for popular representation while it cursorily demanded "control" on their behalf as it took part in the charge for the more modest goal of local government representation.

"Wake up Nairobi," exhorted the newspaper on 12 April 1913 as it continued to pressure the authorities for whatever counted as representative government for the European settler. Having petitioned, held meetings and had the pages of the *EAS* at their service, the settlers decided to up the ante on their campaign for representation. The day's editorial highlighted a Nairobi meeting which a "few leading townspeople" had organised that week and at which it was proposed that the formation of a Vigilance Committee (VC) be considered for debate at a public meeting the following week. Three items would be on the meeting's agenda: the Vigilance Committee, changing the management of the municipal council, and the formation of an executive committee. The champion of the Vigilance Committee proposition was Ewart Grogan. The newspaper was evidently at pains to assure the public that despite his reputation as a firebrand, he was only interested in improving municipal management and not replacing it. Besides, one of its stated goals would be to work with the authorities.[38] The *EAS* presented the VC as an organ for empowering the municipal council of Nairobi. For example, one of its key efforts would be pushing the government to implement the Municipal Councils Ordinance of 1909 that vested the councils with the powers of the township committees. However, once the VC was eventually formed, its goals were more ambitious; its founders demanded a change in municipal control and elected representation to it.[39] In the end, however, it achieved little and went out of operation silently.

[38] *EAS*, "Wake up Nairobi," (vol. not indicated), no. 587, Saturday 12 April 1913, p. 16.
[39] *EAS*, "Vigilance Committee," (vol. not indicated), no. 588, Saturday 19 April 1913, pp. 12 – 14.

In 1915, as conflict spread in Europe, the *EAS* rallied in support of settlers who saw in Britain's preoccupation with the war an opportunity to gain a measure of the politico-economic control they had always yearned for but which the Home Government had denied them. On 11 September 1915, the *EAS* published the settlers' "Call to Organise" which they had made at what the newspaper hailed as "the greatest meeting in the whole of the history of British East Africa."[40] At the meeting the settlers had passed a resolution declaring full support for the King and placing all the Protectorate's resources at the service of the Governor to enable him to lead the country in supporting Britain's war effort. The resolution, which the newspaper quoted in full and placed directly underneath its brief introductory paragraph, seemed innocuous enough, however it disguised what actually amounted to the settler leadership's cunning plot to force their way into the country's corridors of power.

In its report on the meeting, the newspaper took care to highlight the patriotic nature of the music that had kicked off the meeting. Among other performances, a certain C. Udall had a special composition sung to the tune of "The Old Brigade" which was reportedly "guaranteed to make the men of the Nairobi Defence Force sigh for more arduous duties," while a Theo Blunt recited the poem "Friends and Foes." According to the newspaper, Blunt's presentation had been so stirring that had a recruiting agent been about the premises, he would have recruited an impressive number of volunteers on the spot. Then another performer, A. White, had joined both Udall and Blunt in singing "The Old Brigade" and "Land of Hope and Glory" with an enthused audience chiming in zealously. After these stirring performances, the meeting settled down to business with prominent American settler Captain Northrup MacMillan leading the charge. Taking note of the settlers' war activities up to that point, he declared that they had ably demonstrated their willingness to support Britain's cause in the war; however, their efforts thus

[40] *EAS*, "The Call to Organise," (vol. not indicated), no. 713, Saturday 11 September 1915, p. 11.

far had convinced them that they could achieve a "more complete co-operation between settlers and the Government." Indeed it was for that particular reason that they had called the meeting. The next speaker was Ewart Grogan who expounded on just the exact nature of that co-operation. He started by laying out the context for the Protectorate's involvement in the war, arguing that Britain's war strategists had more than enough on their hands overseeing the European theatres of war. It was thus the responsibility of the peripheries of the Empire to protect the integrity of their borders and even find a way to contribute to major war operations in Europe. The newspaper then reported in great detail Grogan's vocalised simulation of a journey through different parts of the Empire as he studied the war efforts of their inhabitants. These included not only Canada and Australia, but also Nyasaland, where he observed that its white population was smaller than that of BEA and had greater problems of internal communication. Yet, he argued, they had mounted a brilliant war effort with successes over the enemy. What of BEA? Had it done enough to counter the risks that German East Africa to its south posed? Grogan thought otherwise and the paper reported the audience as having agreed with cries of "No!" No!" The settlers were willing and ready to continue investing their energies into the war effort but what was lacking at that point was the proper organisation of the entire Protectorate's war effort, which required "some overriding intelligence, some master hand to weld it into one whole."

The second part of the report proceeded to paraphrase Grogan launching his mischievous yet bellicose critique of the failures of the Protectorate's leadership thus:

> The status of the Protectorate was merely diplomatic bluff. It meant nothing at all except what it could be made to mean. He asked his audience to consider the duties of all the responsible members of a ministry in a country like this, and recognise the vast mesh of red tape which strangles them and cramps the movements of men in these positions. He told the meeting that they had to be sensible people and recognise these difficulties. We had to respect these

> institutions as growths – ridiculous if they liked – but we had to recognise that they were there, and we had to respect them, as they stood for a great and historical past. Fortunately, the speaker went on, we were not bound to conform to these conditions. We were free men. We could leap in where angels feared to tread…We could do all sorts of things which would raise the hair off the head of an official.[41]

In the wake of this attack he then sought to empower his European audience even as he continued to launch volleys at the officials who had so aggravated the settler over the years, both in the Protectorate and in the London:

> What we suffered from here was that nobody was ever responsible for anything, except the office boy…which he thought would be appreciated by everybody if they had had the same experience as the speaker, and one had only to go the weary round of departments, and be passed on from one and then to another, until they all went on leave. That, he said, was not a peculiarity of this country. It was the *sine qua non* of official life. It was the same in London, and the same everywhere, and for this reason, and because of bureaucracy – he did not wish to give any offence – had evolved the art of avoiding responsibility. Every official acquired that when his mind was still plastic and when his mind was developing: If he made a positive mistake, then he was damned, but he could go on making negative mistakes for ever [sic], and perhaps even rise to the position of governor.[42]

Sympathisers were to mourn therefore the fate of settlers living under the rule of officials who lacked attributes that the newspaper had pointed out in the past and was, arguably, glad to publish again: initiative, imagination and the ability to innovate policies uniquely suited to the colonist experiences of the European.

Having decried officialdom, Grogan then made his second war organisation recommendation which entailed the setting up of a "body" to set the Protectorate on steady war footing and supervise its entire effort. Grogan was of the opinion that the body had to "represent the organised government, the officials and settlers of this country who provide the sinews of war." It also had to be small to enable it to keep war matters discussed with the General Officer

[41] Ibid.
[42] Ibid., p. 12.

in charge confidential. The small size of the body was also necessary because matters of war, especially those of strategy with which the body if well set up would be engaged, were of a most complex nature and thus "difficult for the man in the street to understand." The leader had thus peremptorily delimited the future settler membership of such a body presumably to paragons of excellence in military service such as he and Captain MacMillan. Most interestingly, Grogan envisioned a body which would be charged with the organisation of the war effort so completely that after the war they would have to answer to questions such as "Why did you not do this, it was your duty and you had the power and the whole responsibility is yours."[43] By implication, the body would also take full credit for the successful conduct of the war and could quite possibly be charged with greater responsibilities in the government of the Protectorate thereafter. Grogan's speech was lengthy and the *EAS* reported it in its entirety as it paraphrased him with several doses of approving commentary. It also bracketed the audience's reaction (not surprisingly there was much laughter, applause and a few raucous responses of approval) at different points of the speech, which ensured that the reader understood the unanimity of those in attendance as well as the spirit of merriment that prevailed.

The *EAS* was therefore undoubtedly supportive of Grogan and McMillan's cause; prior to the meeting, it endeavoured to prime its readership for its agenda and, then, subsequent to the passage of its resolution continued to support it with less belligerance. Grogan was well known to all Europeans in the Protectorate. His boisterous and irreverent manner of speech must have been a cause for concern for the newspaper. This was so because despite it having assailed the Government for whatever wrongs it perceived in the past, Grogan's message that Tuesday was of a most delicate nature when combined with his call for settlers to support the formation of a powerful, settler-controlled decision making body that would operate outside the Protectorate's

[43] Ibid.

administrative structure. Grogan and his ilk were exerting force and strategising for greater control of the Protectorate's affairs in a move that could easily be construed as a South African-style push for independence. The day before the meeting, and conscious of anxieties its mooting had instigated (probably most intensely within administration circles), the newspaper sought to quell anxieties. It claimed to have no knowledge of the conveners' goals although it appeared to have a comprehensive understanding of its agenda. The editor acknowledged that the impending meeting had raised much speculation and uneasiness amongst those who were quick to judge. He reassured readers that the goals of the conveners' were far from inimical to the peace and stability of the Protectorate. The meeting was geared towards disturbing "not so much our sense of security as our sense of equanimity." Britons in BEA could not afford to be inactive when other parts of the Empire were contributing to the war effort, especially since "already the manhood of this country has proved itself on the battlefield."[44] The country was alive with spirited Europeans waiting to serve the Empire but whose efforts were faltering due to a lack of organisation. As such, the newspaper was certain that the convenors' proposition for an organisational structure that would supervise the war effort would be well received by all. It was an endorsement of their goals, and the day after the meeting the newspaper published two other equally supportive editorials.[45]

The settlers scored a crucial victory when the Governor did agree to the setting up of a War Council after exchanging correspondence with the convenors of the meeting, who focused their writing strictly on the matter of organising the Protectorate for war. He proceeded to make appointments to the Council in less than two weeks. Not surprisingly, it comprised among other

[44] *EAS*, "The Appeal;" editorial of Monday 6 September 1915 reproduced in *EAS* no. 713, Saturday 11 September 1915, pp. 15 – 16.
[45] *EAS*, "The Call to Organise," and "For King and Empire;" editorials for Wednesday 7 September 1915 and Friday 9 September 1915 in *EAS* no. 713, Saturday 11 September 1915, p. 16.

officials Grogan and McMillan as unofficial representatives.[46] During that week, the newspaper published the news of the appointments alongside the correspondence the settler leaders had exchanged with the Governor. The establishment of the War Council blew a fresh wind of optimism through the newspaper. It praised the new spirit of entente between the settlers and the Government as it celebrated the victory of the latter and predicted a promising future for BEA.[47]

No sooner had the Governor constituted the War Council than did the *EAS* publish a column advocating for it to play a wider role in the Protectorate's affairs, specifically economic affairs. At the time, the editor had received troubling unofficial reports that the Government was importing maize when there were bags of maize awaiting buyers on various farms. He then seized the opportunity to advocate for a War Council that would take over other functions of government on a more permanent basis. "After the military machine and always after it – comes the economic machine," wrote the editor. It was important for the country to win the war, as doing so was the first step towards a more promising economic future. However, he also argued that it was incumbent upon all to ensure that the economic machinery of the Protectorate was not compromised as a consequence of the war. The Protectorate had to see to it that its economy was fit enough to reabsorb those returning from the battlefield and to take advantage of international commodity markets during and after the war, thus ensuring the country was on sound economic footing once the conflict was over. To do this, the newspaper recommended that those leading the war effort prevent the waste of BEA's numerous resources which the editor revealed were already being brought to the attention of the War Council, presumably because the settler

[46] *EAS*, "Governor's War Council: appointments made," (vol. not indicated), Saturday 18 September 1915, (vol.not indicated) no. 714, p. 7.
[47] *EAS*, "Our rightful part," editorial of Wednesday15 September 1915 and "The Call of Nation," editorial of Tuesday 15 September 1915 in *EAS*, Saturday 18 September 1915, (vol. not indicated) no. 714, pp. 13 – 14. For another version of these events see, Elspeth Huxley, *White Man's Country: Lord Delamere and the Making of Kenya,* Volume II 1914 – 1931, pp. 21 – 24.

representatives on it were communicating with European farming and business interests in the Protectorate. It argued that there was a need for the business community to temper business rivalries and to work closely with the Government. Thus, it was imperative that those in the War Council remembered "that its duties will not cease with the successful mobilisation of a new fighting machine."[48] The newspaper was certainly not blind to the opportunities the Council's involvement in economics would avail to settlers for greater politico-economic power. In the meantime, the newspaper's advocacy for self-government caused it to change its attitude towards the sort of European settler who was welcome to the Protectorate. It had become increasingly evident that settlers needed to increase their numbers in order to bolster their political position in the territory and that goal could only be achieved if settlement was opened to 'small men.'

As an unofficial member of the Land Board and co-owner of an influential publication A. G. Anderson attempted to put this belief into practice. During one of the board's meetings, he and one other unofficial supported the increase of rents on large holdings of land to the disgust of those affected. The Nairobi Colonists Association held a meeting in May 1911 that resulted in a resolution which carried a vote of no confidence against them. The *EAS* published the proceedings of the meeting during which some members had issued strong condemnations of the manner in which those who dominated the meeting launched personal attacks against Anderson and his fellow unofficial Land Board member. Although one of the subtitles over the report read "Anti-Anderson Crusade," the newspaper published the report with little opinion. Furthermore, though the newspaper did not publish an editorial attacking the Nairobi Colonists Association, and Anderson did not author a rebuttal in his own newspaper it ensured that his perspective on the matter was not lost to public debate. This is because the paper did offer those who agreed with him a place to counter his opponents' attacks through ardent letters of support mostly

[48] *EAS*, "Organisation," (vol. not indicated), no. 715, Saturday 25 September 1915, p. 13.

authored under pen names. Take for instance one reader's response to Major Leggett's letter which Lord Delamere, the chair of the meeting, had read at the meeting in his absence. In his letter, the Major had issued a strong condemnation of Anderson's support for the higher land rates and accused him of waging war against capitalist farmers. He was of the opinion that the Protectorate needed "population and money not population alone" and that the investments large scale capitalist farmers made created employment opportunities that in turn spurred the immigration that Anderson wanted to encourage.[49] Two days letter, a certain "Nom de Plume" wrote to the *EAS* terming Major Legget's communication to the meeting "rather amusing," as the latter himself had proposed to double the rates of land rents as a contributor at Land Board meetings and to set conditions for land improvements that were "ridiculously hard" and "sufficient to prevent a sane white colonist from taking land in the Protectorate," in addition to calling for the re-evaluation of land rates every 33 and 66 years.[50] These were measures Legget and his supporters had proposed to discourage the sort of European settler of modest means whom they considered undesirable. According to "Nom de Plume," Legget's telegram to the meeting objecting to similar measures being taken against a different (their own) segment of the European population was therefore disingenuous.

Another correspondent, "A Nairobi Colonist," also defended Anderson, praising his cogent defense of the Land Board's polices as he scolded the conveners of the Nairobi Colonist's Association meeting for launching unwarranted personal attacks on Anderson.[51] Then, in response to the meeting itself, the newspaper published a lengthy, wry correspondence from another reader, "Square Deal." He derided the meeting as a "puerile endeavour" to assail any official policy which discomfited them — whether it be the distinction between the lowlands and

[49] *EAS*, "The landowners meeting," no. 302, Friday 26 May 1911, p. 4.
[50] Ibid.
[51] *EAS*, "The two land meetings," no. 302, Friday 26 May 1911, p. 4.

the highlands, higher land rents, more exacting demands for the development of land holdings or the graduated land tax — even when it made good economic sense for the Protectorate. In addition, "Square Deal" lampooned the large land holders, referring to them with a colourful display of language that depicted them as a rather hoggish lot:

> Last Tuesday afternoon, a number of overstrung yet highly respected gentlemen – this scribe desires to be courteous – fumed as the Legion of Landlords in obsessed dementia. The two meetings are therefore likely to be known in B.E.A. history as "Rampage of the Landbugs." When in perspective such movements usually appear as comedies, and the obsessed land magnates and their bobtailed followers under the hallucination that they are the only right-minded of the Territory will give much merriment.
>
> Lord Delamere explained that the three non-official members of the Legislative Council were in a quandary. Truly a wonderful admission that the honorable had come to know their own congenital state of mind. Then the peculiar coterie of carefully selected quidpuncs assumed themselves to form a genuine Public Meeting and as such proceeded to tighten the screws in the quandary's fixings. Certainly a courageous undertaking considering the Sisyphean task and the limitations of the honourable pupils never made more manifest than during the recent session of the Legislative Council. Though the crux of the comedy is that Highland land tenures were not even discussed at the recent Land Board meeting, wherefore unless certain persons and syndicates are intent upon grabbing lowland plantations, in addition to their present individual holdings, at the lowest possible figure, Anderson and Bunbery can scarcely be considered to have vexed the pockets of the Highland landholders.[52]

It was an unusual critique of the previously favoured capitalist farmer and is significant because it appeared in the newspaper at a time when the *EAS* as a publication started questioning the policy of encouraging capitalist farmers to immigrate to the Protectorate at the expense of less well-heeled Europeans. Indeed three days before the newspaper published "Square Deal's" letter, it published Charles Anderson's letter to the editor in which he argued that higher land rates were the weapons of choice in the battle against land speculation. He was of the opinion that it was dangerous to allow expansive tracts of land to fall into the hands of a few individuals who had no intention of investing in it to make it agriculturally productive. For such people, low

[52] *EAS*, "Land meeting: another view," Tuesday 30 May 1911, p. 3.

land rates made land speculation easy and also meant that they were in a position to undersell their smaller neighbours who collectively would have been in a position to add more value to that tract of land.[53] Thus, from then on the *EAS* would proceed to promote aggressively the immigration to Kenya of all classes of British settlers. In 1919 for instance, following the end of World War I and amidst Government schemes to increase the population of European settlers in the country such as the Soldier Settlement Scheme, the newspaper welcomed the increased influx of settlers to the Protectorate insisting there was plenty of land available.[54] While it celebrated the arrival of settlers with strong capital bases, it also argued that the resources of the Protectorate were so bountiful that it was not impossible for a diligent man to succeed, insisting that "here one and all, from the highest to the lowest, will be welcome."[55] What was important was for the Government to ensure that it did not place any hurdles in the way of those who wished to immigrate to the Protectorate, whatever their financial resources. When the Soldier Settlement Scheme floundered, the newspaper used its pages to advocate for its proper implementation. It published details of the Australian Settlement Scheme Act, which it lauded for not placing capital requirements on beneficiaries, under headings such as "Men Thank Australia," "Brains and Grit Preferred to Gold," and "Government and State Bank Working with Settler." Such requirements were harmful to BEA's reputation and were inimical to its interests as "history on other colonies tends to show that it is the small man who has been the pioneer, and not the capitalist." It cast its eyes enviously at post-war immigration to Australia, New Zealand, Canada and South Africa and was convinced that with the right incentives, BEA could benefit

[53] *EAS*, "Land question," Saturday 27 May 1911, p.
[54] For more on BEA's Soldier Settlement Scheme see C. J. Duder, "'Men of the Officer Class': Participants in the 1919 Soldier Settlement Scheme in Kenya," in *African Affairs*, 1993, volume 92, pp. 69-87 and C. J. Duder and C. P. Youe, "Paice's Place: Race and Politics in Nanyuki District, Kenya, in the 1920s," in *African Affairs*, vol. 93, no. 371, (1994), pp. 253-278.
[55] *EAS*, "New settlers," no. 2667, Monday 3 March 1919, p. See also editorial cartoon in the same issue, p. (page numbers not visible on available record).

from those numbers too. It further encouraged the Governor to persist in pursuing efforts to get the scheme off the ground even suggesting that the Protectorate obtain a loan of £1,000,000 from the British Government to support the scheme.[56]

The relationship between the *EAS* and the premier European organisation, now named the Convention of Associations, after the war was as strong as it was in its pre-war years and 1919 witnessed a renewal of settler activism which the newspaper celebrated as it resumed its role as the body's textual echo. Although the Convention of Associations experienced a downturn and almost became defunct during the war, once it was over and the War Council disbanded the Association was revived and the *EAS* was at hand to support it. Governor Edward Northey's arrival had coincided with the revival of the body which was comprised of smaller European associations scattered all over the country, and in March 1919 the *EAS* proffered a favourable assessment of the new Governor based on LEGCO proceedings since his arrival. The newspaper praised him for making decisions purely on merit instead of resorting to precedent or procedure, most of which had so frustrated them in the past, and for overseeing a smoothly run LEGCO. Under him, red tape was absent and by ruling that officials have a free vote in the LEGCO the newspaper asserted that he had turned the body into a voting machine. Presumably, this was praiseworthy because Northey had also made concessions to settlers, such as their inclusion in the Executive Council, and his action contributed to efforts to make the LEGCO a body of consequence in general. It assured him of their continued support for him and his administration, stating that as long as he continued on the course on which he was already proceeding he would

[56] *EAS*, "The small man," no. (not visible), Wednesday 26 March 1919, p. 6. For article on the Australian Settlement Act see same issue p. 6.

find in the "so-called truculent mob of settlers" a body of citizens eager to contribute to the development of the protectorate.[57]

Following a period of increasing Asian agitation for rights of franchise equal to those of Europeans, plus unrestricted rights to property acquisition and a say in government, Northey had also sided unequivocally with the settlers in a letter to the Convention of Associations which the *EAS* published next to its approving editorial. The newspaper was relieved that the Governor had ruled out the possibility of the franchise rights the Asians were demanding, denied them access to land in the Highlands, and had advocated for the training of Africans to take up positions Asians then occupied in the Protectorate. It endorsed the Governor's view that the presence of Asians was retarding African development and lauded him for proposing the restriction of Asian immigration. The newspaper took the Governor's position on this matter as the result of successful Convention of Associations lobbying. It was they who had created the bogey of the Asian menace which threatened the African's existence even though it did not serve their purpose to claim ownership of the incubus they had planted in the Governor's mind.[58] The settlers had scored a major victory, but in the months and years ahead the *EAS* would continue to provide a platform to those who issued all manner of attacks on Asians and joined in on the fray itself.[59]

On another front, Northey's correspondence to the Convention of Associations on the Protectorate's foreign exchange, labour and education problems — titled "Governor's Visit Home: He is Determined to Solve Exchange Problem: Native Registration," — was billed a

[57] *EAS*, "Old and new," no. (not visible), Thursday 20 March 1919, p. 6.
[58] *EAS*, "Asiatic questions," no.(not visible), Monday 24 March 1919, p. 6. For Northey's reply see same edition "Government's Policy," p. 6. For more on Asian politics during this time see, J. S. Mangat, *A History of Asians in East Africa, c. 1886 – 1945*. London: Oxford University Press, 1969, pp. 97 – 131.
[59] See for example, *EAS* "Asiatic trading," no. (not visible), Thursday 27 March 1919, p. 6, published just two days after the Governor issued his reply to the Convention of Associations.

"highly important letter" and replaced that day's *EAS* editorial. Although the Governor did not have solutions at hand for the Protectorate's exchange rate and education problems, he did have one for the labour problem. He announced the immediate application of the Native Registration Ordinance, beginning with large settlement areas, with the goal of extending it to the reserves and other more remote places. The correspondence itself is a demonstration of just how close Northey had become to the Convention of Associations. A memorandum detailing his views on "native administration policy" accompanied the letter along with a copy of his infamous Northey Circular, which Ainsworth was in the process of distributing to the relevant administration officials. He ended his letter by promising to work towards the decentralisation of Municipal Councils, Road Boards and District Committees while indicating that the development of the railway was of a greater challenge due to the lack of adequate funds. The letter was signed "Believe me, Yours very sincerely, Edward Northey."[60] To the settlers, he was the perfect Governor; one who catered to their every whim without question.

Attempts to Manage Resistance to the Settlers' Self-Government Efforts

By 1923, the question of the place and rights of the Asian in Kenya Colony, as the protectorate had been re-designated, sparked a debate that resulted in the matter being referred to London for settlement. European settlers' political gains under the governors who had followed Charles Eliot worried Asians considerably and heightened their agitation against them. In addition, the release of the Wood-Winterton Report on the matter (named after the Parliamentary Undersecretaries of the India and Colonial Offices) exacerbated tensions because although it maintained the racial exclusivity of the White Highlands, it did not recommend the enactment of immigration restrictions against Asians and proposed elections on a common roll to the utter

[60] *EAS*, "Governor's visit home," no. 1150, Wednesday 29 October 1919, p. 2. For more on Northey see also, Robert Maxon, *Struggle for Kenya: The Loss and Reassertion of Imperial Initiative, 1912-1923*. Rutherford, N.J.: Farleigh Dickinson University Press, 1993, pp. 128-181.

disgust of the colonists who vowed to fight on – in a literal sense. Concerned about the deterioration of the situation, the Secretary of State, the Duke of Devonshire, called representatives of the colony's races to London for talks.[61]

Throughout the talks, the newspaper continued its role as the unofficial public relations arm and textual medium of the CA, airing its views constantly on its pages, particularly the question of an unofficial LEGCO majority and segregation. It was naturally concerned about opinions on the Kenya question in London. For example, a *Daily Mail* editorial appears to have piqued the editor as one of its columns declared it imperative that the Colonial Office maintain control of Kenya. In an editorial that surveyed opinions expressed in the British press on the matter, the *EAS* attributed the statement to South Asian propaganda that had convinced those at Home that the Kenyan settler had been fighting for self-government that would enable it to control its African populace better. This of course had been a goal the *EAS* and the CA had worked towards for several years but now understood only too well that its achievement was an uphill battle that had the potential of alienating a British Government that was then just about to settle issues that amounted to critical steps towards attainment of that goal. As such he cautiously diffused the issue by confronting the *Daily Mail's* claim that the self-government issue was "too previous." The editorial did not deny that self-government was a key goal for the country's European settlers, asserting that after all "it is true that we look forward, some day to self government – and why should we not do so?" However, it stated that the focus should be on the current legislative goal of Kenya's settlers: an unofficial LEGCO majority. The paper appealed

[61] George Bennet, *Kenya a Political History*, p. 41-51. See also, Robert Gregory, *Sidney Webb and East Africa: Labour's Experiment with the Doctrine of Native Paramountcy.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982; Jildaph Kamoche, *Imperial Trusteeship and Political Evolution in Kenya, 1923 – 1963: A Study of Official Views and the Road to Decolonization*. Washington: University Press of America, 1981; Robert Maxon, *Struggle for Kenya: The Loss and Reassertion of Imperial Initiative, 1912 – 1923*. Cranbury, Pennsylvania: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1993.

to the British elector-trustees of the country to sympathise with its settlers who were "nothing more than an advisory body" in the LEGCO and could therefore hardly exert any influence over the formulation of its rules and ordinances. The situation for the settlers was unbearable and the editor asserted that the settler demand for an unofficial majority would ensure that the LEGCO was removed from "the possibility of being classed as a Colonial Office dictatorship, masked with the fancy dress of a representative assembly."[62]

At the same time, those elector-trustees were to take comfort in settler assurances that the LEGCO thus constituted would not mean an end to the dominance of the Colonial Office and its attendant oversight role of the country's African populace. The paper also claimed it simply wanted a definitive response to the Indian question from the British Government. However, whether or not a response to the question came it is likely that if London granted them an unofficial majority they would not have hesitated to use it legislatively in a bid to erase their anxieties over the one race that most threatened their ascendancy in the country. In such a scenario, the Imperial Government could of course veto legislation it considered unacceptable, but it seems that for the settlers such inconveniences would be temporary and bearable in their long walk to autonomy. As proceedings on the matters commenced, the *EAS* kept a close watch on the Indian delegation. The editor nervously surveyed the men of learning and eloquence that the Asian delegation sent to London before declaring his confidence that once the Asians failed to get any of their demands met, British opinion would thereafter rally around the "little, plucky Kenya colony." He took as a sign of weakening amongst its ranks when one of its delegates argued that it would drop its demands for a common electoral roll and accept a communal one if

[62] *EAS*, "Straws," Friday 6 July 1923, p. (not visible).

the policy was applied to Europeans too. The paper accused the delegation of resorting to "dog in the manger" tactics and smugly added that this was to be expected of members of their race.[63]

As news on the conference trickled back to the Protectorate, it quashed the optimism of the newspaper as it struggled to manage settler's reactions to the aftermath of what constituted a huge blow to their demand for representative government. The Indian immigration question had not received the definitive response for which that the settlers had hoped. Cabled news seemed to indicate that as opposed to dominions of the British Empire, the Colonial Office could grant freedom of movement to Asians living in territories that fell under its jurisdiction as long as that movement did not harm the interests of native populations. "This may mean anything or nothing," wrote the editor, even though its implications were quite clear. News from London also appeared to deal a blow to segregation and this seemed difficult for the paper to digest. The newspaper now specified two types of segregation, residential and commercial. It labelled the former "essential" and sought to quell readers' anxieties by urging them to "be tolerant of the Home reporter anxious to get his cable away" for not elaborating further. It also broke news to its readers that communal rolls would now be applied to both Europeans and Asians.[64] Generally, the *EAS* termed the breaking news as satisfactory even though its past positions on the matters in question indicate that it must have been dismayed at the turn of events. Nevertheless, not wishing to upset order and perhaps comforted by the knowledge that the Highlands would remain exclusive to Europeans, it urged readers to await further news calmly.

A week later, following the publication of the Devonshire White Paper, the newspaper was explicit in expressing its disappointment. An editor quite far from calm in disposition wrote that the British Government's decision on its various subjects would be most unsettling to many,

[63] Ibid., p. 119.
[64] *EAS*, "As you were!" no. (8?)961, Friday 20 July 1923, p.(not visible). For the cable news report see same edition, "Kenya conclusions: probable guiding lines for settlement," p. 1.

claiming that on each page it seemed to favour Asians. The *EAS* was upset that segregation in residential areas would not be enforced and the policy of the Paper made it possible for Asians to purchase real estate in European areas – an unfortunate provision that it predicted would militate against the interest of European property owners. The handling of questions pertaining to government was most painful and the *EAS* reported that "self-government, or even an unofficial majority is for the time being bluntly denied to us, with no softening of the refusal to allow us to take a more responsible part in affairs of state." To make matters worse, the paper observed that settlers would now not be permitted to take part in the formulation of laws that affected Africans as they had been able to do through the CA. Such laws would in future be made in London on the advice of Kenya's Governor, who in turn would be acting on advice from other officials and the Chief Native Commissioner. It also expressed indignation at the news that Europeans would be subject to a communal franchise which meant that their "voting status, in fact, is reduced from a dominant European classification to that of equality" with Indians, Arabs and in future, Africans. The *EAS* saw this as a victory for Kenya's Asians. Similarly, it took no solace in the maintenance of exclusive land ownership in the White Highlands for Europeans. The provision that empowered the Governor "veto all transfers of land" left too much discretion in the hands of an individual whom settlers were sure they could not always trust. It meant, as the editor put it, that a pro-Indian Colonial Secretary could in future work in conjunction with a pro-Indian Governor and pass on the right to exercise that veto.

Looking ahead, the newspaper scoffed at the Secretary of State's call for all the parties concerned to work together with good will following the period of heated political debate that had led to the conference. This was highly unlikely, retorted the paper as Europeans could only

view the contents of the Devonshire White Paper with "disquietude and resentment."[65] Indeed the newspaper would continue to express its dismay in the days and weeks that followed. In fact, just two days later it sanctimoniously summed up its key grievances with the Devonshire White Paper thus:

> Two points stand out to be regarded as regrettable from the European point of view, namely, the policy of non-segregation, and the firmly expressed decision that as to self-government, now or in the future, we may as well forget it. For so we read the Memorandum. We have to wait on the renaissance of the African before we can even think of self-government and if at any time we should ask for it again, it would, as we understand the document, only be granted to us in company with the Indians and with the Arab, with whom it is sought to place us on equality in every way. So our high ideals of a white civilization in Kenya may be buried. The Kenya Colonist who thought to find a place in the east on the platform, is requested to take his seat in the body of the hall, with all the other non-African races. The African will have a platform to himself, and the play will go forward under the direction of the Imperial stage manager.[66]

London had dealt the European in Kenya a blow where it hurt most: the hope for a future in which they would govern themselves as they reigned supreme over those they considered members of inferior races. The newspaper was still in irreconcilable mode when in September 1923 the CA and the Chamber of Commerce hosted a farewell dinner for Sir Charles Bowring, who had lived in the Protectorate for over twenty years and was then moving to Nyasaland where he would take up the governorship. To the Governor's proposition that the various sides accept the Paper and move on, it responded that whether or not Kenya had arrived at a definitive settlement vis-à-vis races and their politico-economic differences was still a matter of debate. "Mere words of counsel will not smooth things over unless the march of events permits such amicable co-operation," was the newspaper's observation.[67] The march of events would

[65] *EAS*, "Imperial Govt. Decision," no. (not visible)Thursday 26 July 1923, p. (not visible).
[66] *EAS*, "The Meaning of it," no. (not visible) Saturday 28 July 1923, p. (not visible) See also, *EAS*, "The Jam and the Pill," no. (not visible), Tuesday 31 July 1923, p. (not visible).
[67] *EAS*, "Sir Charles' farewell," no. (not visible) Thursday 13 September 1923, p. (not visible).

however, not permit that amity as those who felt aggrieved by the social and political order continued to vie for their place under the sun.

Before the decade was over, the settlers received another harsh reminder that Downing Street was still hesitant to confer upon them that which they had so fervently pursued over the years: political control and with it unprecedented economic fiat. This time it came in the form of the findings of the Hilton Young Commission, set up in November 1927 to look into a number of issues, including possibilities for bringing the governments in Central and Eastern Africa into closer cooperation either by Closer Union or Federation. Most critically for Kenya's settlers, it was also required to investigate the possibility of changing the territories' LEGCOs "so as to associate more closely in the responsibilities and trusteeship of Government the immigrant communities domiciled in the country."[68] The CA held a meeting to discuss the planned inquiry into Closer Union at which the contributions of most of the speakers captured their reticence towards the entire question of regional integration. There were roughly two camps: those who rejected any shift towards federation outright and those who said they would welcome federation on condition that it came with the necessary "safeguards." Not surprisingly the *EAS* covered the proceedings in great detail. In an editorial, the newspaper echoed the views of the latter, affirming that the consideration of Closer Union was welcome as long as it was founded on the principle of the preservation of western civilisation in the region, which meant that the Commission would examine the interests and aspirations of all the region's peoples against this principle. Prior to the arrival of the Hilton Young Commission, the *EAS* had reviewed its impending task with caution as it stated clearly and firmly that the economic well-being of the

[68] Great Britain, Commission on Closer Union of Dependencies in Eastern and Central Africa, *Report of the Commission on Closer Union of the Dependencies of Eastern and Central Africa.* London: H. M. Stationery Office, 1929, p. 5.

region was paramount and had to be the foundational factor guiding the work of Hilton Young and his team.

> We believe, too, that if sound economic grounds for federation cannot be found by an impartial enquiry, any political formula or superstructure designed to effect closer union will never succeed. There must be created, *in the first instance*, a sound economic foundation and a common economic interest, if political institutions are to be introduced and developed in the future. In this connexion, a great deal too much attention has been given to political difficulties and much less consideration to the common factors in the economic sense which bind the territories together and will continue to bring them more closely into contact, factors which, as we have already pointed out, give a much greater degree of security than any nebulous or skeleton political formulae.[69]

Therefore, as the commission readied itself to look into "common factors" that could be enhanced for the attainment of closer union, the newspaper asserted that it was best if those factors were economic, for they would provide a sound basis for union than the "mere vocal strength" of its claimants.[70]

Nevertheless, the *EAS* did not forget the suspicion with which various circles "at Home" had regarded the arguments of the European delegates to the conference that preceded the publication of the Devonshire White Paper. The fact that British public opinion was critical to determining the direction of policy in Kenya meant that it was important for the newspaper to keep its readers abreast with trends of thought abroad on various issues, no matter how irritating and unsettling. For instance, after the LEGCO amended the Native Authority Ordinance to permit the imposition of fines and terms of imprisonment on Africans who resisted compulsory labour, CMS missionary and Kavirondo (Western Kenya) Archdeacon Walter Edwin Owen, an ardent advocate of social justice, published a report in the *Manchester Guardian* condemning it

[69] EAS, "The Commission in Kenya," no. (not visible) , Saturday 28 January 1928, p. 8.
[70] Ibid.

and the colony's forced labour system.[71] Approving letters from correspondents praised the report including one from retired Kenyan Government medical officer and ardent critic of colonialism Norman Leys, who described it as "a magnificent exposure of the slave system a British Government is actually intensifying in Kenya." It also published a satirical piece on the same ordinance from the Labour Party's *Daily Herald* in which "Gadfly" slammed "nice Christian, civilised Governments, like our own" for not putting an end to what could justly be referred to as forced labour "since we do not call a spade anything less dignified than an agricultural implement." Stanley Baldwin, mocked the satirist, ought to have told Kenya's rulers that the system was "foreign to all those fine ideals the typist or somebody puts into my speeches," but he had chosen not to condemn the manner in which they had resolved to compel the African to "realise the burdensomeness of the white man's burden."[72] In the same issue, a survey of British newspapers on the question of Closer Union had as its second heading "Advance Fears of Dangers of 'Self-Government'."[73]

The tide abroad certainly did not seem to be in favour of increasing the political power of Kenya's settlers. After the release of the report, which among other things underscored the British Government's insistence on the paramountcy of African interests and denied the settlers the responsible self-government they so yearned for, the newspaper attempted to moderate its response in a bid to temper the manner in which the European public in Kenya would receive it.

[71] For a study on Archdeacon Owen see Nancy Uhlar Murray, "Archdeacon W. E. Owen: Missionary as Propagandist," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, vol. 15, no. 4, 1982, pp. 653-670. See also, B. A. Ogot, "British Administration in the Central Nyanza District of Kenya, 1900-60," *The Journal of African History*, vol. 4, no. 2, 1963, pp. 249-273 and Opolot Okia, "In the interests of community: Archdeacon Walter Owen and the issue of communal labour in colonial Kenya, 1921-30," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth* History, vol. 32, issue 1, 2004, pp. 19-40.
[72] *EAS*, "A scathing indictment of compulsory labour," no. 2098, Saturday 12 January 1929, p. 44 and 45.
[73] *EAS*, "British press discuss the closer union report: advance fears of dangers of 'self-government'," no. no. 2098, Saturday 12 January 1929, p. 51. See also *EAS*, "A visitor criticises policy in Kenya," no. 2099, Saturday 19 January 1929, p. 48 and 49 and the newspaper's response in the same issue, "Spur of criticism," p. 11.

Once the report was available, the paper informed readers that it would publish excerpts to ensure that they were able to acquaint themselves with the report's tone and contents. As a publication, it would hold off on any criticism of the report before all interested parties understood the report well and it urged its readers to do the same. It called on them to remember that the Imperial Government had carefully selected the members of the commission and it was imperative that they discuss the contents of the report with due regard for those who had appointed the commission and for the environment in which they had produced the report. The colony was under close scrutiny at a critical juncture of its economic and political history, averred the newspaper, and it was important that the report be debated with sobriety. "There could be no more grievous error than to convey to the public in Great Britain and the Empire as a whole an impression of the inability of East Africa to mold the future on lines which will command the respect, sympathy and support of the rest of the people of the Empire, who are by no means unconcerned in the decisions," opined the *EAS*.[74] At this point it knew well that the settlers had lost yet another round in their fight for self-government and a tactical retreat was necessary to manage their loss in a manner that left room for another stab at the same goal in future.

When it finally published its comment in early February, in a marked *volte face* the paper downplayed settler economic ambitions as it emphasised their political demands, suggesting that the latter were more critical to them than the former, which entailed the 'noble' question of trusteeship of the African which it claimed mattered deeply to the settler community. And so, asserted the *EAS*, although the report had both economic and political implications it was important that readers understand how the two were connected in light of the report. Conscious

[74] *EAS*, "The 'Closer Union' Report," no. 2100, Saturday 26 January 1929, p. 11. (Editorial is dated Saturday 19 January 1929).

of the general hostility of opinion in London towards the granting of greater political control to settlers, the newspaper opted to couch its critique of the report in the language of trusteeship that its critics were using to deflect demands for European-dominated responsible self-government in Kenya as it advocated the settler position. It argued that a critical flaw of the report was that it had failed to grasp the importance of the settler community towards the achievement of certain "political principles," namely the role Western civilisation in Eastern Africa was allegedly supposed to be playing towards the advancement of the African. This meant not only the generally detrimental dilution of settler ambitions, but also the concentration of European activities towards economic growth to the disadvantage of the inferior race that would be doing better under their charge. Such a state of affairs was so undesirable, claimed the newspaper, that "any economic advantages which may appear attractive in a scheme of Closer Union, should be subordinated definitely to the task of establishing the future politically." This future was one in which the European would build a colony in East Africa conscious of advancing the African in accordance with "the best traditions of the human race."[75]

The newspaper insisted that such an arrangement would not preclude the involvement of non-Europeans in political affairs, as they would do so in accordance with the principles of trusteeship – but only at levels that suited their capacity and which implicitly only the European settler as trustee would be entitled to gauge. The newspaper attacked the Hilton Young Commission with much bitterness for what it insisted was its neglect of changes in the Imperial Government's policy towards the settlers' politics between 1923 and 1927 which it claimed was reflected in one of the Commission's terms of reference: that which required it to study legislatures in the region with a view to determining how "to associate more closely in the responsibilities and trusteeship of Government the immigrant communities domiciled in the

[75] Ibid.

country." An irascible *EAS* appeared unable to consider it possible that the Commission had done so and come up with a different view. Having thought it more prudent to dilute settler economic goals, the paper now argued that the Commission had squandered the opportunity to grant the "representatives of western civilisation on the spot" the chance to take up the "onerous responsibility" of its just leadership role in the continent "during the period of tutelage of primitive peoples."[76] Once again settler hopes for self-government had been dealt a serious blow and all the *EAS* could do was to shift gears to damage control as it tried to save the face of the settler community in readiness for the battles that lay ahead.

Chancellor of the Modified Battle Plan

After getting burned in the matter of self-government and the Closer Union, the colony's European settlers opted to change tactics and focus their efforts on the attainment of economic control. However, they would soon find that it was impossible to separate economic issues from politics. The debate on Closer Union came to a close with economic issues dominating as the colony suffered the repercussions of the Great Depression.[77] In 1932, Lord Moyne, the Commissioner the Joint Select Committee appointed to study issues relating to racial taxation and expenditure, concluded that Africans were carrying an unfair tax burden while Europeans enjoyed the benefits of public spending in return for a much lighter tax rate. He recommended the establishment of a Native Betterment Fund with statutory revenue and beyond the control of the LEGCO's European-dominated Select Committee on Estimates. To the dismay of the settler community, he also recommended the levying of an income tax.[78] These measures spurred them

[76] *EAS*, "The Closer Union Report," no. 2101, Saturday 2 February 1929, p. (not visible).
[77] George Bennet, *Kenya A Political History*, pp. 78-80; George Bennet, "Settlers and Politics in Kenya, up to 1945," in Vincent Harlow et al. (eds.) *History of East Africa*, vol. II. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965, pp. 265 – 332; Albert Cooke, "The Dual Mandate in B.E.A.," *Pacific Historical Review*, vol. 3, no. 2, 1934, pp. 130 – 141
[78] Kenya Financial Commissioner. *Report by the Financial Commissioner (Lord Moyne) On Certain Questions in Kenya*. 1932, pp. 59 – 62.

into opposition and led to the excavation once again of the demand for self-government. It is evident that the *EAS* was part and parcel of this tactic and played a key role in mobilising settlers to oppose the measures.

The *EAS* admitted that as the administration had been unable to balance the budget since 1929 and put the budget deficit at £214,000.00 a solution had to be found but did not believe that solution lay in the levying of income tax. The paper argued that it was better for the Government to cut spending. The Income Tax Bill, argued the paper, threatened to double taxes then paid by Europeans, which they would respond to by cutting expenditure, leading to a fall in consumption and a reduction in customs duties. It also insisted that the tax would unfairly target "non-natives" for the benefit of those who were not Europeans as the latter experienced a decline in the quality and quantity of government services. The newspaper adduced as evidence of this the Government's determination to keep information secret regarding non-native services then under deliberation in an Expenditure Advisory Committee, insisting that the Government had been very parochial in its drafting of the bill. According to the *EAS*, the bill was centred solely on the needs of the Government and had not taken into consideration "the standards which must be maintained by western people in an African country" among other things such as the cost of living.[79] Other problems to be dealt with during the year ahead included repercussions of the discovery of gold in Western Kenya and tensions between the administration in Kenya and European settlers.

To deal with these problems the newspaper suggested solutions that did not involve income tax. These were, first, a thorough examination of settler agriculture with a view to increasing settlement on land alienated for that purpose. Although commodity prices were less than favourable globally, the *EAS* argued that the history of white settlement in the region gave

[79] *EAS*, "Income Tax," no. 5901, Thursday 19 January 1933, p.6.

adequate promise of reward for the sedulous settler farmer willing to get by on a modest profit margin. Second, it urged the extension of more affordable credit to farmers by banks and other lending institutions. Third, it recommended continued efforts to influence government polices as they held officials accountable and fourth, well planned and executed settler political action. The newspaper also argued that a series of commissions in addition to Colonial Office and Kenya Government reticence had weakened the position of the Kenya settler making a more concerted and carefully crafted political effort on their part a necessity. Thus, it had not totally abandoned the goal of self-government and rallied its readers to work for "local responsibility for the solution to local problems" that would end the territory's undesirable reliance on London. As such, it argued that it was incumbent upon settlers to develop clear political objectives and identify capable leaders who could overhaul their political institutions.[80] In relation to the latter, the newspaper took on the Joint East African Board that had given its approval to the British Government's income tax plan and tried to rally settlers against the body whose claims of its determination to be seen as an independent board that was free of settler influence angered it. The Board's members stated they did not want to be regarded merely as the settlers' "echo." It had been established as a liaison between settler opinion and the British Government at a time when hurdles in communication made it necessary to have a body with whom the latter could confer on matters of major public policy with relative ease in London. Its members included businessmen with interests in Tanganyika and Uganda, as well as representatives from the Associated Producers for the representation of Kenya's settlers, in particular. By 1933, technological advancements meant it was possible to complete one round of communication with London in less than two weeks which according to the newspaper rendered the Board obsolete. More importantly, its members failed to object to the British Government's income tax plan, and

[80] *EAS*, "A policy for 1933," no. 5888, Wednesday 4 January 1933, p. 6.

had also stated their intention to deliver opinions independent of settler input to the Colonial Office. In addition, the Joint East African Board had also proposed that the budgets of the territories of East Africa be reviewed in London but, not surprisingly, the *EAS* was vociferously opposed to this and asserted the responsibility of doing so ought to remain with local legislative councils. For the *EAS*, the Board's position was untenable in light of the already weakened position of settlers in Kenya.

The following year the *EAS* publicised efforts to push back against the bill. These included the Nairobi Chamber of Commerce's pledge to back their rejection of it with a slate of alternatives and the LEGCO elected members' statement of protest to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister, against the Joint East African Board. It also highlighted a settlers' petition against the Income Tax Bill to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.[81] Most prominent was its support and role as moderator of the Convention of Associations' push against the Income Tax Bill. In March 1933, the Association called a meeting to address the volatile income tax issue. The meeting opened a few days after MLC (Member of the LEGCO) Lt.-Colonel Kirkwood made a declaration that no new taxation was negotiable in the absence of "proper public control" of the colony's finances. He was also opposed to the Native Betterment Fund but stopped short of demanding self-government, insisting only that Kenya's finances be divided into native and non-native.[82] The meeting was also scheduled to begin on the day the *EAS* broke news that the Colonial Office had issued a statement or "edict" as it referred to it,

[81] *EAS*, "Income tax – a lead from commerce," no. 5903, Saturday 21 January 1933, p. 6. See also same issue, "A lead from commerce," p. 1 and 8, *EAS*, "Elected members and the Joint E. A. Board," no. 5938, Friday 3 March 1933, p. 6; *EAS*, "The income tax petition," no. 5942, Wednesday 8 March 1933, p. 1 and 5. For editorial see same issue, "Income tax petition," p. 6; *EAS*, "The alternatives to income tax: memorandum approved by Nairobi Chamber," no. 5943, Thursday 9 March 1933, p. 1 and 5; *EAS*, "The income tax petition," no. 5944, Friday 10 March 1933, p. 7; *EAS*, "Enquiry into alternatives: appointment of Special Committee – Prompt action taken by H. E. the Governor," no. 5949, Tuesday 16 March 1933, p. 1. For editorial see same edition, "Examination of the alternatives," p. 4, *EAS*, "Lord F. Scott's deputy," no. 5951, Saturday 18 March 1933, p. 7.
[82] *EAS*, "Public control of Kenya's money," no. 5954, Wednesday 22 March 1933, p. 7.

insisting that the Income Tax Bill would proceed to the LEGCO since it had deemed this form of direct taxation necessary to balance the budget.[83]

The newspaper bemoaned the sidelining and powerlessness of the LEGCO and organisations such as the CA in the drafting of the bill. It was also fearful of the possibility that the CO statement would inflame passions at the meeting, resulting in resolutions that were provocative, embarrassing and pernicious to Lord Francis Scott's mission to London where he was arguing the settler's case against income tax. Thus, even as it insisted that the Government consult settlers before making major policy decisions, it counseled them to deliberate on the items on their agenda responsibly, cautioning that the session ought not to issue "explosive resolutions, however provoking the circumstances but in opinions which, while firmly stated, are still moderately worded with a proper regard for their influence upon situations both known and prospective."[84] The paper also advised them against conflating questions of financial control with those of constitutional progress at that time, as the latter was a more complex issue and would dilute Scott's arguments that the settlers were earnestly interested in working with the government to reduce the budget deficit and they were only opposed to the means it had chosen to meet that goal. In the paper's opinion such a decision would discourage European settlement and slow down the investment of capital in various ventures.

The following day, the headline story on the previous day's CA session read like a reiteration and vote of confidence in the *EAS'* editorial policy vis-à-vis the Income Tax Bill and the question of financial control. Beneath "Financial Control Demanded" were the subheadings to matters touched on in the report below: "'Non-co-operationists' Yield to Appeals for Patience," "Lord Francis Scott's Plea," and "Further Taxation Must be in a Form Acceptable to

[83] *EAS*, "Colonial Office edict: income tax bill should proceed," no. 5955, Thursday 23 March 1933, p. 1.
[84] Ibid., "The Convention of Associations," p. 4.

the Colony."[85] Unlike the previous day, the editorial was unrelated to the CA meeting. Perhaps it considered it unnecessary in light of the organisation's adoption of all its viewpoints which it could have interpreted as a confirmation of its influence amongst them. Alternatively, it had become adept at reading settler sensitivities and channeling them towards its concept of the "greater good" however racially exclusive to the European it was. An editorial was necessary when the usual *EAS* headline coverage of the CA meeting broke news that it had undertaken deliberations on the sensitive issue of 'constitutional progress' or, as one of the headline's subheadings read, "Colonists Now Ready to Accept Responsible Government."[86] The Association had called for this in addition to the ongoing demand for financial autonomy, which it envisioned being in the exercise of the unofficial members of the LEGCO. According to them the demand was justified because the British Government had then recently adopted Lord Moyne's proposal to move authority to administer native-derived funds from the LEGCO to the Native Betterment Fund. As the Colonial Office had previously insisted that its oversight was necessary to ensure a majority of self-interested non-native MLCs did not control native affairs, the CA now argued that the Fund addressed one of the Government's key objections to constitutional advance.

The *EAS* however, did not welcome this argument and warned the settlers against pressing on with it. The paper prefaced its warning by attempting to explicate their call for self-government, arguing that they were frustrated by the Government's unilateral actions on a wide range of issues without consulting them and its refusal to share responsibilities for native affairs with them. Their reaction was therefore "a natural British reaction; it is in accord with

[85] *EAS*, "Financial control demanded," no. 5957, Saturday 25 March 1933, p. 1.
[86] *EAS*, "The constitutional issue," no. 5958, Monday 27 March 1933, p. 1.

fundamental colonial traditions" that could not be extinguished.[87] However, it observed that settlers had seized the Native Betterment Fund as a means to an end in a manner that would nevertheless still militate against their calls for self-government. It warned them against ceding the quest for control of native affairs to the Government, as it would in fact mean continued interference from London in the running of the country under the concept of trusteeship it had insisted on for decades. Eventually, Lord Scott's mission to London was successful in getting Cunliffe-Lister to step back from the levying of income tax, but the victory was short-lived as three years later the government imposed the tax. [88]

The next year, the newspaper responded vigorously against an unpleasant reminder of the limited extent of settler control of the colony's economic affairs. Widespread settler pessimism about the state of the economy was captured in a letter a farmer, H. E. Bird, sent to the *EAS* decrying the state of the Kenyan economy in early July 1934. He argued that though the colony could boast a balanced budget, the Government had a poor taxation system in place and was therefore collecting inadequate revenue, while poor global commodity prices meant a majority of European farmers were struggling, were on the brink of bankruptcy, and had contributed little towards the balancing of the budget. He also argued that agricultural production amongst Africans had declined and they, too, were experiencing a reduction in their standard of living leading to problems of insecurity for settlers. Meanwhile, government expenditure on salaries, the railway and other overheads of administration continued to balloon.[89] The *EAS* concurred in its next editorial, "Kenya's Plight," with a focus on economic difficulties that it attributed to the British Government's economic policies vis-à-vis its colonies. These included "economic nationalism" that entailed the introduction of a wide range of measures such as quotas, tariffs and

[87] Ibid., "Constitutional reform," p. 5
[88] George Bennet, *Kenya A Political History*, p. 83.
[89] *EAS*, "Kenya's plight: the burden of low price levels," no. 6351, Wednesday 11 July 1934, p. 9.

subsidies to protect local production in the metropole. It also criticised bitterly London's restriction of industrial development in the colonies to protect industries in the UK, as well as its prohibition of the open-ended importation of cheap goods such as textiles, to protect Lancashire's industries, which staunched the already meagre flow of currency in the colonies amongst consumers with a depressed purchasing power. The *EAS* asserted that these measures, coupled with depressed international commodity prices, painted a very bleak picture for the future of Kenya's agriculturally-dependent economy and demanded that the colonial Government step in to revamp the agricultural sector either by lowering taxes or increasing producer prices. The paper also called on it to overhaul Kenya's economic system, implying that the Government take into consideration its own challenges rather than those of London then plan accordingly.[90]

Given the newspaper's take on the economy, which was apparently shared by many a settler, its mordacious attack on Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister's report to the British Government following a visit to the region a few days before the newspaper published Bird's letter came as no surprise. The Secretary of State for the Colonies in his speech to the House of Commons had described as a "glowing picture" the improvements of a number of its colonies, including Kenya, notably because they were then balancing their budgets. The *EAS* catalogued their economic problems, particularly those it linked to Britain's protectionism, pointing out that at the moment "Sir Philip was posing like a pouten pigeon in front of the House" as he reminded them "no doubt of the supernatural qualities of 'the Chancellor and I'," the Kenyan government had issued a twelve-month moratorium on agricultural mortgages.[91] Despite their income tax victory, here was yet another demonstration of the very limited control settlers had over the economy. It was

[90] *EAS*, "Kenya's plight," no. 6352, Thursday 12 June 1934, p. 4.
[91] *EAS*, "A distorted picture," no. 6354, Saturday 17 July 1934, p. 5.

so meagre they could not even define it in their own terms and the *EAS'* angry response to Cunliffe-Lister's remarks registered their frustration as well as that of a newspaper that found it difficult to act as the measured voice of reason that it wanted to be. Nevertheless, these outbursts could not possibly have served the settler cause well, especially in Britain.

Comfort in Fleeting Political Gains

During the Second World War, the entire economic sector of the colony came under executive control. Thirty-one new boards and committees were established within the first two years of the war and on these settlers had unofficial representation. Bennet notes that "unofficials" became "semi-officials" and he highlights the role of Ferdinand Cavendish-Bentinck (MLC) who represented Kenya in missions to three countries. Some settler leaders, for instance Lord Francis Scott in 1943, would insist that this was evidence of the settlers' ability to govern. In 1944, the colony got a new Governor, Sir Philip Mitchell, who had two main items on his agenda: reorganising the Government in a manner that would end the practice of unofficals holding executive positions, sharing in government secrets and then being in a position to launch attacks against it in the LEGCO, as well as looking once again at the possibilities for Closer Union.[92]

The *EAS* found much to praise in the first set of Gov. Mitchell's political reforms. In late June 1945 the Government released proposals for the reorganisation of the Colony's administration in Sessional Paper No. 3. Among other things, the proposals would end the channeling of government business through a Secretariat led by the Chief Secretary so that the administration would be organised into Government departments under Members of the Executive Council. The Executive Council would be composed of 11 members including one

[92] George Bennet, *Kenya a Political History*, pp. 94, 99 – 100 and Richard Frost, *Race Against Time: Human Relations and Politics in Kenya before Independence*. Nairobi: Transafrica Book Distributors, 1978, pp. 53 – 56.

Indian Nominated Member and one nominated representative of African interests. Local Government (divided into native and non-native sections) would be centrally controlled under a Local Government Board with a chairman who would have a seat on the Executive Council. It considered the proposals a step forward in the right direction as far as administering a growing Colony with efficiency was concerned and urged settlers to accept the proposals even though that meant accepting Executive and Legislative Councils with official majorities. It argued that the former lacked representative responsibility and those who sought unofficial dominance of the body as a crucial step towards self-government had focused too much attention on a body in which settlers could only hope to attain their goals by influencing the Governor. The newspaper considered the LEGCO, on the other hand, despite its official majority, adequately representative and more crucial due to its legislative powers. Besides, several central boards would be formed as part of the new Government departments and settlers would be able to sit on them. "The proposals open up wide vistas of opportunity for public service," asserted the newspaper.[93]

The *EAS* was particularly pleased with the proposed structure of the Local Government Department, which it viewed as a step forward towards self-government for which settlers had been agitating over the years. That the Chairman of the Local Government Board would sit on the Executive Council was proof that the Governor was interested in involving settlers in the administration of the Colony in a substantive manner. Settlers had struggled for greater local government control over the years without success as London, unwilling to let power pass on to the hands of settlers, had constantly rebuffed them, arguing that it alone could effectively meet the provisions of its trusteeship policy in Kenya. Now, stated the newspaper, "instead of arguing a case from hypothetical grounds we are being given an opportunity to demonstrate, not only our

[93] *EAS*, "Proposed reorganisation of Kenya Government machine," no. 9675, Friday 29 June 1945, p. 1. For editorial see same issue, "Overhauling the machinery," p. 7.

ability to manage our own affairs, but in the course of doing so to carry with us the goodwill and collaboration in this task of other races." The newspaper considered the structuring of the department into native and non-native sections welcome evidence of the Government's recognition that the needs of the entire Colony's populace had to be met, as economic problems could not be solved "as between white and black, nor, for instance, are good roads of benefit to one section of the community alone." This statement suggests its recognition of a postwar need for interracial understanding and even collaboration. Nevertheless, in Governor Mitchell's proposals, it also saw an opportunity for settlers to attain their self-government goals by proving themselves worthy custodians of Britain's stated colonial goals. It meant a retreat from a cherished tactic of struggling for dominance in the Government's Councils, but the newspaper saw this as a strategic retreat that would allow for a slower, more methodical and concrete means for settlers to gather evidence of their suitability for self-government. As such, it thought it important to locate itself amongst them as a counselor as soon as the proposals came out in a bid to preempt their rejection, and towards the end of the month the LEGCO gave its approval to the government reorganisation plans with protests from Asians and Africans only. However, there was a limit to the extent to which the newspaper was willing to blur racial boundaries and before the year was over it donned its armour to fight the Government's next set of administration proposals and revealed the limits of its openness to interracial collaboration.

When the British Government published Colonial Paper No. 191 in December 1945, the *EAS* found in it the arch nemesis of the Kenya it had been endeavouring to create and used its pages to stir its constituency to reject it. The plan was designed to eradicate inefficiencies in the management of common inter-territorial services and functions that the Conference of East African Governors oversaw. Britain considered the conference as it was then structured "not

well-designed to enlist the support of public opinion and to take full advantage of the considerable body of expert knowledge and experience which is available in East Africa." The proposed remedies were: the formation of an East African High Commission to which the three Governors of the region would belong; an Executive Organisation supported by advisory boards where appropriate; and a 36-member (12 official and 24 non-official) Central Legislative Assembly constituted in accordance with the principle of racial parity, that is, six elected Europeans, six elected Indians and six representatives of African interests that the High Commission would nominate. There would also be two nominated representatives for Arabs and four other High Commission nominees whose race was not specified. In addition, the British Government stated that it would retain the final responsibility for the administration of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika as the trustee of all its inhabitants.[94] For the *EAS*, the last two proposals in particular were emetics that precipitated a vociferous and fervent rejection of the entire document.

On the day it published news of the paper, a lengthy editorial fulminated at the audacity of its authors:

> We need not look far for the principal authors. They are to be found within the Confederation of East African Governors. The Paper discloses without reserve or qualification that His Majesty's Government acted in all major issues on the advice tendered to it by the Governors in East Africa. The outcome in the form of the Paper issued yesterday, is the measure of the extent to which a Colonial Administration, detached from the life of the people is ready and prepared to jeopardise the whole future of British responsibility in East Africa and in the doing of it precipitate a racial controversy which for bitterness may have no parallel, before it is through, in the history of these Territories.[95]

It also gave its explanation of why it considered the Paper so repugnant. The paper was allegedly a blueprint for the reorganisation of the region's administrative system:

[94] *EAS*, "Problems of control of East Africa's common services," no. 9815, Thursday 13 December 1945, p. 1 and 4.
[95] *EAS*, "Prelude to disunity," no. 9815, Thursday 13 December 1945, p. 3. See also, *EAS*, "Preambulating protagonist," no. 9822, Friday 21 December 1945, p. 5; *EAS*, "1946," no. 9829, Tuesday 1 January 1946, p. 3.

> But what in fact is being attempted in that guise is to introduce political principles so applied as to be calculated to return to the Secretary of State and his local agents, the Colonial Administration, all the power and share in responsibility for policy patiently wrested from them by the public for more than thirty years, especially in Kenya and to create a constitutional condition in which the official side and each racial group will be engaged in perpetual intrigue with each other to the compromise of principles and with consequent political corruption in the endeavour to secure voting majorities in this superimposed Central Assembly.[96]

Faced with a regional legislative body that though not ideal would go a long way towards encouraging the interracial collaboration that the *EAS* had purred about in June and July after the Governor had released Sessional Paper no. 3, it baulked because it had a rather exclusive definition of collaboration. Collaboration for the *EAS* meant a situation in which European settlers obtained the compliance of other races to implement policies that suited their own (European settlers') needs and sensibilities. A structural change that put them at par with Kenya's South Asians on the same legislative body and required them to negotiate with other races or to compete with them for the support of the official members on the Assembly was quite simply unpalatable as the newspaper still held on to its principal of European racial supremacy. The *EAS* stated its belief that "Asians it has never been suggested, or for a moment assumed that Eastern people have any right whatever to be given a share in the ultimate responsibility of the British race for the trusteeship of the peoples of immature countries or for that matter expect it."[97] Only Britons had the right to rule over such lands and it was incumbent on the settlers to fight any attempt to unseat them from the pedestal upon which they had set themselves. As such, its assertions that the proposed system would corrupt the region's politics were disingenuous. What it really feared was not so much "political corruption," "perpetual intrigue" and the "compromise of principles" but political debate, perpetual bargaining and having to make concessions.

[96] Ibid.
[97] Ibid.

In the coming weeks it would acknowledge that there was need for the harmonisation of the administration of the region's territories as it put on a spirited effort to ferment opposition to the document from the colony's Europeans. On the morning the Association of Chambers of Commerce opened its annual session that December, the newspaper declared it a broad-based body that was known for its moderation and its efforts to bring about the closer union of the three East African territories. It urged them to extend the session of their meeting in order to include a discussion of the Colonial Paper 191 and, preferably for the *EAS,* issue a condemnation of the document. In the past, the chamber had in fact championed closer union with a view to exploiting the economies of scale that such a state of affairs would avail. These efforts had strained its relationship with the Convention of Associations. Now, the newspaper referred to their previous efforts as evidence against the British Government's assertions that the imposition of a structural order without consultation of those in the territories, as in the case of the Hilton Young Commission, was necessary because of a general lack of will within the territories. It rallied them to the frontline to battle against what it considered an "imported," disconnected colonial administration.[98] Africans once again became pawns in a fight between Kenya's settlers and the British Government as the newspaper claimed that it was above all in their interest that it was fighting the Paper. Any retrogressive step away from the settlers' attainment of self-government would deny them the undiluted advantages of their 'beneficent' rule.

When a cautious Association opted not to rush into issuing a statement and instead scheduled a special interim session to state its position in March of the following year after its constituent chambers had discussed the document, the *EAS* could barely hide its disappointment as it diplomatically lauded them for taking time to study and deliberate what was a serious

[98] *EAS,* "The commercial view," no. 9816, Friday 14 December 1945, p. 5.

matter.[99] It was aware that the commercial interests of the organisation's members often caused them to view socio-political questions through a lens the settler community would rather they did not use. The paper then made an attempt to influence the outcome of those deliberations by laying out the lines along which it hoped the Association's deliberations would flow, insisting that race was not the issue but the fate of the African if his "development" was not the exclusive reserve of the European. Therefore, its members, insisted the newspaper, would do well to remember that the "character, the culture the quality and nature of the civilisation we are trying to create by example in East Africa is to be British and western in its principal form, moral code and conception of citizenship."[100] Similar messages accompanied reports, most prominently featured on the front and editorial pages, of other organisations debating the Paper including: the European Elected Members of the LEGCO who announced to the pleasure of the *EAS* that they would prepare an alternative set of proposals; a meeting of Rift Valley European Electors' Association; a meeting of Ukamba Electors' Association, whose vigorous rejections it endorsed as the only way of dealing with "an irremovable form of Government, directed by remote control;" the Nairobi Chamber of Commerce whose president, most obscenely for the *EAS*, refused to issue a categorical rejection of the document as he called for more deliberation and an end to "that unfortunate spirit of mistrust of Government intentions;" and the Elector's Union (the former Convention of Associations which was comprised of all other elector's unions), who received a warning from the newspaper to heed public opinion or be faced with extinction for "should it fail, the Country will not be slow to discard it, for this is no time for failure."[101]

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[99] *EAS, "*Reaction of Commerce to non-parliamentary paper," no. 9618, Monday 17 December 1945, p. 1. See also, *EAS*, "Twenty-fifth session of constituent chambers opens in Nairobi," no. 9816, Saturday 15 December 1945, p. 3 and 6.

[100] *EAS*, "Commerce and the Proposals," no. 9618, Monday 17 December 1945, p. 3.

[101] *EAS*, "White Paper unacceptable in present form," no. 9823, Saturday 22 December 1945, p. 1. Two members, W. G. Nicol and S. V. Cooke, broke away from their colleagues and refused to reject the White Paper in its entirety, arguing that they were "unable to dismiss the idea of a Central Assembly with legislative powers." For editorial see

The Elector's Union did not disappoint, and for the duration of its conference the newspaper carried its petulant denunciations of the Paper as well as its fervid demands for self-government under equally contemptuous headings.[102] In May 1946, the European Elected Members released their alternative proposals to Colonial Paper 191 but the newspaper rejected them outright. The members, among other things, proposed that unofficial representation to a Standing East African Council with a Secretariat be through Governors' nominations.[103] The *EAS* considered their proposals unworkable as they lacked provisions for separate executive and legislative bodies with clearly defined structures and functions, which meant vesting a nominated Council with unparalleled executive powers. In addition, the newspaper found it insupportable that the Members were willing to place the powers of nomination to the Council in the hands of governors who had only recently alarmed them with their principle of racial parity.[104] Nevertheless, the denunciations that met the Paper did not go unnoticed and in 1947 the British Government went back to the drawing board and came up with different set of proposals.

Once the British Government and the Governments of East Africa issued revised proposals for improved inter-territorial management and the increase of Common Services, the

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same issue, "A new beginning," p. 3; *EAS*, "Non-parliamentary paper on E. A.: Rift Valley's categorical rejection of proposals" and "Ukamba Electors," no. 9839, Monday 14 January 1946, p. 1 and 4; *EAS*, "A useful shaking up," no. 9840, Tuesday 15 January 1946, p. 3; *EAS*, "Non-parliamentary paper provides basis for discussion," and "Ukamba European Electors reject the proposals," no. 9841, Wednesday 16 January 1946, p.3, 4 and 6. For the newspaper's response to the Nairobi Chamber of Commerce see, *EAS*, "Town v. country," no. 9845, Monday 21 January 1946; *EAS*, "Electors' Union's big conference next week," no. 9843, Friday 18 January 1946, p. 5; *EAS*, "Elector's Union conference," no. 9848, Thursday 24 January 1946, p. 3. See also, *EAS*, "Organise campaign of resistance," no. 9847, Wednesday 23 January 1946, p. 3; *EAS*, "Tanganyika delegates reject White Paper," no. 9849, Friday 25 January 1946, p. 8; *EAS*, "This feeble monstrosity: Dar es Salaam Chamber on the new proposals," no. 9855, Friday 1 February 1946, p. 5; *EAS*, "Mombasa Europeans reject non-parliamentary paper: but elect committee to study it," no. 9857, Monday 4 February 1946, p. 1.

[102] See for example, *EAS*, "White settlement is here to stay," no. 9849, Friday 25 January 1946, p. 5 and 8; *EAS*, "Self-government the answer to non-parliamentary paper," no. 9850, Saturday 26 January 1946, p. 3 and 5; *EAS*, "Resistance to any threat to white settlement," no. 9851, Monday 28 January 1946, p. 1 and 4; *EAS*, "Give us the right to control ourselves," no. 9852, Tuesday 29 January 1946, p. 3. See also, *EAS*, "Electors in conference," no. 9851, Monday 28 January 1946, p. 3 and *EAS*, "Background of knowledge," no. 9851, Monday 28 January 1951, p. 3.

[103] *EAS*, "Alternative proposals to rejected paper 191," no. 9940, Tuesday 14 May 1946, p. 1 and 3.

[104] *EAS*, "The alternative proposals," no. 9940, Tuesday 14 May 1946, p. 3.

EAS received them with caution as well as a good dose of pragmatics. Caution because the proposals, named Colonial Paper 210 (1947), did not clarify how Europeans would retain an unofficial majority in the LEGCO and pragmatics because it recognised that global events meant Kenya could not avoid political change. What it hoped to achieve as a publication was to rally European public opinion to support its efforts to influence the nature of that change in the context of the recently issued Colonial Paper.[105] It welcomed the proposals as a vast improvement over Colonial Paper 191 but railed against them for being "a deliberate prolongation of Colonial Office government, more firmly entrenched." That unlike its predecessor decision makers had consulted unofficial members of the three territories as they were drafting the proposals did not mean that Colonial Paper 210 granted the region a measure of constitutional advance. The newspaper considered it little more than a tool of administration for the British Government. It noted bitterly that the Secretary of State of Colonies noticeably retained a veto over all East African affairs and that trusteeship was regrettably "still to be regarded as the unshared, undivided, responsibility of the British Government."[106] It acknowledged that the British Empire was changing rapidly but asserted that consequential reforms ought not to jeopardise the country's future. What constituted that jeopardy would emerge in the days to come as the newspaper made it clear that even with the independence of India around the corner, it still thought of Kenya's Africans as too "immature" for such an event.

For the *EAS*, this meant that Kenya's fragile European minority could not rest on its laurels as it left the future to what it perceived of as the whims of an unsympathetic, distant, recalcitrant British Government. The newspaper was of the opinion that a time had come when

[105] See for example, *EAS*, "Change in constitution of Central Assembly: final power in London," p. 1 and 4; *EAS*, "The meaning of words," no. 10193, Saturday 8 March 1947, p. 3; *EAS*, "Electors in Conference," no.10194, Monday 10 March 1947, p. 3. *EAS*, "Meetings with electors," no. 10198, Friday 14 March 1947, p. 7; *EAS*, "White Paper talk," no. 20210, Friday 28 March 1947, p. 5 and 7.
[106] *EAS*, "Second thoughts, no. 10191, Thursday 6 March 1947, p. 3.

the African stake in constitutional matters and their political participation could no longer be denied, but these were only welcome in so far as they complied with the ambitions of the European minority. This meant that Europeans had to seize the initiative by opening the door to conditional African political participation which would lead to a relationship that took both races "amicably and harmoniously along the road to the goal of a characteristically British Colony." It would, however, be a one-sided relationship guided and dominated by settler prerequisites. African participation had to come with adequate safeguards to ascertain that "African experiments in political responsibility for peoples still in their apprenticeship stage" were tailored towards ensuring "that the life and outlook of the people of this Empire frontline territory remain recognisably British in their main characteristics and aspirations."[107] One such safeguard, in the paper's view, was an unofficial European majority in the LEGCO and in the weeks after Colonial Paper 210 was released, the newspaper constantly urged European district association and other organisations to recognise the improvements in it but to be cautious about fully endorsing the proposals before the Government clarified the matter of the LEGCO's membership.[108] It also celebrated organisations that issued pronouncements on the Paper similar to its own.[109] Just in case its European readership thought this compromise untenable, it had a warning for them. The world was changing rapidly:

> The people are being driven by circumstances largely beyond their control to seek progress in directions, and by means, which involve an obvious element of

[107] *EAS*, "Paper 210," no. 10192, Friday 7 March 1947, p. 7.
[108] See for example, the newspaper's specific warning to the Chamber of Commerce in *EAS*, "Commerce and 210," no.10201, Tuesday 18 March 1947, p. 3 and European Elected Members in *EAS*, "The fate of 210," no. 10223, Tuesday 15 April 1947, p. 3.
[109] *EAS*, "First reactions to Paper 210: Uasin Gishu wants Unofficial Majority in Kenya Legislature" and "Chamber of Commerce Debate," no. 10203, Thursday 20 March 1947, p. 3; *EAS*, "Paper 210: Accepted in principle in Mombasa," no. 10207, p. 3; *EAS*, "Thika welcomes it in principle: Opportunity to get Unofficial Majority in Kenya," no. 20210, Friday 28 March 1947, p. 5; *EAS*, "Nairobi European electors accept Paper 210: European political status must be safeguarded," no. 10219, Thursday 10 April 1947, p. 1 and 3, see same issue "Rift Valley electors and Paper 210: Prepared to give it trial for 4 years," p. 5, *EAS*, "Nyanza authorizes acceptance of 210: 'Unofficial Majority' one of the province's provisios," no. 10220, Friday 11 April 1947, p. 10.

> risk. Five years of war have produced influences world-wide which are having a marked effect on the pace of development of African political thought. The preoccupations of those years, and the uncertainties of the post-war world, have made it difficult for the European community to provide in the long-range affairs of the country the leadership they provided in the short-range requirement of war. Time is no longer on their side. Facts and factors in the situation cannot be ignored, nor can their insistent pressure on racial relations and responsibilities.[110]

The European minority in Kenya had to adapt to these changes in the global sphere or suffer the consequences. And it was clear that there were many Europeans who would struggle to ingest the newspaper's message, as just a few days later, the newspaper published a report on the ongoing Elector's Conference at which delegates declared their intention to establish a self-governing colony in Kenya under European leadership. Africans would be permitted to take part in that government incrementally on the basis of their "merit and quality," which as Bennet points out was a comforting thought to settlers as they would consider themselves the best placed to set those standards and these would undoubtedly mirror their own interests.[111] For the *EAS*, it was imperative that their leadership forge solid but paternalistic relationships that would be acceptable to members of other races to ascertain the future of Kenya as a British Colony. This was the posture the *EAS* maintained as the 1940s drew to a close: hostility to an "official dictatorship" that was an "irremovable government over which they had no control" that constantly frustrated settlers; a recognition of global forces beyond the control of those in the territories; and a paternalistic view towards the African who still had "a long way to go before he has finished his apprenticeship in public business."[112] This posture dictated the manner in which the newspaper approached the turbulent events that led to the declaration of a state of emergency in 1952.

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[110] *EAS*, "An unofficial majority," no. 10216, Friday 4 April 1947, p. 5.
[111] *EAS*, "Self government for Kenya Plan: approved by Electors' Union Conference," no. 10192, Friday 7 March 1947, p. 7. See also, *EAS*, "210 goes through," no. 10226, Friday 18 April 1947, p. 5.
[112] *EAS*, "Political picture," no. 10217, Monday 7 April 1947, p. 3.

1952: A Violent Uprising but the *EAS* Clings On to Dreams of European Domination

On the occasion of the arrival of Princess Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh to Kenya for a visit in early 1952, looking back at years of British rule in Kenya and against the clouds of trouble looming on the horizon, the newspaper conscientiously sought to project an optimistic future for the country. This future, it recalled, had its background in a past where the European had diligently worked to develop the country as the race shouldered its responsibilities as guardians of the land and its people. As the royal couple travelled the country they would witness its economic development and "sense the impatient vigour of the growth" that gave its inhabitants a lot of faith in its future. This included new churches and modern hospitals, constructed by those "who were raised in the great traditions of their Motherland" as well as those who were descendants of Eastern civilisations. Apparently, the adherents of the Motherland's traditions believed that only the act of conferring those institutions on Africans enabled them to fulfill "the great undertaking of raising a young country and its peoples in the scale of human worth."[113] And although it posited then that the children of various races the royal couple would meet during their tour would perhaps have greater opportunities and responsibilities than their parents did, earlier that year it expressed a view that revealed just how distant it still thought the African was from his European counterpart.

Commenting favourably on Minister of State for Colonial Affairs Lennox Boyd's East African tour that year, especially its Tanganyika leg where he had discussed questions of political representation, it highlighted his reluctance to afford the territory's Africans proper franchise.[114] They were certain that the proposals he would make as a result of his enquiries there

[113] *EAS*, "A Busy day," no. 11717, Saturday 2 February 1952, p. 4.
[114] For more on Tanganyika's Trusteeship see, Bernard Chidzero, *Tanganyika and International Trusteeship*. London; New York: Oxford University Press, 1961; John Iliffe. *A Modern History of Tanganyika*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979, pp. 430 - 435, pp. 436 – 484.

would be sound because he had told a group of chiefs who had argued for greater representation based on the size of the African population that such an issue would be addressed based on a needs-based assessment rather than a mathematical one. The newspaper argued that the question of representation was best addressed when based on criteria that conditioned responsibility on capacity, knowledge and experience with the interesting addition that what happened in one East African territory would influence what occurred in the others. It justified its criteria by arguing that the countries of the region were "very young" and had "a great mass of under-developed people who require time to prove their capacity for modern responsibilities, and opportunity at many levels." Such opportunities would come through hands on training at local government level and while this was going on, broader based governmental activities would be "in the hands of those best qualified to discharge it, unweakened by political reforms based on racial considerations." As for Lennox-Boyd's expression of surprise at "how excellent" race relations were in contrast to reports overseas, the *EAS* maintained this was the case all over the region. According to it, race hatred was non-existent.[115] What was in existence were controversies which unnamed invidious groups manufactured out of non-existent frustrations.

After his arrival Lennox-Boyd granted an interview to the newspaper's reporter in which he made just the sort of statements the *EAS* had anticipated and welcomed. He maintained that race relations in the country were good and those who doubted that they were so could visit the country and see for themselves. He also had praise for the unofficial members of the LEGCO, who left him with a "feeling that they gladly accept their responsibilities of helping to lead their African fellow-citizens forward in every field of life." At the same time, those who gave him those warm feelings also "constantly impressed upon me how necessary it was to get a sense of responsibility first in local government." Evidently, he had met several Europeans who were

[115] *EAS*, "The Minister of State," no.11781, Thursday 17 April 1952, p. 4.

only too eager to impress upon him the importance of restricting African political activity to native councils and therefore away from other bodies in which they would be competing directly with them for power. Lennox-Boyd maintained that he was reluctant to generalise on the state of the countries he had visited very briefly but this did not stop him from making the observations above, nor from stating that after a hurried tour of African areas in Rift Valley and Nyanza Provinces, he had been impressed by the manner in which British settlers were helping their "African fellow-countrymen" cope with their encounter with the Western world. He further remarked that he had also seen how British capital and agriculture had transformed the landscape and yielded assets that all races in the colony should value. Most importantly, at a dinner in Nyanza Province, Lennox-Boyd had assured an audience comprised of multiracial representatives that "the Conservative Government did not regard the British record as anything to be ashamed of." The same government also felt that "our people have established an irremovable position here in Kenya. We believe in ourselves. We know that if we cease to believe in ourselves other people with firmer hands will replace us." He went on to state that they "did not intend to leave the world to the bullies – that is the unshakeable determination of the British Government at home." The newspaper gave the Minister's remarks prominent coverage. Under the headline "Minister on Race Relations" were two subtitles: "Impressed in Kenya" and "Irremovable position of Europeans in Colony."[116] They were words that affirmed the newspaper's position on Kenyan race relations, politics and economics. At a time when the tide seemed to be turning against the colonial enterprise, they offered much comfort and assurance to those interests the newspaper had championed for decades.

[116] *EAS*, "Minister on race relations," no. 11706, Monday 21 January 1952, p. 1 and 5. See also *EAS*, "Empire Day," no. 11813, Saturday 24 May 1952, p. 4.

But it was impossible for the newspaper to ignore the realities on the ground. From February 1952 as the security situation continued to deteriorate, the *EAS* stepped up its efforts to define the rebellion and ultimately the politico-economic environment that would emerge as a consequence of its activities.[117] It traced the root of their discontent not to land hunger but to a variety of social ills that required remedies which did not entail a radical surgery of the economy. Mau Mau were "spivs and thugs" who administered an oath that harkened back to "ancient tribal custom at its darkest and most barbaric."[118] They were terrorists bent on disturbing the peace and causing instability with their acts of violence against both Africans and Europeans. The movement was a challenge to the authority of the Government as Mau Mau was inherently wicked and a threat to society. In July 1952, as incidents of Mau Mau attacks rose, the newspaper argued that this was evidence of its sinister nature and its subversive intentions. It was anti-Government and anti-European as well as a terrorist organisation that was doing considerable harm to law and order. It traced its leadership to "fanatical and unbalanced African 'nationalists'" and compared the movement's development to Malaya's communist campaign even though it was certain that the movement was not communist. It was a Kikuyu movement in origin and inspiration that did not hesitate to use violence to compel others to join it and was particularly insidious as the Kikuyu had over the years spread to other parts of the colony and East Africa.[119]

The paper located the origins of the movement in impoverished African settlements in Nairobi, zeroing in on a slum that it considered not only a longstanding health hazard but now, in

[117] For varied analyses on Mau Mau see, Carl Rosberg and John Nottingham, *The Myth of "Mau Mau": Nationalism in Kenya.* Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1966; Tabith Kanogo, *Squatters and the Roots of Mau Mau, 1905-63*. London: James Currey, 1987; Frank Furedi, *The Mau Mau War in Perspective*. London: J. Currey, Athens: Ohio University Press, 1989; E. S. Atieno-Odhiambo and John Londsdale (eds.) *Mau Mau and Nationhood: Arms, Authority and Narration*. Oxford: James Currey; Nairobi: EAEP; Athens: Ohio University Press, 2003.

[118] *EAS*, "Mau Mau in Nairobi," no. 11726, Wednesday 13 February 1952, p. 4.

[119] *EAS*, "Subversive movements," no. 11859, Thursday 17 July 1952, p. 4.

light of rising violence, an indicator of the social consequences of the Government's failure to address the capital's housing problems.[120] As the newspaper maintained that Mau Mau was a criminal organisation, it was adamant that only the full force of the law could adequately confront it and this entailed stiff sentences and corporal punishments which it thought the legal system was reluctant to employ. Force was the effective answer to Mau Mau and not the launch of searches for solutions to vaguely defined notions such as "frustration" and "land hunger."[121] This distinction was particularly important to the *EAS,* for even as Mau Mau violence escalated in 1952 it aggressively sought to dissociate the country's restive state from any links to African land needs.

In denying that land hunger was at the root of the uprising, the newspaper once again had the assistance of Lennox Boyd, who in late February told the House of Commons that land hunger amongst the colony's African populace was not a consequence of European land-grabbing. The Minister was responding to Eirene White (Labour MP) who had asked about land settlement in Kenya as she posited that the Government would not get the co-operation of Africans to improve land productivity in a hostile racial atmosphere and when they believed that Europeans had taken possession of the country's best lands.[122] Lennox-Boyd maintained that the highlands the Europeans occupied had been empty "save for intermittent grazing" and that when land was acquired from Africans they had been adequately compensated. The Minister placed blame for land hunger squarely upon the Africans, accusing them of having been the perpetrators of "primitive methods of cultivation" that had resulted in soil erosion.[123] The *EAS,* featured the

[120] *EAS*, "Mau Mau in Nairobi," no. 11726, Wednesday 13 February 1952, p. 4. See also *EAS*, "Housing," no. 11865, Thursday 24 July 1952, p. 4.
[121] *EAS*, "Subversive movements," no. 11859, Thursday 17 July 1952, p. 4.
[122] United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland Parliament, *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, Official Report*, Session 1951 – 52, vol. 496, 19 February – 29 February 1952. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1952, pp. 666-671.
[123] Ibid., pp. 672-678.

report on the Minister's remarks on its front page under one of its biggest two headlines that day. Under the first, "Land Problem in Kenya," was the subtitle "Minister scotches 'wild' talk."[124] The paper meted out similar treatment against another Labour MP, Fenner Brockway, who threatened the established order in the colonies when he tabled a Private Member's Bill in the House of Commons in April 1952 that sought to establish a standard declaration of human rights similar to that of the United Nations and which would be applicable to all British colonies regardless of sex, race, class or any other social distinction. It was a bill of great significance which earned it a front page location. However, the paper proceeded to slam Brockway for his "missionary zeal," which they attributed to misguidance and a personal failing: impatience. The MP was exhibiting a notorious shortcoming which led him to frown at the rate at which "others rectify and amend what he considers to require rectification and amendment in human society," and which the newspaper maintained was not necessary or possible.[125] According to the newspaper:

> It is an admirable aim but, of course, while equality of opportunity can easily be declared as a principle by an Act of Parliament, no number of such legislative declarations, whether made by Mr. Brockway or by anybody else, can produce in the human being the equality of capacity and ability necessary to make use of equality of opportunity. Indeed it is obvious enough to the ordinary man that there are circumstances in which many people would suffer sadly from the results of the application of such new "freedoms" and from the sudden abolition of so-called discrimination. The power to discriminate in the application of the principles of public policy is of very great value to a backward people struggling to make progress in the world of today, as in Africa. The whole point is in what "discriminations" consist, and how and why they are applied.[126]

The *EAS* considered human rights as defined in the charter of the United Nations exclusive to select groups of people, which did not include Africans who were considered underdeveloped and, as it had declared earlier that year, had not reached whatever it calibrated as the optimum

[124] *EAS*, "Land problem in Kenya: Minister scotches 'wild' talk," no. 11736, Monday 25 February 1952, p. 1.
[125] *EAS*, "Bill against colour bar: to be presented to Parliament," no. 11770, Friday 4 April 1952, p. 1.
[126] *EAS*, "Human rights in the colonies," no. 11770, Friday 4 April 1952, p. 5.

level on the scale of human worth. The paper also used this argument to defend its support for racial discrimination in Kenya's education system that segregated learners according to colour – and learning resources accordingly. For the *EAS*, this was an inevitability as children of different races had "different backgrounds" as well as "different mental processes" and could not be taught together regardless of whatever the relevant specialists argued. At the same time, the newspaper maintained that there were in fact areas of life in Kenya that provided equal opportunity.[127] Racial segregation was a necessity of life in the colonies and the newspaper, conscious of the tide that was turning against the colonial status quo in Britain, was vociferously defensive of the established order in Kenya. Prudence however, dictated that the *EAS* at this stage never employed the term "discrimination" or "segregation" to discuss Kenya's social order, preferring instead the words "different" and "separate." It also meant an acknowledgement of the need for change, but this was always focused in the distant future and was couched in broad terms that left the rate and delineation of that change in the hands of the Government.

Besides, as it had stated that land hunger was not a real problem and that poor agricultural practices and a host of other natural phenomena, for example tsetse fly and drought prone lands were allegedly more critical, the newspaper urged groups agitating for African rights in Britain, the British Government and the Government of Kenya to consider addressing these issues instead of focusing on questions of land alienation vis-à-vis European land ownership. These problems, insisted the newspaper, were such that the "African cannot solve them for himself." What was required to deal with them adequately was Western skill, science and capital. It also meant that "politicians in London" and the relevant decision makers seek solutions for African economic problems that did not involve land ownership. The newspaper in its ongoing effort to maintain the prevailing social and politico-economic order in the colony argued that

[127] Ibid.

Africa was not immune from the forces that compelled people to seek careers that did not depend on land ownership, adding that this had been an ongoing preoccupation of European settlers almost from the moment of their arrival. At the same time, it used the same column to register its opposition to absentee European landlords and those who had not brought their land to production as "every empty acre is a temptation" to those in Kenya and abroad who were agitating for the restructuring of land ownership and thus a threat to the future of European settlers in the country.[128] Sir Phillip Mitchell's remarks at a dinner in London were therefore most welcome. The former Governor of Kenya labeled reports in Britain that tensions were rising dangerously in Kenya as "unspeakable nonsense" and the views of people who were disconnected from realities on the ground. In a petulant speech, he assailed the likes of Fenner Brockway, opining that those who were well placed to understand the dynamics of the region were taken aback by the "ferment of impatient enthusiasm for the new political toy of adult suffrage." The advocates of such rights were illogical and their patterns of reasoning and action amounted to juju. Besides, in Mitchell's view, which closely mirrored that of the *EAS,* Africans did not deserve the rights for which they and others were lobbying. "Political adults are still a very small minority in East Africa," he asserted, and the challenge facing the British and educated Africans "is the problem of the masses of people, most of whom are political, economic and agricultural minors and will so continue for a long time, despite all we can do."[129] The newspaper praised his speech as one of an experienced and well-informed "voice from Africa" speaking free of the fetters that had bound him during his 40 years of colonial service as it rehashed its critiques of the colony's critics abroad. It dubbed the speech a much needed dose of encouragement to settlers in Kenya to continue in their "self-chosen task" of elevating the

[128] *EAS*, "Politics and the land," no. 11819, Saturday 31 May 1952, p. 4.
[129] *EAS*, "The future of the African," no. 11847, Thursday 3 July 1952, p. 1.

colony's Africans and their lands to levels that would make them worthy members of the Commonwealth and subjects of the Queen. It also decried the forces that were working against the British enterprise just as it was rolling back the "jungle" and threatening the survival of "Christian Civilisation."[130]

A few days later following reports that Kenya's land question was to be debated in the House of Commons and that Oliver Lyttelton, the Secretary of State for Colonial Affairs, would propose a Royal Commission to look into the matter, the newspaper remonstrated against the continued Labour-led pressure on the colony from abroad.[131] It insisted that the "frustration" to be debated had no basis in reality and that it could not be used to excuse violence or movements such as the Mau Mau. This applied even to those educated Africans Philip Mitchell had mentioned in his dinner speech that month. These Africans were, as a matter of fact, part of the very problem the administration was facing as the newspaper accused them of harbouring frustrations born of impatience (a charge similar to that which it had leveled against Fenner Brockway):

> African aspirants to progress and its rewards expect to be lifted up in one movement instead of climbing laboriously. They decline to accept the fact that they are held back by the great weight of the immature mass. Asian claimants are reluctant to abandon traditional loyalties and ways of life they have inherited and brought to Africa. European Colony-builders ask for time for capacity for responsibility to develop among a people only two generations removed from the bush.[132]

The changes, responsibilities and opportunities that the newspaper maintained would eventually be made available to all the colony's people on an equal basis would come, but not any time soon, as the *EAS* instrument that recorded their distance from a fantastic "bush" indicated that the colony's Africans were too close to it to be admitted into the corridors of power. The paper

[130] *EAS*, "A voice from Africa," no.11847, Thursday 3 July 1952, p. 4.
[131] *EAS*, "Kenya land to be debated," no. 11858, Wednesday 16 July 1952, p. 1.
[132] *EAS*, " 'Frustration' ," no. 11858, Wednesday 16 July 1952, p. 4.

argued that that those studying Kenya abroad were sentimentalising the concept of frustration that they had themselves created while the inhabitants of the colony had to deal with the consequences of the criminal elements in their midst.

Once the debate on Colonial Affairs commenced in the House of Commons, James Griffiths (Labour MP) opened it with a volley against the nature of the colonial enterprise in Kenya, terming it "a little slice of England dropped into the middle of Africa, surrounded by land-hungry Africans" at a time when "we have reached a state in our Colonial Empire where we cannot rule by decree." The newspaper attempted to blunt the force of his attack by playing up the response of Oliver Lyttelton in the same report on its front page.[133] Under the headings "Inquiry into Kenya Land Problem Soon" and "Assurance by Minister," it informed its readers that the Secretary of State for the Colonies had dealt with the Labour attack formidably by pointing out that the Government was well acquainted with the colony's problems and was already planning a rigorous inquiry into all that pertained to its socio-economic life. At the same time, Lyttelton had yet again linked the land problems to issues other than land ownership, as he had insisted that a solution must entail initiatives on the part of African farmers to change their agricultural practices. In the day's editorial, recognising that it had lost considerable ground now that the government had reluctantly acknowledged that there was a land problem in Kenya, the *EAS* maintained that this was due to poor land utllisation on the part of African farmers and not due to land alienation in favour of Europeans. It argued that Olengurone, an overcrowded and failed government settlement scheme in the Rift Valley, was evidence that Africans who failed to farm responsibly would still fail to benefit from the land even when it was made available to

[133] *EAS*, "Inquiry into Kenya land problem soon," no. 11861, Saturday 19 July 1952, p. 1. See also United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland Parliament, *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, Official Report*, Session 1951 – 52, vol. 503, 30 June – 18 July 1952. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1952, pp. 2346-2350.

them.[134] It also boldly posited that the proposed inquiry would be more useful if it broadened its focus to include an array of social issues, looked beyond Kenya to East Africa in an inter-territorial manner, and considered solutions that included population redistribution and the nature of land use among different people. The *EAS* cautioned against propositions that reserved land for future African use as likely to depress European capital and enterprise which the colony depended on for development. The paper also averred that any solutions that discouraged European skill and capital from coming to the colony would be a disservice to the African, who needed the European for progress. It then repeated its call for decision makers to consider solutions that did not involve land, arguing that it was a finite resource and there were other sectors of the economy present and future that could meet the livelihood needs of its inhabitants.[135]

Even when the Government declared a state of emergency in October 1952 after the murder of Chief Waruhiu and Mau Mau violence threatened to spiral out of control, the *EAS* remained reluctant to acknowledge the land grievances behind the movement. Four days after the emergency declaration, the European Elected Members issued a statement in which they stated that they had always supported the Government in its efforts to improve the economic and social lives of all races in Kenya and argued that the violence was not attributable to economic stress but to people who had organised themselves with the express intent of inciting racial hatred. As a consequence, they remained committed to supporting the aspirations of loyal Africans.[136] The newspaper agreed, informing its readers that the Members concerned had done well to issue a statement expressing their intention to work for solutions to the problems that were affecting

[134] For more on Olenguruone see, Tabitha Kanogo, *Squatters and the Roots of Mau Mau: 1905-63.* London: James Currey Limited, 1987, pp. 105-120, 125-161.
[135] *EAS*, "Land problems," no. 11861, Saturday 19 July 1952, p. 4.
[136] *EAS*, "Elected Members welcome Minister: attitude to responsible Africans unchanged," no. 11944, Friday 24 October 1952, p. 1.

"educated and responsible elements of the African community" as it encouraged their African representatives to respond in kind.[137] It then proceeded to focus on housing yet again as one of those grievances that ought to be remedied for the sake of urban Africans in addition to the raising of wages for skilled and semi-skilled workers to ensure that they would be able to afford the housing the Government made available. The newspaper also recommended that the terms of service of Africans working in the civil service be reviewed to ensure that they had avenues for advancement therein and could take on greater responsibilities. In so doing, the *EAS* was still attempting to draw attention away from issues relating to European land ownership. Housing, civil service terms of service, and wages were matters that concerned the African urban poor and petit bourgeoisie. It hoped to steer the government towards action in these areas to keep Africans in urban areas away from rural areas and attendant complications of land hunger. Solutions here would also enable Europeans to co-opt African proto-elites into the existing politico-economic system on the terms of those who dominated it, which meant its preservation.

As the colony readied itself for the arrival of the Colonial Secretary towards the end of October 1952, the newspaper stressed that the purpose of his visit would not focus solely on the Kenya's immediate security needs, but also on its development plans, particularly as they pertained to assuring law-abiding and anxious Africans that improvements to their lives would be undertaken very soon. These improvements, one of which was the primary need for urban housing, would be largely long-term measures that demanded the assiduous attention of the Royal Commission, but inwardly concerned about the deteriorating security situation, it recommended that the Government see to it that some of these improvements were put in place immediately. It now acknowledged that Africans did have legitimate grievances but insisted that invidious elements among them had exploited and exaggerated them for their own odious

[137] *EAS*, "Opportunity," no. 11944, Friday 24 October 1952, p. 8.

motives.[138] When Oliver Lyttelton in the course of a weekend tour denied the existence of any link between Mau Mau and economic stress, the *EAS* triumphantly published his remarks under a front page heading, "Mau Mau: 'No Direct Link to Economic Causes.' Inside, an editorial sparked by the recently issued terms of reference for the Royal Commission pointed out that it would have to deal with "the consequent need to reconcile primitive methods of existence with those demanded by the growth of industrial and productive enterprises." It contended that once the Commission commenced its inquiry, it would find itself investigating a society in transition from an agriculturally-based economy to one that was based on industry – a phenomenon many other countries in the world had undergone. In its opinion therefore, it behooved the Commission to remember that what Kenya was experiencing was natural for a colony in which profitable agricultural enterprise needed to be sustained as townships were established to meet the requirements of an expanding industrial base.[139] If the Commission followed this line of inquiry, it would take pressure off European land owners upcountry and benefit those who had invested in the country's modest industrial base. It would be a win-win situation for the *EAS'* European constituency, and of course, the newspaper itself that considered its fortunes tightly woven around the economic health of the settler base. It must also have been well aware that a stable African urban working class could only be a boon to the *EAS'* Swahili sister publication *Baraza*.

Staving Off an "Iconoclastic Attack" on the Established Order

By 1954 the *EAS* was certain that there had to be changes in the way in which the colony was administered, especially in relation to the minute role the British had apportioned to Africans in its government, but it was also aware of the intransigence of many settlers to political changes that threatened to dilute their influence in Government. At the end of February 1954,

[138] *EAS*, "Mr. Lyttelton's visit to Kenya," no. 11946, Monday 27 October 1952, p. 4.
[139] *EAS*, "The Royal Commission," no. 11952, Monday 3 November 1952, p. 4.

British Colonial Secretary Oliver Lyttelton returned to Kenya for his third visit since 1952. At the time of his arrival, there was already a strong push by the European Elected Members' Organisation for yet another War Cabinet to deal with the aftermath of the revolt.[140] The Mau branch of the Electors' Union not only argued that a War Cabinet was much better than a military governership, but the *EAS* reported that W. E. Crosskill, the member for Mau, had also contended that favourable constitutional change was that which recognised that "time was more than ripe for Europeans to take a greater share in the government of the country." He acknowledged that any future government would have to be in partnership with members of other races, however their participation would be "to a degree commensurate with their ability and merit and subject to a declaration of complete allegiance to Kenya alone and acceptance of Government policy."[141] Once again, his statement was indicative of a presumption that Europeans would set the standards of measurement for ability and merit and was not cognisant of the fact that many non-Europeans were irreconcilably opposed to key government policies. Meanwhile, the *EAS* was also aware that Europeans in Trans Nzoia, an area which Crosskill represented, strongly favoured the total eviction of Kikuyus from the area. Their member had recommended stockade villages instead, but his proposal was apparently too moderate for them.[142]

To the newspaper, these were unrealistic and extreme positions out of touch with realities on the ground. It was also keen on seeing an end to the emergency and hoped for a return to normalcy as soon as possible. As such, it had come to embrace the belief that a two-prong solution, civil and military, was the best way of achieving that objective. Oliver Lyttelton was of

[140] *EAS*, "Elected Members not opposed to principle of plan," no. 12362, Monday 1 March 1954, p. 1. See also, "Third Kenya visit of Mr. Lyttelton," same issue, same page.
[141] *EAS*, "Mau electors favour a war cabinet," no. 12362, Monday 1 March 1954, p. 1.
[142] *EAS*, "Referendum plan for Europeans," no. 12362, Monday 1 March 1954, p. 5.

course central to spearheading the former solution and the newspaper was confident that the constitution of his character, as well as his experiences in Malaya and British Guiana, would serve him well in solving Kenya's political problems, particularly because he was arriving at a time when there were a lot of divisions within Kenya "and more unproductive talk than at any time for more than a year."[143] A good political solution was necessary for the peaceful co-existence of the different races in the long term and a military solution only dealt with one aspect of the disease that caused the rebellion – the gangs of rebels. For the "disease" that caused the rebellion to be effectively dealt with a more definitive solution had to be found and the following day the newspaper expounded this idea further, even though it must have been a very discomfiting article for many of its readers. It repeated its assertion that the eradication of the disease that caused the rebellion needed a potent cure and this time it firmly located the cure in the sphere of political change:

> No policy, it should be added, will defeat the hideous ideology if it does not provide for a place of responsibility for all races in the common task. It is not, in fact, a common task today except in the limited field of military attack. In the long-term assault upon the evil which has developed in the minds of the Kikuyu people, and threatens to spread, success is only likely and possible if all sections of the community, all races, feel they have a share in the responsibility of defeating it.[144]

Political change was crucial because:

> There is today a sense of frustration among African and Asian communities that they are not regarded as capable of helping to carry a burden which has been assumed almost completely in the political and policy-making sphere outside the Government by Europeans. The genesis of Mau Mau was frustration. It was a reaction against conditions and circumstances of the times, at least some part of which is the outcome of policies and attitudes of the past. There is little hope for the future if frustration continues in the present.[145]

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[143] *EAS*, "The highest level," no. 12362, Monday 1 March 1954, p. 4.
[144] *EAS*, "Opportunity for Mr. Lyttelton, no. 12363, Tuesday 2 March 1954, p. 4.
[145] Ibid. Its interest in positive political change led the *EAS*, later that year, to throw its support behind the ending of the nomination of African representatives to the LEGCO in favour of elected representatives under a system to be inquired into by Walter F. Coutts, Administrator of St. Vincent in the Windward Islands, who had previously

The *EAS* had now come to accept that "frustration" was indeed behind the Mau Mau rebellion, but it seemed to the newspaper that the country's settler leadership had not recognised this important fact and it was keen to play a role in championing it. That they were oblivious to the political contingencies of the situation had been brought home to the newspaper by an incident in the LEGCO the previous week. An African unofficial member had asked that Africans and Asians be included in the Emergency Committees but was voted down by European members, and to make matters worse in the eyes of the newspaper, the European members had triumphed with the aid of official members. Yet the paper believed that the sooner they realised that a longer term solution to the Mau Mau rebellion lay in the political and economic realm, it would be for the betterment not only of Africans, but also for those who had to live with them in the same colony. Thus, it went on to advocate the "re-building, rehabilitation and regeneration of the hearts and minds of people" that would inoculate them from the Mau Mau malady. The paper also urged the Secretary of State to make the most out of what it termed a "psychological moment" in Kenya's history so as to steer political energies towards a more liberal course that would enhance the capacity of the country's leaders to come up with the sort of concessions that would enable the liberation of Africans from the root causes of the bitterness and distrust that had caused the rebellion.[146] Even so, old habits die hard and the *EAS* still maintained an attitude of *noblesse oblige*.

Shortly after the publication of an *Economic Survey of the Colonial Territories of the Crown* (1954) the newspaper hailed it as evidence that the British taxpayer had done much to improve the lives of the African population in the East African territories. According to the

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worked in Kenya. See, *EAS*, "Nomination of Africans ends," no. 12556, Wednesday 13 October 1954, p. 1 and "Representation of Africans" on p. 6 of the same issue.

[146] Ibid.

survey, the British Government had spent £60 million on development between 1946 and 1952 and had budgeted the spending of another £40 million by the beginning of 1956. The paper reported that a large fraction of these funds had gone into the Railways and Harbours administration, the Post Office and the Owen Falls hydro-electric scheme. Although it is evident that these services benefitted Europeans more than anyone else, the newspaper argued that the sums of money recorded in the survey ought to impress African leaders. They proved that "despite every handicap, the trust which the British people in the United Kingdom and their kith and kin settled here in East Africa have assumed for Africans is being faithfully discharged." It went on to add that the survey demonstrated the reason why it was essential for all races to work together in the "exhilarating task of building new countries out of the old Africa."[147] Presumably it was because Africans stood to benefit as the objects of charity from Europeans who were discharging their preordained role as their benefactors. It was a statement that though served with great optimism could only have further frustrated the African leaders it was meant to please.[148]

Once Oliver Lyttelton had completed the work on his proposals for constitutional change in Kenya and Africans as well as Arabs declared their dissatisfaction, the *EAS* supported their objection even as it worked to salvage the proposals in the interest of stability. The proposals resulted in the first of two constitutions that adopted the principle of multiracial government. Under a ministerial system, Asians would have two ministries while Africans would have one (Community Development). Europeans would maintain a majority that tallied with their notion of parity: three European officials balanced by three European unofficial. The *EAS* thought it unfortunate that it had not been found possible to provide for more African representation in the Councils of Government (Councils of Ministers and the War Council) and that although there

[147] *EAS*, "Developing Africa," no. 12364, Wednesday 3 March 1954, p. 6.
[148] The newspaper made similar remarks when the War Council issued its first report. See *EAS*, "Report of the War Council," no. 12562, Wednesday 20 October 1954, p. 6.

would be one African minister and two additional members of the Executive Council, its powers had been reduced substantially under the Lyttelton Plan. The paper maintained that Africans understood their needs best and would have been better served with adequate representation in the Councils of Government to express them. Nevertheless, it argued that no one interest group was wholly satisfied with the proposals and this was, in fact, evidence of the high quality of their craftsmanship. It observed that a lot of power would now rest with the newly created Council of Ministers which would be responsible for policy formulation and, knowing that Europeans would be a dominant factor therein, called on those whom the Governor would nominate to it to remember that they were representing more than a single race. It also urged its future nominees to recognise that the success of the Council would be an important contribution towards realising the Plan's goal of a multiracial government with the emphasis that for Europeans "it will be a practical test of the validity of the claims for true and selfless leadership." As for Asians, the newspaper called on them to work with others in partnership for the development of the Colony into a prosperous country within the Commonwealth and owing allegiance to the Crown, and in support of their claims that they had made their homes in the territory. In the opinion of the *EAS*, Asians would have to change their attitude towards the Government as positions they had held in opposition to the Government could not continue in a multiracial Colonial Government. It also called for multiracial representation in the Development Committee, which the Plan envisioned, insisting that this would ensure a more equal and efficient expenditure of resources in the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the country's resources. In addition, the paper argued, the proper staffing and management of the Committee's affairs was critical because "in the long run the most important sphere is the rebuilding of the economy of the Colony and the creation of those conditions of society which will prevent the seeds of unrest from germinating."[149] The *EAS*

[149] *EAS*, "The Lyttelton Plan," no. 12371, Thursday 11 March 1954, p. 4. See also, *EAS*, "End of the beginning," no.

thus never abandoned its belief in the deeply intertwined nature of politics and economics and remained determined to ensure that instability in the former did not interfere with the latter and vice versa.

Nevertheless, in its eagerness to embrace multiracialism as a pragmatic policy for the Colony, the *EAS* did not forget the insecurities of its European populace. When the new Colonial Secretary A. Lennox-Boyd visited the colony in October of 1954 and assured Europeans at a press conference that the British Government supported their continued stay in Kenya, an assurance that he said could be repeated "as emphatically as you like," the paper splashed it in a headline that read "Assurance Given to All European Immigrants."[150] The *EAS* also reported him to have said he supported Lord Delamere's view that Europeans in Kenya needed to conquer their fears about the direction of change in Kenya to enable them and the country to move forward. The newspaper labeled his remarks "timely" and hoped that they would encourage "those of little faith whose gloomy outlook on the future" made them unreliable partners for progress and actually caused some to desert the Colony during moments of crisis, which only made it more difficult for Europeans to advocate for immigration policies that could encourage further immigration.[151] Kenya was not only capable of attracting immigrants for the benefit of its agricultural sector, but also for that of its commercial and industrial sectors, and the *EAS* argued that efforts to encourage immigration in future should also target the latter sector with the aim of enriching it further with the necessary knowledge and technological skills. It asserted that the Colonial Secretary's remarks were an acknowledgement that security and stability were required for the British to complete their 'mission to Africans' in Kenya successfully and tried to assure

12374, Monday 15 March 1954, p. 6, *EAS*, "A final decision," no. 12376, Wednesday 17 March 1954, p. 6 and *EAS*, "Wise second thoughts," no. 12377, Thursday 18 March 1954, p. 4.

[150] *EAS*, "Assurance given to all European immigrants," no. 12552, Friday 8 October 1954, p. 1.

[151] *EAS*, "More British settlers," no. 12553, Saturday 9 October 1954, p. 4.

European settlers that the British Government would not risk jeopardising the multiracial objectives of the Lyttelton Plan by imposing policies that caused those who were playing such a vital role in the country's economy to flee. And so while it acknowledged that no Colonial Secretary could state the future of British policy with certainty and that there were those who therefore would continue to look at 1960 when the Plan was due for review with trepidation, it was important for them to utilise the years in between to the best of their ability to lay the foundations for a future in which they would be comfortable.

As part of playing its role in facilitating a successful transition into a multiracially governed Kenya, the *EAS* ramped up its attention to the country's economic health. In spite of the economic recession the country had undergone in 1956, the *EAS* tried to start 1957 on a positive note with a front page New Year message in which Colonial Secretary Lennox-Boyd proclaimed that Kenya could look forward to a future in which all races would work together for a common future. In the course of the previous year, he and other Ministers in the Colonial Office had visited different parts of the world and the Colonial Secretary expressed with optimism that plans for the attainment of self-government within the Commonwealth by Colonial territories would proceed as envisioned. As evidence for the British Government's commitment to this grand design, he cited the Gold Coast and the fact that a Bill was in Parliament to grant it independence within the Commonwealth in March of that year.[152] The newspaper opined that what East Africa needed in the year ahead was peace and an ardent investment of resources for economic growth and the improvement of social services. The railway, still prized as a facilitator and barometer of economic growth, had undergone several challenges in 1956 while estimates from the Post Office and telecommunications were not promising. At the same time, there were increasing demands for the provision of housing, health and educational facilities as recurrent

[152] *EAS*, "Common destiny for all races: message to Kenya, no. 13248, Tuesday 1 January 1957, p. 1.

expenditure on administration outpaced revenue. The newspaper called for a re-examination and prioritisation of revenue demands for a judicious use of that which would be available. It was of the opinion that it was best for the country to look within itself for the financial resources that would be required. As such, increased productivity would be imperative and was achievable through harder work and longer hours, especially in the agricultural sector where it believed great growth could be achieved if farmers took advantage of the government's incentives to improve crop and animal yields. In addition, it called for the equipping of local people of all races with the necessary skills the country would need in an ever more competitive world.[153] The following day, more positive news greeted *EAS'* readers under the headline: "Sharp Rise in Kenya Trade Figures Last Year." According to the Department of Trade and Supplies, Kenya's exports in tea, coffee and sisal in the first eight months of the previous year had increased by about £3m when compared to a similar period in 1955.[154] The newspaper tabled this as evidence that increased agricultural productivity was the best way for Kenya to achieve the economic growth required to meet its needs. Although the *Trade and Supplies Bulletin* had showed that Kenya did not have a favourable balance of trade, the newspaper attempted to lighten the impact of this news by arguing that the country was after all growing and in great need of capital goods.[155]

However, there were no simple solutions to Kenya's budget shortfall and two months later "Experts Study Huge Loan Programme for E. Africa" headlined a report on a conference scheduled for that month at which financial experts from London and the three East African territories would discuss the challenges of raising capital to meet the region's needs in the next five to ten years. For the period leading up to 1960, the region would require more than

[153] *EAS*, "This year 1957," no. 13248, Tuesday 1 January 1957, p. 4.
[154] *EAS*, "Sharp rise in Kenya trade figures last year," no. 13249, Wedesday 2 January 1957, p. 1.
[155] EAS, "Production," no. 13249, Wednesday 2 January 1957, p. 1.

£111,000,000. Despite the newspaper's assertion and hope that Kenya could pull itself out of its financial restraints, the report noted that ongoing discussions between the Colonial Office, the Treasury and other British territories had seriously considered external borrowing "taking into account the part to be played by the sterling assets of the colonies in the future financing of capital development and British overseas investment problems." Local loan prospects would be discussed, but it was not difficult for readers to surmise that these would be inadequate.[156] While there was no editorial commentary on the matter, the newspaper's belief that Kenya's economic growth and stability provided a critical platform for social and political change insured that it continued to keep a close watch on political and economic issues. Later that month, the Minister for Finance tabled a Sessional Paper outlining the territory's proposed development programme for 1957-60 in which the Government planned capital expenditure of up to £24 million for the socio-economic development against a need for "highly desirable projects" that would have cost over £50 million. Of the amount proposed, the Government planned to finance expenditure of £18 million from loans raised either in East Africa or Britain and the balance from external grants, Colonial Development, Welfare funds and the International Co-operation Administration, fees from development services, while transfers from Colony revenue and the capital gap would cover the balance.[157]

The newspaper was taken aback, calling the Paper's preamble "a rude awakening from a planner's dream," but once again attempted to brighten up the news by insisting that the country could still grow by striving to increase its productivity and encouraging private enterprise. It advised that the Government borrow as much as it could internally as such funds were retained within the local economy. At the same time, the paper predicted that there would be no savings

[156] *EAS*, "Experts study huge loan programme for E. Africa," no. 13299, Friday 1 March 1957, p. 1.
[157] *EAS*, "£23,000,000 plan to develop Kenya," no. 13321, Wednesday 27 March 1957, p. 1.

from budget surpluses in the years ahead and the country would continue to suffer the financial consequences of the Emergency. As such, the colony's development would continue to depend on what it could borrow pegged on its credit-worthiness, as well as that which it could save through thrift and earn through increased productivity.[158] When East Africa's loan operation in London that year was heavily oversubscribed, resulting in loan dealings totaling £11,500,000, the *EAS* splashed the news on its front page in jubilation. The newspaper observed that this single operation had surpassed the total for all colonial investment that was obtained from the London market in 1956 (£11,000,000) and hailed it as foreign investors' vote of confidence in the region's future. The operation also held great promise that the region would be in a position to raise the over £110,000,000 that would be required for development up to the year 1960. In addition, funds the Government had hived off the budget including those earmarked for the construction of African housing as well as road construction could now be accessed.[159] At the same time, the colony could look forward to the first elections under the Lyttelton Constitution.

Lecturing 'Unruly' African Politicians: A Last Ditch Effort to Control the Nature of Political Change

On the day polling commenced, the *EAS* hailed it as the first time Africans had the opportunity to "exercise the democratic right of electing their own representatives." Saturday, 9 March 1957 marked a day of significance in the "evolution of African participation in the form of Parliamentary government that has been grafted on to Kenya from the parent tree in Britain." It was pleased that the African candidates vying for the eight seats had campaigned vigorously but peacefully and that the voters seemed to be weighing each candidate carefully. The newspaper took pride in having featured the various candidates in its columns in the run up to the

[158] *EAS*, "Development," no. 13321, Wednesday 27 March 1957, p. 1.
[159] *EAS*, "Etast African loan heavily oversubscribed in London," no. 13355, Monday 6 May 1957, p. 1 and "E.A. loan success," p. 4.

election and saw itself as an important polling aid to voters as well as a crucial contributor to the ultimate success of the exercise. It even took the Government to task for not having made it possible for the African candidates to broadcast their views on its African Broadcasting Service. The *EAS* emphasised the fact that the election would mean more African involvement in Government affairs, arguing that it would "prove that the interests of the various communities are mutual in Kenya." It also attempted to moderate the demands that various African candidates had made in the course of their campaigns, for example, the call for universal African education. To this end, and perhaps in a bid to show its European readership that it was not oblivious to their anxieties in its embrace of political change, it highlighted remarks Group Capt. Briggs had made assailing such African candidates for what he considered their economic naïveté, arguing that Kenya's economy could not support universal education without seriously compromising its integrity. The editor stated that not only was Briggs' assessment correct, but he had also aptly pointed out that the country would have to expand its economy considerably to provide the amenities that the candidates were demanding. Africans alongside other races would all benefit if the economy grew and that was a process that "depends entirely on the hard work and co-operation of all communities, backed by development capital." Moreover, peace and stability were crucial for economic growth and the newspaper reminded readers that the Commonwealth, the United States and other parts of the world were watching the country closely. Tranquility was indispensible if the country wanted to attract foreign investment. Kenya needed "sound and far-sighted leadership…to shape the country's destiny on a pattern of racial co-operation. Votes should not be cast solely for tribal or other partisan reasons, nor yet for alluring promises." The voter had to consider all issues critically, cautioned the newspaper, as it implicitly promoted the continued operation of the capitalist system and by extension, the security of itself and others

who were already heavily vested in it. Voters also needed to recognise that rash promises were just that – rash. It was the *EAS'* desire that they wait patiently before the benefits of the economic system trickled down to them. All things considered, the newspaper asked those casting their votes to ask whether they believed "in the honesty of this man's purpose to work for the ends that seem best for Kenya?"[160]

After the election, the newspaper addressed the defeat that the sitting African members of the LEGCO had suffered. It blamed their losses on their not having kept in touch with their constituents, adding that the African electorate had chosen those they considered best qualified in terms of education and performance. They were the petit bourgeoisie that the *EAS* believed in. The newspaper noted that seven out of eight of those elected were teachers while the eighth (Tom Mboya) was a trade unionist.[161] In addition, four had been educated in British universities. While this team was expected to provide a more formidable voice for African issues, the newspaper observed that apart from the two who had kept their seats, the rest would be encountering LEGCO procedures for the first time. Nevertheless, the paper patronisingly added that "they can be sure of a warm welcome from the other Members who will, no doubt, assist to the utmost with guidance in their new and heavy responsibilities." The *EAS* was certain that the integration of Africans in Government was a necessity. This was a position born of thet desire to maintain the order that was of much benefit to those who had sunk considerable amounts of capital in the economy. At the same time, it could not conceal its discomfort with the pace at which political developments were taking place. The Governor, for example, would soon have to

[160] *EAS*, "Polling day," no. 13306, Saturday 9 March 1957, p. 4. For an official report on the political events of 1957 see Great Britain, *Kenya, 1957*. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office 1958, pp. 1, 146–147, 170–173. See also, B.A. Ogot, "The Decisive Years, 1956-63" in Ogot and Ochieng', *Decolonization and Independence*, pp. 48-79.
[161] Mboya initially trained to be a sanitation inspector before getting the opportunity to study industrial relations at Ruskin College courtesy of the Trade Union Congress (UK). See Tom Mboya, *Freedom and After*. Boston, Little, Brown, 1963.

examine the list of the eight African candidates with a view to appointing two Ministers and a Parliamentary Secretary and it was a "regrettable fact" that the eight had "little or no experience in Government administration." Yet, as a publication it had to play its part in making sure that European interests survived the transition and so it once again endeavoured to end a transition-related article on a positive note, observing that in spite of the heavy defeat of African LEGCO members, many of whom Europeans had become accustomed to as moderates unlikely ever to rock the boat, it appeared that the general desire to work with other LEGCO members for "a common solution to political problems" remained.[162]

Four days later, when the newly elected African LEGCO members announced that they did not recognise the Lyttelton Plan or the agreement that there would be no constitutional changes until 1960, the newspaper published what was undoubtedly a major political development on its front page but at the very bottom, probably to avoid raising alarm amongst its readers with a screaming headline. Nevertheless, it made it clear that the MLCs had stated their intention not to participate in Government until their demands were met. The report quoted the statement that they had issued twice; the segment in which they stated their intention to boycott Government and the second in which they rejected "any system which serves as a device to secure for certain people permanent political and economic domination of other sections of our community, which end the Lyttelton Plan is promoting to the advantage of the European community in Kenya."[163] The article also included Tom Mboya's denial that a crowd at a weekend public meeting had indicated by a show of hands their wish that the African LEGCO members accept their two allotted appointments to ministerial office as the *EAS* had reported that Sunday. Mboya asserted that the crowd had not been asked to state their opinions on the matter

[162] *EAS*, "The new team," no. 13311, Friday 15 March 1957, p. 8.
[163] *EAS*, "African members announce policy," no. 13314, Tuesday 19 March 1957, p. 1 and 5.

and they were simply raising their hands in a sign of victory. The newspaper maintained the position of its reporter at the Pumwani meeting and other assessments that he had apparently made while at the meeting, namely that there was a lack of unanimity amongst Africans vis-à-vis the question of ministerial office and that "more than one African suggested that the new team was considerably weaker than that formed by the previous eight representatives." The men of "education" the newspaper had expected to be more accommodative of the status quo had disappointed it. The next day, an editorial claimed that neither their actions nor the vehemence with which their statement was worded had caught the paper off guard. On the contrary, the newspaper had clearly stated that they were the most formidable team Africans had ever had representing them. They did not lack "ability or resolve." What they lacked was experience, "otherwise they would recognise the weakness of precipitate action against cool and steady thinking; otherwise, they would see that the prosaic achieves more than a spectacular flourish of drums." It remarked that:

> As sensible men, they will realise they cannot hope to change the established order overnight, even if they wanted to, which is as doubtful as the benefits of iconoclastic attack. More of real value can be achieved from within than without. No amount of raging and rampaging will feed the people they represent. Only economic stability and ordered progress can do this, and also provide the much-desired amenities of education and social welfare.
>
> While the African Members have an unprecedented chance to make good in the service of the country, their election is only a beginning. They have yet to prove themselves capable of undertaking the responsibilities of leadership. Because they are Elected Members, they should seek to lead their constituents, not to be driven hi[t]her and thither before the variable gusts of agitation. Policy is not shaped in the hysteria of mass meetings, but emerges by agreement from a period of hard, cold reasoning on cause and effect.[164]

The newspaper expected them to come to the realisation after that period of "hard, cold reasoning" that prosperity could not come to all Kenyans at the same time. It took on the condescending role of esteemed teacher to a bunch of unruly school boys urging them to restrict

[164] *EAS*, "Leadership," Wednesday 20 March 1957, no. 13315, p. 6.

their political activities to "reporting" to their constituents, which included explaining the unpleasant realities of life as it had to be. Public meetings were not the appropriate fora for policy formulation, preached the newspaper. It called on the African leaders to learn from the example of their non-African peers who used their meetings to discuss more important and appropriate matters, for example, agricultural policy. They also needed to lean on their colleagues in the LEGCO to learn the ropes of Government and the basics of its procedures. To the *EAS*, the African members were attempting to run before they could walk to the detriment of the Europeans and had to be chastised before they caused too much damage.

In view of the newspaper's position, the Colonial Secretary's rebuke to the African members for their push for further constitutional change was most welcome and deserving of a headline: "Mr. Lennox-Boyd Challenges Sterile Aims of Africans: Responsible Attitude needed by Members."[165] After all, his rebuke in the course of a debate on colonies at the House of Commons served to reinforce the newspaper's stand on the place of the African politician in Kenya's constitutional development processes. Two days later, the Colonial Secretary's critique of the African leaders provided more fodder for another headline: "Pre-1960 Changes in Kenya Only by Agreement: Colonial Secretary States U.K. Policy." The Colonial Secretary, in response to Labour MP James Griffiths', assertion that Africans were in fact underrepresented in the LEGCO and had offered to meet with the Governor to discuss the matter, had maintained that constitutional change could only come after agreement between all those concerned as stated in the Lyttelton Constitution. Africans however, had insisted that they would only meet with the Governor and only on condition that he first admitted that they were underrepresented in the

[165] *EAS*, "Mr. Lennox-Boyd challengs sterile aims of Africans: responsible attitude needed by members," no. 13357, Wednesday 8 May 1957, p. 1. See also, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland Parliament, *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, Official Report*, Session 1956-57, vol. 569, 30 April – 10 May 1957. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1952, pp. 952-653.

LEGCO. Lennox-Boyd did not consider such pre-conditions useful in solving the impasse. Next to the headline story was a smaller report titled: "Africans' Outlook Opposed: Plan Turned into 'Bogy,'" which reported on a speech Michael Blundell had given in which he reproached the leaders for their "unilateral and arbitrary" demands. He called on them to consider the time between then and 1960 as one that would enable all those concerned to work out another electoral system. In the mean time, he hoped that the 1957 election "would bring civilised and educated people of Kenya together and at the same time would leave an opportunity for the expression of reasonable racial points of view."[166] The educated, as opposed to the masses, were the very people Blundell and his ilk recognised as critical to maintaining the existing order. The *EAS* welcomed the Colonial Secretary's response, praising him for leaving a door open for further negotiations and for his insistence that a solution come from within Kenya and not one imposed from the outside. It even recognised that his response appeared to acknowledge that there was some validity in the African leaders' demands. Blundell's speech, on the other hand, was a fine example of political moderation as it underscored the need for African leadership to work in concert with the leaders of other races. The newspaper insisted, however, that his references to the "civilised and educated" people of Kenya could only be a "thinly veiled reference to the concept of a common roll on a qualitative basis," at least for LEGCO seats.

To the disapproval of the *EAS*, African leadership, however, could not be appeased with vague promises of undefined political change. When Group Capt. Briggs criticised Tom Mboya for making speeches that denigrated the integrity of Government and condoned Mau Mau in the LEGCO, the newspaper featured it prominently on its front page with the title "Playing on Emotions: Minister's Criticism of Speeches by Member."[167] Briggs argued that Mboya was

[166] *EAS*, "Africans' outlook opposed: plan turned into 'bogy'," no. 13359, Friday 10 May 1957, p. 1.
[167] *EAS*, "Playing on emotions: Minsiter's criticism of speeches by member," no. 13365, Friday 17 May 1957, p. 1.

using his eloquence to "fan the dying embers of rebellion" instead of using his talent to promote peace. He asserted that Mboya was making unsubstantiated claims in his speeches and thus appeared to favour what he labelled communist methods of communication. Briggs' attack on Mboya served to emphasise the gulf that existed between his constituency and African leadership. Not only did he disapprove of Mboya's speeches, but he also disclosed that he believed that Europeans had always shouldered the burden of providing everything for Africans and, despite the introduction of the graduated personal income tax, he was certain that they would continue to do so. Masinde Muliro (MLC), on the other hand, was quoted in the same report arguing that Kenya was suffering serious problems of disunity and one of the key ways of healing that divide was economic integration. To be sure, coverage of African political activities in the *EAS* was minimal, but it is evident that their 'provocative' language when making speeches spurred the Government to step in with measures to restrict political meetings shortly after the Minister for African Affairs had issued a warning that the Government would act against those who aimed at leading Africans "towards chaos and disorder." [168] Not surprisingly, the newspaper welcomed the move. Amongst other measures, the Government had announced that it would issue licenses for political rallies in the name of one leader only and would record speeches made at those rallies. For the newspaper, the measures were not a regression into the days of political repression, but were essential steps in the interests of safeguarding state security.

In one of its continued efforts to influence trends of thought concerning African political participation, the *EAS* packaged and promoted political change in Tanganyika as ideal. It praised the British Minister of State for Foreign Affairs for his statement to the United Nations General

[168] *EAS*, "Restrictions on political meetings held by Africans: government pledge to maintain security," no. 13370, Thursday 23 May 1957, p. 1. For editorial see "Sabotage," p. 4.

Assembly in which he maintained his stand against timetables towards self-government which were arbitrary and as such unrelated to prevailing circumstances. The path to self-government had definite benchmarks and these had to be heeded and attained before self-governement could be realised. It was dismayed that the United States had joined the USSR in pressuring Britain to grant Tanganyika independence and considered the former rash in its demands and argued that they only served to strengthen the hands of communism. It praised Tanganyika as a worthy illustration of the manner in which multiracial partnership could enrich the life of a country, arguing that it had helped promote economic growth, "the emergence of organised political thought" and "constitutional reforms." The experiences of Dar es Salaam provided lessons of great relevance for those "thousands of miles away." It was time for those engaged in "political kite-flying" to stop and recognise that their efforts would be best utilised in the improvement of local government, social amenities and "the wellbeing of agricultural and industrial concerns." The "educated and civilised" had turned out to be a rather difficult lot and the newspaper now called on the Government to turn away from the urban areas inhabited by a vocal few who represented but only a sixteenth of the total population and turn to those in rural areas who of course included Kenya's landed gentry in addition to its peasant farmers. It urged the Government not to sacrifice their interests in favour of those of a few.

This was a marked shift from the newspaper's policy in 1952, when prevailing circumstances seemed to dictate that a focus on the urban African was the best strategy for Europeans. By 1957, urban areas were the hotbeds of what the *EAS* perceived to be radical, left-wing African politics. And so the newspaper used Tanganyika not only to conjure arguments that favoured the European farmer and entrepreneur in Kenya, but especially to argue for a conveniently composed and paced progression to self-government that safeguarded the

constituency with which it had concerned itself for all of its existence as a publication. Thus when Tanganyika's Governor, Sir Edward Twinning, announced important constitutional developments at the opening of the third and last year of the country's LEGCO, the newspaper used the opportunity to argue that the pace of reform should not only be linked to the developmental rate of public opinion, but also to a growing well-informed electorate and their leaders, including the unofficial majority who were key to enabling government to develop proper policy with their constructive criticism. It is not clear who the *EAS* considered would have the power to determine when this critical mass had been achieved.[169] The paper also praised Chief Thomas Marealle's (Chagga Chief, Tanganyika) statement to the United Nations Trusteeship Council as a cogent, realistic presentation of the African view as well as a far more balanced presentation of prevailing circumstances in Tanganyika than the assessments given by visiting missions of the United Nations to the country.[170] Among other things Marealle had argued that adequate capital was needed to ensure that economic development kept pace with political development. The advance of the latter without the former could only lead to ruin. The newspaper considered it praiseworthy that Marealle had insisted that Africans in East Africa would have to work towards the funding of education. Grants could be obtained for large capital projects, but education could not be funded on grants. As such, it was up to Africans to work for the country's economic progress, which would mean their own economic empowerment and, ultimately, their ability to finance the education of their children on their own. For the *EAS*, Marealle was adept at recognising the hard facts of the realities on the ground, which it argued East Africa had lacked for a long time. That he was a government appointed chief of the breed

[169] *EAS*, "Progress," Wednesday 1 May 1957, no. 13351, p. 6.
[170] For more on Thomas Marealle, see John Iliffe, *A Modern History of Tanganyika*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979, pp. 446-7, 568-9 and chapters 14 – 16 in general. For an official British publication on the Marealles as well as the general colonial-era restructuring of the Chagga political system see, G. K. Whitlamsmith (compiler), *Recent Trends in Chagga Political Development*. Moshi (Tanganyika): KNCU Printing Press, 1955.

that lacked respect in large swathes of colonial Africa did not matter. It also did not matter that he was vague about the manner in which the economic empowerment he was championing, and which was of great importance to all African leaders, could be attained in a socially just manner. The newspaper simply hoped that Kenya's African leadership would learn from the indirect message it was sending to them and desist from making demands that in its opinion were populist and implied a centrally controlled economy in the future.

At the same time, the *EAS* continued in its effort to comfort and reassure the country's European populace. This commitment was the motivation behind headlines such as "Non-Africans Essential to Maintain Prosperity: Skill Must Not Be Driven Out."[171] This particular one was located above a report on remarks the Colonial Secretary had made as he was opening debate in the House of Commons on racial policy in East and Central Africa. He had argued that it was "only" the skill and capital of non-Africans that had enabled the inhabitants of the territories in question to attain prevailing standards of living. Non-Africans had then worked towards teaching Africans to shoulder more responsibilities for their own development and continued to do so in a manner that encouraged racial co-operation. Two days later, "Europeans Assured of Firm Future in Kenya," was the headline over a report on Kenyan Governor Sir Evelyn Baring's speech in which he assured Europeans of a firm and secure future in Kenya, commenting that he recognised how much those of "European origin" had given to the country as he encouraged them to embrace the "common approach" to sorting out the country's problems, which would also contribute to making the future of their children in the country secure.[172] The newspaper praised both speeches, aptly capturing their condescending tone as it layered them with its own when it observed that both "foresee a need for the continued guidance

[171] *EAS*, "Non-Africans essential to maintain prosperity," no. 13382, Thursday 6 June 1957 p. 1 and 3.
[172] *EAS*, "Europeans assured of firm future in Kenya," no. 13384, Saturday 8 June 1957, p. 1.

and leadership of the African to ensure that he progresses along the road…to nationhood." It endorsed Baring's promotion of the "common approach" and took comfort in his assurances that European life in Kenya would continue to thrive and that no Government in Kenya or the United Kingdom would sacrifice the interests of any of the races then or in the future. The *EAS* was particularly relieved the Governor's statement implied that British policy vis-à-vis political change in Kenya would remain steady even if Government changed hands in the United Kingdom.[173]

In October of 1957, Lennox-Boyd returned to East Africa to begin a tour of Kenya, Tanganyika, Uganda and Zanzibar, and announced that he hoped it would promote racial harmony. Interestingly, he also explained that he hoped that the tour would clarify the attitude of the British Government on the country's constitutional future, but it was his words on racial harmony that the *EAS* turned into a headline. However, his latter remarks seemed to indicate that the Colonial Secretary was coming to the region with the intention of dictating London's policy to its leaders instead of simply moderating discussions between various groups with the hope of attaining consensus on contentious issues.[174] The talks stalled almost as soon as they had started when African Elected Members demanded the issue of their LEGCO underrepresentation be discussed separately from all other constitutional matters.[175] For them underrepresentation was a disturbing symbol of the African's subordinate status in the colony but by having it dealt with separately, they also hoped to prevent its deployment as a bargaining tool for constitutional provisions with which they would be uncomfortable. The Asian Elected Members had no objection to the African demands. The *EAS* maintained that the deadlock was but a hurdle and

[173] *EAS*, "The future," no. 13384, Saturday 8 June 1957, p. 1.
[174] *EAS*, "Better racial harmony aim of tour by minister," no. 13486, Saturday 5 October 1957, p. 1.
[175] *EAS*, "Kenya constitution talks deadlock" and "Asian group disappointed at impasse," no. 13498, Saturday 19 October 1957, p. 1.

not a catastrophe that it hoped would be solved when Lennox-Boyd returned to the country from the Tanganyika leg of his tour two weeks later. Demonstrating the gulf of comprehension between European and African political opinion, it summed up the impasse as a "procedural matter" and assailed the politicians for their stubborn avoidance of a block agreement. The paper claimed that Europeans had approached the talks with a spirit of good will while Africans who had initially shown a willingness to negotiate with non-Africans had now seemingly tied their hands with their demand and left little room for manoeuvre. The editor argued that it would have been best for Africans to agree to negotiations on a block agreement and then pull out if they were dissatisfied. He did not elaborate on how exactly they were now restrained politically but the newspaper ended its editorial by regretting the uncertainty the impasse created and the "obduracy of interests" that had stalled the talks.[176]

The *EAS'* assessment of the impasse did not please Tom Mboya, who proceeded to lash out against the publication in the LEGCO. Indeed his attack was one of several confrontations African politicians would have with Kenya's privately owned press before and after independence. Mboya was not able to fully express himself on the matter as the Speaker ruled him out of order twice, but he did have the opportunity to criticise the press for not making use of the opportunity it had to promote political stability and racial harmony. He expressed his concern that the majority of the colony's press was European-owned and run and that this press was the main source of information on African thought for the colony's Europeans. It was therefore a pity and inimical to racial harmony when it misrepresented Africans. When the *EAS* contacted him for further comments, he refrained from specifically criticising the *EAS* stating that while he did not fully agree with its analyses of African politics he considered other

[176] *EAS*, "Time for thought,: no. 13498, Saturday 19 October 1957, p. 4.

European publications to be more at fault.[177] Nonetheless, the *EAS* was certain that it was in fact the target of Mboya's comments, particularly because the legislator had asserted that "some of our colleagues own that instrument."[178] It dismissed his LEGCO remarks as those of a disgruntled press subject not dissimilar from other individuals and institutions who frequently complained when the newspaper did not cover them or covered them in a manner they considered unfavourable. The *EAS* could not cover everything or everybody and when it did, it adhered to the facts:

> This is primarily a newspaper, not a political review. Its purpose is to mirror life, happy, gay, sad or sordid. Our objects are to present the unbiased facts, as far as the law and propriety will allow, and as far as the reporters are able to get against the barricades of officialdom and the P.R.O. system and allowing for human error. Everybody who is not a bigot will agree there are at least two sides to every question. The trouble starts when people object to the other side "getting out."
>
> The Press is entitled by right, not privilege to certain documents, including Council committee minutes, and unexpurgated versions at that. If the Press enjoys freedom, then it must show responsibility. Abuses are fair matter for criticism. Exacerbating racial feelings falls into this category. Who is responsible – the Press or the politicians and speakers of all races it reports?[179]

In this way, the newspaper avoided addressing the issue at hand; that it did in fact neglect to cover African politicians, politics and affairs adequately and that when it did it was in fact partial to European opinion. The newspaper had indeed increased its coverage of African affairs, but this was far from representative.

When Lennox-Boyd returned to Kenya at the end of October 1957, the British Government's attitude on the country's political future became very clear and the *EAS*

[177] *EAS*, "Concern at attitude of Press," no. 13504, Saturday 26 October 1957, p. 1 and 5.
[178] *EAS*, "Press freedom," no. 13505, Monday 28 October 1957, p. 4. Mboya was referring to Michael Blundell who at one time sat on the EAS' Board of Directors.
[179] Ibid.

prominently featured its report on the resignation of all Elected Ministers in the Government.[180] This action effectively brought an end to the Lyttelton Constitution and gave the Colonial Secretary a free rein to sort out the impasse. The three European Ministers issued a statement to the press which made it clear that although they had resolved to resign in the interests of all races of Kenya, they were still bitter at the actions of African politicians who had precipitated the event. They were "disappointed" that the parties concerned had been unable to sort out their differences locally and hoped that "African Elected Members will, in future, realise that the solutions to problems in Kenya must be found in Kenya."[181] The *EAS* praised the former Ministers for their statesmanship and called their action an indication of their commitment to sorting out what was a complex political problem. Lennox-Boyd was acting legally and within reason too, for it pointed out that the eleventh paragraph of the Lyttelton Consititution empowered him to step in and act when disagreement proved unsolvable. The paper was of the opinion that the occasion provided the country's politicians with the opportunity to devote themselves to improving the quality of life in the colony and restoring confidence in its economy.[182]

That Lennox-Boyd had come to the colony with a clear agenda is evident in that within less than 24 hours of obtaining the resignations of the Ministers, he summoned them once again to reveal a new constitutional plan for the country. It gave Africans equal representation with Europeans who were elected communally. The Lennox-Boyd constitution also provided for 12 specially elected members; a provision which African MLCs rejected because European officials had the power to vote and in combination with European unofficials, were well positioned to

[180] *EAS*, "All Kenya elected Ministers resign: action to place initiative with Mr. Lennox-Boyd," no. 13515, Friday 8 November 1957, p. 1.
[181] *EAS*, "Action in interest of all races," no. 13515, Friday 8 November 1957, p. 1.
[182] *EAS*, "Opportunity," no. 13515, Friday 8 November 1957, p. 8.

control the choice. It also offended Africans that only one minister would be African.[183] The *EAS* was quick to sense the direction the wind was blowing and called his plan "astonishingly thorough and comprehensive." No further negotiations were necessary and his "aim as far as possible, has been to forge an instrument that will be the best guarantee of stability during the long haul to political maturity." The actions of the African MLCs had plunged the country into a state of political limbo that threatened to destabilise the lives of all its inhabitants. This was an undesirable state of affairs and the newspaper was only too happy to embrace a solution to the threatening quagmire. Lennox-Boyd had "cleared away all the litter of broken ambitions, false hopes and faint promises" and his message to all was that they recognise the new beginning and forge ahead as one. In the following months, the newspaper would endeavour to prepare Europeans in particular, and the country in general for the looming monumental shift in the structuring of Kenya's politics. It had to do so, for its own security also depended on the minimalisation of disruption to its readership base, their livelihoods and the entire socio-economic milieu in which they functioned. It was time for the *EAS* to move beyond calls for a racially exclusive self-government and to double efforts to secure its future under a new order.

A Commercial Enterprise and the Principles of Self-Preservation

And so, once again, the *EAS* changed tactics to preserve its own interests and those whose cause it had championed for decades. It would attempt to take initiative by responding pragmatically to political change for the benefit of all of them. The newspaper's effort to communicate its new outlook on Kenyan politics to its readers - a carefully orchestrated transition to African majority rule that did not upset the economy - is epitomised by its coverage of one of the most liberal government officials of the day. After the BBC interviewed Ernest Vasey, Kenya's Minister for Finance, in March 1958 just before the first polls to elect Africans

[183] George Bennet, *Kenya A Political History*, pp. 141 – 143.

to the LEGCO, the newspaper published the interview next to an editorial supporting him and a coastal MLC, S. V. Cooke, who shared his view that African majority rule was inevitable if democratic principles were applied. The editorial was a response to a disgruntled *EAS* reader whose complaint against the newspaper's coverage of political news was motivated by what the editor perceived to be his discomfort with the direction of African politics. In his interview, Vasey had stated that African majority rule would result in Kenya's economic decline unless Europeans and Asians were part and parcel of the new political dispensation, transferring the necessary skills and knowledge over a period of time. This could only happen in an environment of sustained economic growth. He was certain any responsible African leader understood this and would communicate it to his constituency. At the same time, Europeans leaders would be remiss if they did not communicate the full purport of Kenya's political changes to their people. Hostility to change could only delay the economic development they needed for their own comfort and security in the country. The editorial made it clear that the *EAS* thought Vasey's remarks were most apt, the realities on the ground could not be denied: "there is not much use pretending that African elections are not being held in Kenya this weekend." Some of its readers may have found Vasey's remarks difficult to digest, but "we cannot cloak the facts," asserted the paper.[184]

Nevertheless, it remained sensitive and sympathetic to the struggles of its European readers to come to terms with the direction of political change, responding on one occasion with a subtle touch of humour and a heavy dose of Biblical counsel. On 26 April 1958, in reaction to more complaints from readers about the space the newspaper was devoting to political coverage, which rang hollow in light of the publication's very intricate, decades-long relationship with a

[184] *EAS*, "Mr. Vasey explains his views on Kenya's future," and "No finality," no. 13628, Friday 21 March 1958, p. 8.

very politically active readership, it dedicated an editorial, "Narrow is the Way," to the entire *Sermon on the Mount* for "these words of Divine truth….apply to this day and age in Kenya."[185] Its readers could not have missed the significance of the broad gate that led to destruction and the narrow gate that was a more difficult path to life, caution against the words of false prophets who could only mislead, and all this preceded by the comforting words of the Beatitudes. There was too much at stake for the interests it represented and the newspaper took to its role as counselor of the settler community with much gusto. The newspaper's spirit of pragmatism was not dampened even when African members of the LEGCO rejected the Lennox-Boyd constitution in January 1958. Instead it was quick to urge the Colonial Secretary to reconsider his initial insistence that there would be no constitutional conference despite its qualms with the hard line African MLCs had taken.[186] Intransigence on both sides could only plunge the country deeper into an unhealthy state of uncertainty with losses leaving none untouched.

By 1959, the *EAS* was just one of several publications of the former East African Standard Ltd. Expansion had started not long after Anderson and Mayer purchased the newspaper, as by 1910 it had fulfilled a need for additional plant capacity by purchasing the defunct *Nairobi Advertiser* and moving inland to Nairobi which was growing quickly and developing into the protectorate's administrative centre. At its old coastal plant, the owners left behind a small press to publish *Mombasa Times* for its former home town. That year, the newspaper produced its first daily version and by 1923 purchased its Nairobi rival *The Leader of British East Africa*. By end of World War I, the Anderson segment of the Anderson and Mayer partnership comprised of C. B. Anderson and his mother, as his father was no longer a part of the enterprise due to "domestic reasons." They opted to go public and the East African Standard

[185] *EAS*, "Narrow is the way," no. 13659, Saturday 26 April 1958, p. 4.
[186] *EAS*, "Informal talks," no.13891, Friday 23 January 1959, p. 8.

Ltd. was incorporated on 5 March 1918. As East African Standard Ltd. (prior to its name change in 1960), it owned publications in all the three East African Territories: *East African Standard, Mombasa Times, Tanganyika Standard, Sunday News* and *Uganda Argus*.[187] The company had no formidable competitor in any of its racially and geographically diverse markets and therefore enjoyed a virtually unrivalled position as the colony's premier publication stable. These were successes that needed to be protected as Kenya marched towards a new era. As a young publication under the ownership of Anderson and Mayer, the *EAS* had continued to forge for itself the role of promoting the European colonist's goal of achieving politico-economic dominance and independence. The envisioned development of a robust settler economy would in turn provide it with an environment in which its initial owners and later shareholders could advance their own interests, namely the returns in dividends from a profitable press venture as well as those in other sectors of an economy that was becoming ever more integrated with that of the world. However, as the 'winds of change' blew across Africa after the mid-20th century, it quickly read their direction and opted to adapt. 'Politico-economic independence, dominance and security' took on new meanings in the rapidly altering state of affairs. Now, the colonist determined to stay in the country in the long term hoped the new order would preserve entrepreneurial independence in a capitalist economy with a dominance that was exclusively economic and not racial, as well as security for capital invested while living under a government in which Europeans would be a minority.

There was no turning back. What the interests behind the *EAS* could do and what it hoped its beloved colonists would do too was to come to terms with the ongoing political changes, attempt to influence their pace, and form as secure a future for themselves within it as best as

[187] *EAS*, "Mr. C. B. Anderson to give up chairmanship," no. 15690, Friday 30 October 1964, p. 13.

they could. The turn of events was not pleasant and the letters from its readers worried it because they appeared to be representative of a more widespread sense of denial amongst Kenya's Europeans. Even after decades, the newspaper remained firm in its Devonshire White Paper-era belief that the repercussions of political apathy were unfortunate indeed for the coffers of entrepreneurs.

"NOT BIRDS OF PASSAGE[1]"

Asian Newspapers 1920s – 1960s

It should be honestly recognised in any discussion of matters political that Indians also are, in the same sense as Europeans, settlers in this country. They have permanent interests in the country and therefore now and in future whatever may be the utopia or dream of a certain section of the Kenya population Indians are and will remain a permanent part of the population of this country.[2]

Of Woes and their Expression

The European press had its most formidable opponent in the bilingual press that Kenya's Asians owned and managed. By the time the *Periplus of the Erythraen Sea* was written in the first century C.E., the Asian sub-continent was already engaging in trade with East Africa. During the 19th century and particularly after Sultan Sayyid Said moved his capital from Muscat, Oman to Zanzibar, Asian immigration to the continent's coastline increased rapidly. They came squeezed first in dhows and later in both dhows and steamships. Their numbers comprised of multiple ethnicities, religions and ways of life. There were Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Jains and Christians who spoke languages such as Gujarati, Marathi, Kutchi, Punjabi and Konkani and who were further divided into different castes and sects.[3] These immigrants settled down along East Africa's hot and humid coastline and entrenched themselves amongst the region's mix of Africans and Arabs as moneylenders, bankers, retailers and middlemen. However, in the years following the declaration of the British East Africa Protectorate, South Asians increasingly found themselves on the receiving end of anti-Asian prejudices as well as the laws, rules and regulations that institutionalised those prejudices, threatening them and the socio-economic

[1] A.B. Patel describes the status of Asians in Kenya in a speech to the Mombasa Indian Association from *Kenya Daily Mail (KDM*), "Racial Co-operation and Equal Opportunity the Only Solution to Kenya's Problems," vol. 25, no. 10868, Tuesday 28 April, 1958, p. 1.
[2] *KDM*, "The Political Outlook in Kenya," Sunday 18 November 1927, (vol. not indicated), no. 20, p.8.
[3] L. W. Hollingsworth. *The Asians of East Africa*. London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1960, p. 7 and Robert Gregory, *Quest for Equality: Asian Politics in East Africa, 1900 – 1967*. New Dehli: Orient Longman Limited, 1993, p.1

niches they had carved for themselves. As the 20th century dawned, the wealthiest and best educated amongst them resorted to the print press and the pages of newspapers quickly became the platforms from which they confronted the British government and settlers and shaped Asian public opinion. They also utilised the same media against fellow Asians whose advocacy methods they viewed as a threat to the attainment of their own objectives. Then as Kenya forged ahead towards independence less than 60 years later, the newspaper offered Asian newspaper owners and editors a chance to achieve the goals for which their predecessors had fought over several decades with minimal success and to secure a future for themselves in a Kenya with an African-dominated government.

The beginning of the actual constraints on the lives and livelihoods of Asians can be traced to the influx of white settlers after 1902. Prior to their arrival, the Imperial British East Africa Company and British administrators at the coast were not only comfortable with the Asians who preceded them but as can be seen from the work of A. M. Jevanjee and Indian railway workers in the first chapter, they found themselves in great need of their capital, management expertise, and labour. Once settlers begun to trickle in and the government started appropriating land from Africans in earnest, Asians were hindered from partaking of the richest and most fertile spoils on Kenya's central highlands. Then in 1907 and in response to settler agitation for representation in government, the protectorate's administration set up an all-European Legislative Council with six official members and two unofficial members. Asians were incensed by their exclusion despite the fact that they were far more numerous than the protectorate's Europeans (according to 1911 census returns there were 11,886 Asians against 3, 167 Europeans).[4] Two years, later, the government responded to their dissent by nominating one

[4] Ibid., pp. 78 – 79.

Asian, A. M. Jevanjee, to take up a seat as an unofficial member in the Council, but not surprisingly those he was meant to represent were not appeased.

Following a lull in local politics after World War I, Europeans returned to rehabilitate their farms and benefitted from an increase in their numbers in the wake of soldier settlement schemes. Their desire to develop Kenya as a 'White Man's Country' and to stifle their chief immigrant competitors – Asians, led them to advocate for the restriction of Asian immigration into the Protectorate. In addition, racial discrimination intensified and found fuel in officialdom as evidenced by bigoted remarks contained in the Economic Commission report released in 1919 on the development of the country in the wake of the disruption caused by the war and Governor Sir Edward Northey's declaration that European interests reigned supreme in the Protectorate as he glanced cursorily at Asian interests. The bitter European-Asian conflict over rights and resources continued with both sides paternalistically asserting that the claims and unmanaged presence of the other was inimical not only to them but also to the African, who was reduced to a pawn for both parties. For Europeans, the old casting of Africans as primitive and in need of civilisation in the Western sense enabled them to portray themselves as the altruistic protectors of the 'natives' from insidious Eastern (Asian) influences and exploitation, and the prudent users of their resources for their ultimate benefit. For the Asians, the casting of Africans as the unrefined but rightful owners of the country's land and resources enabled them to argue for equality as they undermined European claims for exclusive rights to the White Highlands and racial superiority. Their battles culminated in the *Devonshire White Paper of 1923* that declared African interests in the Protectorate paramount, but to the dismay of Asians, left in place the policy reserving land in the White Highlands for Europeans, voting on communal rolls, and an

increase but still fewer seats than Europeans in the LEGCO which had to be filled by nomination. The battle for dignity and equality had to continue and would do so for decades.

Asians in Kenya utilised three main vehicles for their battles: Indian Associations, the East African Indian National Congress (EAINC) that was a parent body for the Indian Associations, and the print press. The Indian Associations were largely urban-based and located in towns such as Nairobi, Mombasa, Kisumu, Dar es Salaam, Kampala, Jinja and Mbale.[5] The EAINC held its first session in Mombasa in March 1914.[6] In 1921, Nairobi was declared the headquarters of the EAINC and its Indian Association enjoyed a somewhat privileged position over the other Indian Associations by virtue of its being located in the capital of what had quickly became the prime British territory in East Africa.[7] The EAINC met annually in Nairobi and the Indian Associations sent delegates to each Congress meeting. It modeled itself on the Indian National Congress (INC) and Kenyan Asian politicians in general followed political events in India closely. After World War I, a series of reforms set India on the path to Dominion status. Its politicians increased their support of Asians in East Africa and the British Government recognised that it had to be cautious about its treatment of Asians in East Africa as their policies risked destabilising the political environment in India and the Government of India. Meanwhile, events in India were most heartening to Asians in East Africa and they looked to Indians in India and the Government of India for support.[8] The EAINC in the course of its existence did its best to nurture this relationship and even honoured INC officials such as Sarojini Naidu with the

[5] EAINC, Correspondence from Gyant Singh to Sitaram Achariar, MFM, Reel No. 4, 7 January 1925. Nairobi: KNA.
[6] MAC/EAI/28/1, Presidential Address – First Session, 1914. MFM Reel No. 4, Nairobi: KNA.
[7] EAINC, Correspondence from D. B. Desai to Joshi, MFM, Reel No. 4, 15 January 1925. Nairobi: KNA, for date of headquarters location in Nairobi.
[8] L. W. Hollingsworth. *The Asians of East Africa*. London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1960, p. 79 – 80.

EAINC presidency.[9] Some of the organisation's prominent leaders in the post-war period and the early 1920s were Allibhai Mullah Jevanjee, Manibhai Ambalal Desai, Shams-ud-Deen, Hussenbhai Suleman Virjee, J. B. Pandya, A. B. Patel, Abdul Wahid, S. T. Thakore, Lahori Ram and Nauhria Ram. While works of history available on Asian politics in Kenya have focused largely on the EAINC, Indian Associations and individual politicians, this chapter will highlight the role of the newspaper in Asian politics and commerce.[10]

There were a few Asian owned and managed newspapers in existence before the period under review in this chapter. The earliest of these was A. M. Jevanjee's *The East African Standard, Mombasa Argus and Uganda Times,* but as discussed in Chapter 1 its contents were dictated by its European editor William Tiller and it was distinctly European in character. Others included: *Chronicle* (1906), *Coast Guardian* (1920s), *Indian Voice* (1915), *Indian Voice of British East Africa, Uganda and Zanzibar* (1911 – 1913) and *East African News* (c. 1914 – 1918).[11] With the exception of the last, these papers did not survive the historical record. At the same time, this chapter does not attempt to exhaustively discuss all Asian newspapers that survived the historical record but only focuses on those that were bilingual and were owned or managed by major participants in or analysts of Asian and Kenyan politics, business or both. The first of these was the *East African Chronicle*.

The Political Activist that was the *East African Chronicle*

The task of running the *East African Chronicle (EAC)* fell upon the shoulders of Manibhai Ambalal Desai, who came to Kenya in 1915 to work as a legal clerk at an English law firm in Nairobi. Desai was a smoker. His political activism is said to have begun after his

[9] See for e.g. MAC/EAI/28/1, Presidential Address by Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, 1924, MFM Reel No. 4. Nairobi: KNA.
[10] See e.g., Hollingsworth. *The Asians of East Africa* and Gregory, *Quest for Equality*.
[11] List compiled from Shiraz Durrani, *Never Be Silent: Publishing and Imperialism in Kenya, 1884 – 1963*. London: Vita Books, 2006, p. 39 and Gregory, *Quest for Equality*, p. 169.

supervisor found him smoking in his office and promptly ordered him to go outside. According to the supervisor, smoking indoors was a privilege reserved for Europeans. Angry and humiliated, Desai resigned instantly and his ire drove him into the hands of prominent Asians in Nairobi with whom he shared his experience: soon after Nairobi's Indian Association was born with A. M. Jevanjee as the President and Desai as the Secretary. From then on, the Association and later the East African Indian National Congress (EAINC) became his sole occupation and preoccupation and when the EAINC resolved to establish a newspaper in 1919 Desai became its editor.[12]

The EAINC established the *EAC* to document Asian grievances, rally members of the community towards common goals, and disseminate information on the association's political activities and achievements to its readers. As a result most of the paper's pages were devoted to speeches and resolutions of EAINC meetings, the activities of its leadership as well as articles criticising government policies. However, the *EAC* also published correspondence its readers sent to government officials in Kenya and Britain and offered Asians a place to criticise adverse remarks on Asians in the two main European dailies of the time — the *East African Standard* and the *Leader of British East Africa*. It further enabled Asians to air their grievances on a wide range of affairs, kept readers informed of the activities of its arch rival — the Convention of Associations, and published a limited number of articles and correspondence from Africans, especially Harry Thuku, the founder of the Protectorate's second African political party, the Young Kikuyu Association (YKA) and later the East African Association (EAA).[13]

[12] Harry Thuku with assistance from Kenneth King. *Harry Thuku: An Autobiography*. Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1970, p. 17 – 18. The date of the EAC's establishment comes from Durrani, *Never Be Silent*, p. 37.
[13] See for example *EAC*, vol. 1, no. 40, Saturday 7 August 1920 – vol. 2, no. 8 Saturday 25 December 1920 and vol. 2, no. 9, Saturday January 1 1921 – vol. 3, no. 4, Saturday 26 November 1921.

The paper's collaboration with Harry Thuku serves to further highlight the role of the newspaper not only as the disseminator of news and information to Nairobi's Asians, but also as a political instrument deployed in their interest as well as those of young, educated Africans whose demands for equality mirrored and bolstered their own. In addition to Desai, Thuku also counted as his "many friends amongst the influential Indians" EAINC political activists such as Mangal Dass, Shams-ud-Deen, Alibhai Jevanjee, and Suleiman Virjee.[14] They invited members of the EAA into their homes, provided them with venues to hold their meetings in Nairobi, and in July 1922 Desai edited the first piece of correspondence members of the association sent to government officials (the Colonial Office in London) in addition to suggesting suitable addressees.[15] The EAC published letters Harry Thuku sent them detailing proceedings of YKA meetings, African grievances, and meetings amongst Africans or between Africans and government officials.[16] Following Thuku's arrest and deportation to Kismayu after his association sponsored protests in Nairobi that turned violent in March 1922, Desai continued to correspond with him while Sitaram Achariar, a newspaper publisher in Mombasa, visited his mother with a financial gift. However, throughout its existence, the EAC struggled financially and by 1921 appears to have requested EAINC officials to travel around the country on its behalf for fund raising purposes.[17]

The *Democrat* Reports - and Inserts Itself into - EAINC Politics

Shortly thereafter, the *EAC* closed due to financial hardships and Desai as well as the EAINC welcomed the relocation of the *Democrat* newspaper of Mombasa to Nairobi to take its

[14] Harry Thuku, *An Autobiography*, p.24.
[15] Ibid., p. 23 – 24. For a reproduction of the actual telegram see "Document IV" on p. 83. Correspondence between Desai and Thuku is also included in the autobiography's appendix.
[16] *EAC*, "The Editor," 11 June 1921, p. 13, *EAC*, "The Awakening," 30 July 1921, p.7 and *EAC*, "The Editor," 30 July 1921, p. 12.
[17] PC/COAST/1/3/151, "Indian Association in East Africa," 24 September 1021, Kenya National Archives (KNA).

place with Sitaram Achariar as its proprietor and editor.[18] Achariar's Kenya Printing Works had been publishing the *Democrat* as a weekly in Mombasa and was interested in turning it into a daily but lacked the finances to do so. While there, he served a brief stint in "H. M. Guesthouse" (detention) in early 1923 and was threatened with deportation for writing an acidic response to an *East African Standard* correspondence that had decried Asian leadership as being equivalent to being "ruled by a race of polygamists, a race who practices child marriage."[19] Immediately after his release the same year, he embarked on a fundraising mission throughout East Africa to enable him to publish it more frequently. What followed turned his paper into yet another organ of the EAINC. For his trip to Nairobi Desai, who was keen to encourage his efforts in the absence of the *EAC,* had another idea. Desai wrote Achariar a letter of introduction to the EAINC-owned Kenya Times Ltd., proposing that they consider purchasing the Kenya Printing Works so that dailies could be produced for both Mombasa and Nairobi.[20] When Achariar got to Nairobi officials of the EAINC Executive Committee agreed to support his newspaper as long as he moved his printing operation to Nairobi. The town, they said, was the capital of the colony and since the organisation could only support a single daily, they strongly felt that it should be located in Nairobi. Achariar was reluctant to move his printing operations to Nairobi as he had made Mombasa his home.[21] In the end he did move from the coast to live in Nairobi on his own, causing one of his young employees to remember him as a bachelor several years later.[22]

[18] MAC/EAI/28/1, "The Eastern Africa Indian National Congress: 1922 Session," MFM Reel No. 4, Nairobi: KNA.
[19] MAC/EAI/28/1, Correspondence from S. Achariar to M. A. Desai, 5 March 1923, MFM Reel No. 4. Nairobi: KNA and EAINC, Correspondence from M. A. Desai to an unidentified government official, 2 March 1923, MFM Reel No. 4. Nairobi: KNA.
[20] EAINC, Correspondence: Letter of introduction from M.A. Desai to M. H. Malik, 28 March 1923, MFM Reel No. 4. Nairobi: KNA.
[21] EAINC, Correspondence: "Mr Sitaram Achariar," MFM Reel No. 4, 9 April 1923. Nairobi: KNA.
[22] By March 1923, Achariar's wife was in Paddington, London. See EAINC, Cablegram from EAINC to Mrs. Achariar, 3 March 1923, MFM Reel No. 4. Nairobi: KNA.

In April 1923, a meeting of the Directors of the Kenya Times Publishing Company Ltd., resolved to hand over all its machinery and stationery to Achariar on a monthly rental of Shs. 5 for a period of four years during which he was expected to publish a daily newspaper in Nairobi.[23] Furthermore, the Standing Committee of the EAINC in Nairobi undertook to write to various government departments requesting them to place their announcements and notices in the *Democrat* in addition to those they placed in European-owned publications, presumably in an attempt to boost its advertising revenues and ensure it survived.[24] About a month later, the shareholders of the Kenya Times Publishing Company went a step further and relinquished their claim to the company's shares as they scaled back their expectations of the newspaper's operations so that the *Democrat* would still be published weekly instead of daily for a minimum period of 12 months.[25] On 2 July 1924, a meeting of the Standing Committee of the EAINC in Mombasa resolved to subsidise the *Democrat* to the tune of £100 each month with money collected from members of Indian Associations in all East African territories.[26] As a result of the EAINC support, the newspaper was established in a manner that made it appear to be part and parcel of the organisation and not an independent journalistic undertaking. It is doubtful that Achariar minded the association.

Achariar embraced the principles of the EAINC and he brought his commitment to the organisation to the newspaper he edited. He had been a fairly active member of the Congress to the extent that in 1920 it appointed him along with A. M. Jevanjee and S. T. Thakore to travel to

[23] EAINC, Correspondence: Letter from Chairman of the Kenya Times Publishing Co. Ltd., to S. Achariar, April 1923, MFM. Reel No. 4. Nairobi: KNA.
[24] EAINC, Correspondence with the Health Office and Uganda Railways, 19 - 21 September 1923, MFM Reel No. 4. Nairobi: KNA.
[25] EAINC, "Notice," 13 June 1923, MFM Reel No. 4. Nairobi: KNA.
[26] EAINC, "Minutes of the Meeting of the Standing Committee," 2 July 1924, MFM Reel No. 4. Nairobi: KNA.

London and state the Asian case to Lord Milner.[27] As a new newspaper editor with a volatile temper, he did not hesitate to insert himself into the organisation's political debates and activities. He edited the *Democrat* in the same wood and iron building in which he lived on Nairobi's Victoria Street and seemed to be truly passionate about his work. A former employee remembered him as a man who did not give much thought to either what he wore or his work space which apparently oozed papers and files from every available surface. He also remembered him as an intelligent man of simple taste who was capable of consuming half a bottle of whisky and then settling down at his typewriter to produce the next day's editorial.[28] Yet, Achariar was not content to restrict his work space to the confines of his 'publishing house' and he sought to directly engage the Asian political scene. He considered himself as one of the 'enlightened' and thought it his responsibility and that of the presumably similarly 'enlightened' EAINC leadership to "set an example to the masses."[29] Two years after running an unprofitable *Democrat,* he had concluded that "the local Indian Community has not yet acquired a taste for newspaper reading to any appreciable degree" and communicated just as much to the EAINC leadership.[30] It must have bothered him greatly for the newspaper was meant to function as a 'propaganda' disseminator to those he saw as the untutored masses on behalf of the EAINC.[31] In light of this assessment Achariar observed, ever more closely, the conduct of the EAINC and its allied associations as their role in shaping Asian public opinion must have been even more critical to

[27] *EAC*, "Indian Letter to Lord Milner: The Asian Case for East Africa as Put by the London Delegation," vol. 1, no. 40, Saturday 7 August 1920, p. 10 -11 and continued under the same headlines in vol. 1, no. 41, Saturday, 14 August 1920, pp. 16-17.
[28] Anonymous, "The Democrat's Editor," in Cynthia Salvadori, *We Came in Dhows*, Volume III, Nairobi: English Press: 2000, p. 150.
[29] EAINC, Correspondence from S. Achariar to a friend, MFM Reel No. 4, 29 May 1924. Nairobi: KNA. See also, EAINC, Correspondence from S. Achariar to the EAINC Honorary Secretary, MFM Reel No. 4, 28 January 1924. Nairobi: KNA.
[30] EAINC, Correspondence from S. Achariar to Honorary Secretary of EAINC. MFM Reel No. 4, 28 January 1924. Nairobi: KNA.
[31] Ibid.

him. This is because the newspaper with its small readership was more of an EAINC minute book and chronicler of its leadership's activities, their words and deeds therein a mystery to the very 'masses' whose support they needed to marshal to attain various goals. As such, whatever he perceived as leadership flaws were a cause of great concern and agitation. He not only wrote about them in the newspaper but also corresponded regularly with EAINC officials: inquiring, criticising, advising, and chastising. A crucial moment of concern for the editor was the conduct of a 1924 poll tax boycott in accordance with the "Suspension of Payment of Poll-Tax" resolution made during that year's annual Congress meeting.[32]

In that year, the EAINC called on Asians to stop paying poll taxes that the government had previously levied only on Africans. Achariar believed that the conduct of Asian leaders was critical to the boycott's success. Not only did the leadership need to boycott the tax themselves in order to rally and keep the Asian populace motivated, but they also needed to be willing to go to jail for their actions. However, shortly after the boycott began, Achariar concluded it was going to fail due to a lack of commitment from the leadership. In one letter to an unidentifiable official (probably Desai) he noted that there were leaders who had gone ahead and paid the tax including "our worthy Vice-Chairman, Mr. Abdulwahid [who] refuses to put his feet in jail and says he is suffering from Asthma!"[33] In addition, he faulted them for having planned the boycott poorly and for having failed to motivate "the rank and file."[34] The EAINC was also struggling financially and was unable to sue European newspapers that misrepresented the boycott and he generally felt that the movement was losing the propaganda war. Achariar apparently took it upon himself to keep one Asian leader in Mombasa informed of the boycott because the

[32] MAC/EAI/28/1, Report on the 5th Session of the Indian Congress, 1924. Nairobi: KNA.
[33] EAINC, Correspondence from S. Achariar to unnamed EAINC Official." MFM Reel No. 4, 29 May 1924. The correspondent is referred to by a fond name "Lalaji."
[34] Ibid.

Congress could not afford to telegraph messages. One disgruntled official, Shams-ud-Deen, allegedly told him he could not afford "even a Shilling to buy postage stamps, or even a five-cent piece wherewith to buy a stout rope for the Chairman and Secretary to hang themselves by in an emergency."[35] To make matters worse, in Achariar's opinion, those whom he thought best positioned financially to aid the Congress, "the big-pots in the country," had failed to "take a live and active interest in the political struggle" and had left the battle in the hands of "paupers" such as him, Desai and Shams-ud-Deen.[36] They had not realised the seriousness of the challenges facing the Asian communities, so "we might as well close the show and trust ourselves to the justice and tender mercies of the British Government."[37] He ended the letter by informing his addressee that he intended to tackle the Congress' leadership failings in that week's *Democrat*. While the "rank and file" might not read it, those whose actions and examples mattered most would do so.

That the Congress supported the *Democrat* did not stop Achariar from using its pages to attack those whom he considered to be failing the Congress and those it represented. By the end of 1924, he had concluded that the organisation's leadership was too moderate and distant and launched scathing attacks against them in the newspaper. The organisation had wavered between making the boycott compulsory and voluntary and, in December, called a Special Session of the EAINC under the presidency of Abdul Wahid in Nairobi to put an end to it as they now considered it an imprudent form of protest. As such all centres were to be duly notified of the Congress' decision including Mombasa, to which three members of the Congress' Executive were dispatched to secure their agreement as was the *Democrat,* which would help disseminate

[35] Ibid.
[36] Ibid.
[37] Ibid.

the news.[38] In addition, officials at the special session resolved to end the Congress' boycott of seats on the Executive, Legislative and Municipal Councils as provided for in the *Devonshire White Paper* and to accept them "under protest," as would Asians in Uganda who had been offered representation in their LEGCO.[39] Mombasa, however, was not to be appeased and Achariar, who considered the Congress' Executive's decision to be cowardly, greedy and autocratic was equally offended. D. B. Desai, Mombasa's Indian Association Honorary Secretary, argued that in making such key resolutions the executive had overstepped its mandate, as they had not included other centres in their decision-making process. Their resolutions were unpalatable because he had noticed the executive committee, "which is in the hands of a few Politicians (veterans as they are called) of the Capital, tries to do anything which enter[s] the mind and whims of the said few politicians, which procedure and practice are, in my opinion, strongly deprecated."[40] The Honorary Secretary put down his complaints against the committee as well as the Indian Association in Nairobi which he also viewed as assuming powers it did not deserve in a caustic open letter which Achariar gladly published. The intrepid editor also used *The Democrat* to launch vitriolic attacks against other EAINC officials. None was spared, including "Lalaji" M. A. Desai. The editor's attack on him was so harsh and quite a turn in the relationship between the two that it prompted Harry Thuku to write to Desai from exile in Kismayu offering words of comfort and encouragement.[41]

[38] EAINC, Resolutions Passed at the Special Session of the Delegates of the East African Indian National Congress at Nairobi on the 27th and 28th December 1924, 2 January 1925. Nairobi: KNA and EAINC, Correspondence from Joint Secretary of EAINC (Gyan Singh) to S. Achariar, 7 January 1925, MFM Reel No. 4. Nairobi: KNA.
[39] Ibid. and EAINC, Correspondence from Shams-ud-Deen Honorary General Secretary of EAINC to the Colonial Secretary, 17 March 1925, MFM Reel No. 4. Nairobi: KNA.
[40] EAINC, Correspondence from D. B. Desai to The President, The Secretary and Members of the Executive Committee of the EAINC, MFM Reel No. 4, 23 December 1924. Nairobi: KNA. For publication see EAINC, Correspondence from Gyan Singh to Honorary Secretaries of Indian Associations of Kampala, Jinja, Mbale and Others, MFM Reel No. 4, 3 January 1925. Nairobi: KNA amongst others.
[41] EAINC, Correspondence from Harry Thuku to M. A. Desai, MFM Reel No. 4, 16 January 1925. Nairobi: KNA.

The EAINC leadership was incensed. In his correspondence to the Honorary Secretaries of East Africa's Indian Associations, Gyan Singh, the Joint Secretary General of the EAINC, announced that "the Democrat has ceased to be an organ of Indian public opinion" and termed its reports on the EAINC leadership as "a policy of blackmail to intelligent readers."[42] He informed them that the leadership had planned a mass meeting and would propose confiscating *The Democrat's* printing press. Achariar was undaunted. He continued his campaign against what he considered poor leadership and as dissent against the Executive Committee coalesced around two centres, Nairobi and Mombasa, he supported the latter despite having moved to Nairobi to start his newspaper in what the EAINC considered the nerve centre of the movement. He even deepened his participation in the political sphere by writing and signing the petition an indignant Mombasa's Indian Association sent to Nairobi's Indian Association requesting it to convene a mass meeting to consider the transfer of the Congress' headquarters to Mombasa.[43]

It is impossible to tell whether or not Achariar survived as editor-in-chief of the *Democrat*. The newspaper itself appears to have remained in print until 1930.[44] Nevertheless, the organisation's squabbles must have underscored the advantages to be reaped from having control over a newspaper. Soon after, influential members of the Mombasa's Asian community feeling the absence of a newspaper quite keenly and perhaps realising the importance of having one in the wake of heightened tensions between leaders in Kenya's largest urban centres started their own. It would outlive *The Democrat* and was to have the distinction of being the longest running Asian owned and run newspaper in Kenya.

[42] EAINC, Correspondence from Joint Secretary General to Honorary Secretaries of Indian Associations, MFM Reel No. 4. 3 January 1925. Nairobi: KNA.
[43] EAINC, Correspondence from S. Achariar and 35 Others to the Honorary Secretary of the Indian Association in Nairobi, 18 February 1925, MFM Reel No. 4. Nairobi: KNA.
[44] Durrani, *Never be Silent*, p. 254 and Salvadori, *We Came in Dhows*, p. 150.

***Kenya Daily Mail*; a Voice for Commerce**

The founder of Mombasa's bilingual (English-Gujarati) *Kenya Daily Mail (KDM)* was a prominent businessman in East Africa, Jangannat Bhawanishanker Pandya. He was the proprietor of Pandya & Company which focused mostly on the clearing, forwarding and shipping of goods. The firm owned a bonded warehouse located near Mombasa's railway station in which it stocked a wide range of goods that included alcohol, cologne, salt, stationery, footwear and cotton textiles.[45] Pandya was also keenly aware that being Asian meant being a second class citizen no matter how hard he worked and no matter how successful he became as an entrepreneur. At the same time, surviving and thriving as an Asian entrepreneur in the reality that was European-dominated Kenya required tact. In addition, he recognised that his success as an entrepreneur hinged on the success of Mombasa - the town he called home and which served as the base of his operations, the success of Kenya's economy, and that of other East African territories to which he extended his business' operations. Consequently, he embraced a more public life as he entered the arenas of political and commercial advocacy to battle the hurdles he and his business encountered, becoming increasingly influential as he gained the respect of his colleagues. He followed keenly the activities of Mombasa's Chamber of Commerce, Mombasa's Indian Association and, in 1929 he attempted to join Mombasa's local government. Pandya served as the President of the EAINC for two years and was the founder of the Federation of East African Indian Chambers in the early thirties.[46] Once it was established, the *Kenya Daily Mail* became a prominent mouthpiece for all his causes and the most enduring Asian newspaper in colonial Kenya.

[45] *KDM,* "Pandya & Company [Advert]"vol. 1, no. 11, Friday 23 September, 1927, p. not visible, and *KDM,* "Pandya & Company, vol not indicated, no. 7, Friday 2 September 1927, unnumbered inner back cover.
[46] *KDM*, "East Africa Mourns the Loss of its Great Leader: Hartals and Meetings All Over the Country," vol. 14, no. 6353, Tuesday 11 August 1942, p. 1.

Not surprisingly, *KDM* provided generous coverage to the activities of the Mombasa Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture. One of its most active members was R. B. Pandya, J. B. Pandya's brother. The chamber met monthly and the paper hailed it as the "defender of the coast," for among other things it championed various developmental causes for the coast in the face of "bad official esteem" in which it argued the administration held Mombasa as it focused on the interior, a view which, as will be seen below, resulted from the indignation of the town's business community at the shifting of the colony's capital from Mombasa to Nairobi.[47] The chamber met regularly on a monthly basis and the paper consistently published the agenda of its meetings, proceedings and reviews of its proceedings once the meetings were concluded. It pursued a wide range of issues but its most salient concerns in the year of the paper's debut are evident in the agenda of its July meeting held to discuss the resolutions its members would forward to the Association of East African Chambers of Commerce that met twice a year. These included: increased railway freight charges on crushed salt; the need for wireless communications; the less than adequate nature of the coast's communication infrastructure; the formation of a new port advisory body; and Kilindi harbour's storage capacity. The need for wireless communication and the state of the region's communication infrastructure were key. The paper, on behalf of interested parties, accused the government of delaying investment in wireless communication due to inertia. It argued that just as in other colonial dependencies that did not have wireless communications, the administration appeared to be waiting for the rapidly changing advances in that technology to come to a conclusion of sorts before they were willing to invest in the necessary infrastructure. Since that conclusion would never occur, the 'commercial community's' disappointment continued to mount at opportunities lost for the faster and more efficient conduct of business. The newspaper frequently framed the chamber's

[47] *KDM.* "A Defender of the Coast,"vol. 1, no. 60, Saturday 27 August 1927, p.2.

concerns as the country's Achilles' heel in the hope that doing so would attract the attention of and get the desired action from an administration that was seemingly growing more distant as it consolidated its hold over the hinterland. For that reason, on the matter of communications, the government needed to understand that a sound communications policy would not only increase trade at the coast but would also benefit the entire country.

It is evident then, just as for the *EAUM* and the *EAS*, that the state of the colony's infrastructure was a major concern to Pandya and his peers in Mombasa's commercial community. The *KDM* was of the opinion that the coast having been the centre of the colony's administration and commerce and, by the twenties, its most developed area was seen as more of a revenue earner than as a place in need of investment as governmental attention turned towards the interior. At its establishment in 1927, therefore, the paper assumed the role of Mombasa's advocate for politico-economic advancement in support of the "public spirited men of all races" who remained devoted to working for the town's health and well-being.[48] It emphasised the importance of the efficient and profitable running of the port and railway and supported calls for the reduction of railway rates made in a Mombasa session of the LEGCO with the suggestion that the latter be funded by the colony's general revenue base. It also urged the government to pursue the maintenance and construction of roads with more vigor and sincerity instead of holding back expenditure in this regard to shore up the inefficiencies of the railway. Good roads and bridges, the editor stated, were not competitors of the railway but its partners. It followed then, that if the government established the Nairobi-Mombasa road, for instance, it would ignite the development of new areas, the results of which would end up on the line as freight.[49]

[48] *KDM.* "The Beautifying of Mombasa," no.21, vol. (not indicated; weekly edition), Friday 2 December 1927, p. 4.
[49] *KDM,* "Railway and Port," vol. 1, no. 11, Friday 23 September 1927, p. 2 and *KDM,* "Railway Policy," vol. (not indicated; weekly edition), no. 15, Friday 21 October 1927, p.6.

The paper also promoted the making of Mombasa into a free port in the hope that it would enable the port to provide more than storage and bonding facilities and encourage lines that stopped farther south to extend their voyages to East Africa, and raise its regional stature.[50] It devoted an editorial to supporting a local journalist's proposal to the Mombasa District Committee that a bridge be constructed across Mombasa's harbor.[51] There was also the need to beautify Mombasa. While recognising that there had been improvements made to the port, some efforts to beautify a major thoroughfare (Kilindini Road), and the town was bustling with new construction sites, Mombasa still had persistent problems and challenges. There was the matter of the eyesore that was the office building of the Public Trustee which was also an insult to the landscape, especially since it obstructed one's view of Portugal's monument to its brief hegemony over the coast — Fort Jesus. The Land Office, which was equally wanting aesthetically and better suited for demolition in the paper's opinion, had not only been renovated but also had a new wing added to it. The result was a hideous construction that the editor thought "only a careless and mean little trader or Government could have approved."[52] Yet another affront to the eye was the Mazrui cemetery after government laxity had permitted the surrounding of its perimeter by trolley-rail tracks. Such irritations were minor as compared to other issues the *KDM* discussed, but they were nevertheless important because the human traffic that flowed through Mombasa included potential investors and it was best that they had good first impressions.

The newspaper sought to galvanise its commercial interests to better the town and to push the government towards the creation of an environment they believed would be more conducive to enabling them to meet their entrepreneurial objectives. It lauded 1927's East African

[50] *KDM,* "Mombasa Free Port?" vol. (not indicated; weekly editon), no. 23, Saturday 10 December, 1927, p.6.
[51] *KDM,* "A Mombasa Bridge," vol. (not indicated; weekly edition), no. 22, Friday 2 December 1927, p.4.
[52] Ibid.,p.4.

Agricultural Show in Nairobi as an opportunity to showcase the town and the coast especially since two years before, the district's exhibit won the Northey Cup and had apparently sparked upcountry interest in the coast, albeit briefly. It was also crucial in creating awareness of the town's resources to its own residents. Most importantly, it had earned the coast respect from "official and unofficial elements" in Nairobi and its environs and was therefore a vital arena for Mombasa's commercial community to convey messages of its continued importance, economic potential and commercial vim to the colony's influential persons and those beyond its borders.[53] It is for this reason that the paper pointed out to its readers that the show was being held shortly before the Unofficial Conference that was to be attended by delegates from different parts of East and Central Africa and the LEGCO's budget session. The goal it said, would be "to shock public opinion and official quarters into consciousness" and thereafter quickly put their reaction to the advantage of the town by having its value "pressed and pursued in the Legislative Council and outside" until the desired results were achieved.[54] In addition, the paper humbly submitted that Nairobi's hosting of the show in addition to the conference was "a lesson for Mombasa" from upcountry.[55] The success of the events would benefit Nairobi and Kenya as a whole, but as crucial as it was that Mombasa send a well-planned and executed exhibit to the Nairobi show it would not "adequately display and preach the wonder that the Coast and Island possess."[56] *KDM* argued that what was needed was for the region's people to "initiate and prosecute adequate and intensive propaganda on their own account."[57] The paper did not articulate the exact nature such a campaign would take but ventured to propose something in the lines of a "Mombasa Week" that would guarantee it the sort of attention and human traffic Nairobi's events would generate. It

[53] *KDM*, "Mombasa at the Coming Show," vol. 1, no. 20, Sunday 10 July, 1927, p. 2.
[54] Ibid., p.2.
[55] *KDM*, "A Lesson for Mombasa," vol. 1, no. 28, Wednesday 20 July 1927, p. 2.
[56] Ibid., p. 2.
[57] Ibid., p.2.

remained confident in the island's value and economic promise and thought its promotion to be of great importance to its continued growth.

A decade before the establishment of *KDM*, the government had decided to move the capital from Mombasa to Nairobi on account of its higher altitude, lower humidity and cooler climate. Mombasa's powerful and influential residents took umbrage at the decision. As far as Mombasa was concerned, there were two major repercussions of the move. First, with the shift went the financial perquisites that came with being a capital, which was a blow to the town's entrepreneurs in particular and its residents in general. Second, the shift for Mombasa's elite quite literally meant being much farther away from the centre of power and appeared to place Asian politicians upcountry at a more advantageous position as far as Kenyan Asian politics was concerned. Asians in Kenya remained united in their condemnation of the daily challenges that resulted in their location at the periphery of power on account of their race and all hoped to continue their efforts to gain access to, and thereafter become a formidable presence in, all power circles including the LEGCO. Such advances that would enable them to be better placed to influence policy formulation and decision-making in directions that were more favourable to them. However, as demonstrated above, there were deep-seated divisions within the community, the most relevant to the capital's shift being the coast - upcountry divide. While the move did not mean Mombasa's elites would abandon their struggle for the changes they had been pursuing, the distance posed an added psychological and logistical challenge that revealed itself in the pages of the *KDM*.

Soon after its establishment, the pages of the *KDM* begun to reflect the disappointment its Asian elites felt at the diminution of their town's status. Not infrequently, the newspaper used its pages to admonish the government for what it viewed as the neglect and lack of recognition of

Mombasa's importance to the colony. The paper argued that the coast was important to the colony in terms of shipping and was an area of vast untapped wealth that could be exploited not just for Mombasa but for the country as a whole. However, the colony's governor was paying too much attention to upcountry interests and needed to "emanicipate" himself from their clutches before he could assist the coast to unleash its full economic potential.[58] More immediately, the paper proposed that the government consider the delegation of some of the executive power now based in Nairobi to Mombasa under a Lieutenant Governor. In one of its many editorials on the coast, *KDM* stopped short of specifying the lines along which power from the new capital could be devolved to the coast, but it did strongly recommend some form of decentralisation which could have given Mombasa's interested parties the feeling that they did indeed have the ear of the administration and were better placed to influence its activities.[59] Pandya and his peers, therefore, wanted more attention from the governor than official visits. Such visits were superficial and did not bear the tangible results they were seeking. Similarly, they had also become wary of the LEGCO's Mombasa sessions as it appeared to them that the legislators increasingly treated the sessions as holiday tours and not opportunities to discuss matters that were pertinent to the region's well being.[60]

One of the paper's aims was to act as a forum for the "expression of sound and responsible Indian opinion." [61] As a new entrant into the newspaper sector, *KDM* felt a need to distinguish itself not only from the European press, but also from its rival in Nairobi, *The Democrat*, and its predecessor the *East African Chronicle,* which it considered as having pursued their goals in a rather bellicose manner. Their style was too rough and tumble for an Asian

[58] *KDM*, "The Future of the Coast, Sunday June 19 1927, vol. 1, no. 2, p. 2.
[59] Ibid., p. 2.
[60] *KDM*, "The Council at Mombasa," vol. 1, no. 74, Tuesday September 13, 1927, p. 2.
[61] *KDM,* "Ourselves," Saturday June 18 1927, vol.1, no.1, p.2.

entrepreneur who hoped that his commercial interests and those of the influential European business community in Mombasa would gradually afford them common ground for the attainment of equity and equality in all spheres of life. It was also a style that Pandya probably deemed as ultimately pernicious to the interest of the Asians should it provoke Europeans into actions that were more damaging and disadvantageous to Asians than they had already been and continued to be at the time the paper was launched. Asians had a vested interest in the future development of Kenya and Asian opinion needed articulation, but that opinion would be expressed responsibly and without "the generous endowment of those whose interests may sometimes lead them to seek to underline or to minimise items in a perspective or facts in a series of events."[62] That is, the *KDM* was informing its readers that it needed their support to run as a journal independent of organisations such as the EAINC that had deeply influenced the operations of *The Democrat* and the *East African Chronicle*. It probably also hoped that its reconciliatory approach would be cool enough to attract both European and Asian advertisers. The *KDM* was unapologetically an Asian newspaper, but one that sought to express itself without getting drawn into the personality battles that were racking *The Democrat*. *KDM,* however, was not partial to publishing strongly worded columns when confronting the source of its frustrations, the general European settler's push for supremacy. Its owner was also not blind to the advantages his newspaper offered him when the pursuit of his economic aspirations demanded a more direct engagement with politics.

KDM Changes Tactics: A Voice in Politics First for a Just Commercial Environment Tomorrow

In 1929 the *KDM* published a manifesto by seven of the twelve candidates who were running together for the seven seats open to Indians on the Mombasa Municipal Board. J. B.

[62] Ibid., p.2.

Pandya's name was at the top of the list of names that signed the manifesto. The other six were A. B. Patel, Fazaleabbas E. Jeevanjee, Abdulla Jaffer Devjee, Rajaballik K. Suleman Verjee, Gulamhusen A. Thakker and Madhavjee Lalji Sachania.[63] The editor described them as men of "tried and established reputation," some of whom had already been engaged in municipal affairs and who did not belong to any political party but recognised the importance of working in unity to achieve common goals. The manifesto's first four points could have been taken from the resolutions of a chamber of commerce meeting for forwarding to a municipal board:[64]

i) Whilst recognizing that without funds the necessary municipal services cannot be run, we believe that the proposed rate of site value taxation is high to begin with and we shall make every effort to make it as low as possible.

ii) We believe that in order to secure the lower taxation which we consider essential for the steady progress and development of this Town, a vigilant eye and strict control will have to be kept on municipal expenditure and we shall oppose all wasteful expenditure in order to lower taxation and to restrain increased taxation in future.

iii) In view of the fact that Mombasa is the only port of Kenya & Uganda, we shall endeavour to obtain a larger share of contribution of Government funds towards Municipal revenue.

iv) We believe that valuation of sites for taxation purposes is in certain localities unreasonably low and in others unnecessarily high, and we shall make every effort to get those adjusted and insist on a fair and reasonably [sic] valuation.

These were points strongly coloured by the concerns of the 'commercial community.' *KDM* in a related editorial highlighted the fact that the men were interested in laying an "especial emphasis" on matters of taxation and revealed their fears of non-coastal commercial competition when it stated that the candidates would "oppose the exploitation of Mombasa as an El Dorado

[63] *KDM*, "The Municipal Board: A Manifesto by Indian Candidates," vol. 3, no. 457, Thursday 3 January 1929, p. 3. Sachania's name was omitted from this list but an erratum appears in *KDM*, "The Municipal Manifesto,"vol. 3, no. 458, Friday 4 January 1929, p. 2.
[64] *KDM*, "The Municipal Board: A Manifesto by Indian Candidates," Thursday 3 January 1929, p. 3.

by outside interests."[65] The other seven that followed indicated their intention: to oppose the exclusive use of municipal resources for one race and racial segregation of any kind; to work for the maintenance of drainage services and roads, especially in Mombasa's Old Town, in addition to improving its lighting, which would also cut down on theft; to advocate for the provision of recreational facilities; to give Indian concerns special attention while also addressing the concerns of other races in a just manner; to demonstrate by their work on the board that Mombasa's Indian community was capable of shouldering its own share of civic responsibilities as it worked for the growth of the town; and, lastly, an acknowledgement that as they would be a minority on the board it would not be in a position to meet all their goals.[66] However, the seven candidates believed that a spirit of co-operation on the board could be fostered and its Indian members would put its well thought out proposals to the board in this spirit. The days that followed were marked by a flurry of activities as other candidates published their manifestos and those in charge made final arrangements for the election day itself. But in the end, to the great disappointment of Pandya, the election was never held.

The day before the election, three delegates from Nairobi - B.S. Varma, S. Achariar and Isher Dass reached Mombasa - and later that evening addressed about 500 people urging them to boycott it until the Hilton Young Commission's report was released. They argued that participating in the election was tantamount to undermining the Asian push for common franchise that was under the consideration of the commission. This was because, the three men asserted, the Governor could not be trusted not to use the participation of Mombasa's Asian community against them by arguing that their acceptance of the terms of the municipal board

[65] *KDM*, "An Indian Manifesto," vol. 3, no. 458, Friday 4 January 1929, p. 2.
[66] Asians were guaranteed seven seats which was equal to the seven seats that European board members would occupy. However, Arabs had one seat and this is why Pandya and his colleagues considered themselves a minority in the board. Arabs were also advocating for more seats. See *KDM*, "Second Air Mail Letter on Delegation: Impressing London," vol. 4, no. 1187, Friday 22 May 5, 1927, p. 1.

elections in Mombasa meant a general acceptance of communal franchise at a national level. The following morning, a meeting held under the auspices of the Kenya Central Indian Association (KCIA) asserted the views of the Nairobi delegates. Pandya and his colleagues strongly opposed the position of Achariar and his Nairobi delegates, arguing that theirs was a purely municipal affair that would have no bearing on national issues. In the end, the views of the Nairobi delegates prevailed and when a majority of those attending the meeting endorsed them and asked the candidates to stand down, they reluctantly acquiesced.[67]

Both Achariar and Pandya took to their newspapers to defend their points of view. To *KDM*, the actions of the KCIA amounted to a needless and "costly interference."[68] In the first place, the paper's editor viewed the association's intervention as disingenuous, as Indians had been participants in Mombasa's municipal board for some time without objection from Nairobi. Secondly, speaking on behalf of "any Mombasa Indian" but of more consequence to Pandya and his fellow candidates, the boycott was a humiliating blow to their dignity. They had worked hard to secure more favourable terms of representation (from the municipality's European officials) to the board and had voiced their intention to co-operate and participate in the municipal elections and its affairs thereafter. Withdrawing at the very last minute amounted to the rude negation of a gentleman's agreement, an act that threatened to upset the very fragile nature of the entrepreneurial ties that loosely bound Mombasa's Asian and European elite, including those with whom they sat side by side in Mombasa's Chamber of Commerce meetings. The KCIA had forced the candidate to "surrender himself and his recognition to a vague and nebulous course" in addition to being required to "sacrifice a status and prestige that he had secured and that he is unalterably convinced would have enhanced immeasurably the dignity of his fellows throughout

[67] *KDM,* "The Municipal Board: Why the Election was not Held," vol. 3, no. 461, January 8 1929, p. 1.
[68] *KDM*, "Costly Interference," vol. 3, no. 461, Tuesday 8 January, p.2.

East Africa."[69] In the editor's opinion, the municipal elections would have bolstered the Asian struggle for proper representation because in the municipal board, Asians had secured equal representation to Europeans and "the unprecedented fourth share in the representation of Government interest."[70] These gains were a victory that the governor was incapable of subverting. The election would have enabled Mombasa's Indians to prove to the British government that they were capable of serving effectively and would have strengthened their case for better representation at all levels in East Africa.

For the *Democrat*, the boycott of the municipal elections proved that "no greater example of solidarity and renunciation of personal views for the higher ideals of unity had been witnessed within recent years."[71] The boycott had proved to political onlookers who were hoping that political fissures would send the colony's Asians into political disarray that they were still capable of acting in concert to attain common goals. And therein lay the sharp difference of opinion between the KCIA and Mombasa's candidates. For the KCIA the Mombasa municipal elections were a political inch that had to be lost for the gain of a political foot at a regional level, while for Mombasa's candidates the elections were the political inch that had the potential of enabling Asians to gain a political foot at a regional level, not to mention the opportunity to be able to contribute more directly to the policies that shaped their entrepreneurial environment. The whole affair had stoked the fires of rivalry between Nairobi and Mombasa's politicians and it would not be the last time that those behind *KDM* directly intervened in the political scene. In the 1940s it would do so again. It also did not definitively bring to closure the debate on whether or

[69] Ibid., p.2
[70] Ibid., p.2.
[71] *The Democrat* as quoted in *KDM*, "Misleading and Costly Interference," vol. 3, no.469, January 17, 1929, p.2. See also *KDM*, "Indians on the Municipal Board: Mr. Varma's Report and Mr. Pandya's Rejoinder," vol. 3, no. 465, Saturday 12 January 1929, pp. 2- 3.

not Asians should participate in local government. In the meantime, the next few years would be bleak ones indeed for Asian politics in Kenya with the beginning of 1931 being most volatile.

KDM to the Rescue: Wresting Nairobi Control of EAINC in Favour of Mombasa

Controversy loomed as the 10th session of the EAINC approached in early January of 1931. Prior to and during the session, *KDM* provided a ready weapon of attack against the faction it disapproved of and a shield of defence for the faction that it supported. The faction it supported in due course emerged as a proponent of Pandya's 1929 stance in favour of Asian membership in municipal boards. In the days preceding the 10th session, *KDM* presented its readers with a view that was far from optimistic about the potential benefits of its proceedings and the ability of the Congress' organisational structure as it was then constituted to further the Asian cause. In its pages, a certain "Politicus" published an article making rather grim and detailed predictions about the proceedings which were scheduled to take place between January 9 and 11 of that year under subtitles such as "community warned" and "guard against disruption."[72] Politicus zeroed in on "internecine warfar[e]" as the Congress' most grievous malaise. In addition, although the organisation was supposed to represent Asians in all of East Africa's territories, the writer in bold script argued that "it gives voting power to the people of the town where Congresses meet to such an extent that voices of outside people have no fair chance of outside hearing at all."[73] Important issues were hardly discussed as resolutions that were "nonsensical" and "irresponsible" were passed amidst "noisy recriminations."[74] As a result, the writer argued, the voices of members from non-Kenyan territories (and one may add non-Nairobi centres) were not sufficiently heard, and apparently, they had started to question whether travelling to Nairobi for the Congress was even worth the effort. Tanganyika had gone a step

[72] *KDM,* "What May Happen to Congress Session," vol. 4, no. 1075, January 8, 1931, p.3.
[73] Ibid., p.3
[74] Ibid., p.3

farther and was actually considering a cessation from the EAINC. In addition, the EAINC's Secretariat was hardly functional and so there was only a minimum of activity between sessions and the body lacked an engine to power it towards objectives set at each session. The Congress was in need of a good constitution and a new lease of life that could only commence once its structure was rebuilt.

Politicus placed the blame for the Congress' ills on the doorstep of General Secretary Isher Dass, whom he accused generally and vaguely of factionalising the organisation's leaders and publicly deriding those who disagreed with him including Shams-ud-Deen, Lahori Ram, Husenbhoy and Pandya. These conflicts, the writer claimed, had divided the whole of the Asian community and threatened to poison its struggles for equality; a threat which arose because the leadership of the Congress was seen by outsiders as the leadership of the Asian community, but according to the writer it had moved too far away from the interests and wishes of the community. A key concern was the upcoming LEGCO elections that Asians intended to boycott and which Politicus accused Dass and the Executive Committee in Nairobi of harbouring intentions of seating the LEGCO with Asian representatives elected under the despised communal roll. This was a very serious charge indeed for in leveling it against Dass, Politicus was accusing Nairobi's politicians of turning away from their previous vehement opposition to Asian LEGCO participation, the very cause that had sent Dass, Achariar, and Varma dashing to the coast to halt the 1929 municipal election. If Politicus was right, Dass' actions amounted to bold hypocrisy and, if wrong, a painfully false accusation.[75] He claimed that feelings against the

[75] Kauleshwar Rai, *Indians and British Colonialism in East Africa, 1883 – 1939*. Patna: 1979, pp. 73 – 74. According to this author, the Dass faction agreed to take part in the communcal election because they were assured that doing so would not be allowed to prejudice common roll deliberations by the joint committee of Parliament or influence the British government's final decision on the issue. As such, the Dass faction decided to take part but "its real object was not to co-oper[ate] but to adopt obstructive tactics after the election in the Legislative Council." For a similar assessment of the situation see, Mangat, *A History of the Asians in East Africa*, pp. 151 – 152.

executive were running so high that a disruption of the 10th session was inevitable when those with the genuine interests of Asians made a move to take back the Congress' reins of leadership. Politicus predicted, and appeared to hope, that tensions would erupt during the selection of the EAINC's officials and the relevant committees. The future of the Congress was at stake and the writer seemed to view the disruption as almost desirable if those against Isher Dass united to remove him to preserve the integrity of the Congress' organisational structure from further harm.

In a separate piece, *KDM's* EAINC reporter in Nairobi sent a brief report also urging unity as it sowed seeds of discontent. The threat of chaos, the writer stated, had unfortunately kept the "mercantile and educated elements aloof," a matter which was most regrettable because the EAINC as an organisation was in major need of an overhaul.[76] Asians stood to lose a lot from the failure of the session and the ills of the body under whose auspices it was to be held. Its problems were rooted in the "mob tyranny" that its members had been subjected to, presumably by Dass and his Executive Committee. In a call that portended the disruption Politicus had vividly captured in his column, he urged those who were interested in a better future for the EAINC "to attend in large numbers and depose the present clique that has spoilt the whole intercommunal and internal atmosphere of life in Kenya."[77] It was therefore important for interested parties to dispel the clouds of apathy that had gathered over them and make an earnest effort to attend and participate at the Congress' 10th session.

Not surprisingly, tensions did boil over at the 10th session of the EAINC. Dass lost his seat in the Executive Committee and ceased to be the Secretary General, a position to which Shams-ud-Deen was appointed "unanimously" in an acting capacity.[78] Having unseated the Dass faction, the EAINC desperately needed to rehabilitate its image and present a unified, formidable

[76] *KDM*, "Congress News: Reception Committee," vol. 4, no. 1075, January 8, 1931, p.2.
[77] Ibid., p. 2.
[78] *KDM*, "Kenya Government Reply to Congress," vol. 4, no. 1083, Saturday 17 January 1931, p. 1.

front, especially given the critical matters under consideration by the British Parliament's Joint Select Committee on East Africa. Consequently, the new Secretary General fired off a letter to Lord Passfield of the Joint Committee, before which three delegates of the EAINC were soon to present their views. *KDM* gave the letter a front page headline.[79] His letter — though the views of just one of the two factions in conflict — sheds more light onto the critiques leveled against Dass by his *KDM* detractors on the eve of the Congress 1931 session.

According to Shams-ud-Deen, the Standing and Executive Committees of the EAINC were guilty of wielding power over and above that which was accorded to them by the Congress and in so doing had taken it upon themselves to make decisions that were not aligned with the wishes of the Congress' members. The EAINC met annually in different parts of East Africa and, following each session, resolutions were passed on to the Standing Committee composed of members from the various East African territories who met in Nairobi to discuss the best way of implementing the resolutions. Having agreed on such a method, the work of the Congress was thereafter passed on to the Executive Committee, also based in Nairobi and composed purely of Nairobi residents, to carry on the goals of the annual session as well as to communicate with the government and other organisations. Since all the sessions of the EAINC prior to the 10th session had resolved to boycott LEGCO elections, neither the Standing nor the Executive Committee had the authority to vary from this stance yet, Shams-ud-Deen implied, they had encouraged participation. Before the end of the Congress session, a new Executive Committee for the year 1931 was hurriedly appointed on the evening of 10th January, supposedly because an unnamed member of the Executive Committee had threatened members of the Subjects Committee with the destruction of the Congress the following day. Shams-ud-Deen endeavoured to convince Lord Passfield that the structure of the EAINC as it was then constituted, and by implication the

[79] Ibid., p. 1.

delegates it would send before the Joint Committee, was legitimate even though its formation was not conventional, as extraneous circumstances had compelled it to act as it did. These circumstances were that:

a) A new Governor was to arrive in the Colony and it was undesirable that the non-co-operation which was launched as a protest not only against the principal of the communal roll but also the unsympathetic attitude of the previous Governor, should be continued in the time of the new Governor unless and until it had been proved that the new Governor pursued the unsympathetic policy of its new predecessor.

b) The statutory time for the re-election of the members of the Legislative Council had arrived and it was highly desirable that ways and means should be found by which unrepresentative persons should be prevented from entering the Council by taking undue advantage of the present incomplete and un-representative register of Indian voters.

c) The Indian Community had undergone a tremendous sacrifice and immense loss by reason of its not being represented on the Legislative Council and *more especially on Municipal Corporations* for nearly four continuous years and its resentment and protest against the communal roll and against the partial attitude of the previous Governor had been made sufficiently manifest to the world at large. [80]

Based on the above points, Shams-ud-Deen's version of the reason behind the turbulent 1931 congress session tallies somewhat with those of Politicus because although point (a) implies that there was still a faction amongst Asian politicians that still believed in the LEGCO boycott point (b) erodes it. The second point leaves room for the new Secretary General's supporters to accuse the Dass faction of colluding with those who had been elected on the basis of the disputed Asian voter registers to take up seats in the Council to spite their detractors who had shown willingness to compromise with the government on the LEGCO matter. It is also interesting that the new Executive Committee found a reason to nominate Asians to participate in local government and not the LEGCO, the institution that from the very beginning was the focus of their protest against

[80] Ibid., p. 3. Italics in (c) are mine.

the communal roll. Shams-ud-Deen asserted that the community had accepted the assurances of the Secretary of State of Colonies that Asian participation in local government elections would not jeopardise their quest for LEGCO elections on a common roll but that "owing to statutory difficulties" the EAINC had not been able to nominate members to the LEGCO as a temporary measure since the elections were not subject to postponement.[81] The EAINC had also asked the five candidates who had been elected not to attend LEGCO proceedings as they had been elected on a limited roll of 3,000 voters out of the 20,000 who were eligible to vote, the vast majority of whom had boycotted the entire process.

In aftermath of the controversy, *KDM* continued to discuss it in their pages, placing blame wholly on the shoulders of Dass and his Nairobi colleagues. It even gave generous space to an unnamed contributor who argued that the infighting had been caused by ideological differences between Dass and other leaders of the Congress which contributed to the leadership wrangles and thereafter the coup that unseated him. According to the contributor, Varma and Dass had both pushed for the holding of the 10th session against the will of EAINC members who had thought it unnecessary, as there were no new matters to be discussed and members of the delegation to the Joint Committee had already been decided on. However, Varma was keen on the session for he hoped that ticket sales would bring in the funds necessary to send a delegation to London's Joint Committee, a delegation from which Dass — despite having declared his desire to attend — was excluded. He also lacked the funds to travel to London on his own and therefore needed to do so under the auspices of the EAINC. However Dass, the contributor alleged, had communist leanings which Asian leaders feared would reflect poorly on East African Asians in general should he represent them in London. Those Asian leaders, "mercantile" as they were, did not approve of his communist ideologies. In addition, his presence

[81] Ibid., p. 3.

in the delegation would also have made it difficult for their sympathisers in London to support their efforts. Dass then took umbrage at his exclusion and proceeded to lash out at those who were frustrating his attempts to be a part of the London delegation and this was supposed to explain his hostile relationship with Shams-ud-Deen and his colleagues. According to this version of events, in the end the Standing Committee appointed a delegation comprisied of three members and after Dass' efforts to take over the process and include himself in the delegation failed he acquiesced to their decision and promised not to go to London. However, due to a delay in the appointment of the Joint Committee, the delegation did not travel to London and so by January 1931, Dass attempted to hijack the Congress' session in a last bid to get himself included in the delegation and failed.

In his EAINC struggles, Dass' media support came largely from the fledgling *Fairplay* that had replaced the troubled *Democrat* as Nairobi's main Asian daily. Towards the end of January it questioned the legitimacy of Shams-ud-Deen's election on legal grounds, but *KDM* rejected its argument because the EAINC did not have a constitution and stated that the Subjects Committee that had elected Shams-ud-Deen was a more representative body than the main Congress session which had become nothing more than "a glorified mass meeting of Nairobi Indians with the qualification for voting by a ticket costing Shs.1."[82] The Subjects Committee in contrast, *KDM* asserted, was composed of demographically determined representatives from each EAINC region and was better suited to deal with the extraordinary situation in which the Congress found itself in 1931. This is the manner in which Dass' position during the controversy reveals itself in the press record: sparse citations within the pages of *KDM* accompanied by disputations. *Fairplay* lacked the clout of its contemporary in Mombasa and since it has not survived the historical record as its erstwhile rival has, there are only glimpses of its defense of

[82] *KDM*, "Nairobi Congress: Faithful Impressions," vol. 4, no. 1090, Sunday 25 January 1931, p. 2.

Dass in the pages of *KDM* courtesy of the latter's correspondents or the Mombasa daily's staff criticising its position in their pages.

The best statement of Isher Dass and his fellow Nairobi Congress politicians' stance towards Shams-ud-Deen and his colleagues is captured several years later in yet another *Fairplay* excerpt within the pages of its successor, *The Colonial Times,* as well as the latter's report accompanying the former. It reveals that the Nairobi faction never recognised the legality of the Shams-ud-Deen led EAINC and considered it a "parallel Congress" that had broken off from the "parent body" and had gone on to establish "parallel Indian Associations" in Nairobi and Mombasa that reflected the personal agenda of Dass' political foes.[83] The Dass faction despised the Shams-ud-Deen faction for taking up positions in the municipal councils of Nairobi and Mombasa and viewed it as a treacherous betrayal of the larger Asian cause: racial equity at all political levels including the LEGCO. Thus, the assertions of the *Colonial Times* impeach any allusions to Dass as a covert supporter of LEGCO electoral participation in 1931. P. Anand writing in the *Fairplay* not only blamed the anti-Dass faction for appropriating the EAINC's structure to suit their whims, but also for causing it irreparable damage as they marched on to municipal council seats:

> You would hesitate to undertake any worldly business whilst some one [sic] most dear to you was lying dangerously ill in the clutches of death. And yet you have displayed a haste, an almost indecent haste, in rushing to the councils when your parent political body is writhing in the agonies inflicted on it by the events of the last Congress session.[84]

Anand proceeded to state ominously that the names of the coup leaders would be remembered with bitterness as they had "driven a steel too deep" in the hearts of Asians in East Africa.[85] Yet the paper was unable to directly influence political events in its favour in the manner that

[83] *Colonial Times (CT),* "The Old Brigade," vol. 11, no. 587, Saturday 30 September 1944, p.1.
[84] Ibid., p. 1.
[85] Ibid., p. 1.

Pandya's *KDM* could. In the propaganda war that preceded and accompanied the whole affair Dass' was certainly the poorly armed party and was ill-prepared to meet its challenger in the better established, well funded and more influential *KDM*.

In the end, shortly after the newly elected council members took up their seats, an EAINC delegation led by V.V. Phadke did leave to present a memorandum containing the views of the Congress' members to the Joint Parliamentary Committee on East Africa and the *KDM* kept its readers updated on their activities. Air mailed reports from its "representative" in London and Reuter's cables enabled the newspaper to update its readers on the Committee's proceedings, which were given front page treatment.[86] It reported with optimism on the tea Mombasa's Indian Association held for V.V. Phadke on the eve of his departure at the Indian Sports Club, confident in his ability to represent them well. Once all three delegates were in London, a steady stream of articles kept readers informed on the delegates' busy schedules: numerous meetings; the "good deal of propaganda work" they had carried out; attempts by the "disgruntled section in Kenya" to slander the Asian delegation and the successful manner in which they had deflected such attempts; the delegates' meetings with the Indian government officials; reports on the positions of the Arab, European and Indian government delegations; and, of course, an extensive report on the contents of the memorandum the Kenyan Asian delegation presented to the Committee.[87]

In their memorandum, Asians underscored their centuries-old existence in the region and their contributions in the fields of commerce and industry as well as their unrealised ability to

[86] See for example *KDM*, "Second Air Mail Letter on Delegates: Impressing London," vol. 4, no. 1187, Friday May 22, 1931, p. 1.
[87] *KDM*, "Mombasa Association: Mr. Phadke's Send Off," vol. 4, no. 1186, Thursday 21 May 1931, p. 2, *KDM*, "Second Air Mail Letter on Delegates: Impressing London," vol. 4, no. 1187, Friday May 22, 1931, p. 1, *KDM*, "The Kenya Obligarchy [sic]: European Delegate Statement," vol. 4, no. 1201, Wednesday 10 June 1931, p. 1, *KDM*, "Mr. Sastri Gives Evidence in London," vol. 4, no. 1205, p. 1.

contribute to agricultural development due to discrimination against them in matters of land tenure. They expressed their support for the paramountcy of African interests and called for an end to discriminatory laws and practices against them. Similarly, discrimination against Asians was unacceptable and all citizens of the colony ought to be treated equally, and they insisted that the government seek to "bestow a common citizenship without regard to the accidents of colour or birth."[88] In addition, through their delegates the EAINC objected to Closer Union primarily because its realisation threatened to give Kenya's European settlers an even bigger platform upon which they could eventually exercise their discriminatory schemes. Furthermore, they opposed the proposed creation of a centralised government under a High Commissioner and insisted that in the event that such an authority was indeed created, its offices be located outside Kenya and beyond the reach of its settlers. On another front, *KDM's* London representative had noted that the question of the common roll was at that time the central issue of concern for Asians. This was especially so since those Asians who had registered themselves as voters and candidates in spite of the EAINC boycott had undermined the Congress' struggle for elections on a common roll in London. The delegation gave this issue considerable attention in its memorandum to the Committee. It criticised harshly European rejection of previous Asian attempts to reach common roll electoral agreements even though they restricted the latter from dominating elections with their demographic advantage over the former as in the Wood Winterton Agreement of 1922, and reserved a majority of LEGCO seats for Europeans.[89] The delegation insisted that Europeans had balked at the agreement because it lacked clauses that

[88] *KDM*, "Indian London Delegation Evidence Opens in the Joint Committee: Powerful Reasoned Case by Mr. Patel," vol. 4, no. 1204, Saturday 13 June 1931, p. 1. See also *KDM,* "E. A. Indian Case for Joint Committee," vol. 4, no. 1216, Saturday 27 June 1931, p. 1 and 3 and *KDM*, "The Joint Committee: Mr. Phadke's Memorandum," vol. 4, no. 1218, Tuesday 30 June 1931, p. 2 and 3.

[89] *KDM*, "Second Air Mail Letter on Delegates: Impressing London," vol. 4, no. 1187, Friday May 22, 1931, p. 1, and *KDM*, "Indian London Delegation Evidence Opens in the Joint Committee: Powerful Reasoned Case by Mr. Patel," vol. 4, no. 1204, Saturday 13 June 1931, p. 1.

would ensure European electoral dominance in the future, a goal which the government locally and abroad would have been at pains to defend in light of arguments that the British were but temporary custodians of African land and rights. The delegation asserted that should Europeans maintain their "obstinacy" on the issue, then they would go ahead and demand representation that was proportionate to their demographic advantage.

When the delegation returned, *KDM* dutifully covered the Congress dinner held in honour of the delegates who counted amongst their successes the death of the Closer Union proposition and the Aga Khan's increased interest in the affairs of Asians in East Africa as a consequence of the publicity gained from their activities at the conference. However, the delegates also informed those gathered that they ought to forget the proceedings of the Joint Committee as it had not picked up their core concerns. England, it seemed to them, "only takes a fleeting interest in Kenya because the nation has daily far greater affairs on its hands."[90] They proposed that Asians take the battle for their rights to a new front, the withholding of taxes. As Asian leaders withdrew to re-strategise there was a lull in Asian politics until another election approached as the Second World War came to a close. Once again, *KDM* was to launch a press campaign in favour of J.B. Pandya's endorsees.

More Disputes of Political Method: A Moderate *KDM* versus A Pugnacious *Colonial Times*

At the time of the next electoral contest, *KDM*'s nemesis in Nairobi once again was the *Colonial Times*. Shamdas Bootamal Horra registered the paper in 1932 and published it at his Colonial Printing Works in Nairobi's Bazaar Street as a weekly.[91] He first came to East Africa in 1900 as an employee of the Uganda Railway and worked there for 19 years. During that time,

[90] *KDM*, "Mr. Phadke Anticipates Non-Payment of Taxes to be Kenya Indians' Course: Little Hoped from Joint Committee, vol. 4, no. 1247, Sunday 2 August 1931, p. 1.
[91] AG/5/17, Registration Papers of the Colonial Printing Works and *The Colonial Times* and the Colonial Printing Works, 1932 and 1934 respectively. Nairobi: KNA.

Horra also served in World War I, was decorated with three medals, and went on to serve in the Kings African Rifles before venturing into business. The Colonial Printing Works, established in 1932, also printed books and stationery.[92] After *Fairplay* collapsed its owner, keenly aware of Nairobi's lack of an Asian-owned newspaper to counter Mombasa's *KDM,* encouraged the establishment of the newspaper and remained closely tied to it as a contributor. *Fairplay* had belonged to A. C. L. de Sousa, a Goan journalist and politician who was also a medical doctor, as was his wife Mary de Sousa. In addition, the two were devoted to community service, particularly issues relating to health and education; all matters pertaining to which the *Colonial Times* generously accorded space in its pages. This interest also found its expression in Nairobi's Indian Maternity Home which the couple ran together.[93] Not only had de Sousa kept himself close to Nairobi's political circles through his involvement with Sitaram Achariar of the *Democrat,* and being the founder and editor of the short-lived *Fairplay,* but he was also one of the Councilors representing Asians in the LEGCO between 1934 and 1938.[94]

The *Colonial Times* fashioned itself as a progressive publication for a new generation of Asians. As will be seen shortly from the newspaper's coverage of the 1944 LEGCO elections, these Asians were of the sort who pushed more aggressively against the forces of imperialism as opposed to the "Old Brigade" of Mombasa-powered politicians that it thereafter derisively referred to as "moderates." They were also saw themselves as the type of Asians who did not sacrifice principle for mercantile gain. In addition its pages, far less garlanded with advertisements as compared to its Mombasa rival, featured numerous columns on social subjects such as what it considered a form of stasis in research on smallpox vaccination methods that continued to leave its young beneficiaries with scars that amounted to "permanent

[92] R. O. Preston. *Oriental Nairobi*. Nairobi: Colonial Printing Works, 1938, pages unmarked.
[93] *CT*, "Dr. de Sousa," vol. 11, no. 578, Saturday 29 July, 1944, p. 1.
[94] CT, " Dr. de Sousa, vol. 11, no. 581, Saturday 19 August 1944, p. 1 and

disfiguration."[95] On one page may be an article on the possible introduction of a new system of World War II era rationing for butter, ghee and edible oils in Kenya and on another a continuing series on the education of Indian girls. On one page an article on Nairobi Municipal Council's appointment of a Licensing Officer whose standards amounted to a "municipal zulum" (municipal terrorism) and on another the celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Arya Samaj Hindu sect in Nairobi. On one page the resolutions passed by the Kenya Indian Education Conference and on another the chastisement of the outgoing Director of Medical Services for having ignored repeated Asian appeals for the expansion of medical facilities to cater for their growing numbers and so on.[96]

As September 1943 was drawing to a close, responding to settler demands the governor announced his intention to dissolve the Legislative Council the following year, which consequently meant that general elections would follow. The *Colonial Times* informed its readers that Europeans felt that the Councilors they had elected to the LEGCO were no longer representing their interests. General elections meant fresh elections for Asians, as well, but the needs of the electorate were even greater because:

> Indian political institutions have lagged behind the onrushing current of political events which are shaping themselves in the midst of war. The sole aim of one set of Indian public men is the capturing of seats in the councils and on miscellaneous committees created for war-time administration. Indian public life has been abandoned by others who cannot carry with them the Indian public during elections which are usually exploited by communalists without any regard to political morality or to the greater interests of the community generally.[97]

[95] *CT*, "Vaccinations," vol. 11, no. 526, Saturday 7 August 1943, p. 1.
[96] *CT*, "Butter, Ghee and Edible Oils," vol. 11, no. 527, Saturday 14 August 1943, p. 1, *CT*, "Municipal Zulum," vol. 11, no. 528, Saturday 21 August 1943, p. 1, *CT*, "The Director of Medical Services," vol. 14, no. 533, Saturday 9 September 1943, p.1 and *CT*, "Resolutions Passed by Kenya Indian Education Conference," vol. 14, no. 533 Saturday 9 September 1943, p. 2.
[97] *CT*, "General Elections," p.3.

The paper asserted that Asian political institutions had turned into "handmaids of political adventurers" who had proceeded to clear the field of "seasoned workers" and then gone on to dominate it unchallenged. According to it, the EAINC and its affliated associations now excelled in voicing the interests of these unsavoury and unnamed Asian politicians who had also quite deftly fashioned them into instruments that enabled them to meet their ends.[98] Since the Congress and Indian Associations were the primary institutions for the political mobilisation for Asians the paper believed that the holding of an election would simply serve to return the then current crop of Asian Councilors to the LEGCO. In addition, the paper argued that the Asian voter roll was deeply flawed. It included names of deceased persons and "permanent absentees" and the *CT* noted that "regularly and faithfully they turn out from their graves and their ashes and from their refuge" to participate in elections. To make matters worse, the authorities were aware of the roll's problems but had not moved to remedy them because "in official circles it matters little whether an Indian Member is returned fairly or not."[99] For the *Colonial Times*, there were too many hurdles in the way of a fair election.

As that year was drawing to a close, the Executive Committee of the EAINC met and resolved by a majority vote of 18 to 7 that its president ought not to participate in the forthcoming general elections. By another vote, the committee also resolved that the president could not accept any government appointment either paid or honorary. Supporters of the resolutions argued that the president of the EAINC needed to focus all his attention on the organisation, which included travelling throughout East Africa. They also argued that the EAINC and Asian interests in general would be harmed if the president lost his election bid. Opponents of the resolution had argued that it was the right of the president to stand for election just as any

[98] Ibid., p.3.
[99] Ibid., p.3.

other Asian would. Secondly, a president who was a member of the LEGCO was well placed to liaise between the two organisations and thirdly, assuming that the president of the EAINC could not discharge his duties effectively while a member of the LEGCO amounted to a declaration of the lack of confidence in his abilities as well as the sincerity of his public service. Besides, two former presidents of the Congress, A.B. Patel and J.B. Pandya, had simultaneously held positions in the LEGCO and the Executive Council. *Colonial Times* decried the resolutions, viewing them as decisions of a minority (Congress' Executive) that was imposing on a majority who had not been given a chance to state their views. The paper thought that the argument that the defeat of the Congress' president would be inimical to Asian affairs was "childish" and the matter in question was better left to the Asian electorate or a full Congress session.[100] The paper's defense of the EAINC president is interesting because it seems that it was more irritated by the lack of transparency and the exclusivity of the process than what the resolutions meant for the then president of the Congress.

Shortly after the Congress Executive arrived at its decision, new anti-immigration regulations disquieted Asians in East Africa and in the eyes of the Asian press raised the significance of the forthcoming general elections.[101] At the 16th session of the EAINC, Asians had called on the government to put more effort into encouraging Asian immigration to Kenya and East Africa in general. This resolution was motivated by government efforts to encourage European settlement and the then recent publication of a bill that would enable it to acquire undeveloped land in the White Highlands for European settlement purposes.[102] Instead, shortly after the Congress' 16th session, the Government of Tanganyika published immigration restrictions on any "non-Native" arguing this was unavoidable at a time of war and attendant

[100] *CT,* "The President of the Congress," vol. 11, no. 543, Saturday 4 December 1943, p. 1.
[101] *CT,* "The New Legislative Council," vol. 11, no. 573, Saturday 24 June 1944, p.3.
[102] *CT,* "Indian Immigration," vol. 11, no. 553, Saturday 5 February, 1944, p. 3

housing as well as food shortages. Asians were alarmed not only by the restrictions, but also by the possibility that the British Foreign Office could extend them to other East African territories.[103] Even more damning for East African Asians were reports that the East African officials had consulted the Government of India and it had approved of the measure. The *Colonial Times* also asserted that the restrictions were targeted at Asians due to the perception that their rate of immigration to East Africa had increased during World War II. That Asian immigration had continued during World War II was correct, however the paper explained that this was because Asian immigrants were supplying labour and technical skills that were deemed crucial at the time. Moreover, their immigration was also accompanied by the departure of some Asians to India when depression replaced war-time prosperity. It was thus arguing that there was no need for the government to restrict immigration as its natural ebbs and flows managed it.

Nevertheless, fears of Asians in Kenya were confirmed when the government promulgated the Defence (Admissions of Male Persons) Regulations 1944, which had provisions on immigration that to Asians amounted to a ban on Asian immigration to East Africa in spite of the neutral application of the term non-native. They were sure the law would be used to discriminate against immigrants from India. The EAINC protested, arguing that "it is now evident that the European Community is definitely moving to oust us from this Country."[104] It believed that "these Immigration Regulations is [sic] a first step" and called on all Indian Associations to consider them as such and ready themselves for protest.[105] Yet, the *Colonial Times* posited that the EAINC reaction to the new law was inadequate as "the Congress attitude so typical of our creed of co-operation is one of peaceful and constitutional agitation, an attitude which may mean nothing." Reviving the Nairobi-Isher Dass ghost of protests past, the

[103] *CT,* "Ban on Indian Immigration," vol. 11, no. 555, Saturday 19 February 1944, p. 3.
[104] *CT,* "Strong Protest of E.A.I.N. Congress," vol. 11, no. 557, Saturday 4 March 1944, p. 5.
[105] Ibid., p. 3.

newspaper called for the adoption of a more aggressive position, insisting that "obviously the only course which the Indian community can follow is the one of absolute non-co-operation on official bodies."[106] It acknowledged that such a course would "take us back a quarter of a century," but 1944 was a year in which Britain and its Allies were still locked in a war unlike the early 1920s when they had already emerged victorious and it was in no mood to compromise. Still, the *Colonial Times* was supportive of the EAINC's decision to send a delegation led by Shams-ud-Deen, that year's Congress President, to India to pressure the government to reconsider the role they believed it had played in the promulgation of the immigration law. It praised the delegation as being "well versed in local matters and for years in the thick of the Indian plight in these territories," adding that "the Indian case could not be in better hands."[107] Faced by what it considered the biggest threat to Asians in Kenya in years, the newspaper's animosity towards the delegation's leader took a back seat. In the meantime, the colony prepared itself for the general elections.

As the general elections drew closer, in June 1944 Shams-ud-Deen, who was aware that there were people who intended to propose him as a candidate for membership of the LEGCO, sent a letter to the press in which he stated that he did not wish to stand for elections. In the letter, addressed to the District Commissioner of Nairobi, Shams-ud-Deen gave personal reasons for his intention. He explained that he wished to retire from politics as he had "put in my day's work and it is time that I had a little rest before I finally retired into Eternity."[108] He urged the District Commissioner not to accept his name if anybody nominated him. The *Colonial Times* wrote that the Congress president's decision would be "regretted all over Kenya and outside it" while maintaining that his name could still be proposed even as he retained the right to resign.

[106] *CT*, "Mass Meetings," vol. 11, no. 557, Saturday 4 March 1944, p. 3.
[107] *CT*, "The Deputation to India," vol. 11, no. 567, Saturday 13 May 1944, p. 1.
[108] *CT*, "Hon. Mr. Shams-ud-Deen," vol. 11, no. 570, Saturday 3 June 1944, p. 2.

The newspaper proceeded to lavish him with praise stating that "no better leader could be found to discharge the delicate task which has been entrusted to him and that "given health, there is no reason why his mission cannot be successful."[109] They were generous words indeed for a member of a political circle it disapproved of but that the paper would repeat them in a few of its subsequent editions.[110] It appears that as long as Shams-ud-Deen was departing from the scene, the *CT* considered him harmless and politic to bid him farewell warmly.

In June the government dissolved the LEGCO and set July as the month during which candidates would be nominated for elections and September as the month for elections. The *CT* underscored the particular importance of the general elections to Asians in light of the immigration restrictions and other war-time regulations and ordinances that it feared would not be repealed as promised once the war had ended. The newspaper tantalisingly suggested to its readers that as far as the Asian electorate was concerned, "there is new blood attempting to replace earlier workers of whom there are but few left in the field."[111] Those earlier workers included Shams-ud-Deen whose loss to the electorate it still mourned in its columns. The paper then proceeded to expound on the role that the "more enlightened" Asians, which presumably included its management, could play in the forthcoming elections:

> Whatever the results of the elections are to be, there can be no two views on the importance of the elections as a means for the Indian Community to return only the best men that it can count to its fold. In this task, the more enlightened section of the Community has a great responsibility, for without guidance and a proper appreciation of the merits of the candidates the election can be nothing more than a farce and a failure.[112]

At the same time it argued, and was most likely hoping, that the Asian electorate was comprised of more independent thinkers because "gone are the days when the people were goaded to the

[109] *CT*, "Mr. Shams-ud-Deen," vol. 11, no. 570, Saturday 3 June 1944, p. 1.
[110] See for example, *CT*, "The New Legislative Council," vol. 11, no. 573, Saturday 24 June, p.3.
[111] *CT*, "The New Legislative Council," vol. 11, no. 573, Saturday 24 June, p.3.
[112] Ibid., p. 3.

election booths under slogans of many denominations."[113] The paper was aware that the election had the potential of heightening preexisting tensions and appeared to be secretly hoping that the electorate would be in a position to present a united front as it elected a fresh crop of leaders who were free from the influence of the J. B. Pandya–Mombasa political circle. Two weeks later it warned that some prospective candidates had visited unnamed Asian religious and social institutions to canvas for their support. It noted that "elections come and go, but the resulting bitterness remains only too painfully to be endured when candidates have either won or lost their contests, resulting in the weakening of institutions for no substantial gain in another field."[114] The paper counseled Asian organisations to reject such political advances and insisted that candidates appeal to the electorate in general and not specific secular or religious institutions.

When the Asian candidates turned in their nomination papers on 14 July 1944 A. C. L. De Sousa's name was at the top of *CTs'* list of five candidates for the hotly contested Central Area's two seats while Shams-ud-Deen's topped the *KDM* list of candidates.[115] The respective lists reveal more about each newspaper's allegiances than a penchant for alphabetising. In the *Colonial Times*, the others listed for the same area along with the names of their proposers, seconders, supporters and emblems were: S. T. Thakore, S. G. Amin, Shams-ud-Deen and A. R. Cocker. Eastern Area, which included Mombasa, had three candidates contesting its two seats: A. B. Patel, K. R. Paroo and M. A. Rana, while Western Area also had three candidates contesting for its single seat: A. Pritam, D. B. Kohli and Ebrahim E. Nathoo.[116] For the *KDM* the other Central Area candidates were listed according to the following order: S. G. Amin, S. T.

[113] Ibid., p. 3.
[114] *CT*, "The General Elections, vol. 11, no. 575, Saturday 8 July 1944, p. 1.
[115] *CT*, "The Coming Legislative Election, vol. 11, no. 576, Saturday 15 July 1944, p. 3 and *KDM*, "Legislative Council Elections: Nominations for Five Indian Seats," vol. 15, no. 6929, Friday 14 July 1944, p. 1.
[116] *CT*, "The Coming Legislative Election, vol. 11, no. 576, Saturday 15 July 1944, p. 3. These names are also listed according to the order in which they appeared in the *CT*.

Thakore, A. C. L. De Sousa and A. R. Cocker. The order of *KDM'*s Western and Eastern Area lists were identical to those of *Colonial Times*. Of the 11 Asian candidates for the five seats contestable, Shams-ud-Deen, De Sousa, Patel, Paroo, Amin and Kohli had all served in the LEGCO, the first three having been elected in general elections and the last three in by-elections. In its Nomination Day edition, the *Colonial Times* noted the inclusion of Shams-ud-Deen despite his desire not to participate as a candidate while *KDM* remained silent on the matter. The former added its hope that sectarian interests would not influence the results of the election. Candidates were urged to be mindful of their conduct during the elections and "do nothing that may impair our moral and political integrity and sully the fair name of the community."[117] The day after Nomination Day, *KDM* made similar remarks. It urged Asians to remain united and cautioned voters against supporting those who attempted to bribe them or who were sectarian in their approach to politics.[118] Nevertheless, it is also evident that a general election that was fought on sectarian grounds was most inimical to the electoral chances of De Sousa behind whom the *CT* threw its support the week after the press published the official list of the nominees.

De Sousa, of course, had a long association with the *Colonial Times*. In addition, he was neither Hindu nor Muslim but a Christian, a religion adhered to by a tiny minority of the Asians in Kenya. A vote for him in the newspaper's eyes would be a powerful statement of Asian unity and the ability of its electorate to vote beyond religious divisions in the face of serious threats to its well being. In the run up to the election the paper regularly featured campaign advertisements urging its readers to vote for him. The advertisements touted his work as a journalist as well as his public service as proof of his interest in the well being of the Asians and told Asians that he had not only contributed his and his wife's medical knowledge to the community as embodied in

[117] *CT*, "The Elections," vol. 11, no. 577, Saturday 22 July 1944, p. 3.
[118] *KDM*, "Election Principles, vol. 15, no. 6930, Saturday 15 July 1944, p. 2.

the establishment of the Indian Maternity Home, but also that he had continuously advocated for the provision of better health services in general for Asians by the government.[119]

Shortly before the election a *KDM* headline cried "Cast Your Vote for Shams-ud-Deen: He is Battling for You in India."[120] Beneath the headline, in reference to Shams-ud-Deen's EAINC-sponsored trip to India, a *KDM* correspondent urged readers to reward him for his service to them over several years and in particular for his work on this trip. In the days preceding the election, Shams-ud-Deen's supporters continued to promote his candidacy. Following the appearance of correspondence in the *CT* from an A. R. Kapila, insisting that Shams-ud-Deen would pull out from the race as "he is a man of his word and once he has manifested his intentions in unequivocal terms [not to stand for elections]…he will not budge an inch from it," H. Gidoomal and S. Mohamed sent the newspaper a letter contradicting this position.[121] The two had appeared on the official nominee list as proposer and one of the supporters, respectively, of Shams-ud-Deen's nomination.[122] They, along with other supporters, had sent Shams-ud-Deen a telegram which they forwarded to the *CT* urging their nominee not to withdraw from the race because of the "friends, prestige and public demand involved" in addition to the "unanimous" nature of their support, and requested him to cable his confirmation.[123] Although no such confirmation was part of the correspondence, Gidoomal and Mohamed insisted that Shams-ud-Deen had indeed confirmed his participation after carefully weighing his initial wish against the needs of Asians in the Central Area. In addition and in

[119] The first advertisement appears in *CT*, "Dr. de Sousa," vol. 11, no. 577, Saturday 22 July 1944, p. 1. Others in the same newspaper include: "Dr. de Sousa," vol. 11, no. 578, Saturday 29 July 1944, p. 1, "Dr. de Sousa," vol. 11, no. 580, Saturday 12 August 1944, p. 1, and "Dr. de Sousa," vol. 11, no. 581, Saturday 19 August 1944, p. 1.
[120] *KDM*, "Cast your Vote for Shams-ud-Deen: He is Battling for You in India," vol. 15, no. 6983, Wednesday 13 September 1944, p. 1.
[121] *CT*, "Kenya Legislative Council Elections," vol. 11, no.577, Saturday 22 July 1944, p. 5. Kapila revisited the matter again in another letter, *CT*, "Election – Last Words," vol. 11, no. 579, Saturday 5 August 1944, p. 5.
[122] *CT*, "The Coming Legislative Election, vol. 11, no. 576, Saturday 15 July 1944, p. 3.
[123] *CT*, "Mr. Shamsud-Deen's Nomination," vol. 11, no. 580, Saturday 12 August 1944, p. 4.

response to A. R. Kapila's description of the ideal Asian candidate (one who was generally aggressive politically) as well as with Shams-ud-Deen's humble educational background in mind, *KDM* defined the ideal candidate as one who, amongst other things, would work in a cohesive manner with his colleagues in the LEGCO and embraced team work. It asserted that "these are even more important for the general good of the community than a very high intellectual capacity or even a very forceful way of speaking or representing the Indian viewpoint either in the Council or before a Government official." Furthermore, the paper asserted that there were voters who were nevertheless incapable of making wise choices in accordance with the principles it had laid out. For their sort, it explained "they have to be guided towards them by the intelligent and thinking members of the Community who are bound to be the deciding factor in making the right choice for electing five best individuals."[124] These would no doubt include members of the press, specifically the *KDM* newspaper that in its first edition had introduced itself to its readers as an entity that wished to contribute an "enlightening influence" as it led them "to Light."[125]

In the end, Shams-ud-Deen and S. T. Thakore emerged victorious in the Central Area while de Sousa finished third and therefore did not win a LEGCO seat. However, their victory did dredge up raw feelings from the EAINC debacle of 1931. In their first post-Election Day edition, *KDM* celebrated their victory alongside those of the Eastern Area candidates K. R. Paroo and A. B. Patel.[126] It congratulated them while noting that most of those who had been elected were former members of the LEGCO. Taking aim at the *Colonial Times'* pre-election speculation on the possibility of and need for "new blood" in the Council, the *KDM* added "thus

[124] *KDM*, "Election Principles, vol. 15, no. 6930, Saturday 15 July 1944, p. 2.
[125] *KDM*, "Ourselves," vol. 1, no. 1, Saturday 18 June 1927, p. 2.
[126] *KDM*, "LEGCO Result in Mombasa: Patel and Paroo Returned with Huge Majority," vol. 15, no. 6988, Tuesday 19 September 1944, p. 1.

despite all the fuss about new blood and fanfare of need of new ideas and fresh faces the majority of the membership on the new Council will be the members of the Old Brigade."[127] Their election, the paper said, was because the electorate recognised in them the principles of a candidate as it had articulated before the election.[128] The *Colonial Times*, obviously disappointed at the results of the elections, rebuked the *KDM* for its "gloating." It bemoaned the return of the "Old Brigade" or "moderate party" that its Mombasa nemesis celebrated, singling out Patel, Pritam, Shams-ud-Deen and Thakore for specific criticism. In them, the paper saw engineers of the 1931 EAINC coup that had alienated Isher Dass, his Nairobi supporters and the town's press and who in turn had never forgiven but had only chosen to suppress their disdain when necessary, such as the recent immigration law crisis.

The paper's spiel against the "Old Brigade" demonstrates yet again that it had never recognised the legitimacy of the post-Dass EAINC and in its post-election edition called it a "parallel Congress" that was supported by "parallel Indian Associations" in Nairobi and Mombasa that were created in the image of leaders who to them were moderate and even treacherous. Moderate and treacherous because they had rejected Dass' unyielding policy of non-co-operation and permitted EAINC members to participate in local government after they "negotiated" with the government, an act that over ten years later the *Colonial Times* still thought selfish and repugnant. Even worse for the paper, Shams-ud-Deen and Thakore were amongst those who benefitted from the arrangement as they became members of Nairobi's municipal council. In the opinion of the *Colonial Times*, that *KDM* had denigrated A. R. Kapila's criteria that included a forceful manner of speech and celebrated teamwork really meant that "the Indian Community must now have moderation, team work and capacity for co-operation [with

[127] *KDM*, "Election Success in Nairobi: Cheers for Shams-ud-Deen and Thakore," vol. 15, no. 6989, Wednesday 20 September, 1944, p. 1.
[128] *KDM*, "People's Choice," vol. 15, no. 6991, Friday 22 September 1944, p. 1.

Europeans]. It does not need independence, high intellectual capacities or even a forceful way of presenting the Indian case!"[129] To the paper, it was another blow to their hopes for a more aggressive strategy in the struggle for Asian causes that it could only concede with bitterness. The Nairobi newspaper did not dispute the election results but considered them the consequences of communalism amongst the colony's Asians and the new Councillors' victories pyrrhic. For the *Colonial Times*, more than anything else, the election of a Christian de Sousa would have been a victory over the socio-religious schisms amongst Asians that it perceived were becoming more apparent as time went on, courtesy of unscrupulous "Old Brigade" politicians whom it accused of exploiting such divisions for the forging of electorates that would favour them. It would also have been the election of a man who was not a moderate and therefore embodied more closely the approach to Asian advocacy the paper favoured.

The Dangers of Internecine Battles: *KDM* Moves to Calm the Waters

KDM was not oblivious to the pernicious nature of events in 1931 and 1944 to Asians in Kenya. As a consequence of the fraught Kenyan political scene, or perhaps in spite of it, *KDM* increasingly turned to India for encouragement, inspiration and caution. From the beginning of its publication, *KDM's* front pages were devoted to a motley collection of news from different parts of the world supplied by Reuters cables. By the 1930s, it was evident to those observing Indian politics that the country's politicians and independence activists had made considerable progress towards gaining the right to govern themselves. Kenya's Asians had always looked to India for guidance and support. They followed the activities of its politicians closely and drew lessons from their strategies and colonial experiences, but constitutional reform efforts marked by a series of commissions and round table conferences in the 1930s spurred increased interest as it appeared that India was drawing ever closer to achieving some form of autonomous

[129] *CT,* "The Old Brigade," vol. 11, no. 587, Saturday 30 Sepember, 1944, p. 1.

government. *KDM* started to devote more and more of its front page space to Indian politics. And so in January, *KDM* optimistically published Indian Muslim leaders' appeal to the British government to release Mohandas Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and other leaders of the Indian National Congress so that they could participate in consititution-making activities. When Gandhi was finally released, the paper celebrated it with another headline.[130] The paper followed closely the proceedings of India's Round Table Conferences, the meetings between Indian leaders and British officials, reported grimly on the activities of the Indian Communist Party and with concern about the tensions between Hindus and Muslim and attempts by various leaders to quell them.[131]

KDM had reason to be worried about Kenyan Asian unity as tensions in the sub-continent eventually spilled over into Kenya splitting the Old Brigade alliance that had served Pandya so well into Hindu and Muslim camps. In December 1946 Shams-ud-Deen announced his resignation from both the Executive and Legislative Councils. The *CT* attributed his resignation to his having changed his beliefs about the desirability of unity amongst Asians across religious lines. People had been shocked, the editor stated, when "one fine day recently they heard him speak in terms which savoured very strongly of communalism. His writings in the press were no less so." Moreover, the editor insisted, Shams-ud-Deen had done little to diffuse rising tensions between the two religious groups in Kenya despite his status as a senior Asian politician. The paper seemed to welcome his resignation and to even relish the division religion had created within the Old Brigade given that the bitterly fought election was not in the distant past. At the

[130] *KDM*, "Mahatma Gandhi's Immediate Release: Expected this Weekend," vol. 4, no. 1090, Sunday 25 January 1931, p.1 and *KDM*, "Mahatma Overwhelmed by Admirers: Many Crushed in Crowd," vol. 4, no. 1093, Thursday 29 January 1931, p.1.
[131] *KDM*, "The Viceroy Revises His Proposals: A Conciliatory Turn," vol. 4, no.1120, p. 1, *KDM*, "Great India Debate in Parliament," vol. 4, no. 1104, p. 1 and "The Frontier Gandhi: Khan's Sound Advice to Muslims," vol. 4, no. -, p.1.

same time, it was concerned that his resignation would only deepen the religious schisms that were already fissuring Asians in Kenya. The editor noted that the existence of the Kenyan Asian, regardless of his religion, was a vexing matter to the British and that "it would be the height of folly on the part of any Indian leader to excite or play with the religious sentiments of the various sections of the Indian peoples living here, for personal ends."[132] Shams-ud-Deen in his response to the editorial which the paper cheekily titled "Mr. Shamsud Deen's Declaration of Faith" confirmed just how deeply the Hindu-Muslim tensions in the sub-continent had affected him and other Muslims in the country. He had changed his views because circumstances had compelled him to change them. Muslims in India had fought a just cause for independence and although he had served the Asian community in the country as a whole, he did not think that possible anymore. Times had changed for "when the community has been apparently irrevocably divided in India as well as all over the world, do you expect me to continue to work hypocritically in the name of the whole Indian community? It would deceive not even a child, even if I tried to do so."[133] Later that year, tensions between the two religious groups almost culminated in violence in Nairobi. A. B. Patel, in his capacity as the leader of the EAINC, failed in his efforts at reconciliation and in 1948 Muslims withdrew from the Congress.[134]

In the meantime, *KDM* did not shrink from its earlier optimism. Besides, a highly fissured Asian community did not augur well for anybody but Europeans. When independence finally came to India on 15 August 1947, the paper celebrated the event with a coloured front page picture of the Indian national flag on a white background bordered by the three colours of the flag. Headlines were not necessary to usher in India's new political dispensation. The creation of the Dominion of Pakistan was also acknowledged. Kenya's Asians commemorated

[132] CT, "Mr. Shamsud Deen's Resignation," 21 December 1943, p. 3.
[133] *CT*, "Mr. Shamsud Deen's Declaration of Faith," vol. 14, no. 710, Saturday 4 January 1947, p. 5.
[134] Gregory. *Quest for Equality*, p. 57.

the event locally with *KDM*, sensitive to tensions wrought by the sub-continent's Hindu-Muslim divisions, using the celebratory atmosphere to encourage unity in Kenya. Giving suggestions for commemorative events, the paper stated that "emphasis [of speeches made on the day] should be on the fact that whether Hindustani or Pakistani, whether Hindu, Muslim or Sikh, we all have brown skins" and it was important that they invest their energies in maintaining a common front in the struggle for their rights in East Africa.[135] India's independence was significant to East Africa because "this struggle for the abolition of colour bar and race prejudice as the basis of Government and treatment of its citizens in Africa…is an important step forward, a position of vantage from where to attack the forces of prejudice and ill will."[136] India would not only remain an important ally in the struggles of East Africa's Asians, but also a more influential one on the world stage. The *CT*, too, had been awaiting the event impatiently and had actually started running commemorative editions from the beginning of January 1947 but kept its coverage of events in India separate from local politics.

Coverage of African Affairs: the *Daily Chronicle* Offers a Peek at the Future…

Another area that experienced significant change in the Asian press from the 1940s was that of its coverage of African affairs, which continued to grow until the demise of Asian newspapers in Kenya in the years following independence in 1964. In the late forties, the *Daily Chronicle* made its debut on the Asian press scene. It belonged to Pranlal Sheth, Director of The Express Printers Limited that published the newspaper. V. D. Patel edited the paper while Dharam Kumar Sharda, who would later on establish his own newspaper, worked as a reporter. It appears to have reported on African affairs and news with an intensity and regularity that was atypical for this period and attracted a lot of government attention. In the month of October 1947

[135] *KDM*, "Independence Day: How Shall We Celebrate It?" Saturday 26 July, 1947, p. 11.
[136] Ibid., p.11.

alone, which was soon after its establishment, the paper featured articles with titles such as: "Is Fort Hall Dropsical?," "Was Fort Hall Police Firing Deliberate and Unprovoked?," "Native Chiefs Are as Powerful as Home Secretary in Wartime?," "African Editor to Face Sedition Charge To-day," "Disunity means Weakness!," "African Alleges Brutal Torture by Chiefs," "Right of Africans to Hold Public Meetings," "Municipal Beer Boycott," and a letter from "A Kenyan" to "Kenyans" on "African Leadership" that began by paraphrasing the opening words of *The Communist Manifesto*, "a spectre is haunting White Africa…the spectre of African progress and freedom."[137] The Office of the Director of Intelligence and Security assiduously noted these and more, all of which the office then forwarded to various government departments along with articles from other newspapers deemed questionable. It considered the publication to be quite radical. The following year, a complaint from Portugal's Consul General arising from an unspecified article in the *Daily Chronicle* prompted the Attorney General to inform the Chief Secretary that a meeting to discuss the issue with the editor of the paper would be "a sheer waste of time" as "he is against the Government and will do all that he can to embarrass it. Incidentally, this paper represents the Communist point of view in this country."[138] A better solution, thought the Attorney General, was an amendment to the penal code to reign in 'errant' editors. In the meantime, the paper continued churning out provocative articles on local and international affairs as a marked increase in the coverage of African affairs in the Asian press became a general trend.

Coverage of Convenience: *KDM*'s Initial Reportage of African News

The phrase "marked increase" above is key as Africans had featured in the Asian press before then. An early glimpse at the attitude of the *KDM* towards Africans comes from its

[137] D.C. File 1947 – 9, Correspondence from the Director of Intelligence and Security, Nairobi: KNA.
[138] AG/5/17/213, Correspondence from the Attorney General to the Chief Secretary, 23 December 1948. Nairobi: KNA.

commentary on two well known publications, Lord Sydney Olivier's *Anatomy of African Misery* (1927) and Norman Leys' *Kenya* (1924) in its first year of establishment.[139] The paper focused most on the latter, authored by a man who had spent about two decades in medical service in different parts of Africa, including Kenya.[140] *KDM* thought the books commendable, but the manner in which their authors had singled out caprice and capitalism to blame for the exploitation of Africans was something the commercialists behind the newspaper found highly objectionable. Thus, in the paper's opinion, and in defense of capitalism as well as in a statement that proffers insight into its attitude towards Africans, it argued that:

> [The books'] influence for good has been immensely lessened by the bitter spirit in which they are written, and one of them attributes to malignant design on the part of individuals or to the ogre called "capitalism" what in the main was a natural outcome of the facts. The facts were that Southern Africa was very thinly peopled, that it had great resources which the native had no idea of developing, and that modern civilisation with all its good and bad features swept over the country as naturally and inevitably as it swept over America in the seventeenth century. Nothing could have prevented it. Nor could anything have prevented the social and economic gulf which ensued for it was based on the fact that black and white were at the opposite ends of the social, political and economic scale. The truth that the native has an unlimited capacity for development and many fine and attractive traits of character does not alter in the least the other truth that when the European arrived he was a barbarian of not too refined habits who regarded the white man as a wizard and the wages he paid as a shortcut to heaven and who therefore naturally and inevitably fell into a position approximating medieval serfdom.[141]

The paper clearly denigrated a people and ignored evidence of imperialism's violent and exploitative nature as it scrambled to explain contemporary injustices it could not ignore in a manner that fell in line with the moderate tone it had adopted at its launch. It was a tone that the European businessmen and potential advertisers with whom Pandya and his peers rubbed shoulders would not find offensive. It was also a tone that avoided the needless stirring of

[139] Norman Leys. *Kenya*. London: Hogarth Press, 1924 and Sydney Olivier, *The Anatomy of African Misery*. London: L & Virginia Woolf, 1927.
[140] Norman Leys. *Kenya*, p. 11.
[141] *KDM*, "The New Problem of Africa," Sunday 10 July 1927, p. 2.

popular emotions amongst the less financially endowed Asian masses whose opinions the paper sought to mould.

The newspaper argued that the authors' focus on capitalism was a red herring because the actual problem was the manner in which European claims to what was initially a "natural" order was one which suffered from a stasis that prevented them from adapting to changes amongst the members of the strata that constituted that order. Therefore,

> To suggest that the problems of Africa are due to any special indignancy on the part of British or Dutch who live there is to introduce into the problem of race relations in Africa the terrible hatred and class war which the disciples of Karl Marx have managed to introduce into the problems of industrial relations in Europe. The solution of the African problem requires plain speaking and courageous defence of what is right. But it will never be found along the lines of dividing black and white into sheep and goats. Both are suffering – though much less than our authors would have us believe – from the inexorable facts of their environment and their past. It is the part of statesmanship to recognise these facts to draw remorselessly legitimate conclusions from them, but to deal with both on the basic Christian assumption that they will respond to wisdom and appeals to their better nature more readily than to condemnation and abuse.[142]

It was not long however, before the paper felt compelled to adopt a more aggressive tone towards racial injustice in Kenya. The animus for the change was a push by European settlers for an even greater control of government affairs that did not bode well for the rest of the colony.

Five months after the critique of Ley and Oliver's books, the paper launched an essay series on "The Political Outlook in Kenya that was sparked by essays in the European press demanding increased unofficial European control of government."[143] As will be seen below, it was a demand sufficiently obnoxious to necessitate a retreat from a key argument the paper had made about the African vis-à-vis the above books. Drawing extensively from one of the books

[142] Ibid., p. 2.
[143] *KDM,* "The Political Outlook," Friday November 12 1927, (vol. not indicated), no.19, p. 6. The complete title is taken from the first essay of the series in the next edition i.e. *KDM,* "The Political Outlook in Kenya," Sunday 18 November 1927, (vol. not indicated) no.20, p.8. The essays were written by "a contributor from the Indian standpoint."

that it had criticised only a few months before, the author of the series also contradicted arguments that *KDM* had made in July. Coming as it did on the eve of an important session of the Convention of Associations during which a memorandum was to be drawn up and most importantly, amidst the probing of the possibility of the "federation" or "Closer Union" of Britain's East African territories, the newspaper was wary of letting the European demands go unchallenged. The editor criticised Europeans for polluting the process with an "unnatural and grotesque accompaniment which has been made its vital condition in some quarters i.e. the dictatorship of a few thousand settlers in Kenya."[144] Their "narrow, parochial ambitions" were tainting a process from which Asians hoped to recover the blow they were dealt in the Devonshire White Paper of 1923. The issue of federation was closely tied to that of reviewing the colony's constitution. Much hope was placed in a clause of the White Paper of 1927 in which the commission's terms of reference included an examination of East Africa's legislative councils to "associate more closely in the responsibilities of trusteeship and government the responsibilities the immigrant communities domiciled in the country."[145] A key argument of the essay was that "Indians also are, in the same sense as Europeans, settlers in this country."[146] As such, the Hilton Young Commission that was charged with investigating the possibility of federating Britain's colonies had to take that into account when it looked into the racial composition of Kenya's legislative council and grant Asians an equal or even greater share of the seats therein in accordance with their larger demographic share of the colony's immigrant population. Furthermore, any positive gains Asians in Kenya made in this regard would be beneficial to Asians in Tanganyika and Uganda. However, the paper's essayist also cautioned that the political status of "the natives of the country," meaning Africans, ought also to be

[144] *KDM*, "The Political Outlook," p.6.
[145] *KDM*, "The Political Outlook in Kenya, Sunday 18 November 1927, (vol. not indicated) no.20, p.8.
[146] Ibid, p.8.

addressed because they were bound to demand their political rights in the future.[147] In addition, it was opposed to statements made by the governor in a speech to the LEGCO that August implicitly supporting European-dominated self-government in Kenya allegedly for the benefit of Africans. In the governor's opinion, the question of self-government did not rest on numbers but on "character," "experience," and "education." These qualities were in existence amongst the "settled population," with "its natural bent of honour towards the weak, its sturdy political sense, and its instinct for fair play."[148] These were words Kenya's Asians, whom Europeans had derisively referred to as natives, took to mean European settlers. Besides, the European press was littered with references that depicted them as the cream of humanity and Asians' experiences in their dealings with Europeans had taught them how vacuous the latter's claims to honour and fair play could be. The paper thought that the government of a colony as ethnically diverse as Kenya was fraught with difficulties and complexities and argued that it was just to question whether "the average white settler in a colony is fit to rule over people of other races whom in self interest he is there to exploit."[149] To *KDM's* essayist, Europeans' exploitative ways were most evident in their modes of acquisition of land and labour from Africans and the rationales they used to justify their methods.

Drawing heavily from Norman Leys' book *Kenya,* the paper set out to demonstrate that the European settler was not specially fitted for leadership in the colony and had fallen far short of the caretaker standards it had set for itself vis-à-vis the colony's African populace. With its promise of an even-toned publication just a few weeks behind it, the series begun by quoting Leys:

[147] Ibid, p.8. As will be seen in the next chapter, after failing to prevent the occupation of their lands by the British throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, Africans were already demanding their rights within and outside the press before 1927.
[148] Ibid., p.8.
[149] Ibid., p.8

> The Europeans in Kenya are neither more nor less intelligent, than the people in any area in England or Scotland with a population of 10000 souls. One does not happen to find many people of exceptional ability in a town or district in England with a population of 10000 and one does not find many in Kenya.[150]

For the essayist, years of Asian interaction with and observation of the European validated Leys perspective. Next, the essayist condemned as spurious the claim of the British government and settlers that they had only taken from the African prime land in the highlands and declared as Crown Land that which was not in use and that the "uncivilized" African was incapable of optimally exploiting. That is, the government was taking land from its owners to lease to those whom it viewed as better suited to making it more productive. It noted that were the same principle "applied to one of the rich men in England or any part of the world, no Government would last long."[151] Not only were Africans without adequate land, but they also lacked security of tenure of whatever was left, and there was an urgent need to address the plight of the growing landless classes amongst them.

The paper concurred with Leys' pessimism at proposals to vest the administration of each reserve in a board of trustees with representatives that included missionaries and an African, for the government would cunningly appoint only "tame" missionaries to such a board and the African representative would be one who had learnt to squelch any thought of independent action and owed his position to the government to whom he had proved his loyalty. Furthermore, it was obvious that African landlessness, taxes and low wages served the labour needs of the European; labour that had been shot at, flogged and exposed to abuses that were "inevitable whenever men

[150] Leys as quoted in Ibid., p. 8. The complete quote in Norman Leys, *Kenya*. London: Hogarth Press, 1924, pp. 153 – 154 is "it is necessary to state that the Europeans who live in Kenya are just ordinary people. Eager reformers at home may naturally assume that they are specially bad, or at least have more bad people among them than usual. They themselves think they deserve to have an influence in the colony and in the commonwealth out of all proportion to their number. Both views are false. The great bulk of the Europeans in Kenya are neither more nor less virtuous, neither more nor less well educated, neither more nor less intelligent than the people in any area in England or Scotland with a population of 10,000 souls. One does not expect to find many people of exceptional ability in a town or district in England with a population of 10,000, and one does not find many in Kenya."

[151] *KDM*, "The Political Outlook in Kenya, Sunday 18 November 1927, (vol. not indicated) no.20, p.8.

are given both political control over a subject people and the opportunity to profit by its labour."[152] *KDM* thus argued that Europeans had failed at the role they claimed for themselves and could not be trusted with power to rule over other races. The Asian, just as the African, was bound to suffer even more under European-dominated self-government. The ability of the newspaper to provide a forum for the articulation of such opinions must have acted to confirm J.B. Pandya's belief in the importance of the *KDM* in safeguarding that which they had acquired over years and often over generations, but in the face of threats to make government even more exclusive than it already was, the urge actually to break into the political sphere where one could hopefully play an even more direct role in shaping the policy that determined the sort of environment in which an entrepreneur did business and functioned as an individual was irresistible.

In 1944, the Governor's announcement that he would nominate an African to the LEGCO brought renewed Asian press interest in the African and a paternalistic tone more often than not characterised their articles. Henry Moore attributed his ability to make the decision to the existence of the government sponsored Local Native Councils as training grounds for African leaders. However, the *Colonial Times* asserted that more than any other race, the Asian had made the nomination a possibility. It welcomed the nomination as the removal of "a blot on the representative character" of the LEGCO and as the culmination of several years' worth of Asian cultivation of African leadership.[153] It cited M.A. Desai and S. Achariar as examples of Asians who offered political counsel, camaraderie and printing facilities to Africans. What the Indian leaders had offered "is no mean contribution towards the present political consciousness of the

[152] Ibid., p.8.
[153] *CT,* "African Representation," vol. 11, no. 572, Saturday 17 June 1944, p. 3.

African."[154] They had made their offerings not as a gift but "as a dutiful contribution of an immigrant community which has always appreciated the similarity of the subject status of both peoples and of the need that there is for both to achieve their rights through argument and persuasion."[155] The paper also remarked with concern that Europeans had been relentless in their efforts to poison the minds of Africans against Asians by presenting the interests of the latter as invariably inimical to the former and that the government was likely to nominate an African who was unlikely to offer much opposition. Whatever the case, the paper saw the move as beneficial to both Asians and Africans because it seemed to indicate that the "British Government does not intend to allow in the African colonies the white oligarchy which interested quarters are bent upon introducing from South Africa."[156]

In another article, the *KDM* observed that there was renewed speculation on the possible Closer Union of the three East African territories after the end of the Second World War and gave front page coverage to the views of Africans on the matter. Those Africans expressing their views generally agreed with Asians that Closer Union must not give Europeans power over the other races of the colony. The particular view *KDM* published came from Uganda and the paper notified its readers that in that territory, "the African has begun to think for himself intelligently and is in a position to know or decide what is good or bad for him."[157] As the publication of a people with antecedents in a continent that was not spared European imperialism, the paper's journalists recognised African struggles. Yet this was not without them betraying a sense that they had thought of Africans as having been unaware of their rights and responsibilities in their own land and in need of political apprenticeship the kind of which could only have been

[154] Ibid., p. 3.
[155] Ibid., p. 3.
[156] Ibid., p. 3.
[157] *KDM*, "African's Reasons for Opposing Closer Union of East African Bloc," vol. 15, no. 6944, Tuesday 1 August 1944, p. 1.

provided by foreigners – particularly through the benevolence of Asians. When African struggles in the central part of Kenya took a violent turn, the Asian press that had celebrated Gandhi and his devotion to non-violence as a protest method for attaining Indian independence disapproved.

The Mau Mau Rebellion and Asian Editorial Repositioning

One of the press casualties of the Mau Mau Rebellion and the subsequent declaration of a state of emergency was *The Tribune* which belonged to D. K. Sharda. On 14 January 1953, the government cancelled the newspaper's registration. Its acidic tone and unequivocal support for African political ascendancy made it an exception in the Asian press world. As the continued publication of the newspaper on its printing press would have violated the cancellation, Sharda, with the support of the Kenya Indian Congress, continued publishing it on a cyclostyling machine.[158] Three days later, the paper resumed circulation in cyclostyled form with a note to its readers expressing a desire to continue regular publication but warning them to "be prepared for suspension without notice." Not surprisingly, Sharda's paper appears to have been more outspoken and brazen in its language than its contemporaries. The first cyclostyled edition carried an article headlined "Exploiting the Emergency" in which it accused settlers of plotting to work for the complete divorce of the country's government from the Colonial Office with the intention of setting up a "Settler Raj" during two meetings they were said to have held in early January.[159] It warned them that any such effort would be "strenuously resisted by both Africans and Indians."[160] The two groups would launch a "counter campaign of total opposition by every constitutional means," but given that there was a state of emergency, any steps towards "Settler Raj" could also lead to "General Chaos."[161] *The Tribune* dubbed Michael Blundell's call to have

[158] MAC/KEN, Correspondence from KIC to Fenner Brockway, 14 January 1953. Nairobi: KNA.
[159] MAC/KEN, *The Tribune*, vol. 2, no. 79, Saturday 17 January 1953, p. 1. Nairobi: KNA.
[160] Ibid., p. 1.
[161] Ibid., p. 1.

the colony's centre of power moved from London to Nairobi "thoroughly fantastic" and symptomatic of a man who "credits other races with less intelligence than we think they have."[162] It warned that "let no one think this state of affairs is permanent. It is going to change; it must change."[163] It foresaw a Kenya in which the racial organisation of politics was greatly altered or ceased to be a factor. The paper's tone was akin to a prolonged battle cry. It is no wonder that an already oppressive government banned it.

At the coast, *KDM* barely covered the Mau Mau Rebellion until October 1952. When it did report on the violence, it did so in dry reports and hardly ever ventured into discussing it in editorials. A front page headline in the paper ten days before the declaration of a state of emergency on 20 October 1952 notified the paper's readers that LEGCO's European members had urged the government to use military force to smash "terrorism" in Kenya and that a number of Africans had been sentenced to imprisonment for committing the "Timau outrages" on cattle.[164] Another headline announced reports that the Kenyan government had requested the British government to provide troops and then proceeded to report on police operations in forests around Nairobi, while another observed that tensions were still high in the area most affected by the violence and that the authorities had made more than 3,600 arrests.[165] Direct condemnation of the violence or analyses of its cause and course were left to sources external to the paper, but that the paper published them also says something about its stance towards the violence and the factors that instigated it. A page 2 story reproduced from *The Times* (London), focused on Mau Mau violence, recruitment methods and oathing procedures which the author considered demonstrative of "the boldness of Mau Mau agents and the mentality of men only a short step

[162] Ibid., p. 6.
[163] Ibid., p. 6.
[164] *KDM*, "Troops to Curb Terrorism in the Colony," vol. 24, no. 1021, Friday 10 October, 1952, p. 1. Rebels sometimes cut the tendons of European settlers' cattle or slaughtered them. Timau is located in Kenya's Rift Valley.
[165] *KDM*, "British Troops from M. East to be Flown to Kenya," vol. 24, no. 10217, Monday 20 October, 1952, p. 1.

removed from the savage in spirit and method."[166] The article watered down Kikuyu land grievances and attributed the cause of the rebellion to "a large dose of civilization and its freedoms administered too suddenly" which were then threatening the "security and prestige of British settlements in the process"[167] because the rebels were eager for power and desirous of too quick a transfer of it to the African. In November, a front page story noted that Prime Minister of India Jawarharlal Nehru was "distressed" by the violence in Kenya and that while he had urged Asians in Kenya to support Africans in their struggles and fair trials for those in detention, he had called for an end to any sort of violence and the pursuit of peaceful methods for solutions to their problems.[168] In addition, Nehru insisted that only the formation of a multi-racial society with equal rights for all would ensure lasting peace and harmony in the colony.

KDM's first editorial on the day after the declaration of the state of emergency endorsed the Governor's pronouncement and gave the clearest statement yet of how the paper viewed the rebellion. The editor observed that an escalation in violence had necessitated the decision and that it was certain the Governor had made the declaration after careful consideration and for the well being of the entire country. It then endorsed the government's action because it believed that it was the best short term solution to a situation that was rapidly spiraling out of control to the detriment of the entire colony. The editorial urged people of all races to cooperate with the government, adhere to its stipulations and generally support it in its efforts to restore normalcy as little positive change could be achieved amidst violence. At the same time, the editor noted that there were serious problems in the colony that needed to be solved and highlighted the Governor's promise that "as soon as subversive activities had been checked and normalcy restored, steps will be taken to give effect to plans for economic development and particularly for

[166] *KDM,* "Inside Story of Mau Mau," Thursday 28 October, 1952, p. 2.
[167] Ibid., p. 2.
[168] *KDM*, "Nehru 'Distressed' at Events in Kenya, vol. 24, no. 10229, Tuesday 4 November 1952, p. 1.

help to the poorer inhabitants of this country."[169] The editor viewed the violence as a dire threat to the peaceful development of the country in all sectors of life and hoped that a return to law and order would provide the Governor with a chance to live up to the promises he had made upon the declaration of the state of emergency.

The *Colonial Times* similarly reported on the rebellion with forthright condemnations of the violence but also left the writing of more nuanced commentaries to foreigners. For example, in the aftermath of the Ruck family murders, the editor remarked, "no one knows what exactly are the aims of the Mau Mau movement; but one thing is certain: whatever those aims are, there can never be any justification for the murders of helpless women and little children."[170] As for the *KDM* editor, the violence was unacceptable because it was inimical to whatever the paper considered to be development up to that point. The editor also called for the pursuit of constitutional methods to address grievances. As far as more nuanced commentaries on the rebellion are concerned, one of the paper's most notable contributors was British journalist, Labour M. P. and supporter of African and Asian causes, Fenner Brockway.[171] In 1953 he contributed a series of articles, "Why Mau Mau?," to the *Colonial Times*.[172] In these articles, he restated his commitment to supporting Africans and Asians as he registered his strong opposition to Mau Mau violence, writing that "we had strong hopes in the advance of the African people. It has therefore been a shock to us to find some Africans reverting to methods of witchcraft and

[169] *KDM*,"Emergency," vol. 24, no. 10219, Wednesday 22 October 1952, p. 2.
[170] *CT*, "Violence vs. Constitutional Methods," vol. 20, no. 1025, Thursday 29 January 1953, p. 3. See also *CT*, "Emergency or War," vol. 20, no. 1934, Saturday 4 April, 1953, p. 3. In early 1953, Roger Ruck, his wife Esme Ruck along with their young son Michael were brutally murdered at their remote farm in Kinangop (Rift Valley, Kenya). An employee, Muthura Nagahu, who attempted to rescue them was also murdered. For a detailed account of the Ruck family murder and trial see, David Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged: The Dirty War in Kenya and the End of Empire*. New York: W. W. Norton, 2005, pp. 93 – 111.
[171] For his autobiography see, Fenner Brockway, *Towards Tomorrow: the Autobiography of Fenner Brockway.* London: Hart-Davis, MacGibbon, 1977.
[172] For the series introduction: *CT*, "Why Mau Mau?", vol. 20, no. 1938, Saturday 2 May 1953, p. 1.

terrorism."[173] However, the focus of Brockway's articles was neither Mau Mau violence nor their oathing ceremonies, for while he disapproved of both he also asserted that "it is not enough to condemn, punish and protect. We must seek out the causes of Mau Mau and strive to remove them."[174] He attributed the rebellion to severe social, economic and psychological frustration and spent the rest of the series addressing the causes he had identified. In his opinion, there was social frustration as a consequence of the British dismantling of the institutions the Kikuyu had put in place to govern themselves and manage their lives without replacement with a suitable substitute. Economic frustration stemmed from "land hunger" and poor wages while psychological frustration was a result of the repeated humiliation the African bore as a result of the colour bar.[175] Indeed once the country stabilised under the state of emergency, the British acknowledged the indispensability of more comprehensive political and economic policies that addressed African grievances to ensuring sustainable peace.

Securing the Future of its Constituency: The Asian Press Tries to Manage Political Change

KDM captured Britain's acquiescence to the need for marked politico-economic changes with its optimistic headlines. A front page story at the very beginning of that year was a line taken from a speech Lennox-Boyd made in Kenya while on a whirlwind tour of British colonies in Africa: "Kenya Can Look Forward with Confidence."[176] In the speech, he made it clear that it was Britain's intention to grant self-government to countries it deemed ready to stand on their own and pointed to Ghana as a step towards this direction. The following month, another headline based on remarks made by Herbert Morrison, a former cabinet member of Britain's

[173] *CT*, "Why Mau Mau?," vol. 20, no. 1939, Saturday 9 May 1953, p. 2.
[174] Ibid., p. 2.
[175] *CT*, "Why Mau Mau?" vol. 20, no. 1940, Saturday 16 May 1952, p. 2.
[176] *KDM*, "Kenya Can Look Forward with Confidence," vol. 23, no. 105499, Wednesday 2 January 1957, p. 1.

Labour government, declared "Kenya On Road to Self-Government."[177] On the eve of Ghana's independence, probably hoping that Kenya would remain at and march towards independence in peace, the paper praised Kwame Nkurumah for leading a struggle for independence "with brains not bombs."[178] However, the newspaper carried fewer editorials and articles on the political changes than its erstwhile rival in Nairobi.

The *Colonial Times* used its pages more extensively to introduce its readers to the emerging African leadership of that decade and to prepare them for African-led Kenyan self-government which it believed would materialise in the very near future. It covered the 1957 elections with great zest. To acquaint its readers with African politicians, there were regular profiles on the most prominent personalities and election front runners.[179] It also gave front-page treatment to not all, but only African candidates and their manifestos, often with a picture of the relevant candidate. Although such articles were based largely on the words of the candidates themselves, the paper did not hesitate to emphasise manifesto provisions which supported Asian causes or appeared to secure their future in a rapidly changing country. Thus, the coverage of Oginga Odinga's electoral manifesto was headlined "Steer Away from S.A. [South Africa]" a nation that continued to advance the colour bar unashamedly even as Africa in general appeared to be moving towards self-government.[180] It was also the home of one of the continent's largest Asian populations; a population from which Kenyan Asians had drawn much support and whose struggles against apartheid they closely monitored and in turn supported. Odinga also advocated for the opening up of the White Highlands and the provision as well as improvement of common educational and healthcare facilities, both of which were areas of critical concern to this

[177] *KDM*, "Kenya On Road to Self-Government," vol. 23, no. 5588, Tuesday 5 February 1957, p. 1.
[178] *KDM*, "Freedom won with Brains not Bombs," vol. 23, no. 10584, Wednesday 6 March 1957, p. 1.
[179] See for example, *CT,* "The Quiet Nationalist: Mr. Ronald Ngala," vol. 25, no. 1960, Thursday 14 January 1960, p. 3.
[180] *CT,* "Steer Away from South Africa," vol. 24, no. 2112, Friday 18 January 1957, p. 1.

particular newspaper and to which it had devoted much attention in the thirties. John Kibaso's manifesto coverage a few days later was headlined "Asians Should Be Given Equal Opportunities With Other Races," while John Kasoyoka's was introduced with the headline "Good Race Relations, Economic Unity and Contented Security Forces."[181] Tom Mboya's manifesto was published with a similar "multiracial" headline and professed "the fundamental equality of all men, regardless of race, colour, sex or creed" in addition to a strong condemnation of European dominance over Africans and "the immigrant people who wish to make their homes in Kenya," as well as the "anachronism of White Highlands.[182] A week after Mboya, readers were introduced to B. A. Ohanga's "reasoned proposals" which championed economic progress for all regardless of race.[183] The manifestos, while focusing on issues that pertained to Africans, recognised other races including and especially Asians in a manner that reassured an Asian paper that already thought it apt and just to throw its weight behind African nationalists. For *Colonial Times*, independence in Kenya was a matter of fact and the paper thought it best to shift its focus to those who would dominate its government in the near future and whose policies would determine the manner in which its Asian population lived in that new country.

KDM shared the paper's attitude but wrote in a tone reminiscent of that with which it had addressed African issues in the twenties. After the elections, in a rare editorial, it remarked that "the Africans have exe[r]cised the franchise for the first time and with the advance of time and development of democratic institutions they will become mature."[184] Therefore, although Africans had not been able to vote on a common roll as they had demanded, "their right to cast

[181] *CT*, "Good Race Relations, Economic Unity and Contented Security Forces," vol. 24, no. 2119, Friday 8 March 1957, p.1.
[182] *CT*, "Asians Should Be Given Equal Opportunities With Other Races," vol. 24, no. 2115, Friday 8 February 1957, p. 1 and *CT*, "Education for All--Economic Opportunity--Human Dignity--Old Age Security" vol. 24, no. 2117, Friday 22 February 1957, p. 1 and *CT*, "Anachronism of White Highlands," vol. 24, no. 2118, Friday March 1 1957, p. 4.
[183] *CT*, "African Candidate Puts Forward Reasoned Proposals," vol. 24, no. 2118, Friday March 1 1957, p.1.
[184] *KDM*, "African Elections," vol. 23, no. 10595, Monday 18 March 1957, p. 2.

vote and elect their own members is in itself a great advance for them." For *KDM,* the political changes were good, but it still viewed Africans as inferior members of the political process in need of nurturing before they could be considered the equals of Asians and Europeans. *KDM* also saw them as a distinct and separate constituency and their writing until that point was pervaded by "us" and "them" angles. At the same time, change of the Ghanaian sort was coming and the newspaper expressed its hope that Asians would be secure in it. Elected African members in the LEGCO would enhance its capacity to understand African views while "the African representatives [would also] understand the true feelings of other races" and most importantly be convinced that "all races in the Colony have contributed to its development and are here to stay as much as the Africans themselves."[185] The paper's tone must have been unsettling to its African readers. Indeed it was the same tone, albeit more brash, which C. B. Madan, Minister without Portfolio, adopted when speaking of the African in a speech given to the Indian Association of Mombasa in July 1957 and which resulted in a rebuke from Tom Mboya.

The speech was sparked by Francis Khamisi's "Africa is for Africans" speech in which he called Asians and Europeans "immigrants" and declared that the African "will and must ultimately govern his own country."[186] He in turn was reacting to a statement issued by R. P. Cleasby MLC, in which he called for multiracial constitutional provisions that would prevent a single race from dominating government.[187] In his speech Madan stated that it was a matter of fact that Africans would indeed dominate the country's political and economic future. Nevertheless, it would serve them well not to refer to Asians and Europeans as "immigrant races" because "when the African emerged from the depths of darkness and had his first glimpse

[185] Ibid., p. 2.
[186] *KDM,* "African Will and Must Govern his Own Country," vol. 30, no. 10678, p. 1.
[187] Ibid., p. 1.

of civilisation, the Asian and the European was already here trying to unseal the lock placed on the African mind."[188] It was the Asian and European who had enabled the latter to "break away from the tentacles of raw nature" and enabled them to take their seats at the table of government because they were moving towards "standards which are at par with the European and the Asian and because he would have gained the confidence of others as to his ability to conduct the Government of the country on a basis just and impartial to all inhabitants of the country."[189] The question of why that government had ridden roughshod over African (and Asian) rights, why it had been partial to Europeans and failed to earn the confidence of the country's majority, did not arise in his speech. Instead, Madan insisted that it was best the African internalised the fact that "he is being advanced to achieve his goal by the European and the Asian," and smugly added the least Africans could do was curb the volatile nature of their political speeches because "it may be too much to expect the African to be magnanimous and to expect an expression of gratitude from him."[190] In another speech in which he addressed African dissatisfaction with the Lennox Boyd constitution, he expressed his support for a common citizenship for all Kenyans while urging Africans to be patient with the pace of constitutional reform because majority rule, while desirable, was still "a long way away" and "Africans had to learn that Europeans and Asians had not got where they were overnight."[191] One prominent politician's response to his speech made it clear that views similar to those of Madan, and by extension *KDM*, would not be tolerated.

In December 1957, Tom Mboya, speaking on the issue of Africans in government, responded not to Madan but to the original European remarks. This was probably a deliberate choice because despite the prurience of Madan's remarks, confronting Asians did not seem

[188] *KDM*, "Hon. Madan's Speech in Mombasa,"vol. 30, no. 10684, Monday 15 July 1957, p.1.
[189] Ibid., p.1.
[190] Ibid., p. 1.
[191] *KDM*, "Wrong for Asians and Europeans to Rest on Past Deeds," vol. 30, no. 10798, Thursday 28 November, p. 1.

politically astute as by that time his colleagues were men such as trade unionist Makan Singh and KANU politician Pio Gama Pinto. He was also aware of the more progressive stand of newspapers such as the *Colonial Times* in which he occasionally published articles. However, his response was broad enough to address Madan's assertions implicitly. *KDM* also gave front page treatment to his response in which he claimed that:

> For the last 50 years it has never occurred to Europeans that African[s] can take a stand, can take decisions and can be firm. Indeed it never occurred to them that we have convictions of our own. Unfortunately there are among the Africans who because of inferiority complex believe, when told by Europeans that African[s] cannot do this and cannot do that…All that the African needs is equal opportunity and suitable facilities to develop his talents.
>
> The African…took his first stand through his elected representatives and [t]his came as a big shock to some of our friends. For the first time they have been faced with realities which have made them think "what shall be Kenya tomorrow?" This is a question they have avoided for all these years.[192]

And in response to assertions that Africans were ready for Christianity and not democracy, Mboya asked "when shall we be ready for democracy and who will judge?"[193] Africans, according to him, saw their struggles as identical to struggles for human rights and freedom that others were fighting for elsewhere in the world. Interestingly, in the editorial of that day's edition, *KDM* made a complete U–turn on its views regarding the pace of political reform in the country and urged Asians to keep up with them in addition to identifying themselves with African struggles, noting that if they did not commence the process immediately, "tomorrow, let it be warned, will be too late."[194] In contrast, the *CT* — an earlier endorser of the political changes —, had shared Mboya's optimism as well as the certainty of a victory sooner rather than later. By 1957, it was also the more robust publication and featured extensive articles on Kenyan

[192] *KDM*, "African is Going to Fight for Rightful Position," vol. 30, no. 10801, Monday 2 December 1957, p. 2.
[193] Ibid., p. 1.
[194] Ibid., p. 2.

and African political changes accompanied by a far greater number of images on more pages than *KDM* could muster.

Events abroad but particularly in Africa served to reinforce the paper's belief in the coming of self-government or independence to Kenya and these, too, it covered to make its point as well as to propose, perhaps in a bid to influence, the manner in which Kenya should work towards these objectives. In one optimistic editorial titled "Africa on the March," the paper pointed to India and Pakistan as examples of countries that had not only obtained dominion status that was previously preserved for British colonies with sizeable populations of European descent, but also complete independence.[195] It was all an indication that "the mighty British Government no longer believes in the rule of one race over another."[196] The editorial celebrated Ghana's independence and cast a glance at Uganda which "is going forward. We see her go" as rapid constitutional changes advanced her closer to independence.[197] The paper also endorsed Ghana's decision to join the Commonwealth and hoped that a more multiracial Commonwealth would shift one of its members, the Union of South Africa, towards multiracialism as well. For the paper, political events in the late 1950s appeared to be coalescing to buttress and even realise goals that had been fodder for countless resolutions and petitions that Indian Associations and the EAINC had produced over the years, many of which it had published since its establishment. Kenyan Asians had striven for equality with Europeans (even when Africans were not considered a part of that equation); many had been willing to live under the British Crown if they were treated as equals; when their demands were ignored British imperialism became anathema and had to be defeated; they had cheered India on to independence and taken heart in its achievement; India and Pakistan's admission into the Commonwealth was akin to a recognition

[195] *CT,* "Africa on the March," vol. 24, no. 2118, Friday 1 March 1957, p. 3.
[196] Ibid., p. 3.
[197] Ibid., p. 3.

of Asian human dignity and held the promise of promoting political change in South Africa. Now Ghana was heading for independence and was this not a harbinger of political change in the entire continent? These were changes *Colonial Times* made a decision to celebrate and from which to extract lessons for the local scene.

And so in the years leading to independence, the newspaper devoted more and more space to articles that analysed the future of Kenya and political developments in other African countries. "Africa's New Rulers," a series of articles authored by renowned journalist Colin Legum, typify the paper's effort to keep its readers abreast with political change all over Africa, including the strengths and weaknesses of the new states and their leaders.[198] In "The Quiet Nigerian," Legum praised Nigeria's Abubakar Balewa for his pragmatic approach to modernisation, gradual change, and what he perceived as a calm and contemplative persona that was best suited to governing a country that held great economic promise.[199] Writing on "The Quiet Cameroonian," the renowned journalist pondered whether Prime Minister Ahmadu Ahidjo would survive a year in office.[200] The French had handled the country's transition to independence carelessly and hurriedly to benefit a political faction that it favoured in a polity that was still deeply in need of French technical and economic aid, he opined. Several months later, Congo's troubles at the onset of a decade otherwise brimming with optimism provided cautionary experiences for countries on the brink of independence. The editor insisted that the countries' woes were another case of a poorly planned transition to independence typical of countries ruled by Belgians, French and Portuguese, who hardly prepared the people over whom they ruled for independence. Kenya would be different. Kenya had to be different, the paper

[198] Colin Legum was a South African journalist who left his country for England in 1949 as a protest against apartheid. He was widely respected for his analyses of African Affairs in books and for various newspapers. http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/914912/Colin-Legum accessed on Thursday 25 October 2012.
[199] *CT*, "The Quiet Nigerian," vol. 25, no. 1384, Thursday 21 January 1960, p. 6.
[200] *CT*, "The Quiet Cameroonian," vol. 25, no. 1383, Thursday 14 January 1960, p.6.

asserted optimistically, because the United Kingdom had planned the liberation of its territories. However, the "lesson" the country's rulers could draw from Congo was the urgency with which Britain needed to Africanise Kenya's civil service and judiciary in addition to its police force and military, the latter with people who would be disciplined and loyal to the country.[201] It was not enough that Kenya was inching ever closer to independence; for that experience to be enjoyed by Africans and those who had made Africa their home, there had to be peace and stability.

Another series that focused on postcolonial Kenya, the "Thoughts on the Future of Non-Africans in Africa" that later morphed into the "Thoughts on the Future of Africa" series authored by a certain "Iconoclast" for the *Colonial Times*, delved into issues that betrayed the anxieties of Asians. In sharp contrast to the mood that pervaded the paper's editorials as 1960 dawned, Iconoclast perceived a sense of doom and gloom on the African horizon because it seemed to him/her that Africans were campaigning for their rights on racial grounds. In the author's opinion, Asians only had themselves to blame, as following the onset of European imperialism they had campaigned to be equal to Europeans and whatever rights the British had granted them they had done so to them as a racial group – Asians – and they in turn had accepted these as such.[202] Subsequently, they were paying for their actions with the suspicion and indifference with which Africans now regarded both Asians and Europeans. Nevertheless, the situation could be remedied and the future secured for all races in Africa if all concerned, but especially Europeans, genuinely embraced and advocated "some universally cherished principle" for example national unity or human rights.[203] This was because, in Iconoclast's view, as the country was undergoing critical constitutional changes, those who held the most power (Europeans) were guilty of equivocating on a democracy that embraced all peoples and held

[201] *CT*, "Lessons of the Congo," vol. 26, no. 1489, Thursday 14 July 1960, p. 3.
[202] *CT*, "Thoughts on the Future of Non-Africans in Africa," Thursday 7 January 1960, vol. 25, no. 1382, p. 3.
[203] Ibid., p. 3.

them equal. This was even more disconcerting at a time when certain prominent African leaders were insisting that the British government declare Kenya an African country. "If in future Kenya is to be ruled by a majority of the people, then why insist upon this declaration?" he pondered.[204] For Iconoclast, the key question was "will the non-Africans living in Kenya have the same freedoms and rights as Africans in particular [?]," including the right to contest elections.[205] In his opinion, it was not enough that disparate African politicians had been giving assurances that there would be equality for all in an independent Kenya. Their political organisations needed to do so as well, in addition to articulating exactly what rights would be granted to the country's citizens. The key to securing the future of immigrants who had made Kenya their home was to insist that human rights be granted to all not as racial groups but as individuals. Iconoclast insisted that Asians understood the African's desire for freedom and were fully aware of the machinations of obstructionists to their cause among Europeans. Yet, even for them, explicit support for human rights would "make opposition to political advance look ridiculous. Such opposition can naturally come only from non-Africans. It will come mainly from Europeans."[206] It would also, presumably, calm the anxieties of many Asians and assure them of a secure future in a country most now knew as their only home.

In addition, Iconoclast believed that to secure the future of the country it was essential for the government to "give Africans a stake in prosperity."[207] In an article that avoided directly discussing the distribution of wealth amongst a populace and which resorted to fiction to make a point, Iconoclast began by reaching into the past for a quote that succinctly and indubitably conveyed his message to Asians and Europeans. At the top of the article were Adam Smith's

[204] *CT*, "Thoughts on the Future of Non-Africans in Africa," vol. 25, no. 1385, Thursday 28 January 1960 , p.4.
[205] Ibid., p.4.
[206] Ibid., p. 4.
[207] *CT*, "Thoughts on the Future of Africa: Give Africans a Stake in Prosperity," vol. 25, no. 1395, Thursday 7 April 1960, p. 4.

words cautioning that "the affluence of the rich excites the indignation of the poor who are then driven by want or prompted by envy to invade their possessions."[208] Too much of the country's wealth was in the hands of the Asian and European minority groups and this bred resentment in those who had little, which in this case mostly Africans. Their resentment was a tinderbox for chaos and violence and with the ramifications of the Mau Mau rebellion in mind and the state of emergency still in place, Iconoclast did not think it possible for Kenya's future to be secure when a majority of Africans were poor. This was not a social problem that the more financially able members of society could ignore, for the Africans' discontent ultimately would be disruptive for all the country's inhabitants. It was thus incumbent upon the government to begin solving the problem not by banning Asian traders from conducting business in African reserves, but by involving Africans in development planning, expanding and improving educational facilities and extending credit facilities to them. With similar concerns in mind two years before, *KDM'*s editor declared that the time had come for Kenya's Asians and Europeans to treat Africans as equals and for the latter to assure minorities that their rights would be respected.[209] For the Asian press, independence was coming and the best Asians could do was to ensure that they not only survived it but thrived under the new political dispensation. All this required a good dose of political will, but in spite of Iconoclast's declarations on the unilateral Asian belief in unfettered democracy in Kenya, the paper that published his series was despairing at what it considered a chronic tendency of Asian leaders to equivocate on that issue to the peril of the entire Asian population at a crucial moment of transition.

[208] Ibid., p.4. Quote is from Adam Smith, "Of the Expense of Justice," in *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations,* volume II, part II. London: W. Strahan and T. Cadell: 1778, p. 316.
[209] *KDM*, "The People and their Leaders," vol. 25, no. 1305, Thursday 17 July 1958, p. 3.

The Press as Chief Whip of Asian Politics

For the Asian press, Kenyan Asian leadership was largely a disappointment between 1954 and 1960 due to the unwillingness of a majority of Asian politicians to unite and reengineer their organisations for the new political environment, as well as their failure to come out definitively in favour of an independent African-dominated Kenyan state. To begin with, the *Colonial Times* held that by May 1957, the Nairobi Indian Association which was also crucial to the functions of the EAINC Executive, had all but collapsed after its political "deadwood" had resisted the attempts of a more inspired but unnamed lot to revitalise the organisation.[210] The latter had gone on and established a parallel organisation while the "deadwood" held on to the organisation's old records. *KDM* described what was now the Kenya Indian Congress (KIC) as an organisation "under chloroform," riddled with religious tensions and only half awake at a time when Africans and Europeans were very active in the political arena. The editor believed that Asian leaders in the twenties had sown the seeds of democracy but that those who led after them were a disappointment. "The seeds of democratic ideas sown by the pioneers of the twenties had become plants" but now "the plants…had different people to tend them," observed the editor.[211]

In July 1957, *KDM* and *CT* headlines announced the driving of the "last nail in the coffin of Asian unity," as a bill granting Asian Muslims separate representation in the Nairobi City Council went through the LEGCO.[212] The government had drafted the bill at the request on unnamed Asian LEGCO members. W. B. Havelock, the Minister for Local Government who had moved the bill would receive praise and bouquets from his backers but the paper averred that he would be wise to turn the bouquets into "wreaths to lay them at the coffin of Asian unity" and

[210] *CT*, "The Indian Association," vol. 24, no. 1246, Friday 17 May 1957, p. 3.
[211] *KDM*, "A Momentous Session," vol. 25, no. 1290, Thursday 3 April 1958, p. 3.
[212] *CT*, "Last Nail in the Coffin of Asian Unity," vol. 24, no. 1253, Friday 5 July 1957, p. 1 and KDM, "Last Nail in Coffin of Asian Unity," vol. 30, no. 10676, Friday 5 July 1957, p. 1.

the rest could be "retained for the graves of the African communities if the government pursues the policy of dividing the communities by tribes and religions."[213] Tensions between Muslims and Hindus had been on the rise and had mirrored tensions on the Asian sub-continent that had led to the separation of Pakistan from India. Nevertheless, the government's action was seen as a catalyst and an unwanted institutionalisation of those tensions.

To add to this, at a time when Africans were making an aggressive push for a more representative government in Kenya, an Asian Minister without Portfolio, C. B. Madan, announced that "it is the declared policy of the Indian community that it will not stand in any racial camp as an ally of any racial group."[214] Asians would stand on "No Man's Land" as this was the best position from which they could prevent other races (Europeans and Africans) from fighting each other. Asians were "an innocent people" who supported political and economic progress for all. For the *CT*, Madan's remarks were symbolic of a leadership that was misreading the signs of the time as well as lacking in courage, vision and foresight.[215] The paper did not consider the African struggle for fair representation and freedom as a parochial racial endeavour but as a struggle for majority rule. It was a fair and just goal that was not different from what India had achieved for itself. What Asian politicians and others did not realise, but *CT* did fervently from earlier on, was that "sooner or later – sooner than many expect – the African community is to have a controlling voice in the political affairs of the Colony. That is one thing it would be extremely unwise to forget." The newspaper urged Asian politicians such as Madan to urgently overhaul their approach to Kenyan politics:

> The position of the proverbial sandwich is not a happy one. It would be better and wiser to see the writing on the wall and to interpret it fearlessly…There

[213] Ibid., 1. For *CT's* perspective on the matter see *CT*, "The Psychology of Denigration," vol. 24, no. 1254, Friday 12 July 1957, p. 3.
[214] *CT*, "Asians Not Joining Racial Camps," vol. 24, no. 1255, Friday 19 July 1957, p. 1.
[215] Ibid., p. 1.

> is no question of our acting as a referee in a boxing match. We are in the fight itself. We have to throw our weight – however small it is – on the side of democratic forces. Once we realise this, we shall cease regarding ourselves as a small contingent sandwiched between two powerful armies ranged against each other. True, we must support the right. But what is right, if not democracy of the British type?[216]

The newspaper had fashioned a 'voice of reason' role for itself. As the sixth decade of the 20th century came to an end, it predicted quite accurately the impending government of Kenya by majority rule. At the same time, what it feared was Asian leaders' mismanagement of the community's political affairs as the country transitioned into that state risked its well being in the new country that would emerge once independence was attained. They were wasting the opportunity to bring decades of Asian political agitation to fruition. It was time to broaden the borders of their activism by overtly joining hands with African politicians. Asian politicians needed to build bridges between Asians and Africans and support their campaign for a just government. Otherwise, they risked waiting until it was too late, until independence had arrived and Africans viewed their desire to take part in the life of the new nation as having reaped where they had not sown. *KDM* in the aftermath of its U-turn shared *CT's* views on Asian leadership.

Once Africans MLC (Members of the Legislative Council) had rejected the Lennox Boyd constitutional proposals, the paper severely chastised Asian MLCs who failed to support them and chose to equivocate on its provisions as they sought constitutional multiracialism. *KDM* condemned as parochial their insistence on constitutional safeguards and their resistance to "undiluted democracy."[217] It reminded them that India and Pakistan had not provided Europeans with any safeguards and their people had created strong slogans against the British such as "Quit India." It urged them to recognise that Kenya was an African country and that fact would shape

[216] *CT*, "Policy Statements," vol. 25, no. 1256, Friday 26 July, p. 3.
[217] *KDM*, "Lennox Boyd Proposals: Chaos and Confusion Among Asian Legco Members," vol. 30, no. 10814, Tuesday 17 December 1957, p. 1.

its politics in future. The paper asserted that "their vagueness and their record during the African struggle against the Lyttelton Plan has convinced us that Asians, just like Europeans, are determined to prevent Kenya from becoming another Ghana." [218] Moreover, "Africans will have no room for people who pursue the middle of the road policy."[219] The paper insisted that all Asian leaders needed to come out strongly in favour of Kenya as an African country or consider leaving for India and Pakistan.

As 1960 dawned and preparations were underway for the First Lancaster House Conference, the headline of *KDM*'s first edition demanded that "Kenya Asians Come Off the Fence!"[220] It railed at Asian leaders who had "cherished the idea of countering the gusto of African nationalism at the cost of hurting race relations."[221] Their dithering in this regard was as repulsive as their scheming, but even more damaging they had "subjected their followers to confused and panicky thinking."[222] *CT* believed that poor Asian leadership was truly pernicious to the future of Asians in Kenya and not simply a malady of a few misguided politicians who cloaked their deeds in calls for "multi-racialism" or "non-racialism," both of which were no substitute for the "one-man, one-vote" democracy Africans were demanding. As preparations were underway for Kenyan delegations to travel to London for the first Lancaster House Conference, the paper took heart in a small group of Asians who came out to declare their support for a "one-man, one-vote" democracy. It also highlighted Tom Mboya's praise for their statement as he expressed his hope that Asian politicians would support their statement, for he

[218] Ibid., p. 1.
[219] Ibid., p. 1.
[220] *CT*, "Kenyan Asians Come Off the Fence," vol. 25, no. 1382, Thursday 7 January 1960, p. 1.
[221] Ibid., p. 1.
[222] Ibid., p. 1.

considered it "so far the most positive and practical stand taken by members of the Asian community."[223]

Africans were watching Asians, the paper seemed to caution, but its leaders in their indecision were letting their followers down. It did not help that once the Asian delegation got to London and despite it having declared its support for majority rule prior to its departure from Kenya, it was unable to keep that stand. I. E. Nathoo, a member of the New Kenya Party, declared his support for majority rule and his party promptly dissociated itself from his statement while a fellow Muslim delegate accused him of going against the wishes of Muslims in Kenya. Then in late September of the same year at a meeting attended by both Africans and Asians, leaders of the latter equivocated on yet another matter. J. M. Nazareth, a member of the LEGCO, stated that Kenya was not ready for independence while F.R.S. De Sousa, speaking as a member of the Kenya Freedom Party, strongly opposed Nazareth's position.[224] *CT* considered the former's statement a severe blow to the interests of Asians as until then the prevailing assumption was that Asian leaders supported the African call for independence even if they did not agree on various issues such as the reservation of seats for minorities. It accused Asian leaders of being too cautious and slow to embrace the rapid changes on the political horizon. The stated position of Asian leaders for decades was that they were supportive of African needs and rights. The paper insisted that Asian support for the African also meant supporting their call for independence or receiving their charges of hypocrisy. They needed to support the African demand for majority rule as well as the timeline they insisted on or risk inviting African mistrust towards them and those they led.[225] The paper perceived Asian politicians as already being in a disadvantageous location vis-à-vis Europeans and even more so Africans. They were to blame

[223] Ibid., p. 1.
[224] *CT*, "Independence-When?" vol. 28, no. 1421, Thursday 6 October 1960, p. 3.
[225] *CT*, "Down to Business," vol. 25, no. 1386, Thursday 4 February 1960, p. 3.

squarely for their predicament for "in a country seething with nationalism they have preached communalism," and they had "failed to realise that the one vital Asian need in Kenya was to cease to be Asian as rapidly as possible and become Kenyan."[226] *CT* averred that their conduct did not augur well for the future of those Asians who wished to see all races living harmoniously in a democratic Kenya.

The press' concerns and anxieties were reflected in an address made by C. M. Dewani during the Annual General Meeting of the Indian Merchants Chamber Mombasa of which he was chairman, which was reported in the *KDM*. He plainly told Asians that they needed to make themselves "wanted" in an independent Kenya.[227] However, they were not to go about this by concentrating their efforts in economics but by working for improvements of all the country's peoples in all aspects of life. Africa needed to grow and expand its economy and Asians could play a role in that growth. In a speech *KDM* called "interesting," Dewani advised Asians that they had nothing to fear from political change because "danger to us will be there only if we do not associate with the Africans in their desire for the good things in civilisation and block their way. The reality of the situation must be frankly realised."[228] He added that he hoped the ongoing Lancaster talks would result in a constitution that would ensure a prosperous and secure future for all Kenyans by providing a basis for sagacious and systematic economic planning. Another leader, I. T. Inamdar, the president of Mombasa's Indian Association, asked Asians to accept the ongoing changes and to try and adjust to them as well as they possibly could. He expressed concern over anti-Asian remarks made by African leaders and added that they accepted their obligations to the country and hoped African leaders would in turn work towards building relationships with Asians and a country in which everybody would feel secure in the

[226] *CT*, "Security and Leadership," vol. 25, no. 1392, Thursday 7 March 1960, p. 3.
[227] *KDM*, "Asians Must Make Themselves Wanted in Kenya," vol. 33. No. 14, Monday 18 January 1960, p. 2.
[228] Ibid., p. 2.

future.[229] If these were their hopes, they too must have shared the press' frustrations with the country's Asian leadership. The press believed that country's Asian leadership needed to speak with one voice but found events in the Asian political scene rather disconcerting.

The 26th session of the Kenya Indian Congress (KIC) ended in acrimony.[230] Its leadership was torn apart by disagreements over a motion on whether or not the KIC should field candidates in the forthcoming general elections. Supporters of the motion including an ex-President of the Congress pointed to India and argued that the Indian National Congress there fielded candidates and did not see why the same could not apply to KIC. They also insisted that doing so would give the Congress a great opportunity to participate in the struggle for independence. Those who objected, including J. M. Nazareth, maintained that KIC should remain a non-partisan body that spoke for all Kenyan Asians. A resolution in favour of the motion passed amidst a chaotic meeting. *CT* was not in favour of the motion but for different reasons altogether. First, the motion turned KIC into a racial party, but as rapid changes took place, it seemed to the paper that in a democratic Kenya ideology would be the distinguishing factor for political parties, not race. In addition, the motion threatened to place all Asians who did not stand for elections under its umbrella in opposition to it.[231] Secondly, and most radically, at the beginning of 1961 the newspaper declared KIC a "sinking ship."[232] The organisation had outlived its purpose and was no longer relevant to the altered political environment. Its leaders had reduced its functions to attacking members of the Kenya Freedom Party that it now considered its rival for the support of Kenyan Asians as its members in the LEGCO voted against key opposition propositions, such as a 1961 independence date and the harmonisation of the independence of the three East African

[229] *KDM*, "Indians Asked to Adjust with Needs of Time, vol. 33, no. 39, Tuesday 16 February 1960, p. 2.
[230] *CT*, "Congress Session a Failure?" vol. 28, no. 1422, Thursday 13 October 1960, p. 1.
[231] *CT*, "Congress in Doldrums," vol. 28, no. 1424, Thursday 27 October 1960, p. 3.
[232] *CT*, "Speeches from a Sinking Ship," vol. 28, no. 1436, Thursday 19 January 1961, p. 3.

territories for economic purposes. *CT* posited that some of KIC's candidates could survive the elections, but that would be because of their own individual efforts ("good swimmers") and not because they were affiliated to the Congress, for the "ship itself is doomed."[233] Interestingly, in July 1961 the President of the Congress at a meeting held in conjunction with the Kenya Muslim League acknowledged that their political associations would have to be disbanded in the near future as there would be soon be no need for "racial bodies." Meanwhile, *CT* insisted that that time had already gone past but the problem was that Asian leaders lacked the political will and courage to take the steps necessary in that direction.[234] In addition, following the dissolution of bodies such as KIC the newspaper encouraged Asian politicians to stand for elections as candidates of African parties namely KANU and KADU.

CT thought it crucial to caution Asians against isolating themselves from African parties and politics in general. Africans comprised over 90 per cent of the population and would control the nation's political life after independence. It was necessary for minorities to recognise that all stood to benefit from a stable and just government, and the editor was of the opinion that a key ingredient in ensuring such a government took root was to respect African views and to join their political endeavours by becoming part of and working through their political bodies. They were also to make an effort to understand those behind whom Africans threw their support. Besides, and most importantly, "if a community ignores the views of the African voters it will have difficulty in securing co-operation in future. Any community…which fails to pay heed to what the political organisations of Africans will decide to do so at its own responsibility."[235] As elections were underway, readers were also warned not to take comfort in the victories of

[233] Ibid., p. 3.
[234] *CT*, "Choice Between Alternatives," vol. 28, no.1460, Thursday 6 July 1961, p.3.
[235] CT, "Two Relevant Considerations," vol. , no., Thursday 2 February 1961, p. 3.

minority candidates who rode to victory without African support, for the editor was sure that would not be the case in future elections.

Some Asian politicians did join both KANU and KADU and in so doing became embroiled in their differences over independent Kenya's constitutional framework. Three Asians stood for elections on KIC tickets and won, as did one independent. After the elections, the KIC joined KADU in government with the consent of the Congress that thought it best for their candidates to join the party that had opted to work with the government while the independent joined KANU. They did so although one candidate hesitated. *CT* thought KIC's action, that is choosing to align itself with one African party or another, was a ghastly mistake.[236] The paper suggested that KIC ought to have set the candidates free to choose one party or the other. It did not help that one of KADU's most prominent members, Daniel arap Moi, on hearing of the tensions within KIC threatened Asians with expulsion not only from Kenya but from East Africa even though his party had benefited from the elections. KANU's Tom Mboya, in his capacity as the party's Secretary General, condemned the statement. KADU was the party in government and Moi was stoking the deepest fears of Asians who feared marginalisation in an independent Kenya. They had spent over half a century fighting the European for respect and equality and there were many, like those behind *CT*, who kept hoping that those goals that had been unattainable under a British-led country would be attainable in an African-led country. For the paper, it also highlighted the caution with which Asians had to manage their transition into the new Kenya as it had proclaimed in the years leading up to the elections.

Independence: The Asian Press Goes Silent

While Kenya did eventually transition into independence with an African-led and dominated government, Asian newspapers did not and by the end of the sixties all their printing

[236] *CT*, "Parties in Trouble," vol. 28, no. 2863, Thursday 27 July 1961, p. 3.

presses had ceased to produce them. By 1960, *KDM* was a six-paged newspaper, four of which were in Gujarati. It was an odd linguistic shift at a time when the paper was clamouring for interracial harmony in a country in which more people (both African and European) spoke more English than Gujarati. The following year, it continued publication as a Gujarati weekly and shortly thereafter ceased to exist. Similarly, in July 1962 *Colonial Times* announced that it would from then on publish a purely Gujarati newspaper on a weekly basis. It enthusiastically informed its readers that the English section of the newspaper would be shifted to a new publication that was to be called *Africa Times*. Harkening back to its 1930s heritage, it explained that the new paper was aimed at "elite intellectual leadership" and would be reflective of the ongoing changes in Africa as it would be "dedicated to the Africans of tomorrow" and would portray "the Africa of today." The new publication would also seek to nurture "indigenous" talent "which will dedicate its arts and aspiration towards enhancing the glory of our Africa." However, the *Africa Times* never really took off as a publication and the *Colonial Times* never made it past 1962.

In 1952, the *Daily Chronicle* changed hands. It came under the ownership of the A.B. Patel group and shortly afterwards another Asian firm, M. M. Bhatt & Sons purchased it.[237] Notably, Pio Gama Pinto joined the *Daily Chronicle* as editor in 1952 after resigning from his post as the paid Secretary to the Kenya Indian Congress where he had worked closely with leaders of the Kenya African Union. In addition to his editorial duties, Pinto also served as the correspondent of the Press Trust of India and All India Radio and continued to collaborate with KAU members who had not been detained. His activities led to his arrest and detention under the Emergency Regulations in June 1954 until he was freed in the latter months of 1959. Once he was released, Pinto, who considered himself a member of "the progressive front among Asians in Kenya," formed the Kenya Freedom Party during the first Lancaster House Conference and

[237] Gregory, *Quest for Equality*, p. 175.

worked as its Assistant Secretary. When he found KANU open to members of other races, he welcomed the dissolution of his party and joined it. Pinto threw himself into KANU politics.[238] Together with Oginga Odinga, Tom Mboya and James Gichuru, he helped set up the party newspaper *Sauti ya Kanu* (Kanu's Voice). From January 1962, he also worked as the Commercial Manager of the Pan African Press Limited which published *Sauti ya Mwafrika* (The African's Voice) and helped ready the party for elections in his honorary capacity as Secretary of the KANU Nairobi Election Committee. In 1963, Pinto stood for election on a KANU ticket and won. He appeared to be making a smooth transition from communal Asian politics to African nationalist politics that Asian newspapers had started to champion in the late fifties. In the meantime, the *Daily Chronicle* died silently in 1964.

One year later, Pinto was dead, the first assassination victim of the Kenyatta government era. In 1966, the Pan African Press Ltd., started drafting a tribute to Pinto. Contributors included some of Pinto's closest associates and friends: Oginga Odinga, Bildad Kaggia, Achieng' Oneko, J.D. Kali, Dennis Akumu, Joseph Murumbi and Muinga Chitari Chokwe.[239] The first five had by then fallen out with the KANU government which had labeled them communists for their socialist populism. All were members of KANU but had quickly grown weary of a party they considered packed with government cronies too beholden to its former colonial ruler to care about the impoverished masses.[240] In addition to associating with this group of politicians Pinto had in 1961 worked closely with Muinga Chokwe to establish the Moçambique African National Union which by the time of his death had forged links with the Moçambique National Liberation Front (FRELIMO) that benefitted from funding from various overseas countries

[238] MAC/KEN/71/2, Pinto, Pio da Gama: Election Communications. Nairobi: KNA.
[239] Odinga, *Not Yet Uhuru*, p/ 287-8, 292. The author gives his perspective on Pinto's assassination and the events that followed.
[240] For more on his group of politicians see Colin Leys, *Underdevelopment in Kenya: The Political Economy of Neo-Colonialism*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: The University of California Press, 1975, p. 212 – 253.

including the USSR and China.[241] In his tribute, Murumbi defended Pinto against accusations that he was a communist, calling him a socialist and adding that even if he were the latter "surely in a democratic Kenya it is not a crime warranting death to follow any political persuasion."[242] Though a Goan, a minority group amongst Kenya's Asians, his death must have reverberated deeply within the entire Asian community

It can be conjectured that Pinto was a canary of sorts in the mine that was post-independence politics for Asians and that his assassination led to an existential crisis for Asians in Kenya. This crisis could only have been heightened by the arrest and deportation to India of Pranlal Sheth in 1966.[243] In the run up to independence and after, Sheth developed close relationships with the same group of politicians who were critics of government policies at a time when it was becoming clear that Kenya's independence did not guarantee one the freedom of expression: Oginga Odinga, Achieng' Oneko and Joseph Murumbi. Coupled with post-independent government policies that were geared towards Africanising the economy, including the wholesale and retail trade sector to which Asians had retreated in light of restrictions the colonial government had placed on Asian land ownership, Kenyan Asians quietly withdrew from public life.[244] They found a niche in the manufacturing sector which they expanded successfully as their participation in politics, even relative to their small numbers, became anaemic. The

[241] MAC/KEN/71/2, Pinto, Pio da Gama: Election Communications. Nairobi: KNA. Pinto's extent of involvement with FRELIMO if any is unclear. He only mentions his involvement with the Mocambique African National Union in this document. Brief mention of his work with FRELIMO can be found in Pheroze Nowrojee, *Pio Gama Pinto*: *Patriot for Social Justice.* Nairobi: Sasa Sema Publications, 2007.
[242] MAC/KEN/(Last reference number not visible), Pinto, Pio Gama: Miscellaenous Correspondence, 1952-1972. Nairobi: KNA.
[243] Gregory, *Quest for Equality*, p. 179. Gregory considers Pinto's death and Sheth's deportation as particularly damaging to Asian journalism. This however, does not explain why all the major Asian dailies had gone out of print by the time of Pinto's death.
[244] For more on how Africanisation efforts affected Kenyan Asians see Nicola Swainson. *The Development of Corporate Capitalism in Kenya: 1918 – 1977.* Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1980.

unstated maxim for Asians who chose not to leave the country after independence appears to have become lay low, invest wisely and survive until the seas calm down.

Most importantly, the waters of newly independent Kenya appear to have become too capricious for any Asian who would have aspired to revive the old newspapers or start a new one in the model of the old. The old newspapers had their eyes trained largely on Asian politics and had championed the political and economic interests of their owners as members of a race subordinated to Europeans. Their owners recognised that little could be achieved without the support of ordinary Asians. After all, it was they who made a boycott or protest effective and who voted at communal and later open roll elections to their benefit or detriment. This support was crucial even when it came at the cost of internecine battles. The *Colonial Times* appeared to be on the brink of developing a new journalistic formula, but at a time when 'nation building' and 'nationalism' were buzz words, perhaps a Gujarati newspaper appeared to be out of place, especially for a people who did not want to be remembered as a distinct race that even though subordinate to the European during the colonial era had enjoyed a status higher than that of the African. At the same time, the continued publication of *Africa Times* in the absence of a Gujarati newspaper may not have been adequately motivating. The *Daily Chronicle* under Pinto may have transitioned into the new era as a progressive publication but in light of his political views and those of the KANU government, it is unlikely that it would have survived. The new era called for a new journalistic formula. The failure of colonial era Asian newspaper owners and editors was that they were unable to come up with a formula for a newspaper that served their objectives as it navigated the vicissitudes of independent Kenyan politics.

"THE PAPER IS THEIR MEETING GROUND"[1]
African Newspapers: 1920s – 1952

Government have been publishing many papers at present for Africans to read, and so they say that these papers are highly recommended by this European. Some are given free and some are sold cheaply because they want the African to read just what they think the African should know and no more.[2]

Sometime in 1950, H.C.E. Downes, the government's Press Officer, walked off Nairobi's Racecourse Road and into a small, Spartan office located on a back street that housed the editors of five African newspapers and their printing press. They were the editors of *Muthamaki, Mumenyereri, Muramati, Ramogi* and *Mulina wa Vosi* newspapers. The first three were published in Kikuyu, the fourth in Dholuo and the fifth in Maragoli. He was visiting the office on the invitation of Victor Wokabi, editor of *Muthamaki*. He, his fellow editors, and editors of defunct African newspapers at the meeting wanted to discuss the unfair treatment they insisted they had always received at the hands of the government. Downes recalls seeing "an extraordinary crowd of khaki overcoated gentlemen sitting in the background" whom the editors informed him were their correspondents.[3] He later realised that they really were the most avid letter writers to the newspapers and not conventional reporters. The "correspondents" sat in still silence throughout the meeting. The editors paid a modest sum for the rent of their room and shared a hand operated press located in a room that was a third of its optimal operation size. *Ramogi's* Zabulon Oti, who operated the press, obtained his ink and paper from Asians at black-market prices and had under his charge employees who were "practically unskilled." The machine was in such poor shape that the press officer labeled it "worthless." Such was the state

[1] AG/5/23, Newspaper article from *Muthamaki* in correspondence from Office of Director of Intelligence and Security to The Hon. Member of Law and Order (2 August 1950). Nairobi: KNA. The complete sentence is "the House of Mumbi (Agikuyu) know very well that the paper is their meeting ground, where they meet and express their views wherever they may be."
[2] Ibid., 2 August 1950.
[3] AG/5/24, A Scheme to Improve the African Press of Kenya. 30 January 1951. Nairobi: KNA.

of the African press in the mid-20th century. Nevertheless, from this humble setting the editors churned out newspapers in which their generation of young, mission-educated leaders waged veritable battles against both fellow Africans and Europeans who resisted their efforts not only to liberate, but also to set the agenda for the general development of themselves and their societies. To this end, African newspapers acted as venues for their owners and readers to express dissent, shape the direction of cultural change, and provide centres for politico-economic mobilisation and calls to action.

Tinder for Press Fires: The Colonial Order versus Disenfranchised African Youth

In a report that was a product of the above meeting, H.C.E. Downes, acting on Victor Wokabi's claim to have been the first African editor, gave 1946 as the year in which the African press was established, but he was off the mark by over 20 years. The first African newspapers appeared in Central Kenya in the 1920s. They were the publications of a generation of Christianised and Westernised Kikuyu men. The first of these was Harry Thuku's *Tangazo,* which Manibhai Desai's *East African Chronicle* newspaper published. As compared to its Asian and European contemporaries, *Tangazo* was so humble in size and appearance that Thuku himself called it a circular and not a newspaper. With this publication, Thuku publicised the activities of his political association and fought those who got in his way, both African and European. It survives mainly in the form of excerpts and references in his autobiography but with enough detail to permit an assessment and understanding of its role in his political activism.[4] Thuku was born in 1895 and in his autobiography recalls that around the time of his father's death in 1899, a European had quietly taken residence on land his clan owned. About 15 years later, the clan learnt that this part of their land had been sold to a government official and they

[4] A single leaf of the publication, "Tafathalini m'fanye msada wa cents 5 kama juzz [juzi]," ("An appeal to you to contribute 5 cents as you did the day before yesterday") is owned by the library of the University of California, Berkeley.

were asked to move, which they did. He joined the Gospel Missionary Society (GMS) as a boy, became a Christian and in 1911 departed for Nairobi as a teenager. It is here that he was to become increasingly politicized and would begin his forays into the colony's newspaper world. Initially, Thuku worked as a cleaner and messenger at the Standard Bank of South Africa and served a brief prison term for forging a cheque.[5] His next job was that of composing type at a European newspaper, *The Leader of British East Africa*, in 1914. Thuku credits his work at the newspaper with raising his political consciousness by exposing him to a multiplicity of stories in which the hardships of Africans "entered into [his] head and lay quiet until later on."[6] He was particularly troubled by forced labour (especially that which involved women and girls who were prone to sexual exploitation), the *kipande,* and an unjust taxation system.[7]

Thuku's work in Nairobi enabled him to interact with an ethnically and racially diverse range of people, many of whom by the early 1920s were partners in his political endeavours. Among his colleagues at the newspaper was Josiah Njonjo, a future member of the Young Kikuyu Association (YKA). He used his earnings at the newspaper to rent a single room in an Asian owned house on Nairobi's River Road which was inhabited by the first generation of African government clerks. He recalls that these government employees came from places as far apart as Buganda, far inland, and Freretown and Rabai on the Kenyan coast. They included Jimmy (James) Jones, the son of an African Church Missionary Society (CMS) pastor who was named after James Hannington, the CMS bishop killed by Kabaka Mwanga in 1885 on his way to Bugandan territory (Jones' father had accompanied him on that fatal trip); Ralph Sanda, a

[5] Harry Thuku. *Harry Thuku: An Autobiography*. Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1970, p. 12. Thuku claims that he and a young relative acted out of naiveté and his intention was not to steal but to make funds available for the latter whose employer had travelled to the United States on leave.
[6] Ibid., p. 15.
[7] Ibid., p. 15 – 20. The *kipande* was an identity document (placed in a container and worn around the neck of the African male) required only for Africans in colonial Kenya. It had personal details as well as one's employment record and was instituted to control the movements of Africans with a view to enhancing the adminitration's ability to extract labour.

Giriama who was educated at the CMS mission in Rabai; Francis Hamisi, also from the coast, a Muslim and a future newspaper owner; Abdala Tairara bin Assuman, a distant relative of Thuku's and leader of a small Kikuyu-Muslim community in Nairobi; Mohamed Sheikh, a Kamba Muslim; Job Muchuchu and Ishmael Mungai, who sold bread at a small shop on River Road; Asians such as A. M. Jevanjee and M. A. Desai; and Ssentongo, a Buganda clerk who owned a newspaper named *Sekanyolya* and through whom Thuku learnt about the Young Baganda Association from which the Young Kikuyu Association (YKA) took its inspiration.

The YKA was as much a political weapon against European oppression as it was against an older generation of Kikuyu, government-created chiefs for whom Thuku and his peers had little respect. In early June, just as Thuku and his colleagues were mulling over the establishment of the YKA, they learned that the Kikuyu Association (KA), a body led by Kikuyu chiefs, had put together a petition with the help of the Church of Scotland Mission (CSM) detailing grievances they wanted the government to address and it had agreed to a meeting to discuss the contents of the petition at Dagoretti near the residence of Chief Kinyanjui. Kikuyu chiefs (and many others of various ethnicities) were late 19th century and early 20th century creations of the British for administrative purposes. They wielded powers that were alien to their cultural setting and their roles in labour recruitment and tax collection made them unpopular. From time to time even they were compelled to complain to the government when they thought its demands excessive and too unpopular to carry out, but usually they lacked the respect of those over whom they presided, and who increasingly came to see them as government bucket boys.[8] In time, a new generation of educated, Christianised Africans emerged with the means to acquire wealth

[8] For more on the creation of chiefs in Kikuyuland see Godfrey Muriuki. *A History of the Kikuyu 1500 – 1900*. Nairobi, London, New York: Oxford University Press, 1974, chapters 6 and 7. See also Marshall Clough. *Fighting Two Sides: Kenyan Chiefs and Politicians, 1918-1940*. Niwot, CO: University Press of Colorado, c. 1990 and Robert Tignor. "Colonial chiefs in chiefless societies," *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol. 9, no. 3 (October 1971), pp. 339 – 359.

and influence outside traditional socio-economic and political circles and they started to pose a challenge to chiefs and the generally gerontocratic order of their societies. With their education and determination to make hay out of the meagre opportunities the new colonial order afforded them, they now had the ability to upset old systems of patronage. They also recognised the need for their societies to embrace and adapt to their own needs the principles, systems and facilities of the new order for them to succeed personally and as individuals with the dignity of having a liberated and independent people behind them. Experiments with capitalism, as would be mooted in various newspapers for example, could not succeed without a people (Africans being the majority in any given locality) who felt the need to acquire its services or products and who morally as well as intellectually considered themselves the equals of Europeans. Thuku's decision to attend the chiefs' meeting at Dagoretti, therefore, can be seen as the beginning of a triangular battle for African hearts and minds with a younger generation of educated Africans (who amongst the Kikuyu were also known as *athomi*, readers) on one side, chiefs on the other, and the British on another. It would be waged on the ground and on paper.

The meeting, which was attended by the Acting Chief Native Commissioner and the District Commissioner of Kiambu among others, commenced with private committee discussions between the chiefs and government officials. In his account of the meeting, Thuku's discomfiture with the contemporaneous hierarchy of Kikuyu politico-economics and its *modus operandi* is clearly evident. He observed that during that session "Kinyanjui, Waruhiu, Philipo Karanja James and other prominent Kikuyu went into a committee for a short time; we younger people did not know what was being discussed."[9] To his surprise, once the committee meeting ended, its members all came out and Kinyanjui selected Thuku to serve as the secretary of the meeting. It is not clear why he did this as his own secretary, Philipo James, had accompanied him to the

[9] The first two were chiefs while Philipo James was Kinyanjui's secretary.

meeting. However, it was probably because Thuku, who was not working for any of the chiefs but was equipped with the skills necessary to take down the minutes of the meeting, was seen as a more neutral figure. Once the meeting came to a close, Thuku found himself irreconcilably opposed to the method the Kikuyu chiefs had chosen to submit the petition to the British Government in London. According to him, they had resolved to send it through a conventional chain of communication that would result in the petition passing through the hands of the District Commissioner of Kiambu, then the Provincial Commissioner in Nyeri, from the Provincial Commissioner to the Chief Native Commissioner, then to the Chief Secretary of Government and finally to the Governor, who could then decide whether or not to send it to London. Thuku was dismayed because "I know each man on the way would add his comments to the Memorandum, and I could guess what some of them might be – not in our favour certainly!" For him, the chiefs were too close, too comfortable and too trusting of a colonial order that was skewed against the African to be effective in their efforts at advocacy. Having been the secretary of the meeting, he had a copy of the memorandum and he resolved to send it to London using a more direct route in the name of the YKA.

The submission of the memorandum to London would be the first significant political action of the YKA as well as a brazen act of insubordination against both the colony's government and the Kikuyu chiefs. It was the first call to arms of a battle that would be waged on the ground in rallies and campaigns as well as in the Asian press, Thuku's fledgling *Tangazo,* and other publications that would follow it. On his return to Nairobi, Thuku met with his peers and in accordance with bonds forged amongst youthful workers of diverse ethnic origins and lessons gained as a consequence, decided that a petition to London that addressed the grievances of one ethnic group was neither inclusive nor powerful enough. They resolved to expand its

scope to cover all Africans and, in the same spirit, decided to change the name of the association to the East African Association (EAA) in July 1921. Next, the EAA held a meeting at a venue their Asian supporters made available, the Arya Samaj Girls School on Nairobi's Ngara Road, which according to Thuku was attended by at least 2,000 people to whom they laid out their plans and discussed various grievances. The meeting was a sharp ethnic contrast to Dagoretti's the month before. Amongst those who spoke were James Mwanthi, who was Kamba and a certain Abednego, who was Luo. Jimmy Jones was in attendance and so was Ssentongo, who took a copy of the petition and published it in his paper a few days later. Manibhai Desai edited the petition and suggested names of members of the House of Commons whom he thought would be amenable to giving an African voice a fair hearing. Thuku then sent it off as a telegram to England. After it was safely out of the country, he sent a copy of the document to the colonial government in Nairobi with a request that they send it to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Once news of the EAA's action spread, there was a great furore in government and Kikuyu political circles as they were not at all pleased that its contents had included the words "next to missionaries Indians were our best friends" or that the association had even sent the telegram in the first place.[10] First, his association's decision to send the letter had circumvented and even challenged chiefly authority. Second, Thuku explains that he had included the words declaring Afro-Asian friendship because shortly before he sent the telegram, he had learnt that leaders of the European Convention of Associations while on a trip to London had resorted to using Africans as pawns against their Asian foes by arguing that the latter were inimical to the interests of the former, whom only Europeans could safely steward. Thuku had most likely heard about this assertion from Desai and included the line as a show of appreciation of and support for his Asian backers, as after all "Indians had not taken any of our land by force; they had no power

[10] Thuku. *Harry Thuku*, p. 23.

and were only traders" from whom Africans could purchase a variety of goods that they had come to depend on in small, convenient quantities.[11] Thuku's actions were to cost him his job which was by that time at the Treasury, for given the choice between continuing to work for the government and staying out of politics or taking up politics and resigning from his post, he opted for the latter. Later, he attended a closed session meeting between Kikuyu chiefs and headmen from Fort Hall and Embu uninvited and ready for a confrontation when he learnt about their intentions to denounce the telegram the EAA had sent to England.

On the day of the meeting, he and his colleagues arrived at the station before the Kiambu chiefs to ensure that they would be the first people the leaders would see when they alighted from the train. Thuku's disdain for the chiefs and all they represented is evident in his description of their encounter at the station:

> I stood just opposite the door of the second class coach, and greeting first Kinyanjui and the others as they stepped down. I could see they were very surprised that Thuku had come to their secret meeting. "Let's go the meeting place then," I teased them; and I felt they would have liked to throw me over the nearby Chania Falls. Anyway, we walked down to the site of the present Blue Posts Hotel…Fort Hall and Embu chiefs faced the fall, and the Kiambu group had their backs to it. We three "bad" boys sat at the side.[12]

The "bad boys" had their work cut out for them, but the utter disrespect and disdain with which Thuku held the older generation's leadership seems to have eroded any feelings of anxiety he may have had and emboldened him. There was little any chief could say to change his mind:

> Kinyanjui rose to explain the situation. Now, he was not what the Kikuyu call a *muthamaki* – a man who can draw people to him by words. And especially when he was telling lies he could not speak very convincingly; you see, he was simply telling them what his own D.C. Campbell had told him, and you could see that sometimes he forgot his words. (They called him paramount chief, but I don't think the Kikuyu would have chosen him if they had been allowed to vote).[13]

[11] Ibid., p. 23.
[12] Ibid., p. 26.
[13] Ibid., p. 26

According to Thuku's recollection of the day, Kinyanjui proceeded to call him a "thief" for stealing the Dagoretti meeting's resolutions and accused him of lying to the British government about many things in addition to plotting "to bring Indians to rule us."[14] When given a chance to defend himself, Thuku pointed out to Kinyanjui that it was the Government and not he who had brought Asians to build the railway and that he was not opposed to Europeans in general, but only to those who had stolen land. After he had spoken those attending the meeting broke up into regional groups. Upon their reassembly, Thuku writes that two Embu chiefs spoke powerfully in his favour with one of them defending him as a man akin to the *njubiri*, brave men of yore who had served as lookouts for enemies. Thuku left the meeting unscathed and on his return to Nairobi threw his energies into the EAA and *Tangazo*.

The EAA held several meetings, all of which *Tangazo* covered, disseminating news of their proceedings and the organisation's goals and activities in general. In Nairobi, meetings were held on unoccupied land between the Post Office and the District Commissioner's office while meetings of the committee took place in Tairara's house as he owned a typewriter. They diligently worked to cultivate a network of supporters locally and internationally and Thuku continued his efforts to make the EAA a truly multi-ethnic organisation that represented "Kenya's educated native opinion."[15] On one occasion in early 1922 when Thuku held an EAA meeting in Ng'enda "deep in Kikuyu country," he made sure that he was accompanied by a Nandi, Luo and Kamba Muslim "to show the Kikuyu that there were many other people in Kenya."[16] The EAA platform of action was to be broad and bold, not timid and parochial like the

[14] Ibid., p. 26
[15] Thuku's words as quoted in Keith Kyle, "Gandhi, Harry Thuku and Early Kenyan Nationalism," *Transition*, no.27 (1966), p. 21.
[16] Thuku, *Harry Thuku*, p. 29.

Kikuyu Association and the chiefs that Thuku so despised.[17] In *Tangazo*, Thuku reported on the meeting thus:

> I was very delighted to be travelling to the meeting at Ng'enda, because I was accompanied by the school teacher, Samuel Okoth, a Christian from Maseno, and two Moslems, their names were Abdulla Tairara and Ali Kironjo. We were very pleased at our trip for we travelled as brothers. And I saw no difference between the Kavirondo and the man from Kikuyu, or even between the Christian believer and the believer in Islam. I was pleased too in that we fulfilled the command of our Lord God – that you should love your neighbor as yourself.[18]

In this way the paper, published in both Kiswahili and Kikuyu, complemented the work of the EAA. Although the country's literate population was still quite modest in the 1920s, Thuku thought it important to do all he could to broaden the political mindset of its up and coming generation of readers, the leaders of tomorrow who would take up the African case on a bigger and united platform that would in turn pose a more formidable challenge to the country's colonial government. They were united by the education that enabled them to navigate the rapidly changing political, economic and social terrain, religious and ethnic tolerance as well as a firm belief in the advancement of all Africans who shared their training and vision. The association continued to hold rallies protesting colonial policies as various British quarters looked on concerned.

Meanwhile, Thuku's protests against forced labour and unjust taxation unsettled them the most and culminated in his arrest. On the day he was arrested, on 14 March 1922, the head of the Church of Scotland Mission, Dr. John Arthur, criticised government policies that had bolstered the EAA's support amongst Africans, in particular "this lad Harry Thuku [who]…likens himself to Ngangi (?) [Gandhi] in India." By the 1920s, Africans had changed their forms of protest and advocacy drastically and Dr. Arthur attributed these changes to their "development" which

[17] Ibid., p. 28 – 29.
[18] Ibid., p. 30

enabled them to "safeguard themselves against oppression and exploitation."[19] Following his arrest and detention in Nairobi, the EAA organised a rally outside the police station in support of Thuku, violence erupted when the police fired into the crowd and the government subsequently banned the EAA. Thuku was deported to Kismayu where he remained until 1930.

A Place for Chiefs to Impale Themselves

Nevertheless, the hostility between the readers and the chiefs had not abated and this time the readers, who dominated politics amongst the Kikuyu in the years following Thuku's arrest, took to *Muigwithania* to convey their side of the story. *Muigwithania* was sponsored by the Kikuyu Central Association (KCA) which was established in 1924. It succeeded the EAA as the voice of the Kikuyu *athomi*. A few copies survived the historical record in addition to a bound volume of typed issues and articles which the colonial government's security apparatus translated for censorship purposes.[20] In 1928, *Muigwithania's* detailed report on a meeting Kikuyu chiefs convened served to depict them as an archaic, self-seeking, egotistical lot who were enemies of progress. The paper quoted the chiefs liberally as if its intention was to provide them with ample space to convict themselves by their own words in front of the audience the KCA had diligently assembled since *Muigwithania's* publication debut.

On 20 April of that year, a major meeting of leaders from all over Kikuyu country met in Nyeri to discuss issues of concern to them; although once the meeting had been convened it became clear that the chiefs had called it to push for the suppression of the KCA with government assistance. Among the government officials present were the District Commissioner (DC), the Provincial Commissioner (PC), and the Chief Native Commissioner (CNC). The Provincial Commissioner spoke first and termed the meeting one of "concord" that the chiefs had

[19] Kyle, "Gandhi, Harry Thuku and Early Kenyan Nationalism," p. 6.
[20] DC/MKS.10B/13/1: *Muigwithania*. Nairobi: KNA. Translations from this source shall be quoted exactly as they appear in this record, i.e. with the inclusion of the interpreter's notes vis-à-vis alternative meanings.

proposed so that the community could come together, iron out differences, and develop an atmosphere in which people could prosper. In *Muigwithania's* account of the meeting he then proceeded to detail the two items that comprised the meeting's agenda — an agenda that to the readers must have appeared to be one that served to mutually reinforce the interests of its conveners. The paper reported the PC exhorting the people that "it were well for the people to pay heed to (or, obey) the authority for the Chiefs, because they have been placed in their positions by the Government. That is the first thing."[21] In addition, the divisions amongst the Kikuyu also did not augur well for effective administration and so the PC explained that the CNC had thought the meeting important because "the people were not in agreement amongst themselves; they ought to agree together."[22] The first chief who spoke was Chief Wambugu. He zeroed in on the female circumcision controversy as the chief cause of societal disagreement and blamed the readers for the misunderstanding because some of them had advocated its abolition while others supported the retention of the practice. Paramount Chief Kinyanjui was surprised that the matter had been brought up for debate in the first place. Indeed, it is evident from the pages of the newspaper that KCA was strongly in favour of female circumcision.

At this point the meeting turned to a discussion of its main objective: the activities of KCA. The chiefs' statements reveal how they thought KCA was rapidly shifting the balance of power with which they had become comfortable in its favour. Chief Murigu, in a tone that was either reconciliatory or paternalistic, expressed a desire to "talk with our children and come to a conclusion with them, so that we may know what is troubling them (may know their complaints)." For some of the "readers" (Mission people) have been given authority (or chieftainship) in the country…we wish to agree amongst ourselves because these young men

[21] DC/MKS.10B/13/1, *Muigwithania*. Nairobi: KNA, p. 246.
[22] Ibid., p. 246.

who are here are our children." Next, Chief Ngatunyi accused the KCA of plotting to unseat the chiefs and collecting money to finance the release and installment of Harry Thuku as a chief. He insisted "that is why we do not recognise them (know their affair) for they debate (or, meet for discussion) at night. We do not want them to be our rulers. If the Government wishes us to resign from our positions (from authority) today and wishes to hand the authority to them, and for us to sit down. But I say this because I am a chief: if it is desired to depose me, let me be deposed." Chief Kereithi then attempted a public dissection of the association by calling attention to "four lots of these readers (i.e. educated Natives): some of them want Harry Thuku and others want the 'Githaka' (land), and others want the chiefs to be deposed, and others want the circumcision (i.e., the preservation of female circumcision)." Kereithi then aggressively asserted that "I myself (Kereithi) should like to (or, am able to) attack (or punish) these people." He posited that "if the 'Bwana Mkubwa' would give me leave, I would gather them together one morning and cut them up (lit. slash them about) and trample them under my feet like little rats and make an end of them. For they pay (contribute? Or, levy upon others?) Shs. 20/-, and they eat sheep at night, taking oaths." He thus presented the KCA as a nuisance. Nevertheless, his remarks also reveal seething anger at an organisation that appeared to have been inspired by a man (Harry Thuku) who had flagrantly flouted their authority not too long ago and was collecting funds for a coffer they did not control. The fund would in turn enable the association to power themselves towards goals that the chiefs had not determined and which could actually be inimical to their own interests. Another attendee, Gideon Gatere, insisted that the government officials present inform the chiefs whether or not they had given their consent to KCA's activities.

A Place for the KCA to Stand Tall

If the report painted an unflattering picture of the Kikuyu chiefs, the same could hardly be said for the manner in which it presented its sponsor, the KCA. When the association finally got a chance to speak for itself, Joseph Kang'ethe and Johnstone (later Jomo) Kenyatta addressed those present and the newspaper gave their speeches equally generous coverage. Kang'ethe dismissed charges of clandestine KCA meetings because:

> When we meet we send letters to the D.C. and to the P.C. and if we conspire (debate) against the chiefs, you know (i.e., you Europeans know?), because we send letters to you (to your place). For our debates are not secret (lit. the debating which debate, or, the matter about which we debate, is not secret), and the matter of circumcision which is spoken of here is discussed in the Council which has been appointed (Local Native Council?). But what is said (has been said) here is not what we look to (i.e., are concerned with?), but as regards goats, we eat them because at a time such as this when we have come here they form our food, in the same way that the chiefs who have come here now have goats (or sheep, etc.) slaughtered for them by the other chiefs. Then as regards shillings, we contribute (give) them for the work [of] our country, and if the 'Bwana' would like to enquire, we would show him the reason for them (object of them), for it is not a matter of secrecy. Further, as regards the letter we sent the Governor ('to the Governor's residence'), you can read (it) and see that there was (is) no slander (accusations) written in it, but only matters of complaint on behalf of our country.[23]

Thus, in his remarks Kang'ethe defended KCA blow by blow against the accusations the chiefs had made against them by asserting the registration of its activities with the government, who were the ultimate decision makers in the land and to whom the chiefs themselves owed their allegiance. According to him, the association worked in pursuit of the interests of the people and not against them. He did not even bother to deny allegations that the organisation to which he belonged had spoken unfavourably about certain chiefs. What mattered was that the KCA considered their complaints against chiefs to be legitimate and that it had explicitly communicated them to the government. For his part, Kenyatta decried the belligerent tone of the

[23] Ibid., p. 248.

meeting and similarly defended the association as one that merely sought to advance the interests of the people. He observed that:

> As we arrived here we supposed we had come to seek agreement: we did not know that it was a matter of a Chief ('one Chief') and the people of his district who were coming to dispute together about some quarrel ('ill feeling') they might have at home in their own villages. And as regards the Association, we speak in [on] behalf of (on account of) our land (*githaka*), because from it comes the food we eat, and it is why those of our chiefs who do not know say that it is their authority we conspire against. Know now that if we stay here talking angrily ('saying things of anger'), it will get dark. It behooves us to talk about agreeing together (or, about what will bring us into agreement), for we are all Kikuyu, and are all dependent upon ('what benefits us is just') the food which comes out of the soil.[24]

Kenyatta remained firmly in support of the association but his tone was more conciliatory. However, the chiefs were resolute in their suspicion and resentment of the organisation.

As the meeting proceeded, the chiefs demanded the abolition of the KCA. Chief Wambugu insisted that the Kikuyu only needed the Local Native Council and chiefs, so the presence of the KCA was superfluous and unhelpful. Chief Koinange wa Mbiu revisited Harry Thuku's letter to London and claimed that "formerly we were with you from the time of Bwana Harry Thuku. But because Thuku wrote a letter and did not inform us, but [p]referred the Indians, that is the reason why we did not like (or, love) Mr Harry Thuku, for we saw that he preferred (or, wanted) the Indians." Chief Wambugu declared that "we decide (rule) that the council ('kiama') which debates (discusses matters) without our knowledge is to be abolished (is to disappear), and we leave (i.e. are left with) the Local Native Council."[25] Once the government officials who had left the meeting area returned, Wambugu expressed to them the chiefs' wishes declaring that "the gathering of elders which meets (gathers) without our knowledge, we say

[24] Ibid., p. 248.
[25] Ibid., p. 251.

(decide) is to be abolished: we wish it to return to the meeting here, for it meets in secret."[26] But KCA remained unmoved, with Kang'ethe reminding the assembled government officials that the association had always kept them informed of their activities. He reminded the P.C. that they had actually invited him to a KCA meeting the month before and this time added that they had also not spoken against chiefs.

When the PC spoke, undoubtedly aware of the political repercussions that might echo to London if KCA was indeed banned, he took a middle of the road approach. He stated that he did not see a need to ban the association, observing that "I have not seen any evils of theirs in the Association, for they argu[e] (debate) convincingly (or, with justice)."[27] He proceeded to caution the KCA to remember that "you should not forget the Chiefs, because they were placed (in authority) by the Government, and their names are at the Governor's." At the same time, he urged the chiefs to recognise that "it were well for you to agree with (come to an understanding with) the heads of this council of the Association, so that your country may progress: and that the Association may bring matters to you in the Local Native Council such things (matters) as they are concerned with."[28] He also proposed that they send their correspondence to the LNC instead of the DC, advice which if followed would have subordinated the KCA to a body for which they had little respect. In any case, the conflict between the two groups did not end.

Chief Kigwaini's reaction to the PC's remarks left no doubt that there would be no ceasefire:

> The father of all of us here is the Government, and we derive our food from the earth ('it is the earth that we eat'). But you are able (or, it is your business) to admonish (instruct, advise) the fools amongst us; because these 'reading' people have entered (or, are entering) the 'Kiama', therefore those who

[26] Ibid., p. 251.
[27] Ibid., p. 252.
[28] Ibid., p. 252.

> err (or make mistakes should be admonished, for they are our own Kikuyu (or are Kikuyu like us). That is the way in which a matter like this should be settled.

To him, KCA posed a real and direct challenge to the prevailing power structure. It was employing methods and instruments of communication and political mobilisation that they could not rival. It was forcing its way into the *kiama* (council of elders) prematurely and pulling the rug that was the Kikuyu people from under their feet. The KCA was a body that claimed to speak for the Kikuyu people and thanks to the weapons their lives of 'readership' availed to them, their voice was getting louder and louder, dominating debate on Kikuyu culture and life. It had hijacked the line of communication between the government and the Kikuyu people that the chiefs had guarded jealously as intermediaries.

KCA Propagates its Vision of a Self-Reliant and Capitalist Kikuyuland

On masthead of *Muigwithania*, the readers' newspaper boldly declared itself "The Unifier of The People and Country of the Kikuyu."[29] With this declaration, it located itself above the political fray that rocked Kikuyu life and assigned itself the role of an impartial, sagacious and caring moderator. To the left of the masthead it announced yet another role. It was "The Voice of the Kikuyu Central Association in the Work of the Country of the Kikuyu" and provocatively appealed to its readers to "Join this Council and Help Your Country."[30] It was provocative because by calling itself a *kiama* the KCA appeared to be positioning itself as a *kiama* parallel to the chief's *kiama*; it was not simply forcing its way into the *kiama* the chiefs had created for themselves, but had created its own *kiama* which now functioned as a rival centre of power. Its *muthondeki* (editor) was Johnstone Kenyatta, who also served as the Secretary of the KCA. Although the KCA owned the newspaper, the Democrat P. & P. Works published it on its presses and Asians were generally supportive of the enterprise. A few Asians placed

[29] Ibid., p. 424.
[30] Ibid., p. 424.

advertisements in the newspaper and in its third issue the paper published a congratulatory message from U. K. Oza, the Hon. Secretary General of the EAINC and Sitaram Achariar, the editor of the *Democrat,* telling them "the need of your people is to learn from us and to express yourself."[31] In words that would have made Thuku cringe, Oza and Acharya counseled the KCA to "be Kikuyu first and everything else afterwards."[32] They were to strike a moderate tone, working "in harmony with the Indians and Europeans," but they were not to lose their identity; "civilize yourself by all means," he encouraged, "but do not Europeanise or Indianise yourselves."[33]

Under Kenyatta and future editors, the newspaper conscientiously undertook to find a balance between exhorting the Kikuyu to take up education, travel widely, and enter the colonial economy as disciplined and ingenious entrepreneurs while urging them not to lose their ethnic identities and safeguarding that which it deemed Kikuyu traditions and worth keeping. These elements comprised that which the KCA believed was essential for a prosperous Kikuyu society. In this society there would be more people who embraced KCA's values, KCA would increasingly become a more comfortable fit in this milieu, its leaders and like-minded individuals would be its future wielders of political power while the chiefs faded into obsolescence. *Muigwithania* helped the KCA disseminate its ideas as it battled against the chiefs for mindshare in Kikuyu country. In its fourth issue, the newspaper reminded its readers of its goal to seek "the welfare of the Kikuyu." The editor explained that the newspaper was vital to its work because

[31] Ibid., p. 411.
[32] Ibid., p. 411.
[33] Ibid., p. 411.

"he who is praised while asleep is not aware of it," i.e. the newspaper was crucial in ensuring the Kikuyu would be kept aware of the work the KCA was doing on their behalf. Although news about KCA activities did not inundate the 16 pages of this 15.8 cm by 22.2 cm paper, its editorials championed KCA causes and its editor gave a generous amount of space to correspondence from readers who echoed its viewpoints.

From the very advent of the newspaper, Kenyatta insisted that the Kikuyu could work their way towards liberty and freedom through diligence, despite their status as a people subjugated to Europeans. In one of its earliest editions, *Muigwithania* dedicated a page to describing "Conditions in Other Countries" interspersed with commentary that reveal the association's position on matters that would emerge as key concerns in later editions. The countries (and one African region) were those in which the British had an interest of one kind or another.[34] Assuming the supremacy of the way of life of the Kikuyu, the paper informed its readers that Britain defeated Australia's aborigines "by reason of their sloth."[35] The country's original inhabitants "did not command knowledge" and "were incapable of working their lands (*ithaka*)" and this it viewed as the reason they lost their lands to the British. The Kikuyu, on the other hand, were different as they knew "well that our ancestor was a cultivator and lover of fine things." It therefore called on the people to cultivate their lands diligently, not only for progress but also to enable them to win representation in the LEGCO. Just as the EAINC, KCA seemed willing to adopt a moderate approach to political advocacy perhaps in part because of that body's influence in African politics and publishing. Whatever the case, the newspaper argued that the Maori of New Zealand had attained a measure of representation in their country because of their

[34] Ibid., p. 429.
[35] Ibid., p. 429. For a different perspective on Australia's aborigines see Australian National Committee for UNESCO, *Australian Aboriginal Culture*. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service for the Australian National Committee for UNESCO, 1973.

hard work which had earned them some respect from the British. It followed then that "if we Kikuyu are diligent and obedient, our Government here will surely listen to our appeal (cry)."[36]

This belief in positive Afro-European interaction is taken even further in the paper's brief survey of South Africa. There, readers were informed that "Europeans went there in order to help black people" but what was undesirable since then was the European insistence on the separation of the races so that "the black people may no longer obtain much knowledge (or, skill) or highly-paid work."[37] The paper's position was a far cry indeed from the confrontational approach the region's newspaper owners would adopt in the years following World War II. Indeed, it was the sort of claim that would irritate even those dubbed as moderate nationalists as the country dashed towards independence. Nevertheless, despite these colonial prejudices towards other indigenous people, throughout its lifespan as a publication, *Muiguithania's* own columns did disclose a deep sense of suspicion, and distrust of the British. This was in addition to an acute sense of land loss suffered at the hands of their colonial masters which had brought the association to the conclusion that it was only through the acquisition of education and a mastery of their political and economic systems that they could regain respect and assert their equality. As such, unspecified Africans in West Africa were to be admired because they had made great advances in the above areas. It therefore behooved the Kikuyu to do likewise while ensuring that the education they obtained was of quality, for "there are many who want us to be taught liberally (without repression) so that we may know how to cultivate large fields and to engage in superior (or, profitable) occupations which will cause ou[r] country to progress."[38] Education that was inferior and geared towards preparing Africans for low-income jobs as well as that which did not prepare them to compete effectively in the agribusiness world was not acceptable.

[36] Ibid., p. 429.
[37] Ibid., p. 429.
[38] Ibid., p. 430.

Shortly after its establishment, *Muigwithania* helped KCA launch one of the modes of achieving an understanding of British ways by publicising a call for funds to send its officials to Europe to advocate on their behalf. It tabulated the number of Kikuyu in six districts with a total of over 600,000 inhabitants and challenged them to use their numbers to achieve this particular goal by their generosity. They needed to:

> Be jealous (envious); se[e] how other African nations (peoples of Africa) have sent their people to Europe, and consider and become convinced that unless we send some of our people to Europe now to be educated ("opened up," developed) so that they, on their part, may come and "open up" for us the concerns of our country, we shall continue to be like[e] stick man who says that "he for whom others go to consult the oracles has to be content with whatever he may be told"[39]…Are you going to be content with what other people tell you? Don't you want to see with your own eyes? Don't you hear it said that one gets lost by staying in one place…My brothers and sisters! Do not think that you are being "got at" (urged) against your wills, for probably that is what many will say who have no interest in helping our country.[40]

KCA officials were aware of delegations (and probably drew inspiration from) that both Asians and Europeans had sent to London in the past to advocate for members who belonged to the organisations that had funded their trips and on whose behalf they spoke. This article called upon readers to recognise that it was within their abilities to ameliorate their hardships, and in this case, sending KCA officials to London would be a big step forward towards that end. Eventually, only Kenyatta left for London. Once there, he sent letters to the newspaper reiterating KCA policies with a renewed sense of urgency brought on by his immediate exposure to the extent of British power and the activities of other Africans in London. His letters were akin to those of an overseas correspondent and probably added greatly to the prestige of the KCA and *Muigwithania* in the eyes of its readers. They had achieved that which the chiefs could barely imagine; they sent a representative with local funds to the land of the power that had colonised them. This was

[39] Ibid., p.326. The translator explains the moral of the proverb as being "that you should find out things for yourself."
[40] Ibid., p. 326.

the power to which previously only telegrams had been sent. Now the KCA was very close to the ears of those who mattered. It can therefore be argued that the letters Kenyatta sent to *Muigwithania* from London bore a significant amount of force and influence and enabled KCA to propel its agenda even farther.

Kenyatta's letters to the newspaper read like calls to action to the Kikuyu. After witnessing the pomp and pageantry that accompanied a return of the King and Queen to Buckingham Palace, Kenyatta wrote to the editor exclaiming about "the wonder I then saw" which "I have never seen before, and I do not suppose I shall see it again." Realising the sense of awe in British power that the ceremony had instilled within him in contrast to the fissured society he had left behind, he urged them to "learn well how to honour one another…respect ("fear") one another, so that people of other nations may look up to (honour) you." It was also important that they "learn well to listen to reason ("convincing words") and cease to trample convincing words on the ground."[41] These words of reason were presumably emerging from the communication channels of the KCA but their articulation would serve no purpose if the Kikuyu paid no attention to them.

In another letter, Kenyatta touched on the three major themes that dominated the pages of the newspaper: political unity, education and land, with particular focus on the first and last issues. Political unity was crucial because infighting resulted in the wasteful expenditure of societal energy and caused bitterness that in the long run benefitted none. Most importantly, it eroded the common ground the Kikuyu needed to confront the British. Personal agenda had to cede ground to the common good, "for if we go on saying, Let each person take his own road, that is the way by which we shall lose (throw away) our country; that is not the way to put things

[41] Ibid., p. 49.

right."[42] Kenyatta believed Kikuyu infighting diminished the impact of their advocacy and degraded the community's dignity in the public eye. It enabled those "here in Europe who do not want us to attain to importance (consequence) say (disseminate, give out) this:- Although they speak (talk), they can do nothing, for they are not united among themselves; they are not capable of sustained effort (lit., "they have only one charge, or, rush") there is no difficulty in overthrowing them."[43] Kenyatta therefore insisted that it was paramount for the Kikuyu to seek and maintain a common front. On land, he pointed out to readers that:

> Now the time is come for us Kikuyu to open our eyes and see how matters stand ("what matters are like"). If you want the country to really belong to the Kikuyu as God intended ("as God created it"), (then) rise up, let us begin and do this (or, let us first do this):- …Before all things, rise up and let us do this: let us have done with all sloth and begin and use up (use the whole of) the little portions that have been left to us, for if [we] are to get good out of our gardens, no other kind of work will bring good to us (or, make us of use, give us importance) except (the cultivation of) the field ("garden"), for if we fail (refuse) to feel concern ("be grieved") for our fields, no good will accrue to us (or, we shall attain to…importance).
>
> Here in Europe it is given out by the people who put pressure on us (or, who press upon us) and who want to be left in possession of our fields (gardens) that "THE BLACK PEOPLE HAVE VERY MUCH LAND, AND RICH LAND, BUT THEY DO NOTHING WITH IT: IT REMAINS IDLE". Now do you want it to continue to be said of us that we are slothful?[44]

Kenyatta still believed that the Kikuyu could work themselves out of their predicament and into favour with the government. However, what he was recommending was problematic because while African agriculture had in fact contributed the bulk of the colony's produce the reserves were increasingly becoming overcrowded which also compromised the quality of the soil.[45]

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[42] Ibid., p. 170.
[43] Ibid., p. 170.
[44] Ibid., p. 169. Upper case letters are the translator's (and perhaps *Muigwithania's*)
[45] For more on land alienation in this region and its effects see, Donald Barnett and Karari Njama. *Mau Mau from Within: Autobiography and Analysis of Kenya's Peasant Revolt.* New York: The Monthly Review Press, 1966; G. H. Mungeam. *British Rule in Kenya, 1895 – 1912: The Establishment of Administration in the East Africa Protectorate*. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1966; Carl Rosberg Jr. and John Nottingham. *The Myth of "Mau Mau": Nationalism in Kenya*. New York: Frederick A. Praeger for the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace,

On education, Kenyatta once again drew from his experiences in Britain to draw attention to a matter he and the KCA had raised before. He told readers that:

> If it is the case that you want us to become of consequence (acquire importance) and to become the counselors (or, pleaders, or arbiters?) of our Country, busy yourselves with EDUCATION, for the thing that I see is in the forefront here is knowledge (wisdom), and it is as though it (knowledge) were rulership (power?), for here anyone without knowledge is o[f] no consequence, and his voice will nowhere be heard, for rulership (power?) here is (consists of) counsel (reason, deliberation) led by EDUCATION. But do not think that the education (I refer to) is that which we are given a lick of; no it is a methodical (ordered, considered) education to open out a man's head (i.e., to develo[p] a man's brain)…For the Kikuyu have immediate need of men like these:- 1. THE KIKUYU LAWYER, 2. THE KIKUYU TEACHER. 3. THE KIKUYU DOCTOR….Perhaps people will say that it is a difficult thing to get people like that, but I tell you this, I myself have seen with my own eyes here in Europe many black people who have come from countries near to us in order to help their country, and now many are Lawyers and many are doctors and many are Teachers able to teach the people the higher ("the Great") knowledge ("wisdom"). And therefore I see nothing to prevent the Kikuyu from being able to know such things, for these men do not belong to a people ("sort") who are further advanced than the Kikuyu in knowledge, and therefore it appears to me that the Kikuyu are able to learn things like these very quickly and to become helpers of the rest of the Kikuyu, for unless we are to get clever Kikuyu who will help us we shall never advance, for we shall continue to be given (merely) a lick of everything with t[h]e lips. Let people stop being afraid that Europe is a bad place or that people could not study there well. I have seen myself that we are frightened (by being told) that Europe is a bad place, so that we may be afraid and (so) may never get there and see the things that are there, for there are many very amazing things but of these I shall be able to tell you later, by the help of the Almighty.[46]

To achieve these educational goals, Kenyatta encouraged the Kikuyu to lobby their Local Native Councils and leaders to spend more funds on the provision of quality education instead of that of which they were being "given a lick of."

Readers, the *athomi*, were to play a critical role in the advancement of Kikuyu causes at higher levels of government. Politically, *Muigwithania* presented them to the Kikuyu as specially

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1966; M. P. K. Sorrenson. *Land Reform in the Kikuyu Country: A Study in Government Policy*. London and Nairobi: Oxford University Press for the East Africa Institute of Social Research, 1967.

[46] DC/MKS.10B/13/1, *Muigwithania*. Nairobi: KNA, p. 170.

suited to the task of political representation on account of the education they had acquired.[47] In 1929 following the KCA's presentation of grievances to the Hilton Young Commission, it reminded the people that "readers, the wise men (me[n] of ability) are not asleep…("Readers, the s[a]yers (spokesmen) are not asleep, or, The wise ones amongst the 'readers' (i.e., educated Natives) are not asleep) but are giving their brains food for thought (food in the way of thoughts)."[48] The newspaper drew their attention to the Commission's recommendation that Europeans represent Africans in the LEGCO. It argued that government claims that Africans still lacked the "knowledge (wisdom)" necessary to serve in that body were lacking in foundation as there were many African men who were qualified. These men could "speak English well" and it is interesting to note that the newspaper emphasised the ability to speak English over other leadership qualities, as it was an ability only the *athomi* had acquired in school. A certain J. Rimber in his correspondence to the editor reinforced the newspaper's position. He explained there were many Africans suited for the task of representation in the LEGCO, especially at the coast (Mombasa) where he was located. These were many men who had been educated in the Church Mission Society's schools in Freetown and Rabai and could speak English fluently. Furthermore, several had held various positions in government, had performed their jobs well and would certainly serve well in the LEGCO. According to him, it was time the government recognised that "the Natives (Owners) of the country are not hindered ("put back"); that when affairs of this country are being settled they may sit together with those who do the settling," and be kept fully appraised of government affairs.[49]

[47] For more on the *athomi* and their philosophies see John Londsdale, "The Moral Economy of Mau Mau: The Problem," in Bruce Berman and John Londsdale, *Unhappy Valley: Conflict in Kenya & Africa* (Book II). Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1997, pp. 265 – 504.
[48] DC/MKS.10B/13/1, *Muigwithania*, p. 201.
[49] Ibid., p. 90.

In addition, the *athomi* were also encouraged to provide living examples to Kikuyu society by using their knowledge to prosper in commerce and agriculture. In an article titled "Money-making (or, Quest of Possessions), Kenyatta explained that wealth was to be acquired through "knowledge (wisdom, cleverness) and gentleness (i.e. in peaceful ways)" in the spirit of "self-help." He promoted self-help as empowering and liberating. It earned a nation respect and ensured an individual could care for oneself, one's family, one's community and ultimately one's nation.[50] Though the Kikuyu had suffered the appropriation of their land, he called on them to maximise the use of that which they still owned. They were to ensure that they did not allow land under Kikuyu ownership to remain idle. He feared that this only led to further appropriation because it gave Europeans an excuse to grab even more 'idle' land.[51] Similarly, Henry Gichuiri, who took over the running of *Muigwithania* as Acting Editor in the absence of Kenyatta, appealed to his "friends, you who read," to "seek ways which will cause us to advance our country, by the trade (yield) of our cultivation (agriculture).[52] He observed that though they were cultivating their lands diligently, they did so with little planning and were not using their lands as intensively as they possibly could. He then went on to offer agricultural advice which included a brief but detailed account on what he considered to be profitable poultry-keeping and the cultivation of cabbages and cauliflower. For him, improved and innovative crop and animal husbandry, in addition to good trading practices, would ensure that the readers were "both sayers and doers" of advancement.[53]

The *athomi* writing to the paper agreed. Petro Kigondu communicating from Fort Hall, for example, started his letter by greeting "the readers of "Muigwithania," both men and

[50] Ibid., p. 278.
[51] Ibid., p. 122.
[52] Ibid., p. 282.
[53] Ibid., p. 282.

women." His audience, he was certain, were fellow *athomi* or *mambere* ("those who are in front") for "where do these people called "Mambere" come from...are you not they?"[54] Kigondu then argued that while the *mambere* had modified their lives by acquiring new languages and lifestyles, they had failed to advance themselves in the areas that mattered most; commerce and agribusiness. It was important for them to "distinguish ourselves (from the rest of the people) by our methods of planting, in the same way as we distinguish ourselves in the building of our houses and w[a]y of dressing and in our (foreign) speech, for the field is more important than all the clothes in the world."[55] Kigondu encouraged the *mambere* to consider investing in diverse entrepreneurial ventures that included agriculture, construction, transport and commerce, in addition to political advocacy. He appealed to them to form partnerships as well as companies and to set up cottage industries when the latter were impossibilities. Cultural change had to be matched by economic change and empowerment. Another correspondent, John Gichung'wa writing from Paris, appealed to the Kikuyu to "consider well and see that there is a fair company of us who know to read, and we are able to raise up (i.e., accomplish) a very important (or, useful) work if we would lay aside sloth (or, apathy) and gird up our loins."[56] Gichung'wa urged the Kikuyu to reconfigure their culture in a manner that encouraged economic advancement. Circumcision for instance, was important, but "a person should be content to know in his heart (that he is circumcised) and keep quiet about it [be satisfied]." In Europe, he noted, "no one makes a song about circumcision or the circumcision-guild. But the people of these parts sing the praises of wealth and knowledge (wisdom)."[57] Culture needed to change to enable the Kikuyu to

[54] Ibid., p. 323. The translator defines *mambere* as a term for mission boys and girls especially those in boarding schools and adds that "it also happens adventitiously to bear the meaning, "Those who are in front", i.e., to the fore." The underscore of "you" is the original.
[55] Ibid., p. 324.
[56] Ibid., p. 327
[57] Ibid., p. 327.

prosper amidst contemporaneous changes. In addition, the newspaper and its correspondents were generally agreed that the *athomi* needed to be more proactive in the development of Kikuyu country.

At the same time, Gichung'wa's approach to culture was favoured by the newspaper because as the Kikuyu advanced themselves in all spheres of life, *Muigwithania's* pages cautioned them against forgetting their culture altogether. Agriculture was part of the Kikuyu soul. For Kenyatta, even as the Kikuyu were undergoing drastic social changes in the colonial era, they were not to "rely upon there being anything else that will make men of us (or, make a people of us) but the field, digging our hands down into the soil."[58] He implored anyone who had obtained employment outside Kikuyu reserves and "who is conscious that he is a Kikuyu…[to] try very diligently to discover (seek) where he came from, and build, if only a booth like that in a garden (for guarding crops), and let him make that (or, decide that that is) his base (or, place of origin)." They were to imitate the *nyamendigi* (a small bird) that left its nest in search of food but always returned to it. Employment away from the reserve was admittedly a way for many Kikuyu to earn a living, but Kenyatta saw no future for the Kikuyu as a people away from their land. At the same time, his appeal to them reveals his awareness of the demographic congestion of the land that was pushing them to seek non-traditional forms of income. The 'booth' was a compromise; a way to appeal to them to remember from whence they came in a pragmatic manner that did not make them feel compelled to acquire optimal plots of land that were obviously lacking. What was important was retaining a keen sense of Kikuyu identity.

Kenyatta encouraged the Kikuyu to "try hard to seek out (trace) the Kikuyu customs that are good and hold on to them firmly," because doing so would reinforce their identity and enable

[58] Ibid., p. 122.

them "to take your stand alongside of the customs of the other nations."[59] The Kikuyu and their problems gave Kenyatta and his fellow 'enlightened *athomi*' a raison d'etre. It is from them that they derived their identity, political legitimacy and the revenue base that powered their political activities. Thus, Kikuyu life, society and land combined into an agglomeration that gave the individual bearings in a rapidly changing world in which even the 'enlightened athomi' controlled little. Its continuity was vital and though the *athomi* were better positioned than most to navigate the new world beyond Kikuyu country, their harkening back to tradition and culture was a tacit acknowledgement of their continued dependence on their land and its people for their own political and economic survival.

Arguably, it is this awareness that moved Kenyatta to praise the chiefs of Kiambu and Dagoretti district and the Local Native Council for banning Kikuyu women from travelling to Nairobi to sell agricultural produce. Those who obtained permission to go to Nairobi had to wear "the long (Kikuyu) robe, because this is the traditional mark (dress) of the Kikuyu woman." Kenyatta defended his support for the chiefs by arguing that there were many "evils" associated with the selling of potatoes. These evils were "very many and very shameful [leading to] the weakening and dispersing of the Kikuyu nation." He insisted that those with whom Kikuyu women traded did not respect them and checking their activities in Nairobi was "one means of buttressing the Kikuyu nation." The denigration of their dignity was insidious because it put at risk the dignity of all Kikuyu: do you think that if your mother and your sister is despised you yourself are excepted?"[60] he asked. In this way, Kenyatta draped Kikuyu women with the onus of embodying Kikuyu morality in their persons. In this newspaper article, he attempted to set up Kikuyu women as sacred totems of Kikuyu morality who were as delicate as they were helpless

[59] Ibid., p. 49.
[60] Ibid., p. 328.

when compared to Kikuyu men and who were therefore in need of the paternalistic guidance and protection of the latter. As a result, the decision of the chiefs in this regard found favour with one of their arch foes while it greatly interfered with the economic lives of Kikuyu women who had enjoyed trading a wide variety of commodities intra- and inter-ethnically prior to the twentieth century.[61]

Women were largely absent as correspondents or writers in *Muigwithania,* however the two who sent letters to the newspaper voiced their concerns over cultural matters. Writing in the heat of the female circumcision crisis between the Church of Scotland Mission and the KCA in the late twenties, Tabitha Wangui wa Thomas Kamau, remonstrated against those who were arguing against female circumcision that the Kikuyu had practiced "from the ages past (from former times)."[62] She insisted that it was impossible for women who were uncircumcised (*kirigu*) to live harmoniously amongst circumcised women who did not respect them and amongst whom they deservedly felt inferior. Such women "are unable to open their mouths ("to speak") in the presence of the other women – (so) in what way are they "women?," she posed. She cited the example of a *kirigu* who "felt continually aggrieved (or, injured)" and whose reason for going to Nairobi "w[a]s because she was a "Kirigu," for she was always being scoffed at by the other women on the score that she was a "Kirigu." She continued, "if you want Prostitutes to increase largely, you should say that circumcision is to be abandoned, and you will see what the state of affairs will be."[63] Interestingly, her letter blamed the resort to prostitution by such women on the alienation they suffered from their societies and not uncontrolled sexual

[61] For the exploration of a similar idea in a different cultural context see, Lieselotte Steinbrugge. *The Moral Sex: Woman's Nature in the French Enlightenment*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995. For women's marketing activities see for example, Muriuki, *A History of the Kikuyu*, pp. 86 and 108. See also Claire Robertson, *Trouble Showed the Way*. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1997.
[62] DC/MKS.10B/13/1, *Muigwithania*.., p. 86.
[63] Ibid., p. 87.

desire. Kamau's concern appears to have been the social disruption that decisions not to circumcise girls caused and the alienation from society the *kirigu* suffered and not the effects of the practice on the sexual urges of women.

Another female, Christian correspondent, Wanjiru wa Kinyua, who was undoubtedly deeply influenced by church teachings against female circumcision but fully aware of its integral nature to Kikuyu ethos, struck a moderate stand under the cover of Christianity. She observed that there was a considerable amount of controversy over the question of female circumcision as men debated over whether or not to marry an uncircumcised woman. In Kinyua's view, the ongoing dispute was needless "for the matter is (already) settled and was decided long ago, and it was decided by our Lord Jesus Christ."[64] She counseled those debating such matters to "place them before the Almighty, for if the circumcised person does not believe, he (or, she) will not be saved, and the same with the uncircumcised person." The question of female circumcision, she wrote, was best left to the church and in the meantime, it was best for the Kikuyu to "cease from useless ill-feeling amongst ourselves." It was a bold position indeed, for Kinyua knew that KCA owned *Muigwithania* and must have been aware of their support for female circumcision. At the same time, she was an educated, Christian, Kikuyu woman stating a position on an issue that touched on her faith, her body and her person. Christianity provided her with a sturdy ideological shield as she minimised the importance of female circumcision in a way that the *athomi* who ran and read *Muigwithania* would find most difficult to dismiss.

On the question of the female education, Kinyua, a married *athomi*, cautioned certain Kikuyu girls who defied their parents to go to school but did not complete their studies. These women had "sinned against God (or, the teaching, or, word of God) and had "caused Him (or, it)

[64] Wanjiru wa Kinyua also quotes the New Testament (1 Corinthians 7:19) to support her point: "for circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing."

to be spoken against).” Her carefully drafted letter makes it clear that the sin was not because they had chosen to go to school but because those who gave up due to lack of parental support went to Nairobi and all the evils it stood for in the eyes of rural Kikuyu. These girls caused their parents to say “O hear what kind of ‘School’ she went to! So she was going into Prostitution was she?”[65] Kinyua appears to have been concerned that their actions did not augur well for all educated Kikuyu women who were already distanced from their society by their education and would also have to bear with the perception that they were immoral. Their actions shamed God and the Kikuyu as a whole. Generally, she and Wanjiru both recognised the rapid and drastic changes their people were undergoing and the toll they exerted on their societies. It was essential to them that the Kikuyu did not lose their souls and moral compass as they navigated through the colonial system.

Culture provided that moral compass, but how stable was it as the social systems of the Kikuyu intermingled with those of the alien British? There was no retreat from the present; what was crucial was that the Kikuyu managed their interaction with the new dispensation with prudence. Just as other Africans, the Kikuyu had to confront constantly the fact that they were participants in the new social order and its institutions as disadvantaged subordinates. The *athomi* considered themselves best equipped to diagnose and remedy whatever consequential ills they perceived in the psyche of their people so as to enable them to achieve political and economic ascendancy. Henry Muoria was another of these *athomi* and just like Thuku and the KCA, he considered the print press a veritable ally in the battle against whatever stood in the way of the future he envisioned for the Kikuyu.

[65] Ibid., p. 121.

Mumenyereri: From A Doctrine of Self-Reliance to Utter Annoyance

In his autobiography Henry Muoria explains that as the editor (and owner) of an African newspaper he saw his work as "a noble activity designed to elevate the spirit of my fellow tribespeople." He wanted to rid Africans of any feelings of racial inferiority by encouraging them to think independently and "work efficiently."[66] As a young boy in 1925 Muoria had learned to read and write in a CMS school but three years later and lacking his parents' moral support coupled with their financial inability to support his education, the future newspaper-editor dropped out. He moved to Nairobi where he got employment in an Asian metal works firm and spent his days transporting metal goods in a handcart to various points of the town. Apparently, Muoria's pay was so meagre that it left him chronically hungry and exhausted which meant he could barely accomplish his tasks. He resigned after being slapped for dropping and denting a tank he had just delivered to a customer. Bitter and humiliated, Muoria swore never to return to such hard labour. He decided to sell vegetables at Nairobi's Municipal Market, went back to school and left when he had mastered enough English to earn a treasured place at Nairobi's Railway Training School, where he was trained as a telegraphist in the early 1930s. What followed his training was a series of lonely stints as a signaler and train guard in stations far away from home and his young family. In Eldoret, a busier environment encouraged him to develop himself by taking correspondence courses from institutions in England and it is during this time that he sent a letter of protest against remarks that a LEGCO member had made to *The East African Standard*. It was published and stimulated debate, but a rejoinder was rejected. This rejection led him to his next endeavour; a correspondence course in journalism. With the clouds

[66] Henry Muoria, *I, The Gikuyu and The White Fury*. Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers Ltd.: 1994, p. 1. For more on Muoria and related issues see: Wangari Muoria-Sal et al., *Writing for Kenya: the Life and Works of Henry Muoria*. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2009; Bodil Frederiksen, "The present battle is the brain battle," in Karin Barber (ed.) *Africa's Hidden Histories: Everyday Literacy and Making of the Self*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2006, pp. 278 – 313.

of war hovering over Europe, the English institution in which Muoria was enrolled sent him a batch of lessons fearing the interruption of communication systems in the event of war and so between 1939 and 1945 he busied himself with his lessons. By 1945, he felt ready to put his knowledge into practice by setting up his own newspaper.[67]

Mumenyereri was therefore born as a newspaper independent of the KCA or any other political association. As he had resolved to set it up at a time of high security alertness in Kenya and abroad he experienced special hardships in getting it off the ground. To begin with, his decision to start the newspaper caused the disintegration of his marriage to his first wife, Elizabeth Thogori, who did not take kindly to Muoria's resignation from the railway and the loss of its stable income. Then after preparing material for the publication of the first issue, the Asian printer to whom he submitted the material in Nairobi informed him that according to wartime regulations, he was forbidden to use newsprint for the production of a new periodical. When he attempted to apply to the government for permission to use newsprint, an official informed that he could only do so if his publication pre-dated the war. The news unsettled him but he soon found a way round his predicament on learning about a defunct Kikuyu monthly, *Muthithu* ('The Treasure'), that had been established before the war. Its owners had no intention of reviving it and permitted Muoria to use its name. Only then did the government permit him to publish the newspaper, but not before they had sent him to Dr. Louis Leakey at Nairobi's Coryndon Museum who had established himself as an authority on the Kikuyu for final consent.[68] Leakey

[67] Ibid., pp. 43 – 45.

[68] Louis Bazett Leakey (1903-1972) was born to parents who were missionaries of the Church Mission Society. The family settled in Kabete amongst the Kikuyu and Leakey even underwent Kikuyu initiation. During his lifetime, he established himself as an authority in the fields of archaeology, paleontology and anthropology. Amongst his many writings are a Kikuyu grammar, *First Lessons in Kikuyu*. Nairobi: East African Literature Bureau, 1959 and a three volume work on *The Southern Kikuyu before 1903*. London; New York: Academic Press, 1977. He also finished writing his memoirs just before his death; *By the Evidence: Memoirs 1932 – 1951*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1974.

gave him the go ahead but not without a warning that he was to ensure the contents of his newspaper were never "subversive." Muoria then started the newspaper with the title *Muthithu na Mumenyereri* (*The Treasure and The Guardian*) to conform to regulations but dropped the name *Muthithu* shortly after when the government dropped the prescription under which he had established his newspaper.[69] The first edition was bilingual (English and Kikuyu), but according to Muoria, he made the newspaper a solely Kikuyu newspaper in response to readers who argued that those who spoke English already had a lot to read. It started as a monthly publication with a circulation of 1,000 copies a month in 1945 and by 1952 had a bi-weekly circulation of 22,000 copies.[70] The newspaper's name, 'The Guardian,' is reflective of Muoria's *athomi* status and his initial embrace of their determination to position themselves as the midwives of the process that would lead to Kikuyu politico-economic independence. *Mumenyereri* has survived the historical record in two forms: excerpts from the newspaper in Muoria's autobiography and copies government officials collected for purposes of sedition monitoring and prosecution.

From Muoria's autobiography it appears that being the editor of the major post-war Kikuyu newspaper enabled him to play a key role in establishing Kenyatta as an authority in Kikuyu politics and as a visionary leader eager to forge multiethnic links for a broader platform of political advocacy on his return from London in 1946. By 1945, the Kikuyu political scene was at an ebb. The government had taken advantage of wartime security provisions to ban KCA in 1940 and detain its leaders. At the end of the war, its leaders were released and they attempted in vain to have the ban on the association lifted. According to Muoria, when the government frustrated their efforts to organise themselves politically, the former KCA leaders resolved to contact Kenyatta in England and request him to return to Kenya and aid them in their

[69] Ibid., pp. 47 – 48.
[70] Ibid., p. 45 and AG/5/23. Prosecution of Seditious Publications: Mumenyereri. Nairobi: KNA

negotiations with the government. They had zeroed in on him because the publication in 1938 of his anthropological study of the Kikuyu, *Facing Mount Kenya*, had done much to enhance his profile as a leader. The editor states that "the main reasoning behind the elders' desire to recall their man from England was that Kenyatta was now a well-known man, so, as a highly respected and clever man, it would be impossible for even the governor to ignore him or even to reject his request to lift the ban on the KCA."[71]

Kenyatta arrived at Mombasa aboard a ship on the evening of 23 September 1946. Muoria was not appointed a member of his welcoming committee but he did accompany the committee to Mombasa to report on the occasion. He described the man who had been away from home for so long to his readers in vivid detail and, most importantly, reported his speeches at length. These were speeches in which Kenyatta enunciated ideas that were to encase his political career in the post-war years and provided the themes of future speeches many of which Muoria published in his newspaper. First, he had returned to Kenya with a renewed sense of the necessity of an ethnically diverse African political front and in his first speech given in Kiswahili at the coast he stated that:

> It is not right that we Africans should be thinking in terms of tribes, what is more important is to think of ourselves in terms of being fully matured people, who are honest at heart, to acquire unity and to have pride in our black skin. I myself am a Mugikuyu, but my tribe of the Gikuyu are very few. The best thing for us to do is to love one another without discriminating as to who is this and who is that. For that is the only way in which we can uplift our country as well as our African people to a higher stage in their development.[72]

Second, later that day in another speech he revisited a familiar theme – African self-help, which he expounded on with the authority of a man who had travelled and had a broader and therefore more insightful perspective of life:

[71]Muoria, *I, Gikuyu and the White Fury*, p. 20.
[72] Ibid., p. 16.

> My friends, since I left this country of ours, I have visited a lot of countries of Europe. And I have learned a lot of things. Above all, I have had ample time to study very closely the brains of all human beings on earth, that is to say, those of Europeans, Chinese, Indians and Africans. I can tell you the fact that all those brains are the same, but where the difference occurs is in the use of these brains. Nations which have used their brains have made great progress, and those nations which have failed to use their brains have remained behind. And that is what we Africans have been doing. If a mother of a child binds its hand as soon as it is born, that hand will remain like that and the child will never be able to use it. And if a man fails to use his brains in life, they will never be of any use to him…
>
> I would like to tell you that our enemy which prevents us from making any progress is within ourselves. In order that you may realise the truth about this, there is a certain proverb that asserts: "That which bites you is within your own clothes." Therefore, if we want to go ahead, we should first beat that enemy which prevents us from achieving our unity. One often hears Africans asking one another, "Do you think you can do this and that like an Indian or a European?" But I can assure you that Europeans as well as Indians are human beings like ourselves and there is nothing which they usually do which we cannot do ourselves provided we develop integrity.[73]

While Kenyatta had shifted a great deal from his focus on Kikuyu politics for Kikuyu advancement he still maintained that Africans held within themselves the means to their liberation and progress as measured by cultural scales he had been exposed to in a colonised Kenya and abroad. He believed only Africans could equip themselves with the morale and diligence necessary to confront and prosper in their greatly altered reality. Muoria really admired Kenyatta and thought him to be brilliant and farsighted. European-owned newspapers ignored his presence and *Mumenyereri's* editor therefore thought it even more important to cover him. He remarks that "I appeared to be the only journalist who appreciated and recognised the value of such a man as Kenyatta at that time as well as the importance of his spoken words to the extent of giving them wide publicity in my newspaper *Mumenyereri* and then including them in pamphlets which I thought to be more lasting than the newspaper in which they were published."[74] Once Kenyatta arrived in central Kenya he settled down at Githunguri as the

[73] Ibid., p. 17.
[74] Ibid., p. 14.

principal of the run-down Kenya Teachers College that the Kikuyu had established in 1939.[75] Muoria claims the ethnic group had withdrawn their support when its principal and founder, Mbiyu Koinange, misappropriated funds the community was donating to the institution. *Mumenyereri* supported Kenyatta in his efforts to revive the college and creatively publicised fundraising efforts that were successful. Muoria considered Kenyatta's arrival and his fresh approach to politics rejuvenating and worthy of support. Kenyatta's words must have resonated deeply for a man who considered it his journalistic obligation to "elevate the spirit" of his people and make them "proud to do their work efficiently."[76]

Nevertheless, it is clear that by 1950 *Mumenyereri* had taken two definite positions on matters relating to Africans. First, although the newspaper was still published exclusively in Kikuyu, Muoria's journalistic activism covered both Kikuyu and non-Kikuyu. He did on occasion specifically address the Kikuyu, but the newspaper appears to have focused less on publishing articles drawn directly from Kikuyu society and economy and more that focused on African lives and problems. Second, he believed that Africans were victims of an oppressive system that made it difficult for them to succeed and they could not "work" their way out of the problems in the way that Kenyatta had encouraged them to do on the pages of *Muigwithania* and in the speeches he made on his return. Self-help was simply not a solution when there was a government in place that subjugated the "self." As a result, the newspaper featured articles assailing the government and European settlers for machinations that had resulted in a system that kept Africans in politico-economic and social subservience.

[75] For more information on this institution and the interaction between politics, religion and education amongst colonial-era Kikuyu see, Terrence Ranger, "African attempts to control education in East and Central Africa, 1900 – 1939," *Past and Present*, no. 32, 1965; David P. Sandgren, *Christianity and the Kikuyu: Religious Divisions and Social Conflict*. Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1970; O. W. Furley and T. Watson, *A History of Education in East Africa*. New York: NOK Publishers: 1978

[76] Ibid., p. 1.

These critiques were made in language that was far more abrasive than that in what is available of *Muigwithania's* publication run. In April 1950, for example, *Mumenyereri* responded to continued European calls for self-government by urging Africans to demand self-government for themselves. This was because "all Africans have experienced the slave tyranny of Europeans."[77] The newspaper declared that "there are no people who have been deprived of their land so much as the Agikuyu, and there is nowhere where people feel most the conditions of slavery as the people in Kenya." Europeans, it insisted, were only interested in the demographic increase of Africans to satisfy labour demands and their continued oppression of Africans had pushed them, and evidently the newspaper, to the brink of something disruptive. It suggested that "now Africans are just like dry wood and the only thing they lack is something to light them up so that they may blaze away like fire." Expounding further on its dry wood analogy, *Mumenyereri* explained that what it meant was that "all Africans are very angry indeed on account of the ill-treatment they get from the Europeans," but what they lacked were leaders who could mobilise them effectively. It beseeched its readers to call upon African leaders "so as to fight together for all that we need." They were fighting words indeed, so ardent and belligerent in tone that it is surprising they did not attract a sedition charge.

Three months later, the newspaper likened the strength of Europeans to that of a "strong animal that eats weak animals." [78] Africans, in the paper's opinion, were similar to weak animals on account of their poverty. The analogy was sparked by comments made by a member of the House of Lords who had claimed that the British would give Africans their freedom once they were adequately groomed politically and economically. Muoria pondered how this was possible,

[77] AG/5/23, Newspaper article in correspondence from Office of Director of Intelligence and Security to The Hon. Member for Law and Order, 3 July 1950. Nairobi: KNA.
[78] AG/5/23. Newspaper article in correspondence from Office of Director of Intelligence and Security to The Hon. Member for Law and Order, 27 July 1950. Nairobi: KNA.

insisting that "I would like to know what kind of politics Africans are allowed to practice in this country?" He wondered how Africans would ever acquire wealth for "when African workers ask for better pay nobody takes interest." They also had no land and could not move into forested land. He went on to assert that Europeans had a home in England "so that when they say that they belong to this country, that proves that the only work that Europeans can do well is to oppress Africans further."[79] A crucial step towards African self-reliance was political representation and the ability to set up and run trade unions with freedom. Yet the government appeared to be devoted to ensuring that African mobilisation efforts faltered. Consequently, a few months later the newspaper thought it important to highlight the activities of European settlers who had held a meeting in Thika District to lobby the government to suppress African trade union activity. Since that meeting, the paper asserted, Africans had found it impossible to register trade unions and it linked this suppression to a general systemic disregard of African demands for representation in the LEGCO, Central Assembly, and the Executive Council. When African leaders "demand better pay and better treatment like other races, they are called bad leaders, whose aim is to fill their own stomachs." The eternal European excuse was that Africans were not ready, but "people who often hear Europeans say that it is their aim to lead the Africans slowly towards self-Government wonder at seeing the Europeans punishing African leaders." The newspaper cast an envious glance at West Africans "who are about to be given freedom" and informed its readers that this was in no small part due to the vigorous health of their trade unions. African workers in Kenya had to have representation in government and their own trade unions to fight for and protect their rights as employees.[80]

[79] Ibid., 27 July 1950.
[80] AG/5/23. Newspaper article in correspondence from Office of Director of Intelligence and Security to The Hon. Member for Law and Order (Erroneously dated). Nairobi: KNA.

In "Kenya Laws are Retarding Africans' Defence," the newspaper accused the government of running the affairs of the country's diverse peoples according to the wishes of the European Elector's Union as embodied in their "Kenya Plan" and made an impassioned plea for African press freedom.[81] The article was a response to an unidentified European journalist who had accused *Mumenyereri* of sedition for writing about African hardships in Olenguruone, which he viewed as typical of all Europeans who complained about the African press. According to the paper, "the fact of the matter is when the African publishes a fact in their Press, the Europeans are never happy about it, therefore they begin speaking evil about it saying that such a newspaper is not good and should be banned."[82] The writer insisted that European newspapers focused on matters that exclusively benefitted Europeans, but Africans had their own needs, too, which the African press articulated. According to it, "the majority of Europeans wish Africans to agree that supplying the needs of the Europeans will also solve Africans' problems" and, unfortunately, some Africans now believed in the same thing.[83] This labour fomula would never work. It only bred the inferiority complex Muoria was labouring to expunge from their minds. Besides, *Mumenyereri* could not be banned because it had never encouraged its readers to take up arms for their cause and could not:

> The African's protest is based on the prospects of their coming generations, and the Europeans also have the same idea. But the African's protest is only mere words while the Europeans have full war powers; they have power to imprison people, and to pass any law which they know will benefit their children in the future. They have the power to tell Africans to observe the law, whether it is good or bad. And because the Europeans are powerful, that is why this European does not mind trying to have this newspaper banned by running it down and saying that it creates hatred by publishing articles as we refer to.[84]

[81] AG/5/23. Newspaper article in correspondence from Office of Director of Intelligence and Security to The Hon. Member for Law and Order (2 August 1950). Nairobi: KNA.
[82] Ibid., 2 August 1950.
[83] Ibid., 2 August 1950.
[84] Ibid., 2 August 1950.

Africans needed their own newspapers and no European-sponsored substitutes would do:

> The House of Mumbi (Agikuyu) know very well that the paper is their meeting ground, where they meet and express their views wherever they may be.
>
> Government have been publishing many papers at present for Africans to read, and so they say that these papers are highly recommended by this European. Some are given free and some are sold cheaply because they want the African to read just what they think the African should know and no more. But why do they not publish these papers without speaking evil of the paper published by Africans? The Agikuyu have this saying, "When a man is unable to jump about on the dancing ground, he blames the ground and says that it has too many stones".
>
> The Europeans have come to the conclusion that they cannot publish papers for Africans because Africans are wide awake and they will not buy papers which have no interesting news, for they know what is good and what is not. Just because the Europeans cannot publish papers for Africans, the excuse they give is that the African Press is bad. But people are not goats, they cannot buy a worthless thing …we must go on speaking truthfully. We should not tell lies and cause strife. If you know you do not hate anyone and that your aim is to speak what is true, there is no need to fear. We want our readers to send in their articles for publication as they used to. There is a saying "Chase a man with the truth and he will go away for good. But if you chase a man with a stick, he will turn back to you with a stick."[85]

For Muoria, African press freedom was more important than ever before because strong African political organisations were lacking. It appears that for the editor, the importance of his work was raised because in light of the suppression of African trade unions in the aftermath of the strikes they had launched in the late forties, and once the initial excitement of Kenyatta's return had subsided, the local political scene was once again subdued.

The contents of Muoria's newspaper did lead to a number of clashes with the law and these heightened as Mau Mau activity in the Central and Rift Valley Provinces of the country intensified. In 1947, a report of a strike at Uplands Bacon Factory based on the verbal accounts of two eye-witnesses who were present resulted in a magistrate's court fining Muoria and his Asian publisher, while the writer of the article was sent to prison for six months. In the article,

[85] Ibid., 2 August 1950.

Mumenyereri had reported that following the disruption of activities at the factory when its African workers held a strike, the District Commissioner sent his District Officer, a European police inspector and a few African *askaris* to the scene. At the factory, the D.O. made a request to speak to the strikers. As the meeting proceeded, two brothers were identified as ring leaders and, according to Muoria, it is unclear whether the D.O. ordered their arrest before the police shot them. The newspaper did however report that when the D.O. ordered the African *askaris* present to shoot the two leaders, they hesitated, which resulted in an enraged police inspector grabbing one of their guns and then shooting them dead himself. The government considered this a false report. The false part of the report was the section in which the reporter stated that the African *askaris* had defied orders. Perhaps the government considered the publication of the expression of defiance by government employees, whether true or false, too potent a catalyst for dissent to be ignored at a time of heightening security concerns. Such incidences had the potential to end the life of a publication as a result of financial strain, but *Mumenyereri* survived.

Muoria hired one of his regular correspondents, John Gatu, whose letters had impressed him as an assistant to ensure the newspaper could continue to run in case he was ever sent to prison. As a consequence of the whole affair, Muoria's Asian publisher severed ties between his firm and the newspaper, sending Muoria into the hands of *Ramogi's* publishers before dissatisfaction with their services resulted in Muoria acquiring a duplicator from Mbiyu Koinange's second wife to publish his newspaper. *Mumenyereri's* readers continued to buy the newspaper in its duplicated form and after a few months the newspaper started to turn a profit for the first time in its brief existence. This enabled Muoria to buy a treadle printing machine, install it in new premises and add two more printers shortly thereafter. Meanwhile, he continued to

steam about the killing of the two African brothers as the environment became increasingly restrictive for African newspapers.[86]

Ramogi: Another Promulgator of the Self-Reliance Doctrine and the Capitalist Dream

A significant development in the post-war era was the establishment of the Dholuo newspaper *Ramogi*, named after the mythical patriarch of the Luo. This is because in the years after its establishment in the late forties, its printing press rolled out several African newspapers, some of which were edited by the men H.C.E. Downes encountered on his visit to the newspaper's backstreet office in 1950. *Ramogi* was the brainchild of Achieng' Oneko and in his autobiography, *Not Yet Uhuru*, Oginga Odinga explains that Oneko established it in secret as he was a civil servant who was not supposed to participate in political activities. The newspaper's registration certificate has Zabulon Oti, Esau Oketch and Oneko Nyauchi whose occupations are listed as bookbinder, foreman and farmer, respectively. It is likely that Achieng' Oneko had his employees register themselves as the paper's owners.[87] At the time he was working as a government meteorological observer and a clerk.[88] Shortly after he started the newspaper, Oneko started working closely with Oginga Odinga who was the founder of the Luo Thrift and Trading Corporation. Odinga established the corporation in a bid to model the liberty of financial independence for Africans. In a manner akin to Kenyatta he believed that Africans could free themselves from Europeans by empowering themselves in an economic sense. He had arrived at this belief following years of frustration as a member of the Christian Church, mission school student, mission school teacher and government employee. Though a Christian, he resented mission schools for their elevation of European culture above all other cultures and their condescending attitudes towards Africans. Mission schools produced Africans who were

[86] Ibid. pp. 53 – 56.
[87] AG/5/24, *Muthamaki.* Nairobi: KNA.
[88] Oginga Odinga, *Not Yet Uhuru* London, Ibadan, Nairobi: Heinemann, 1967, p. 80.

divorced from their cultures and reduced them to "tame, middle men, shadows and subjects of White mission men."[89] To make matters worse, "any stirrings in them to become independent leaders of their people were suppressed by their allegiance to the mission hierarchy, and the fact that, once educated, they were absorbed into the government machine."[90] As a result, Africans had lost confidence in themselves and their abilities. Those who were educated became dependent on a system that limited their advancement within it and encouraged them to think of the meagre income earned within it as the ultimate and most respectable form of sustenance. Mission schools encouraged uncritical submission to authority, dulled creativity, and discouraged initiative and critical thinking. Africans were receiving education that turned them into "docile civil servants" and trained them not "for independence but for subservience."[91] In addition, Africans were saddled with chiefs who the government appointed primarily for their amenability to serve it and not their own people.[92]

For Odinga, therefore, an African demonstration of economic independence and innovation consitituted the first step towards ending European domination. In his autobiography he argues that Africans "had to show we were capable of enterprise and development in fields beyond our shambas. It was no good bridling at accusations of our inferiority. We had to prove our mettle to the government, to the Whites. In addition, Odinga thought it unfortunate that other Africans viewed the Luo as "extravagant, self-centred and exhibitionist." These were impressions he had gathered during his days as a student in Uganda's Makerere University and he wished to overturn them by mobilising them and others to embrace entrepreneurship and help establish the capital base of the Luo Thrift and Trading Corporation.

[89] Ibid., p. 62.
[90] Ibid., p. 62.
[91] Ibid., p. 63.
[92] Ibid., pp. 20-21 and pp. 92 – 94.

Oneko and Odinga first met when the former was a student at Maseno High School in Nyanza Province and the latter was a teacher. The two men met again in 1946 when Odinga traveled to Nairobi to canvass for capital for the corporation (then called Bondo Thrift and Trading Company). There he shared his views on Euro-African relations and politics with Oneko. In his autobiography he recalls that Oneko received his views tepidly but warmed up to them and Odinga as an individual when he accompanied him to a disciplinary hearing at the Central Government Offices and was impressed with the manner in which Odinga defended himself. They became close friends and Oneko became the Nairobi representative of Luo Thrift and started to promote the company in the columns of the newspaper. By the end of 1947, the company had purchased a flatbed press for the newspaper and it was also rolling out publications for other African editors. Odinga reports that the company made no profits from the African publications it published but considered their publication a joint contribution to the African cause for independence. Copies of *Ramogi* spanning the period 1959 – 1962 are available.[93] However, by this time the colonial government had purchased the newspaper through its Kenya Vernacular Press and was managing it.

The Proof of their Power is in their Suppression

The administration's chronic unease with the African press and its efforts to obstruct their publication is indicative of their influence notwithstanding the low level of literacy amongst the colony's African populace. In his autobiography Odinga comments that "the level of politics differed in these papers, but some were quite outspokenly critical of the government; I wondered sometimes whether the government knew what was in these papers."[94] Of course the government did know; archived government records and the Corfield report which the British government

[93] At the archives of the University of Nairobi, Kenya.
[94] Odinga, *Not Yet Uhuru*, p. 82.

commissioned in the aftermath of the Mau Mau uprising, attest to this fact.[95] As is evident from its dealings with *Mumenyereri* above, once the authorities had set its eyes on a press target, they could be relentless in their pursuit of the paper's demise.

Another example can be drawn from the experiences of *Muthamaki* (*Adviser* or *Leader*), which in 1950 found itself in another clash with the law. Victor Wokabi owned and managed the newspaper and it was one of his two press ventures after a conviction of sedition resulted in a fine and the death of *Hindi ya Gikuyu* (*Gikuyu Times*) in June 1950.[96] One month later, Wokabi was in trouble again. The offending article was a *Muthamaki* commentary on the trials of various Kikuyu leaders, including Dedan Mugo, suspected of being Mau Mau and those of trade union leaders Fred Kubai and Makhan Singh. As regards the Kikuyu leaders, the article in its first paragraph noted that "presumably Kikuyu leaders are being looked upon as kei apple thorn bushes by the Government." It went on to add that "we know Mr. Dedan Mugo and a few other Kiambu leaders are before the Courts being tried on false charges made against them which up to now have not adduced sufficient evidence." The newspaper also railed at the government for failing to provide evidence linking KCA leaders to Mau Mau. On Kubai and Singh, the commentary stated that "the case is to be heard though there is not sufficient evidence to support the charge" and accused the government of declining to bring witnesses the union leaders had requested it to bring in from England.[97] The government considered the statements as

[95] F. D. Corfield, *Historical Survey of the Origins and Growth of Mau Mau*. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1960.

[96] AG/5/24. Correspondence from Crown Council to Attorney General, 4 August 1950. Nairobi: KNA. Translation of *muthamaki* is from V. G. Simiyu "The Democratic Myth in the African Traditional Societies," in W. O. Oyugi and A. Gitonga (eds.), *Democratic Theory and Practice in Africa.* Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, 1987, p. 64.

[97] AG/5/24. Correspondence from the Office of the Director of Intelligence and Security to The Hon. Member for Law and Order, 22 July 1950. Nairobi: KNA. When the government consulted Dr. L.F.B. Leakey in March 1951, he recommended an ammendment of the translation of the Kubai-Singh segment of the article stating that "ciira….no ugutuo" cannot mean "would be convicted," it can only mean that a "decision" or "judgement" or "verdict" will be

constituting offences against the relevant section of the Penal Code. A count was also brought against *Ramogi's* Zabulon Oti as the printer of the offending article.[98] The government's translation of this article was accompanied by others titled, "Makhan Singh and Fred Kubai's Case Awaiting Decision" and "Leaders are Looked Upon as Kei-Apple" in which the newspaper repeated the same accusations against the government.[99] As the government was building a case against him, *Muthamaki's* editor began to suffer the repercussions of his newspaper's reports. In the latter article, the newspaper reported that the government was planning to have Victor Wokabi withdrawn from membership of Nyeri's Local Native Council and questioned its decision to do so as the opinion of those he represented had not been sought.

In the Corfield report it is clear that after World War II several government officials considered the African press to be hostile to Europeans and harmful to the continuity and stability of the status quo, the very environment African newspapers viewed as exploitative and harmful to their own interests. For example, following a provincial commissioners' meeting held in October 1946 which was also attended by the Labour Commissioner, the Member for Health and Local Government, the Social Welfare Adviser, and Harold E. Lambert, a retired administrative officer, it was recommended that a dispatch be sent to the Secretary of State highlighting several key observations regarding the African press.[100] The meeting was agreed that African newspapers were a "grave menace" to the Colony's future and noted that certain

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given." He added that "the implication from the preceding words" even though there is no evidence" could imply that judgement against the two would be made, but this is only implied NOT stated."

[98] AG/5/24. Attorney General's Draft Charge Sheet, 1950. Nairobi: KNA. A final copy is not available, however it is clear that Murage and Oti were indeed summoned and remanded in custody for Preliminary Enquiry before a Nairobi magistrate as evident in AG/5/24. Correspondence from Assistant Superintendent of Police to Deputy Public Prosecutor, 2 February 1951. Nairobi: KNA.

[99] AG/5/24. "Makhan Singh and Fred Kubai's Case Awaiting Decision," and "Leaders are Looked Upon as Kei-Apple," Undated. Nairobi: KNA.

[100] Harold Lambert authored works on the Kikuyu, a few coastal peoples and other issues related to his work in Kenya. See for example, *Kikuyu Social and Political Institutions*. London: New York Oxford University Press, 1956; *Chi-jomvu and Ki-ngare:sub-dialects of the Mombasa area*. Kampala: Makerere College, 1958; *The Systems of Land Tenure in the Kikuyu Unit.* Cape Town: Communications from the School of African Studies, University of Cape Town, 1963.

"seditiously minded" Indians were aiding and abetting the African newspapers in their activities, which was most unfortunate because the newspapers were "purely anti-Government and anti-European."[101] To make matters worse in the opinion of the officials at the meeting, the impact of the publications could not be overemphasised because they considered the African mind fragile and gullible, that is, "uneducated and politically immature" and therefore vulnerable to manipulation by rebellious editors whose objectives they resented and feared.

The officials believed a key contributor to these problems was that the African press was unbridled and had taken advantage of British sensitivities to press freedoms. They hoped that the Secretary of State would enable them to get more information on laws pertaining to the press in Britain and institute redoubtable regulation mechanisms. Unfortunately for the October meeting officials, their recommendations came to nought and the reasons given in the Corfield report explain why the publication of independent African newspapers continued amidst government harassment in the years following the war. Corfield points out that:

> No very definite action appears to have been taken on these recommendations, presumably on the grounds (although it is not clear from the records) that the Secretary of State would, even if he accepted the proposals in principle, have had great difficulty in persuading Parliament to agree to any decisive action which appeared to interfere with a cherished freedom.[102]

The British parliament would not be moved to impinge on press freedoms at home or abroad. When officials sought the counsel of the Chief Secretary of Nigeria in January of the following year, he remarked that though faced with the same problem, the Nigerian government was dissimilar from Kenya because the Nigerian press was "abusive" of the government while the Kenyan press was "preaching a doctrine of hatred against Europeans."[103] In the meantime,

[101] Corfield, *Historical Survey of the Origins and Growth of Mau Mau*, p. 191.
[102] Ibid., p. 192.
[103] Ibid., p. 192.

government officials continued to complain about the African press, becoming more strident in their protests as the Mau Mau crisis progressed.

Government officials complained increasingly about an African press they found to be ever more abrasive and brazen in its critique of government and Europeans. In February 1947, in a document which the Acting Chief Native Commissioner addressed to the Member for Law and Order and the Deputy Chief Secretary, he opined that "the general tone of these newspapers since the date of the provincial commissioners' meeting in October last year has steadily deteriorated and the situation which was urgent enough then is worse today." He added that although the Standing Finance Committee had rejected earlier proposals for the government to establish an African newspaper to counter the independent African press, the pernicious nature of the independent African press warranted a serious reconsideration of the matter. Echoing views expressed at the provincial commissioners' meeting the year before, he theorised that the African had only just encountered the written word and newspapers and "is apt to take the written word as truth. These papers, therefore, have a much greater influence on readers than they would in a more civilized country."[104] For this official, the failure to bring African newspapers, under control or to dilute their presence with a more palatable government publication would only lead to the continued publication of falsehoods and the heightening of colour consciousness which could in turn result in violence.

In November 1950, in reaction to an article published in *Muthamaki* titled "The Mau Mau will not be destroyed by the imposition of fines, or sentences of imprisonment," a provincial commissioner was dismayed when the Attorney-General and the Deputy Public Presecutor advised him that a prosecution against the newspaper and the writer of the article would not succeed. When he complained, he received the following response later that month:

[104] Ibid., p. 192.

> The Member for Law and Order has refused his fiat, which is a necessary condition precedent to a prosecution, because he was of the considered opinion that in this case a prosecution would not succeed. Convictions for sedition are difficult to obtain, and a lay opinion might well be that *the law, in the British tradition of free speech, is to an extent weighted in favour of an accused.* It is considered politically important there should be a considerable apparent chance of conviction, as otherwise, the accused and his statements are given publicity, the prosecutor is made to look foolish, and perhaps oppressive, and the accused, when acquitted, can be thought a martyr. There is nothing in the article which constitutes the offence of contempt of court.[105]

For several government officials in Kenya, British sensitivities vis-à-vis press freedoms were increasingly viewed as pesky inhibitors of swift, decisive action against "seditious" publications operating in an environment they viewed as unique and in need of special exceptions from British press laws.

Corfield, too, considered Kenya's press laws inadequate. Kenya's newspaper sector was controlled under the provisions of the *Book and Newspaper Registration Ordinance, 1906*. This ordinance required the government to register books and newspapers, which meant that every year a register of Kenya's newspaper proprietors was compiled. As a result, the government required newspaper owners to provide basic information comprising the title of the newspaper, the names and addresses of its proprietors and its average annual circulation figures. For Corfield, its main deficiency was that it "gave no control over the products of the Press." Government supervision and control of the press was exercised under the Penal Code's law on sedition which was amended in June 1950 to enable courts to confiscate newspaper presses, but Corfield found the following extracts relating to seditious intention particularly problematic:

> 57. (1) A seditious intention is an intention-
>
> (v) to promote feelings of ill-will and hostility between different classes of the population of the Colony;
>
> But an act, speech or publication is not seditious by reason only that it intends-

[105] Ibid., p. 198.

(d) to point out, with a view to their removal, any matters which are producing or having a tendency to produce feelings of ill-will and enmity between different classes of the population of the Colony.

(2) In determining whether the intention with which any act was done, any words were spoken, or any document was published, was or was not seditious, every person shall be deemed to intend the consequences which would naturally follow from his conduct at the time and under the circumstances in which he so conducted himself.

59. (2) A person shall not be prosecuted for an offence under section 58 of this Code without the written consent of the Attorney-General.[106]

Corfield argued that a majority of African newspapers and KAU leaders had disseminated racially divisive information and attacked fellow Africans who were anti-Mau Mau and that their actions constituted grounds for prosecution for "seditious intent." However, it disappointed him that no such actions were taken against them. This reflected "the tradition of aversion the British have always entertained to prosecuting for "political reasons."[107] In addition, he thought it was difficult for government officials to distinguish between seditious statements and those that were acceptable expressions of "legitimate political aspirations."[108] To add onto this, it was equally problematic to weigh "intention" as provided under section 57 (2), which meant that section 59 (2) was particularly important; yet the latter ultimately depended on the Attorney General who, in light of the unfortunate (in Kenya's case) British tendency to liberally interpret the "proviso" in section 57 (d), was unlikely to proceed with prosecution.

As a consequence of the government's inability to use the law to effectively suppress African newspapers that spouted views that discomfited, offended or even threatened them, these publications grew into a resilient press sector. The dominant newspapers of the post-war era were *Mumenyereri* (May 1945 – October 1952), *Sauti ya Mwafrika* (1945 – 1949 and June-October, 1952), *Muramati* (November 1950 – October 1952), *Mwaraniria* or *Dunia* (1946 –

[106] Ibid., p. 194.
[107] Ibid., p. 194.
[108] Ibid., p. 194.

1953), *Habari* (July 1945 – April 1947), *Mwalimu* (June 1945 – December 1947) and *Hindi ya Mwafrika* (later *Hindi ya Gikuyu* and then *Muthamaki*) April 1948 – October 1952). During their publication runs, their owners collided with the government from time to time. In April 1947 the editor of *Habari*, F. M. Ruhinda, was fined £50 or three months' imprisonment in case of default for sedition, while his publisher was sentenced to 18 months in prison. To Corfield's disappointment, both sentences were reduced on appeal. Ruhinda's fine was lowered to £25 or three months' imprisonment in case of default, while his publisher's term was reduced to a year. Later that year, Muoria was convicted for *Mumenyereri's* reporting of the Uplands Factory Riot. At the time of his conviction, two other sedition-related charges were pending against him, but following his conviction for the Uplands Riot article they were dropped as the editor was issued with a "strong warning regarding the future conduct of his paper."[109] Corfield notes that a few months later, the newspaper launched a "campaign of vilification" against Chief Waruhiu (whom the Mau Mau considered a government lackey). Fines and prison terms had failed to instill the intended lessons in Muoria and his staff. Then in June 1950, J.C.K. Kamau and Victor Wokabi as joint editors of *Hindi ya Gikuyu*, together with their editor V.G. Patel, were found guilty of various counts of sedition. All were fined different amounts, none of which exceeded £50, and only Kamau received a prison sentence (eight months later reduced to six months on appeal). The following month Wokabi was in court again for the Mugo-Kubai-Singh article and once more in March 1951 for sedition and contempt of court. Wokabi issued an apology for the contempt charge, which resulted in both charges against him being dropped. In July of the following year he published a politician's fiery speech made at a KAU rally in Thika in which the politician declared "Europeans are the knives and the Africans are the meat. The time is coming when Africans will be the knives and the Europeans the meat, and they will be cut to

[109] Ibid., p. 196.

pieces."[110] Corfield considered the publication of the speech a seditious act that ought to have been punished. However, no charges were brought against *Muthamaki,* "presumably because the police and the administration were at the time becoming overwhelmed with the effects of subversion and sedition." Nevertheless, shortly before the declaration of the state of emergency W. K. Kihara, the editor of *Muramati*, was convicted of sedition and ordered to pay a fine of £25.

As the Mau Mau crisis escalated, Central Kenya witnessed an evanescence of several unlicensed publications (which Corfield describes as newssheets) that were far more abrasive than their contemporaries. These included *Inoro ria Gikuyu* (November 1951), *Uhuru wa Mwafrika* (August 1952), *Wiyathi* (September 1952), *Mugambo wa Muembu* (September 1952), *Afrika Mpya* (October 1952), *Wihuge* (July 1952), *Gikuyu na Mumbi* (October 1952), *Kimuru* (November 1952), and *Wasya wa Mukamba* (March 1952). In October 1952, the declaration of the state of emergency brought the tumultuous relationship between the African press sector and the government to an end as the latter was able to finally suppress it.

That group of African newspapermen whom Downes met in 1950 — despite their ethnic differences — shared commonalities of class and ambition for themselves and their societies that inherently put them on a collision course with the government. They had all obtained a "lick" of missionary education and then proceeded to work, at least for a while, as junior civil servants. Their experiences of both institutions exposed them to humiliations and frustrations that reinforced the reality of their subordinate positions in the colonial order. At the same time, their education afforded them the opportunity to break away from the politico-economic chokehold government-appointed chiefs held in the reserves as well as cultural systems of patronage that were weighed against the young. Their experiences also fueled them with the desire to tap into

[110] Ibid., p.198.

the new order to stem their exploitation and empower themselves to bargain for and eventually acquire power. The print press became an effective vehicle in the journey towards their objectives. It offered the editor-owners of its products the opportunity to reach other educated members of their societies who by example and word-of-mouth would assist them in shaping their societies in the image they expressed for them. These would be societies that entered the capitalist system as equals of the European with the "readers" leading the way. Not surprisingly, their objectives were disturbing to a colonial order that sought the continuity of the status quo. When land stress and post-World War II changes in agricultural production exploded in the violent Mau Mau uprising, it afforded the government the opportunity to ban the newspapers that had dared to threaten its monopoly on power and cost so much time and energy to monitor within legal limits its officials thought tedious and ineffective. The percentage of Africans who could read relative to Asians and Europeans must have been modest indeed, but Downes' visit to that small backroom off Nairobi's Racecourse Road symbolises the government's recognition that despite their modest readership, African newspapers could not be ignored. The reality was that each African newspaper had many listeners, as well as readers.

LEVIATHAN'S CRANKY PRESS

Government newspapers: 1920 – 1962

While Government is anxious to continue these papers it is felt that in many cases African District Councils could make a greater financial contribution than they do at present, enabling the Central Government grants to be reduced.[1]

I do not think it would be feasible to require the African District Councils of these tribes to contribute. All the African District Councils…are extremely badly off in any case.[2]

In a 1970 paper which is also one of the earliest Kenyan-based press history works, F. Carter argues that until 1940 the Government saw no threat in whatever constituted the African press.[3] The sector was small with just *Muigwithania* in existence and, as is evident in Chapter Four of this dissertation, it adopted a fairly moderate tone in its discussion of politics and economics, reflecting the publisher's belief that the educated African was capable of attaining success in colonial Kenya with the requisite application of skill, intellect and diligence. After 1940, Carter observes that as Africans started more newspapers in the course of the next two decades there was a rise in press-related prosecutions. It is also evident that a number of *Muigwithania's* successors were not quite as moderate politically, with some overtly challenging the colonial status quo. Concomitant with the Government's earlier lax attitude towards the African press were its half-hearted attempts at newspaper publishing characterised by bureaucracy and red tape, poorly planned news gathering and dissemination schemes, inadequate governmental moral and financial support as well as flirtations with private capital and skill. The rise of Mau Mau and its militant challenge to the status quo, however, finally caused the Government to rethink its approach to newspaper publishing. For the first time it committed

[1] PC/NKU/2/27/2, Correspondence from the Department of Information to all District Commissioners, 6 April 1956. Nairobi: KNA.
[2] PC/NKU/2/27/2, Rift Valley Provincial Commissioner to the Secretary for African Affairs, 25 May1956. Nairobi:KNA.
[3] F. Carter, "The Kenya Government and the Press: 1906 – 1960," *Hadith*, vol. 2, 1970, pp. 243 – 259.

itself fully to the venture as the political climate raised the stakes in the competition for influence over African minds. Government newspapers, with *Pamoja* as the flagship publication, became a valued tool in the bid to make Africans more amenable to supporting the administration's socio-economic and political imperatives, especially those that pertained to controlling the pace and direction of political change.

Leviathan Sleeps; An Era of "Far from Restrictive Press Laws": 1920 – 1938[4]

During this time, the two existing press laws that Carter details have more to do with the Government's need to ensure the registration of and fair competition within the newspaper sector, while a third World War I era censorship law was never applied. The Books and Newspapers Ordinance of 1906 required newspapers to register with the Government in addition to sending it their annual returns and circulation numbers. There was also the Telegraphic Press Messages Ordinance of 1934 that provided an 84-hour protection period to news that correspondents and overseas agencies telegraphed to newspapers in Kenya and which Carter explains was designed to prevent piracy of Reuters news. Carter also notes that the Indian Telegraphic Act, which was applicable in Kenya, enabled the Government to delay telegraphic messages in the interests of "public safety," but nevertheless could be circumvented by use of the telephone and appears to have been hardly ever applied. The first overt law of censorship was the Press Censorship Ordinance of 1915 which the Governor was free to use during times of emergency but never did, while the censor provided for in the ordinance was never appointed.[5] Clearly, during these years, the Government did not feel compelled to move more forcefully against the press, African or otherwise. It was content to rely on sedition and libel laws to rein in the occasional offender. Yet there were those within Government who evidently did perceive a

[4] Ibid., p. 243.
[5] Ibid., p. 244.

need for Government to communicate its policies to Africans through novel channels at a time when the literate segments of their population were appropriating European modes of organisation to mobilise support for their agenda; the political party and the newspaper.

Just as Harry Thuku's Young Kikuyu Association was gaining steam, the government made a decision to start a newspaper targeted at Africans, but poor planning and lack of finance doomed it from conception. In mid-August 1920, the Acting Chief Native Commissioner, O. F. Watkins, sent a circular to the colony's Provincial Commissioners informing them that the Governor had consented to the publication of a "native" newspaper that the Government would finance and control. The goal of the newspaper was to be "informative and educational," but in addition to that he thought it would be useful to Junior Officers in remote areas who were struggling to master Kiswahili amidst the challenges of administering areas under their jurisdiction. The exact nature of the "informative and educational" material the government wished to disseminate to Africans is unclear, however this could be a reflection of the government's need to institute the sort of social change among African societies that would ensure that they were more useful to and accommodating of the colonial enterprise, for example the payment of unjust taxes, the supply of a healthy workforce for European settlers as well as Government projects, and generally the cultivation of more passive recipients of Government policies. Watkins informed the administrators that the contents of the paper would include world and local news reports, the latter being centred on various districts, appointments of chiefs, summaries of laws and correspondence from readers. The cost of the paper would depend on its circulation, but he thought it important that it did not exceed 25 cents for it to be affordable for its target readers.

A key purpose of the circular was to obtain information on the proposed publication from District Commissioners. They were requested to suggest a title, although in parenthesis the Acting CNC noted "(already suggested Habari);" recommend how often the newspaper should be published; answer whether they could make arrangements for the submission of brief articles based on news from their districts; and give a figure guaranteeing the number of copies they could circulate as well as the circulation numbers they thought the publication could attain. With regard to the latter, they were advised to canvass missions and "educated natives."[6] In planning the project, the Government made a key error. The District Commissioners do not appear to have been involved in the planning phase of the proposed publication before the circular was sent out. For one thing, the name of the publication had already been decided, but more importantly the wording of the circular makes it clear that the Government expected the success of the publication to rest heavily on their input. Not only were they expected to be primary generators of its content, they were also supposed to "guarantee" the circulation of the copies that the Office of the CNC would sent to them based on the District Commissioners' 'market research.' It was a big mistake on the part of the relevant decision-makers in Government and its consequences would plague the brief life of the publication.

The responses of the Coast Province's District Commissioners to their Provincial Commissioner (PC) were harbingers of the publication's future tribulations. The District Commissioner (DC) of Kilifi seemed eager to shift the responsibility of contributing articles to others, indicating that he could source short articles from Arabs and Swahilis in his district and would "also invite the Headmaster of Malindi School to send me the best of his boys' essays." He thought just about 20 copies could be sold in the whole district and that the publication would

[6] PC/CP/1/20/6. Correspondence from the Acting CNC to all Provincial Commissioners, 16 August 1920. Nairobi: KNA.

perhaps attain a circulation of 200. The DC also cautioned the government that any article of a "Mission tendency" would lead to its rejection, which meant that the "informative and educational" goals the Government had in mind would be meeting a lot of scrutiny in the days ahead.[7] The DC of Voi was more forthright in disassociating himself from the publication process. "I fear I cannot guarantee contributions," he said adding, and in contrast to the Kilifi DC, that while some content could be obtained from "Mission circles" they would most likely lack the element of brevity the CNC desired. The Kilifi DC had suggested that a supplement for local Coast news be added to the newspaper as he doubted that Coastal people and those farther inland would be interested in each other's affairs.[8] It thus appears that even within the Coast different districts had different demographics and so there would be a need for editorial staff to take more variables into consideration when publishing the newspaper. Shimoni's DC in a terse letter wrote that the probability of him contributing articles was very high, but that it "depends upon happenings, crops etc. of the District," and that circulation would be "very small."[9] In the meantime, financial difficulties meant that three weeks after he sent his first circular to the Provincial Commissioners, Watkins had to send another one notifying them that the launch of the publication had to be postponed for six months until it could be budgeted for the following year.[10] The first issue was not to be issued until July 1922.

By the end of its launch year, the Acting CNC was experiencing significant challenges generating content for the newspaper. Consequently, he wrote to Provincial and District Commissioners complaining that his office's request for articles from them had "met with a very meagre response." The expectation was a minimum of a single news paragraph of about 200

[7] PC/CP/1/20/6. Correspondence from the Kilifi DC to the Mombasa Acting PC, 24 August 1920. Nairobi: KNA.
[8] PC/CP/1/20/6. Correspondence from the Voi DC to the Mombasa Acting PC, 31 August 1920. Nairobi: KNA.
[9] PC/CP/1/20/6. Correspondence from the Vanga DC to the Mompasa PC, 2 September 1920. Nairobi: KNA.
[10] PC/CP/1/20/6. Correspondence from the Ag. CNC to All PCs, 16 August 1920. Nairobi: KNA.

words from each province. He advised that the paragraph be compiled in the office of the Provincial Commissioner based on the paragraphs the District Commissioners sent to his office, although special events warranting longer articles would be acceptable. He also informed them that he had observed that local news from the district was quite popular among Africans, especially since those employed as labourers away from home appreciated the opportunity to keep up with news from home. He was "keen" on the welfare of Africans and was sure the Commissioners were just as keen, adding that he was "confident that this reminder will not have to be repeated."[11] The circular was brief but the CNC's frustration was clear.

One and a half years later, *Habari* was still struggling to attain optimal circulation numbers. Nevertheless, the Government still thought the newspaper a valuable education tool for Africans in addition to being an 'instrument of administration.' So at the beginning of 1924, it attempted to revamp it. A decision was made to abolish the paper's Editorial Committee and to hand over its work to a single editor. Senior Commissioners would still be required to send news reports from their provinces as would officers whose departments dealt directly with Africans. In addition, the cost of the paper would be lowered to 10 cents in the hope of increasing subscribers and consequently encouraging commercial enterprises to use the paper for advertising purposes.[12] The struggle for advertising revenue was so great that the Deputy CNC even wrote separately to Senior Commissioners and their subordinates suggesting that they encourage African traders to use the post to order and obtain their goods, which would not only stimulate

[11] PC/CP/1/20/6. Correspondence from CNC to All Senior Commissioners," 20 November 1922. Nairobi: KNA.
[12] PC/CP/1/20/6. Correspondence from the Secretariat to All Senior Commissioners and Resident Commissioners, 7 January 1924. Nairobi: KNA.

the local market but also encourage those selling to them, specifically European firms, to advertise in *Habari*.[13]

To add to this, the content generation problem of 1922 was proving chronic and in August 1924 the Deputy CNC had to repeat his request to commissioners. He stressed that he understood that the daily workload of administrative officials was heavy, but he still thought district news reports important enough for each office to designate one junior officer or clerk to put together a local news report during the first week of every month.[14] However, the district commissioners appeared to feel the request was too difficult to honour due to staff shortfalls and heavy workloads. For instance, writing to the Senior Commissioner of the Coast, the Malindi DC objected to the Deputy CNC's suggestion, arguing that he had but a staff of three (one administrative officer, a District Clerk and a Junior Clerk), two of whom were busy preparing and dispatching accounts, returns and reports. He suggested that the *Habari* editor hire paid correspondents who would be stationed at district headquarters. An unconvinced Deputy CNC caustically responded to this request stating "that if the District Commissioner, Malindi, could have spent the time occupied in writing his letter by putting together a few notes on his local news it would have been all that I required." He insisted that he was editing the newspaper in addition to his routine duties and it ought not to be considered "an extreme hardship" if one member of each district's staff spent half an hour a month on a news report.[15] As for the suggestion that he hire correspondents, the editor disclosed that the paper was not making a profit and he did not feel paid contributions could be justified. Then for the first time, African

[13] PC/CP/1/20/6. Correspondence from Deputy Chief Native Commissioner to Senior Commissioners, 14 March 1924 and Correspondence from Deputy CNC to all District Commissioners and Resident Commissioners, 26 March 1924. Nairobi: KNA.
[14] PC/CP/1/20/6. Correspondence from Deputy CNC to A. J. Maclean of Mombasa, 11 August 1924. Nairobi: KNA.
[15] PC/CP/1/20/6. Correspondence from Deputy CNC to the Coast Senior Commissioner, 18 September 1924. Nairobi: KNA. See also (MAA) 2/5/41 (I). Press Propaganda, 30 August 1939. Nairobi: KNA. Watkins was editing the paper with "voluntary help," and with the assistance of Jimmy Jones who was an employee of the Government Press.

generated content was solicited out of sheer desperation, as he suggested that subscribing Headmen might be found willing to contribute district news.

There also appear to have been production and distribution problems even when demand for the paper was good. In September of the same year the Assistant DC of Kilifi wrote to his Senior Commissioner explaining that he had diligently promoted the periodical in his district by distributing ten free copies each month and charging them to his office's contingency vote. Nevertheless, after securing an impressive 35 subscriptions, he had failed to receive the 20 subscriptions he had been requesting monthly since May.[16] The paper continued to limp on before closure and then revival in 1927. By then, the Digo DC boldly informed the *Habari* Business Manager that he was not willing to guarantee the distribution of the paper as the last time he had done so he was required to make up the deficit. However, he was willing to assist in the sale of the publication provided that the articles in it were not similar to those in the "old Habari which I had considered were quite unsuitable for native reading." Copies of the 'old Habari' are not available today, but some of the objections the DC voiced were sensational news items from the European press and "wholly inaccurate 'times' alleged to have been accomplished at the Native Olympic Sports," another indicator of its long running content woes.[17] In 1931, crippled by its problems, the government stopped publishing *Habari*.[18]

Leviathan Stirs; Flirting with the Private Press Sector and the Birth of *Pamoja*: 1939 – 1952

As war closed in on Europe, the absence of *Habari* or a suitable substitute was keenly felt in government circles. In 1939 an Order in Council extended Britain's Emergency Powers

[16] PC/CP/1/20/6. Correspondence from Assistant DC to Senior Commissioner Coast, 1 September 1924. Nairobi: KNA.
[17] PC/CP/1/20/6. Correspondence from Digo DC to the Business Manager, *Habari*, 14 April 1927. Nairobi: KNA.
[18] (MAA) 2/5/41 (I). Press Propaganda, 23 June 1939. Nairobi: KNA.

(Defence) Regulations to the colonies; in Kenya it was introduced as the Defence (Censorship) Regulations of 1940 and it strictly regulated the publication of war and military news through the country's Information Office.[19] It was in that year that the Government felt adequately threatened by the activities of KCA to ban it and *Muigwithania*, beginning an era of aggressive press censorship aimed especially at the African and Asian press. However, this action did not address the critical question of how to communicate war news to Africans without causing alarm, while at the same time ensuring that subversive German activities did not take root amongst them to the detriment of the British Government and its interests in the colony. By 1940, additional goals included encouraging African men to enlist in the armed forces and encouraging increased food production in the African reserves to stem food shortages that had the potential of causing instability at a critical time.[20] At the end of 1939, the Embu DC wrote to the PC of Central Province requesting guidance on which information ought to be disseminated to Africans regarding the state of security in Europe. He had already given some information to them at *barazas* before making a trip away from his district in late September. At that time, he thought "the position then so very critical, and there was no time to refer to Headquarters…I thought it would be unfair for them to be suddenly faced with war without any kind of official warning on the subject."[21] A major concern for the Embu DC was false rumours and he felt that the best way of keeping them at bay was through the distribution of a regular news bulletin which the government prepared and translated into Kikuyu with the help of a missionary who had a thorough understanding of the language. Alternatively, if translation proved an insurmountable challenge, he proposed that the bulletin be prepared in short, crisp English sentences that an

[19] F. Carter, "The Kenya Government and the Press 1906 – 1960," p. 244.
[20] ARC (MAA) 2/5/49. Correspondence from Chief Secretary to the Editor of EAS Ltd., 24 April 1940. Nairobi: KNA.
[21] (MAA) 2/5/41 (I). Correspondence from Embu DC to Central Province PC, 31 December 1938. Nairobi: KNA.

African clerk could translate with relative ease. Although the PC assured the DC that a suitable medium of communication would be available for that purpose when and if needed, his letter to the Chief Secretary (accompanied by a copy of the Embu DC's letter) in Nairobi indicates that there was no clear policy on the matter by early January 1939.[22] Indeed the Chief Secretary only vaguely referred to "appropriate action" that would be taken "should the necessity arise." The Government seemed to be content with a 'wait-and-see' approach. However, in addition to the Embu DC, there were those who thought otherwise.

In May, the Commissioner of Police forwarded a proposal by a private individual, the renown Louis B. Leakey, for a weekly newspaper in Kikuyu to the Governor. He was very supportive of the proposal and thought the only justifiable hurdle on its way could be financial, but even that was not to be considered indomitable when compared to its potential advantages. He emphasised that what appealed to him most about the proposal was Leakey's insistence that the value of the newspaper would diminish greatly if it was introduced only at the actual onset of war. "It seems what is required is for the paper to establish a reputation in peace time as a purveyor of 'straight news' which would be of incalculable advantage in war time," he asserted.[23] In his proposal, Louis Leakey justified the need for a Kikuyu newspaper arguing that those then in existence, including *Muigwithania,* lacked "straight news" and were too political, while *Mokinyu,* a paper which the Italian Catholic Mission published was for Catholic propaganda. Yet he perceived a growing sensitivity to news on Europe's political situation amongst the Kikuyu. Apparently, "the problem of Danzig, Palestine, Tanganyika, and the Sino-Japanese war etc. can be heard every day at almost every trade centre and in every eating house

[22] (MAA) 2/5/41 (I). Correspondence from Central Province PC to the Chief Secretary, 3 January 1931. Nairobi: KNA.
[23] (MAA) 2/5/41 (I). Correspondence from the Commissioner of Police to the Governor, 19 May 1931. Nairobi: KNA.

and hotel." Whether or not this was the case is difficult to ascertain; nevertheless, it served Leakey's interests in the proposal to have the administration believe that there was already a considerable flow of war-related information from unofficial news channels circulating amongst Africans.

Leakey justified the need for publication of the newspaper in Kikuyu by arguing that the Kikuyu constituted one quarter of the African population and there were "several thousands" of Kamba and Luo who could speak the language (presumably because of labour migration patterns). He estimated that given the low rate of literacy amongst Africans, 5,000 copies could be sold, but conceded that only a six-month trial would determine a more accurate figure. However, he also pointed out that "the number of people reached by the news in the paper may be considered to be about 50 times as great as the nu[m]ber of copies sold. (This is a very conservative estimate)."[24] As pointed out in the previous chapter, a newspaper's circulatory reach went beyond those who actually bought copies, especially when a significant percentage of the populace was illiterate. For the paper to be a success, he insisted that the Government would have to subsidise an initial capital cost of £200 and monthly editorial costs as income in the early stages would be inadequate. Leakey totaled monthly editorial costs at £120 including an editor's salary of £50. The latter figure would later prove difficult for certain Government officials to swallow. Leakey justified the monthly figure by arguing that the following advantages would accrue to government in due course:

> (1) Knowledge that the machinery for adequate and effective propaganda and counter-propaganda measures had been organised in [sic] for an emergency such as war.
>
> (2) A medium thorough which ciuld [sic] easily communicate new decisions, laws and ordinances, much more effectively than through Barazas.

[24] (MAA) 2/5/41 (I). Louis B. Leakey proposal on Notes on the Proposal to Start a Kikuyu Weekly Newspaper, undated. Nairobi: KNA.

(3) Assurance that the Natives were getting RELIABLE STRAIGHT NEWS in the place of distorted news and harmful RUMOUR.

(4) An excellent channel for the spread of information about anti-soil erosion methods, sanitation, hygiene etc.[25]

These were the sort of advantages that made the proposal attractive to the Commissioner of Police. However, once the proposal was in the hands of Government officials, questions arose. Most officials whom the Chief Secretary consulted wondered whether the use of Kikuyu instead of Kiswahili could be justified.[26] Another thought that a salary of £50 for the editor was too much. Their concerns touched on Leakey's interests in the proposal; his peers considered him an expert on the Kikuyu and so the likelihood that the Government would rely on his expertise in one way or another for an official Kikuyu language publication were high. He also hoped that the Government would appreciate the urgent need for the publication as he had communicated it in his proposal, thus ensuring that he would soon be on the receiving end of a generous salary as the manager of a publicly capitalised and subsidised publication. The Director of Education, in the most detailed response to the Chief Secretary, though supportive of the idea also questioned the publication of the newspaper in Kikuyu only. He also observed that "Dr. Leakey appears to envisage the paper as a Government organ, with himself as the editor," though he thought it best for the Government to distance itself from such a publication by subsidising a private organisation to publish it.[27] He appears to have been suggesting that diminishing the Government's role in the newspaper's publication would raise its credibility in the eyes of readers and enhance its role as a covert purveyor of propaganda. Most importantly, he suggested that the Government consult other governments where similar publications were already in operation, specifically Northern Rhodesia, where the Native Affairs Department was publishing

[25] Ibid., uppercase letters are Leakey's.
[26] (MAA) 2/5/41 (I). Handwritten and initialed correspondence, undated. Nairobi: KNA.
[27] (MAA) 2/5/41 (I). Correspondence from the Director of Education to the Chief Secretary, 20 June 1939. Nairobi: KNA.

Mutende and Southern Rhodesia where a private firm working closely with the Government published the *The Bantu Mirror*. With the inevitability of war in Europe, the Government was by now eager to develop a suitable medium of communication with (more appropriately 'to') Africans. Consequently, the Acting Chief Secretary duly sought guidance from the governments of Northern Rhodesia and Southern Rhodesia, who responded by relating demographics to languages of publication (both countries had a single publication with articles in more than two languages), detailing technical aspects of newspaper production, circulation figures and other operational issues.[28] Discussions within Government ensued with most officials favouring the publication of the newspaper by a private organisation benefitting from subsidies as the Government controlled its editorial policies. The Chief Native Commissioner, who by August 1939 now believed that the need for a news dissemination medium was "daily becoming more urgent," considered that the private organisation with the capacity to handle such an endeavour was the *East African Standard*.[29]

Later that month, the Information Committee chaired by the Chief Native Commissioner met to discuss the best way for the Government to realise its publication goals through private enterprise.[30] In supporting an *EAS* subsidised publication, the CNC insisted that a Government publication would be met with great scepticism. Major Grogan was more cautious and thought that the *EAS* ought to test the waters with a supplement in its newspaper targeted at the African reader. Such a supplement, he proposed, could be sold separately. The Director of Medical

[28] (MAA) 2/5/41 (I). Correspondence from the Acting Chief Secretary to the Chief Secretary to the Government of Northern Rhodesia, 26 June 1939. Nairobi: KNA. (MAA) 2/5/41 (I). Correspondence from the Acting Chief Secretary to the Chief Native Commissioner of Southern Rhodesia, 26 June 1939. Nairobi: KNA. (MAA) 2/5/41 (I). Correspondence from the Secretary of Native Affairs of Southern Rhodesia to the Chief Secretary, Kenya, 1 July 1939. Nairobi: KNA, (MAA) 2/5/41 (I). Memorandum on the Publication of the African Newspaper of Northern Rhodesia: Mutende, 21 July 1939. Nairobi: KNA.
[29] (MAA) 2/5/41 (I). Correspondence from the CNC to the Chief Secretary, 7 August 1939. Nairobi: KNA.
[30] ARC(MAA)2/5/41 (II). Minutes of a Meeting Held at the Secretariat at 10.15 a.m., 28 August 1939. Nairobi: KNA

Services endorsed Grogan's view. In contrast, the Director of Education was in favour of a government funded and published newspaper which would be distributed with the assistance of provincial administration, Local Native Councils and schools. He thought such a publication could sustain a circulation of about 25,000 copies per issue and, just as the Southern African government-supported journals, should be published in multiple languages. In the end, the Information Committee resolved to contact the Directors of the *EAS* for initial inquiries. The Government would propose a publication in multiple languages published as a supplement in the *EAS*. They were of the opinion that the supplement would be circulated for free, but once it had gained a foothold amongst African readers it would be sold at a fixed price.

In arriving at this conclusion the Information Committee must have been keen on avoiding the extra expenditure that would have come with hiring skilled staff as well as heedful of warnings that the Government's printer would not have the capacity to publish the paper. O. F. Watkins, the former editor of the government's failed *Habari* newspaper, must also have played a crucial role in encouraging the committee to seek a private partner in the venture. Once approached, the *EAS* stated that though they had considered publishing a newspaper specifically for the African reader, they had been hesitant to do so as they were certain such a publication would not be commercially viable. They did, however, believe in its importance and were willing to do so, offering the following conditions as proposals for further discussion:

> That the production and management should be undertaken by the East African Standard, Ltd.
>
> That the management should be supervised by a small Committee composed of a Government Representative and the Managing Director of the East African Standard, Ltd., or his nominee.
>
> That the policy of the paper should be independent of Government control but under the Editorial direction of the Board of Directors of the East African Standard Limited, or their nominee, with an Editor approved by Government.
>
> That the Government shall make good any loss sustained by the publication of the newspaper in the form of a direct subsidy, which subsidy shall

> be sanctioned annually in advance by Government and shall be agreed between Government and the East African Standard.
>
> That in the first instance, subject to a mutual agreement for cancellation, an undertaking shall be given that a subsidy shall be payable for a minimum of three years for an agreed annual amount.
>
> That in computing the loss to be made good by Government only direct costs acceptable to auditors shall be admitted with the following exception. The works costs for the mechanical production of the paper shall be based upon the actual costs plus 10%.
>
> That the relationship of the Government and the East African Standard Limited in the promotion of the newspaper shall be made clear as it is thought to be more harmful to endeavour to maintain secrecy in a matter of this nature.
>
> That the languages used should be English and Swahili.[31]

Capt. Anderson, who along with his wife had purchased the *EAS* from Jevanjee, also told the Government that it needed to be prepared to guarantee a subsidy of £1,500 for each of the three years it supported the paper's publication. O. F. Watkins, in a cover letter forwarding the EAS Ltd. response to the Financial Secretary and eager to see the newspaper take off, offered to serve as editor in addition to his Government appointment so as to enable the Government to save on the costs of hiring a European editor.[32] In the Government's offer, the EAS Ltd. had spotted an opportunity to embark on a venture it had contemplated for a while but had not even dared to test due to financial costs. However, now that it was on the verge of obtaining the government backing it needed to do so, it was keen on limiting the role the government would play in the venture, reducing its role to one of financial backer during what would amount to a three-year pilot phase. Thus, the role of the Government Representative in the small management committee was left undefined and though the paper provided for a government-approved editor, it still maintained that the government should not take part in the paper's policy formulation. It seemed to imply that the government's role as far as editorial policy was concerned would be

[31] ARC(MAA)2/5/41 (II). Correspondence from Managing Director of EAS Ltd., to Lt. Col. O. F. Watkins, 30 August 1939. Nairobi: KNA.
[32] ARC(MAA)2/5/41 (II). Correspondence from O. F. Watkins to the Financial Secretary, 31 August 1939. Nairobi: KNA.

limited to approving an editor who thereafter would not be obliged to take Government views into consideration. It was a paradoxical arrangement that was to become a major bone of contention soon after an EAS-Government arrangement was reached.

Once the Government agreed to the financial conditions that the EAS Ltd. had laid down, the company took it as a sign that it had also accepted the conditions proposed in its letter to O. F. Watkins and quickly moved to begin publishing.[33] Anderson urged the Government to appoint their representative to the paper's management committee and indicated that he had already discussed the position of the editor with Watkins and encouraged the Government to appoint him to the post.[34] Two days later the Government appointed A. T. Lacey, the Director of Education to the management committee.[35] In addition to being eager to grab the opportunity to widen its market, the company may also have been concerned that its rivals had the intention of launching similar publications.[36] Moreover, in its haste to develop and control an authoritative news source for Africans on terms that would enable it to meet its propaganda goals the Government was also eager to move forward with the plan and seemed content to let the EAS Ltd., lead the way in the mistaken confidence that it would have effective control over the publication. Besides, it too was concerned about the EAS Ltd's rivals. A day before the company launched its newspaper, the Director of Civil Intelligence reported that the *Sunday Post* was about to commence production of a Kiswahili-Kikuyu paper. He was concerned that the paper's staff lacked the experience to translate English to Kikuyu and errors in translation could result in negative repercussions. He was also worried that none of the European staff at the newspaper were proficient in Kikuyu "so

[33] ARC(MAA)2/5/41 (II). Correspondence from Acting Chief Secretary to the Directors of East African Standard, 6 September. Nairobi: KNA.
[34] ARC(MAA)2/5/41 (II). Correspondence from the Managing Director of EAS Ltd., to the Chief Secretary, 7 September 1939. Nairobi: KNA.
[35] ARC(MAA)2/5/41 (II). Correspondence from the Acting Chief Secretary to the Managing Director EAS Ltd., 8 September 1939. Nairobi: KNA.
[36] ARC(MAA)2/5/41 (II). Papers on "Native Newspapers," 15 September 1939. Nairobi: KNA and (MAA) 2/5/41 (I). "Propaganda Among the Natives," 7 August 1939. Nairobi: KNA.

that the new venture may be dangerous."[37] And so in the headlong rush to get the EAS Ltd.'s paper it was supporting off the ground, it compromised on many of the qualities its officials had advocated, such as publication in multiple languages, and failed to probe further to what extent it would control the paper's content. The Government allowed the conditions that EAS Ltd. had issued as a "basis for discussion" to morph into a charter upon which the company would establish the newspaper's *modus operandi*. The company officially launched the newspaper, *Baraza*, on 16 September 1939 at a Government-subsidised cost of 10 cents a copy. It was also sold in the Northern and Tanga Provinces of Tanganyika where it was economical to do so at the subsidised rate.[38]

Soon after its launch, the *EAS* Ltd. had to face frequent criticism regarding its content, particularly from security officials. For instance, the Commissioner of Police wrote to the Chief Secretary to complain that the headline "Eropleni [Ndege] za Germani [Ujerumani] zinapiga meli za Kingereza [Uingereza], (German Planes Attack British Ships)" beneath a picture on the front page of the 28 October 1939 issue of *Baraza* gave the reader the impression that the German attack was successful when it was not.[39] The government, however, opted not to refer the matter to the Information Committee arguing that the sub-headline "Bombomu [Bomu] Nyingi Zinatupwa Bure," ("Several Launched Bombs go to Waste") made it clear that the attack was unsuccessful.[40] The following month, the Director of Civil Intelligence sent yet another letter of complaint to the Commissioner of Police. This time the offending headline was under the column "Uvumi wa Wiki" or "Rumours of the Week" that the newspaper sought to dispel

[37] ARC(MAA)2/5/41 (II). Papers on "Native Newspapers," 15 September 1939. Nairobi: KNA.
[38] ARC(MAA)2/5/41 (II). Correspondence from the Chairman, Information Committee to the Chief Secretary, 16 October, 1939. Nairobi: KNA and ARC(MAA)2/5/41 (II). Correspondence from Chief Secretary to Chairman, Information Committee, 25 October 1939. Nairobi: KNA.
[39] ARC(MAA)2/5/41 (II). Correspondence from the Commissioner of Police to the Chief Secretary, 30 October 1939. Nairobi: KNA.
[40] ARC(MAA)2/5/41 (II). Correspondence from the Chief Secretary to the Commissioner of Police, 6 November 1939. Nairobi: KNA.

and it read "Kupigana Katika Northern Frontier" or "Fighting on the Northern Frontier [of Kenya]."[41] He argued that while the story conformed to the Government's stand that there was no fighting in the Northern Frontier, "in view of the fact that headlines strike the eye and that many readers, especially Africans, do not read the letter press," the headline ought to have read "Hakuna vita Katika Northern Frontier" that is "There is No Fighting in the Northern Frontier." He also thought it was dangerous that the newspaper had informed readers that in the event that there eventually was actual fighting, it would let them know because "the African may infer that war with Italy is inevitable." In addition, he had observed that the newspaper had reported German mining successes on its front page while Allies' successful destruction of seven German ships had been "tucked away in an obscure corner of page 6 with very small headlines." He was of the opinion that one of the purposes of *Baraza* was to "stress our successes, not to stress German successes."[42] That which constituted "straight" news in cases where the Allies suffered setbacks would therefore always be open to interpretation. Another article the Director found disturbing was a notice the paper published on the Ukamba Members Association announcing the formation of the association that year and stating its goals: to achieve "equal political status with other subjects of H. M. the King by all legitimate means" and to promote the socio-economic advance of the Akamba as well as to advocate for and protect their rights. The notice included a list of the association's key officials and, to the Director's dismay, he could not help but notice that it was published a week after *Baraza* had given "free publicity" to the Kikuyu Central Association. Yet, their activities in the preceding months were most displeasing to the

[41] ARC(MAA)2/5/41 (II). Correspondence from the Director of Civil Intelligence to the Commisssioner of Police, 27 November 1939. Nairobi: KNA.
[42] Ibid.

Director and he thought it improper for the newspaper to cover the associations' activities in the way that it had done over two weeks.[43]

When the EAS Ltd., responded to the Director's queries, it reiterated the conditions it had sent to the Government at the end of August 1939. The response was certainly not what the Government wanted to hear. It was a forthright defense of *Baraza's* editorial policies in which Anderson reminded the Government that it had demanded a publication free from its control and under the direction of the company's Board of Directors. He then proceeded to issue the company's justification for the newspaper's coverage of African news, particularly as it related to the activities of the KCA:

> I feel certain that the occasional successes of the Kikuyu Central Association have greatly strengthened their standing and have emboldened their more extreme members. The vast mass of their members, however, belonging, as always, to the moderate element. In the absence of any acceptable public championship of their legitimate grievances, the cloak of secrecy has proved a boon to the subversive elements of the Association. The fact that this Association has strengthened its position among the Kikuyu and that its subversive activities give Government increasing anxiety seems to me an indication that the previous methods of dealing with the problem have not succeeded.
>
> I believe that the surest corrective to subversive propaganda is not counter-propaganda, but honest and sympathetic publicity so that those suffering under grievances may have their grievances aired. Where there is an accumulation of grievances or misunderstandings there also will one find material ripe for trouble. I suggest a comparison of the secret police forces of Europe where the Press is controlled with those of such countries where the Press is free.[44]

The statement was an astute and prescient observation of Kikuyu politics and local African politics in general and also one that made it clear the EAS Ltd. was determined to control the paper's content completely in accordance with its goals as a commercial media concern. The company's Board of Directors had studied the African political scene carefully and was convinced that a more sophisticated and therefore variegated analysis of its participants, in

[43] Ibid.
[44] ARC(MAA)2/5/41 (II). Correspondence from the EAS Ltd. Managing Director to the Chief Secretary, 19 December 1939. Nairobi: KNA.

addition to a pragmatic approach to addressing the grievances they put forth, was the best way to engage them in print and in practice. Not only did the company believe that "moderate" elements of African politics should be encouraged to speak out without suppression, it also tacitly chastised the government for not doing so and condemned its existing approach as crude and harmful. Anderson insisted that it did not matter "how extreme these views are provided they are publicly stated." He was certain that such views would be neutralised by the "more stable elements of their community who will see in 'Baraza', not only a safety valve, but a means of self-expression and a means of challenging the present supremacy of the more subversive leaders." Suppression only bred discontent that would explode to the detriment of everybody. Anderson also added rather obliquely that it was also *Baraza's* policy to ensure that Africans understood "what would happen with a foreign power on their border if one of the objectives of the Kikuyu Central Association should be attained – East Africa for the African."[45] Thus, in its vehement defense of freedom of expression and the press, what the EAS Ltd., really wanted was the freedom to protect the interests its decision makers represented. If this necessitated the provision of a safety valve as a preventative measure against a destructive explosion that would upset the entire politico-economic order to the detriment of all, then it was willing to do so.

As for the matter of the Northern Frontier headline that had so discomfited the Director of Civil Intelligence, Anderson made it clear who was the final arbiter in the novel arrangement that produced *Baraza*. He pointed out that the story had appeared under the "Rumours of the Week" segment in which rumours were stated and then quashed. Anderson observed that the column was a suggestion of the Information Committee and that it employed the counter-propaganda methodologies he considered counterproductive and informed the Chief Secretary that "I will reconsider its continuance." He acknowledged that producing an African newspaper

[45] Ibid.

would pose unique challenges and encouraged the Government to keep sending the company its criticisms. Nevertheless, it was clear that that the paper would not feel obliged to act on those criticisms if it considered them at variance with its editorial policies.

Anderson's letter to the Chief Secretary commenced the process that led to the company's falling out with the Government and the end of the latter's participation in the endeavour. Internal discussions within Government ensued which also entailed a review of the correspondence that had led to the establishment of the newspaper, with one official resignedly observing that "we appear to have accepted tacitly the condition that the policy of the paper should be independent of Government control."[46] Similar views were expressed in a report following an inquiry into the Information Office in March 1940. Two members of the commission expressed their displeasure with the arrangement under which EAS Ltd. was producing *Baraza,* arguing that it was quite feasible that it could potentially "run as a completely anti-Government paper which, as the Government takes an interest in the financial side, would be an anomaly." They thought it unacceptable that the only active role the Government had in the publication was appointing an officer who only had a say in financial matters, especially as they pertained to guaranteeing the company against losses incurred in the publication of the Kiswahili newspaper.[47]

In October the EAS Ltd. submitted its accounts to the Chief Secretary through the Director of Education, who was sitting on its management committee. Lacey prefaced the accounts by explaining that *Baraza's* circuation had peaked at 17,500 in October before attaining an average of 11,500 copies thereafter, which the company attributed to drought, the attendant

[46] ARC(MAA)2/5/41 (II). Correspondence between the Chief Secretary and various government officials, 29 January 1940 – 30 January 1940. KNA: Nairobi.
[47] ARC(MAA)2/5/41 (II). Extract from Report of the Commission of Inquiry on the Information Office, 5 March 1940. KNA: Nairobi.

rise in commodity prices, and the reading of each copy by more than one person. He also explained that advertising revenues had also fallen after the initial three-month contracts with various companies had ended and that there had been a rise in wages and salaries from January 1940, because apparently, the editor had started receiving his salary from the EAS Ltd. instead of the Information Office, the sum of which was then debited to *Baraza*. The total loss sustained for the year that would end in December 1940 was projected to be £1,080.[48] Lacey also added that Anderson had assured him that the newspaper had established itself and the company was gaining experience in catering to the tastes of African readers. The Chief Secretary acknowledged having undertaken to insulate the company against losses incurred in the publication of *Baraza,* but requested the Accountant General to carry out an audit of the paper's accounts before any payment was made.[49] By this time, the Government's relationship with the newspaper had soured and its actions make it clear that it was only begrudgingly keeping its side of the bargain. In 1942, having benefited from the push to develop a new publication and having successfully broadened its market as the Government cushioned it from the anxieties of shouldering the burdens of travelling through uncharted corporate territory, the EAS Ltd. asked the Government to stop its financial contributions to *Baraza*.[50] The company was now free to generate the sort of content it desired without having to answer incessantly to Government officials.

And so the Government found itself once again without a newspaper; a status that led to the establishment of a weekly broadsheet named *Pamoja* ("Together") which the Kenya

[48] ARC(MAA)2/5/41 (II). Correspondence between the Director of Education of Chief Secretary, 9 May 1940. KNA: Nairobi.
[49] ARC(MAA)2/5/41 (II). Chief Secretary to Accountant General, 25 May 1940. KNA: Nairobi. See also ARC(MAA)2/5/41 (II). Correspondence from Accountant General to EAS Ltd. Managing Director, 21 June 1940. KNA: Nairobi.
[50] CS/2/8/122. African News Bulletins, 10 February 1947. KNA: Nairobi.

Information Office published and distributed free of charge but not without some very familiar problems. In 1946, G. G. Hutchinson, the Acting Information Officer, described it as a Kiswahili publication of "one sheet on rather poor quality paper" with a circulation of 18,000.[51] In a letter to the Chief Secretary he advised the Government to consider increasing its size as there was a content glut at the Kenya Information Office and too little space to publish the available material in *Pamoja*. He also disapproved of the small font in which it was published as he thought it made the paper too arduous for semi-literate Africans to read and suggested that an English column be included in future editions to assist those who were learning English to develop proficiency. At the time Hutchinson was writing, the Government was also publishing a newspaper for African World War II Carrier Corps named *Askari*. It was a 16-page paper which included photographs that never featured on the Government newspaper's modest spread. Hutchinson wanted the Government to revamp *Pamoja* and make it more similar to *Askari* in style. Another of his suggestions was that the improved *Pamoja* be published fortnightly instead of weekly. In giving this suggestion, Hutchinson claimed that he was acting under the counsel of a Church Missionary Society Bookshop staff member who had informed that a fortnightly edition was best for a publication geared towards Africans as "the African is a slow reader and likes time to digest the material with which he is served."[52] He may also have given the suggestion because he was well aware of the Government's difficult history with publications it sponsored and the added financial strain that a 16-page publication would place on public coffers, not to mention the Government Printer's facilities.

Indeed, as soon as discussions of Hutchinson's proposal started, various officials expressed concern over the difficulties of financing and publishing it. Thus, although a meeting

[51] CS/2/8/122. Correspondence from Acting Information Officer to the Chief Secretary, 5 March 1946. KNA: Nairobi.
[52] Ibid.

of the African Social Services Advisory Committee, a meeting of Provincial Commissioners, and consequently the Chief Secretary approved of the plan to enlarge *Pamoja* by 14 March 1946, two weeks later after learning exactly how much it would cost to revamp the publication, the Advisory Committee admitted that the Government could not afford it and counseled Hutchinson to investigate the extent to which advertising could finance the project. The Government Printer also explicitly rejected the proposal as his offices lacked the quality of paper best suited to publishing the newspaper with illustrations and suggested that the Government contract the paper's publication to a private organisation. Further discussions in September also led to the suggestion that the enlarged newspaper be run "on a proper commercial profit-making basis," which the Chief Secretary indicated would mean an end to the free distribution of the newspaper and the implementation of a cover price that would cover the cost of producing each issue without including income from uncertain advertising revenue. By this time, Hutchinson had cut down the number of pages in the proposed revamped newspaper to eight with six versions, each in a different African language and modeled on another World War II era Government publication, *Kwetu Kenya*.[53]

Nevertheless, the Government remained interested in the establishment of a newspaper it controlled. At a meeting which the head of the Development and Reconstruction Authority chaired, the Chair emphasised the need for mass education and seemed to think of the press as a key medium for disseminating the information the Government had in mind. The Information Officer used the opportunity to lobby for a revamped *Pamoja* proposing yet again an eight-page

[53] CS/2/8/122. Extract from the Minutes of a Meeting of the African Social Services Advisory Committee, 28 February 1946; Correspondence from the Acting Chief Secretary to the Information Officer, 14 March 1946; Correspondence from the Government Printer to the Acting Information Officer, 21 March 1946; Extract from the Minutes of the Meeting of the African Social Services Advisory Committee, 28 March 1946; Correspondence from the Acting Chief Secretary to the Kenya Information Officer, 19 September 1946; Correspondence from the Information Officer to the Chief Secretary, 25 September 1946. Nairobi: KNA.

publication distributed free, even though it would be more than four times as expensive to produce, because he considered its goals justifiable: counter propaganda, mass education and the enhancement of literacy. These were goals that had been expanded on in a Kenya Information Office memorandum that had embraced several key recommendations to the Development Committee. These included the elimination of the "unwillingness" to "comprehend the broad requirements of a rehabilitation and development programme and more particularly unless the principle that 'all must work' can be brought before the African in a convincing and effective way, there is no alternative to economic disaster." The Development Committee claimed to have found the root cause of that "unwillingness" to embrace the Government's policies in the African press that had succeeded in poisoning the minds of its readers and turning them against the Government. To counter its effect and therefore to make the African "willing to be taught," the Information Office believed that the Government had to develop a sound medium of counter propaganda and this meant the establishment of a more robust newspaper.[54] These are the ideas that the Information Officer brought with him to the meeting and after further discussion, the Information Officer was instructed to submit his plan for the publication for the revamped newspaper to the Government.[55]

In the meantime, a few Africans started to approach provincial administration officials seeking funding and support to enable them to establish newspapers and these officials were generally supportive of their proposals. Having been party to meetings in which the proposition to enlarge *Pamoja* was discussed, the officials were certainly aware of the inadequacies of the paper and the meandering course decision-making on the matter had taken within Government. They appear to have been quite taken by the goals of the proposed publications which promised

[54] CS/2/8/122. Memorandum on Kenya Information Office Estimates and Extended Activities. Nairobi: KNA.
[55] CS/2/8/122. Notes of a Meeting Held at the Secretariat, 29 October 1946. Nairobi: KNA.

to ensure that they would be valuable auxiliary tools for the implementation of Government programmes and goals. Thus, just a day after the Information Officer was instructed to prepare a plan for the new *Pamoja*, the Nyanza PC sent the Chief Secretary a letter forwarding a request made by a "responsible" African seeking to obtain government support for the publication of a newspaper which would provide "essential news and necessary hints on Agricultural subjects, Educational propaganda, Livestock management, commercial and social advancement, concerted talks on Health and Hygiene questions, elimination of the conditions which make for the persistence of superstitious and diabolic beliefs, particularly witchcraft in all its forms, etc. etc." Borrowing from the American Declaration of Independence and perhaps in a bid to make himself indispensable to the proposed paper, the Nyanza resident had informed the PC that for the publication to be successful it needed to "be of the people, by the people and for the people" while arguing that it had to be partly dependent on the Government for financial reasons.[56] The Nyanza PC forwarded his request to the Chief Secretary, encouraging him to offer a subsidy and maintain control of the newspaper. According to him the paper would offer the government a good medium for counter propaganda in the area's newspapers and this would be achieved with greater ease if the government maintained a standing subsidy to the paper instead of a subsidy that guaranteed it against loss. [57] The Central Province PC also received a similar request through his Embu DC on behalf of two men identified as Joel Gatigo and James Nyaga, who wished to start a Kiswahili and Kikuyu paper with the goal of enabling district residents to "understand one another." They proposed publishing the paper using office equipment (a typewriter and duplicating machine) as they purchased their own paper while working after

[56] CS/2/8/122. Correspondence from the Nyanza Province PC to the Chief Secretary, 30 October 1946. Nairobi KNA.
[57] CS/2/8/122. Correspondence from Nyanza PC to Chief Secretary, 8 January 1947. Nairobi: KNA.

office hours as they kept their government clerical appointments.[58] Nyaga and Gatigo claimed not to be after profits and that they would sell the paper simply to ensure that readers valued it enough to respect it as a news source. The Embu DC's main concern was that he would lose the two if the newspaper grew and consumed more of their time, but he otherwise did inform the Central Province PC that he did not doubt their "altruistic" intentions, adding that their newspaper would also have a chance of growing before "less reputable" ones made their debut.[59] Nevertheless, Hutchinson was not supportive of the application because he considered the Government support for such publications inimical to the existence of his own proposed enlarged *Pamoja*. [60]

In April 1947, the Government finally agreed to subsidise Gatigo and Nyaga's *Embu District Gazette,* but by May 1947 Hutchinson reported to the Chief Secretary that the two men appeared to be profiting not only from the sale of the paper, but also from the monthly grant they were receiving from the Government. According to him, Gatigo and Nyaga were receiving £6 each month while spending but a few shillings on four stencils for each issue and a supply of duplicating paper. He was sure they were recouping those costs from sales so he urged the Government to end the grant then shift to guaranteeing the two men against loss and only when proved by audited accounts. This would, however, mean decreasing the Government's control of the publication in the same way the Nyanza PC had cautioned against with regard to the proposal he had received. As regards the *Embu District Gazette*, he advised that a paper sold for profit meant that eventually its publishers would be motivated to print what sold "and this is by no

[58] CS/2/8/122. Correspondence from Joel Gatigo and James Nyaga to the Embu DC, 18 November 1946, Correspondence from the Central Province PC to the Embu DC, 6 December 1946. Nairobi: KNA.
[59] CS/2/8/122. Correspondence from Embu DC to Central Province PC, 16 November 1946. Nairobi: KNA.
[60] CS/2/8/122. Correspondence from Acting Information Officer to the Chief Secretary, 13 December 1946. Nairobi: KNA.

means all desirable."[61] The scenario this would create would not be unlike that experienced with the EAS Ltd.'s *Baraza*. Instead, the Secretariat recommended that the men receive a monthly honorarium and any profits that they made go into their Local Native Council's coffers.[62] While altruism, whatever they perceived it to be, may have been the motivation of these African upstarts, it does seem more likely that, not unlike the EAS Ltd., they had also spied an opportunity to get a business venture off the ground with government assistance, or worse a chance to bilk the Government. The government had in turn made itself susceptible to such activities by its reluctance to fully invest in its own press venture. Nevertheless, by the end of 1947, there were two district newspapers: one in Embu and another at Kisii. The Nyanza proposal remained only a proposal, though in 1948 the CNC approved of the Nyanza PC's suggestion that the Government pay for space in *Ramogi* to publish local news and announcements.[63] However, by then the Government had also decided to make it policy to support such papers on a standing subsidy basis.

At the same time, the continued existence of a troubled yet vibrant African press just as the Government was embarking on post-World War II social welfare policies ignited Government interest in the publication of newspapers in languages other than Kiswahili.[64] The committee which the Chief Native Commissioner chaired concluded that it would be best for Government to sponsor a private organisation to produce a non-Kiswahili African language paper on a test basis, preferably starting with Kikuyu instead of publishing one on its own. Once

[61] CS/2/8/122. Correspondence from Nyanza Province PC to CNC, 7 July 1947.
[62] Ibid.
[63] CS/2/8/122.Correspondence from Nyanza PC to CNC, 3 January 1948 and Correspondence from CNC to Kenya Information Officer, 3 February 1948. Nairobi: KNA. DC/KSM/1/28/6. The double-column grant for space in *Ramogi* continued until the Central Nyanza District Commissioner's office started a district newspaper. For more on *Ramogi* and other privately owned African newspapers see Chapter Four.
[64] CS/2/8/140. Report of the Committee Appointed to Consider the Best Means of Organising the Dissemination of Accurate News to the African throughout the Colony by Means of a Newspaper or Newspapers in the Vernacular, April 1948. Nairobi: KNA.

again, the East African Standard Ltd. was approached through its subsidiary East African Publications Ltd. What propelled the committee towards the company yet again included fears, mostly old, that the Government risked embarrassment should its publication contain statements that it was later unable to substantiate; that it would have difficulty acquiring and supporting the staff required to produce a publication of good quality; and that a Government publication had the potential of causing harmful competition with private enterprise. The latter concern was probably inspired by the fact that the committee had actually invited the General Manager of the East African Publications Ltd., B. A. Philpotts, to appear before it and not surprisingly he had stated that rather than risk competition with the government his company was willing to undertake publication of a Kikuyu newspaper and if successful it would then move on to publishing newspapers in other African languages. This time the company stated that it would independently finance the publications from the very beginning and so once again their editorial policies would be free of government control. Nevertheless, it was keen on using the Government's administrative network for distribution purposes. When asked whether this would not in fact create the impression that the newspaper was government-controlled, the General Manager defended the request, opining that the risk would be negligible and thus would not undermine the company's efforts to protect the newspaper's image.[65] At the same time, the Government probably did not want to ruin the business of a European-owned company that was producing a newspaper it did not control but nevertheless valued despite the discomfort it caused every now and then. To add to this, Philpotts (just as was the case with Capt. Anderson in 1939) was interested in protecting the company's profit margins as it experimented with a new venture while it enjoyed Government support that it was eager to downplay to ensure the taint of its aid did not harm sales.

[65] CS/2/8/138. Minutes of Meeting of the Newspaper Committee at the Secretariat, 25 March 1948. Nairobi: KNA.

Not withstanding this arrangement the committee also believed that private enterprise would not be able to meet all the news dissemination needs it had in mind for Africans and so it also recommended that the government subsidise the production of district news sheets and the purchasing of space in other newspapers. The government approved these recommendations and by 1956 it was issuing grants to African District Councils, provincial officers, and the Department of Information that were publishing 16 district news sheets in various provinces.[66] This was however financially strenuous and many of the news sheets were of sub-standard quality and struggled to survive.[67]

Leviathan Awakens - Mau Mau and its Aftermath: 1952 - 1955

Meanwhile, by 1951 *Pamoja* was still a fortnightly single sheet paper, however the violent political outburst in the country's Central Province and the declaration of a State of Emergency in October 1952 sharpened the Government's focus on the publication and resulted in the changes Hutchinson had advocated for incessantly but fruitlessly in the previous decade.[68] On 4 October 1952, the Deputy Chief Secretary instructed the Government Printer to increase the number of copies printed by 10,000 to a total of 35,000 on a weekly basis up from the standard bi-weekly figure of 25,000. He informed the Printer that the increase had to be made for "security reasons" and it is telling that of the 35,000 copies to be printed, 20,000 would be in Kiswahili while 15,000 would be in Kikuyu, the latter of course being the primary language spoken in Mau Mau hotspots.[69]

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[66] CS/2/8/140. Executive Council: Summary of Minute no. 219/48. Nairobi: KNA, DC/TAMB/3/18/5. Correspondence from the Department of Information to all District Commissioners, 6 April 1956. Nairobi: KNA.
[67] See for example, PC/NKU/2/27/2, Correspondence from Department of Information to all District Commissioners, 6 April 1956. Nairobi: KNA and PC/NKU/2/27/2, Correspondence from Rift Valley PC to the Secretary for African Affairs. Nairobi: KNA.
[68] CS/2/8/122. Summary of Government press situation, 10 February 1947. Nairobi: KNA and *Pamoja*, 2 March 1951. Nairobi: KNA.
[69] CS/2/8/122. Correspondence from Executive Officer to Chief Secretary, 28 January 1952 and Correspondence from the Deputy Chief Secretary to the Government Printer, 4 October 1952. Nairobi: KNA.

The increased numbers and higher quality were necessary from the moment Kenya hit crisis point as the Government not only moved quickly to stifle debate on African grievances but also to disseminate its version of Kenya's troubled *status quo* that shifted blame away from the Government and the European populace to Africans themselves. According to this version, the country's problems were attributable to a lack of African understanding of the charitable nature of British rule and the impatience of self-absorbed Africans, who having benefitted from that rule, were now eager to unseat their benefactors in order to grab power for their own selfish ends.[70] While those early editions of *Pamoja* are not available, some of their headlines as gleaned from official correspondence demonstrate the unilateral barrage of Government information geared at communicating its broader policy agenda as they related to British rule and the State of Emergency. Among these are, "H. E. the Governor's broadcast talk on the State of Emergency," "The Secretary of State for the Colonies Broadcast Speech," "Government policy – some questions answered," "Commentary on and Explanation of the Government's Statement," and "The Royal Commission for East Africa." The other headlines provide some insight into the Government's effort to quell the immediate violence and deal with its consequences: "How to Claim Compensation for Financial Loss Suffered due to Subversive Activities," "Prohibition of Members of the Agikuyu tribe from Entering the Coast and Nyanza Provinces," and "A Talk Given by the Provincial Commissioner, Central Province, on Lawlessness."[71] The contents of the available documents that formed the basis of these newspaper articles illuminate the policies that guided Emergency-era Government press, particularly on the key issues of Mau Mau, land,

[70] Eight years later, a government report maintained a position that absolved it and the colony's settlers of any blame for the problems that led to the Mau Mau rebellion. See Corfield, *Historical Survey of the Origins and Growth of the Mau Mau*, p. 162.
[71] CS 8/4/25B, Correspondence from the Assistant Executive Officer, Information Services to the Chief Native Commissioner, 25 November 1952. Nairobi: KNA.

wages and self-government, as well as those that touched on post-War social welfare and economic development, education, and industry.

The speech of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Oliver Lyttelton, is a particularly useful blueprint for comprehension of the rationale behind the condescending articles that would festoon the pages of Government newspapers targeted at the African. The official Government policy on the Mau Mau was that it was not born of economic stress of any kind. It was a secret society that committed heinous crimes, rejected European law and religion, and had as its ultimate goal opposition to all that was foreign. At the same time, the Secretary thought it prudent to add that Mau Mau was also a threat to all Africans who were not members of the organisation in a bid to communicate to the targeted readers of *Pamoja* that they too risked loss of life and property at the hands of its members and that it was best for them to throw their weight behind the Government. He proceeded to inform Africans that they risked the loss of all the development the British Government had nobly and ably delivered to them. In addition, the Secretary was keen on stressing that the Government's development projects pre-dated Mau Mau and the movement had not compelled it to react to its demands in any way whatsoever. The British enterprise to rescue Africans from their "primitive state of ignorance" had actually started towards the end of the nineteenth century and its consequences were the well managed and cultivated lands that adorned the landscape in place of the open fields that were once simply battlefields for warring peoples and grazing lands for notoriously belligerent pastoralists who roamed the country as they attacked and sacked others. The underlying message of this segment of the speech was that there was much for which the African owed his/her appreciation to the European and therefore his support and loyalty during the Mau Mau uprising.

On the question of land, the Secretary admitted that there was indeed a problem, but nevertheless this was still not the reason why Mau Mau had come to be. He stated that Africans were experiencing genuine economic pressures stemming from land issues, but that these were largely the result of harmful land use practices and poor agricultural methods that could be remedied if Africans put a halt to them.[72] The Secretary of State for the Colonies was thus keen on communicating to Africans that it was within their abilities and power to ameliorate their agricultural problems which, by implication, were not in any way linked to European land appropriation. As for wages, he explained that he was supportive of higher wages for Africans as were those he had spoken to during his recent tour of Kenya. However, he imperiously added, Africans needed to understand that higher wages meant that more money had to be available to pay them, which would not be the case if they did not work harder. Wages had to be dependent on productivity and lacking that the general economy would suffer. Once again, the administration was telling Africans that they were in a position to tackle their problems if only they heeded the counsel of their European 'guardians' and performed their duties to them diligently. As for education, Lyttelton stated that he was impressed with the eagerness Africans had displayed for it, stressed technical education, and indicated that the Government would avail more opportunities in this regard.[73]

Another issue that the African Information Services was keen on framing for Africans to contest rising calls for independence was self-government, particularly its manifestation at a pace (far in the distant future) and form (in accordance with the principles of 'multiracialism') with which Europeans were comfortable. A critical document that encapsulates the AIS' stand in

[72] The Government did not identify land alienation as being the root cause of many of these problems. As part of its effort to contain the problem without addressing land alienation, it would later take steps to implement R. J. Swynnerton (compiler), *A Plan to Intensify the Development of African Agriculture in Kenya*. Nairobi: Government Printer 1955.
[73] CS 8/4/25B, Speech of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, 4 November 1952. Nairobi: KNA.

this regard is "Self-Government – the Truth," written in question and answer format that drew from statements the Secretary of State for Colonies had made in the House of Commons prior to the declaration of the State of Emergency. In it he maintained that the policy of the United Kingdom vis-à-vis Kenya was that the country would eventually be self-governed. However, that state of self-government when achieved would entail the "proper provision" for all the country's races to ensure the protection of their rights and interests. Well aware that some Africans in Kenya were following closely the developments in Ghana's political scene, the AIS drew from a statement the Minister of State for Colonial Affairs made in August of 1952 to argue that Kenya and Ghana were two very different entities due to the former's varied racial composition (its "several communities"). All these races had made their home in Kenya, contributed to its growth, and remained to take part in its government. A further nod to multiracialism was provided in uppercase letters at the very end of the document: "KENYA WILL NOT BE GOVERNED BY ANY ONE COMMUNITY BUT BY A PARTERSHIP OF ALL COMMUNITIES."[74]

Another official series titled "If you ask me…" expanded on the above propaganda goals as it endeavoured to contain African demands for independence and convince them that regardless of acknowledged problems, British rule was ultimately of a philanthropic character and that it was in their best interests to heed the diktats of their infinitely wise rulers. The Information Office of Britain's Colonial Office prepared the series' leaflets to enable the colony's administrators to respond to African questions about and criticisms of colonial government. For them, the colonies' foot soldiers on the ground were indispensible to reinforcing propaganda disseminated via newspapers and radio broadcasts. As such these foot soldiers, who ranged from European officials to European farmers, needed to be equipped with

[74] CS 8/4/25B, Self-Government – the truth," 1952. Nairobi: KNA.

the appropriate information in readiness to respond to questions by Africans from all walks of life. The Colonial Office also wanted to establish a response centre for questions the colonies' Europeans sent them and in so doing to ensure that the Government got its message out with the clarity and uniformity it desired. The District Commissioner of Nanyuki, A. Galton-Fenzi, forwarded the first of the "If you ask me…" series to the farmers in his district explaining the questions and answers in them would "merely state the advantages the Africans in this Colony have in remaining within the British Commonwealth, and under British leadership."[75] Once again in question and answer format, the leaflets explored land and self-government issues in addition to dispelling any affinities, real or imagined, that emerging African intelligentsia may have displayed for communism.

An additional crucial issue explored was the question of industrialisation in the colonies. The Colonial Office admitted that industrialisation in the colonies had been slow but insisted that this was as a result of prohibitive factors therein and not as a result of a deliberate Government policy of underdevelopment to protect industries in the United Kingdom from competition with its colonies. According to the Colonial Office, Africans lacked the purchasing power, large internal markets, managerial knowhow, and capital to support the establishment and running of a strong industrial sector. In spite of these damning assessments, the recipients of the leaflets were to inform Africans that the British Government nevertheless was establishing Government Corporations to support local and foreign investors in the colonies. At the same time, it behooved Africans to welcome the foreign investor who came with the requisite capital and skills for the establishment of an industrial enterprise and from whom they could learn. In addition, the Colonial Office was also of the opinion that Africa's future economic growth would perhaps

[75] CS 8/4/25B, Correspondence from District Commissioner, Nanyuki to farmers, 22 September 1952. Nairobi: KNA.

always be dependent on agriculture and the processing of its produce would never be much more than a peripheral issue. Furthermore, fears that foreign investors were impoverishing African countries by expatriating capital were unfounded as these were mere returns on their investments, which were also taxable locally.[76] The Government clearly thought the proper articulation and dissemination of its point of view through these publications a matter of great importance and this alone was adequate reason to embrace the changes to *Pamoja* for which Hutchinson had fruitlessly lobbied the Government in the mid-forties.

Thus by 1953, *Pamoja* was a four-page paper of much better quality with carefully composed articles and selected photographs to implement the Government's post-Emergency propaganda strategy. A 1953 headline on "The Value of Coffee" announced that 400 tonnes of Kenyan coffee that year had been produced by African farmers under the guidance and expertise of European experts. It went on to explain that African farmers had been engaged in the growing of coffee for a few years but made no mention of the fact that those who had attempted to do so decades earlier had suffered Government suppression.[77] Another article in the same issue titled "Mau Mau did not Stop the Development of Kikuyu Farms" informed the reader that there were then several well managed Kikuyu farms and there could have been more had the Mau Mau uprising not taken place. There would, however, be more in the future because "the Kikuyu had seen that Africans who had followed the counsel of agricultural extension officers before the Mau Mau uprising took place were able to earn income even during the months when those fighting did everything they could to disrupt farming."[78] The Mau Mau were presented as bent on rebelling against anything the Government initiated, even when they were sound programmes

[76] CS 8/4/25B, "If you ask me…:" Why can't we have our own factories?" and "When expatriate firms take profits out of a country, do they impoverish it?" October, 1952. Nairobi: KNA
[77] *Pamoja,* "The Value of Coffee," no. 19, 1953, p.1.
[78] *Pamoja*, "Mau Mau did not stop the development of Kikuyu farms," no. 19, 1953, p. 2 – 3.

aimed at improving the lives of those who took part. The article was keen on emphasising the Government's agricultural programmes as having pre-dated Mau Mau and were therefore not as concessions born of the rebellion or to ensure that it did not recur. The article was also meant to dispel any suspicions that programmes that did exist before the rebellion were primarily geared at preventing land stress in the reserves from pushing Africans onto land reserved for Europeans towards sparking a range of socio-economic stresses that could have destabilised the habitat of European labour supply.

A similar message is evident two years later in a report on agriculture in Ukambani as seen through the eyes of a Machakos resident, Joseph Munyao, then 67 years of age. The report's leader has Munyao recounting his community's first encounter with a cordial European *"siku hizo za zamani"* ("those days of a long time ago"), but the inclusion of that observation in the report and its relevance to the rest of the article are not clear, although in the next few sentences Munyao is quoted discussing socio-economic developments in Ukambani so presumably the foreigner is supposed to represent the ushering in of a golden age of sorts for the African courtesy of European munificence. Munyao is then reported to have seen several steps towards progress in his lifetime, including the end of chronic and bitter fighting between different peoples, better healthcare, and better educational opportunities. At the same time, he was also well acquainted with the area's problems of nutrition – the result of poor harvests due to soil erosion. The reader is then taken through the consequences of heeding Government directives or ignoring them. Several Ukambani residents, already receiving food aid in the late 1940s, are reported to have rejected Government counsel to relocate to newly cleared forest land where they would practice agriculture under the supervision of the Department of Agriculture. Those who did flourished, while those who did not continued to suffer until some became so desperate they

begged to be let into the Government-sponsored agricultural scheme. Once again the message was clear; in order to prosper, the African must learn to listen to an all-knowing Government that has always meant well. Ignore it and be doomed to failure. Less effusive accounts or balanced analyses were absent as these would dampen the rural idyll of sedate African-officialdom interaction that the government was painting.[79]

Pamoja also highlighted the Government's efforts in the education sector. The training of African radiographers made the headlines in a 1955 issue and the writer of the article not only named each of the four African students who completed the course, but also identified them ethnically, perhaps in a bid to present the Government's tertiary training policies as benefitting a wide segment of Kenya's African population.[80] A large front page photograph of six children of about eight years in age at Kenya's first multiracial school, Hospital Hill School, adorned the paper's fifth issue in 1955. The photograph's caption focused on the African boy, Marsden Madoka, who readers were informed could speak English well and enjoyed being at the school very much.[81] As with agriculture, *Pamoja* did not shy away from presenting educational progress as a reward for those who embraced British rule and lived peaceably under it. One report made this propaganda goal of the Government abundantly clear. On the occasion of the launching ceremony for the construction of the Jeanes School for tertiary education in western Kenya, *Pamoja* reported Governor Evelyn Baring as having said that the opening of the school was a big step towards development for a region whose people "were loyal to the Government and lived in peace." *Pamoja's* issues were therefore designed to present the African reader with a picture of

[79] *Pamoja*, "Land rehabilitation," no. 1, 1955, pp. 2 – 3. See also Judith Heyer, J. K. Maitha and W. M. Senga (eds.), *Agricultural Development in Kenya: An Economic Assessment.* Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1976; Anne Thurston, *Smallholder Agriculture in Colonial Kenya: the Official Mind and the Swynnerton Plan*. Cambridge: African Studies Centre: 1987; Marilyn Silberfein, *Rural Change in Machakos, Kenya: A Historical Geography Perspective.* Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 1989.
[80] *Pamoja*, "Medical training," no. 24, 1953, p. 1.
[81] *Pamoja*, "Children of Different Races Study Together," no. 5, 1955, p.1.

growth, stability and tranquility for the loyal and compliant after the storm that was Mau Mau under a benevolent Government that had always meant well.

In other news articles, the Government aimed at impressing upon the African the scale of British power in an effort to produce submission born of awe. Queen Elizabeth's 1953 Commonwealth tour was reported with detail certainly meant to instill reverence in the reader. As she approached the islands of Fiji the newspaper explained that her ship, *The Gothic*, would be met by several thousand Fijian youth who would accompany it to shore. Fiji was of course not her home, but it was hoped that the reader would conclude that, nevertheless, its residents were members of the Commonwealth who were living quite contentedly under her rule. Why not Kenyans? One of the highlights of her Fijian visit would be the moment when she was presented with the gift of a shark's tooth that had been kept with the intention of being given to "the most powerful guest of all to those islands." Before her departure, the Fijian monarch would prepare a sumptuous feast for their esteemed guest and knowing the importance many African cultures attach to the feeding of guests as part of a proper welcome *Pamoja* detailed the animals that would meet their end on that day for the Queen, among other culinary delights: 1,850 pigs of which the newspaper thought it important to further dichotomise by noting that 1,500 would be small and 350 big, 2,000 ducks and turkeys, 20 tonnes of sweets, pastries and fruits and lots of fish. [82] Should Africans doubt the ability of that power to manifest itself, *Pamoja* made sure there were occasional reminders of its potency. For example, in 1955, a brief article below a picture of a smiling Queen Elizabeth seated next to a waving Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia told of the latter's woes at the hands of the Italians and how they had caused him to flee to Britain for safety before the Queen's soldiers routed the Italians from the Ethiopia.[83]

[82] *Pamoja*, "Her Royal Highness the Queen on a Commonwealth Tour," no. 24, 1953, p. 1.
[83] Pamoja, "The Queen welcomes a royal guest," no. 1, 1955, p. 4.

Subliminal messages on the 'intrinsic sagacity' of the British and the morality of paying taxes were present in an article on local government in Britain. Apparently, this sort of information had to be disseminated because it was "very relevant to self-governing countries within the British Commonwealth whose governments are benefitting from following the British example."[84] The article announced that foreign (and by implication impartial) researchers had found Britain to be the best governed country in the world. This was in no small measure due to their highly efficient system of local government that employed the public funds it received in the service of its residents with the utmost prudence and honesty. According to the report, the system was a success not because Britain had a large number of local government employees but because very few residents ever tried to evade taxes and those who did were caught and severely punished. If its propaganda goal was successful, the targeted reader was meant to ask, if those in the metropole bore their tax burdens with grace why not the African in the colony, especially as the British knew everything there was to know about administering a country? What they were not meant to ponder was why Kenya's Africans had for decades paid more taxes to the Government and received far fewer public services as compared to the European. What was hoped was that through such stories, *Pamoja's* reader would also be more predisposed to trusting government and all societal changes to the British.

Political change, was of course, the most sensitive issue and through its flagship newspaper the Government attempted to control its pace, form and direction as it enshrined its policies in print. When two British officials visited the colony in 1953, the newspaper featured their remarks prominently. The two had disclosed that they believed Africans were capable of holding positions of greater responsibility in the country's administration. However, these would be "availed to them" in the near future and therefore would be provided at a time their rulers

[84] *Pamoja*, "Serving the people of England: how the local government works," no. 6, 1954, p. 1.

deemed appropriate.[85] In addition, the officials stated their support for higher wages for Africans, but (and the newspaper added bold highlights to this statement) these would be incumbent on them increasing the work they did. When *Pamoja* published a report on governmental changes that included the entry of the first African into the Council of Ministers, it listed amongst the Government's goals fighting terrorism, deracialised development policies, and its responsibility "to ensure Kenya develops into a strong country within the Commonwealth and with all its citizens being obedient to the Queen."[86] When the Government extended limited voting rights to Africans in 1956, the newspaper celebrated the occasion with a headline "Votes for African men and women," and proceeded to discuss the issue with no mention of the property and literacy requirements upon which the right to vote would be granted or denied. All these messages were reinforced daily with Kiswahili proverbs or English proverbs translated into Kiswahili on either side of the newspaper's masthead. Between 1953 and 1954 for example, the proverbs at the mast were *subira huvuta heri* (equivalent to patience pays) and *kizuri hakijitembezi chajiuza* (meaning reward comes to that which is good). In 1954, *taratibu ndio mwendo* (equivalent to slow but sure wins the race) and *mbio za sakafuni huishia ukingoni* (meaning even the worst of times come to an end) made their appearance, while in 1955 *mtaka cha mvunguni huinama* (equivalent to you reap what you sow) instructed the reader on the left of the masthead as the proverb on the right cautioned *wajisaidiao Mungu huwasaidia* (God helps those who help themselves).[87] The proverbs reinforced the Government's propaganda message artfully: first, that Africans were an indolent lot who had to learn to work and work hard instead of blaming the Government for their woes or engaging in bloody rebellions; second, the proverbs attempted to temper demands for self-government and equality in all spheres of life with calls for patience.

[85] *Pamoja*, "They visited Kenya," no. 21, 1953, p. 1.
[86] *Pamoja*, "Changes in Kenya's Government: there will be an African minister," no. 6, 1954, p. 1.
[87] *Pamoja*; refer to various issues between 1953 and 1955.

Leviathan Hobbles on to the End of an Era, 1955 - 1962

By 1955, with the threat of Mau Mau greatly neutralised, the Government assessed its stable of newspapers and opted for a massive cutback. The Lyttelton and Lennox-Boyd Constitutions of 1955 and 1957 expanded African representation in the Executive Council and the LEGCO respectively, while the Lancaster House Conference of 1960 made it clear that political control would pass into African hands sooner rather than later. Leviathan's cranky press had failed to stem the tide of political change. The first to go were the numerous Kikuyu weeklies established in a bid to gain control of the message in the Mau Mau hotbed that was Central Province. The distribution of most of these publications had been considered too urgent and crucial for sale and so were a drain on the Government's budget. This, however, did not mean an end to Kikuyu language newspapers as Government propaganda needs dictated the maintenance of one Kikuyu monthly, *Agikuyu*, in addition to district newssheets in the same language.[88] Less than two years later the Government considered further cutbacks. This time, the Department of Information proposed the publication of provincial newspapers instead of the continuance of numerous district newssheets and other Government-sponsored publications in each Province. The Director observed that some district newssheets had been successes while others were failures. He attributed their varied performance to the differing levels of "enthusiasm shown for them by different administrative officers." More pertinently, some district newssheets were performing so poorly that the Advertiser's Association had questioned the rates they were being charged for the promotion of their goods and services in the publications. The association had threatened to withdraw its support for the newspapers and a budget-strapped government was sure it would not be able to publish the papers without their support. The Ministry of

[88] BB/8/24, Correspondence from Department of Information to provincial and district officials, 22 December 1955. Nairobi: KNA.

Information had carefully weighed the advantages and disadvantages of the proposed amalgamation arguing that although the process would mean that the resulting eight newspapers would lack the intimate local character of district newssheets, the Government would be able to control editorial policy better and in turn improve the quality of the resulting publications, centralise financial control and enable the Government to harmonise the financial accounting of the publications and place these functions in the hands of officers who would have more time to dedicate to the task, relieve provincial officials of newspaper-related tasks, and, crucially, ensure the continuity of Government papers.[89]

Not surprisingly, all but two provincial commissioners supported the proposal with the exceptions being unconvinced that a newspaper lacking in local character would be useful; but the times and circumstances were against them.[90] In May 1959 J. H. Reiss, the Director of Information, went ahead and issued notices in accordance with the Standard Conditions of the Printing Industry issued by the British Federation of Master Printers for the cessation of printing not only all Government district newspapers, but also provincial newspapers, as in their place there would now be a single national government newspaper in Kiswahili.[91] It was a sudden decision reached without further consultation of the affected officials and shocking to some.[92] The Provincial Information Officer of Southern Province, in communicating the decision to his Provincial Commissioner, acknowledged the "surprising turn of events" but urged him to take the decision in stride as he was of the opinion "that those who have made the decision appear to

[89] BB/8/24, Correspondence from the Ministry of African Affairs to district and provincial administration officials, 6 June 1957. Nairobi: KNA.
[90] BB/8/24, Correspondence from the District Commissioner of Kitui to the Provincial Commissioner of Southern Province, 28 June 1957. Nairobi: KNA and BB/8/24, Correspondence from Nyanza Provincial Offices to Secretary of African Affairs 17 June 1957. Nairobi: KNA.
[91] BB/8/24, Correspondence from the Director of Information to Provincial Information Officers, 28 May 1959. Nairobi: KNA.
[92] See for example, BB/8/24, Correspondence from the Provincial Information Officer of Coast Province to the Director of Information, 1 June 1959. Nairobi: KNA.

be well aware of the fact that events now move swiftly in Kenya and we must mend our pace and methods accordingly."[93] However, the Government appears to have struggled with the decision to cancel the provincial newspapers. Later that year, a meeting chaired by The Acting Governor resolved to make up for the cancelled, loss-making publications by stepping up the publication and distribution of two existing Kiswahili newspapers, a revived *Habari* and *Pamoja*. Publication of *Sauti ya Pwani*, a coastal Kiswahili paper would also continue, but the Government would encourage those responsible for its production to distribute it commercially and consider its sale to a private entity.[94] It does appear that publication of non-Kiswahili newspapers did continue until June 1962 and that by then the Government had changed its course of action and communicated to provincial administration that it planned to produce *Pamoja* in three languages — Kiswahili, Kikuyu and Kikamba — after June. It was still dogged by old fears that Kiswahili had still not attained veritable *lingua franca* status in the colony. Once again, however, finances dictated a less ambitious scheme for the Government press and so in April 1962, to preempt complaints of favouritism from other ethnic groups, the Public Relations Officer informed all the Provincial Information Officers that there would not be three versions of *Pamoja*. In addition, the prevailing economic uncertainty meant that publishing just one newspaper would result in great savings, which was most appealing "as the financial position of Kenya is going to be very difficult in the next few years."[95] So once again, finances appear to have been dictating the Government's press priorities and its desire to play a lesser role in the country's newspaper sector.

[93] BB/8/24, Correspondence from the Provincial Information Officer to PC of Southern Province, 3 June 1959. Nairobi: KNA.
[94] BB/8/24. Record of a Meeting held in the Chief Secretary's Office at 9.00 a.m., 19 June 1959. Nairobi: KNA.
[95] BB/8/24. Correspondence from the Information Services to Provincial Information Offices, 9 April 1962. Nairobi: KNA.

Nonetheless, it is important to note that financial constraints coupled with production difficulties had always troubled the Government's newspaper initiatives. Its cutbacks in the late fifties and early sixties must therefore be viewed in the context of the country's general politico-economic state. At critical political and economic moments, for example during the rise of African partisan politics and the post-war periods that caused considerable socio-economic stress amongst Africans, as can be seen in the increased labour demands of European settlers after World War I and the more intensive use of capital on European farms that resulted in the eviction of large numbers of African squatters which along with other factors escalated into the Mau Mau Rebellion after World War II, the Government showed most interest in establishing and controlling newspapers. These papers acted as media for communicating Government policy and it was hoped that they would encourage African compliance along lines that supported the colonial enterprise and goals. In addition, they provided the British with a tool they used to attempt to maintain the political status quo as it controlled change. With the eventual start of an unexpectedly fast paced but peaceful decolonisation process in the late fifties and early sixties that was nevertheless accompanied by a general economic downturn as investors shied away from the colony uncertain of its future, budgetary constraints became more heightened and officials easily gave in to them as — unlike during the State of Emergency — political events appeared to unravel in a peaceful and constitutional manner.[96]

[96] For economic fears and consequences see for example, Donald Rothchild, *Racial Bargaining in Independent Kenya*. London; New York; Nairobi: 1973, pp. 122-155; Richard Frost, *Race Against Time: Human Relations and Politics in Kenya before Independence.* Nairobi: Transafrica Book Distributors, 1978, pp. 260-267.

PART II

POSTCOLONIAL KENYA

The early sixties were an exciting time for Africa as several countries including Kenya, transitioned into independent states. The second part of this dissertation follows the arguments already established thus far into the new era.

For the oldest publication, *The East African Standard*, ownership changes but the interest of the publication in the stability of the economic and political stability of the country does not. In fact, there is an expansion in the use of the newspaper to open access and then entrench itself in other sectors of the eocnonomy. New publications also come into being and this part of the dissertation contines to explore the reasons behind their establishment and how these guide their operations thereafter.

"MAKE THAT STAKE SECURE"[1]

The East African Standard Newspaper: 1960 – 1990

Thousands…of people have pinned their faith on you. There are poor people, disillusioned people, bitter people, nervous people, anxious people. They are anxious and perplexed about today and tomorrow. They do not want to be always looking over their shoulder. They have children to educate; businesses to run, farms to manage, factories to supervise.[2]

On the occasion of the retirement of C. B. Anderson from the Chair of Consolidated Holdings Ltd. at the end of October 1964, the *EAS* briefly revisited its publication record. It admitted that initially the newspaper had championed the interests of the European settler community, but argued that under the guidance of Anderson it had become more cognisant of the interests of other Kenyan communities and with time these also found their way onto the pages of the newspaper. As such, by 1964 the newspaper considered itself a publication that was now "able to associate itself with African national aspirations, with a clear policy supporting the ideal of building a nation in which people of all ethnic origins can participate." According to the paper, this meant that under Anderson it now lent "unequivocal support for the interests of independent Kenya" and advocated similar policies towards Tanzania and Uganda.[3] But did the newspaper really change? Did it become more alert to the interests of other Kenyans out of nationalistic fervour or was it because doing so was a measure of contingency to secure its own as well as settler interests in an independent Kenya? And when a British multinational corporation, Lonrho, bought Consolidated Holdings Ltd. in 1967 did its policies change? The argument here is that the newspaper never really changed and continued to exist to serve the interests of its owners: profit and the self-appointed promoter of the politico-economic stability it needed to succeed, and later the added role of stand-by public relations office of Lonrho as the

[1] *EAS*, "A question of time," no. 14186, Monday 4 January 1960, p. 4.
[2] *EAS*, "To await arrival: an open letter to Jomo Kenyatta," no. 14686, Saturday 12 August 1961, p. 4.
[3] *EAS*, "Mr. C. B. Anderson to give up chairmanship," no. 15690, Friday 30 October 1964, p. 13.

multinational sought to expand and consolidate its investments in Kenya. This meant aligning itself closely with the ruling party KANU and the Government, the compound entity that could significantly impact the existence of private enterprise whether it was that of newspaper publishing or a concern of the newspaper's owners in another sector altogether.

Minding its own business – and all that it depended on

By 1960 the *EAS* was firm in its belief that an African-ruled Kenya was just around the corner and eagerly encouraged local politicians to look inwards for solutions to the country's problems, perhaps as an assurance that the future of Kenya would be in prudent hands. Kenya's political activities invited a lot of external attention. Early that year, the Bow Group, which the newspaper described as an independent research society of younger Conservatives, issued a memorandum in which they called on the British Government to set up a system that would ensure the safety of Europeans and Asians as power passed on to Africans in Kenya. Its suggested means of securing these rights was to have a Bill of Rights entrenched in the constitution during its formulation at the Lancaster House Conference. They were of the opinion that it was best to insert such a provision into the constitution prior to the transfer of power to Africans, which would give it time to take hold during a period of transition towards self-government and ultimately independence to ensure its establishment and acceptance by all. Part and parcel of establishing the Bill of Rights was the Group's suggestion that the British Government retain an official majority in the LEGCO while the elected officials therein be composed of members elected on a multi-racial but limited franchise designed to allow most of the voters to be African, who would elect members equal in number to the total aggregate of European and Asian officials. The newspaper headlined the report "Minority Protection Urged," with a sub-heading emphasising the other key point of the memorandum, namely that which

urged the British Government to come up with a time-table for independence with 1965 as the date for responsible self-government and 1970 as the year for independence.[4] Next to the headline story was a smaller report on Michael Blundell commenting on the Bow Group's memorandum but insisting that the ultimate solution to Kenya's political challenges would have to come from within. He was certain that given the commitment and goodwill of all those concerned, self-government would be attainable in 1963.[5]

Noteworthy here is that the *EAS* chose to highlight that which it was most supportive of in the statements of the Group and Blundell. At the same time, the newspaper did not think it served any useful purpose for politicians and other interested parties to focus their energies in designing benchmarks and targets for the political transition process. What was most important, wrote the editor, was that the rights of minorities in the country be secured in whatever political compromise that emerged from London. It finished off its editorial by praising an open letter Tom Mboya had sent to non-African peoples of the colony the previous day in which he had assured them that all, regardless of race, had a stake in the "tremendous opportunities" that lay ahead. "Statesmanship, and not a time-table, could make that stake secure," remarked the editor. The newspaper asserted that it was of critical importance for decision makers to secure the future of those minorities, for whatever time-table eventually emerged, "it is to the skill and experience of the immigrant races that Kenya will for long need recourse."[6]

Thus during this period, the *EAS* adopted the role of securing the property rights of Kenya's minorities and ensuring that the political transition occurred in the context of a stable economic environment that would safeguard the financial interest of those who had a stake in the

[4] *EAS*, "Minority protection urged: time-table needed to meet rise of nationalism," no. 14186, Monday 4 January 1960, p. 1.
[5] *EAS*, "Look for our own answer says Mr. Blundell," no. 14186, Monday 4 January 1960, p. 1.
[6] *EAS*, "A question of time," no. 14186, Monday 4 January 1960, p. 4.

economy during and after the transition. For instance, when the outgoing president of the Federation of Kenya Employers, R. J. Hillard made a speech at the organisation's annual meeting demanding that the country's labour unions withdraw from its political affairs, the newspaper headlined it as "Warning to Kenya Unions," beneath a smaller heading that read "Employers' leader says country's economy must come first." Hillard was reacting to Tom Mboya's insistence that he would not refrain from using the country's labour unions for political purposes. The federation's president considered his actions a threat to economic stability and fatiguing for employers who had already been embroiled in varied disputes with labour unions. He claimed the unions had already engaged in violence and intimidation during strikes and urged the Government to withdraw its recognition of the unions if they continued to constitute an economic threat to the country.[7] Three days later, the newspaper stated its opposition to the trade union movement, ranking trade unionism as a major social problem next to ethnic prejudice and intimidation despite what it argued was Britain's unceasing efforts to break down barriers between itself and the people of the colony. It argued that the Government had encouraged trade unionism and that employers had agreed to cooperate with it, believing that the movement would work towards improving worker's standards of living and generally contributing towards the economic growth of the country. Unfortunately, in the *EAS'* opinion, politics had infiltrated the movement and strikes were then being called for "flimsy" reasons.[8]

The following day, the newspaper rebuked Mboya for his remarks on the alternatives for success of the Lancaster House talks. Mboya had opined that they would be "very grim" and the newspaper considered his response irresponsible and a 'dark threat.' It analysed the remark in the context of the end of the State of Emergency the day before, arguing that it was unfortunate that

[7] *EAS*, "Warning to Kenya Unions: Recognition in danger of withdrawal," no. 14191, Saturday 9 January 1960, p. 1.
[8] *EAS*, "Tribalims and Violence," no. 14193, Tuesday 12 January 1960, p. 4.

some leaders seemed to consider its end a "formal act" rather than a genuine ending of violence. In expressing its dismay the newspaper stated that Mboya's remarks this time amounted to political agitation of the sort that was rife in the period leading up to the outbreak of Mau Mau-related violence. It called on leaders to "ponder the consequences of such words used at this time and of the results of intransigence." Statements of this sort, insisted the editor, were the reason why Kenya was not a land of "unalloyed joy" and though not stated directly, they constituted a threat to investor confidence in the country's future and economy.

The newspaper's concerns for settler socio-economic interests influenced its coverage of the country's constitutional conferences as it inched towards independence. In 1960 when talks at the first Lancaster House Constitutional Conference threatened to break down on account of the question of Mbiyu Koinange's proposed presence, the newspaper considered it a stalling tactic on the part of the African leaders and attributed their actions to the import of the Colonial Secretary's keynote speech at the conference.[9] The *EAS* had hailed the speech with the headline "Mr. MacLeod hits the right note," and also published a report based on the official communiqué of the conference's proceedings on the day the Colonial Secretary had made his speech. It highlighted two points. The first was the setting up of a self-governing country with the proper parliamentary institutions in place. Second was the "acceptance by all of the right of each community to remain in Kenya." Macleod had also stated that independence would not take place unless there was a legislature that represented all people within the country and to which the Government was accountable. In addition, there had to be "mutual tolerance" amongst all

[9] Mbiyu Koinange was an old associate of Jomo Kenyatta. The Governments of Britain and Kenya regarded him as a Mau Mau supporter. For more on this matter see Bennet, *Kenya: A Political History*, pp. 147 – 148. For more on Mbiyu Koinange see, *DN*, "Mbiyu Koinange, the Powerful Force Behind the Kenyatta Presidency," 29 October 2011, http://allafrica.com/stories/201110311054.html?page=2. Accessed 19 December 2011 and *DN*, "Koinange was one of the first Kenyans to get degree despite his shaky English," 5 November 2011, http://allafrica.com/stories/201111070983.html?page=2. Accessed 19 December 2011.

people and while Macleod had suggested a Bill of Rights as a way of providing the individual with safeguards, he did not think it the ultimate solution. Instead, he believed that it was best that a society naturally inculcated values that promoted the values that would be written into a Bill of Rights.[10]

The *EAS* was delighted that the Colonial Secretary had expressed points on minority rights and the British Government's intention to ensure that they were included in Government in a meaningful manner. It was certain that the speech had discomfited the African leaders at the conference and hence their boycott, but mirthfully remarked that that copies of the keynote speech would nevertheless be included among their conference papers. Under a subheading "A reason for the wrecking tactics," the newspaper drew the attention of its readers to sections of the speech in which Mcleod had stated the right of different communities to remain in the country and play a role in public life, as well as the attainment of independence only after a period of self-government during which the entrenchment of the above conditions would be confirmed. It also explained that the Colonial Secretary had not mentioned a timetable but had instead conditioned independence on contemporaneous circumstances as he showed how a considerable length of time had to pass during which leaders would gain experience and learn to trust each other. The paper buoyantly declared that "judged by these considerations, independence must be a long way off; as also from the fundamental fact that it cannot be conferred until the Government of Kenya is answerable to a legislature fully representative of differing views of all the people elected on a very wide franchise." It was sure that the speech explained the boycott but most importantly, it appeared that the British Government still shared the newspaper's minority-friendly views. The actions of the African politicians were those of leaders who had

[10] *EAS*, "Mr. Macleod hits the right note," and "Wide franchise to express all views needed," no. 14202, Friday 22 January 1960, p. 1.

promised much to their electorate but were only just realising that they were not going to be in a position to deliver that which they had promised. For the *EAS*, at this point, there was a danger that the African Elected Members would refuse to accept yet another constitution, agreed or imposed, in their determination to obtain independence. Not only could the British Government not grant independence, but it could also "upset the social equilibrium and cause disaster to the country's economy."[11]

The moment the constitution blueprint became available and it was evident that Kenya would be headed for elections and self-government soon after the conference came to a close, the newspaper quickly changed its tune and broke the news to its readers as calmly as it could. It declared that the boycott of the African Elected Members had been after all a "procedural disagreement," as the resulting constitution blueprint made it clear that independence was just around the corner. It would please none of the European delegate groups in London for it had gone too far to the left of the liberal New Kenya Group proposals but not far enough to meet all African demands.[12] Such a blueprint would, of course, not be acceptable to the United Party which represented conservative settler politics under the leadership of Puck Briggs and Cavendish-Bentinck.[13] It solemnly informed readers that responsible self-government would soon arrive as it appeared that "opinion in Kenya" was being prepared for elections in 1961 and self-government soon after. Nevertheless, the newspaper still hoped that Mcleod would find a way of designing an electoral system that would reserve seats for the country's racial minorities, at least for the duration of the transition period. The editor insisted that the most important factor

[11] *EAS*, "Five key principles," and "A reason for the wrecking tactics," no. 14202, Friday 22 January 1960, p. 8.
[12] Michael Blundell led the New Kenya Group.
[13] For more on the positions of the two European parties and the contemporary political scene, see, David Anderson, "'Yours in the struggle for majimbo.' Nationalism and the party politics of decolonization in Kenya: 1955-64," *Journal of Contemporary History*, 2005, vol. 40, no.3, pp. 547-564; Gary Wasserman, *Politics of Decolonization: Kenya Europeans and the Land Issue, 1960-1965.* Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1976; Donald Rothchild, *Racial Bargaining in Independent Kenya: A Study of Minorities and Decolonization.* London, New York: Published for the Institute of Race Relations by Oxford University Press, 1973.

at the conference was to find a way of utilising the abilities of all the country's people for progress, adding that the country's minorities had nothing to fear if good sense prevailed at the conference. For the newspaper, the African Elected Leaders' genuine embrace of the spirit of a Bill of Rights that protected all minorities, including those who chose to reside in Kenya without accepting Kenyan citizenship, would go a long way towards reassuring those on whom the country's economy depended.[14]

As details of the bill continued to leak to the press and it became clear that there would be an African majority in the LEGCO, the *EAS* remarked bitterly that the bill was going to disenfranchise Asians and Europeans. However, conscious that it was an opinion maker and of its influence among the colony's Europeans, it tried to end its editorial on a positive note by observing that no matter how difficult it was for the British in the colony to accept, opinion in Britain had changed vastly against colonial enterprise and lacking even a Bill of Rights to cling to, it called on readers to work towards the promotion of interracial co-operation for the benefit of all, no matter the "complexion of the Government in the years ahead."[15] Less than two weeks before, it had ruefully explained to readers what exactly it thought was causing opinion in Britain to change: public opinion had moved towards the left, the conservatives were divided over the question of colonial enterprise, the quick march towards independence in the Belgian Congo had taken the British Cabinet (a cabinet that was ever more keen on ridding itself of the political complications that colonial enterprise wrought) by surprise, and finally American pressure on Britain to decolonise. These were forces it wanted its European readership to understand. Though the import of the emerging bill discomfited the newspaper, the forces that had produced

[14] *EAS*, "Critical phase starting," no. 14210, Monday 1 February 1960, p. 4.
[15] *EAS*, "The Bill of Reckoning," no. 14222, Monday 15 February 1960, p. 4. The Europeans and Africans factions at the conference had failed to agree on a Bill of Rights as Europeans wanted land rights written into it while Africans opposed this and argued that a basic Bill of Rights secured minority rights. A Bill of Rights without land safeguards was later included in the constitution that emerged after the Second Lancaster House Conference in 1962.

it were quite formidable. The newspaper would have to bank its plans for Kenya's economic future on something less tangible; the goodwill of an African majority that had thus far been a subordinate people.[16]

In addition to advocating for European commercial interests, the *EAS* used its pages to encourage those behind them to stay on, believing their continued existence critical to the stability of the entire economic system. The new constitution would have "sweeping reforms" that the British Government had imposed on the colony, but as the country marched towards independence "the place of the farmer and the business man depend, not so much on safeguards and a Bill of Rights, as upon the good will that is generated, on whether the communities are really going to work together, regardless of race, for their common purposes." The newspaper observed with much concern that the document that had emerged from the conference had caused considerable disquiet within the colony and that there was much talk about a loss of confidence in the economy, hurried property and farm sales, cancellations of orders for farm equipment, the expatriation of capital, and career worries within the civil service. It informed readers that the scale of these activities had undoubtedly been exaggerated but stated that nevertheless, they were indicative of the sort of disquiet that was inimical to the health of the colony's economy. To make matters worse, the £5,000,000 that the Colonial Secretary had proposed for a land development fund was less than half what the newspaper thought adequate for stabilising the land market.

It also decried the remarks that African leaders had made on their return from London, calling them unsettling and contributing to the country's economic tensions. For example, it quoted Ronald Ngala remarking that the African leaders would uphold property rights, but that "in the so-called White Highlands claims to land ownership and property rights are in dispute

[16] *EAS*, "Sweeping reforms," no. 14211, Tuesday 2 February 1960, p. 4.

and have been in dispute since the establishment of white settlement." Julius Kiano, on the other hand, had stated that the African leaders had deliberately avoided giving any commitments on matters touching on the White Highlands as they did not wish to place restrictions on the actions of a future Government. These were statements that the *EAS* found most unsettling as the newspaper not only considered them contributory to the overall unfavourable economic climate, but also a threat to the economic future of the country's minorities. It hoped that such remarks were but "a passing phase" and that soon enough the African leaders would embrace the country's economic realities and begin working to undo the damage that had already been done. At the same time, it reached out to the colony's Europeans whose continued existence the *EAS* valued and actively sought to encourage. Thus the editor ended the piece by affirming that "there is every reason to believe that the vast majority of Europeans are determined to match the challenge of the times with a firm resolve to sit tight, for their influence and skills, as also those of the Asian population, will be ever more in demand as the Africans rise in political responsibility."[17] It probably hoped too, that African leadership would come to embrace this view.

When the Minister for Agriculture, Bruce McKenzie, warned farmers of under-developed or undeveloped farms to develop them or risk unspecified consequences from the Government – present or future – the *EAS* jumped to the defense of the farmers. McKenzie had urged farmers to bring such land under production and if they planned on leaving the colony to do so in a manner that did not make it difficult "for those of us who are determined to continue farming here." The newspaper argued that the present economic uncertainty did not make it possible for farmers to do as the Minister urged. First, the British Government had refused to foot the bill for farmers who wanted to sell their land and exit the colony and, second, it cautioned that even if

[17] *EAS*, "Taking stock in Kenya," no. 14238, Friday 4 March 1960, p. 10.

the Government granted money for compensation, the exit of recompensed farmers would only harm the economy in the long run. What was required was the investment of money in the development of farms which in turn would contribute to the country's overall economic growth:

> What, then, is to be done? The decision seems to lie between mining the land and carrying on with sensible and reasonable farming practices. Once, that is, the individual has decided not to cut and leave it all. In the ultimate, common sense must prevail. Exactly as most farmers cannot afford to leave Kenya (and, anyway they have nowhere else to go and insufficient capital to start again), no successor Government could afford to disrupt the agricultural economy. Town and country are indivisible and that way would lie economic and political suicide.[18]

The newspaper was demanding that the Government be more proactive in its efforts to stablilse the land market and ultimately the economy as it sought to encourage European farmers to stay by attempting to convince them of the indispensible nature of their enterprise to any government, that which they knew and that which they did not but whose eventual realisation was now a certainty.

The outbreak of violence in the Congo so soon after the *EAS* reported on its independence gave it another opportunity to promote its design for a peaceful transition and the stability of Kenya's economic system in the future. The month of July started with headline stories on Congo's independence, but it was not long before the paper, which was now increasingly reporting African news on its front page, was headlining alarming news from the new state, particularly as it related to the actions and reactions of Belgians.[19] In Congo the *EAS* saw timely lessons on decolonisation for the British Government that if they were applied would ensure that East African territories did not undergo a similar experience as they became

[18] *EAS*, "Farm development," no. 14250, Friday 18 March 1960, p. 10.
[19] See for example, *EAS*, "Mutiny flares in Congo army," no. 14344, Thursday 7 July 1960, p. 1; *EAS*, "SOS from Congo mutiny town," no. 14345, Friday 8 July 1960, p. 1; *EAS*, "Belgians flee Congo in panic," no. 14346, Saturday 9 July 1960, p. 1, *EAS*, "Belgian troops rout mutineers," no. 14347, Monday 11 July 1960, p. 1; *EAS*, "Fighting in new Congo areas," no. 14348, Tuesday 12 July 1960, p. 1.

independent. It blamed Belgium for the crisis, arguing that it had failed to prepare adequately the Congo for independence and had rushed its decolonisation process. At the same time, it sought to allay fears that violence and chaos were inevitable by pointing to Nigeria, Ghana and to some extent Somalia as examples of well managed and executed British decolonisation schemes. The newspaper assured its readers that if the British managed the decolonisation processes of East Africa as well as they had managed those of West Africa then the inhabitants of its territories in the East of the continent had nothing to fear. What was of importance was for Britain to plan its handover of power with prudence and prescience, which entailed the increased integration and involvement of Africans at all levels of Government as well as the private sector. In short, the British Government had to ensure that Africans had an interest in maintaining the conditions that promoted economic growth and this could only occur if they were part and parcel of that economy. The newspaper had a warning for those in authority; they could not afford to be complacent, wishing away their worst decolonisation fears. They had to work to ensure that they were never realised. The British policy of decolonisation was thus far commendable, in its opinion, because it conditioned independence on "inter-racial concord," which was only possible when "people realise the value of mutual understanding, the purposes of co-operation, because their interests are indivisible."[20] It also used the crisis to urge the British Government to control the reins of decolonisation that is, its pace and course as a careless withdrawal had the potential of unleasing enormous negative repercussions in its wake.

Lastly, the *EAS* thought the Congo Crisis a lesson for Kenya's African leadership. The newspaper was increasingly certain that Kenya's African leadership understood well the importance of preserving not only law and order, but also their centrality to securing the

[20] *EAS*, "Lessons from the Congo," no. 14347, Monday 11 June 1960, p. 4. See also *EAS*, "The Congo questions," no. 14350, Thursday 14 July 1960, p. 4.

prevailing foundations of the economic system. However, it was irritated by the remarks that politicians made in public and decried them as irresponsible populist remarks that though interesting crowd pleasers, made other races uneasy and helped to construct an insidious image of nationalism in their minds. Some of those who came under criticism included Masinde Muliro, whom the newspaper quoted saying that Europeans and Asians "should be allowed to stay provided they help to develop the country, but they should leave politics to Africans." The newspaper was of the opinion that such remarks could not be overlooked because it also blamed Congo's African leadership for the crisis, claiming that it had misled the citizenry into believing that with independence would come freedom from law and order. It disclosed that it understood their "political difficulties" and was aware that "public signs of extremism have no place in their private moderation," but remained concerned about those who heard their messages and took them seriously.[21]

As news about the crisis continued to flow out of the Congo, one newspaper in London suggested that the British Government make a commitment to its "kith and kin" in Kenya that it would be catered for in the event of a crisis. The *EAS* also observed that several Kenyan leaders kept making trips to London to sort out political problems. The country was moving towards independence and it worried the newspaper that the country's politicians were not working together consistently and concertedly across racial lines. Was this not the time to build strong working relationships for the soon-to-be independent Kenya? With no constitutional safeguards in place, it was of utmost necessity that the "goodwill" the *EAS* had mentioned time and time again be cultivated gradually. It believed that the interracial cooperation it envisaged was an organic process and the sooner it commenced the better it would be for all those who wanted to remain in Kenya and continue benefiting from its resources. Thus the *EAS* had by this time

[21] Ibid.

resolved to forge ahead into the future with those who would soon control decision making in Kenya. It insisted that solutions for the future of Kenya's stability had to come from within and not from London. Kenya's leaders had to communicate with each other as it was through this process, too, that Africans would become a part of the system that they would soon control. Congo was an illustration of the societal and economic catastrophe that resulted from having inadequate numbers of "trained leaders in the civil service and in the industrial and commercial field."[22] The time to ensure that Kenya did not have that problem was then, when the British were still in control, for it was not lost to the newspaper that it was they who had to make tremendous concessions to enable Africans to penetrate those fields.

After the elections that followed the first Lancaster House conference were held on 2 March 1961 Governor Patrick Renison announced that Kenyatta would be moved from Lodwar to Maralal. He said that it was neither his intention nor that of the British Government to keep Kenyatta in detention indefinitely, in spite of what they still believed was his involvement with the Mau Mau movement.[23] The Government conditioned Kenyatta's release on the implementation of the Lancaster House Constitution, the smooth running of Government and the determination beforehand that his release would not be harmful to law and order. The *EAS* by now was very pragmatic in its assessment of the man. It was very much aware of the varied ways in which the Kenyan public perceived the detained politician. The paper observed that to some he was a hero and to others a villain. However, it asserted quite rightly that "realism rules that in captivity, he must be conceded to be the leader of African nationalism." Whether that would remain as such in the long term the paper was uncertain, but opined that it would be determined by the words and actions of African leaders, most importantly those of Kenyatta himself, from

[22] *EAS*, "Congo confusion," no. 14353, Monday 18 July 1960, p. 4.
[23] *EAS*, "Governor's dramatic announcement: Kanu, Kadu leaders called for urgent discussions," no. 14546, Thursday 2 March 1961, p. 1.

then onwards. The newspaper was of the opinion that Kenyatta had been out of the public eye for such a long time that nobody really knew what his thoughts were on a wide range of issues. It averred that Maralal was a halfway house of sorts for Kenyatta, a place from which the Government would attempt to determine his way of thinking so as to be sure that his release would meet the preconditions the Government had set. The paper was therefore very supportive of the Governor's actions as they interpreted them to mean that the Government was committed to maintain the peace that was necessary for the proper functioning of the country at what was a very sensitive time.[24] A few days later, the Government announced it had consented to African politicians' requests to be permitted to visit Kenyatta and that two KANU leaders (James Gichuru and Tom Mboya) and two KADU leaders (Ronald Ngala and Masinde Muliro) would travel to Lodwar the following week to hold discussions with Kenyatta. The Government considered their trip as part of their efforts to determine Kenyatta's thoughts on various issues.[25]

Given its cautious approach to the leader's release, the newspaper was disappointed when KANU announced that it would not send its representatives to meet Kenyatta, would take their seats in the LEGCO but would remain opposed to any Government that was formed without its consent. The party complained that the Governor had not consulted them on the move of Kenyatta from Lodwar to Maralal and was upset that he had not been released immediately after the election. KADU on the other hand, maintained that it would go ahead with the visit despite delaying their departure in the hope that KANU would alter its position and agree to sending its representatives.[26] The newspaper criticised KANU for taking "electioneering" too far. The election was in the past and it was time for the country's politicians to settle down to matters of

[24] *EAS*, "Half-way house," no. 14546, Thursday 2 March 1961, p. 4. See also, *EAS*, "Disqualifications," no. 14547, Friday 3 March 1961, p. 8.
[25] *EAS*, "Party leaders flying to see Kenyatta next week," no. 14548, Saturday 4 March 1961, p. 1.
[26] *EAS*, "Kadu delays visit to Lodwar," no. 14549, Monday 6 March 1961, p. 1.

government that were central to stability and security. To make matters worse, it claimed that some party members were already declaring the Lancaster House Consititution dead informally and were creating a precondition for their participation in Government that had not been agreed on at the constitution talks. The newspaper derisively implied that they were members of the "Kenyatta cult" whose cosmological framework always stood in the way of co-operation. Their boycott was injurious to the all important goal of discerning Kenyatta's thoughts before he was let loose on the Kenyan political scene.[27] The KADU representatives eventually left for Lodwar without their KANU counterparts. On their return, the *EAS* published a positive but cautious front page report on their visit, complete with a photograph of the detained leader and his visitors under the headline "Kenyatta silent on leadership: not bitter, say Kadu visitors to Lodwar," in which it reported among other things that the leader bore no grudge against the British for detaining him and had urged African leaders to work with unity on all national issues.[28] Nevertheless it continued to be concerned about not having adequate knowledge of the leader's thoughts and intentions, regretted the spanner that his continued detention was throwing into the works of Government, and encouraged the Governor to keep his promise to allow a press delegation to meet the detained leader.

Kenyatta was clearly a controversial figure, "but it seems undeniable that Kenyatta in captivity is a myth more dangerous than Kenyatta at liberty." At the same time, the newspaper was convinced that releasing Kenyatta "according to the feel of the country" remained the right thing to do. African leaders who refused to participate in Government were to blame for his continued detention.[29] Eventually a joint KADU-KANU delegation did visit the detained leader a

[27] *EAS*, "A few reminders," no. 14549, Monday 6 March 1961, p. 4.
[28] *EAS*, "Kenyatta silent on leadership: not bitter, say Kadu visitors to Lodwar," no. 14552, Thursday 9 March 1961, p. 1.
[29] *EAS*, "Constitutional crisis," no. 14558, Thursday 16 March 1961, p. 4.

few days after the *EAS* reported Kenyatta's call for a joint KADU-KANU delegation to visit him.[30] On its return however, KANU announced that it would still not participate in government while the next day KADU dissociated itself from the statement.[31]

The press finally did get the opportunity to visit Kenyatta at Maralal. The *EAS* highlighted four of his contributions in its headlines: that he had condemned violence, called for immediate independence, advocated new constitutional talks, and had refused to give an assuarance on the security of land titles.[32] Kenyatta had insisted that it was best to leave the articulation of land policy to a future government. This did not satisfy the newspaper and in an editorial that stressed the land issue more than any other discussed at Maralal it insisted that the release of Kenyatta was actually a matter too complex for one man, the Governor, to deal with. It called on him to consult widely: farmers, those with commercial interests, educationists and politicians. It proposed that the forthcoming meeting of the Convention of Associations debate the issue and spearhead the holding of a multiracial conference to discuss the status quo. Such a conference, the newspaper proffered, would "promise more reassuring prospects for the ownership of land" and issue a commitment to uphold the law, i.e. the security of those titles once Kenyatta was released. The newspaper therefore hoped to rally public opinion that mattered to apply pressure on Kenyatta to protect land titles in the event that his views on the matter turned out to be pernicious to land owners once he was released.[33]

Shortly before his release and amidst its reporting a barrage of news on the construction and furnishing of his house in Kiambu amongst other things, a still skeptical *EAS* editorialised an

[30] *EAS*, "Kenyatta sends for joint Kanu-Kadu delegation," no. 14558, Thursday 16 March 1961, p. 1.
[31] *EAS*, "Kanu still says: we stay out," no. 14565, Friday 24 March 1961, p. 1; *EAS*, "Kadu denies it approved statement on Lodwar," no. 14566, Saturday 25 March 1961, p. 1.
[32] *EAS*, "Pressmen hear violence condemned, independence 'today' demanded: Call new Talks, Kenyatta urges: assurance on safety of land titles refused," no. 14581, Wednesday 12 April 1961, p. 1.
[33] *EAS*, "A voice from captivity," no. 14581, Wednesday 12 April 1961, p. 4.

open letter to Kenyatta. It was still concerned that his release could jeopardise peace and told him that the country was "poised on the ridge" and that very little was required to send it "tumbling down the slippery slope." In addition, the newspaper also communicated its concern for the country's racial minorities, forcefully but allegorically. It quoted his broadcast from Maralal in which he had sent greetings to his "countrymen," pointing out that "most people are therefore prepared to accept that they are included in the term 'countrymen' because, as you know, there is more than one pebble on this Kenya beach. Some of them have been there a very long time." It went on to tell Kenyatta that:

> As you begin to move around you may think that Kenya has made remarkable progress in the past decade despite all the setbacks and the difficulties. This is not merely a reference to, say, the tall buildings in Nairobi which you will be seeing for the first time. There has been substantial achievement in agriculture and local industries generally. There is a greater degree of understanding among the people of Kenya, a wish to "get on" to expand, to promote the peace and prosperity of all citizens.
>
> Thousands – nay millions – of people have pinned their faith on you. There are poor people, disillusioned people, bitter people, nervous people, anxious people. They are anxious and perplexed about today and tomorrow. They do not want to be always looking over their shoulder. They have children to educate; businesses to run, farms to manage, factories to supervise. They like Kenya because Kenya is their home, and if they take a look around the globe they can see a good many other places which have their complexities and their problems too. But you have made up your mind. You must have done. Tomorrow could be the start of a new era, a date linked with memorable consequences – and not just the start of another day.[34]

The *EAS* was certain of the inevitability of African rule and it was willing to throw its weight behind the country's future African leaders as long as they did not upset the country's economic equilibrium. However, it needed to be certain that the most influential man amongst them – Kenyatta – shared their thoughts on the economy. The newspaper also again stressed the importance of law and order, that all important companion of economic growth, and linked it to unemployment and incidents of crime. It insisted that unemployment could be linked to a lack of

[34] *EAS*, "To await arrival: an open letter to Jomo Kenyatta," no. 14686, Saturday 12 August 1961, p. 4.

finance and that to a lack of confidence which in turn could be linked to law and order. This was yet another attempt to stress the importance of political efforts at contributing to and maintaining an atmosphere that was conducive to commerce. Kenyatta had already given several assurances to racial minorities, affirmed the equality of all Kenyan citizens, stated his commitment to the promotion of private enterprise, law and order, democracy, the protection of property rights, protection against nationalisaton and disavowed communism – all duly noted by the *EAS* previously.[35] But understanding only too well the influence he wielded the newspaper was still to be convinced of his intentions and was determined to put to him exactly what was at stake with the hope that he would embrace and share their interest in preserving it.

In April 1961, the *EAS* noted with concern the widening rift between KADU and KANU, especially as it threatened the implementation of the Lancaster House Constitution and continued to prolong the state of uncertainty in the country.[36] The two parties could not agree on whether or not and when to take part in Government as KANU steadfastly preconditioned their participation on Kenyatta's immediate release. KADU did eventually agree to join Government and the two tactfully issued a statement to the press announcing their decision to do so alongside another to begin constructing a house for Kenyatta in Kiambu which he would move into after his release.[37] The newspaper was welcoming and deeply appreciative of KADU's move. It praised its leaders and was certain that they would reap political capital in Kenya and abroad from their decision and would also benefit from the advantages of being in power immediately before independence. According to it, KADU had properly distinguished the question of Kenyatta's release from that of independence that could only be hastened once the country was politically and economically

[35] *EAS*, "As time goes by," no. 14681, Monday 7 August 1961, p. 4.
[36] *EAS*, "Warning against rule by decree" and "Signs of widening rift between Kanu and Kadu," no. 14577, Friday 7 April 1961, p. 1.
[37] *EAS*, "Kadu agrees to join Government," no. 14587, Wednesday 19 April 1961, p. 1.

stable. Nonetheless, the newspaper was well aware that KADU's presence in Government was problematic as KANU had clearly emerged the majority party after the elections. It still hoped that KANU would reconsider its position and opt to work with KADU. "This is no time for anybody to crow over Kadu's gains and Kanu's misfortunes," warned the newspaper. A massive task of reconstruction and development awaited the country and the newspaper averred that this could only be tackled successfully with a concerted multi-racial effort that commenced with African unity and proceeded with a spirit of compromise when and where differences emerged.[38]

As KADU took its place in Government with the attendant ministerial positions, the *EAS*, considered it a necessary step towards a harmonious transition from British to African rule. KADU's leaders in Government, though not part of an ideal situation, would be gaining the necessary experience to govern the country after independence under the British supervision it trusted. However, it remained concerned that KADU would be unable to operate efficiently in the face of KANU hostility as the party had threatened to oppose all actions of the Government, "a threat which carried into effect, can only lead to prolonged lack of confidence in the country's stability, dissuading investment to Kenya's serious detriment."[39] It still hoped that KANU would take up one of the suggestions of its members and enter into a coalition government with KADU. especially since Ronald Ngala had not only left the door open to negotiations but had also left some ministerial positions open. The *EAS* simply wanted a peaceful transition that ensured economic continuity – as well as secured the future of its expansive printing and publishing enterprise. Indeed, once Kenyatta was released and the relationship between the two parties appeared to improve, the newspaper seemed to draw a lot of comfort and confidence from their renewed co-operation in the days leading up to and after his release, their joint statement

[38] *EAS*, "Kenya's new Government," no.14588, Thursday 20 April 1961, p. 4.
[39] *EAS*, "Coalition government," no. 14595, Friday 28 April 1961, p. 8.

committing themselves to the protection of private property, which it placed on the front page, and Kenyatta's assurance that there would be "no gangster government" that preyed on private property once Kenya became independent, which made the headlines.[40]

When events made it clear that another constitutional conference would be held as soon as September 1961, the newspaper announced "Kenya harmony could bring independence sooner," above a headline; "Talks date may be advanced."[41] It even went as far as proposing that the British Government set a time-table for Kenya's independence that it had all along had an aversion to, calling on policy makers to base their decisions on Kenya's prevailing circumstances. Now, increasingly confident in the politico-economic constitution of the country's future leaders the *EAS* urged the British Government to set a time-table for Kenya. "Can a time-table be avoided? Might it not clear the air?" asked the newspaper. It went on to affirm that "the people of Kenya have already made up their minds about the issues of today and the possibilities of tomorrow – and those who have not will not be swayed either way by some indication of dates." The *EAS* had indeed made up its mind about the country's future leadership and it was comforted by what it saw, politicians who understood well the importance of maintaining the economic status quo.

During the second round of constitutional talks in early 1962 the newspaper urged the Colonial Secretary to find a way to balance the centralist demands of KANU with the regionalist demands of KADU. Although it favoured a strong central government it was eager to see the two sides reach a compromise that would avert a political crisis that could potentially harm the

[40] *EAS*, "Kanu-Kadu pledge to respect property rights," no. 14692, Saturday 19 August 1961, p. 1 and *EAS*, "No gangster government," no. 14698, Saturday 26 August 1961, p. 1.
[41] *EAS*, "Talks date may be advanced," no. 14699, Monday 28 August 1961, p. 1 and same issue, "Question of timing," p.4.

economy further.[42] When the conference reached just such an agreement the newspaper proclaimed it a "victory of moderation" and called on Kenya's politicians to end their politicking and apply themselves fully to the task of governing the country. It specifically urged them to tackle the country's unemployment problem and hoped that Tom Mboya in his new post as Minister for Labour would mark the beginning of a new relationship between employers and employees that would see the increasingly common labour disputes brought under control. With this constitution in place, the country readied itself for another electoral process.

As the elections approached the *EAS* used its front pages to feature positive news likely to calm nervous investors and settlers in addition to covering the political activities of the major parties, most of which it also tried to present positively. There was heartening economic news: "No Kenya Exchange Control Pledge," was the KANU Executive Officer Mwai Kibaki's promise to a largely Asian and European audience in Nairobi. He insisted that KANU would leave the investor free to use his profits as he pleased.[43] In addition, the party would do all it could to encourage investment and give tax holidays if necessary to protect various local commercial entities. The following day, the paper carried another "Pledge by Kadu to the Investor," in which the party's deputy, Masinde Muliro, promised that his party would not practice economic discrimination against those who chose not to become Kenyan citizens after independence.[44] "E. Africa Economy Looks Up," headlined an article on James Gichuru's remarks in his capacity as the Chair of the Ministerial Finance Committee to the Central Legislative Assembly on the 1963/4 Estimates of Expenditure for the general fund services of the

[42] *EAS*, "Constitution making," no. 14846, Friday 16 February 1962, p. 10. The reason for the newspaper's lukewarm reception of KADU's demands for *majimbo* became evident later that year when politicians opposing its constitutional dilution threatened secession and violence. The newspaper argued that "right from its inception, the regional system contained the seeds of segregation, the division of the country's life into compartments unless unity could be produced through strong direction from the centre." See, *EAS*, "Warning to agitators, no.15048, Thursday 10 October 1962, p.

[43] *EAS*, "No Kenya exchange control pledge," no. 15227, Wednesday 8 May 1963, p. 1.

[44] *EAS*, "Pledge by Kadu to the investor," no. 15288, Thursday 9 May 1963, p. 1.

Common Services Organisation.[45] He informed the Assembly that the region's economy had improved markedly over the previous year, which demonstrated a return of investor confidence. Opposite this article was a smaller one, "Kanu says it Will Bring £50m to Kenya," in which Bruce McKenzie, the Minister for Land Settlement, claimed that the party would bring between £30,000,000 and £50,000,000 to the country in the three years that would follow 1963.

The next day, news that the United Nations' Special Fund would make a loan of about £854,000 featured prominently on the front page, while further down "Kadu Gives Pledge on Constitution" titled an article on Ronald Ngala's first broadcast to the country in which he stated his party's commitment to defending the constitution while observing with prescience that KANU had not accepted the constitution and was determined to change it, particularly those provisions that safeguarded the status of the regions. Next to it, Kenyatta was quoted speaking to an audience of Sikhs and assuring them that those who took Kenyan citizenship would enjoy all the rights that came with that status while further down a small article quoted Ngei remarking that his party would be a "balancing force" after the election and that no party could rule without it. He warned that no one ethnic group could dominate the country and anyone who thought that was the case was mistaken.[46] Two days later, in "Mr. Kenyatta: European Skill Needed," the KANU president gave an interview while visiting the west of the country in front of 4,000 supporters to Independent Television for British viewers in which he acknowledged the

[45] *EAS*, "E. Africa economy looks up, no. 15222, Thursday 2 May 1963, p. 1.
[46] *EAS*, "Signing of £854,000 U. N. aid for Kenya," "Kadu gives pledge on constitution," "Kanu leader assures other races," "No government without us says Mr. Ngei," no. 15233, Friday 3 May 1963, p. 1. However, after the May elections, an announcement that Kenya would receive £10,000,000 in aid from Britain prompted the newspaper, which had previously cheered on and celebrated news of such financial infusions, to caution against dependence. It predicted that Kenya would be independent before the 1964 budget and it would have to learn to be self-reliant as the "era of going to H.M.G. for perennial aid is coming to an end." It pointed the country's economists towards the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, but also highlighted Government officials' assertions that Kenya would trade broadly, accept aid only when it did not compromise economic independence, but most importantly considered the creation of conditions that encouraged local savings for financing development paramount. This was the newspaper speaking in its role as politico-economic caretaker. See, *EAS*. "Kenya gets £10m in aid from Britain," and "More Money from Britain," no. 15245, Wednesday 29 May 1963, p.1 and p. 4.

country's skill shortage and its continued need for European skill after independence with the provision that they would not be "our masters." At the same time, he told his audience that it was important that Kenyans put the past behind them and held no grudges for the mistreatment they had suffered under those in authority.[47] This was just the sort of message the newspaper hoped to hear from him.

The following day, the newspaper carried a story on the visit to Kenyatta's Gatundu farm of five European farmers including Maj. F. W. Day, one of the four former members of the United Party. The KANU president had given them a tour of his mixed farm before sitting down for a chat which Day described as "completely frank and friendly." The two photographs on the front page focused on the visit and showed the smiling and seemingly comfortable farmers in conversation with Kenyatta as they toured the farm in the company of Bruce McKenzie.[48] The title "Kanu to Demand Hard Work" must have been comforting to those who feared that Africans and an African-led government would appropriate private property for their own benefit after independence as they rested on their laurels and demanded that the Government cater to their every need.[49] It was an issue that the *EAS* had feared and had constantly harped on, especially after 1960. The article also reported Oginga Odinga's insisting that self-help, co-operation and communal development would be critical in the country's future even as he promised a socialist welfare society in a broadcast the previous night. The broadcast foreshadowed the differences in political philosophies between him and the other KANU leaders which would result in his turbulent exit from the party along with those who shared his ideas by the end of that decade. Further below on the same page, a small article reported on feelings of "Confidence in Kadu Promises" expressed at a Nairobi meeting of Asians which the KADU

[47] *EAS*, "Mr. Kenyatta: European skill needed," no. 15225, Monday 6 May 1963, p. 1.
[48] *EAS*, "Farmers drop in on Mr. Kenyatta," no.15226, Tuesday 7 May 1963, p. 1.
[49] *EAS*, "Kanu to demand hard work," no. 15227, Wednesday 8 May 1963, p. 1.

chair Daniel T. Moi had addressed as he incorrectly warned that a vote for KANU was a vote for nationalisation.[50] Two days later, another report informed readers that two former members of the New Kenya Party had resolved to join KADU after the previous election because of its "sincerity and courage." The two, one of whom, W. B. Havelock, was then Minister for Agriculture, explained that they had been encouraged by KADU's affirmation of the right to private property and its support for private enterprise at a time when it was not politically popular to do so.[51]

A most interesting article titled "Europeans Given New Assurance by Kanu" gave an account of James Gichuru's speech to an audience of his European constituents, informing them that he thought that it was time to bring the land settlement schemes to an end as they were harming the country's economy. It quoted him making very revealing statements about African political exigencies at that time. For example, he divulged to his audience that the Government had implemented the settlement schemes to "ease the pressure which has built up because of land hunger." This pressure of course not only had economic but also political consequences, and was of a horrendous scale that the country's leaders, African and otherwise, had not only already seen in the Mau Mau rebellion and remembered too well, but were also quite bent on preventing another on a similar scale or worse. Not only were such movements disruptive, but the country's governing elite considered them a threat to their own positions of power. The newspaper also reported that Gichuru had told his audience further that African politicians, including himself, had been heard issuing remarks such as "Europeans must go from Kenya," but "they did not mean it, as the whole economy was tied up with Europeans in Kenya." He went on to say that

[50] *EAS*, "Kanu to demand hard work," and "Confidence in Kadu promises," no. 15227, Wednesday 8 May 1963, p. 1.
[51] *EAS*, "'Courage' of Kadu made them join," no. 15229, Friday 10 May 1963, p. 1.

"we have had to say these things because we have always felt that to get anything from the British Government you must kick a little."[52]

A few months later, the *EAS* would repeat those sentiments in a less jocular manner when it described the settlement schemes as a "socio-political palliative…to relieve landless African peasant farmers, mainly Kikuyu, by buying out existing farms."[53] The newspaper had long concluded that African politicians were simply playing to their base when they made these remarks. It had enough knowledge of negotiations between African leaders and the British Government to gauge their actual political and economic ideologies and its only concern was that their audiences might take what they said at face value to the detriment of Europeans. To have a prominent African leader admit to what the paper knew only too well was priceless and worthy of a front page location. That it did not make the headlines was probably an editorial concession to its potentially explosive nature, but that it featured at all is also an indication of the newspaper's confidence of its readership, Europeans in Kenya and a modestly sized African bourgeoise, who shared its politico-economic perspective.

It is for this reason that the *EAS* later supported the Government's policies on what was variously known as Localisation, Kenyanisation or Africanisation, which it designed to enable the emerging African elite to gain entry into various sectors of the economy, particularly agriculture, corporate management, retailing and distribution. The paper's support was particularly visible in 1967 when the Immigration Bill and the Trade Licensing Bill passed in Parliament. The first sought to control the numbers and qualifications of foreigners seeking employment in the country while the second was geared towards enabling Africans to gain a foothold in retail trade. For the *EAS,* it was particularly noteworthy that the Immigration Bill

[52] *EAS,* "Europeans given new assurance by KANU," no. 15234, Thursday 16 May 1963, p. 1.
[53] *EAS*, "Progress of settlement," no. 15358, Tuesday 8 October 1963, p. 4.

abolished all existing entry permits, including permanent residence certificates, replacing them with 12 new categories. It is evident that the newspaper was pleased that the Bill would result in the creation of two classes — citizens and non-citizens — despite those categories, and that the latter would include Tanzanians and Ugandans of African descent.[54] It was yet another indication that there would be room for Europeans and Asians in independent Kenya. Its main concern was that the process be well defined to avoid uncertainty that would alarm investors and upset economic progress, and that efficient, expatriate labour be retained where necessary, Africans be given opportunities based on merit so as not to compromise standards, and most importantly that Localisation not be considered equivalent to "Blackenisation." As the Government had cleared the question of citizenship, the newspaper was confident enough in the general direction of Kenya's economic policies to support the Chairman of the Federation of Kenya Employers, Sir Colin Campbell, when he signaled his willingness to work with the Government in the formulation of Localisation policies, praising him for his "liberal spirit."[55] Atwood and the *EAS* were pragmatists who understood well the importance of accommodating Government concerns in this matter and considered its implementation surety for their own long-term economic security.

Returning to 1963, unlike its major rival the *Daily Nation*, the *EAS* did not endorse any party in the run-up to the 1963 elections. On election day it featured final messages to voters from the leaders of KADU, KANU and the small, explicitly ethnic Akamba People's Party

[54] *EAS*, "Citizens and non-citizens," no. 16451, Saturday 8 April 1967, p. 4; see same issue, "Localisation plan defined," p. 1. For the newspaper's coverage of the Trade Bill see, *EAS*, "Trade control Bill opens way for Africans, no. 16604, Wednesday 4 October 1967, p. 1 and *EAS*, "Trade licensing," no. 16605, Thursday 5 October 1967, p. 6.
[55] *EAS*, "Policy on Localisation," no. 16384, Friday 20 January 1967, p. 8; see same issue "Employers glad to help in localization," p. 17. For other examples see: *EAS*, "Africanisation of Retail Trade," no. 16450, Friday 7 April 1967, p. 8; see same issue, ,"New entry permit system proposed: Kenya Bill to abolish all existing passes," p. 1 and "New moves to accelerate Africanisation," p. 18; *EAS*, "New Africanisation pledge: Bill will seek control over expatriates," no. 16424, Wednesday 8 March 1967, p. 1; *EAS*, "Speed-up of Africanisation," no. 16449, Thursday 6 April 1967, p. 1.

(APP) under Paul Ngei's leadership. KADU and KANU's were placed side by side while that of APP, by far the smallest party, was placed beneath KADU's.[56] In its editorial, the newspaper highlighted the historic nature of the election: it would be Kenya's first conducted on universal adult suffrage and would be the last under the colonial regime.[57] A period of self-government would follow and an *EAS* more certain about the manner in which the country would be governed in future stated that it hoped that this transition period would be short. It accurately and contentedly observed that there were hardly any policy differences between the parties and clashes between them had been brought about by personality clashes or ethnic tensions. The main bone of contention between KADU and KANU, observed the editor, was whether or not regionalism was intended for the period of self-government or would continue unaltered into independence. Nonetheless, the newspaper approached the big day with the comfort of knowing the country's economic status quo would be safe no matter which party emerged the victor and was relieved that the elections had proceeded peacefully, which it considered a favourable augury for the country's future.

As the first results trickled in and it became clear that KANU would lead the next Government, the *EAS* continued to demonstrate its comfort with the country's new leaders. It was certain that KADU had won enough votes to form a "healthy Opposition," but it advised that it should not oppose for the sake of opposing "as in the Westminister pattern of parliamentary democracy." The newspaper seemed confident in KANU's assurances that it would listen to the Opposition. Once again it stated its hope that the period of self-government would be brief and was at ease with the rough outlines of Kenya's future; a country without privilege was "certain and understandable" as was a democratic Socialist republic under Kenyatta's leadership. It did

[56] *EAS*, "Consider the issues says Mr. Ngala," "Remain calm says Mr. Kenyatta," and "Mr. Ngei says 'Thank you' to Government," no. 15236, Saturday 18 May 1963, p. 1.
[57] *EAS*, "Historic election," no. 15236, Saturday 18 May 1963, p. 4.

not appear concerned about Kenya being a welfare state as KANU had promised a dynamic one that would be achieved through hard work. In addition, it did not appear bothered that KANU would seek to abolish or weaken regionalism. KANU would not come out of the elections with the majorities it needed to change the constitution at will and so would be expected to work tactfully towards weakening the sections of the constitution of which it did not approve. Although the Opposition would be healthy, KANU was at an advantage because it would make its stand against those sections "from the seat of power" at the next constitutional conference.[58] Nonetheless, even at this stage the *EAS* steered clear of unequivocally stating its support for KANU or the opposition.

In the period after the elections and leading up to independence, the *EAS* clearly sought to assure its largely European readership that in KANU Kenya's future had been placed in the best hands possible. After the elections, the next major political event that year was the October 1963 constitution talks. As they began in London, the *EAS* analysed the statement Kenyatta issued at the opening of the conference and backed the changes KANU proposed as a prerequisite to robust and efficient government. Kenyatta had issued the statement at the start of the constitutional conference in addition to making some remarks to the newspaper's journalists in London, it insisted that the rationale the party had given for the constitutional changes it was proposing adequately demonstrated its good will. It therefore came out clearly in support of the party's campaign to dilute regionalism. The KANU leader had argued that in seeking to alter the sections of the constitution they had pointed out, they were simply working to translate the will of the majority into a government that could work efficiently. The *EAS* asserted that it was in the common interest that Kenya did not disintegrate into ungovernable pieces as a result of overly

[58] *EAS*, "Uhuru na Karambee [sic]," no. 15244, Tuesday 28 May 1963, p.4.

powerful regions.[59] As regards the efforts of the European delegates at the conference, the paper lauded them for focusing their efforts on the questions of citizenship and land. KANU had steadily maintained its objection to dual citizenship which holders of British passports favoured. It commended the party for its openness and honesty in what was a sensitive matter and even suggested that the party's stand on what was a politically charged issue was encouraging, as it made its declarations to protect land and property rights more believable. KANU was a party that had a "record of adhering to declared policy."[60] Besides, the paper thought the party's position on the citizenship issue understandable for a government that had a lot to do to develop a sense of nationhood once the country became independent. And so it simply praised the European delegates at the conference for their efforts to get the British Government to agree to the restoration of British citizenship to those who had given it up should they wish to reclaim it in the future. This was a matter for the British Government to deal with and not for discussion at the Kenya constitutional conference. On land, it observed that the delegates were lobbying the British Government to allocate another £10,000,000 to land purchases over a period of five years. It was sure that KANU's stand on citizenship would generate the need for more land sales despite the heartening remarks and speeches various African leaders had made recently. The *EAS* preferred that these settlers did not exit the country, but was more concerned that those who chose to were able to do so in a manner that did not jeopardise the overall economy. It referred to the government's statement there were still 2,000,000 acres of mixed farming land in African hands in what were once Scheduled Areas, stating that officials did recognise the importance of preserving the size of these land units for the good of the country's economy. The infusion of funds to enable purchases on a willing seller willing buyer basis was thus of crucial importance.

[59] *EAS*, "Kanu conference policy," no. 15352, Tuesday 1 October 1963, p. 4.
[60] *EAS*, "Citizenship and Land," no. 15355, Friday 4 October 1963, p. 8. For other *EAS* concerns on the matter of dual citizenship see *EAS*, "The one and the ninety-nine," no. 15386, Saturday 9 November 1963, p. 4.

Once the constitution had been finalised and the date of Kenya's independence determined, the *EAS* situated itself between KANU and KADU as a reconciler. It averred that little had changed and the final constitution which was neither fully unitary nor federal did not differ much from that put forth after the second Lancaster House conference. That which had been altered simply made the constitution more flexible and workable and in fact, posited the newspaper, the need for more changes would be recognised in the future. However, Kenyans could rest assured that the KANU Government would not abuse the process and would only make changes where "absolutely necessary" as its leader had stated.[61] Besides, the newspaper was happy that the safeguards requiring 90% and 75% votes in the two Houses of Parliament had been carried over into the new constitution and would be required to alter any section touching on human rights, the Senate, and the regions. The newspaper declared the new constitution a victory for all Kenyans and called on KADU to embrace it. It was of the opinion that ethnic tensions were at the root of KADU-KANU hostilities and urged KADU to turn its ethnic fears into strength by making sure the Government was indeed accountable to all Kenyans whether they were from large or small ethnic groups.

On Independence Day, the *EAS* celebrated with a 64-paged special independence issue, and as Frank Barton points out, it was the first time the newspaper appeared without the British coat of arms on its mast.[62] It hailed the birth of a new nation and focused on its multiracial nature. Kenya, the newspaper stated, had the unique opportunity of demonstrating how a people in their diversity could live and work together for the betterment of the quality of their lives in the spirit of African Socialism, which KANU had vaguely defined but which the newspaper nevertheless embraced as a harmless ideal and therefore worthy of its support. It was certain that

[61] *EAS*, "Constitutional pyramid," no.15369, Monday 21 October 1963, p. 4.
[62] Frank Barton, *The Press in Africa: Persecution and Perserverance.* Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1966, p. 71.

those who lived to the end of that century would "find Kenya a happy land, made so under the leadership of the first Prime Minister, and those who follow Mr. Kenyatta."[63] The *EAS* was pleased with the peaceful transition and the new leaders' desire and commitment to promoting capital and protecting that which had already been invested in the country. It could afford to look forward to the future with great optimism.

The newspaper's confidence in Kenyatta can be seen in the manner in which it covered him and the celebration of Kenya's first official public holiday on 20 October 1964. On that day Jomo Kenyatta as Prime Minister of the country attended celebrations of the first official Kenyatta Day, a day named after him, which as the *EAS* explained, was meant to commemorate his arrest by British authorities on that date in 1952. Among other related events he attended a dance at City Hall located on Delamere Avenue, a thoroughfare that would also soon be 'created' Kenyatta Avenue.[64] The confidence and comfort of the newspaper in the Prime Minister is evident in its lavish praise of the man in the day's editorial. Kenyatta was the man who had "spearheaded" the struggle for independence in Kenya. He had suffered for it and paid dearly but the newspaper praised him for not being bitter or vengeful. He was "wise in the fullness of his years and modest in the triumph of his achievement."[65] It proceeded to highlight quotes from his speech broadcast to the country to commemorate the event, which the newspaper hoped his fellow politicians and the ordinary citizen would embrace. In his speech Kenyatta had touched on several issues the *EAS* itself had addressed in the months and years gone by: that people would have to be patient before they started to enjoy the benefits of independence, that Africanisation would not be based on race, and that non-African and foreign expertise would be sought and welcomed. He further warned Kenyan politicians against making utterances that

[63] *EAS*, "A new nation is born," no. 15414, Thursday 12 December 1963, p. 8.
[64] *EAS*, " Day of jubilation for Kenya," no. 15681, Tuesday 20 October 1964, p. 1.
[65] *EAS*, "Mzee's message to Kenya, no. 15681, Tuesday 20 October 1964, p. 1.

would discomfit such visitors as he declared that Kenya would not align itself to either the East or the West. He was also of the view that the country ought not to develop a chronic reliance on foreign aid and that genuine development had to be powered by the diligence of the people.

Thus by 1964 the *EAS* trusted Kenyatta and KANU fully and it is, therefore, not surprising that when the Government announced amendments to the constitution that would erode the compromises made in KADU's favour at the second and third constitution talks, the newspaper rallied behind it and championed its cause. After all, it too had never been enthusiastic about those compromises. The proposed changes were responsible because "utmost care has been taken to preserve the ultimate parliamentary responsibility and the supremacy of the legislature" and they were not geared to creating a one-party state, although the paper maintained that this was the ideal and hoped that it would come into realisation with the continued defection of KADU members to KANU. The "Republic Bill" had originated in the Executive, but Parliament had the option of accepting or rejecting it after due process in both Houses had been followed. It was sure that the bill would pass in the Lower House where KANU had a clear majority. However, if it failed to pass in the Upper House where the ruling party did not enjoy a majority, the matter would be passed on to Kenyans for passage or rejection at a referendum. It would need 65% of the votes in its favour to pass the referendum stage before being returned to Parliament for passage or rejection with a simple majority in both houses. Sensing a KADU-led battle against the bill, the *EAS* pushed for a peaceful process while asserting that its passage was necessary for the adaptation of the constitution to the "practical living conditions" of the country.[66] Key to this process was the great extent to which the regions would cede financial and political power to the centre, becoming little more than glorified local government authorities.

[66] *EAS*, "Republican changes," no. 15683, Friday 23 October 1964, p. 8.

Not surprisingly, KADU through Ronald Ngala immediately objected to the proposed changes and while the *EAS* reported this objection, it proceeded to use editorials to expound on and promote the proposed changes, which it presented as virtuous and necessary while it breathlessly reported the bill's progress on its front pages, rallied public opinion in its support, and pressured dithering KADU members to support the bill or to defect to KANU altogether.[67] It also portrayed those opposed to the Bill as parochial individuals who were not supportive of that which the Executive had proposed in the public interest. If the bill failed to pass in the Senate, they would also be guilty of compelling the Government to spend £100,000 on a referendum that could have been otherwise employed for example, in job creation, a genuine concern but which the newspaper picked up for populist reasons. When four KADU MPs eventually defected to KANU, making it clear that the probability that the bill would pass in the Senate was very high as the ruling party was now short of just one vote, the *EAS* headlined its front page story "Masai Leaders Chose Kanu" and its editorial "Masai Chose Harambee." [68] The latter in particular stands out because it implied that ethnic groups whose leaders had not aligned themselves with KANU were anti-Harambee and therefore unpatriotic recluses. In addition, it called on KADU leaders to demonstrate their "belief in national unity" by supporting the Bill as it expressed its hope that a single party state without legislative action was in the offing. It was of the opinion that the opposition was only valid when it was characterised by major political differences and not ethnic or minority fears. It does appear however, that KADU's opposition was motivated by both but the *EAS'* calibration of opposition politics did not cater for KADU's complexities. Generally,

[67] *EAS*, "Mr. Ngala attacks 'uncalled for' idea," no. 15683, Thursday 22 October 1964, p. 1; *EAS*, "Kadu attack on 'totalitarian' constitution,: no. 15683, Friday 23 October 1964, p. 17; *EAS*, "Powers of the president," no. 15685, Saturday 24 October 1964, p. 4; *EAS*, "Regional responsibilities, no. 15686, Monday 26 October 1964, p. 4; *EAS*, "Government swamps the opposition," "Crowd marches in support of bill" and "A foregone conclusion," no. 15695, Thursday 5 November 1964, p. 4; *EAS*, "Supreme test for the Senate: Warning given on £100,000 waste," no. 15696, Friday 6 November 1964, p. 1; *EAS*, "End to confusion' urged: Minister asks Senate to accept changes," no. 15697. Saturday 7 November 1964, p. 1.

[68] *EAS*, "Masai leaders join KANU," and "Masai chose Harambee," no. 15698, Monday 9 November 1964, p. 1.

these remarks only served to pathologise opposition politics and problematised the positions of those who found and would in future find themselves at variance with major Government policies.

As KADU continued to haemorrhage members it called for a crisis meeting and its leaders, seeing a very dim future for Opposition politics in Kenya, resolved to merge with KANU.[69] This was the very outcome for which the *EAS* had hoped. It was certain that there would be differences between KANU members in the future. However, there was apparently an "African manner" of dealing with such differences that would ensure that consensus was achieved after adequate deliberation. There was also another point of the "traditional African character" that the newspaper wished to dissect.[70] Despite its journalistic creation it was tragically farsighted as the manifestation of its attributes in independent Kenya would be all too real and far from the realms of imagination, journalistic or otherwise. Regarding this unique "character" the newspaper argued that "there has, then, been a growing conviction throughout the country that MPs can only achieve those benefits which they expect to secure through co-operation with the Government. They can do their criticising and their prompting better from within." The newspaper repeated this on Independence Day: "Now there can be discussion within, after the customary African style, and, once agreement is reached, undivided action." Allegedly, the dissolution of the Opposition had enabled a government that was a unique blend of the Westminster pattern of democracy and "traditional African methods" to come about, which meant consensus after internal deliberation.[71] It was a statement that assumed that those in

[69] *EAS*, "Kalenjin vote for changes: Kadu holding crisis meeting today," no. 15699, Tuesday 10 November 1964, p. 1 and *EAS*, "Kadu joins united front with Kanu: differences end in one-party State," and "Senators give bill unanimous approval," no. 15700, Wednesday 11 November 1964, p. 1.
[70] Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds), *The Invention of Tradition*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983 is of relevance here (albeit in reference to a post-colonial context) and subsequent debates on the invention of tradition.
[71] *EAS*, "The new republic," no. 15727, Saturday 12 December 1964, p. 16.

power would always be interested in consensus-building. The newspaper also believed that now that the power of the regions had moved to the centre, national unity would be enhanced in a country of diverse peoples.

At independence the *EAS* published a 32-page "Jamhuri Special" edition. On its front page, it announced Kenya's new republic status and highlighted a ceremony held the night before to celebrate the country's transition to that status at which the breaking of the Presidential Standard was performed. A photograph of the Presidential Standard and another of Kenyatta appeared beneath the headline.[72] There had been much talk about "national unity" now that the regions had ceded their powers to the centre. But on that night at the ceremony commemorating the end of the country's allegiance to the British throne, the national flag that best symbolised that unity was not in the spotlight. In retrospect, the newspaper had published a symbolic pronouncement of Kenya's political fate in the years that would follow; the ascendance of an autocrat and autocratic rule that would outlast him and ensure that opposition politics would be in a chokehold for decades. The *EAS* contributed to this process at its earliest stages by repackaging KANU's policies and pronouncements into ideologies of Government that it used to justify the actions of those in authority whom it identified with as being most interested in sustaining the conditions in which it continued to thrive.

In the same vein, it was very supportive of African Socialism as the Government defined it in Sessional Paper No. 10. This was because although the Government's economic policy articulated therein rejected both capitalism and Marxism, it not only protected free enterprise but promised to promote it, while severely limiting the role nationalisation would play in the economy. In addition, it left the country's land policies intact.[73] The economic philosophy had its

[72] *EAS*, "Kenya becomes a republic," no. 15727, Saturday 12 December 1964, p. 1.
[73] *EAS*, "Design for living," no. 15843, Wednesday 28 April 1965, p. 6.

roots in the KANU manifesto of 1960 and Tom Mboya's Ministry of Economic Planning and Development issued the paper in response to the party's radicals, who were insisting on the overhauling of the country's land policies among other things. Some of the sessional paper's key opponents, who also believed the Government was not doing enough to promote social justice and equity, were Oginga Odinga, Denis Akumu, O. O. Mak'anyengo, J. D. Kali and Bildad Kaggia, all of whom had socialist leanings. All but Odinga had been members of various trade unions and Kaggia's home area, Murang'a, had been victim to grievous land adjudication practices. He therefore felt the problems of the landless quite keenly and also enjoyed the support of squatters and labourers from the Rift Valley.[74] The provision of land for the landless became a key goal for these leaders which resulted in accusations from Kenyatta and other KANU leaders that they were promising free land that was simply not a sensible economic option to the masses. It does appear, however, that what they were in fact advocating was the designing of land policies that would cater not only to the interests of wealthy Africans who could afford to take out generous loans to purchase European farms on sale, but also to the less privileged Africans for whom, small, low interest loans and flexible loan repayment facilities alongside proper land adjudication practices were essential.[75]

In 1966, the manifesto of their new political party, Kenya People's Union (KPU), would clarify that free land would be given to the neediest, but detractors of the dissidents ignored this qualification perhaps due to envisaged problems in defining "the neediest."[76] More immediately,

[74] Colin Leys, *Underdevelopment in Kenya: the Political Economy of Neo-Colonialism: 1964-71*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1975, p. 212 – 215.
[75] Oginga Odinga, *Not Yet Uhuru*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1967, p. 253 – 269. In *EAS*, "Take-over of land urged by Mr. Kaggia," no. 15832, Thursday 15 April 1965, p.1, the paper reports Kaggia making a more radical demand for the transfer of "the wealth and means of production" to the people of Kenya that could be interpreted as a demand for the nationalisation of land. However, this is markedly different from what he had advocated before resigning from his post as a cabinet minister in the Kenyatta government. Nevertheless, such remarks, if he was indeed reported accurately, must have only served to raise the anxiety of the *EAS*.
[76] Odinga, *Not Yet Uhuru*, p. 304.

on an inner page in 1965, the *EAS* published a report on Achieng' Oneko voicing his opposition to the labeling of those opposed to Government as "communists." They were, he insisted, African socialists whose goals were access to proper nourishment, adequate healthcare, a decent education and housing for every Kenyan. They did not want "a society where a few rich individuals only gave a pittance to the majority."[77] As debate on the future of Kenya's economic policy heated up prior to the publication of the sessional paper, the *EAS* had painted those opposed to the Government's policies as instigators of societal divisions who were defying Kenyatta's call for harambee and unity, the purveyors of "cheap jargon and foreign slogans" as Mboya had argued at the expense of debates that could lead to actual economic advancement.[78] Disagreement with the government's stated economic policy was anathema for the paper and politicians who dared to voice their discontent were "lesser politicians" and "trouble-makers."[79] Its virulent condemnation of those arguing for adjustments in the government's economic policy was yet another step towards the definition of political opposition as pathological and therefore intolerable, as well as undesirable. KANU took the challenge of Kaggia and his colleagues as a dangerous ideological offense and quickly resolved to suppress them.

In late February 1966, the *EAS* front page featured KANU's Secretary General, Tom Mboya, who announced that the party would hold a meeting to re-organise the party by restructuring it to cater for the needs of an independent Kenya as opposed to a colonised Kenya.[80] A few days later, Bildad Kaggia issued the most severe response to Mboya's announcement, which the newspaper published on an inner page. He insisted KANU was in an "appalling" state; the party had not held elections since 1960, it lacked funding and the

[77] *EAS*, "African socialism: aims put forward," no. 15831, Wednesday 14 April 1965, p. 4.
[78] *EAS*, "African socialism," no. 15824, Tuesday 6 April 1965, p. 4.
[79] *EAS*, "Trouble-makers warned," no. 15829, Monday 12 April 1965, p. 4.
[80] *EAS*, "Kanu will be changed to suit new Kenya," no. 16105, Monday 28 February 1966, p. 1.

headquarters did not even have a telephone. Kaggia argued that KANU officials, in particular Tom Mboya, called for reorganisation once in a while for the sole purpose of engineering party branch structures to suit their political goals, which meant muscling out those they disliked and ushering those they favoured in. In addition, he argued it was "ridiculous" that the meeting would be held at State House, pointing out that the party's meeting ought to have been held at its headquarters and not at the official residence of the head of state which scheming politicians would now "defile" with their activities.[81] The *EAS* agreed that the venue ought to be changed but otherwise supported the convening of the meeting, arguing among other things that the party's plans to restructure itself were timely and that party branches that had not held elections were laggards who could only blame themselves for their predicament.[82]

When the Vice-President, sensing the unstated objectives of the meeting, held a press conference to vent against those in Government whom he argued had incessantly falsely accused him of planning to overthrow the Government, undermining and humiliating him, the *EAS* made it clear that the Vice-President's dealings with the East discomfited it and that the formation of an opposition party was perhaps inevitable.[83] The newspaper suggested that the rumours Odinga had complained about stemmed from his condemnations of imperialism and neo-colonialism, which to it must have sounded like the words of a man who was unwilling to let bygones be bygones, a threat to those who had benefitted most from Kenya's colonial rulers and had chosen to stay on after independence. In addition, it observed that Odinga had been more acerbic in his critiques of the West than the East, "seeming always to hold Eastern political theories in deference compared with revulsion from imperialism." Odinga and those who shared his political beliefs, asserted the newspaper, had moved so far from the Government's position on

[81] *EAS*, "Mr. Kaggia claims Kanu affairs in 'appalling' state," no. 16109, Friday 4 March 1966, p. 3.
[82] *EAS*, "Kanu Conference," no. 16113, Wednesday 9 March 1966, p. 6.
[83] *EAS*, "Vice-President claims 'unfair treatment'," no. 16114, Thursday 10 March 1966, p. 1 and 2.

various issues that though a single party served Kenya's interests best, the establishment of a second party was inevitable.

On the first day of the conference, the *EAS* gave the party generous front page coverage under the headline "President Reviews Kanu's Successes."[84] The day's editorial on what was clearly a party convention was titled "State of the Nation." It reviewed Kenyatta's speech on the first day of the meeting as he had surveyed the ups and downs of the previous three years: the failure of the East African federation and the ending of regional governments, the KADU-KANU merger, an economic growth rate of 7.3 per cent and some gains in the struggle against unemployment which the newspaper observed was yet to be brought under control and remained a grievous social malaise "fraught with the dangers of mass bitterness." Indeed, it asserted that unemployment was the reason why Kenya had to press on with Kenyatta's socio-economic plans. It would also take time before a welfare state complete with free education and healthcare could be achieved.[85] The newspaper was generally satisfied with the running of the country and those who opposed the government were therefore a threat to the establishment that served its interests best.

As was expected, Kenyatta was re-elected President of Kanu at the conference while Oginga Odinga walked out following the abolition of the post of Deputy President in the party's constitution which he held and the creation of eight Vice-Presidents to represent the each of the country's eight provinces. After the leader of the headline report, the newspaper highlighted the contents of the following paragraph in indented form:

> In a post-election address, President Kenyatta warned dissident elements that Kenya was determined to be independent, would crush any attempted coups and would not allow a few individuals who were on the "pay-rolls of foreign Powers" to confuse the people. Amid cheers, he said a process of weeding out

[84] *EAS*, "President reviews Kanu's successes," no. 16116, Saturday 12 March 1966, p. 1.
[85] *EAS*, "State of the nation," no. 16116, Saturday 12 March 1966, p. 1.

> such people had begun and the Government and Kanu were strong enough to deal with them.[86]

EAS observed that the election had driven out members of what was then known as the "progressive group" and was pleased that the exercise had fully involved and integrated members of the former KADU party. It was confident that KANU was strong enough to counter the "empty slogans" of its detractors and urged those amongst them who still held cabinet posts to resign, which would serve to strengthen the Government as the meeting's purge had only served to cleanse the party.[87]

For the *EAS*, the party's actions were all signs of a strong, powerful Government and it could only shower praise on the leaders who had "taken a firm line in dealing with malcontents in their own party." At that point, the newspaper did not believe that any legislator would actually quit the party and took as evidence of this the fact that none had quit after the President had announced that the party would expel those from the Government who did so from both the party and the Government. The newspaper pointed out that a strong government was important because it was a crucial factor in development, arguing that "all lending agencies look before they leap." Those who looked at Kenya would see a country with a promising agricultural sector, a blossoming tourism sector, and "blessed with a sound Government" which would encourage them "to place their investments there and development capital sets off ever widening effects."[88] It did not matter that the "traditional African character," whatever it was, had failed to resolve disputing factions within itself amicably. What counted was that those 'malcontents' had been shown the door in a manner that preserved the external integrity of the Government and made it look strong to those who mattered.

[86] *EAS*, "Kanu re-elects President Kenyatta," no. 16112, Monday 14 March 1966, p. 1.
[87] *EAS*, "Kanu conference success, no. 16112, Monday 14 March 1966, p. 4.
[88] *EAS*, "A strong government," no. 16121, Friday 18 March 1966, p. 10.

Nevertheless, in the following weeks there were defections from KANU, including those of Government officials starting with that of the Vice-President himself which was dramatic enough to garner a headline in the *EAS*.[89] The newspaper argued that at the very least, Odinga's actions had proved that he was a principled man. It revisited his interactions with the East, particularly his acceptance of funds from Eastern bloc countries which he had defended by arguing that the origins of the funds did not matter as long as they were put to good use. For the *EAS*, the former Vice-President's error had been his vehement attacks on imperialism and colonialism which it claimed had resulted in his repulsion by the West and his being "magnetised" by the East. It blamed him for instigating unnecessary ideological battles in Kenyan politics; Kenya was not going to chose between Communism or Capitalism.[90] It was going to adhere to African Socialism. To the newspaper, Odinga remained an implacable character who was dangerous to the country's politico-economic transition process because he threatened to undo all that the British Government had implemented in a bid to ensure a mutually beneficial economic transition for the country's new ruling class and its old.

Aware of the potentially volatile nature of Odinga's announcement, news about his resignation and those of others who defected from KANU to join him in the days that followed were accompanied by reports from party and Government officials accusing defectors of being selfish and hypocrites, urging calm, encouraging loyalty to the party, assuring citizens that the Government had national security under control as it made threats to punish those who threatened that security, and intimidated others in ways that remained unspecified.[91] Generally,

[89] *EAS*, "Mr. Odinga's resignation accepted," no. 16145, Friday 15 April 1966, p. 1.
[90] *EAS*, "Mr. Odinga's 'only way'," no. 16145, Friday 15 April 1966, p. 1.
[91] See for example *EAS*, "Stand firm by the President – Kanu," no. 16146, Saturday 16 April 1966, p. 1; *EAS*, "Security situation under control: warning on intimidation by Mr. Moi," "Secret talks condemned by Mr. Ngala," and "13 unionists quite Kanu as Assistant Ministers pledge loyalty," as well as "Kanu line on Mr. Odinga criticised," no. 16147, Monday 18 April 1966, p. 1; *EAS*, "Kanu appeals for vigilance: action to be taken against intimidators," and "M.P.s to resign today claim," no. 16148, Tuesday 19 April 1966, p. 1; *EAS*, "Secret talks: Mr.

the newspaper reported on these issues without questioning KANU's position and did not hide its distaste for the defectors.[92] Security issues fell under the docket of Daniel T. Moi, the Minister for Home Affairs and a prominent leader of the extinct KADU party who appeared to relish his role as chief condemner of the defectors with more than a smidge of schaudenfreude. The *EAS* quoted him warning Oginga Odinga that "the opposition will be dealt with in the same way the former Kadu opposition was dealt with," adding that "he himself (Mr. Odinga) knows the way he dealt with the opposition and he should not be surprised if he and his followers are dealt with in the same manner."[93]

For the newspaper though, the key factor throughout this turbulent period remained the maintenance of security and it highlighted Moi's assurances to this end while adding that "overseas investors are more likely to be relieved and encouraged by what has happened," meaning his stated intention to use the full force of the law against those who disrupted the peace. It assured readers that Moi was a capable Home Affairs Minister and he, alongside Njoroge Mungai the Minister of Defence and Charles Njonjo the Attorney General, with the backing of the police and the armed forces were up to the task of keeping the country stable.[94] When a group of 26 MPs defected from KANU, the *EAS* accompanied the headlined news with an uncharacteristically large in-text sub-heading "Group Pledges Non-Violence," and noted in its

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Moi gives details: Trip by car to home of former chief at Mariakani," "Tanzanian ordered to quit Kenya at once," "Ministers not in Mombasa this year," and "Frustrated M.P.s quit Kanu for ambition says Government," no. 16150, Thursday 21 April 1966, p. 1.

[92] See for example, *EAS*, "Campaign of opposition," no. 16149, Wednesday 20 April 1966, p. 6. The report on allegations of a secret meeting between Tanzanian officials and defectors is an exception but in this case too, the newspaper sided with the Government. See, *EAS*, "Secret talks: Mr. Moi gives details: Trip by car to home of former chief at Mariakani," "Tanzanian ordered to quit Kenya at once" and "Ministers not in Mombasa this year,"no. 16150, Thursday 21 April 1966, p. 1. For the newspaper's position on the Tanzanian issue see "Challenge to resign," no. 16153, Monday 25 April 1966, p. 4. See also *EAS*, "Hypocrisy charge leveled by Kanu at dissident M.P.s," no. 16151, Friday 22 April 1966, p. 1; *EAS*, "Warning for subversives: President speaks of 'real hard labour'," no. 16159, Monday 2 May 1966, p. 1; *EAS*, "Mr. Moi warns by-election intimidators," no. 16165, Monday 9 May 1966, p. 1; *EAS*, "Subversives known – Mr. Moi: un-named for reasons of security," no. 16204, Thursday 23 June 1966, p. 1.

[93] *EAS*, "Mr. Moi pledges safety," no. 16148, Tuesday 19 April 1966, p. 1.

[94] *EAS*, "No early election," no. 16148, Tuesday 19 April 1966, p. 4.

editorial that the opposition had committed itself to using constitutional means to achieve its objectives.[95] The newspaper argued that this commitment, together with the Government's security assurances, would go a long way to calming down those who had been disquieted by recent developments.

The newspaper's security interests also influenced its position on various Government schemes to harass and frustrate the Opposition, as well as the manner in which it covered the Opposition once campaigns were underway. It encouraged the Government to register the Kenya People's Union, cautioning that the Government's democratic credentials would be called into serious question if it did not do so and that "opposition driven underground would be more dangerous than in the open." When the Government confiscated the passports of several dissident MPs and their supporters, the newspaper acknowledged that this constituted a breach of individual rights and that it evidently constituted an attempt to prevent them from travelling overseas or to foreign countries. Those who had suffered this action could not travel outside the country at all as doing so on the passport of another state would have meant forfeiting their Kenyan citizenship since Kenya did not recognise dual citizenship. Yet it did not rebuke the Government for taking this step.[96] In fact, it gave several positive headlines to KANU in the month of May: "Attack by Kanu on Mr. Odinga," which was a report based on a KANU statement that accused Odinga of planning to usurp the President's powers; "Kanu asks voters to review progress," over a report on a KANU statement which savaged KPU leaders from Nyanza province accusing them of having neglected their constituents; "Pledge of Nairobi's faith in

[95] *EAS*, "26 Kenya M.P.s to cross the floor: Mr. Odinga as Leader of Opposition," no. 16149, Wednesday 20 April 1966, p. 1.
[96] *EAS*, "Challenge to resign," no. 16153, Monday 25 April 1966, p. 4; *EAS*, "The President speaks," no. 16155, Wednesday 27 April 1964, p. 6. On the issue of K.P.U. registration, see also *EAS*, "Registration for the K.P.U.," no. 16174, Thursday 19 May 1966, p. 4 for a cautiously worded comment over the delay that delicately rebukes both the Government and K.P.U.

President" for a report on the city's local government officials' delegation to State House where they assured him of their unswerving loyalty; "Accept bribes but vote for Kanu says President," in which he accused dissidents of buying votes with money which unscrupulous foreigners had given them; and "KPU accused after riot at rally" and "Fighters may face arrest – Mr. Moi," which referred to yet another KANU statement in which the party accused the Opposition of transporting troublemakers to the east of the capital to cause chaos at political meetings after a vehicle carrying Tom Mboya was besieged by "alleged" KPU members[97]

KANU also benefited from being the party in power and could claim Government successes as its own such as the Government's publication of a "£325m. Development Plan for Kenya: Public and Private Partnership," that the *EAS* headlined in early May.[98] In its editorial the newspaper linked the plan to KANU's manifesto and the Sessional Paper on African Socialism, arguing that the principles of the plan which detailed the Government's designs for the economy up to the year 1970 found their roots in the two documents and analysing it at length before urging readers to support the Government. It argued that:

> Politics may be more exciting but fills no empty bellies. Economics matter most. The realisation of this phase of planned development will mean more jobs for the workless and youngsters leaving school with a better standard of living for families which they can never obtain on a "free for all" policy as is being promoted by some Opposition leaders. Yet no amount of planning will succeed without support for the Government's constructive policies and response from the people through faith backed by unremitting hard work.[99]

The unveiling of the plan provided it with an opportunity to enhance the image of the ruling party in the eyes of the public, garner more support for it as the by-elections approached as it

[97] *EAS*, "Attack by KANU on Mr. Odinga," no. 16161, Wednesday 4 May 1966, p. 1 and 3; *EAS*, "Kanu asks voters to review progress," no. 16162, Thursday 5 May 1966, p. 1 and 8; *EAS*, "Pledge of Nairobi's faith in President," no. 16170, Saturday 14 May 1966, p. 1; *EAS*, "Accept bribes but vote for Kanu says President," no. 16176, Saturday 21 May, p. 1; *EAS*, "K.P.U. accused after riot at rally" and "Fighters may face arrest – Mr. Moi," no. 16177, Monday 23 May 1966, p. 1.
[98] *EAS*, "£325m. Development Plan for Kenya," no. 16163, Friday 6 May 1966, p. 1.
[99] *EAS*, "Phased economic planning," no. no. 16163, Friday 6 May 1966, p. 1.

admonished the party to which it too was opposed. The following day the newspaper published a statement from KANU's headquarters on its third page in which the party had listed its achievements since independence, outlining them as milestones leading up to the publication of the development plan.[100]

In contrast to the front page coverage the newspaper granted to KANU in addition to those it got on inner pages, those on KPU were always on the inner pages. There were two exceptions: one on 20 May 1966 when Oginga Odinga gave a press conference announcing the party's policy and another ten days later reporting on how the police had broken up a KPU meeting in Nakuru with dogs and batons before they proceeded to arrest a number of people.[101] A similar pattern of coverage continued in the critical by-election month of June when the *EAS* gave prominent front page coverage to KANU campaigns and increased but less prominent front page coverage to KPU.[102] At one point, the *EAS,* in response to the President's allegations that foreigners were funding KPU actually endorsed his assertion and encouraged Kenyans to donate to KANU to enable it to counter them. It went on to argue that the campaign was essentially an

[100] *EAS*, "Development Plan 'peak of Kanu achievements," no. 16164, Saturday 7 May 1966, p. 3.
[101] *EAS*, "Mr. Odinga takes post as K.P.U. head: Mr. Kaggia to be deputy," no. 16155, Wednesday 27 April 1966, p. 3; *EAS*, "Students answer criticisms on invitation to Mr. Odinga," no. 16161, Wednesday 4 May 1966, p. 8; *EAS*, "Cabinet's size crticised by K.P.U.: waste of funds," and "Mr. Oneko to contest Nakuru," no. 16162, Thursday 5 May 1966, p. 3; *EAS*, "K.P.U. pledges not to use violence: faire play appeal," no. 16163, Friday 6 May 1966, p. 3; *EAS*, "Somali Radio attacks attitude to K.P.U.," no. 16167, Wednesday 11 May 1966, p. 3; *EAS*, "Mr. Odinga to visit registrar," no. 16169, Friday 13 May 1966, p. 3; *EAS*, "Technical things hold up K.P.U.," no. 16170, Saturday 14 May 1966, p. 3; *EAS*, "Kandara voters urged to oust Kaggia," no. 16171, Monday 16 May 1966, p. 5; *EAS*, "Delay by registrar worries K.P.U." and "Mr. Odinga's quotes put up for comparison," no. 16174, Thursday 19 May 1966, p. 3; *EAS*, "Kanu again examines Mr. Odinga's record," and "Stand on S. Africa attacked by K.P.U.," no. 16182, Saturday 28 May 1966, p. 3. For the exceptions see *EAS*, "Free land demanded in K.P.U. policy," no. 16175, Friday 20 May 1966, p. 1 and p. 3 and *EAS*, "Police break up K.P.U. meeting," no. 16183, Monday 30 May 1966, p. 1.
[102] For KANU front page news see: *EAS*, "K.P.U. registration warning," 16186, Thursday 2 June 1966, p. 1, *EAS*, "Last lap in race for votes: President cheered by Nakuru crowd" and "Election attack on Mr. Kaggia," no. 16189, Monday 6 June 1966, p. 1; *EAS*, "No communes for Kenyans – Mr. Mboya," no. 16193, Friday 10 June 1966, p. 1; *EAS*, "Kandara acclaims the President: 20,000 turn out to show loyalty," "Kanu only party for progress," and "Tribute to President," no. 16194, Saturday 11 June 1966, p. 1. For K.P.U. front page news: *EAS*, "K.P.U. rally condemns split of C. Nyanza," no. 16189. Monday 6 June 1966;p. 1; *EAS*, "Policy of Kanu colonial – K.P.U.," no. 16193, Friday 10 June 1966, p. 1; *EAS*, "Budget critics stifled – K.P.U." no. 16194, Saturday 11 June 1966, p. 1.

effort to ward off insidious foreign intervention and a strengthening of the party that backed the Government in its developmental endeavours.[103]

Towards the end of April 1966 the Government recalled Parliament to debate legislation that would compel those who had defected from KANU to face the electorate again in by-elections.[104] The *EAS,* which had earlier called for precisely this action, once again found itself in agreement with the Government's intentions. It insisted that it was only right that the defectors seek the mandate of their constituents once again on the new party ticket as it assured readers that the Government had the country's interests at heart as it remained committed to economic progress and, interestingly, in the face of KPU's campaign on social welfare policies, to social justice.[105] The bill passed both houses of Parliament and became law, but even before then almost half of the 30 MPs who had defected from KANU reconsidered their defections and returned to the party. The *EAS* was not amused and went as far as recommending that the party punish them by refusing to readmit them, which would condemn them to "political wilderness."[106]

Amidst all this, a group of KANU MPs announced plans to legislate for preventive detention and the dissolution of the Senate, which would be absorbed by the House of Representatives.[107] The group also recommended that Central Nyanza be divided into two districts, an act of political gerrymandering intended to disadvantage KPU. The *EAS* endorsed the proposals fully, noting that "the Government would be well advised to take careful note of these recommendations" even though it acknowledged that imprisonment without trial was an

[103] *EAS*, "By-election prospects," no. 16194, Saturday 11 June 1966, p. 4.
[104] For more on Kenyatta-era constitutional changes see Ogot and Ochieng, *Decolonization and Independence in Kenya*, 1995, pp. 91 – 108.
[105] *EAS*, "No early election," no. 16148, Tuesday 19 April 1966, p. 4.
[106] *EAS*, "M.P.s return to the fold, no. 16156, Thursday 28 April 1966, p. 4.
[107] *EAS*, "Kanu M.P.s to seek Senate abolition," no. 16179, Wednesday 25 May 1966, p. 1 and 9.

infringement on human rights and a practice which many associated with colonial subjugation. The KPU threat, however, coming as it was from a party that was championing the restructuring of the country's land policies towards a direction the *EAS* was unsure of, meant the newspaper was willing to advocate for its use. It argued that, "realities of political life have to be faced and, being what they are under the machinations of foreign ideologies, many new States have run into the necessity to use the weapon." The newspaper insisted that detention without trial would be acceptable as long as it was used in "self defense," that is, when a threat to the democratic rights of other citizens existed and as long as the Government respected the rights of the Opposition to exist and issue constructive criticism. In the opinion of the newspaper, it was actually a necessity as prosecutors were bound to face difficulties in attempting to build cases against "political extremism" and "outright agitation." The newspaper did not explain what exactly constituted political extremism or agitation and why they would be considered crimes in a democratic country in the first place. As for the Senate, it was a vestige of regionalism that the newspaper had never embraced. The Government could not disband the Senate as its existence was entrenched in the constitution. Nonetheless, the *EAS*, maintained that a constitution had to be flexible to be viable and it could be changed when need arose, the need in this case being the dissolution of the Senate.[108]

Once in Parliament, the two MPs, Martin Shikuku and Jean Marie Seroney attempted to delay its passage by arguing for more time to debate its contents with the former's protest to this bill and others before it attesting to the increased subordination of the Legislature to the Executive. The *EAS* quoted Shikuku arguing that "we are being reduced to machines – even machines do not work so fast."[109] Nonetheless, the paper maintained that what was important

[108] *EAS*, "Kanu Group proposals," no. 16180, Thursday 26 May 1966, p. 6.
[109] *EAS*, "Special powers Bill delayed by two," no. 16185, Wednesday 1 June 1966, p. 1.

was that Parliament would remain supreme and it was not unduly disturbed by the section of the bill that empowered the Government to impose censorship, maintaining that even the press had to be responsible in its activities.[110] Less than three years later the Government faced a crisis when Tom Mboya, the Minister for Economic Planning and Development, was assassinated and it put the detention law into use at full throttle.

The *EAS* recognised the potential of Mboya's death to wreak havoc on the status quo and assumed the role of peacemaker. Alongside reports on the Requiem Mass conducted at the Holy Family Cathedral in Nairobi, the *EAS* carried an odd, brief report on rioting which had broken out in the city centre. To its left, a smaller report made it clear that ferocious riots had broken out outside Holy Family Cathedral and a newspaper reporter quoted officials of the St. John Ambulance Brigade calling the riot the worst they had seen in independent Kenya.[111] At the bottom of the page was another brief report in which the Vice-President, Daniel T. Moi, urged people to remain calm as investigations into the death of the Minister were conducted. He singled out persons "largely from the Luo community" whom he accused of causing isolated incidents of disturbances.[112] The *EAS* blamed the riots on the "unendurable pain" many felt at the loss of a charismatic politician. It called on those who resorted to violence to reconsider their actions and ponder whether they were not in fact aiding the assassin whose actions may have been calculated to cause chaos. The paper went on to highlight a segment of the eulogy Archbishop McCarthy had given at the cathedral in which he had commended Oginga Odinga and Achieng' Oneko's responses to the murder. Their words had been "impressive because they preached patience, non-violence and submission to law and order." The editorial ended in the

[110] *EAS*, "Public security," no. 16185, Wednesday 1 June 1966, p.6.
[111] *EAS*, "Rioting mob stones motorists and shops," and "More than 100 treated by ambulance men," no. 17152, Wednesday 9 July 1969, p. 1.
[112] *EAS*, "Mr. Moi appeals for calm," no. 17152, Wednesday 9 July 1969, p. 1.

Beatitudes for mourners and peacemakers.[113] The following day, it praised the police for the manner in which they had dealt with the demonstrations on the day of the mass and encouraged readers to give donations to the Forces Memorial Hospital as a show of their appreciation to them.[114]

Neither Kenyatta nor any of his cabinet members attended Tom Mboya's funeral on Rusinga Island with the exception of Josiah Mwangi Kariuki, who in five years time would be assassinated too.[115] If the *EAS* had sensed violence born of pain it does appear that the Government had read anger directed against it in the actions of the demonstrators. The death of Mboya also had the effect of blurring divisions among different Luo classes and factions that had developed at the height of the deceased's rivalry with Odinga. Evidently, some Luo also felt the Government was increasingly marginalising them politically and economically and a delegation of 300 leaders expressed these feelings to the President when they visited him at State House, Nairobi. The President tactfully pushed back against their complaints and the *EAS'* publication of the story under the headline "Tribalism has 'no place here'," with photographs of the leaders giving the KANU salute ensured that a visit of grievance was presented in the best possible light.[116] But was the targeted audience listening? Were they convinced? Incidents later that year suggest that they were not.

In October 1969, the *EAS* would have to take out its peacemaker robes again and rally in support of the Government when violence erupted during Kenyatta's visit to Nyanza Province, revealing the depth of the maladies that wracked the country beneath the veneer of calm and

[113] *EAS*, "The peacemakers," no. 17152, Wednesday 9 July 1969, p. 1.
[114] *EAS*, "Praise for the police," no. 17153, Thursday 10 July 1969, p. 4.
[115] J. M. Kariuki was a popular socialist politician and Central Kenya MP who is remembered for the critical stance he adopted towards the Kenyatta regime. For more on his life see, Simiyu Wandibba, *J. M. Kariuki*. Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, 2004.
[116] *EAS*, "Tribalism 'has no place here'," no. 17233, Saturday 11 October 1969, p. 1 and 5.

control with which its powerful and influential voice had varnished it. The visit was part of a three-province tour and in Nyanza, one of the slated events was the opening of Kisumu General Hospital which had been constructed with Russian funds and expertise. On his way to Nyanza Province, the *EAS* headlined a speech Kenyatta gave in Rift Valley accusing KPU of being the stooges of unnamed foreign powers who were funding its activities and for not having contributed anything concrete to the development of their constituencies.[117] The following day a headline announced that Kisumu, the provincial headquarters of Nyanza Province, was under curfew and that seven people were dead after members of the presidential escort team had fired into a crowd of demonstrators and several more were injured.[118] Apparently, both the President and Odinga, who had arrived before him, had been greeted with shouts of "Dume!," ("Bull!") which was the symbol of KPU, and an agitated crowd, some of them reportedly waving pictures of Tom Mboya captioned "where is Tom?" Thereafter an irate President had a public face-to-face confrontation with Odinga which the *EAS* published in detail. Diplomacy had flown out the window in a fit of rage and the *EAS* quoted Kenyatta demanding that, "these stupid people must stop their nonsense and unless they do so we will deal with them severely. If it was not for my respect for you Odinga, I would put you in prison now and see who has power in this country. If any of your stupid supporters continue with their nonsense, we will show them that Kenya has a government."[119] He also warned Odinga against building political capital out of the hospital arguing that it was he as President who had sent Odinga in his capacity as a government official to negotiate funding for it from the Soviet Union. After this confrontation, some members of the

[117] *EAS*, "Foreign funds for K.P.U. warning," no. 17245, Saturday 26 October 1969, p. 1.
[118] *EAS*, "Kisumu under curfew: seven dead after escort fires on hostile crowd," no. 17246, Monday 27 October 1969, p. 1. See also, David Goldsworthy, *Tom Mboya, the Man Kenya Wanted to Forget.* Nairobi: Heinemann Educational Publishers, 2008, pp. 279-289.
[119] *EAS*, "Trouble planned – witness," and *EAS,* "President warns Mr. Odinga at Kisumu," no. 17246, Monday 27 October 1969, p. 2.

public shouted and threw stones at the presidential motorcade as Kenyatta was exiting the hospital grounds. His presidential escort personnel responded by firing into the crowd with live ammunition.

The newspaper considered the event tragic not just for Nyanza Province but for the entire country, for it threatened the integrity of the positive image the country had gained since independence, whatever it considered to be peace and the economy.[120] Shortly after, the Government clamped down on the protesters and their leaders. It arrested and detained all KPU MPs, two party officials and a trade unionist under the Preservation of Public Security Act, while Oginga Odinga and his deputy, J. M. Nthula, were placed under house arrest. The Government considered them all a threat to "the peaceful running of the country."[121] The *EAS* defended the Government's actions as necessitated by a desire to preserve national security. It reminded readers that Kenyatta himself had been the victim of an oppressive regime. Under his own regime, however, what patently constituted an identical breach of human rights was allegedly necessary as the only way of securing law and order and preventing a debate in and out of Parliament that would have heightened tensions dangerously.[122] It took as fact unsubstantiated Government claims that investigations into the Kisumu riots had shown that the riots were not spontaneous but had been planned by the KPU and that the clamp down would actually serve as a relief for the Province's people, who allegedly had been under heavy political pressure to submit to KPU. The party itself, the newspaper speculated, seemed destined for extinction and its

[120] *EAS*, "A tragedy for Kenya," no. 17246, Monday 27 October 1969, p. 4.
[121] *EAS*, "K.P.U. leaders rounded up: arrests ordered after special Cabinet meeting," no. 17267, Tuesday 28 October 1969. Those detained are listed as: Luke Obok (Alego), Tom Okello-Odongo (Kisumu Rural), Ondiek-Chillo (Nyakach), Okuto-Bala (Nyando), Wasonga Sijeyo (Gem), John Odero-Sar (Ugenya), Ramogi Achieng'- Oneko (K.P.U. Publicity Secretary), J. D. Kali (K.P.U. General Secretary and O. O. Mak'Anyengo (General Secretary of the Petroleum Oil Workers' Union).
[122] *EAS*, "Action against K.P.U., no. 17247, Tuesday 28 October 1969, p. 4 and *EAS*, "Aftermath of Kisumu," no. 17249, Thursday 30 October 1969, p. 6. See also, *EAS*, "Frontier detainees to go free," no. 17235, Tuesday 14 October 1969, p. 1.

leaders only had themselves to blame as they had allowed their selfish ambitions for power to jeopardise national unity and they could only redeem themselves by returning to the "mainstream," that is KANU.[123]

A day before KPU was banned, the *EAS* defended the party's continued existence after a number of MPs had demanded its ban during a parliamentary debate. Such an action would be too draconian, especially since the Government had claimed that its grievance was with KPU leaders and not all residents of the Province. Once the Government banned the party, the newspaper quickly changed its position, observing that in its statement on the matter, the Government had explained that KPU had to be banned because it had become a subversive organisation that planned on unseating the Government using unconstitutional means. Besides, the action of detention itself was in fact constitutional. Nonetheless, it urged the Government to provide the accused with the opportunity to defend themselves against the allegations made against them in a court of law and expressed its hope that the country would return to normalcy soon.[124]

Speaking the truth of its power: Lonrho Ltd. takes over Consolidated Holdings Ltd.

In 1969, a multinational headquarted in London, Lonrho, purchased Consolidated Holdings which gave it control over the *EAS* and Motor Mart, a vehicle importation enterprise. Roland Rowland, the ambitious, mercurial chief executive and significant shareholder of Lonrho was keen on further expanding the company's interests in Kenya as he was in other African and Middle Eastern countries. According to biographer Tim Bower, Bruce McKenzie, Kenya's Minister for Agriculture, offered Rowland a path to valuable access to Kenyatta in return for a significant interest in Lonrho's investments that the latter was not willing to concede. However,

[123] *EAS*, "Action against K.P.U., no. 17247, Tuesday 28 October 1969, p. 4.
[124] *EAS*, "The ban on K.P.U.," no. 17250, Friday 31 October 1969, p. 8.

Rowland apparently found a way around this hurdle while lamenting about his difficulties in Kenya to the country's High Commissioner in London, Ng'ethe Njoroge, brother to Kenya's Minister for Foreign Affairs Njoroge Mungai. The High Commissioner recommended his twenty-six year old nephew Udi Gecaga, who was just about to marry Kenyatta's daughter Jeni, as a solution to Rowland's Kenyan investment challenge. Udi Gecaga's mother, Jemimah Gecaga, was a nominated Member of Parliament and a sister to Njoroge Mungai.[125] When Lonrho later found itself under attack during parliamentary debate in 1973, she used her position in Parliament to defend her son and the company that employed him.[126] More importantly Bower observes that the Mungai nexus was opposed to that of the Attorney General Charles Njonjo – Bruce McKenzie's patron among others.

Rowland's victory over his entrepreneurial adversary and his ascent into the inner sanctums of power was marked by a photograph of Duncan Sandys, formerly a member of the British Cabinet and then Chair of Lonrho Ltd,, meeting Kenyatta at State House, Nairobi that appeared on the front page of the *EAS* shortly afterwards. The two men were smiling as Sandys studied Kenyatta's unsheathed sword-cane, joked and talked "over old times." The caption also informed readers that Alan Bail, the deputy chair of Lonrho Ltd., Roland Rowland, the company's chief executive, and Udi Gecaga, the managing director of Lonrho East Africa Ltd., had accompanied Sandys to the meeting. It was a picture that spoke more than a thousand words to Lonrho's adversaries, present and future; the company was 'armed' and ready for business with the ultimate 'shield and defender.'[127]

[125] Tim Bower, *Tiny Rowland: a rebel tycoon.* London: William Heinemann Limited, 1993, pp. 195 – 199.
[126] Suzanne Cronje, Margaret Ling and Gillian Cronje, *Lonrho: portrait of a multinational*. London: Julian Friedmann Books Ltd., 1976, p. 38.
[127] *EAS*, second, front page photograph, no. 18052, Saturday 27 May 1972, p. 1.

The newspaper soon proved itself a valuable public relations asset as it gave coverage that favoured Lonrho Ltd's managing director during a major corporate crisis. In May 1973 Rowland and his supporters sought the extension of an injunction preventing eight directors led by Sir Basil Smallpeice from dismissing him as managing director. The battle first appeared on the front page of the *EAS* as "Africans 'may act' if Lonrho's Chief Executive Ousted."[128] In the weeks ahead, playing up to his African audience, Tiny Rowland would depict the battle as one between Lonrho directors who were passionate about Africa's newly independent states, their nationalistic goals, development plans and economic aspirations versus those who did not care about Africa and would alter the company's policies to the continent's disadvantage once Rowland was out of the picture. This is the storyline the *EAS* promoted and although it never editorialised the matter, it gave the saga front page coverage on an almost daily basis in the month of May and the first few days of June, in addition to inner page reports.

The first report featured words of caution from the chair of Lonrho's Board, Duncan Sandys, made in an affidavit that was read to a judge in the Chancery Division of the High Court warning that Zambia, Zaire and other unnamed African states would put an end to Lonrho's operations in their countries if certain members of its board successfully brought Tiny Rowland's term of office as chief executive officer to an end. Moreover, he too would resign as chair of the

[128] *EAS*, "Africans 'may act' if Lonrho's chief executive ousted," no. 18347, Wednesday 9 May 1973, p. 1. See also *EAS*, "Lonrho head tells of chairman's compensation deal," no. 18348, Thursday 10 May 1973, p. 1; *EAS*, "Lonrho head accused of deceiving colleagues," no. 18348, Thursday 10 May 1973, p. 3; *EAS*, "Mr. Kariuki raises Lonrho affairs in the Assembly," no. 18348, Thursday 10 May 1973, p. 9; *EAS*, "Lonrho executive replies to attacks, no. 18349, Friday 11 May 1973, p. 1; *EAS*, "Lonrho litigants warned to heed African reactions," no. 18350, Saturday 12 May 1973, p. 1; *EAS*, "Kariuki refuses to clarify," no. 18350, Saturday 12 May 1973, p. 2; *EAS*, "Lonrho head loses 'battle' but keeps his job," no. 18352, Tuesday 15 May 1973, p. 1; *EAS*, "Lonrho's policy 'not to change'," no. 18355, Friday 18 May 1973, p. 1; *EAS*, "Dealings in Lonrho shares," no. 18358, Tuesday 22 May 1973, p. 1; *EAS*, "Secret Lonrho inquiry 'because of royalty'," no. 18358, Tuesday 22 May 1973, p. 4; *EAS*, "Public inquiry on Lonrho demanded," no. 18360, Thursday 24 May 1973, p. 1; *EAS*, "Lonrho 'not matter for Government'," no. 18366, Thursday 31 May 1973, p. 1; *EAS*, "Lonrho meeting applauds group's men in Africa," no. 18366, Thursday 31 May 1973, p. 4; *EAS*, "Lonrho now seeks peace and quiet," no. 18369, Monday 4 June 1973, p. 1.

board if his efforts to reconcile the feuding board factions resulted in his dismissal, for despite his desire to remain neutral in the matter, he considered Lonrho's African successes attributable majorly to Rowland's "personal initiative and energy." There were also affidavits from Tom Mtine and Udi Gecaga, Lonrho's most senior executives in Zambia and Kenya respectively, as well as Gil Olympio, whom the newspaper described as Lonrho's chief roving representative in West Africa. The affidavits all bore words of rousing support for Rowland. Gecaga praised Rowland as the epitome of a company that was "progressive and dynamic" and which was "sensitive to the rapid changes in independent Africa." In contrast, those who opposed him were mediocre characters – "they had paid few visits to Africa and some had never been there." Thus from the very beginning, readers were presented with a depiction of the boardroom battle that set up Rowland as David fighting for the development of Africa and Sir Basil Smallpiece as Goliath and his band of seven Philistine directors who did not. Editorials were not necessary. From the front pages of the *EAS*, Rowland ensured that news reaching Nairobi from London on the battle was presented in the most positive light possible at the breakfast tables and office desks of those who mattered.

Amidst all this, Lonrho came under a scathing attack from J. M. Kariuki in the Kenyan Parliament which the *EAS* could not ignore. On 10 May 1973 a front page report on the Lonrho battle directed readers to pages 3 and 9 for related news. The page 3 report, "Lonrho head accused of deceiving colleagues," commenced with a leader that scoffed at how "a British tycoon who built up a huge Pan-African mining and finance company on the basis of the trust he inspired in African leaders was alleged in court in London to be unfit to run a public company." After this unequivocal yet implicit vote of support delivered with a huge dose of scorn, the brief report went on to outline the executive's opponents accusations that he lacked "commercial

probity" and the proper temperament to run a public company.[129] On page 9, which was actually the second to last page of the newspaper, was located the article, "Mr. Kariuki Raises Lonrho Affairs in the Assembly." J. M. Kariuki, who was also an Assistant Minister for Tourism and Wildlife, had accused Lonrho's companies of practicing racial discrimination and stated his concern at the rate at which Lonrho was buying companies in Kenya. In addition, he had called on the Government to scrutinise the firms's financial records to ensure that it was not expatriating capital to the detriment of the economy. He also claimed that Lonrho had recently secured a loan of £13,000,000 locally to buy a number of firms in the country and argued that the money could have been better used to finance Kenyan entrepreneurs. He named the firms Lonrho had already bought out and added that it planned to buy more. Kariuki proceeded to remark that "soon they will be going to the Government to ask for a Letter of Approved Enterprise for sending outside Kenya the profits of money locally borrowed. My advice to the Government is to refuse this letter." The previous day, he had pointed out to the House that Lonrho was an acronym for London and Rhodesia knowing that the Government of the self-governing colony of Southern Rhodesia was anathema to African states. Holding what he described as an *EAS* staff salary list, he then went on to unleash an attack upon the newspaper as an example of a Lonrho company in which manifested Lonrho's unpalatable corporate policies. This he did in response to another MP's motion on unemployment in the country, and the newspaper reported it in the following terms:

> The Assistant Minister charged that salaries were based on "racial discrimination." He called out names of several reporters and proof-readers and their salaries, and claimed that there was "glaring discrimination in the salaries of the staff, based on racial origin. And I am told this company has African directors. Shame on them. They should be ashamed of the salary structure in this firm. I wonder what sort of directors they are Mr. Speaker," he continued with his

[129] *EAS*, "Lonrho head accused of deceiving colleagues," no. 18348, Thursday 10 May 1973, p. 3.

> remarks. Mr. Kariuki claimed that the firm "has even removed some Africans in top positions because they did not happen to toe Lonrho's line and replaced them with those of Africans who can support the policy of certain individuals. The Minister for Finance and Economic Planning must check on how the companies bought by Lonrho were transferred. The Government must step in and see what is going on in Lonrho."[130]

Accordingly, readers who thought to read the article were confronted with these ugly charges of racism and cronyism against the newspaper that they had purchased and helped to enrich. And while the attack was relegated to the obscurity of the back pages, Udi Gecaga's response the following day made the front page. He did not identify the MP by name but addressed in general, "those who pontificate on issues that they don't fully understand" and challenged them to repeat their accusations outside their "privileged sanctuaries," making it clear who in particular had sparked off his response. He focused his comments on Lonrho, arguing that the company did owe its existence to London and Rhodesia, the latter meaning both Southern and Northern Rhodesia. Moreover, the latter — now the independent state of Zambia — was "the cradle of the new Lonrho" and enjoyed the unanimous support of its government.[131] He also emphasised that Lonrho was first quoted in the London Stock Exchange in 1908 as London and Rhodesia Mine and Land Company Limited and continued to trade on that stock exchange as Lonrho Limited following a name change in 1963. As such Gecaga sought to identify Lonrho as a public company firmly rooted in the United Kingdom and not apartheid-run South Africa. In addition, Gecaga also pointed out that the company submitted its accounts to the Kenyan Registrar of Companies like all other public companies in the country and it sought approval for all local loans and remittances. As for the question of its purchase of local companies, the managing director argued that Lonrho was also localising its enterprises, citing for illustration

[130] *EAS*, "Mr. Kariuki raises Lonrho affairs in the Assembly," no. 18348, Thursday 10 May 1973, p. 9.
[131] *EAS*, "Lonrho executive replies to attacks, no. 18349, Friday 11 May 1973, p. 1.

that Lonrho had appointed eight senior African executives to the boards and management of Kenyan Lonrho companies and eight University of Nairobi graduates in the preceding two months. However, cited without context, these appointments did not permit an assessment of their significance, which could only be made by comparing their number and the total value of Lonrho's assets in Kenya. Besides, while Lonrho may have sought Government approval before expatriating capital or borrowing locally, Gecaga's response could not possibly have been satisfactory to J. M. Kariuki, who was concerned that the Government was not scrutinising applications for these transactions with the necessary rigour. Kariuki's accusations against the *EAS* went unanswered and two days later he declined to answer a list of questions an *EAS* reporter presented to him at a press conference, insisting that he stood by his parliamentary statement and would not expound on it further until parliament appointed a select committee to look into the issue.[132]

When those who mattered finally commented on the battle they did so on the eve of the shareholder's meeting at which Tiny Rowland's fate was to be decided. This was after a UK judge declined to intervene in what he considered an internal corporate dispute and left it to Smallpeice and his band to decide whether or not to fire Rowland before the shareholder's meeting. The *EAS'* front page was at hand to flash the statement which favoured Rowland. The Government commented through Ng'ethe Njoroge, the Kenyan High Commissioner in London and stated that it had not done so earlier as it too had considered the dispute an internal corporate affair that was beyond the jurisdiction of the Government. Njoroge explained that the Government had finally opted to comment as a consequence of the negative manner in which it had been presented in the local and international press as having an interest in the matter that was harmful to the country's investment climate. By the time he issued the Government statement, J.

[132] *EAS*, "Kariuki refuses to clarify," no. 18350, Saturday 12 May 1973, p. 2.

M. Kariuki had repeated his allegations against the company to BBC television and Njoroge stated that the Assistant Minister's remarks had to be taken as personal and not representative of the Government's position. Indeed, all other information that had not originated from the Kenyan Government was to be treated as "unauthorised and incompatible" with the Government's position. He maintained that the Government's policy was to attract foreign capital and the expertise that was needed for economic growth. Once in the country, these investments were governed according to the Foreign Investment Protection Act of 1964 and all other relevant laws. He also asserted that the Government only welcomed companies that had "the right attitude" and could "appreciate the economic aspirations of the people and contribute to the realisation of these aspirations."[133] In addition, these companies were expected to embrace all that pertained to the Government's policy of Africanisation, which entailed the placement of Africans in upper level positions of management. The article then went on to report that the City of London was expected to record one of its heaviest polls and turnouts at Lonrho's annual meeting when shareholders were expected to vote on whether or not Rowland would stay on as chief executive. After Rowland emerged victorious, the *EAS* celebrated with the triumphant front page story "Shareholders vote for Mr. Rowland."[134] With his victory in hand, Rowland wished to refocus his energies on running the company and after one last front page report, "Lonrho now seeks peace and quiet," the newspaper laid the matter to rest.[135]

Peace prevailed until mid-February 1974 when the *EAS* had to deal with another controversy regarding its holding company. Trouble commenced when Idi Amin launched an attack against the Organisation of African Unity's (OAU) Secretary General, Nzo Ekangaki, for

[133] *EAS*, "Lonrho 'not matter for Government'," no. 18366, Thursday 31 May 1973, p. 1.
[134] *EAS*, "Shareholders vote for Mr. Rowland," no. 18367, Friday 1 June 1973, p. 1.
[135] *EAS*, "Lonrho now seeks peace and quiet," no. 18369, Monday 4 June 1973, p. 1.

having signed an oil consultancy agreement on its behalf with Lonrho.[136] Amin protested that Ekangaki's action, which he argued gave Lonrho the sole rights to act as oil agents between African and Arab countries, lacked an OAU mandate. Amin accused Lonrho of having its roots in Southern Africa where it was providing racist minority regimes with arms and argued, therefore, that the agreement was "regrettable and unfortunate." He demanded that Ekangaki cancel the agreement immediately as failure to do so would mean that the matter would be put up for serious debate at the next OAU summit. The newspaper published the report on its front page, but dedicated about half of the article to Udi Gecaga's response in which he stated that Lonrho had been "invited" to work as the OAU's consultants during ongoing negotiations between African and Arab countries, that Lonrho had several offices and specialists in both Africa and the Middle East who would be "available on request" to provide their expertise to the OAU and its member states, and that Lonrho was neither "an imperialist company" nor did it provide military support to Southern Africa's oppressive regimes. He also thought it important to emphasise once again that Lonrho was a public company registered in the United Kingdom.[137]

The following week, the *EAS* published a prominent front page story with a leader reporting Vice-President Moi's criticism of the OAU for having usurped the authority of sovereign states by signing the consultancy agreement with Lonrho, arguing that it ought to have referred to the organisations' Heads of State and Government arm before acting definitively on the matter. The report also referred to MP Martin Shikuku's condemnation of the deal. The MP had pointed out that African countries could not have links with entities that maintained ties with Southern Africa's racist regimes while demanding that other countries honour their demands for sanctions against those very regimes. He went on to add that a country such as Kenya,"who

[136] Cronje et al., *The Lonrho Connections*, pp. 194 – 219.
[137] *EAS*, "Uganda condemns O.A.U. head's oil deal with Lonrho, no. 18587, Friday 15 February 1974, p. 1.

never got their independence on a silver platter," ought not to tolerate such an agreement and that if investigations revealed that Ekangaki had acted on his own accord he ought to be condemned by all nationalists on the continent. In between these protests, the newspaper dedicated a few paragraphs to a rehash of Gecaga's response to Amin the previous week.[138] It also carried an editorial, "Best Possible Prices," that addressed the issue indirectly. The editorial focused on ongoing conference talks between Africa's oil consuming and oil producing countries in Libya. One of the main recommendations of the conference that was to be forwarded to the OAU summit scheduled for the end of February was the provision of oil to African countries at the "best possible prices." The newspaper argued that this was nothing more than empty political rhetoric from oil producing countries which would achieve nothing for Kenyans who wanted basic facts and figures and to know how future costs of oil were going to affect the prices of essential commodities. It also criticised a recommendation that called for the planning for construction of more oil refineries in conjunction with the Arab League and the two associations of oil-producing countries. The *EAS* pondered what the Arab League, a political organisation, could contribute to the effort and dismissed the recommendation as yet more politicking at the expense of genuine result-focused consultations, complaining that "it would appear to be impossible nowadays to do anything without the spectre of political self-interest raising its head."[139] There was no mention of Lonrho, but if the impression the editorial was meant to create was that a 'politically disinterested' entity was needed to take over negotiations, then the newspaper had attempted to do this without making any direct attacks at specific African politicians or governments.

[138] *EAS*, "O.A.U. action 'out with its mandate'," no. 18589, Monday 18 February 1974, p. 1.
[139] *EAS*, "Best possible prices," no. 18589, Monday 18 February 1974, p. 4.

The next day, another front page report started with a leader announcing that Lonrho had confirmed that it had signed a deal with the OAU and had therefore become "O.A.U. adviser on oil affairs particularly with regard to relations with Arab countries." This statement gives the impression that Lonrho considered the deal complete, binding and exclusive. It comprised one out of ten paragraphs of which the article was comprised. The other nine paragraphs featured condemnations of the deal from various leaders, including Tanzanian Foreign Ministry officials who were reported to have "expressed shock at news of the agreement." Nonetheless, the title of the article read, "Oil deal with O.A.U. confirmed."[140] However, when the Kenyan Government Foreign Affairs Minister, Njoroge Mungai, issued a statement in which he declared that the Lonrho-OAU deal was not yet binding as any agreement of this sort had to have the authority of the summit of the organisation's Heads of State and Government before it could be considered definitive. As such the *EAS* had to publish another report headlined "Lonrho Oil Deal 'not binding on O.A.U. States."[141] Next to it was a smaller report outlining Nzo Ekangaki's threat to resign from his post as Secretary General if he could not convince the body's Council of Ministers that he had acted in good faith when he negotiated and signed the deal. This report was the first time that explicitly referred to Lonrho's "big South African interests," probably because Ekangaki had made direct reference to this fact in his statement in which he also disclosed that he had acted under the authorisation of the OAU's Committee of Seven which was set up to handle its oil policies. The besieged Secretary General also stated that the deal appointed Lonrho to work with only those countries that wished to use its services and that he was already in communication with governments that wished to use the company's services.[142] Thus, both

[140] *EAS*, "Oil deal with O.A.U. confirmed," no. 18950, Tuesday 19 February 1974, p. 1.
[141] *EAS*, "Lonrho oil deal 'not binding on O.A.U. states'," no. 18591, Wednesday 20 February 1974, p. 1.
[142] *EAS*, "I'm ready to go, says leader," no. 18591, Wednesday 20 February 1974, p. 1. See also *EAS*, "Ghana 'has full confidence in Mr. Ekangaki'," no. 18592, Thursday 21 February 1974, p. 1.

statements made it clear that the role Lonrho envisaged for itself as a consequence of the oil deal, or communicated to the *EAS* or which the newspaper had chosen to communicate to readers whether or not the OAU was backtracking for political reasons, was much more modest.

Attached to this report was another from the newspaper's correspondent in London who wrote that the turn of events had surprised Lonrho which claimed letters on the agreement had been sent out to Heads of Government the month before the controversy erupted. As such "City sources" believed that the problem was not the deal and that "Lonrho is a scapegoat of a vendetta against the OAU secretary general. Those "City sources" asserted that Lonrho had but an honorary consultancy that was not exclusive and that the agreement was the member states were yet to endorse the agreement. Then demonstrating just how thoroughly African leaders were entangled with a company that discomfited many on the continent, Lonrho in defending itself revealed that it had seconded Aly Wally, the former Egyptian Miniser of Petroleum and then a Lonrho employee, as an adviser to the OAU delegation. Also, in another thinly veiled accusation of hypocrisy at those who had attacked the deal, it revealed that Aly Wall had introduced the Tanzanian Government to King Feisal of Saudi Arabia. The "City sources" were therefore, puzzled by the Tanzanian reaction to the deal.

At this point, the *EAS* moved to comment directly on the matter and it defended both Ekangaki and Lonrho as it attempted to do its bit in salvaging whatever was left of the deal by reiterating that it was neither exclusive nor had it been finalised. In its editorial, it tactfully joined the Kenyan Government with the two parties, which ensured that the newspaper presented itself as not just a parochial advocate for its holding company but also as one for the Kenyan Government:

> The allegations have been launched in unseemly terms against Mr. Ekangaki, Lonrho and in some respects, the Kenya Government. In light of realities what has happened is that a molehill has been turned into a mountain of distortion.
>
> The agreement as it stands requires Lonrho to establish direct contact with O.A.U. member states affected by the oil embargo, to advise, assist and undertake for them such tasks as may be determined by the State concerned. It is not even a monopoly agreement. It lays down that without prejudice to fair competition Lonrho might be appointed to act as contractors, managers, buyers or confirmers in respect of services, capital equipment, consumable stores and other goods or services.
>
> Those terms are quoted directly from the agreement. The operative phrases are "without prejudice to fair competition" and "might be appointed."[143]

Apparently, Njoroge Mungai, the Foreign Minister and therefore the aspect of the "Kenya Government" in question, needed defending because he had complained the night before that a newspaper had made attacks on him and his ministry that appeared to have been personal.

In its defense of Lonrho, the newspaper also alluded to its links with the company which it had steered clear of during the 1973 controversy:

> As far as Lonrho is concerned, and this newspaper is in a better position than any other to have the facts, it is the only international company of its size whose Chief Executive has gone on record publicly to say that: "Southern Africa will be Black Africa in ten to fifteen years from now. It is also the only international company with African executives at all levels of management.[144]

On this occasion, when the reputation of Lonrho and by extension all its enterprises were at stake now that the Government had not rallied explicitly in its defense and its highly problematic South African interests had been aired once again, perhaps the *EAS* considered an allusion to its relationship with the company worth the risk to its reputation in a bid to convince readers of its intimate belief and knowledge in Rowland's statement on South Africa. Udi Gecaga would repeat Rowland's statement on South Africa in another front page defense of Lonrho the

[143] *EAS*, "Much ado about nothing," no. 18591, Wednesday 20 February 1974, p. 4.
[144] Ibid.

following day in which he also pointed out that "for historical reasons" there were several multinational companies with South African links: Barclays Bank, National and Grindlays Bank, Standard Bank, British Leyland, Shell, Unilever, Coca-Cola, Firestone, British Airways and Old Mutual.[145] His message rang clear from *EAS*; Lonrho was a British multinational just like any other and it was in Kenya to stay, for even to contemplate expelling it implied the same for several prime British investors in the Kenyan economy. It was a clarion call to those in power for realism. Gecaga's position in Lonrho indicated that they already understood it quite well.

And so the *EAS* continued to promote Lonrho's cause in the days that followed. "Minister for Talks on O.A.U. Deal" was the heading of a brief article on the Tanzanian Foreign Affairs Minister's leadership of a team of officials to the organisation's Council of Ministers which would focus on the Lonrho-O.A.U. deal instead of the usual budgetary matters. The article revisited the Foreign Minister's criticism of the deal and ended with Ekangaki's defense of the same.[146] At the end of February an optimistic *EAS* reported, "O.A.U. Ministers Expected to Compromise Over Oil Deal," before announcing "Lonrho oil deal in force" in early March 1974 as it referred to comments made in the *Daily News*, a Tanzanian Government publication.[147] The publication had obtained a copy of the agreement which also stipulated that Lonrho open an office in Addis Ababa, the headquarters of the OAU, and that the organisations' members were to provide the company with diplomatic facilities to enable them to perform their duties. The *EAS* did not state whether or not the newspaper approved or disapproved of the deal, but the impression it made was that the former was the case. This was followed by "O.A.U. Council 'has not rejected Lonrho agreement'" two days later which headed an Agence France Presse article

[145] *EAS*, "Lonrho director gives background," no. 18592, Thursday 21 February 1974, p. 1.
[146] *EAS*, "Minister for talks on O.A.U. deal, no. 18597, Wednesday 27 February 1974, p. 1.
[147] *EAS*, "O.A.U. Ministers expected to compromise over oil deal," no. 18598, Thursday 28 February 1974, p. 6 and *EAS*, "Lonrho oil deal in force," no. 18600, Saturday 2 March 1974, p. 1.

that made it clear the Council of Ministers had not discussed the matter, let alone made a decision on it, as Ekangaki continued defending himself. It was he who asserted that the Council of Ministers had not rejected the agreement, something that could not happen since he had not even been given the opportunity to defend his actions. In fact, it is his words of defence that the *EAS* turned into a heading. At the same time, the report also carried commentary on an article in Nigeria's independent *Daily Times* that had told Africa to stop making "a laughing stock" of itself as Lonrho was "an imperialist organisation notorious for its close intimacy with Africa's arch-enemies, including Ian Smith's racist regime in Zimbabwe and John Vorster's apartheid republic of South Africa."[148] The *Daily Times* was reported to enjoy the support of Nigerian President, Gen. Yakubu Gowon, who was then chairman of the OAU. Finally on 16 May 1974, the newspaper informed readers that "O.A.U. Cancels Pact with Lonrho," based on a report from its London reporter.[149] It took care to detail the actual cancellation process which indicated that Lonrho had taken the first step by submitting a letter requesting an ending of the agreement which Ekangaki had accepted and responded to by handing over a letter acceding to the request to a company official in Addis Ababa.

The newspaper did have the opportunity to repair its image the following year when popular MP J. M. Kariuki was assassinated and the newspaper excelled in its accurate reporting of his disappearance and death, whereas its rival, the *Daily Nation*, floundered.[150] After the *EAS*, then renamed *The Standard (TS),* reported the MP's disappearance on 8 March 1975, it did not supply its readers with any new information on the case until 10 March 1975, when it reported "J. M. is 'not in Zambia'" in response to a report in the affirmative that the *Daily Nation* had

[148] *EAS*, "O.A.U. 'has not rejected Lonrho agreement'," no. 18601, Monday 4 March 1974, p. 2.
[149] *EAS*, "O.A.U. cancels pact with Lonrho," no. 18612, Saturday 16 May 1974, p. 1.
[150] For the *DN*'s coverage see chapter 7, pp. 560-563.

published the previous day.[151] It based its report on its "special correspondent in Lusaka" who reported that Zambian authorities had clearly stated that they had no knowledge of Kariuki's presence in their country. The correspondent had spoken to Zambia's Minister for Home Affairs, Aaron Milner, who stated his government's position after checking with all the hotels in Lusaka as well as airport and immigration officials. Once a herdsman found the politician's partially decomposed body with four bullet wounds under a tree at Nairobi's Ngong' Hills, and one of Kariuki's wives had positively identified it, the newspaper published a definitive "J. M. is Dead" headline story with an accompanying biographical piece as its rival dithered in its reporting of the finding.[152] To the public, the *Daily Nation* appeared to have been in the employ of some influential person who had used it to try to cover up an assassination while *The Standard* emerged as a beacon of veracity and a paragon of journalistic integrity. The former's coverage of the issue had enraged many and *The Standard* as a brand benefited from the outpouring of goodwill it enjoyed. It did not hesitate to capitalise on its good fortune.

On 15 March 1975 it gave front page space to a story on a University of Nairobi students' anti-*Daily Nation* demonstration. The students had burnt a coffin containing copies of the newspaper, and a *Standard* Reporter wrote that they had hailed *The Standard* and decried its rival as they carried posters which read "*Daily Nation* means daily confusion." Readers were also informed that they had also "passed a resolution not to buy the newspaper again."[153] On the same page, there was a specially bordered brief report, "Keeping up with the Huge Demand." Apparently, some of the newspapers' readers "old and new" had missed their copies of the daily the previous day. The paper promised them that "our machines were working flat out to keep up

[151] *EAS*, "J. M.'s family appeals for help," no. 18915, Saturday 8 March 1975, p. 1 and *EAS*, "J. M. is 'not in Zambia'," no. 18916, Monday 10 March 1975, p. 1.
[152] *TS*, "J. M. is dead," no. 18918, Wednesday 12 March 1975, p. 1.
[153] *TS*, "Students accuse editor," no. 18921, Saturday 15 March 1975, p. 1.

with the fantastic demand for Kenya's most accurate and up-to-date newspaper – and copies were still rolling off until 11.30 yesterday morning."[154] It was a financial windfall for the newspaper and as it enjoyed the wave of goodwill its handling of the matter afforded it, its management and writers must have been relieved at its new positive aura. After all, even on the day it reported the MP as missing, it had been compelled to use its front page to fend off another parliamentary attack on Lonrho, this time from a Nairobi MP, I. W. Waweru, who had linked the conglomerate to three companies that a Lonrho spokesman was reported to have denied any "direct interest" in.[155] The attack nevertheless, proved that Lonrho's image as an enterprise waging a predatory war of expansion against homegrown enterprise instead of that of a healthy foreign investor persisted.

The restive days and weeks after Kariuki's death were rife with rumours, innuendo, protests and Government charges of subversion that worried the paper even though it hesitated to comment on them. In May, for example, the newspaper gave prime coverage to meetings at which rumour mongers and others were denounced. The reports seemed to hint at intra-ethnic and inter-ethnic divisions while others hinted at the Government's unease with the public outcry that ensued after Kariuki's death. The newspaper reported that the powerful Minister of State, Mbiyu Koinange, assailed unidentified discontented people whom he claimed were trying to divide the Kikuyu. "If the Kikuyu people started fighting amongst themselves wouldn't other tribes take advantage of the situation?" the Minister had asked. He had also alluded to a Kiambu-Nyeri fissure amongst the Kikuyu and cautioned against its existence.[156] Then on 12 May, a GEMA (Gikuyu, Embu and Meru Association) meeting in Kiambu issued "The Kiambu Declaration" that asked those present to act as "policemen" and report those whom they heard

[154] *TS*, "Keeping up with the huge demand," no. 18921, Saturday 15 March 1975, p. 1.
[155] *TS*, "Lonrho denies claim by M.P.," no. 18915, Saturday 8 March 1975, p. 1.
[156] *TS*, "Minister hits at slanderers," no. 18964, Monday 5 May 1975, p. 1.

abusing the President, Government or were found circulating subversive literature to the Government. According to the newspaper's reporter most speakers at the meeting had issued condemnations against subversive elements and urged those present to endorse the meeting's resolution pledging loyalty to the President and his Government in addition to KANU and GEMA.[157] The following day, the newspaper headlined Kenyatta's attack on "voices from the wilderness" who were circulating subversive literature and working to destabilise the country.[158] Four days later, his Vice President, Daniel T. Moi, received coverage for a similar warning and then Kenyatta announced the arrest of some of those who "speak ill of the Government and propagate rumours."[159] The newspaper also carried a report on the Minister for Economic Planning, Mwai Kibaki, who hailed from Nyeri and had made a speech at a GEMA meeting in the district assailing those in positions of power and influence he accused of "abusing and belittling" the people of Nyeri.[160] There were several such reports of politicians in different parts of the country delivering heated speeches accusing and threatening unnamed dissenters which could only have served to heighten prevailing tensions.

Finally, on 26 May 1975, the newspaper probably concerned about the rising threat to stability, ventured to comment on the tense atmosphere that it had captured so diligently on its front pages. It had previously been quiet but its response then was indicative of the dismay with which it had observed the proceedings of the weeks past. It laid blame primarily on the doorstep of the country's leaders and institutions in a bold editorial titled "The Future of Our Country":

> From the spate of political meetings which have been the feature of the last few weeks, it has been difficult for the ordinary Kenyan, not the political Kenyan, to decide what is going on in his own land.

[157] *TS*, "The Kiambu Declaration," no. 18970, Monday 12 May 1975, p. 1.
[158] *TS*, "Mzee lashes idle talk, no. 18971, Tuesday 13 May 1975, p. 1 and 3.
[159] *TS*, "Moi gives out stern warning," no. 18975, Saturday 17 May 1975, p. 1 and 3 and *TS*, "Subversives in custody," no. 18980, Friday 23 May 1975, p. 1 and 7. Those arrested were not identified.
[160] *TS*, "Kibaki attacks those who belittle people," no. 18982, Monday 26 May 1975, p. 1.

> He listens to the Voice of Kenya and gets nothing that is worthy of the name of news. He is bombarded by propaganda. He listens to the Voice of Uganda or Radio Tanzania and hears something totally different. Just what is he to believe?
>
> From his newspaper, sometimes, he reads that an M. P. has criticised the Government for not doing enough or that a series of Ministers have condemned rumour-mongering and that some citizens are not as good as others. What does he think?[161]

Even Kenyatta, "Father of the Nation," came under examination alongside that of other leaders:

> President, Father of the Nation, has to spell out to people that they are all part of one country – but also has to tell the same people into which categories they fall – then something is wrong.
>
> Political rallies are not the answer to the problems the country faces. It is no good preaching to the people. Unless they believe what is said, unless they really mean it when they cheer, such exercises are without meaning.
>
> What should be asked is simple. Have the people received the fruits of independence? Have they tasted the pleasures which are known to the few? Are they content that the leaders of the country are doing their best for all?[162]

It went on to maintain that Kenya was one of the "finest countries in the world" and that the ills that harmed it including corruption and a resistance to changing "social structures" needed to be eradicated so that more of its citizens could benefit. It was a country with fine politicians but these coexisted with mediocre, parochial politicians who worked against the common interest. The editorial was bold, firm in its tone and absolute in its condemnation of the country's leaders for what it evidently considered noxious politicking and dereliction of duty.

The following day, notwithstanding its ties to Gecaga, the evidence of the limits of the Government's tolerance for criticism was on its front page. In a prominently displayed "Apology" the newspaper ceded as much ground as it could to mollify those who had taken offense at its editorial and had obviously been in touch with the newspaper. It apologised to the President for "inferences" drawn from the editorial and conveyed its regret for the embarrassment that may have resulted. It tactfully communicated its support for Government

[161] *TS*, "The future of our country," no. 18982, Monday 26 May 1975, p. 4.
[162] Ibid.

rallies but with the specification that those it supported were those geared towards expounding Government policies to aid development. However, it did clearly make a U-turn on certain issues, registering then that it indeed recognised that the Government had done much to improve the lives of Kenyans and that the Voice of Kenya had contributed greatly to the country's progress by "keeping the people fully and accurately informed" as it "played its role with diligence and objectivity" adding that it regretted any suggestion that it had performed otherwise. The apology was patently an act of self-preservation. The newspaper had tasted the embrace of popular appeal in May and its attempt to continue riding on that wave had met with a firm rap from the Government. Nevertheless, it did try to continue appealing to some of those whose readership it had gained with its new found reputation as a principled media organ by taking a stand on potentially volatile issues as it responded to the Government actions with caution. After all, selling newspapers was Consolidated Holdings' key enterprise.

Two examples based on key events after the apology demonstrate the paper's efforts to reposition itself editorially. First, following a University of Nairobi riot, the newspaper maintained its silence as the university was shut down and 94 students were arrested then remanded after being charged with rioting following a proclamation to disperse, which carried a stiff penalty.[163] The President eventually pardoned them a few days later and the newspaper praised his action while it also called on the relevant authorities to enable the students to revive "responsible representation" in the form of a student's organisation that would encourage a more structured and less disruptive organ for communication.[164] Then in October, several parliamentarians led by the Vice-President staged a walkout from the chambers to protest against remarks the Deputy Speaker Jean Marie Seroney and MP Martin Shikuku made in the course of

[163] *TS*, "Court remands 94 students," no. 18984, Wednesday 28 May 1975, p. 1 and 2.
[164] *TS*, "Hats off, Mzee!" no. 18986, Friday 30 May 1975, p. 8.

a debate. Shikuku had declared "KANU is dead" and when a fellow parliamentarian demanded that he substantiate his assertion, the Deputy Speaker retorted "that is obvious" and as such substantiation was unnecessary.[165] In reaction to these events, the newspaper used the eve of the first anniversary of Kenya's Third Parliament to comment on the state of affairs within KANU. It began by restating its support for the one party system, calling all KANU MPs "poppets" that needed to be strong to keep the vessel that was Kenya steady. It did not issue a direct attack on Shikuku's remarks, only calling them a "deliberate, tactical irritation." The newspaper maintained that the party was "very much alive and kicking" while at the same time asserting that those who thought that it was weak as an organisation would be more useful if they engaged in constructive criticism and participated "constructively in the party's long overdue revitalisation." It then went on to defend the existence of an unofficial opposition within KANU, returning to its post-independence assertion that its existence negated an official opposition, thus "unless such a self-appointed 'opposition' deliberately vitiates the functional role of Parliament it cannot be justifiably gagged."[166]

The Standard had chosen to defend Shikuku and Seroney but did so by ensconcing its defense in a rather ambiguous assessment of the party's *status quo*. After it reported that officials at the party's headquarters had released a statement from its Tinderet branch in Seroney's Nandi District suspending him from the party in a move that could only have been instigated by those in its higher echelons, it termed the conduct of the two a failed exercise in brinkmanship.[167] It was also of the opinion that the pro-Government walkout was another brinkmanship failure as some party members had baulked at the move and actually defended Seroney and Shikuku. By

[165] *TS*, "'Kanu' remark sparks House walk-out," no. 19100, Friday 10 October 1975, p. 1 and 3 and *TS*, "House adjourns in 'protest' over ruling," no. 19101, Saturday 11 October 1975, p. 1.
[166] *TS*, "Kanu poppets must be firm," no. 19102, Monday 13 October 1975, p.4.
[167] *TS*, "Seroney banned by Kanu branch," no. 19104, Wednesday 15 October 1975, p. 1.

making this assertion, the newspaper was making a critique of the Vice-President himself as he had led the walkout. Nevertheless, it still couched its criticism in extravagant praise for the country, calling it "one of the few surviving democracies on the continent" and adding that it had "naturally become a subject of global envy."[168] This declaration was in spite of all evidence to the contrary reported on its very own pages; evidence of an increasingly powerful, exclusive and intolerant government. However, once Seroney and Shikuku were arrested and detained just three days after KPU's Achieng' Oneko was released from a six year detention spell, the newspaper was silent on their fate. KANU called a Parliamentary Group meeting with an undisclosed agenda and the newspaper pulled back from some of its less than flattering assessments of the party, adding that "Kenyatta has always been renowned for his no-nonsense, effective management of the party" and that he had done so efficiently and successfully indeed.[169]

Nevertheless, there were those who were already thinking about Kenya's leadership in a post-Kenyatta era including those managing *The Standard*. Kenyatta was quite advanced in age and was rumoured to be ill. In a country where those in power did not tolerate policy and ideological differences and had worked ruthlessly to emulsify the political scene, patronage had ascended to great heights as the weapon of attack and defense for the only interests that continued to exist in an even more pungent form: personal advantage and the extent to which alliances with others could advance them. With the demise of Kenyatta an ever more real possibility, one faction gained notoriety in 1976 by attempting to preempt the atrophy of its power in the event of his absence.[170]

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[168] *TS*, "On a brink that leads to nowhere," no. 19104, Wednesday 15 October 1975, p. 6.
[169] *TS*, "Vital issues for 'routine' meeting," no. 19105, Thursday 16 October 1975, p.4.
[170] For more on Kenya's system of political patronage during this era refer to B. A. Ogot and W. R. Ochieng', *Decolonization and Independence in Kenya: 1940 – 93.* London: James Currey, 1995, p. 203 and Joseph Karimi and

In late September that year, a group of MPs including three cabinet ministers endorsed the MP for Nakuru North Kihika Kimani's call for the amendment of Kenya's constitution to eliminate the section that made it possible for the Vice-President to ascend to the office of President for a period of 90 days in the event of the sudden vacation or death of the incumbent. The ministers who endorsed his demand were: the Minister for Lands and Settlement Jackson Angaine, the Minister for Defence James Gichuru, and the Minister for Co-operative Development Paul Ngei. Kimani claimed the demand was his "personal idea" and expressed it at a public rally in Nakuru. *The Standard* reported it under a bold headline "Change Kenya Constitution" in an unusually large font size.[171] When Kihika repeated his call the following month, the newspaper gave it front page coverage and published a supportive column on its editorial page by a pen-named contributor who quoted the leaders of the Change-the-Constitution group at length, including Kimani, calling the succession clause "most undemocratic" and Ngei declaring that it was dangerous to leave power in the hands of an acting President for 90 days. According to him, if the Vice-President turned out to be unscrupulous he could "really teach you a lesson" in the transition period before the elections.[172] After Attorney General Charles Njonjo issued a stern statement warning that it was "a criminal offence for any person to compass, imagine, devise or intend the death or the deposition of the President" with the intention of quashing the debate, the newspaper was taken aback and published it without comment.[173] However, the next day it had recovered, perhaps confident in the power and influence of those

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Philip Ochieng', *The Kenyatta Succession*. Nairobi: Transafrica, 1980, pp. 8 – 10. Both books also have studies of the group that was pushing for the constitutional change on pp.100 - 106 and pp.3 - 51 respectively.

[171] *TS*, "Change Kenya Constitution," no. 19399, Monday 27 September 1976, p. 1. For another study of the press during this time and the period immediately after the 1978 transition, see Karimi and Ochieng', *Kenyatta Succession*, pp. 39 – 51.

[172] *TS*, " 'Change the constitution'," demand is voiced again," no.19405, Monday 4 October 1976, p. 1 and same issue, "Who knows where the sun shines best," p. 4.

[173] *TS*, " 'Meddlers' face death penalty," no. 19408, Thursday 7 October 1976, p. 1.

backing Kimani's call as well as bolstered by the sense of urgency over what was at stake in the long-term.

A headline, "M.P.s Defy That Njonjo Ruling," informed as much as it almost commanded. Beneath it, leaders of the Change-the-Constitution group deplored implications of disloyalty inherent in the Attorney General's statement and reaffirmed their loyalty to the President, Government and KANU, while a special front page commentary attempted to divert Njonjo's warning from its target. Instead of Kihika and his clique, the newspaper praised Njonjo for his ruling and claimed that it was a most appropriate warning to foreign media, their local lackeys and "elusive pamphleteers" who had been distributing seditious literature. Despite this, the commentary, "Power, Politicians and the People," thought it important to defend the Change-the-Constitution group, arguing that they were "well known freedom fighters" who were "undoubtedly loyal supporters" of the political order, "long established politicians" who had participated in Kenya's constitutional conferences in the early sixties and its amendments in the years that followed and by implication could be trusted to amend it again appropriately. They were correct in presenting their arguments to the people in a public forum as in accordance with "democratic principles" the people were best placed to be the final arbiters of conflicts between politicians.[174]

After further contemplation over Njonjo's statement, the newspaper published yet another front page commentary the following day calling it "The Big Bluff."[175] This time, it admitted that the statement was geared towards the Change-the-Constitution group but attempted to denigrate it by claiming it was Njonjo's personal opinion and that it had no legal basis. Another report on the same page claimed that the over 90 MPs who had signed a document in the

[174] *TS*, "M.P.s defy that Njonjo ruling" and "Power, politicians and the people," no. 19409, Friday 8 October 1976, p. 1.
[175] *TS*, "The big bluff," no. 19410, Saturday 9 October 1976, p. 1.

possession of the Minister for Natural Resources Stanley Oloitiptip that denounced the latest effort to amend the constitution had been misled as they had thought they were signing a loyalty pledge. It alleged that as a result 40 parliamentarians had since retracted their support for the document.[176] Next to this article, journalist Arnold Raphael filed a report from London that claimed observers were following the constitution debate with great interest and it had earned the name "Great Kenya Debate" in "informed circles."[177] Apparently, the feeling in London, that great home of parliamentary politics and thus best placed to make the most prescient assessments of these matters, was that the debate would continue with gusto and climax in the relevant constitutional amendments before the end of the year. Notwithstanding 'London's' opinion, the debate was dealt a blow the next week when Kenyatta chaired a cabinet meeting that restated Njonjo's warning which it headlined with no comment. [178] The debate petered out and its champions along with *The Standard* withdrew from this frontline.

The announcement of Kenyatta's death on 22 August 1978 ushered in a period of lavish praise in the pages of *The Standard* that went on until his funeral at the end of that month. The impression it created was that he was so faultless, so brimming with sagacity and benevolence as to be almost divine in constitution. It devoted several pages to glowing biographical columns on Kenyatta; Kenyatta the young man, Kenyatta the freedom fighter, Kenyatta the liberator, Kenyatta the president, Kenyatta the African statesman, Kenyatta the country's "number one farmer," and so on, but there was no attempt to analyse his presidency with balance and rigour.[179] The paper praised him for calling on Kenyans to put the oppression of the colonial era

[176] *TS*, "40 M.P.s quit the 'other faction'," no. 19410, Saturday 9 October 1976, p. 1.
[177] *TS*, "London is watching," no. 19410, Saturday 9 October 1976, p. 1.
[178] *TS*, "Cabinet repeats Njonjo warnings," no. 19412, Tuesday 12 October 1976, p. 1. For editorial see same issue p. 4, "We've heard it all before…;" a response to calls by extreme right-wing MP Enoch Powell for the repatriation of modern Britain's immigrant races.
[179] *TS*, "He led the way back to the land," no. 19998, Saturday 2 September 1978, p. 4.

behind them so that they could forge ahead on a new course after independence. He was a "born leader of men" who loved those he ruled over and in return inspired "the love, loyalty and confidence of all his people." He had taught Kenyans to "love one another and that we should live in peace and harmony" and "laid down a solid and unshakeable foundation" upon which Kenyans could build promising futures for generations to come.[180] He was "indeed God's gift to Kenya" and "a leader unto light and life."[181] On Independence Day, his successor Daniel T. Moi, announced that he had set free some of those who had been away from that light, political detainees one of whom, Wasonga Sijeyo a former KPU MP, had been in detention since 1969.[182]

The Standard stays on course after another political transition; same car, different driver

Given *The Standard's* fervent support for the Change-the-Constitution Group of 1976, the accession of Daniel T. Moi to the presidency was a delicate affair for the newspaper and it went to great lengths to signal its realignment to the new order to ensure its interests survived and continued to thrive under Moi. There were hagiographic columns on him and now the paper extolled him as a veteran politician who had exhibited "firmness and moderation in public life."[183] He was religious, had shown great interest in the youth, believed in democratic government and could be relied on to uphold the country's constitution.[184] It headlined news of various politicians who in the days and weeks after Kenyatta's funeral, declared their support for the new President including, most notably, Kihika Kimani, James Gichuru, as well as his fellow cabinet ministers, and GEMA as a group.[185] *TS* also supported Moi's sole candidacy for KANU

[180] *TS*, "A nation in mourning," no. 19989, Wednesday 23 August 1978, p. 4 and *TS*, "Let us build on his foundation," no. 19990, Thursday 24 August 1978, p. 4.
[181] *TS*, "Let us build on his foundation," and "A leader unto light and life," no.19990, Thursday 24 August 1978, p. 4.
[182] *TS*, "Detainees are set free," no. 20085, Wednesday 13 December 1978, p. 1.
[183] *TS*, "H. E. The Hon. Daniel arap Moi," no. 19990, Thursday 24 August 1978, p. 5.
[184] *TS*, "Long experience will make his task easy," no. 19991, Friday 25 August 1978, p. 5.
[185] *TS*, "Koinange, Mungai back Moi," no. 20000, Tuesday 5 September 1978, p.1 and *TS*, "GEMA, Women say: it's Moi," no. 20002, Thursday 7 September 1978, p. 1.

leadership and for President. It argued that Kenyans wanted a smooth transition and that they saw in Moi "the torch-bearer of the late President Kenyatta's splendid ideals" and were eager to support him in his "gigantic tasks of maintaining national unity, safeguarding our hard-won Uhuru, for whose procurement Mzee suffered so much and for so long," as he "maintained the tempo of stability and development which the country enjoys."[186] And so the newspaper lavished him with praise in articles and editorials. For example, one editorial on KANU demonstrations of loyalty to the President, "Hats off to Moi," was further sub-titled "Setting the Pace" and "No-nonsense leader."[187]

Once Moi was elected unopposed as Head of State, the newspaper published a full page portrait of the President on its front page titled "Kenya's leader." Above it, a prominent note cautioned readers against missing their bumper, colour edition commemorating the event.[188] Inside, one of the editorial's highlighted paragraphs read:

> And luckily for all Wananchi [citizens], Mzee's worthy successor in that exalted dual role, as the Republic's and the ruling party's President, His Excellency Daniel arap Moi, is fully pledged and dedicated to the same noble task of championing and defending our national unity and integrity in eternal freedom as a liberated people.[189]

Commenting on the swearing in ceremonies of the President and his Vice-President the following Monday, *The Standard* even thought it important to remind its readers that it had predicted the reaction the leaders would receive from those in attendance:

> And, as this newspaper had said editorially the same day, the colourful proceedings at Uhuru Park were punctuated with thunderous roars of applause. Both President Moi and his Vice-President, Mr. Mwai Kibaki, were especially honoured with prolonged roars of applause after they were sworn in by the Chief Justice.[190]

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[186] *TS*, "Closing ranks behind Moi," no. 20005, Monday 11 September 1978, p. 4.
[187] *TS*, "Hats off to Moi," no. 20010, Saturday 16 September 1978, p. 4.
[188] *TS*, "Kenya's Leader, no. 20034, Saturday 14 October 1978, p. 1.
[189] *TS*, "We all salute the President," no. 20034, Saturday 14 October 1978, p. 4.
[190] *TS*, "Forward into Moi era," no. 20035, Monday 16 October 1978, p. 1.

The newspaper was thus unequivocal in declaring its support for Moi and it went as far as turning on the dregs who had dithered in announcing their support for the President.

On the occasion of the first Kenyatta Day over which Moi presided as President the newspaper railed against vague, unnamed politicians and individuals whose ethnic prejudices and parochial interests created pernicious social fissures. It warned them that their activities would not be tolerated. The editorial was curiously titled "Forgive those who trespass against us" and reminded readers that Kenyatta had called on Kenyans to forgive their colonial oppressors despite the hardships they had imposed on them.[191] Was it a message to the incumbent President, whom the Change-the-Consititution Group, with *The Standard* egging them on, had humiliated and threatened with political demotion during his term as Vice-President? Whatever the case, the newspaper repeated the same message the day after Kenyatta Day as it also reported on the celebrations which were "climaxed by President Moi's magnanimity and well thought-out directives."[192] Nonetheless, the newspaper's *volte face* did not escape comment and on 27 October 1978 *The Standard* published a story detailing Attoney General Charles Njonjo's disclosure to Parliament the previous day that certain individuals had set up a militia force known as *Ngorokos* to assassinate key leaders, including him during the transition period.[193] He asserted that had he not worked to ensure that the country's constitution was followed after the death of Kenyatta, Kenya would have fallen to military rule.[194] The following day, in an editorial titled "Bravo, Njonjo!" the newspaper disclosed that while it had busied itself reporting a critical story of great importance to national security, "another newspaper preferred to tell its readers

[191] *TS*, "Forgive those who trespass against us," no. 20039, Friday 20 October 1978, p. 4.
[192] *TS*, "Kenyans rally behind Moi," no. 20040, Saturday 21 October 1978, p. 4.
[193] For more on the ngorokos and Njonjo's reaction to contemporaneous events see, Karimi and Ochieng', *Kenyatta Succession*, pp. 47 – 51 and pp. 109 – 126.
[194] *TS*, "Assasination bid on top leaders," no. 20045, Friday 27 October 1978, p. 1 and 2.

how Mr. Njonjo had 'hit at 'The Standard'," before curiously adding words of congratulations to the Attorney General. Njonjo had called out the newspaper for its behaviour in the past and it knew better than to be belligerent in its response as this would have undone all that it had published to realign itself with the new political dispensation. It thus responded to *DN's* taunts with words of contrition in the most assertive tone it could dare, insisting that "of course, the more the Attorney-General 'blasts' any local newspaper, Member of Parliament, civil servant or any other individual or organisation, the more does he infuse them all the need to mend their ways and fences."[195] *The Standard* was a newspaper on a monumental exercise to remake its image and this involved withholding punches it was obviously itching to unleash on its adversaries.

Njonjo was not the only one with a bone to pick with *The Standard.* A year later, Odinga along with a group of former KPU MPs enjoined the newspaper along with the KANU Secretary General in a lawsuit for reasons the newspaper found difficult to disclose. Once again, its readers only got a whiff of the situation on 11 October 1979 when the newspaper reported that Oginga Odinga and three other individuals who had filed a lawsuit against Robert Matano, the KANU Secretary-General, and Henry Gathigira, the Editor-in-Chief of *The Standard*, had dropped it six days after the newspaper reported that KANU had banned him and five other former KPU politicians from contesting parliamentary and civic elections scheduled for November that year.[196] A note at the end of the report vindictively informed readers that "a number of newspapers last week widely publicised the news of the intended civil suit, citing Mr. Robert S. Matano, 'The Standard's' Editor-in-Chief, Mr. Henry Gathigira, and the publishers of the

[195] *TS*, "Bravo, Njonjo!," no. 20046, Saturday 28 October 1978, p. 4.
[196] *TS*, "Oginga Odinga is barred," no. 20336, Friday 5 October 1979, p. 1 and 3 and *TS*, "Odinga drops law suit," no. 20431, Thursday 11 October 1979, p. 1. Odinga and his colleagues had argued that the report was presented in a way that impugned their character.

newspaper."[197] The newspaper had not thought it important to inform its readers about the lawsuit and those who did it viewed as celebrants of their moment of tribulation. As a publication, it withheld its comment on the matter of the politicians' ban even after they had dropped the lawsuit. After the elections, Moi appointed Odinga the Chair of the Cotton Lint and Seed Marketing Board, supposedly to give him an opportunity to prove himself regarding the remarks others had made against him, and the newspaper praised the President for his act of conciliation, which it considered an important contribution to national unity. [198]

Less than two years later Odinga was in political trouble once again and his trials and tribulations gave the *The Standard* an opportunity to show just how ardent it was in its support for the President. In March 1981 a small article on the third page of the newspaper announced that the M.P. for Bondo, Jonah Ougo, had resigned from his parliamentary seat in favour of Odinga, who had been holding it at the time of his detention in 1969.[199] It looked like Odinga would soon return to Parliament. However, this was not to be. Shortly after, Odinga made a speech at a college fundraising meeting in which he explained that he and Kenyatta had collided politically because the former President was grabbing land.[200] In addition, *The Standard* also reported that Odinga claimed that when Moi appointed him to his post he called him *"baba,"* saying "come *baba*, join me and let us work together for this country."[201] Odinga probably made the statement as he simplified a conversation he had with the President for a specific audience that he expected to understand the colloquial use of the term "baba" as a sign of respect by a younger person to an elder, regardless of the latter's status. Moi's response when it came was a

[197] *TS*, "Odinga drops law suit," no. 20431, Thursday 11 October 1979, p. 1.
[198] *TS*, "Odinga hails the President," no. 20384, Friday 30 November 1979, p. 1. See same edition "National unity consolidated," p. 4. See also *TS*, "Odinga 'must toe the line'," no. 20385, Saturday 1 December 1979, p. 1.
[199] *TS*, "MP quits seat for Odinga," no. 20790, Wednesday 25 March 1981, p.3.
[200] For DN coverage of this incident see chapter 7, pp. 556-558
[201] *TS*, "Odinga told to shut up!" no. 20800, Monday 6 April 1981, p. 24.

most apt description of his political philosophy and mode of Government; anyone who thought the former President's Government was evil could not appreciate his own "let alone fit in it." In addition, he firmly denied having addressed the former Vice-President as *baba,* asserting that the only person he ever addressed in that manner was Kenyatta. *The Standard* further dramatised his response with a headline shouting "Odinga Told to Shut Up."[202] The newspaper railed at Odinga for having spoken ill of a dead person instead of having done so when he was alive (and which would have probably earned him retaliatory action of the physically confining sort anyway). It claimed that Odinga lost his post as Vice-President not because he had clashed with Kenyatta on the question of land grabbing but because he was overly ambitious for power and had plans to usurp it. On the issue of "baba" the newspaper explained that while it was the Swahili word for father, in politics it referred to the Head of State with the saccharine addition that "every man, woman and child – refers to our Head of State as *Baba*, the father figure" out of "love, conviction and respect, not out of expediency." It thus did not make sense for the Head of State to refer to another as *baba* in the political context. The newspaper accused Odinga of having invented a dialogue with the President even as it did so itself, complete with salutations, in an editorial that was as ridiculous as it was vulgar.[203]

That April, *The Standard* dedicated a couple more headlines to Odinga's tribulations in addition to other smaller articles.[204] There were also those that were indicative of the siege mentality the party went into at every political crisis. "Pledge to crush anti-Nyayo Elements" reported on the President's visit to South Nyanza where the region's MPs assured him of their

[202] Ibid., p.1.
[203] *TS,* "Odinga's big blunder…," no. 20802, Wednesday 8 April 1981, p. 4.
[204] *TS*, "Odinga is warned," no. 20803, Thursday 9 April, 1981, p. 1; *TS,* "Odinga not cleared," no. 20806, Monday 13 April 1981, p. 1; *TS*, "Odinga told to apologise," no. 20807, Tuesday 14 April 1981, p. 1; *TS*, "Odinga has not apologised," no. 20808, Wednesday 15 April 1981, p. 1; *TS*, "Sorry, KANU tells Odinga!" no. 20810, Friday 17 April 1981, p. 1; *TS,* "Form party, critics told," no. 20812, Monday 20 April 1981, p. 1; *TS*, "Gichuru speaks out," no. 20813, Tuesday 21 April 1981, p. 1.

loyalty and promised to smother dissenters. Bondo is located in South Nyanza and KANU leaders undoubtedly thought it important to distance themselves from Odinga and reiterate their support for the President to ensure that Odinga's political problems did not engulf them too.[205] In "Purges on the Way!" the newspaper gleefully reported that the President was on a mission to eradicate all "anti-Nyayo" elements from the party for the sake of the country's security and stability.[206] After reporting the President's mission and that the Minister of State in the Office of the President, Nicholas Biwott, had announced Odinga was now barred from contesting the Bondo parliamentary seat for not upholding a tenet of Nyayo Philosophy, that is, forgetting the past, the newspaper penned an editorial celebrating the removal of "the cancer in our midst." Using a lot of imagery the newspaper implied that Odinga had never changed and had simply camouflaged his true self to disrupt the lives of Kenyans. Such people could not be tolerated. He was a cancer that had to be removed and "one does not remove a cancer by applying deodorant. It calls for a more fundamental surgical job." It asserted that Moi was "a popular and powerful leader who has the full support and respect of the entire Kenya nation to lead us."[207] Consequently, whatever methods he used to achieve the object of his mission would meet with their support. During Odinga's political crisis, *The Standard's* rival took a more conciliatory approach towards Odinga, which earned them a severe rebuke from the Government. Not surprisingly, *The Standard* published it on their front page under the heading "Nation is warned

[205] *TS*, "Pledge to crush anti-nyayo," no. 20804, Friday 10 April 1981, p. 1. *Nyayo* is the Swahili word for footprint or footstep. On becoming president, Moi had pledged to follow the footsteps of his predecessor in a bid to ease his political transition and calm those who were anxious about his accession to power. He also developed a Nyayo Philosophy that revolved around three principles: Peace, Love and Unity. Those who opposed him were being accused of opposing his philosophy too and therefore of being anti-Nyayo.
[206] *TS*, "Purges on the way!" no. 20815, Thursday 23 April 1981, p. 1
[207] *TS*, "Why Odinga was barred," no. 20816, Friday 24 April 1981, p. 1. See editorial, same issue, "The cancer in our midst," p. 4.

by the State" before proceeding to quote the Government's condemnation of the newspaper's conduct extensively.[208]

The following year, Odinga's political activities and the resulting tensions gave the newspaper yet another opportunity to demonstrate its pledged loyalty to the ruling regime. On 19 May 1982 *The Standard* published a headline story in which the Minister for Livestock Development Paul Ngei attacked Oginga Odinga following reports that the latter had announced plans to establish an opposition party in Britain. He insisted that Kenyans were happy with their Government and that Odinga should not have made the announcement in Britain to begin with as it was the home of Kenya's former colonial masters.[209] When Odinga responded the following day denying that he had any such intentions, his response was located on the third page.[210] Despite his denials, KANU expelled Odinga from the party, which resulted in another headlined report and, for the first time, comment from the newspaper. The report detailed Moi's attack on the former Vice-President, arguing that he had tried to rehabilitate the politician but that the latter had not been appreciative of the President's efforts. "Who is Odinga to attack my Government and Cabinet Ministers?" thundered Moi, "he is not the President of this country." [211] Moi insisted that Odinga's statements in London meant that he had forfeited his membership of the ruling party and urged those who had similar views to join him in exiting the party. The newspaper supported Moi's reaction and below its editorials, printed an extensive report by South African journalist Colin Legum on Odinga's speech in London to the British Labour Party's Africa Committee and his interaction with the Socialist International, presumably to discuss a possible

[208] *TS*, "'Nation' is warned by State," no. 20812, Monday 20 April 1981, p. 1.
[209] *TS*, "Ngei hits out at Odinga," no. 21148,Wednesday 19 May 1982, p. 1.
[210] *TS*, "Now Odinga hits out at 'payukaring' leaders," no. 21149 , Thursday 20 May 1982, p. 3.
[211] *TS*, "Odinga out of KANU," no. 21149, Friday 21 May 1982, p. 1 and p. 28.

affiliation of his proposed Kenya Socialist Party.[212] Legum's report stated that although Odinga had been given the opportunity to present his ideas to the Labour Party's Africa Committee, he had failed in his efforts to get them to support his initiative. If this was the case, it may explain Odinga's decision to distance himself from his remarks to the committee in London. Nevertheless, the deed had been done; his fate was sealed and he was expelled from KANU along with George Anyona, a former MP whose reasons for expulsion the newspaper did not elaborate.

At the same time, KANU now moved to make its position as the country's sole political party legal by amending the constitution to make it official and thereby illegal for one to form an opposition party.[213] In response, *The Standard* published a convoluted defense of Kenya's single party "democracy," arguing that while totalitarianism was to be frowned on the same was not the case with authoritarianism. The latter was only harmful when combined with the former as it meant "all individuals are atomised and associations pulverised." In contrast, a democratic authoritarian system had individualism at its roots which culminated in autonomous associations. The newspaper went on to argue that authoritarianism was "a necessary ingredient of political power" as it enabled a government to enforce the public compliance necessary for the benefit of all.[214] Besides, argued the newspaper, a country that was governed according to a single set of ideas was not democratic and Kenya was not one of these. In Kenya, there were several competing centres of power for example: the judiciary, business clubs, chambers of commerce, farmers' union, religious organisations, the political party and peoples of different ethnicities who competed for power and provided the same pluralism found in a multi-party system. This defense came from a publication that had just defended the expulsion of an individual who had

[212] *TS*, "Odinga's exit from KANU" and "Odinga's plan to form new party," no. 21149, Friday 21 May 1982, p. 4.
[213] *TS*, "Odinga, Anyona out," no. 21155, Thursday 27 May 1982, p. 1 and 24.
[214] *TS*, "One-party democracy," no. 21156, Friday 28 May 1982, p. 4.

sought to establish an alternative organisation to KANU and had labeled all those who diverged from the Government's policies anti-Nyayo. It also failed to address the manner in which KANU could exert its power to control all other organisations, many of which were already enmeshed with it as a result of the incestuous manner in which the country's wealthiest and most influential reproduced themselves in different arenas.

When the bill making Kenya a *de jure* single party state passed, the newspaper praised it as a promoter of national unity versus the divisibility that the proposed Kenya Socialist Party would have caused. Kenya was a unified country that already possessed a political system within which change could occur without vituperative political debates and violence. It restated its position that it was possible for a one party state to be democratic and that Kenya had indeed always been democratic and would continue to be so. According to the newspaper, KANU was an effective single party because it held regular elections and honoured the principle of elected representation.[215]

The push for political pluralism that year led to a crackdown on dissidence that the newspaper largely supported and defended, most probably motivated by Government assertions that the dissenters were Marxists and Communists and therefore inimical to the prevailing politico-economic order.[216] When the Students' Organisation of Nairobi University (SONU) issued a statement condemning the Government for its stance against multi-partism, news of their statement was flashed to the newspaper's readers in a report that laid stress on the Government's promise to deal "firmly" with the organisation rather than the statement itself.[217] Speaking on behalf of the Government, Paul Ngei had also urged the students to identify

[215] *TS*, "One party democracy," no. 21167, Thursday 10 June 1982, p. 4.
[216] See for example, *TS*, "Njonjo raps Marxists," no. 21171, Tuesday 15 June 1982, p. 1 and 3 and *TS*, "No crisis in Kenya-Njonjo," no. 21178, Wednesday 23 June 1982, p. 1 and 24.
[217] *TS*, "State to be tough on students," no. 21157, Saturday 29 May 1982, p. 1 and 20.

themselves clearly with the ruling party by registering as members after pledging their loyalty to it at either the office of the KANU Secretary-General or his own ministry office at Kilimo House, a process showing once again just how fused the party was to the Government. A few days later, the newspaper headlines read "No Mercy on Dissidents-President" and quoted the President commanding the Commissioner of Police, Ben Gethi, to "get down to work;" once again *The Standard* concurred that this was necessary in the interests of national peace and stability. The President was apparently concerned that there certain insidious individuals were "promoting foreign ideologies" that were at the root of university demonstrations in the preceding months.[218] Ben Gethi proceeded to crack his whip and in the following weeks the newspaper furnished readers with reports on security officials picking up several professionals, especially university dons, for unspecified reasons with some including George Anyona, detained.[219]

[218] *TS*, "No mercy on dissidents – President," no. 21160, Wednesday 2 June 1982, p. 1 and 3. For editorial, see same issue, "Students and dissidents," p. 4.

[219] *TS*, "Anyona is detained," no. 21161, Thursday 3 June 1982, p. 1, *TS*, "Khaminwa picked up," no. 21162, Friday 4 June 1982, p. 1; *TS*, "Lecturer remanded," no. 21165, Tuesday 8 June 1982, p. 1. See also same issue, "Kanu branch to crack down on dissidents," p. 2; *TS*, "More lecturers picked up," and "Dar expels Kenyan students," no. 21166, Wednesday 9 June 1982, p. 1; *TS*, "Law lecturer picked up," no. 21168, Friday 11 June 1982, p. 1; *TS*, "Lecturers freed," and "Lecturers 'out to wreck stability'," no. 21170, Monday 14 June 1982, p. 1 (two of the five held were released without explanation); *TS*, "Police pick up lecturer," no. 21173, Thursday 17 June 1982, p. 1; *TS*, "More to be detained," and "Lecturer's bail bid again rejected," no. 21175, Saturday 19 June 1982, p. 1; *TS*, "Mukaru, Mazrui detained," and "Wang'ondu bail not granted," no. 21180, Friday 25 June 1982, p. 1 and 32; *TS*, "Dissident lecturers face stern measures," no. 21183, Tuesday 29 June 1982, p. 1 and 20; *TS*, "Lecturer's bid for bail rejected by High Court," no. 21185, Thursday 1 July 1982, p. 28; *TS*, "Wang'ondu: I was tortured," no. 21192, Friday 9 July 1982 p. 1 and 28; *TS*, "Wang'ondu judgement on July 19, no. 21193, Saturday 10 July 1982, p. 1 and 3; *TS*, "Dissidents will be put away," no. 21195, Tuesday 13 July 1982, p. 1 and 2. See also same issue, "Court refuses bail for Kinyatti," p. 3; *TS*, "Two lecturers detained," no. 21198, Friday 16 July 1982, p. 1and *TS*, "Wang'ondu jailed for 4½ years," no. 21201, Tuesday 20 July 1982, p. 1. For related scholarship on these events and the Kenyan academy see, Donald Savage and Cameron Taylor, "Academic freedom in Kenya," *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, vol. 25, no. 2, 1991, pp. 308-321; Korwa Adar, "Human rights and academic freedom in Kenya's public universities: the case of the Universities Academic Staff Union," *Human Rights Quarterly*," vol. 21, no. 1, 1991, pp. 179-206; Maina Kiai, Kenya Human Rights Commission, *Haven of Repression: A Report on the University of Nairobi and Academic Freedom in Kenya.* Nairobi: Kenya Human Rights Commission, 1992; Ali Mazrui, "Pan-Africanism and the intellectuals: rise, decline and revival," in P. Thandika Mkandawire (ed.), *African Intellectuals: Rethinking Politics, Language, Gender and Development*. Pretoria: CODESERIA, 2005, pp. 56-77.

The newspaper praised the clampdown hailing "Mr. Moi our only Hope for Peace" as it asserted that since the arrests it had become apparent (on what basis it is unknown) that "the radicals who have been operating in the country had embarked on an insidious campaign not only to discredit the achievement of the Government, but also to steer Kenya on a path of instability and ruin." These radicals were bent on establishing a communist party based on the Marxist belief of "destroying everything before you build." They had endeavoured to manipulate Kenyans, especially students, with the goal of plunging the country into chaos which would enable them to achieve control by asserting compliance through the threat of violence. The newspaper went on to add that Moi, on the other hand, had steered Kenya through challenging economic times and ensured the pursuit of peace, stability, and national goals identified "through our democratic machinery of government" and which a majority of the citizenry embraced.[220] The newspaper even displayed a lack of unease with the vague nature of the details emerging from the interrogation of those picked up to probe further into the nature of the quashed Kenya Socialist Party, arguing that this in fact proved "the total absence of witch-hunting and MacArthysim on the party of the Government." Its sources had divulged to it that the proposed socialist party was only a disguise aimed at misleading observers about the true intent of its objectives by putting on the cloak of a less threatening socialist democratic party akin to those of Western Europe. Apparently, it was in fact a party that was actually based on the Communist Party of the USSR, complete with a Central Committee and Politburo bent on the destruction of society and democracy. It labeled dissenters the "Change-the-System" people and insisted that

[220] *TS*, "Mr. Moi our only hope for peace," no. 21165, Tuesday 8 June 1982, p. 4.

they were not going to shy away from using violence to achieve their goals and had to be stopped.[221]

On 20 July 1982 the newspaper made a sudden, unexplained turn from its previous support of the detentions and Kenya's "democracy" in an editorial on "Detention without trial," but its Board of Directors was forced to act quickly to make amends with the Government. The editorial was withering in its critique of the repressive atmosphere:

> In the last six months, this country has been increasingly gripped with fear, the fear of detention of individuals without trial.
>
> It does not require much argument to verify this proposition. At the time of writing, at least one person who has been teaching political science at the University has tendered his resignation. Some lecturers are finding it difficult to teach because of the fear that they will be picked up for views they may express in the course of their lectures.
>
> The state of fear and trepidation in our highest seat of learning comes at a time when the Government has banned some plays thus giving the impression that it intends to control opinion.
>
> Yet scholarship and learning thrive in freedom, and our citadel of learning should be the last place in which the state should interfere.[222]

The editor went on to note that although Chapter Five of the Kenyan constitution included a Bill of Rights, it was a contradiction that Clause 85 of the Constitution, the Preservation of Public Security Act Section III, permitted detention without trial and therefore overrode the provisions of the former. He called for an amendment of the constitution to permit detention without trial only during extraneous periods, for example war, arguing that its use during any other time was indefensible. As for the Government, the editor wrote that it needed to move quickly and decisively to restore a sense of security, beginning with the release of all detainees against whom it could raise no credible evidence for the charges leveled against them. He added that Kenya

[221] *TS*, "'Opposition' party's designs," no. 21169, Saturday 12 June 1982, p. 4. See also, *TS*, "Democracy remains," no. 21170, Monday 14 June 1982, p. 4.
[222] *TS*, "Detention without trial," no. Tuesday 20 July 1982, p. 4.

could not claim to be democratic and "at the same time do things which militate against the rule of law."[223]

The thinking behind this *volte face* is unclear. It may however, be conjectured that the continued arrests and detentions, claims of torture as well as planted evidence had finally alarmed the editor and caused a crisis of conscience. Alternatively, another explanation may be found in the fourth and fifth paragraph of that day's editorial:

> There are also instances in which editors of our national newspapers have been told in no uncertain terms that they can publish certain things at their peril and there have been instances where they have been humiliated in public.
>
> Yet this kind of intimidation against people who are trained to handle ideas can have no other effect except to move this country from an open to a closed society.[224]

The editor may have therefore been moved to pen the scathing editorial out of anger and frustration at persistent and unusual Government efforts to dictate the publication's contents. The editor in question was George Githii and the editorial earned him a summary dismissal from *The Standard,* which the publication announced on the front page of a special edition that very day in a bold headline, "Standard Editor–in-Chief Dismissed." The headline was in extraordinarily large font size and completely out of proportion with the accompanying brief apology. In it, the company's shareholders, directors and management issued "an unreserved apology" for the "provocative" editorial which they acknowledged contained contentious views that were inconsistent with "this newspaper's long-established policy of support for the Government of Kenya."[225] The following day as several members of parliament called for the detention of Githii

[223] Ibid.
[224] Ibid.
[225] *TS*, "Standard Editor-in-Chief dismissed," no. 21202, Wednesday 21 July 1982, p. 1.

in unison, the newspaper headlined the extensive report on their demands and repeated its apology beneath the headline.[226]

Subsequently, when the country suffered a major political crisis in August of that year the newspaper not only steered clear of controversy but also rallied behind the government as more people were detained on flimsy grounds. That crisis was an attempted coup d'état by low ranking officers of the Kenya Air Force which forces loyal to the Government quelled in less than a week. *The Standard* published editorials lauding the loyal forces for their achievement as it urged citizens to report rebels who had not surrendered; condemned those civilians who had supported the coup, especially university students; called for a "thorough weeding" of the student body of the University of Nairobi as well as the Kenyatta University College; and urged that a commitment to law, order and democracy be maintained amongst Kenyans.[227] More arrests and detentions, including that of a sitting Member of Parliament, Koigi wa Wamwere, and one of the paper's journalists, Otieno Mak'Onyango, followed the failed coup and the newspaper reported these without comment.[228] In addition, it made no effort to conduct a dissection of the Kenyan Government and Kenyan politics in the aftermath of what was most certainly a deeply disturbing event in the country's brief post-independence existence that should have spurred a thorough exercise of political retrospection and analysis on its pages. In light of the newspaper's treatment of George Githii and its unqualified commitment to support the Government and KANU, that such an exercise would have been embarked on was highly unlikely.

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[226] *TS*, "Detain Githii, say MPs," and "Editor is dismissed," no. 21203, Thursday 22 July 1982, p. 1 and 2.
[227] *TS*, "Expose rebels and looters," no. 21213, Wednesday 4 August 1982, p. 4. *TS*, "Anarchy not for Kenya," no. 21215, Friday 6 August 1982, p. 4, *TS*, "The hooligans now stand exposed," no. 21218, Tuesday 10 August 1982, p. 4, *TS*, "All must help in the round-up," no. 21219, Wednesday 11 August 1982, p. 4.
[228] See for instance, *TS*, "Wamwere, Mutunga detained," no. 21221, Friday 13 August 1982, p. 1. For editorial see same issue, "P.L.O. now at cross-roads…," p. 4; *TS*, "Lecturer in suicide bid," no. 21228, Saturday 24 August 1982, p. 1. For editorial see same issue, "More oil could be saved," p. 4. *TS*, "Journalist on treason charge," no. 21257, Friday 24 September 1982, p. 1. For editorial see same issue, "Double dealing down south," p. 4; *TS*, "Kinyatti on sedition charge," no. 221260, Tuesday 28 September 1982, p. 1. For editorial see same issue, "Making use of the ASK show," p. 4.

Similarly, when Government claims of the existence of a clandestine, political movement resulted in a wave of arrests, detentions or dubious court cases, the newspaper reported these with no further probing.[229] *The Standard* first published news of the sentencing of three Kenyans on charges of being in possession of seditious publications on its back pages in early April 1986. The three men — Joseph Manje, a lecturer at Kenya Science Teachers College; Peter Kihara, a farmer from Central Province; and Geoffrey Maina, an accountant in a parastatal — were jailed for between four to five years each for being in possession of the underground publications *Mwakenya* and *Mpatanishi*.[230] The newspaper noted that the assistant Deputy Public Prosecutor, Bernard Chunga, did not read the contents of the publications in court even though he submitted them as evidence and so they remained a mystery to journalists and the public. Presumably, all were to be satisfied with his charge that the publications "were intended to bring into hatred or

[229] For studies on repression and the general political scene during this era see, Peter Anyang' Nyong'o, "State and society in Kenya: the disintegration of the nationalist coalition and the rise of presidential authoritarianism, 1963-78," *African Affairs*, vol. 88, no. 351, pp. 229-251; Vincent Khapoya, "Moi and beyond: Towards peaceful succession in Kenya?" *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 10, no. 1, 1988, pp. 54-66; Gibson Kamau Kuria, "Confronting dictatorship in Kenya," *Journal of Democracy,* vol. 2, no. 4, 1991, pp. 115-126; Rok Ajulu, "Kenya: the road to democracy," *Review of African Political Economy*," vol. 19, no. 53, 1992, pp. 79-87; D. Paul Ahluwalia, "Democratic transition in African politics: the case of Kenya," *Australian Journal of Political Science*, vol. 28, no. 3, 1993, pp. 499-514; Rok Ajulu, "The left and the question of democratic transition in Kenya: a reply to Mwakenya," *Review of African Political Economy*, vol. 22, no. 64, 1995, pp. 229-245; James Kariuki, "Paramoia: anatomy of a dictatorship in Kenya," *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*," vol. 14, no. 1, 1996, pp. 69-86; Korwa Adar, "The internal and external contexts of human rights practice in Kenya: Daniel arap Moi's operational code," *African Sociological Review*, vol. 4, no. 1,2000, pp. 74-97; Rok Ajulu, "Thinking through the crisis of democratization in Kenya: a response to Adar and Murunga," *African Sociological Review*, vol. 4, no. 2, 2000, pp. 133-157; Godwin Murunga, "Civil society and the democratic experience in Kenya," *African Sociological Review*, vol. 4 no. 1, 2000, pp. 97-118; Korwa Adar and Isaac Munyae, "Human rights abuse in Kenya under Daniel arap Moi, 1978-2001," *African Studies Quarterly*, vol. 5 no. 1, 2001, pp. 1-17; Anders Norman, "Elections in Kenya," *Review of African Political Economy*," vol. 30, no. 96, 2003, pp. 343-350.

[230] The publishers of these publications are unknown. The meaning of *Mwakenya* is also unclear while *Mpatanishi* is Kiswahili for reconciler. Durrani attributes the publication of Mwakenya to the underground December Twelve Movement which he argues emerged as the Mwakenya movement in the eighties. See, Shiraz Durrani, "The mirage of democracy in Kenya: people's strggle for information as an aspect of the struggle for liberation," an edited version of a paper delivered at the Residential Conference on Emerging Democracies and Freedom of Information, Somerville College, Oxford 2 – 4 September 1994, http://www.libr.org/isc/issues/ISC1/the%20mirage%20of%20democracy%20in%20kenya.pdf , accessed on Sunday 28 October 2012.

contempt or excite disaffection against the government of Kenya as by law established."[231] The next day, the detention of Kariuki Gathitu, a Computer Science lecturer from the University of Nairobi, made front page news. Although the don was picked up from his house on 5 March 1986, the newspaper did not learn of his detention under the provisions of the Public Security Act until the first week of April when it was published in the *Kenya Gazette*. It reported his wife saying that police had searched his home for about three hours and impounded 31 publications, most of which dealt with socialism.[232] Shortly after, "Kanu Declares War on Saboteurs" was the headline over a report on the party's announcement of its intent to eradicate "the few people" who were running the "so-called Mwakenya clandestine movement." At a meeting of its National Executive Committtee and its National Governing Council, officials had called on all party branches to be on the alert for those who were distributing seditious publications that denigrated the Government.[233] The next day, readers received information on "How MwaKenya Operates…" based on a report of Prosecutor Bernard Chunga's claims in court in which he repeated his charges that the movement aimed at causing "disaffection" against the Government during the trial of a postgraduate student of Law at the University of Nairobi named James Opiata. He made claims of secret oathing ceremonies that took place in the capital's suburbs and allegations of several secret meetings between Opiata and members of the group.[234] According to Chunga, the group was organised into cells, collected membership fees and was even planning a conference. Eventually Vice-President Mwai Kibaki and a host of party officials issued condemnations of the movement, accusing it of using foreign funds to mislead Kenyan youth and plotting to form a second party. He was adamant that there could be no opposition party in

[231] *TS*, "Sedition: three get 14½ years," no. 22351, Thursday 3 April 1986, p. 24. See also, *TS*, "Sedition case judgement today," no. 22350, Wednesday 2 April 1986, p. 28.
[232] *TS*, "Lecturer detained," no. 22352, Friday 4 April 1986, p. 1.
[233] *TS*, "Kanu declares war on saboteurs," no. 22357, Thursday 10 April 1986, p. 1 and 28.
[234] *TS*, "How Mwakenya operates…" no. 22358, Friday 11 April 1986, p. 1 and 32.

Kenya and anyone who attempted to establish one was "like a fool who tried to cut down a *mugumo* tree with a razor blade."[235]

On this day, *The Standard* finally commented on the matter. It praised the Government for going after the movement with speed and efficiency, took its word that the organisation existed as had been described, that it was the beneficiary of its "foreign masters" (in this case Sweden which hosted and would host a number of Kenyan dissidents and former detainees), and that it was a serious threat to the country which had to be extinguished without delay. It even went as far as advising the party to consider forming KANU clubs and fraternity leagues in educational institutions to counter the alleged Mwakenya cells.[236] There were more reports of seditious documents before the President called an end to the Mwakenya debates. While politicians paid heed and stopped discussing the matter, arrests and detentions continued for the rest of the year, all of which the newspaper reported without comment with the exception of one editorial urging Kenyans to resist the movement.[237] It published detentions of people from all walks of life: teachers, university students, university dons, journalists, businessmen, a foreigner (Ugandan), a carpenter and an office messenger.[238] They included Nation Media Group journalist

[235] *TS*, "Kibaki, Karume blast 'Mwakenya'," no. 22360, Monday 14 April 1986, p. 1. See also *TS*, "Moi discloses Mwakenya aims," no. 22362, Wednesday 16 April 1986, p. 1. The *mugumo* tree is a fig tree that the Kikuyu regard(ed) as sacred. See for example, Joe Mutiga, "To the ceremonial mugumo," *Transition*, no. 3, 1962, p. 8.
[236] *TS*, "A stable Kenya plays it cool," no. 22360, Monday 14 April 1986, p. 6. After the repeal of section 2A of the Kenya constitution which restored multipartism in 1991 and after the most ardent multiparty advocates had suffered severely at the hands of those in power, Kibaki quickly resigned from the KANU Government to form his own opposition party, the Democratic Party of Kenya.
[237] *TS*, " Seditious document mailed to Chotara [Nakuru District Kanu Chairman]," no. 22363, Thursday 17 April 1986, p. 3; *TS*, "Mayor reports dumping of seditious leaflets," no. 22364, Friday 18 April 1986, p. 1; *TS*, "Stop Mwakenya debate," no. 22365, Saturday 19 April 1986, p. 1. For the editorial mentioned see, *TS*, "Forward ever, backward never!" no. 22436, Friday 11 July 1986, p. 6.
[238] *TS*, "Teacher jailed for sedition," no. 22371, Saturday 26 April 1986, p. 1; *TS*, "Two more jailed for sedition," no. 22374, Wednesday 30 April 1986, p. 1 and 28; *TS*, "Mwakenya distributor jailed," no. 22380, Wednesday 7 May 1986, p. 1; *TS*, "Mwakenya: Ugandan jailed," no. 22382, Friday 9 May 1986, p. 1; *TS*, "Journalist jailed for sedition," no. 22383, Saturday 10 May 1986, p. 1; *TS*, "Another university lecturer picked up," no. 22384, Monday 12 May 1986, p. 1; *TS*, "Another lecturer held" and "Pambana: Two students jailed," no. 22388, Friday 16 May 1986, p. 1 and 32; *TS*, "Freed author exposes Mwakenya," no. 22392, Wednesday 21 May 1986, p. 28; *TS*, "Thirteen held over Mwakenya," no. 22393, Thursday 22 May 1986, p. 1; *TS*, "Mwakenya: six workers denied bail," no. 22397, Tuesday 27 May 1986, p. 1; *TS*, "Mwakenya distributors jailed," no. 22421, Tuesday 24 June

Wahome Mutahi and his brother Njuguna Mutahi, who were sentenced to a total of 30 months in prison for "failing to prevent a felony." Mutahi was charged with receiving a seditious publication, *Mpatanishi*, from his brother which he read and returned without reporting it or him to the police. He was also accused of receiving a second copy by post which he did not report. At their trial, Chunga once again intoned about the pernicious nature of the publications to the Government but their contents remained a mystery.[239] The day after Independence Day, the newspaper announced that the President had granted clemency to one detainee, *The Standard's* own journalist Otieno Mak'Onyango, and over 5,000 prisoners, but detentions continued unabated. On the back page of the previous day's issue, the newspaper had informed readers of yet another detention while on Christmas Eve it published the detention of a lawyer and three days later the sentencing of two businessmen on Mwakenya charges.[240]

The constant stream of sedition arrests, court trials and detention announcements must have contributed to the political intimidation of dissidents and the suppression of dissident views as well as raised tensions as Githii had argued. Nonetheless, *The Standard* probably considered the publication of these detentions an inescapable function of its role as a major newspaper. However, its unquestioned acceptance of the Government's view of Mwakenya and its charges against those arrested helped to legitimise official suppression schemes and contributed to the Government's efforts to construct an image of itself as an infalliable, prescient and sagacious

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1986, p. 1; *TS,* "Mwakenya: 3 jailed," no. 22424, Friday 27 June 1986, p. 32; *TS,* "Mwakenya member jailed," and "Lecturer picked up," no. 22427, Tuesday 1 July 1986, p. 32; *TS,* "Mwakenya: two teachers jailed," no. 22433, Tuesday 8 July 1986, p. 1; *TS*, "Mwakenya: messenger jailed," no. 22434, Wednesday 9 July 1986, p. 1 and 24; *TS*, "Mukaru Ng'ang'a, Miano detained," no. 22436, Friday 11 July 1986, p. 1; *TS*, "Mkangi detained," no. 22448, Friday 25 July 1986, p. 1; *TS,* "Mwakenya: preacher jailed for 2½ years," no. 22559, Tuesday 2 December 1986, p. 1 and 28, and *TS*,

[239] *TS,* "Journalist and his brother jailed for seditious papers," no. 22545, Saturday 15 November 1986, p. 24

[240] *TS,* "Detainee and 5,000 prisoners released," no. 22569, Saturday 13 December 1986, p. 1; *TS*, "State announces Agina's detention," no. 22568, Friday 12 December 1986, p. 52; *TS,* "Nakuru lawyer officially detained," no. 22578, Wednesday 24 December 1986, p. 1 and 28; *TS*, "Mwakenya: two jailed," no. 22579, Saturday 27 December 1986, p. 1.

entity. Even reports of detainee releases, such as that of Mak'Onyango, contributed to this image of the President and his administration. The release of detainees against whom the Government had leveled serious charges enabled the President to set himself alternately as the possessor of the firm hand of fatherly discipline given with love and the wielder of another hand of almost sacred mercy and magnanimity. His was the hand that giveth and taketh away in a manner that could not always be understood but need not be probed into as the people were expected to trust in his infinite wisdom. Indeed in 1988, after he released Raila Odinga from detention where he had been since 1983 along with nine other detainees, *The Standard* published an editorial, "President Moi's Fatherly Gesture," praising his 'superhuman' benevolence:

> The President not only released the detainees but also found time from the exacting tasks of high office to meet the released detainees in order to personally give them a sense of belonging [the President had personally informed six of the detainees of their release when they were taken to State House.
>
> That fatherly gesture too is excelling and can be equated to the biblical story of the prodigal son in which a loving father did not forsake a son who missed the way.
>
> He did not call them to condemn them but to usher them back to the society where they would join hands with the rest of wananchi in the challenging tasks of nation building.[241]

The newspaper aimed at convincing readers that the President always meant well and acted in their interests. It then went on to defend detention, pointing out that the President had stated that he only used it as a last resort and always made its detentions public. In addition, the newspaper argued that the Government never forgot its detainees and that they underwent a review process to "determine any change of heart for the common good of society" and that judicial supervision ensured that detainees were living under conditions specified in the relevant Act.[242]

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[241] *TS*, "President Moi's fatherly gesture," no. 22925, Tuesday 9 February 1988, p. 6.

[242] Ibid. See also *TS*, "Nine detainees released," no. 22923, Saturday 6 February 1988, p. 1 and 20. The President's sensitivity to the activities of the former detainees is evident in a report published the day after the above editorial in which he criticised four of the detainees for calling a press conference at the Foreign Press Centre shortly after their release. See *TS*, "Moi hits at former detainees," no. 22926, Wednesday 10 February 1988, p. 1.

Changing lanes – hesitantly; KANU and then *The Standard* Support Minimal Political Reforms

The 1982 coup moved Moi to overhaul KANU, but his announcement in relation to this went unnoticed at the offices of the *The Standard*. As William Ochieng' and Bethwell Ogot explain, the party had become almost moribund in the years following independence.[243] After the ban of KPU, KANU existed as the only party of a *de facto* one-party state and although there were several attempts to revitalise the party from 1970, none resulted in significant change. KANU did not hold elections until Kenyatta's death in 1978 even though it announced several election dates. Perhaps this situation explains the newspaper's tepid reception of the President's announcement. Ochieng' and Ogot also observe that between 1974 and 1978 it only reactivated itself at times of political crisis, for example, following the assassination of J. M. Kariuki or to carry out the blocking of certain candidates during by-elections. Nevertheless, it was not until 1985 that KANU's post-coup revitalisation commenced in earnest with a recruitment drive that was geared towards transforming KANU into a genuine mass party. After the conclusion of an aggressive membership drive, KANU announced the holding of party grassroots elections in June 1985 to be followed the next month by using a novel method of voting: queuing.

During this period *The Standard* occasionally featured special commentary on the party next to its editorials from the pen of Henry Gathigira, the newspaper's Editor-in-Chief himself. These were very laudatory of the party and its leader and were written in extravagant language. In one commentary, for example, Gathigira wrote that the elections would enable KANU to "once again prove to fraternal parties in the rest of Africa, at its forthcoming grassroots elections that the made-in-Kenya brand of democracy is essentially foolproof and incorruptible."[244] It

[243] Bethwell Ogot and William Ochieng', *Decolonisation and Independnce in Kenya, 1940 - 93*. London: James Currey, 1995, pp. 201 – 208.
[244] *TS*, "Kanu 'vaccine' versus corruption," no. 22105, Monday 17 July 1985, p. 6.

praised the recently concluded membership drive, noting that a large number of those registered were youthful and would help rejuvenate the party. The commentary was titled "Kanu, 'vaccine' versus corruption." Why the editor thought the party had a vaccine against corruption became clearer in the next commentary in which Gathigira asserted that in queue voting, KANU had found the ultimate vaccination against corrupt electoral practices. He argued that it helped save the money, time and effort that went into printing ballots and that it prevented voter bribery. While the first was true, the editor did not consider that queue voting actually made it more difficult for voters, bribed or not, to vote their conscience as they were more susceptible to intimidation and lacked the privacy and the anonymity that secret balloting confers upon voters. If he did, he chose not to articulate that concern arguing that KANU "had closed every convenient door to corruption, on the crystal-clear edicts and advice of the ruling party's president, His Excellency Daniel arap Moi, who is also Head of State and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces [listing the presidential roles as if readers needed a reminder]." He went on to add that "Kanu is now determined to prove that – as it is indeed one of the largest democratic political parties in Africa – the new leaders who will be fairly and freely elected are the men and women the union has been grooming for *leadership*."[245]

On the first day of the party's elections, it reiterated its support for the exercise and its voting method, ascribing it to unspecified roots in hoary African traditions and arguing that it ensured that voters were "unimpaired by the intricacies of so-called secret voting" and claiming that the voter queues were the best way of registering voters' leadership choices. The exercise itself would provide voters with the opportunity to prove that they were united "under President Daniel arap Moi's dynamic and inspiring leadership." It even hinted that the method could be employed in future parliamentary and civic elections as it "sublimely simplifies such massive

[245] *TS*, "All eyes on Kanu's D-Day," no. 22110, Saturday 22 June 1985, p. 4. Italic's are the newspaper's.

exercises" and exposed all unsuccessful candidates to the "real rigors of being subjected to democratic African rating!"[246] In this way, the newspaper maintained an optimistic air about the party's rejuvenation and continued to depict the country's political structure as poised to lead it towards a Utopia of some sort under its sapient leadership corps.[247]

It is therefore not surprising that when KANU conducted its 1988 nomination process using the queue system, *The Standard* maintained its stand that the country's democracy was firm and well nourished. As Chairman of KANU Moi controlled the process from start to finish although he himself was also a contender seeking to defend his own parliamentary seat and presidency after going through the KANU nomination process. At the end of January 1988 he informed a crowd at a school fundraising meeting to the west of Kenya that he was still keeping the date of the general election secret. It was "my secret" he said as he jokingly challenged political commentators and seers to guess the correct date. Despite the fact that his secret violated the interests of electoral fair play, the newspaper simply explained that he was whetting the appetites of those who intended to run.[248] In the meantime, KANU registration exercises continued as only registered members could vote in the party primaries. The general elections were open to non-members as well as members, but this meant that those who chose not to become party members for whatever reason could only vote for candidates the party's nomination process put forward. In addition those who garnered 70% of the vote during the party's nomination process stood unopposed in the general election. Later that month, the President extended the registration deadline from 31 January 1988 to 5 February 1988 in a

[246] *TS,* "Stand up and be counted…!" no. 22111 , Monday 24 June 1985, p. 6.
[247] See also, *TS,* "Kanu uproots the tribalists," no. 22115, Friday 28 June 1985, p. 6 and *TS,* "Kanu's vital transformation," no. 2218, Tuesday 2 July 1985, p. 6.
[248] *TS*, "Election date is my secret – Moi," no. 22911, Saturday 23 January 1988, p. 1 and 20.

statement released to the press via the government-run Kenya News Agency (KNA).[249] This was, not surprisingly, front page news in *The Standard* as were his other nomination and election related actions: "Nomination Rules Will be Out Tommorrow - Moi" headlined another KNA report on his announcement that he would release a booklet detailing the queue based nomination rules the following day; "Moi Preparing for General Election" headlined a KNA report on his announcement that he was halting all fundraising functions for various causes to focus on general election preparations; "Vote Seekers Must Get Party Approval" informed readers that according to the rules Moi had released, all those who wished to seek a KANU nomination had to pledge loyalty to the party's President; and "Elections Countdown: Moi Issues Directive" published Moi's order to those wishing to stand for nominations to resign by 10 February 1988.[250] The editorial accompanying the latter headline was titled, "Why Kenyans Should Join Kanu," and in it the newspaper urged readers to register and praised the party as a genuine mass party that catered for its members' diverse needs. It also stated that the party was well organised with the necessary "disciplinary machinery and procedures" and so "all Kenyans of all walks of life and caste need to support it by joining and participating in its deliberations from the grassroot to the national level."[251] A few days later evidence of the party's disciplinary procedures were evident when three prominent politicians failed to obtain clearance to stand for KANU nomination: former Vice President Oginga Odinga, former Minister G. G. Kariuki, and former Mombasa North M.P. Said Hemed Said. Odinga had failed to issue a plea for pardon that conformed to the party's constitution; G. G. Kariuki had not been pardoned because his local KANU branch had

[249] *TS*, "Kanu registration deadline extended," no. 22915, Thursday 28 January 1988, p. 1 and 24.
[250] *TS*, "Nomination rules will be out tomorrow – Moi," no. 22918, Monday 1 February 1988, p. 1; *TS*, "Moi preparing for general election," no. 22919, Tuesday 2 February 1988, p. 1 and 6; *TS*, "Vote seekers must get party approval," no. 22920, Wednesday 3 February 1988, p. 1 and 7; *TS*, "Elections countdown: Moi Issues Directive," no. 22921, Thursday 4 February 1988 p. 1 and 24.
[251] *TS*, "Why all Kenyans should join Kanu," no. 22921, Thursday 4 February 1988, p. 6.

not made any recommendations on his behalf; while Said's case was under review. According to the newspaper's report, there were other politicians who had failed to receive clearance and the party's Secretary-General, Burudi Nabwera, announced that the party's National Executive Committee and its National Governing Council planned on meeting to discuss the cases of those who had been suspended or expelled from the party.[252]

The day after the KANU nomination elections complaints about the queue system of voting emerged once again. Charles Rubia, a former Cabinet Minister and MP for Nairobi's Starehe Constituency, lost the chance to defend his seat when one of his opponents, Kiruhi Kimondo, garnered 71% of the vote, which according to KANU nomination regulations meant that he would stand unopposed. The paper quoted Rubia terming the process a "big disappointment." A victorious Vice-President Mwai Kibaki who was elected unopposed after polling 99.79% of the vote complained that the returning officer in his Nyeri Constituency (the Nyeri District Commissioner) had given erroneous figures on the total vote tallies.[253] The DC had announced that a total of 18,548 voters out of 18,586 had voted for Kibaki while the Vice-President claimed that his agents had recorded a total of 19,382 voters out of which 19,344 had voted for him. His complaint resulted in a "recount" after which the DC stood by his figures while Kibaki was left to ponder over the methodology he had used to defend his figures.[254] There were evidently other candidates who were unhappy with the nomination process, as a mere two days after the primaries *The Standard* reported that Moi had studied their complaints as well as

[252] *TS*, "Kanu explains Odinga, Hemed, GG cases," no. 22927, Thursday 11 February 1988, p. 1 and 2. The party later pardoned Said as it lifted the suspension of six politicians and reinstated the membership of three others excluding Kariuki and Odinga. See *TS*, "Hemed, Keino, Olang' pardoned, all suspended members cleared," no. 22932, Wednesday 17 February 1988, p. 1 and 6.
[253] *TS*, "Disappointing, says Rubia," and "Kibaki in landslide victory," no. 22937, Tuesday 23 February 1988, p. 1.
[254] After the elections, Mwai Kibaki lost his position as vice-president to Josphat Karanja.

the entire nomination process and then rejected their appeals by arguing that he had found them "devoid of merit."[255]

The newspaper expressed its satisfaction with the entire process lauding Kenya's "Impressive Democracy" and arguing that the nominations had been conducted sucessfully and as such "the nation has taken a gigantic step towards the ultimate maturity of her democracy." It acknowledged there had been some problems but argued that these could be dealt with through legal channels or the party's machinery which it presented to readers as trustworthy and reliable. According to the newspaper, the credibility of the entire process could not be questioned:

> What cannot be disputed is that wananchi took part in the Kanu nominations exercise in a peaceful and orderly manner. It was an impressive display of the democratic process at the grassroots and those who were cynical or had misgivings before should now be satisfied.
>
> It should also be noted this was the first time the system had been tried. In many ways it will serve as a learning process for the future.
>
> Whatever shortcomings emerged, the validity, fairness and efficiency of the Kanu nominations process has been firmly established.[256]

Accordingly, *The Standard* rallied unequivocally behind the Government, once again defending a deeply flawed political process. The exercise turned out 360 candidates to vie for 188 seats.[257]

On Election Day, the newspaper would report without the slightest hint of irony that of these only 297 would actually be contesting seats as those returned unopposed prior to the nomination process or who had garnered over 70% of the vote during nominations had already filled 65 seats.[258] Nevertheless, complaints and recriminations ensued unabated and the newspaper reported these without altering its stand on the outcome of the process. Those who received the most prominent coverage in *The Standard* were veteran politician Paul Ngei, for whom KANU backtracked and granted an appeal against the results in his Kangundo

[255] *TS*, "Queuing: Moi rejects appeals," no. 22938, Wednesday 24 February 1988, p. 1 and 17.
[256] Ibid.
[257] See for example, *TS*, "360 candidates set to vie for 188 seats," no. 22941, Saturday 27 February 1988, p. 20.
[258] *TS*, "It's all systems go: 297 seek to be MPs today," no. 22960, Monday 21 March 1988, p. 1 and 24.

Constituency, as well as former MPs and Cabinet Ministers Charles Rubia and Kenneth Matiba, who would play a major role in the next push for multipartism in less than two years.[259] It also covered the Government's suppression of *Beyond*, a Christian monthly magazine which the National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCK) ran without altering its position on the nominations. Readers of the newspaper had the opportunity to glean information on the magazine's 'offense' as it devoted a paragraph to mentioning the magazine's contents, which indicated that it had criticised the KANU nomination process.[260] After coming under attack from the party, the Government eventually banned the publication as debate on the queue system of voting heightened amidst indications that KANU was considering its use in future general elections.[261]

Still, debate on the question continued. In April *The Standard* published a front page photograph of Moi shaking hands with Margaret Thatcher at 10 Downing Street. Beneath it the related article explained that he had briefed her on the queue system of voting and the way in which it had been employed that year.[262] Thatcher's response to Moi's message was not part of the article and the coverage of the visit could have been innocuous but for its unstated significance: the President had confidently presented a controversial voting system to a powerful Western leader without suffering adverse criticism. This was the same leader of Kenya's prosperous, former colonial ruler and now significant financial donor and investor who in January had come to Kenya for a visit the newspaper set up as an endorsement of the country's leadership. The British, it argued, "have a rationale that a country which is visited by the Queen

[259] *TS*, "Beaten Ngei accuses Muli," and "Don't fool the world, Karanja tells Rubia," no. 22939, Thursday 25 February 1988, p. 1 and 28; *TS*, "Kangundo polls to be repeated," "Now Muli hits at Ngei," and "Rubia challenges Karanja," no. 9940, Friday 26 February 1988, p. 1 and 6; *TS*, "Ministers accuse administration," and "Mulinge and Ngei supporters clash," no. 22941, Saturday 27 February 1988, p. 1 and 20.
[260] *TS*, " 'Beyond' report: Kanu hits at NCCK," no. 22952, Friday 11 March 1988, p. 1 and 36.
[261] *TS*, "What's 'Beyond' upto? Ask angry leader[s]," no. 22593, Saturday 12 March 1988, p. 11 and *TS*, " 'Beyond' banned," no. 22956, Wednesday 16 March 1988, p. 1 and 32.
[262] *TS*, "Moi briefs Thatcher on queuing system," no. 22975, Thursday 7 April 1988, p. 1.

and the Prime Minister must be regarded as a good country in respect of political and social stability." As both had now visited Kenya, it therefore fit the bill. The paper had gone on to note that during an interview the Prime Minister granted the paper she had "paid a glowing tribute" to the President and disclosed that she "placed a very high value on President Moi's wisdom."[263] This 'wise' leader had now conferred a new system of voting on the country which he insisted was workable. In April, the paper seemed intent on subliminally challenging its readers to ask why then local minnows were opposing him. In the course of the same month, the party continued to push for the system, particularly through prominent KANU leader and Assistant Minister for National Guidance and Political Affairs Shariff Nassir and the President himself.[264] It acknowledged that there were problems but maintained that these could be remedied. The paper barely covered the Church's objection to the system, granting but one headline report and a back page story as it took on the role of an opposition of sorts to KANU in a country where the Government had severely stifled dissenting views. The back page story reported that the Anglican Bishop of Eldoret Diocese, the Rt. Rev. Alexander Muge, deplored the system as undemocratic and insisted that neither he nor clergy within his jurisdiction would ever take part in such a process as he demanded that a referendum be held on the matter. [265] When Nassir responded by insisting that a referendum was unnecessary, he was back on the front page.[266] The Church's response to Nassir through the Catholic Bishop of Nakuru Diocese, the Rt. Rev. Ndingi Mwana a Nzeki, and Rev. Jephthath Gathaka of the diocese of Mount Kenya East of the CPK

[263] *TS*, "Karibu Mrs Thatcher," no. 22894, Monday 4 January 1988, p. 1.
[264] *TS*, "No more secret ballot – Nassir," no. 22989, Saturday 23 April 1988, p. 1 and 24; *TS*, "Kanu to meet on queuing system," no. 22990, Monday 25 April 1988, p.1 and 28; *TS*, "Moi gives directive on voting debate," no. 22993, Thursday 28 April 1988, p. 1 and 10.
[265] *TS*, "Queue move a threat to democracy – Bishop," no. 22990, Monday 25 April 1988, p. 28.
[266] *TS*, "No referendum on voting – Nassir," no. 22991, Tuesday 26 April 1988, p. 1 and 7.

(Church of the Province of Kenya – Anglican Church) earned it its first headline that month.[267] The front page story continued into the newspaper's seventh page. On the opposing page, two headlines beneath the editorial read "Queue-voting system the best, says Koech" over an article on praise for the system from KANU parliamentarians and a second, "Okondo Attacks Bishop" publicised Minister for Labour Peter Okondo's attack on Muge for disparaging queue voting. Debate on the issue petered out the following month after the President demanded that it end while KANU took its time to deal with the matter in the way that best suited it.[268]

At the start of 1990, the year that ushered in the march towards a new era of political pluralism in Kenya, *The Standard* avoided controversy by publishing a far less provocative headline report than its chief rival which reflected the reticence with which it would deal with calls for political reform.[269] While the *Daily Nation* devoted its front page to Reverend Timothy Njoya's audacious demand that Kenya pluralise its politics, *The Standard* had a front page report on a robbery at a Nairobi residential estate. While this was certainly a newsworthy story, it was also unlikely to stoke controversy or retaliatory action from the Government. Inside, the paper published a verbatim record of the President's New Year Message in which among other things he proffered an interpretation of events in East and West Germany that favoured the interests of his own Government as far as its hold over power and continuity was concerned. The people of East Germany had won freedom for themselves just as Kenyans had done several years ago, he stated. Theirs was a victory for the freedom to enjoy one's rights which Kenyans had already attained and were now "free and peaceful."[270] The address sought to depict demands for political

[267] *TS*, "Churches speak out on elections debate," no. 22992, Wednesday 27 April 1988, p. 1 and 7. See same issue, "Queue-voting system the best, says Koech," and "Okondo attacks bishop," p. 6.
[268] *TS*, "Stop debate on queuing – Moi," no. 22997, Tuesday 3 May 1988, p. 1 and 24.
[269] Compare *TS*, "40 thugs terrorise families," no. 23515, Tuesday 2 January 1990, p. 1 to *DN*, "Njoya urges end to one-party systems," no. 9044, Tuesday 2 January 1990, p. 1 and 12.

[270] *TS*,"Moi's New Year Message," no. 23515, Tuesday 2 January 1990, p. 2.

reform and its advocates as unwanted and unnecessary. When KANU politicians predictably chimed in, their responses to Njoya's New Year sermon assailing him for demanding an end to Kenya's one-party state, the newspaper published their responses but kept them away from the headlines in what appears to have been a bid to lessen its political impact and resonance as a news story.[271] In addition, and also in contrast to the *Daily Nation*, the newspaper made its stand on the matter known quite early, as on 4 January 1990 it published an editorial, "Rev. Njoya: Why You are Wrong," criticising the cleric for his stated position. It depicted the reverend as a man who enjoyed controversy and so was simply "at it again" as he "posed as an advocate of the so-called liberation theology and was attempting to present a mask of indifference." It is not clear what *The Standard* meant by labeling the outspoken Njoya indifferent, but then drawing from a variety of sources from Kenyatta to whatever it perceived to be "traditional African societies," the paper continued to argue against a multi-party state insisting that: in a multiparty state parties were simply preoccupied with winning polls, that it would heighten ethnic tensions as African nations were not homogenous, that it was possible to have a political system that fostered free and open debate and in which a wide variety of views were taken into consideration during policy formulation without political pluralism, that traditional African societies dealt with differences communally, that the continent's historical background was different from that of the West and as such so were its institutions, and that the single party checked sectional interests as it promoted peace and unity which enabled a country to develop.[272] Once again, the newspaper seemed oblivious to the fact that Kenya's one-party system had displayed a severe allergy to

[271] *TS*, "Njoya's utterances a slur, says Biwott," and "Aringo lashes out at Njoya," no. 23516, Wednesday 3 January, p. 12 and 28 respectively (the response of the NCCK the following day appeared as a small front page report that continued on an inner page, *TS*, NCCK hits at Aringo," no. 23517, Thursday 4 January 1990, p. 1and 2.); *TS*, "Saitoti attacks Njoya's 'irresponsible' sermon," no. Thursday 4 January 1990, p. 3; *TS*, "NCCK: Aringo gets backing," no. 23518, Friday 5 January 1990, p. 3; *TS*, "Awori reacts to Njoya sermon," no. 23519, Saturday 6 January 1990, p. 2,

[272] *TS*, "Rev. Njoya: why you're wrong," no. 23517, Thursday 4 January 1990, p. 6

"free and open debate" over the years. On the front page, "A Bird's Eye View," which frequently featured a crow-like bird with its wings outstretched by cartoonist Tidi thought "You have misunderstood the flock this time Rev…" as it looked up at Rev. Njoya standing behind a lectern. *The Standard* thus did not shy away from explicitly stating its support for Kenya's political system and at this point did not advocate for any reforms whatsoever.

It was not until 9 January 1990 that the multiparty debate received its first headline treatment in the daily when CPK Bishop of the Diocese of Maseno South Henry Okullu and Martin Shikuku attacked Minister for Livestock Development Elijah Mwangale for urging the Government to detain Njoya and "subversive" clergy.[273] Beneath the headline, *The Standard's* front page cartoon Bird flying above a lectern with a cross and a microphone tagged "Politics!" commented, "Party branches and the church have become centres of action!" which communicated the newspaper's disapproval of the church's unrelenting confrontation of the country's politicians. It had certainly come to the conclusion that the church was overstepping its boundaries to the disadvantage of the Government, who could not treat clergy like ordinary dissenters in a country with a large Christian populace and who enjoyed the backing of their congregations locally and in the West. Mwangale's call had made it to the front page the previous day as did Njoya's response to all the criticisms KANU politicians had leveled against him, in particular those that implied he was propagating racism and ethnic prejudice. The two, he argued, were in fact the tools of the country's elite, "who hold the knives of apportioning jobs, resources and opportunities. They use those knives to cut a bigger stake for themselves on the basis of patronage, which does not benefit anybody in their tribes who lies outside that patronage." According to Njoya, what ailed Kenya therefore was oligarchy and the sharp and

[273] *TS*, "Detention: Okullu, Shikuku criticise Mwangale," no. 23521, Tuesday 9 January 1990, p. 1 and 2. See same issue for "Bird's Eye View" cartoon.

rigid economic difference between the country's haves and have nots. He also pointed out that interethnic tensions were not the result of intrinsic cultural differences but the result of elites of different ethnicities ganging up "to take a fatter portion of the cake."[274] Although the newspaper located Njoya's response at the bottom of its front page and beneath Mwangale's detention call, it gave the views of both a fair amount of coverage, signaling the newspaper's recognition that the multi-party debate could not be shunted aside. Nevertheless, it covered the debate with far less intensity than its rival that January.

In the weeks that followed, debate on the issue faded as the newspaper focused on the disappearance and murder of yet another politician, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation Robert John Ouko in February 1990.[275] In addition, KANU infighting took prime space in the newspaper as Kenyan politics played out in an environment where a party that claimed to be a mass organisation and a vehicle for the expression of diverse views continued to harass those it had purged from its ranks for issuing dissenting views as its most influential cliques used their party offices to suppress political rivals.[276] The newspaper published these reports with no commentary and with indifference. It was as if it had come to accept the infighting as a fact of Kenyan political life and as a phenomenon that was harmless as long as it did not interfere with the prevailing socio-economic and political order.

The multiparty debate returned to the pages of *The Standard* in late March where it would continue to dominate headlines for the rest of the year with a fairly balanced coverage of

[274] *TS*, "Mwangale: detain subversive clerics," and "Njoya answers his critics," no. 23520, Monday 8 January 1990, p. 1 and 2 and p. 1 and 24 respectively. Njoya's arguments are similar to those made by Joseph Karimi and Philip Ochieng, *Kenyatta Succession*. Nairobi: Transafrica Book Distributors, 1980, pp. 8 – 16.
[275] As is the case with all other political assassinations in Kenya's history since Pio Gama Pinto's in 1965, the plotters of Ouko's murder were never brought to book. For an interesting study on the sociology of knowledge resulting from inquiries and investigations into his death see, David Cohen and E. S. Atieno Odhiambo, *The Risks of Knowledge: Investigations into the Death of the Hon. Minister Robert John Ouko in Kenya*. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press; Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, 2004.
[276] See *The Standard* issues between 16 February – 28 February 1990, 12 March 1990 and 30 April 1990.

both opponents and proponents of political pluralism as it maintained its stand against the latter. Martin Shikuku heralded its return when he demanded that Kenya's parliament be dissolved as it had lost credibility. It was a brazen demand, but Shikuku argued that he was simply exercising his freedom of expression as an ordinary Kenyan citizen as provided for in Chapter 5, Section 79 of the first Kenyan constitution. He claimed to have 11 reasons for his demand to be disclosed at a later date. The newspaper's cartoonist, Tidi, turned his claim into a mockery of the fact that Shikuku was no longer a parliamentarian. "The Bird's Eye View" featured an anxious, wild-eyed Shikuku remarking 'I've eleven reasons why I'm not one of them…"[277] And so alongside a straightforward report on the former Butere MP's remarks, the newspaper communicated to the reader that, according to it, Shikuku did not truly have the interests of the country at heart, but only his own; he was nothing but a jealous, spurned politician who wanted to shake down an institution to which he no longer belonged as he was envious of those who did. Shikuku's political activities earned him a summons from the Butere Kanu sub-branch committee – an event which occurred often when party bosses wished to rein in 'errant' politicians. He ignored the summons and the committee issued him with a six-month suspension, but he was unfazed and the newspaper quoted him stating that the party could go ahead and even expel him if it wished to do so. He was not interested in requesting re-admission because he did not approve of their "witch-hunting."[278]

A few days later the newspaper splashed a headline featuring Charles Rubia and Kenneth Matiba's call for the dissolution of Parliament, this time with the added demand that the country set up a multi-party system to be preceded by free and fair elections. Once again *The Standard* featured them as bitter politicians criticising an institution from which they were absent despite

[277] *TS*, "Scrap Parliament, Shikuku insists," no. 23612, Wednesday 25 April 1990, p. 1 and 2.
[278] *TS*, "Shikuku boycotts Kanu meeting," no. 23615, Saturday 28 April 1990, p. 1 and 2.

their contrary desires. "The Bird" cartoon next to the story was drawn outside Kenya's Parliament thinking "they could not have made the demands while they were *waheshimiwas* [members of the House]."[279] The next day the headline read, "Moi denounces Matiba and Rubia as Tribalists," while a smaller report at the bottom of the page featured Attorney General Justice Mathew Muli's warning that mere debate on multi-partism was "unconstitutional," as the constitution provided for one party that in his opinion had "done well."[280] He also pointed out that the constitution did not provide for a referendum, adding that in his opinion multiparty proponents were leading the country down a path of division and chaos. While he was busy elevating the constitution to the ranks of the immutable sacred, government officials gave the newspaper a slew of headlines that presented the opposition in a negative light reminiscent of attacks on the Opposition in the sixties; they were stooges of foreign powers (but this time the United States) who were acting behind the scenes to undermine a good Government as its members plotted assassinations of various officials.[281] These headlines were indicative of official irritation at Western pressure to democratise Kenya's political system and which in fact stopped the President from dictating an end to the multi-party debate. In due course, mounting internal and external pressure would force the President and KANU to consider political reforms as *The Standard* slowly realigned itself to avoid being in conflict with the Government's new position.

Instead of killing the debate, the Government and consequently *The Standard* sought to control it. On 10 May 1990 the headline "Moi Commends Political Debate" was located above a picture of United States Ambassador to Kenya Smith Hempstone shaking hands with the

[279] *TS*, "Matiba, Rubia want Parliament dissolved," no. 23620, Friday 4 May 1990, p. 1 and 2.
[280] *TS*, "Moi denounces Matiba and Rubia as tribalists" and "Multi-party debate unconstitutional," no. 23621, Saturday 5 May 1990, p. 1 and 2.
[281] See, *TS*, "Monitor diplomats' activities – Nabwera," and "Keep off, V-P tells foreign powers," no. 23622, Monday 7 May 1990, p. 1 and 2; *TS*, "Rubia, Matiba in US funds claim," no. 23623, Tuesday 8 May 1990, p. 1 and 2; *TS*, "Police quiz Rubia," no. 23625, Thursday 10 May 1990, p. 1 and 2; *TS*, "Dissidents plot to kill leaders," no. 23626, Friday 11 May 1990, p. 1 and 2; *TS*, "How dissidents plan to operate," no. 23627, Saturday 12 May 1990, p. 1 and 2.

President as he welcomed him to a US trade exhibition in a city hotel. At the event the President stated that he welcomed the ongoing debate on the future of Kenyan politics while he maintained that the country would not tolerate external pressure to accept that which was not for the good of the country. The pressures he was under are clear as the daily quoted him complaining that "we are being asked to risk that which we have painstakingly built in order to live up to some generalised prescriptions of political behaviour…and we are threatened that unless we do so, we risk losing friends and other financial aid."[282] The newspaper praised the President's assertion that he was open to debate as indicative of the "good health of [Kenya's] vital organs" and as having placed the debate on multi-partism within context. That is, argued the paper, as the debate proceeded it was essential that Kenyans keep in mind the "over-riding goals of a unified and stable nation" which implicitly communicated its ongoing support for the one-party system just like the Government. Besides, it went on to add that:

> Generalisations which are plausible in their ideological context, but which do not take into account the intricate nature of Kenyan society and national interests will not help either.
>
> They should also note President Moi's emphasis that while Kenya does not fear taking risks or making sacrifices, this should be in the service of the people and should not be done irresponsibly.
>
> Ideological posturing which Kenya has rejected in the past, should still be rejected in preserving unity and stability.[283]

Just like the President, the newspaper depicted pressure for political change as purely external and therefore so alien and distant from the intricacies of Kenya's political milieu that those pushing for it could not possibly understand the Government's good intentions. As such, by closely mirroring the besieged leader's position, the newspaper maintained a political posture that ensured it did not collide with the Government to its detriment as a publication and that of its allied corporate interests. The newspaper therefore, only thought it prudent to admit the need for

[282] *TS*, "Moi commends political debate," no. 23625, Thursday 10 May 1990, p. 1 and 2.
[283] *TS*, "What we must not lose sight of," no. 23626, Friday 11 May 1990, p. 6.

political reform after the man at the country's helm voiced it, albeit with great reluctance. It did, however, equivocate on the necessity of the debate as shortly after the publication of the above commentary the newspaper turned an editorial on job creation into a denigration of the reform question as it insisted that unemployment and other issues could form the substance of more important debates. It argued that this was so because they would do more to "help majority of Kenyans instead of involving them in politics of no fundamental value to them" — this from a newspaper that had never thought it judicious to separate economics from politics.[284]

When Moi announced that KANU's constitution could be debated and changed as he tried to stave off a more radical alteration of the political system with changes that preserved the integrity of the single party state, the newspaper not surprisingly fell into lock step behind him.[285] It insisted that the announcement had taken the steam out of those pushing for "gratuitous changes in the country's political system" and supported Moi's claim that had multi-party advocates been genuine, they would have approached the party first for discussions before amendments.[286] That some of those advocates had ended up in detention and exile for doing so does not appear to have caused the newspaper undue concern. Besides, on the occasion of Madaraka Day on 1 June 1990, the newspaper averred that Kenya had largely attained the goals of its independence struggle and that its citizens now basked in the security of the knowledge that KANU was a strong political party and that they had "a freely elected legislature" that formulated laws in tandem with their aspirations. It decried waste and corruption in public offices as if to give its earlier assertions some credibility by demonstrating some recognition of

[284] *TS*, "National focus should turn to job-creation," no. 23628, Monday 14 May 1990, p. 6.
[285] *TS*, "Kenyans free to change Kanu Constitution – Moi," no. 23631, Thursday 17 May 1990, p. 1and 2.
[286] *TS*, "Kanu can do the multi-parties job," no. 23632, Friday 18 May 1990, p. 6.

flaws in the picture it had painted and with which it was certain its readers were unfortunately all too well acquainted before ending with a reminder that "unity" was their most valuable asset.[287]

In late June the newspaper highlighted KANU's political reform efforts. Most significantly, the party announced that its National Executive Committee and National Governing Council would act on what various politicians and activists had pushed for fervently: an examination of its electoral system.[288] It was a definite step towards political reform and this time the newspaper thought it safe to issue an unequivocal comment on the process' necessity. The paper explained that KANU was engaging in a healthy exercise of self-examination that all organisations required to ensure that they did not sink into a rigidity that resulted in a loss of the ability to respond to new ideas and led to stagnation. The relevant organs of KANU had responded "magnificently" by demonstrating through their actions that the party was "a viable and dynamic organisation" and not a colossus that reigned supreme over the country as it suppressed views that did not conform to its own. Its critique was delivered with great care to ensure that the impression the reader got was not that KANU was a party in crisis, but one conducting a calm exercise of political contemplation. For example, it acknowledged that recent elections using the queue method had been controversial but its fault lay in those who had tried to manipulate the results by denying the accuracy of the numbers on the ground. Politicians had not been cheated, but the tempestuous nature of recent elections had left them "feeling cheated."[289] At this stage, the newspaper also thought it the perfect time to issue brief critiques of the conduct of KANU youth wingers whom many had accused of heavy handedness and

[287] *TS*, "United we shall prosper," no.23644, Friday 1 June 1990, p. 6.
[288] *TS*, "Committee to examine Kanu polls rules," no. 23661, Thursday 21 June 1990, p. 1 and 2; *TS*, "Significant shift made at top Kanu meeting," no. 23662, Friday 22 June 1990, p. 1 and 2..
[289] *TS*, "The ruling party and self-examination," no. 23662, Friday 22 June 1990, p. 6.

bullying, as well as of politicians who made reckless remarks that poisoned the political atmosphere.

As political events heated up in July following the Government's denial of a license to Matiba and Rubia to hold their public multi-party debate meeting, the newspaper reported the unfolding events with minimum commentary.[290] On the day security forces picked up Matiba and Rubia the newspaper editorial was titled "We Should Try to Create More Jobs." The following day, when it announced their detention along with the picking up of Raila Odinga and lawyer John Khaminwa amidst riots, the focus of its editorial was on the Mandela-Thatcher meeting that year that had been preceded by much speculation and not on the charged political atmosphere at home.[291] However, on the day the meeting was supposed to have been held, 7 July, its editorial cartoon indicated that the newspaper was not too troubled by the spate of recent arrests. It showed a police constable pushing lawyer John Khaminwa into a police office with a police rule book on his desk as he quipped, "I say you get in there…you probably need a lawyer yourself!!!"[292] As riots and arrests of various politicians and professionals continued, the newspaper published an editorial decrying the violence and attendant property loss before

[290] *TS,* "No licence for July 7 meeting," no. 23671, Tuesday 3 July 1990, p. 1 and 2, for editorial see same issue, "Std one: specific instructions vital," p. 6. *TS*, "State security not negotiable – Moi," no. 23672, Wednesday 4 July 1990, p. 1 and 2, for editorial see same issue "How to better handle Kenya's trade with US," p. 6. *TS*, "Police pick up another lawyer," and "Concern over arrests disappoints Moi," no. 23675, Saturday 7 July 1990, p. 1 and 2, for editorial see same issue, "Sports: time to pull together," p. 6. *TS*, "Rampage erupts again in the city," no. 23676, Monday 9 July 1990, p. 1 and 2, for editorial see same issue "Africa needs appraisal," p. 6, *TS*, "Riots erupt in Nyeri, Murang'a and Nakuru," and "Police use force in dealing with hooligans," no. 23677, Tuesday 10 July 1990, p. 1 and 2, for editorial see same issue, "Pre-school vital for a child's education," p. 6. *TS* 24-hour ultimatum on buses, matatus" and "Bust set on fire by mob in Limuru," no. 23679, Thursday 12 July 1990, p. 1 and 2, for editorial see same issue "Welcome home Nelson Mandela!" p. 6, *TS* "Anyona, Ngotho, 4 others picked up," Gibson Kuria leaves for UK," and "Kenyatta, Mboya, Kodhek sons appeal for dialogue," no. 23600, Friday 13 July 1990, p. 1 and 2, for editorial see same issue "Population: education of the masses vital," p. 6.

[291] *TS*, "Matiba, Rubia picked up," no. 23673, Thursday 5 July 1990, p. 1, for editorial see same issue "We should try to create more jobs," p. 6. *TS*, "Matiba, Rubia detained" and "Raila picked up, Khaminwa held," no. 23674, Friday 4 July 1990, p. 1 and 2, for editorial see same issue, "Thatcher, Mandela meeting a success," p. 6.

[292] *TS*, Editorial cartoon, no. 23675, Saturday 7 July 1990, p. 6.

retreating once again.[293] Following the Government's harsh crackdown on opposition politicians, the debate again shifted to the pulpit. The newspaper covered clerics' efforts between the months of July and August to find a solution out of the crisis that would also stabilise the country politically in the long term with editorial silence. Notably, the Catholic Church's Justice and Peace Commission called for a national conference to discuss the country's future received prominent front page coverage as did Bishop Henry Okullu's issuance of another provocative call for the dissolution of parliament.[294] KANU, however, was not ready for the radical surgeries they were advocating and towards the end of the year implemented party reforms that it hoped would stave off calls for political pluralism.

In December of that year when the party did away with its controversial electoral policies at a special delegates' conference, the newspaper played along and helped party bosses in their attempt to stage a dignified retreat. The delegates met allegedly to discuss the findings of the KANU Review Committee and on the first day of the conference, which the President himself chaired, there were contributions from several of those present that defended the queue-voting system vehemently. The day after the first meeting of the conveniently planned two-day meeting, the headline in *The Standard* read, "Queue-voting Debate Still On" and the next day a smaller report, "Queue Voting Out," announced what was presented as an abrupt turn of events.[295] The paper explained that after continued debate, Moi had intervened and requested the delegates to agree to the abolition of the system as the Review Committee had recommended because it had attracted a lot of negative attention in addition to false accusations against the Government. It reported that the President had told the delegates that he understood "how popular the queue-

[293] *TS*, "The basis of a civil society," no. 23678, Wednesday 11 July 1990, p. 6.
[294] *TS*, "Catholics again call for national conference," no. 23681, Saturday 14 July 1990, p. 1 and *TS*, "Dissolve Parliament, says Okullu," no. 23682, Monday 16 July 1990, p. 1 - 3.
[295] *TS*, "Queue-voting debate still on," no. 23803, Tuesday 4 December 1990, p. 1 and 2.

voting system was with them" before "he appealed to differ with their views that the system be retained."[296] At the same time he was reported accusing those who were opponents of the system of being under the influence of foreign powers as he reiterated his agreement with those who supported the system. He acknowledged that its use had resulted in controversy and divisions, arguing that the moment was right for an alternative before urging the delegates to consider his 'humble' views. Not surprisingly, that marked the end of queue-voting along with the 70% rule and expulsion as a party disciplinary policy. The newspaper lauded the President in an editorial titled "Moi Gave People Victory." It praised the delegates for accepting Moi's "passionate plea" and responding to "reason from a seasoned statesman" whose "wisdom and sagacity…prevailed and saved the day and the destiny of this nation."[297] The President had caved in to pressure and conceded some ground, but he was determined to do so without looking weak and it served the interests of *The Standard* to present the President in his desired light in its reporting and commentary of the event.

One conspicuous commentator on the multi-party debate and other issues that year was Mark Too. He had become the Deputy Chair of Lonrho East Africa Ltd. in September 1979 as Roland Rowland unceremoniously sent Udi Gecaga packing from his executive perch in the company. Kenya was undergoing a political transition then and Gecaga had become an albatross as power shifted from his network of patronage rendering him obsolete and Too was favoured by virtue of his personal links to Moi. By 1990, in addition to being the Deputy Chair of Lonrho East Africa, Too was also the Nandi District KANU Chair and he received more coverage in the pages of *The Standard* than any other KANU District Chair. In that year, hardly a month went by without a report covering one or the other activity of the businessman and politician. These were

[296] *TS*, "Queue-voting out," no. 23804, Wednesday 5 December 1990, p. 1, 3 and 13.
[297] *TS*, "Moi gave people victory," no. 23805, Thursday 6 December 1990, p. 8.

usually located on the second or third pages of an issue. In January 1990 for example, the paper featured a report on him urging the Secretary-General of the NCCK, Rev. Samuel Kobia, to caution clerics against issuing "malicious statements" as well as another in which he labeled Rev. Njoya a "tribalist."[298] In May, an article relayed his challenge to multiparty activists to prove to Kenyans that KANU had failed to meet its goals and that they were not simply demanding political change for the sake of it. The paper published another article the following day under his own name on the editorial page alongside a large headshot titled "More Parties for What?" in which he repeated his challenge. He also insisted that the push for multi-partism was a bid to "resurrect tribalism" and a path to chaos.[299]

Too also got coverage in the newspaper for all sorts of unrelated issues that hardly any other party district chair could hope for. He appears to have been the only district chair who could also get the newspaper to cover him railing at his district residents for not helping the Government curb stock thefts, warning them against rumour mongering during a primary school fund raiser, urging them to build and equip more schools at another fund raiser, declaring that he had no political ambitions at a house warming ceremony of a local civil servant, calling on school officials to pay attention to students, attending the funeral of a former paramount chief, decrying hiring practices at a collapsed, government-owned sugar mill, and calling on inquiries into co-operatives to be speeded up so that new directors could be elected with the input of farmers.[300] A report in late July 1990 shows that he even thought himself suitably empowered to

[298] *TS,* "Go easy, Too urges the clergy," no. 23515, Tuesday 2 January 1990, p. 2; *TS*, "Reverend Njoya is a tribalist, says Too," no. 23519, Saturday 6 January 1990, p. 24.
[299] *TS*, "More parties for what?" no. 23625, Thursday 10 May 1990, p. 6 and 7.
[300] *TS*, "Help wipe out stock theft, says Mark Too," no. 23534, Wednesday 24 January 1990, p. 2; *TS*, "Too tells Kenyans to stop rumours," no. 23592, Monday 2 April 1990, p. 2; *TS,* "Too decries lack of well-equipped schools," no. 23628, Monday 14 May 1990, p. 3; *TS*, "Too: I've no political ambitions," no. 23646, Monday 4 June 1990, p. 3; *TS,* "Stop cattle thefts, says Mark Too," no. 23667, Thursday 28 June 1990, p. 3; *TS*, "Listen to students, says Too," no. 23670, Monday 2 July 1990, p. 3; *TS,* "Too at burial," no. 23682, Monday 16 July 1990, p. 2; *TS,* "Hirings

command that no political rallies would be held in Nandi District on Sundays.[301] Certainly, Too gave commentary on a wide range of socio-political issues, but what is of interest here is the frequency with which he got them published in *The Standard*. Unlike other district chairs, he did not seem to have a problem getting the paper's staff to hear him.

The firm Too worked for, Lonrho, could also continue to count on the pages of *The Standard* to present it to Kenya and Kenyans in the manner that suited it best. In the newspaper, Lonrho had a publication that it could count on to project itself to the Government and the governed as an entity that was encouraging development in Kenya. In April 1986, for example, the newspaper was there to capture a story that would otherwise have probably gone unreported; an article on Lonrho's plans to commence a training programme for its employees which included a paragraph stating that the company employed over 150,000 people with fewer than 100 being located in the company's London headquarters. A picture of J. J. Austin Brown, the Group General Manager of Consolidated Holdings Limited, East Africa posing with course participants accompanied the article.[302] This brief report allowed Lonrho to present itself as an ameliorator of the country's unemployment problem as well as a company that cared about nurturing and educating Kenyan human resources. In June of that year, a special supplement commemorating the British National Day featured a Lonrho advertisement alongside related articles and advertisements from other British firms. Each "o" in the name Lonrho was taken up by two illustrations of the earth with a humanised, smiling African continent. It featured a list of the company's 39 Kenyan-based enterprises in industries as diverse as vehicle assembly and distribution, food production, hospitality, travel, wood energy, real estate and print media.

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at firm irk Too," no. 23774, Wednesday 31 October 1990, p. 3; *TS*, "Too wants probes to go faster," no. 23790, Monday 19 November 1990, p. 4.

[301] *TS*, "Too: no more political rallies on Sundays," no. 23690, Wednesday 25 July 1990, p. 2.

[302] *TS*, "Lonrho launches training scheme," no. 22365, Saturday 19 April 1986, p. 20.

Beneath the imposing font that spelled Lonrho were the words "helping Kenya grow."[303] The advertisement appeared to have been targeted less towards the final consumer than to the Kenyan Government and its decision makers who had the power to influence the environment in which the companies operated or whether they operated in it at all. It was neither the first nor the last time the advertisement appeared on the pages of the newspaper as it often made an appearance on public holidays when companies and parastatals sent their congratulatory messages to the President and the country.[304]

In addition to ensuring that the company had the ears of the Government's most influential leadership clique, the Lonrho-owned companies listed in the advertisement were a boon to the newspaper's advertising revenue earnings. For instance, on the 60th anniversary of The Motor Group, the paper published a 13 page supplement in *The Standard* publicising its contribution to the economy in terms of jobs and training as well as the quality and range of its products, in addition to promoting the output of its vehicle assembly lines or distributorships, which included well known brands such as Toyota, Mitusbishi, Massey Ferguson and Renault.[305] Lonrho left nothing to chance and even after it had established itself in Kenya it continued to count on the newspaper to keep its audience up to date with articles on Lonrho's successes that arguably impressed as well as boosted the confidence of those who shared in the company's

[303] *TS*, Lonrho advertisement, no. 22411, Thursday 12 June 1986, p. 20.
[304] See for example similar advertisements, in *TS*, no. 22568, Friday 12 December 1986, p. 26 – 27 and *TS*, no. 22258, Thursday 12 December 1985, p. 14 and 25.
[305] *TS*, "60th Anniversary, The Motor Mart Group: The Motor Industry Leader," no. 22439, Tuesday 15 July 1986, pp. 11 – 24. For another Lonrho-related supplement see, *TS*, "AVA [Associated Vehicle Assemblers]: Building Kenya's winners," no. 22508, Friday 3 October 1990, p. I - VIII. The newspaper also did benefit from Lonrho-related enterprises advertising to the final consumer. See for example, "An anniversary special from Toyota Kenya," no. 22441, Thursday 17 July 1986, p. 2 and *TS*, "Toyota Land Cruiser," no. 22445, Tuesday 22 July 1986, p. 1, *TS*, "Lonrho Hotels Prize Crossword [Series]," no. 23584, Friday 23 March 1990, p. 16.

vested interests. These commonly bore titles such as "Lonrho Profits Surge," "Toyota Outsells other Models," "Lonrho Interests Expand," and "Lonrho Set for Big Expansion."[306]

At the same time, Lonrho also used the newspaper to project an image of itself as an enterprise that encouraged development in Africa and as such one that cared not only about Kenya's economic health but also that of its continental peers. Thus a front page article in November 1986 informed readers that Lonrho had reached an agreement with the Ugandan Government to cooperate on various ventures, including the financing and marketing of Uganda's main cash crops, coffee and tea. Notably, one of these ventures was a major infrastructural project aimed at constructing an oil pipeline from the Kenyan border into Uganda. At the time, Kenya's oil pipeline extended from Mombasa at the coast to the capital Nairobi but the article disclosed that the Government had commissioned a feasibility study from Lonrho for the extension of the existing line to Western Kenya which it had duly submitted (and must have been awaiting a response eagerly). Thus, in addition to presenting Lonrho as a company that continued to invest in the economies of Africa that sorely needed infusions of skill, capital and technology, *TS* coverage was also geared towards tactfully shaking out a response from government bureaucracy that risked delaying Lonrho's contractual victories for two major infrastructural projects. Another disclosure, that the agreement was preceded by a meeting between Tiny Rowland and President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda himself, enabled Lonrho to tout its connections, appear particularly robust, and added a tone of urgency to the matter at hand.[307] Similar articles were devoted to Lonrho's signing of an agreement that expanded its interests in Mozambique to agriculture, mining and tourism, in addition to its stake in the Beira

[306] *TS*, "Lonrho profits surge," no. 23653. Tuesday 12 June 1990, p. 9; *TS*, "Toyota outsells other models," no. 23690, Wednesday 25 July 1990, p. 9, *TS*, "Lonrho interests expand," no. 23788, Friday 16 November 1990, p. 5 and *TS*, "Lonrho set for a big expansion," no. 23815, Tuesday 18 December 1990, p. 10.
[307] *TS*, "Uganda and Lonrho in joint ventures," no. 22542, Wednesday 12 November 1986, p. 24.

oil pipeline that extended to landlocked Zimbabwe in 1985; its triumphant 1985 return to Tanzania after having lost its assets in that country to nationalisation in the late seventies; its commissioning of a gold mine shaft in Ghana in 1988 and its first major deal in newly independent Namibia in 1990.[308]

Most importantly, Lonrho could count on *The Standard* to ensure that its side of the story was told to the African constituency that mattered as well as in a manner that enhanced and protected its image overseas and inspired the confidence of decision makers on the continent. This is evident in the newspaper's coverage of the 1990 release of the report of the British Department of Trade Inquiry that criticised high ranking government officials for contributing to the flawed manner in which Egyptian magnates the Fayed brothers had acquired the House of Fraser group that Rowland had been eyeing for Lonrho.[309] The paper presented the report as a vindication of a dedicated businessman and his company that had "itself suffered grievous injury" as a consequence of what the inquiry termed "fraud on a grand scale." The report matched perfectly the narrative that Lonrho had constructed for its African audience all along, that of a company led by an indefatigable, successful, go-getter who sought to cultivate mutually beneficial relationships between Lonrho and various African countries while fending off the machinations of the envious, devious and dubious.

Indeed over the years while not every issue of *The Standard* carried articles that directly concerned its owners, it was always at hand if and when need arose. As a media enterprise steering itself through the uncertainties of political transition in the 1960s, it undertook to protect its interests by attempting to influence opinion in a manner that would ensure that it not only

[308] *TS*, "Lonrho is back in Tanzania," no. 22241, Friday 22 November 1985, *TS*, "Lonrho, Maputo Agree," no.22065, Wednesday 1 May 1985, p. 24; *TS*, "Lonrho commissions new gold mine shaft in Ghana," no. 22931, Tuesday 16 February 1988, p. 8; *TS*, "Lonrho gets into Namibia," no. 23584, Friday 23 March 1990, p. 5.
[309] *TS*, "Scandal: Lonrho to seek damages," no. 23571, Thursday 8 March 1990, p. 9. See also, *TS*, "Rowland takes action on fraud," no. 23740, Friday 21 September 1990, p. 9.

continued to thrive, but also that the ecological base it needed to do so remained secure. This strategy meant a timely surrender to political change, especially to the African faction (KANU) within that seemed inclined to ensure the stability of the politico-economic order that suited it best. It also meant tolerance for political conduct that was at odds with democratic principles and good governance. Similarly, as a Lonrho-owned publication it continued to align itself closely to those in power, which enabled it to secure and advance the interests of its ownership in various sectors of the economy. As such it consistently acted on its belief that it was not enough to have a stake in the economy; proper political alignment meant being in a position to "make that stake secure."

THE COMPLICATED "BIRTH OF A NATION"

The *Daily Nation* Newspaper: 1960 – 1990[1]

The last thing this newspaper wants to do is to cause panic, if only for the reason that our own survival, like that of any other firm in Kenya must depend on a sound economic climate.[2]

I felt strongly at the time, and still feel that, that the printed media are profoundly important as instruments of mobilising peoples of the new countries of Africa and Asia for the complex and continuing task of nation building.[3]

Bracing for Major Political Change

On its 50th anniversary in the year 2010, the Nation Media Group published its corporate history, *Birth of a Nation*.[4] In its first chapter, Gerard Loughran, a former editorial employee of the *Daily Nation* newspaper, discusses the newspaper's establishment in 1960. He explains that the then youthful and recently installed leader of the Shia Imami Muslims, Prince Karim Aga Khan, found himself in charge of 15 million Ismaili Muslims in 25 countries and that one of the largest of these communities was in Kenya. The prince, Loughran explains, was concerned about the future of this mostly mercantile Kenyan Ismaili community as well as that of other immigrant communities as the curtain fell on British rule in East Africa. He pondered over how the entry of African businessmen into the commercial arena would affect Ismailis, if they would be able to integrate into the new order well, and whether he could "assist in a peaceful transition from colonial rule and if so, how?" At this point, Loughran detours to the prince's return to Harvard to complete his Bachelor's degree in Islamic history and writes that, during this time, the Aga Khan constantly encouraged Ismaili Muslims to make East Africa their home and to become citizens of

[1] A few months after its establishment in March 1960, *The Nation* was renamed the *Daily Nation*. As such the abbreviations *TN* and *DN* is used in this chapter to refer to the newspaper as it was named during the period under examination.
[2] *DN*, "Page one comment," no. 15, Wednesday 19 October 1960, p. 1. Quote is part of a commentary accompanying an article on a downturn in real estate investment in Kenya in the face of political uncertainty.
[3] *DN*, "Message from His Highness the Aga Khan," no. 7553, Wednesday 20 March 1985, p.
[4] Gerard Loughran. *Birth of a Nation: The Story of a Newspaper in Kenya*. London: I. B. Tauris & Co. Ltd., 2010.

the emerging African nations as they participated in their efforts to nurture their economies. To this end the prince hired financial experts and formed the Industrial Promotion Services as an unequivocal show of his commitment to the developmental goals of the new African nations. And then, the writer goes on, "quite unexpectedly, he also announced he wanted to start a newspaper."[5]

According to him, when the Aga Khan broached the matter of establishing a newspaper in East Africa with his press advisor (and former editor of London's *News Chronicle*) Michael Curtis, whom he hoped would oversee the effort, the press advisor assumed the Aga Khan was interested in establishing "a newspaper for the Ismaili community" and he strongly stated his disinclination to help in the establishment of such a publication. The Aga Khan, however, insisted that that was not what he had in mind and what he wanted was a "completely independent paper."[6] In spite of this statement, the *Daily Nation* as a publication implicitly became a newspaper that did indeed watch out for the welfare and interests of Ismaili Muslims and other minorities whose commercial interests he must have also considered valuable to the stability of Kenya as it transitioned into independence. That welfare and those interests could only be catered for in a stable and well-governed Kenya and a newspaper was the optimal platform for the prince not only to "assist in a peaceful transition from colonial rule" in the short-term, but also to safeguard long-term overall stability in a temporal space in which he held no temporal power and the spiritual devotion of but a tiny minority. To achieve its goals, the newspaper he founded would for decades both unreservedly and grudgingly support an unworkable political system.

[5] Ibid., p. 3.
[6] Ibid., p. 4.

Loughran notes that it took eight years for the *Daily Nation* to attain profitability and it is not anomalous that a publication founded and funded by this spiritual leader for caretaker purposes sought and eventually made profits. A look at a few of the investment decisions of the fourth Aga Khan shows that he continued to be guided by the financial principles of his predecessor, his grandfather Agha Sultan Mohammed Shah, the third Aga Khan. Harry Greenwall's biography of the latter reveals that the Aga Khan received varied and generous donations from his followers worldwide, the exact sum of which was apparently known only to himself and the Ismaili's Chief Collector (the Head Mukhi).[7] He also generated income as a result of his "shrewdness as a financier by clever investment and successful speculation."[8] Greenwall also credits the Lady Ali Shah, the third Aga Khan's mother, with having made ingenious business decisions that greatly increased her son's inheritance in the years following his father's death when he was eight years old.[9] According to him, although the Aga Khan received much from his followers, he also spent a lot on various projects for their own benefit. In Pretoria, for example, next to an impressive Ismaili mosque the community also set up a clinic on land the Aga Khan had purchased with their funds. The clinic ensured that most Ismaili children were vaccinated against smallpox and diphtheria and doctors as well as a dietician were at hand to advise mothers. In addition, the facilities included a health library and a health publicity service. Pretoria's Ismaili community also benefited from the activities of organisations such as the H. H. the Aga Khan's Provincial Education Board, H. H. the Aga Khan's Welfare Society, H. H. the Aga Khan's Volunteer Corps and H. H. the Aga Khan's Ladies Volunteer Corps. Greenwall saw the Aga Khan as being a benevolent dictator of sorts who presided over a vast welfare society that his followers funded and supported. He aptly notes that Pretoria's

[7] Harry Greenwall. *His Highness the Aga Khan Imam of the Ismailis*. London: The Cresset Press, 1952, p. 79.
[8] Ibid., p. 75.
[9] Ibid., pp. 11 – 12.

Ismaili organisations and institutions were representative of Ismaili institutions in other parts of Africa.[10]

On the occasion of his 1945 diamond jubilee ceremonies in Dar es Salaam, the Aga Khan decreed that the diamonds which Ismailis donated and against which he had been weighed would be put into the Diamond Jubilee Investment Trust. Apart from investment, the Aga Khan hoped that the fund would be used to begin a new era of Ismaili commercial initiatives so that co-operatives, corporations and building societies that would obtain from the trust sums equal to their capital bases at low rates, and would then lend to Ismailis at equally favourable rates.[11] Commercial success meant these enterprises had to be run efficiently and with profit as a goal. It is also evident that as East Africa transitioned towards African rule in the early 1960s, his grandson thought it prudent that some of these institutions and organisations lose their exclusive communal cloaks and that others be established afresh along lines that displayed a willingness to engage others in a spirit of interracial cooperation. The need for such initiatives was probably heightened by the fact that the region's Ismailis had lived in a racially stratified society in which their future rulers had always been at the bottom. As can be seen from Chapter 3, the run-up to independence not only heightened this realisation amongst Asians, it also brought great anxieties about their lives as racial minorities in the new nations.

For the Aga Khan, a safe and secure East Africa for his "spiritual children" was one in which they too transitioned successfully into their respective African-led countries and in which the safety of their investments was also assured. The Aga Khan's counsel that his followers make their homes wherever their antecedents had settled was always accompanied by a carefully crafted Immamate public relations exercise on their behalf. Prior to the first half of the 20th

[10] Ibid., p. 80 – 81.
[11] Ibid. p. 89 - 90.

century, most of the Aga Khan's followers lived under British rule. Greenwall writes that his widowed mother, the Lady Ali Shah, who astutely managed her son's financial and spiritual affairs in his youth was particularly conscious of British dominance internationally. She also thought it critical need that they build the best relationship possible with the world's most powerful entity to safeguard the welfare of Ismaili communities in different parts of the world. Therefore "so long as the sun never set on that Empire, all would be well with the spiritual welfare of her son's followers."[12] On assuming the Immamate, the grandson of the third Aga Khan embarked on a vigorous exercise to forge strong links with the governments of the rapidly changing East African region, including Kenya. Such links had to be pursued in a purposeful manner that convinced the government of their mutual benefit and thus, with few exceptions, were based on socio-economic projects.

The projects all involved the investment of private capital at a time of rapid constitutional change and political unpredictability as officials shuttled back and forth to London for constitutional talks in the late fifties and early sixties. They were a minority group's vote of confidence in the future and potential of the country at a time when many Asians and Europeans were becoming ever more worried about their place in Kenya's future. In addition, the projects were largely multiracial and were therefore in step with the spirit of the government's socio-political policies of the day, increased interracial interaction and co-operation that would in turn help to ensure stability amidst a rapidly morphing constitutional order and the attendant security of British interests within that order. Some of these were quite ambitious and impressive in scale for maximum and enduring effect. To this end, the Ismaili community made a point of inviting government officials, particularly the governor, to participate in the planning and more commonly the opening ceremonies of Ismaili projects and religious activities. Quite often the

[12] Ibid., p. 12.

governor invited the Aga Khan to stay at Government House during his visits to the colony.[13] When the Ismaili leader was due to travel to Kenya for his coronation, the Immamat Coronation Celebration Committee of H.H. Aga Khan Shia Imami Provincial Council sought and obtained government assistance in planning and organising the event to which the governor, Sir Evelyn Baring, was invited.[14] The governor was also invited to attend the opening ceremony of the Platinum Jubilee Hospital in September 1958, an initiative of the Aga Khan III. For this particular project, the Ismaili community had sought and obtained the government's commitment and subsequent financial support to meet half the costs of the hospital's initial construction estimate.[15] The hospital was one of the community's biggest initiatives in the region. In his speech at the hospital's opening ceremony, the Aga Khan noted his desire, right from the project's earliest stages, to ensure that "not only should it be a superlatively well-designed building…but that it should be run on the most modern lines, modelled on the very best of Europe's voluntary and teaching hospitals."[16] He had as an aim that "its administration and the quality of its medical and nursing services should be second to none from the very beginning."[17] Good management would not only ensure quality services but also that the hospital became self-sustaining financially. And of course, in line with social and political changes, the hospital would employ people and admit patients of all races. Sir Evelyn Baring, convalescing in Nairobi

[13] AE/22/410. See for instance correspondence from the Aga Khan to Sir Malcom MacDonald in which he thanks the governor for his Government House hospitality and in reciprocation invites him and Lady MacDonald to visit him in Gstaad, Switzerland for skiing on their next visit to Europe, 29 September 1963. KNA: Nairobi.
[14] AE/22/410. Correspondence from J. B. Ahamed to Mr. Wilson, Private Secretary to the Governor, 25 October 1957. KNA: Nairobi.
[15] AE/22/410. Correspondence from the office of the Secretary of State [for the Colonies?] to W.A.C. Mathieson, 14 January 1958. KNA: Nairobi.
[16] AE/22/410. The Aga Khan's speech to those present at the opening ceremony of the Platinum Jubilee Hospital, undated. KNA: Nairobi.
[17] *Ibid.*

following an accident, found a way to collect himself and attend the hospital's opening ceremony.[18]

Towards the end of that year, the governor was again present at the opening of a new Jamat Khana that the community had built in Nairobi to cater for its growing population. It was built on land the government granted the community. The Acting President of the Provincial Council compared the new structure to an older one on Government Road and hoped that it too would become a Nairobi landmark.[19] In June of 1960, Baring's successor, Sir Patrick Renison, presided over the opening ceremony of an Ismaili swimming pool. At the ceremony Jimmy Verjee delivered a speech that was revealing of the principles that had guided Ismaili socio-economic projects, ethos and their attitude towards their East African home:

> Your Excellency, it has always been stated that the Ismaili community has made this country its home and under advice from its Spiritual Leader, it is bent upon pursuing a policy which imbibes into its future generation, the fundamental principles of frank and unqualified acceptance of the English traditions of life and true patriotism and loyalty to this country of its adoption.[20]

Yet more had to be done than declaring Kenya home and submission to or being at ease with the traditions of the colony's rulers, especially since rapid political changes had made it clear that British rule was about to come to an end. So he went on to insist that:

> Words, however, are not enough and I would therefore like to reiterate that the entire mode of living of the Ismailis, their approach to the solution of their problems as citizen's of this country, their non-racial policy in keeping the doors of their schools, Hospital and other institutions, wide open to members of other races, their contribution to the economic well-being of the country and last but not least the practical demonstration of their faith in the future of the country through their gigantic Housing Schemes, financed by their own local communal

[18] AE/22/410. Correspondence from F. R. Wilson, Private Secretary to the Governor to Dorothy White, Private Secretary to H. H. the Aga Khan, 20 August 1958. KNA: Nairobi, AE/22/410. Telegram from Aga Khan to Eboo Pirbhai, 24 August 1958. KNA: Nairobi, AE/22/410. Telegram from the Governor to the Aga Khan, 27 August 1958.

[19] AE/22/410. Speech of the Acting President of H. H. The Aga Khan's Nairobi Provincial Council (undated). KNA: Nairobi.

[20] AE/22/410. Speech delivered by the Adminstrator Vazir Jimmy Verjee at the opening of the new swimming pool by His Excellency the Governor Sir Patrick Renison, 17 June 1960. KNA: Nairobi.

> institutions such as the Jubilee Insurance Co. Ltd., and the Diamond Jubilee Investment Ltd., bear ample testimony to the community's declared policy that it stands for the rapid economic and political advancement of all the citizens of this Colony and of its cherished hope that under Rule of Law, they and others who claim to be citizens of Kenya will be allowed to play a full part in the development of this Colony.[21]

Thus Verjee thought it important to emphasise that the Ismaili community had shown their commitment to Kenya by investing in the country at a time when others were fleeing, taking vital capital with them and financially draining the colony. The anti-Asiatic remarks issuing from the lips of various politicians were also not lost to him. Governmental change via constitutional means was not only desirable for its peaceful methods but also because it would ensure that the safety and continuity of the lives and businesses they had diligently built in Kenya were preserved. Nevertheless, the Aga Khan felt there was a need for them to find a way to influence policy in the new governments and to demonstrate their decision to make East Africa their continued entrepreneurial locale and, most importantly, their home. As a result two key institutions were established in Kenya: the East African Industrial Promotion Services and the *The Nation* newspaper, which became *The Daily Nation* in October 1960.

Shortly after its establishment in March 1960, the pages of the *Daily Nation* started to reveal some of the concerns and anxieties of Kenya's Asians (including non-Muslims) and Europeans. A few of the several articles in this vein from the first year of its operation are demonstrative of this characteristic. In July for example, the paper published an article written by N. S. Toofan, a regular contributor of opinion pieces on Asian life and politics which was directed largely at Hindus. In it he argued that they needed to accelerate certain cultural changes, particularly as they concerned the caste system. He insisted that it was a system whose inhibitions encouraged harmful feelings of "superiority and disdain" that needed to be eliminated

[21] Ibid.

as it was bound to "create endless unpleasantness or worse, from the day the Africans begin to come into their own." [22] Less than a month later *TN* itself, evidently very sensitive to immigrant opinion, thought it important to add a preface to a report on Peter Poole, a European condemned to hang for the murder of his African employee, Kawame Musunge. The editor noted that this was as a consequence of the sentiment in "certain quarters" that the political tide against them had influenced the trial. Apparently, many felt that the court had issued a guilty verdict and that Poole's appeals had failed so as to appease African politicians. It condemned this attitude terming it "irrational" and "potentially dangerous."[23] Then in a November editorial, it urged minority races to get used to the idea of African rule as the political tide could not be turned. In anticipation of the KANU policy statement, it urged them to look to the future with hope as in the statement it was believed KANU would guarantee individual property rights and a free and fair society for all. The editorial also called on African leadership to get rid of its "lunatic fringe" and convince the country that an African-led Kenya will be one in which private investment would be secure.[24]

Columnist Paul Pry, who had the opportunity to look at the statement before the paper was sent to the press, was not pleased. He wrote an article on "KANU'S Contradictions," which he believed many people, especially Europeans, would find disturbing. The section on land, for instance, outlined what he thought was a reasonable land resettlement plan. However, he observed that its tone changed as the condition of squatters in the Highlands was compared to the "exploited serf in feudal Europe" that had to be remedied even "if the eradication of this evil system would mean complete revolution of the land tenure in the Highlands." The section on

[22] *TN*, "The truth about Asian women – and about the tremendous task they must perform," no. 17, 10 July 1960, p. 23/9.
[23] *TN*, "The young man they hanged on Thursday," no. 23, 21 August 1960, pp. 20 -21.
[24] *TN*, "Now is the time for courage," 20 November 1960, p. 5.

"planned economy" expressed KANU's desire to control the order of economic activities as "priorities cannot be rationally decided by the capitalist's search for profit." Pry argued that the statement would do little to change the high rate of capital repatriation by "immigrant races" that was already in progress.[25] Those "immigrant races" were not only moving capital abroad, they were also following it and a paper interested in maintaining the stability of immigrant communities could not ignore the phenomenon.

And so as the decade of uncertainty set in and Asians as well as Europeans became increasingly unsettled, *The Nation* attempted to use its pages to calm down the situation. For instance, in August of the following year, the paper carried a story on the activities of an R. H. Mutton representing "Accommodation Australia," who had spent time in Mombasa talking to Europeans about the advantages of immigrating to Australia and encouraging them to do so. The paper quoted him saying that many had expressed interest and in March the following year a ship would be chartered to leave the Kenyan coast for Australia with those who did not want to live in an independent Kenya.[26] *TN* would probably have preferred not to publish the story at all but ignoring such realities could only have been harmful in the long run so it opted for tact in its presentation of the news to its readers. In the same edition, the paper tried to take the air out of the exodus story by publishing "There's a White Exodus from South Africa too," next to the day's editorial, "Frying Pan and Fire."[27] An editorial encouraged readers to read the former and to see for themselves the "colourless" nature of dictatorship. In the story, Stanley Uys writing from Cape Town narrated the expunging of their beloved British traditions from emblems, flags and government and their replacement with totalitarian Afrikaner traditions. It also warned

[25] *TN*, "KANU's contradictions, 20 November 1960, p. 5.
[26] *TN*, "Exodus by Charter Ship Planned," no. 279, Friday 25 August 1961, p. 1.
[27] *TN*, "As Europeans prepare to quite Kenya, there's a White exodus from South Africa too," no. 280, Saturday 26 August 1961, p. 6.

would-be immigrants to Australia that only those who were well capitalised would succeed, otherwise they would be jumping "out of the political frying pan and into the economic fire."

Earlier that month the paper had reported on "The Big Shutdown," which detailed the closure of shops on Nairobi's Bazaar Street as their Asian owners and others (11,000 in total) flocked to the funeral of a fellow Asian murder victim Kantilal Hirji Shah.[28] The paper identified his murderers as a gang of five Africans who shot him during an attempted robbery. One of the few paragraphs *TN* opted to highlight in bold also informed readers that some Africans "appeared to pay tribute" to Shah during the shutdown. The newspaper estimated that £100,000 worth of business was lost when over a thousand shopkeepers shutdown for the day to protest the murder. *The Nation* considered their actions unnecessarily disruptive and an overreaction to the murder, however brutal. It asserted that the grieving Asians had politicised a random act of violence and that their reaction was actually symptomatic of deep seated fears of the future that had been simmering below the surface as the political climate altered radically and the recession set in before the funeral, triggering an explosion of protest that manifested itself in dramatic grief. These were the same fears that had led to unprecedented rises in passport applications and capital outflow. At the same time, the editor cautioned Kenya's future leaders that the first few months after independence would be critical to convincing Asians that their lives and property would be safe in an independent Kenya. This would of course apply to Ismailis as well, whose leader must have been aware of their concerns.

The Aga Khan wasted no time in taking initiative to meet the challenges his community was facing. In 1962 he communicated both in person and in writing a proposition to form a firm to encourage industrial growth to the Secretary of State of Colonies, who with cautious support forwarded the Aga Khan's proposals to the governors of Kenya and Uganda as well as the

[28] *TN*, "The big shutdown," Thursday 17 August 1961, pp. 1 – 2.

Secretary General of the East African Common Services Organisation for consideration. The organisation would provide advice, technical and financial support for fledgling and well established enterprises in the region. He made reference to the Jubilee Investment and Insurance companies that the Ismaili community had benefitted from for several years and which they had considered adequate for their commercial needs. However, the Aga Khan noted, in the midst of the political and economic insecurity that had resulted in firm closures and departures the two firms now seemed inadequate. He recognised that they were not capable of providing the assurance entrepreneurs needed to keep their investments in the region. This issue must have been most unsettling for the Ismaili leader whose policy and those of his predecessor had been to encourage the formation of stable and permanent communities wherever Ismailis found themselves. The Aga Khan knew that he had to take decisive action to reassure Ismailis and keep them from abandoning East Africa en masse. Thus in his proposal to the Secretary of State he disclosed:

> It was this idea of creating a new instrument to guide the community in economic matters during the last difficult months before independence and early years after independence that led me to trying to work out a scheme for the creation of an East African Industrial Promotion Service.[29]

However, the dictates of the socio-political dynamics of the day demanded that the Aga Khan broaden the focus of his economic initiative. He thus added:

> It seemed to me, however, that with my present interests in East Africa, it would be unwise to start a communal institution, and it is for this reason that I would like to create an East African Industrial Promotion Service, without even the name "Ismaili" in the title, and which would be founded by the community and myself, but which would work for any company of any race in East Africa.[30]

[29] AE/22/410. Correspondence from the Secretary of State of Colonies to the Officers Administering the Governments of Kenya and Uganda and the Secretary General, East African Common Services Organisation, 19 June 1962: KNA.
[30] Ibid.

His "present interests" were, of course, his personal investments including *The Nation* newspaper, the Ismaili community and Ismaili enterprises in general.

The Aga Khan wanted to lead by example. He hoped that the EAIPS would act as a robust display of confidence in the future of the new East African countries and encourage Ismailis to stay instead of fleeing in mass panic. In turn, the EAIPS would encourage those who stayed by contributing towards the creation of an environment conducive to commerce and offer them the opportunity for greater prosperity by injecting more sophisticated and substantial auxiliary services for commerce into their enterprises and trading environments. He had thought about this intervention with characteristic care and deliberation. He informed the Secretary of State that he had discussed it with industrialists and businessmen in the region who were impressed and greatly supportive of the idea. Subsequently, in 1961 the Aga Khan then proceeded to hire a German industrial consulting firm, Kienbaum Unternehmensberatung of Gummersbach, to further investigate and flesh out his idea which they proceeded to do during November-December of the same year. It is they who recommended the creation of the EAIPS. Time was of the essence. By May 1962, the firm was in East Africa working with the Ismaili community to restructure the Jubilee companies to streamline them for eventual incorporation into the EAIPS. The size, composition and capabilities of the organisation were crucial to turning the tide of economic insecurity. As the Jubilee companies were undergoing restructuring, Dr. Kienbaum's firm was busy pitching the organisation to "Western European industrialists and banks" some of whom, according to the Ismaili leader, had been quite receptive to the proposition.[31] It was hoped that the EAIPS would attract and pool together technical specialists "from the maximum number of free world countries, including Northern Europeans, Western

[31] Ibid.

Europeans, specialists from Commonwealth countries and from the United States."[32] The Cold War made it crucial to stress the Western base of the initiative and, in turn, win the support of an influential British addressee who wished to exit from an East Africa already well set in a capitalist mold.

There would be another benefit for the British. The initiative would contribute to stabilising East Africa for all its minority populations which included tens of thousands of British settlers whose numbers were contributing to the departures the Aga Khan mentioned in his letter to the Secretary of State of Colonies. By September 1962 the governors of Kenya and Uganda had sent their responses to the Aga Khan's proposition to the Secretary of State of Colonies. Both were supportive of the idea and thought the EAIPS would be most effective if it worked in close consultation with the governments concerned to ensure that its projects complemented their own industrial and developmental efforts. The EAIPS was eventually formed in the spring of 1963 and the *Daily Nation* would always be at hand to ensure that its efforts did not go unnoticed by stakeholders just as it would always be present to reassure the country's inhabitants in moments of crisis.

The Congo Crisis significantly impacted the political leanings of the newspaper in the 1960s as it slowly but steadily caused it to shift its support to the country's leading political party KANU. This was arguably the most significant impact of the conflict on the publication although its corporate historian highlights its coverage of the conflict for marking the paper's transition from a foreign (British) editor to its first Kenyan (African) editor. The crisis debuted on the paper's front page with one headline and two subheadings: "Congo bursts into flame: SOS to the

[32] Ibid.

World: Send planes to get us out, plea by ham radio."[33] *The Nation's* reporters breathlessly filled in its readers on the various messages which amateur radio enthusiasts in Nairobi had picked up. The paper itself had then proceeded to relay their calls for help to airline companies, charter firms and the Royal Air Force, although most could do little in response other than roll out standby operations. The messages communicated the plight of "Europeans [who] have taken to the bush," and that of "thousands of terrified European refugees crowding into towns and cities of the Congo and a train emptied of its "White passengers" by "African troops." A fourth headline also on the front page, "Mutineers Bar Mercy Lift," led a report on the cancellation of an East African Airways flight to Goma to airlift over 200 "European women and children" who were waiting for the plane at the town's airstrip. "Skymen Reserve Call-up," also on the same page, led a report in which among other things, the Belgian Premier Gaston Eyskens blamed atrocities and general violence on African military personnel and added that "he had no reports of African civilians attacking Europeans." Besides, the Belgian government had put in place "maximum – even 'super maximum' – measures to protect Europeans." In the weeks and months ahead, there were reports of troubled "Europeans," "Belgian settlers," "some Britons," in various states of distress anxiously waiting for evacuation at airports, being attacked, raped or dying at the hands of Africans. For *The Nation* this was the deficiency in their early reports on the crisis: the sharply delineated presentation of the African as aggressor and the European as victim with journalistic focus on the fate of latter.

More significantly, the crisis caused the paper to reexamine Kenya's march to independence and what it meant for peace and stability in the near future. Typical of this is "Kenya and the Congo: Could it happen here?" a special newspaper report a week after the crisis

[33] *TN*, "Congo bursts into flame," "SOS to the world," "Send planes to get us out, plea by ham radio," "Mutineers bar mercy airlift," "Skymen reserve call-up," no. 17, 10 July 1960, p. 1.

exploded on the paper's pages.[34] The report noted that private discussions with Kenya's Europeans and Asians revealed that they were afraid violence would erupt if independence came too soon, while Africans in sharp contrast remarked that violence was a possibility if their demands for independence were not heeded. The article carefully examined the Congo's colonial history and its rapid journey to independence in a bid to contextualise the conflict and illuminate the factors that led to it. It was clearly aimed at reassuring readers that Kenya's shift towards independence had been slower and continued to be more gradual than that of the Congo. It also pointed out that unlike it, Kenya had a greater proportion of educated Africans in the civil service and that the country's Africans had a longer history of participation in party politics, adding that strong African political organisations were key to a stable future.

An editorial at the end of that dark month for the Congo, "Too much defeatism," decried what it perceived of as a pervasive attitude of helplessness and hopelessness amongst Kenya's Europeans and Asians brought on by fears that Kenya's economy would collapse and that the country was headed for its own Congo-style crisis in the near future. The disruptions such fears could cause naturally concerned a newspaper founded and funded by a man eager to keep a certain segment of those immigrant communities safe and secure in a society that would not disturb their social and economic lives. The paper went on to list security and financial measures that the government was taking to safeguard the country's future. In addition, it sought to comfort Asians and Europeans by implying that Kenya's politicians understood only too well the workings of the capitalist system and the global markets to expel them once they took over the reins of power. They (Africans) may not be fond of either one of them, but "very few intelligent Africans (whatever may be said on the political platforms) seriously propose to push them out." The editor conceded that while there was a lot of turbulence in Congo, South Africa and Asia, he

[34] *TN*: "Kenya and the Congo: Could it happen here?" no. 18, 17 July 1960, p. 12.

was confident that Kenya was not lacking in a good number of people across racial divides who were determined to steer it sagaciously through the difficult and unpredictable times ahead. "If this is a declaration of faith, THE NATION can point to more solid fact in its support than can those who forecast only doom and disaster," added the editor.[35] Nevertheless, the spectre of a conflict never left the newspaper and it loomed large over its assessment of Kenya's two main African political parties in the 1960s and eventually caused it to align itself with and promote KANU for much of that decade.

After the February elections, it became clear to a disappointed *DN* that KANU was not going to begin negotiations to enter government as had been planned. It was obvious to the paper that KANU's insistence that Kenyatta be freed before that happened was unpalatable and unacceptable not only to European settlers but also to key government officials. To the paper, KANU's hesitation appeared to extend Kenya's period of politico-economic uncertainty, creating room for squabbles that had the potential of escalating into open inter-party conflict to the detriment of all it stood and hoped for as well as promoted in its pages. Just as was the case with its rival *TS, DN* immediately shifted its focus to a less truculent KADU. Two days after the electoral results were announced, the paper's headline boldly proclaimed "Ngala: KADU is willing if KANU is not."[36] According to its editorial, the country's constitutional process was of utmost importance and despite differing opinions on the Kenyatta issue across political divides, it exhorted Kenya's politicians to ensure that the process was not scuttled. It also expressed fears that should KADU go ahead and agree to form a coalition government with Blundell's NKG, a scornful KANU might proceed to do all it could to make the country ungovernable. It therefore welcomed the proposed bi-party trip to Lodwar to consult Kenyatta in the hope that he would be

[35] *DN*, "Too much defeatism," no. 18, July 31 1960, p. 6.
[36] *DN*, "Ngala: KADU is willing if KANU is not," no. 129, Friday 3 March 1961, p. 1.

willing to persuade the two parties to come to an agreement so that the new government could be formed.[37]

When intra-KANU discord complicated plans to visit Kenyatta, the paper was alarmed and responded with a page one comment decrying the follow-up of an otherwise peaceful election with "a major political crisis." It considered KANU's actions irresponsible as they threatened the attainment of the very factors the newspaper's proprietors and management desired. Once again, the paper expressed its doubts that a KADU coalition would be able to govern effectively insisting that "the prospects of a coalition Government formed by KADU and some of the European and Asian minority groups are anything but rosy." KANU's efforts to appease the constituency that had voted for it in February would simply result in national catastrophe as in the absence of political stability "Kenyatta's restriction will inevitably continue, the economic situation worsen, hunger and unemployment increase and the security situation deteriorate." Kenyan Africans, the paper went on, could achieve their goals "by working and co-operating with those of the immigrant races who want to help him" or "by producing a series of political explosions."[38] The latter it argued, could only steer Kenya towards the ugly road that led to a bloody and turbulent Congo-type independence. The former, the paper insisted, was actually faster and appealed to its readers to look to Nigeria and Tanganyika where its peaceful results could be seen.

Two and a half weeks after the election results were announced on March 1 1961, the paper's editorial called readers' attention to KADU's "unity and discipline" that even in the aftermath of its defeat, permitted it to demonstrate advantages against its rival on a daily basis.[39] The editor argued that KANU's victory in the elections would have been even more impressive

[37] *DN*, "Four African Leaders going to Lodwar to see Kenyatta," no. 130, Saturday 4 March 1961, p. 1.
[38] *DN*, "Page One Comment," no. 131, Monday 6 March 1961, p. 1.
[39] *DN*, "Unity and Discipline," no. 142, Saturday 18 March 1961, p. 6.

had it been more cohesive as a political body. In addition, KANU's refusal to visit Kenyatta in response to the Governor's invitation that both parties send delegations to Lodwar to meet and consult the detained politician followed by an acceptance shortly afterwards made them look confused and disorganised. To make matters worse, KADU had ended up with three seats as opposed to KANU's two during the selection process for the nominees of the National Seats. *DN* blamed this on infighting within the latter. The newspaper believed KANU was turning into a sham of a party weakened by what it boiled down to "tribal and factional differences."[40] Eventually KANU and KADU did manage to organise a joint delegation to visit Kenyatta. The *DN* celebrated with a front page headline exclaiming "Jomo says unite to get me out," but a closer reading of the article reveals that the paper was trying very hard to be optimistic or simply using its pages to beseech Kenyan politicians to enter negotiations with each other and the Governor so that a government would be formed.[41] Though it observed that the politicians had returned to Nairobi in good spirits it noted that neither party had changed its position as far as participation in the government was concerned. While both parties expressed a willingness to work with each other to get Kenyatta freed and win independence, KANU maintained that it had not gone to Lodwar to discuss participation in government while Daniel T. Moi speaking for KADU insisted that "KADU has not decided not to take part in the Government and we will make arrangements to see the Governor again."[42] When KANU through Mboya eventually stated clearly that it would not enter government and that it had turned its back on the Lancaster House agreements, *DN* ruefully noted that the standstill would continue and threw its cautious support behind KADU.[43] After KADU agreed to be part of the government, the paper praised it as a

[40] Ibid., p. 6.
[41] *DN*. "Jomo says unite to get me out," no. 147, Friday 24 March 1961, p. 1.
[42] Ibid.
[43] *DN*. "It's still a deadlock," no. 148, Saturday 25 March 1961, p. 7.

party "acting out of a commendable sense of public spiritedness" and "making a first class job of it."[44] But as far as the paper was concerned, the Kenyatta question had not been answered and until it was, Kenya could not rest.

Kenyatta was of course a controversial figure and the *DN* struggled as it endeavoured to present him to its readers in a manner that assuaged the fears of Kenya's anxious minorities as it supported their causes, while it lent him its support in line with African aspirations. When Sir Patrick Renison made it clear that Kenyatta's release would be conditioned on the unfettered continuation of the constitutional process, the formation of a stable government and on an assurance that a free Kenyatta's political activities would be contained in the interest of security, the *DN* balked at his position, particularly because it rightly perceived that the Governor's attitude would be untenable for most Africans. While it too believed that the leader's release could not be unconditional, it insisted that once released Africans would find any further restriction of Kenyatta unacceptable. The paper also thought it was commendable that the government had decided to allow the press and African politicians to have access to Kenyatta before he was freed. However, it argued, there was the danger that Kenyatta, who had been outside the Kenyan political scene for almost a decade and was out of touch with the rhythms of Kenyan life, would only have delegations presenting him with an endless array of de-contexualised, inter- and intra-party disputes of which he might become a part, further complicating matters for the administration. Instead, the paper made a strong push for his release. It cautiously stopped short of claiming to understand the man fully for "Kenyatta is either no longer a force in this country, or he is still the most sinister thing it has ever produced."[45] At the same time, it believed that Kenya was changing and it was time to "let

[44] *DN*. "Poisoned atmosphere," no. 213, Friday 9 June 1961, p. 6.
[45] *DN*. "Between two Stools," no. 128, Thursday 2 March 1961, p. 6.

Kenyatta meet the people he knows and understands. Let him get the feel of a country which in 10 years has advanced the pace of 50."[46] It argued that true freedom would grant Kenyatta the opportunity to bathe in the currents of what the *DN* was advocating, an emerging new Kenya in which all races would be equal and their rights respected.

Kenyatta's freedom was important precisely because the paper neither understood nor trusted him. Instead, it lay its trust in Kenyan society which by then it believed was mature enough to assess, accept or reject Kenyatta on the basis of what would enable the country to quickly achieve independence and thereafter general stability. Kenyatta's first test would be the manner in which he counseled the KANU-KADU delegations that visited him in Lodwar in search of consensus on government formation. It insisted that "if Kenyatta sincerely has the good of the country at heart, he can hardly allow his own person to become the barrier to further progress." Furthermore, there was no need for Renison to explain that he was acting in the interests of the country and cared too much for it to release Kenyatta into a position of authority because "Kenyatta already holds that position of authority." The paper had evidently realised that detention was only ennobling him as he became a martyr-like symbol of self-sacrifice. Delegations to Lodwar only worked to enhance his aura as a charismatic and judicious leader to whom society's most prominent resorted for wise counsel. Yet did he deserve that image? The problem for the *DN* remained that Kenyatta's psyche after ten years of isolation ominously remained an enigma. It appears that only freedom for Kenyatta while Kenya was still a colony in which Britain was in a position to directly intervene politically could provide the most secure environment for the correct diagnosis of his mindset. It insisted that freedom "would have subjected Kenyatta's authority to the eroding forces of African public opinion which might soon

[46] Ibid.

enough have discerned the idol's feet of clay."[47] The electorate was thus being denied time to assess him for themselves.

The remarks of KANU leaders at a meeting in public rally in Mombasa some three months before had underscored just how crucial the paper's defining and crafting the presentation of Kenyatta to the Kenyan public was to attaining the Kenyan future it desired. In March 1961, the paper reported that Oginga Odinga, speaking to a very receptive and supportive crowd, had praised Kenyatta as "the enemy of Europeans" (he later retracted the word 'Europeans' and explained he meant 'imperialists) and that he was imprisoned "because he wanted an unfettered Kenya." The paper reminded its readers that the previous year, Odinga had called Kenyatta "the leader of Mau Mau" despite the latter's steadfast denial of any such role and that he had gone on to praise Mau Mau as a "heroic struggle."[48] These were of course alarming statements for those who still considered Mau Mau a terrorist guerilla movement with no genuine grievances. Odinga had gone on to say that Kenyatta was imprisoned because he had exposed the plundering of the country and it was only he and his supporters who could put an end to such rapacity. The paper also reported that Muinga Chokwe, the KANU MLC for Mombasa, had attributed the prevailing famine to the repatriation of capital by "immigrant races" and insisted that "they should follow their money."[49] For the *DN*, these remarks, made in populist mode but not all untrue, were worrying indeed for they threatened to infuse bitterness and hatred against racial minorities into the transitional process. The paper condemned the politicians' remarks as inaccurate and unwarranted attacks on Kenya's immigrant races, arguing

[47] *DN*. "Way out for KANU?" no. 129, Friday 3 March 1961, p. 6.
[48] *DN*. "Odinga does it again," no. 143, Monday 20 March 1961, p.1.
[49] Ibid., p. 2.

that Odinga's insistence that "the white man in Kenya" was "squeezing us of our wealth" and "introducing tribalism" were such outrageous remarks they unworthy of a response.[50]

However, the paper did begin to inch cautiously towards positive coverage of Kenyatta. In early June, it carried a small story on its second page titled "Kenyatta – assurance to farmers." In it, the paper explained that Kenyatta had repeated his assurance that good European farmers who were not demanding special treatment in the new Kenya need not be fearful of their place in the new country. The paper, carefully noted that "this statement was claimed" in a report which KANU leader Mungai Njoroge and the Minister for Tourism Peter Marrian had prepared following their visit to Maralal.[51] Kenyatta issued other assurances including his desire for a peaceful attainment of independence as well as his concern at the deepening divide between African politicians. Six days later, a picture showing Ronald Ngala and other government officials along with James Muigai (the detained leader's brother) breaking ground for the construction of Kenyatta's house in Gatundu accompanied a story that obviously promoted KADU's claims that they had only joined government to speed up the journey to independence and Kenyatta's release.[52] The day's editorial decried political infighting amongst Africans and while it welcomed Kenyatta's invitation to the feuding parties to visit him in Maralal, the paper appeared uncertain about whether Kenyatta was acting out of concern for the country or out of a desire to hasten his release and therefore in self-interest. It argued that if it were for the former, then he had "some pretty straight-talking" to do.[53] Evidently acknowledging his power and influence, the paper urged Kenyatta to repeat statements that had been attributed to him in the past, for example, his denunciation of those who had referred to him as a demi-god and remarks

[50] *DN*. "Where do we stand?" no. 144, Tuesday 21 March 1961, p. 6.
[51] *DN*. "Kenyatta – assurance to farmers," no. 208, Saturday 3 June 1961, p. 2.
[52] *DN*. "Work starts on Jomo's house," no. 213, Friday 9 June 1961, p. 5.
[53] *DN*. "Poisoned atmosphere," no. 213, Friday 9 June 1961, p. 6.

he had made to Njoroge Mungai insisting that he was not the "property" of either KANU or KADU and would act in the interests of all African parties. If he did not approve of KADU's participation in the government it encouraged him to express similarly his disapproval of KANU's behaviour, which it deemed non-constructive.

By mid-June 1961 the *DN* had intensified its efforts to present an image of Kenyatta that was favourable to racial minorities and to influence the manner in which Africans would receive and respond to him. They benefited from a lot of indirect help from Kenyatta himself, who continued issuing statements that racial minorities, determined not to leave the country, must have found comforting. "You've got nothing to fear – Kenyatta," proclaimed one bold headline over a report on a delegation of four men from the Kenya Indian Congress who had visited Kenyatta in Maralal. The report began with an emphatic declaration that "Kenyatta subscribes fully to the declaration of Human Rights in the United Nations Charter and believes that all persons who have made their homes here, and are prepared to identify themselves with the country and its people, have nothing to fear in an independent Kenya."[54] During the visit, Kenyatta had also sought to clarify remarks he had previously made to the press on land after he had been quoted saying title deeds Government had issued by then amounted to nothing more than "a piece of paper."[55] The remark had disconcerted many, particularly European landowners who took it as a threat to property rights. The paper in bold print emphasised that Kenyatta had explained his remarks were not to be taken as a broad land policy statement – a matter which was better left to the future government. Another statement which received bold print emphasis was the paragraph in which the reporter stated that "Kenyatta had also expressed full agreement with the Congress view that ultimately it was the responsibility of African leadership to look after the

[54] *DN*, "You've got nothing to fear – Kenyatta," no. 221, Monday 19 June 1961, p. 1.
[55] Ibid., p. 1.

welfare of all people in Kenya, irrespective of their race or origins."[56] The entire report is striking in its mostly direct attribution of Kenyatta's statements to the man himself as opposed to the high rate of the use of "Dr. Mungai said" and the drenching of the spirit of the article on his and Marrian's visit to Kenyatta with the use of a poignant "claimed" at its top. While "claimed" and "said" are not absent from the "nothing to fear article," their minimised employment went a long way towards eliminating the tone of sceptism that pervaded the Mungai-Marrian Maralal trip report that came so soon after the paper expressed its desire for Kenyans, politicians and ordinary citizens, to hear Kenyatta in his own words.

Perhaps the fact that a wholly minority delegation had returned with a positive report added more weight to their claims. When a six-man delegation of the Kenya Muslim League which Zafrud Deen led visited Kenyatta a few days later, their trip was reported with a comparable level of optimism and positivity on an inner but prominently featured page 2 story titled "Kenyatta: I'm Ready If the People Want Me." Concomitantly, the newspaper at this stage may have decided to shed all indicators of doubt in preparation for the release and ultimate leadership of the man to whom all African leaders, KANU or KADU, appeared to defer and who looked destined for the ultimate position of authority in a new political dispensation. Leaders of minority groups also seemed to be coming round to accepting Kenyatta as a future leader. Suitably positioned next to the above ("nothing to fear") article was a news report on KADU's chief political advisor Taita Towett's address at a Mombasa public meeting. He was reported to have told his audience that Europeans and Asians would be welcome to stay in Kenya on condition that they accepted African rule. He then filled his audience in on his own recent trip to Maralal to see Kenyatta whom he had never previously met and was very keen on doing so to gauge his character. Towett had apparently returned from the trip impressed with the man who

[56] Ibid., p. 1.

had welcomed him and Ronald Ngala warmly despite their KADU membership, urging them to "march separately but strike together."[57] The political advisor was reported reassuringly telling his audience, and by extention *DN's*, that Kenyatta "is not a bad man nor a risk to the country at all. He is a good man." These remarks, issuing from a prominent KADU leader, must also have held more water for the paper than the Gichuru-Marrian visit and could also explain its prominent positioning in the newspaper's pages.

Nevertheless, as a publication, the *DN* still had its doubts about the direction of Kenyatta's post-detention politics and it was aware that some of its readers shared similar doubts so, it urged them to accept his certain release as far better for the country than political uncertainty and continued playing the role of transition midwife and counselor. The paper appears to have deliberately retained its covertly equivocal stance towards Kenyatta to enable it to play those roles. In mid-July 1961 when Kenyatta's release was imminent and the direction of debate in the LEGCO appeared to indicate that he would join the body upon his release, quoting Marrian, the newspaper gave one of its strongest statements yet on the matter:

> And to those in this country who fear the entry of Jomo Kenyatta into parliamentary life – and a leading, if not dominant role at that – we would say, like Peter Marrian
>
> "We believe Mr. Kenyatta has proved himself true to his Maralal statements and that he is now capable of exercising the unifying influence this country so desperately needs. We believe he will now prove a constructive force. But if the reverse is true, the sooner we find out about it the better."[58]

The statement was certainly not an unequivocal endorsement of the man and it left room for frank commentary and continued scrutiny of Kenyatta's character, actions and policies then and in the near future to the extent that the newspaper chose or would actually be able to do so. Six

[57] *DN*, "He's a good man, Towett declares," no. 221, Monday 19 June 1961, p. 1.
[58] *DN*, "Mr. Jomo Kenyatta MLC?" no. 244, Saturday 15 July 1961, p. 6.

days later, a full page editorial in the newspaper titled "Can he pull it off?" similarly revealed the paper's take on what it still considered to be an iffy future:

> Few men become myths in their own lifetime. Fewer still, having become myths, have then to undergo the transformation into man again. But such is almost certain to be the fate of Jomo Kenyatta.
>
> From the moment he crosses, for the last time, the threshold of his temporary home at Maralal to make the fateful journey back to Kiambu the journey will begin.
>
> For Jomo Kenyatta, and for Kenya, the journey is likely to be a painful one. But possibly Kenyatta has the vigour, the vision, tenacity of purpose, the physical and mental stamina to stand up to the enormous stresses and strains of the transformation.
>
> If he has, then the outlook for Kenya and the proposed East African Federation, in which he must certainly play a dominant role is good. If he has not, the fears of those who see in Kenya's headlong rush towards independence the seeds of another Congo, or worse, may be realised. [59]

The paper's editorial then made it clear the sort of policies that would win Kenyatta the trust of the skeptics and the anxious: once in power he had to live up to his promises not to seize European-owned land and Asian property, as well as welcome and protect foreign investment. This "wait-and-see" approach was to continue to pepper generously editorials, news reports, and commentaries on Kenyatta up to and immediately after his release. [60]

In the meantime, the *DN* in its self-appointed role as transition midwife presented its readers with positive story after positive story on Kenyatta's release even as it reported on the KADU arm of government dithering on the matter of his actual release and his readiness for leadership.[61] The paper speculated on the date of his release and eagerly fed readers with minute details of everything from the colour of the burglar-proof bars of his newly constructed Gatundu

[59] *DN*, "Can he pull it off?" no. 249, Friday 21 July 1961, p. 6.
[60] See for instance, *DN*. "The man and the hour," no. 269, Monday 14 August 1961, p. 6 and *DN*, "This is where he came in," no. 270, Tuesday 15 August 1961, p. 6.
[61] See for example, *DN*, "Jomo statement is held up," no. 249, Friday 21 July 1961, p. 1, and *DN*, "Jomo can lead – but not yet, says Ngala," no. 252, p. 1.

home to the weather's impact on release plans. [62] It also gave plenty of coverage to his homecoming. In addition to keeping readers informed about what was by any measure a key political development, perhaps the coverage, especially when taken in the context of more skeptical opinion articles, was also geared towards humanising the mythical man that Kenyatta had become in detention. The coverage familiarised the reader with him and the newspaper was laying ground for Kenyans, immigrant and non-immigrant, to engage him as a leader who could not only wield great authority, but also one whom they could also dare to hold accountable for that authority.

Following Kenyatta's release, the *DN t*urned its attention once again to the constitutional process that was key to providing the stability for which the country yearned, unequivocally discouraging British and Kenyan politicians from transplanting the Westminster model of government to Kenya. It provided its revealing two-cents on the matter in response to a KANU-KADU joint committee invitation for Kenyans to submit their views on the country's future constitution. According to the paper, democracy in Pakistan, Ceylon and Ghana had foundered because though Britain had bequeathed unto them the Westminster model of government with the best intentions, their constitutions, though suitable for countries with what it considered "homogenous states" such as the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, could not adequately address the needs of newly independent states in Africa and Asia. The paper had three main objections to the model that mirrored the infantilisation of the African mind represented in the minority-owned colonial-era newspapers that had preceded it. First, the rule that majority wins worked in the United Kingdom where allegedly "a spirit of fairplay, compromise and generosity, with its roots in centuries of tradition, permeates political thinking." In Kenya, it was unlikely to work as society was "heterogenous" and "immature." Second,

[62] For instance, *DN*, "House is nearly ready," no. 256, Saturday 29 July 1961, p. 1

checks on the Executive by the Legislature were highly destabilising, for each time the governing party lost a crucial vote it had to resign and face the electorate once again. Instability led to political crises that weakened government. This, the *DN* argued, created room for military coups and other political ills which were particularly damaging for new states "with desperate populations."[63] Last, and on this point the paper gave its lengthiest objection, the Westminster model had no minority safeguards.

> So the possibility is that in Kenya, under such a constitution, the European, Asian and Arab minorities will lack the confidence to reverse the present trend of capital outflow. They may indeed intensify their "salvage operations" and get out with what they can, while they can.
>
> Such a development is bound to have its effect on the inflow of investment capital from the outside. Private investors will be extremely wary and if foreign governments invest here it is likely that they will do so only to further their own political aims, which may be inimical to the best interests of the country.
>
> Economic hardships will exacerbate racial and tribal differences. This in combination with the possibility of weak Governmental direction, could result to a situation similar to that in the Congo.
>
> Is this what we want for Kenya?[64]

It is interesting to note that the racial ordering of the three major minorities at the beginning of this passage consciously or unconsciously harkened back to the unofficial racial structure in descending order of the colony that had been the norm for decades. More importantly, the objection captured the fears and anxieties of foreign investors such as the Aga Khan and minorities that included his own Ismaili followers, which had led to the establishment of the *DN* in the first place. The paper went on to suggest an alternative to the Westminster model – an American-type constitution as apparently in contrast to the other 'mature' countries mentioned, the United States was racially, religiously and culturally diverse. It was August 1961 in a racially volatile USA, but in the American constitution the *DN* claimed to see a document that "embodies a great number of checks and balances to prevent the oppression of one section of the population

[63] *DN*, "Is Westminster really the best model for Kenya?" no. 272, Thursday 17 August 1961, no. 272, p. 6.
[64] Ibid.

by another or the abuse of power by individuals who reach the top."[65] If ever there was need for proof that African countries would each have to undertake their own unique and difficult sojourns to fair and just societies, it was there in the *DN's* depiction and juxtaposition of 'mature' and 'immature' democracies on its sixth page that day. Nevertheless, the statement helps to explain further the position the newspaper gradually adopted in favour of a strong executive and a single-party even when it had accumulated more power than any one arm of government in the UK or the USA.

The *Daily Nation* Endorses KANU: A Journey of Accommodation Begins

When elections came, the *DN* endorsed KANU and used its pages to encourage its audience to vote for the party in two separate editorials, one of them on its front page. The paper argued that the elections marked such a crucial point in the country's history that "editorial fence-sitting" would have been the "negation of a true newspaper's function in a democratic country. It therefore urges its readers this weekend to support the Kenya African National Union."[66] The paper justified its endorsement of KANU as opposed to the KADU/APP alliance thus: first, it considered KANU the party with the most capable leaders; second, it believed KANU would work better with the leaders of the other East African countries to achieve federation; third, it also believed KANU was more promising as a guarantor of internal security; and last, as it was desirous of a united Kenya at peace, it considered KANU's centralisation ideologies more conducive to the attainment of that unity than KADU's insistence on regionalism. KANU's charismatic and colourful cast of leaders had thus impressed the newspaper and its strong centralisation policies seemed to make the future of minorities more secure. Not surprisingly, the endorsement was not without reservations. The paper made it clear

[65] Ibid.
[66] *DN*, "KANU for Kenya!" no. 822, Saturday 25 May 1963, p. 6. The second endorsement front page endorsement is in *DN*, "We said it…We meant it…" no. 823, Monday 27 May 1963, p. 1.

that its 1963 endorsement was not indefinite. It also wondered, once again, whether KANU would truly protect minorities, encourage and protect foreign investment, and would remain united as a party or be rent apart by personality conflicts and factional squabbles.

In the days that followed, as KANU emerged the victor the *DN* featured celebratory headlines and kept readers informed of preparations for self-government. On 1 June 1963, a small story at the top of the paper's second page featured the only statement in the paper's pages from a religious group, "Ismailis Congratulate Kanu." Sir Eboo Pirbhai, the leader of the Ismaili community in Kenya, had sent a telegram, published in full as part of the short article, on behalf of the continent's Ismaili communities congratulating the new Premier on KANU's victory. Twenty-four days later, following a speech Kenyatta made at a Nakuru meeting in Kenya's Rift Valley, the *DN* gave the Premier its first unreserved endorsement. In his speech Kenyatta repeated the assurances he had made in detention and after his release, including a warning against those who were "hindering progress" on European farms for "out-dated racial reasons."[67] The paper was delighted; Kenyatta's "statesmanlike" speech was the confidence booster it believed the farming and business sector needed to spur growth.[68] What made the speech convincing for the newspaper was that Kenyatta was now in a position of authority, Kenya was officially in self-governing mode, and complete independence was at hand. "Can there…be any further excuse for a lack of confidence in the type of Government Kenya has and will have in the future?" asked the paper. "Therefore, even the political Jeremiahs must by now be convinced that the KANU Government stands for sane, wise and non-extremist Government."[69]

In spite of its support for KANU and the new Premier, the newspaper did recognise that there was a vital role for the opposition to play but could not hide its unease with the election's

[67] *DN*, "Words of a statesman," no. 847, Tuesday 25 June 1963, p. 6.
[68] Ibid.
[69] Ibid.

losers. Once KADU conceded defeat and pledged to support the government in its development efforts, *DN* observed that it deserved "unstinted praise."[70] Constructive criticism and cooperation would be invaluable to the new government. At the same time, its wariness of opposition politics in Africa could not be concealed, for the ghost of the Congo still loomed large over the publication. It cautioned that the implementation of KADU's good intentions would not be easy as it found it difficult to believe that unscrupulous politicians, determined to acquire power by any means necessary after having lost the elections, did not exist. "Some still nurse the hope that they can become the Tshombes of Kenya," it warned.[71] It was up to both parties to ensure that such characters did not destabilise the country and ruin its chances of winning the confidence of the international community, which the *DN* had repeatedly pointed out was a necessary ingredient for the country's future economic development. But as the wounds KADU and KANU had acquired in their battles in and out of the constitutional conferences refused to heal, their discontent with the status quo simmered and inevitably showed up on the newspaper's pages and it was drawn into comment.

When Ronald Ngala and other members of the opposition met with Governor Malcom MacDonald to demand autonomy for the Coast Region and the full recognition of the rights of KADU Regions: Coast, Rift Valley and Western, the newspaper disapproved.[72] Then when KADU officials unhappy with the direction of the constitutional talks in London threatened secession in October 1963, the *DN* responded by praising Jomo Kenyatta's condemnation of the threat as blackmail as well as his appeal for calm and the maintenance of law and order. The editor also called on KADU to reconsider their position and warned against the negative

[70] *DN*, "A prayer answered," no. 828, Saturday 1 June 1963, p. 6.
[71] Ibid.
[72] For newspaper's report see *DN*, "Recognise the rights of the KADU regions," no. 848, Wednesday 26 June 1963, p. 16. For editorial see same issue, "Threats from the Coast," p. 6.

repercussions of their actions.[73] The following day, the *DN* headline screamed the government's response to the KADU threat, "Alarmists can be Jailed or Fined £250."[74] Another front page story quoted an interview Kenyatta granted to the British Broadcasting Corporation in which he accused KADU of "sharpening spears and making poisoned arrows, imaginary poisoned arrows, in an effort to frighten the British Government."[75] It seems that for the *DN* of the 1960s, regionalism was too close a kin of division, territorial fragmentation, disintegration and disorder. As long as it existed it would always appear to be a nightmarish harbinger of Congoesque chaos and bloodshed. It could lead to the type of conflict that not only traumatised a nation but also disrupted the lives of immigrant communities, destroyed their livelihoods, and sent them packing in distress to the nearest border crossing points, ports and airports with their pictures turning up in newspapers all over the world. The *DN* had thrown its weight behind the fledgling government, believing it to be the better option for the new nation and from its pages it cheered them on.

It is not surprising therefore, that in 1964 when KANU made its first moves to consolidate its hold over power in the first of a series of constitutional processes that would plunge the country into autocratic rule for decades, the *DN* lauded it. The prospect of a country free of regionalism was too appealing to ignore. More power in the hands of Kenyatta and KANU whose policies the paper embraced was comforting. Besides, the constitution at that time still had some vital checks and balances between the three arms of government. The newspaper praised Kenya's new republican constitution, with a more powerful head of state and greatly weakened regions as a consequence of centralisation "unique among the democracies of the

[73] *DN*, An appeal for sanity," no. 940, Friday 11 October 1963, p. 2.
[74] *DN*, "Alarmists can be jailed or fined £250," no. 941, Saturday 12 October 1963, p. 1.
[75] *DN*, "KADU 'sharpening spears…'" no. 941, Saturday 12 October 1963, p. 1.

world."[76] It acknowledged that the post of the new republican president had increased powers as compared to that of the Governor-General, but the fact that he still had to get elected in a constituency and that his rule was dependent on the votes of the people through their parliamentarians meant he would dominate politics without being "the God-like figure created in many other so-called republics." The paper also confidently told its readers that this would be so even if the country became a one-party state, a matter which in any case "the new Constitution does not concern itself," although it would start doing so even before the decade was over. Nevertheless, at this time, the paper thought the proposed document deserved the "warmest support" of most people.[77] In the next few days, the paper continued to promote and defend the proposed amendments. When KADU members complained that the president would be too powerful the *DN* swiftly published an editorial dissecting and repudiating their position. Five days later a boisterous headline targeted at KADU and unnamed discontented KANU members declared, "Mr. Mboya Silences the Critics: No Fear of a Dictatorship." [78]

After the constitution amendment bill successfully passed through the Lower House the paper's headline reflected the celebratory mood within KANU, "Jubilant KANU MPs Hail Lower House Victory: Constitution Bill is Passed."[79] In addition, the day's prominently located editorial, "Plea to KADU Senators," was directed to members of an Upper House where KANU lacked the majority it needed by a margin of just four votes:

> To KADU senators we make an urgent appeal. Not on behalf of the Government, which can well take care of itself in this matter, not even on behalf of the public, who are equally able to express their own views.

[76] *DN*, "Commentary," no. 1262, Friday 23 October 1964, p. 6.
[77] Ibid.
[78] *DN*, "Commentary," no. 1265, Tuesday 27 October 1964, p. 6.
[79] *DN*, "Jubilant KANU MPs hail Lower House Victory: Constitution Bill is Passed," no. 1272, Wednesday 4 November 1964, p. 1.

> We make an appeal on behalf of the future generations of Kenyans whose voices cannot as yet be heard but whose destiny will be affected profoundly by the votes cast.[80]

The newspaper's grounds for this passionate appeal to the Senate to support the bill was based on a desire to avoid a costly referendum. In addition, the paper expressed its concern that the death of the bill in the Senate would lead the government to question seriously its *raison d'être*:

> The first consequence of the defeat of the Bill in the Senate would be friction, not only between the Government and the Opposition members of the Senate, but between the Government and the Senate itself.
>
> Such friction might lead to the Government's re-examination of the Senate's role in legislative matters and possibly a contemplation of changes either in the set-up of the National Assembly or in the allocation of power between the two Houses.[81]

The editor, Hillary Ng'weno, added that if the bill failed to pass in the Senate, the "Government might be tempted to add them unconstitutionally."[82] In due course, these possibilities turned out to be more than just grounds for a plea. Ng'weno had unconsciously made a highly accurate and ominous assessment of the weaknesses in the country's governmental structure; the Opposition was inherently weak, the Executive was already too powerful, the constitution's checks and balances could be easily compromised, and the Government would brook no dissent. In the meantime, the bill passed in the Senate and soon after KADU and KANU merged. "One Party Kenya: Mr. Ngala Dissolves KADU Opposition," read the *DN* headline.[83] A jubilant, front page commentary praised Ngala for dissolving his party, as the end of partisan politics meant more time could be spent pursuing national unity and economic development. The paper's mood reflects its belief that the Opposition would continue to exist in public opinion and in Parliament, where its actions would be less insidious as there would always be agreement on major policy

[80] *DN*, "Plea to KADU senators," no. 1272, Wednesday 4 November 1964, p. 1.
[81] Ibid.
[82] Ibid.
[83] *DN*, "One Party Kenya: Mr. Ngala Dissolves KADU Opposition," no. 1278, Wednesday 11 November 1964, p. 1.

issues. The following day, the paper's editorial slammed segments of the British press that had criticised Kenya's shift to a one-party state as a loss for democracy. The newspaper accused them of paternalism and pontification. Kenya was going to have to prove them wrong by continuing to provide "its citizens with the maximum amount of individual liberties that are consistent with security and the development interests of the country."[84] On the eve of the now Republic of Kenya's first Independence Day anniversary the *Daily Nation* commemorated the event with a 56-page bumper issue.[85]

Two days before Jamhuri Day, a story spread over two pages in the newspaper announced the planned construction of a "skyscraper" above the picture of a smiling Aga Khan.[86] The timing was certainly no coincidence. It was a highly visible introduction of the young Aga Khan to a broader segment of Kenyan society, a new political dispensation as well as a strong demonstration of confidence in the future of the country by the leader of one of its minority groups. The two pictures accompanying the story showed a modestly sized building. Nevertheless even at eleven stories it would be a significant architectural addition to the Nairobi of the day. The article explained that the project would be sponsored by the Industrial Promotion Services (IPS) and would be owned by the Industrial Promotion Building Limited. It also indicated that the building's financiers would include the Aga Khan, IPS, the Diamond Jubilee Investment Trust Limited and the Jubilee Insurance Company Limited. A company spokesman cited not only the stimulation of the local construction industry as a benefit of the project, but also its provision of a base from which the international companies involved could expand outwards, spreading industrial investment to other parts of East Africa. It is also evident that further publicity was planned in the form of a competition whose winner would produce a mural

[84] *DN*, "Commentary," no. 1279, Thursday 12 November 1964.
[85] See *DN*, "56-Page Jamhuri Special," no. 1304, Friday 11 December 1964.
[86] *DN*, 11-storey office block for Nairobi, no. 1303, Thursday 10 December 1964, pp. 10 -11.

or an entrance floor design in the spirit of capturing "the basic theme of economic and social progress" of the region. It was an impressive show of developmental support that the young Kenyan government was bound to notice.

The following day, the newspaper's readers learnt about "Aga Khan Gift to Mzee."[87] One of two photographs showed Kenyatta's official limousine emerging from the stone gateway of the residence formerly owned by the Ismaili leader and which the Government had been renting for Kenyatta. At a ceremony which the Governor and cabinet ministers attended, Sir Eboo Pirbhai made a speech praising the President and his work in the past year and gave the President the title deeds to the property on behalf of the Aga Khan. He also read a letter to Kenyatta from the Aga Khan who hoped that the latter would "accept this gift as a demonstration of my deep attachment formed during my childhood years to Kenya, and I would be happy and proud if from now on the President were to live in it." He also hoped "to have the pleasure of seeing you soon, and if this were to be in Kenya of calling on you in your new home."[88] The newspaper published both the speech and the letter in full. The article ended with a few quotes from Kenyatta's speech expressing his appreciation to the Aga Khan. It was a generous gift as well as a crucial and delicately executed investment towards the building of another relationship between a Kenyan leader and the Ismaili leader and by extension his spiritual children. His newspaper, suitably aligned to the a administration that promised sound economic policies and to steer clear of racial vendettas, was at hand to capture it.

The Aga Khan did see the President soon after Pirbhai read his letter to him at the title deeds handover ceremony, as before the year ended the Aga Khan was in Kenya and on the *DN's* front page. A prominently displayed picture accompanying a report headlined "£200,000

[87] *DN*, "Aga Khan Gift to Mzee," no. 1304, Friday 11 December 1964, p. 2.
[88] Ibid.

Hospital Wing Opened" showed a smiling Aga Khan and the administrator of the Aga Khan Platinum Jubilee Hospital J. McBride escorting Kenyatta, who had opened the hospital's Nurses Training School the previous year, to the dais for the opening ceremony.[89] Another picture on the second page showed him smiling broadly as he chatted with Kenyan government ministers including the Attorney General Charles Njonjo and the Minister for Commerce and Industry Tom Mboya. Beneath the picture was the title to a smaller story, "Thousands Greet Aga Khan," on the Ismailis who had gone to the airport to meet the leader on his arrival. In addition, the paper devoted four more pages to the story with titles such as "Big Step Forward in Kenya's Medical Plans," "Impressive opening," and "For Kids Nothing but the Best." Accompanying the stories were advertisements from companies such as Neon Fluorescent (East Africa) Ltd. and Thaker Singh (Electrician) & Sons that had participated in the construction of the new wing.[90] Although the ward (out-patient, casualty and children's wing) was an extension of a medical facility that operated on a for-profit basis, it was yet again a significant investment of social and financial capital in the country's economy and future that also reflected favourably on the image of the community. Indeed, in his speech Kenyatta remarked that "the example of self help and community service set by the Ismaili community here represents an admirable response to the call of Harambee."[91] The paper also highlighted in bold Kenyatta's remarks terming the facility's development an important contribution to the Government's broader national healthcare plans. The Aga Khan must have deeply appreciated these remarks as from the very beginning he had been keen to stress that his projects, which were privately run and self-sustaining for-profit

[89] *DN*, "£ 200,000 hospital wing opened," no. 1316, Monday 28 December 1964, p. 1.
[90] Ibid., pp. 9 – 12.
[91] Ibid., p. 1. Harambee is a Swahili word that refers to community self-help or pulling together. Some attribute it origins to Hindu Asian builders of the Uganda Railway (1896-1901) for whom Ambee is the goddess of strength and "har" means hail. Apparently they sometimes chanted har ambee (hail Ambee) as a work chant to motivate themselves.

ventures, were contributors to Kenya's overall development; they were partnerships in economic growth and advancement. The newspaper enabled him to repeat this message not only to Kenya's leaders but also to its citizens, amongst whom his spiritual children lived and hoped to continue doing so in peace.

The economic stability of the country would be a great contributor to that peace and the *DN* lauded the Government's White Paper on African Socialism in 1965 because it did not upset the capitalist path for Kenya that it supported. It acknowledged that the Government's definition of socialism would meet with opposition within and outside the continent, but argued that what mattered was that the Kenya Government was going to apply it to achieve Kenya's developmental goals. The Government was merely adapting the philosophy to suit the country's needs and in a jab aimed at Kaggia and his colleagues, it went on to add that the Government's definition of African Socialism was in essence the embrace of an important component of the Paper's goal: to design a philosophy of development that could be continually adapted to the country's needs. A developmental philosophy that did not embrace change would never work because it would inevitably turn into "a rigid doctrinaire system that would merely raise more problems than it attempts to solve."[92] As for the ongoing debates on agricultural development and land tenure, the newspaper urged those concerned to take heart in the Paper's proposition that a working party be formed to inquire into the necessity or otherwise of ceilings on individual ownership of land, as well as the Government's stated intention to spread agricultural development more broadly across the country so as to remedy its acknowledged focus on areas covered by settlement schemes. As mentioned previously, Bildad Kaggia, Oginga Odinga and others balked at the paper considering it a development charter for Kenya's elite at the expense

[92] *DN*, "Commentary," no. 1420, Wednesday 28 April 1965, p. 6.

of the masses and falling far short of the promises they had made to the latter prior to independence.

The *DN* quickly framed the conflict between the two as a struggle between Communism versus Capitalism which the latter had to win as the former threatened to undo the continued existence of individual property rights it had so vociferously championed and destroy the free market system within which it functioned. So when dissent between the "Socialist Group" and the "Progressive Group" culminated in the vote of confidence in government, *DN* heaved a cautious sigh of relief.[93] It was of the opinion that Kenya's political problems were caused by those in government who had made idealistic promises to the electorate prior to independence. After independence, keeping those promises had proven difficult in the face of the country's economic realities. Coupled with ethnic chauvinism and the interference of other countries (meaning Eastern bloc countries) in Kenya's affairs, this combination had muddied the Kenyan political scene. The paper portrayed dissenters as the gullible trumpets of foreigners who also took advantage of innocent Kenyans to promote their own selfish interests. In the coming weeks, it would issue strongly worded editorials supporting the government's warnings and expulsions of diplomats from Eastern bloc countries accused of helping to organise and support Kenyan dissenters.

When KANU announced plans to restructure the party (in a bid to isolate its political opponents), the newspaper called the move "long overdue" and promoted it as another step towards greater internal stability. It had fully embraced the one-party KANU government and its policies as the best way to govern Kenya and continued to base all its political analyses on this acceptance. KANU, it insisted, had indeed lost steam and structure since the 1964 merger which

[93] Terms Mboya used to label dissenting politicians. See, *DN*. "Confidence vote," no. 1673, Thursday 17 February 1966, p. 6.

was unfortunate because "a one-party State without a well-organised political party, in our present circumstances becomes virtually a multi-party State, with small factions, schisms, cliques and cabals disrupting national unity."[94] Thus according to the *DN*, and in line with its 1964 position on the KADU-KANU merger, a "well-organised" party would not only unite the country, it was also capable of effectively managing dissent as those within it agreed generally with government policy. Yet how exactly this could be done in a political environment in which it was already evident that there were those who differed greatly with government policy was unclear and the newspaper did not explore the issue further. It follows then that once the Nairobi delegates' conference was held, and the post of Deputy President abolished to punish and isolate Oginga Odinga, the *DN* placed Tom Mboya's words praising the conference as "free, frank and cordial," above its headline and hailed the event as a step "towards a new KANU."[95]

In its editorial the paper argued that the Nairobi delegates' conference was of great significance because among other things, it had served as yet another endorsement of Kenyatta's policies that "so effectively held Kenya together and united all races who have made their homes here" and promoted his allies, the "Kenya Group," to national and executive positions of leadership in the party. Furthermore, their opponents, the Socialist and Progressive Groups who were guilty of promoting communist ideologies in Kenya had been "properly identified and isolated" so the Kenya Group would ensure that Kenya would not descend into the violence and disorder that plagued its peers elsewhere in the continent.[96] The communisation and ethnicisation of Opposition politics would be a recurrent theme in the attacks KANU launched against

[94] *DN*, "KANU – the right step," no. 1687, Saturday 5 March 1966, p. 6.
[95] *DN*, "Towards a new KANU," no. 1693, Saturday 12 March 1966, p. 1.
[96] *DN*, "Significance of KANU changes," no. 1694, Monday 14 March 1966, p. 6.

dissenters and in its presentation of the news and in its editorials the *DN* contributed to the promotion of this image.[97]

Once KPU was officially launched in 1966, its harassment and attacks against it filled the pages of the *DN*. When police picked up the Vice-President's elder brother Ojuok Odinga and two other men from the premises of the Ramogi Press, it made front page news in the paper. Apparently, the arrests were connected to a march that KPU supporters had held a few days before following the victory of a KPU candidate, Chilo Migudo Ondiek, in the Senate by-election for the Central Nyanza seat. According to the Kenya News Agency, the marchers were alleged to have made their way towards the Vice-President's home singing songs that the insulted the government.[98] The Government's seizure of the passports of opposition politicians and trade unionists was also front page news.[99] An editorial reviewed the Government's actions, requested it to justify them, then let the matter rest.[100] When the Vice-President resigned from his post along with Assistant Ministers Okelo-Odongo and M. F. L. Waiyaki, the *DN* reported the story under the headline "Moi Slams the Quitters."[101] The day's editorial praised Daniel T. Moi, the Minister for Home Affairs, for his statement to Kenyans warning them to be wary of "intimidators" and assuring them of national security. It took on the role of clarifying the implications of Moi's warning, insisting that it was targeted at power-hungry politicians who took advantage of the emotions of hardworking Kenyans to win popular support. These unscrupulous politicians allegedly did so by cultivating ethnic chauvinism and racism. The latter occurred when these politicians argued that "money and commerce and industry are in the hands of this or that race." In addition, the country's security apparatus was in the best shape and Moi

[97] See for example *DN*, "Leave us alone," no. 1736, Tuesday 3 May 1966, p. 6.
[98] *DN*, " Odinga's brother held: charges not disclosed," no. 1717, Saturday 9 August 1966, p. 1.
[99] *DN*, "Passports seized," no. 1729, Saturday 23 April 1966, p. 1.
[100] *DN*, "Passports," no. 1729, Saturday 23 April 1966, p. 6.
[101] *DN*, "Moi slams the quitters," no. 1724, Monday 18 April 1966, p. 1.

asserted that its efficiency had already been proven when some members of the Russian Security Service were expelled for engaging in political activities on behalf of unnamed local politicians.[102] Nevertheless, it is also true that as soon as it was clear that an opposition party was going to be formed the *DN*, in spite of its rabid opposition to multiparty politics thus far, declared it an important democratic development, "a constitutional outlet for alternative policies" crucial to the maintenance of peace. It therefore called on the government not to hinder its establishment.[103]

At the same time, once KPU vied for the seats under the new party's ticket, the *DN* used its pages once again to promote KANU. In early May, for example, a two page pictorial, "Nairobi People Pledge Support," was dedicated to coverage of a KANU rally in Nairobi. The caption of a picture of Kenyatta at a microphone quoted him announcing that "we will govern this country firmly." It was just the sort of reassuring message that worried observers needed to be assured that KANU would weather the latest 'communist' wave successfully. Next to it, a picture showing a section of the crowd with their hands up in KANU's index-finger salute noted that they had "pledged to KANU, President Kenyatta and the Government to crush the 'rebels'." Another picture of a different section of the crowd showing Maasai sitting down while three men standing behind them held posters was captioned "Maasais are ready to fight in defence of Kenya, with placards." Tom Mboya's rally picture was captioned "KANU's secretary-general…challenges the rebels" while that of him and a group of ministers on a podium at microphones read "Kenya Ministers entertain the people with 'KANU Yajenga Nchi [KANU builds the Nation]'." Most notably, a group of pictures titled "We will never go Back to the Forests" was dedicated to three pictures of ex-Mau Mau fighters: that of a smiling woman giving

[102] *DN*, "Reassurance on law and order," no. 1724, Monday 18 April 1966, p. 4.
[103] *DN*, "Legality for the 'Opposition'," no. 1726, Wednesday 20 April 1966, p. 6.

the KANU salute captioned "Mrs. Dedan Kimathi swears to follow Kanu forever," another of "Field Marshall Mwariama who assured the President of his support always," and one of a small group of people also giving the KANU salute captioned "ex-freedom fighters assure President Kenyatta that they will never go back to the forest."[104] In the Mau Mau segment, the paper appears to have been challenging KPU by suggesting that if these virulent fighters for land and property rights in the colonial era were satisfied with the present order, why not KPU and its supporters? Although the *DN* in its corporate history claims to have endorsed a political party just once in its entire history, it did endorse KANU again ahead of the Little General Election of 1966:

> The time of reckoning has come. What have the contestants to offer? On the one hand, Kanu stands with a proud record of achievements. Through its leadership, Kenya has experienced more national unity and national integration in all spheres than ever before…
>
> So far the People's Union has not been able to produce a cohesive programme of action, except criticism of the present regime and promises of free money, free land, free everything.
>
> Much has been made of the talk about free things. If men were equal in ability, in intelligence, their needs and all the other attributes of their species, one could be forgiven for talking about free things and formal equality. But this is not the case and nothing could be more unequal than formal equality in the human society.
>
> Everyone knows that a nation cannot be built on destructive criticism and false promises. There must be new ideas and constructive criticism and these must be followed by programmes of action.
>
> It is better to help Paul help himself than to rob Peter to pay Paul.[105]

The paper was asserting that the status quo was best as KANU would assure the continuity of stability and the continuity of a free market system while the Opposition would institute a command economy or "formal equality" that would entail a radical redistribution of

[104] *DN*, "Nairobi people pledge support" and "We will never go back to the forests," no. 1736, Monday 2 May 1966, p. 8 – 9.
[105] *DN*, "Ideas and action," no. 1769, Thursday 9 June 1966, p. 6. For the newspaper's claim see, Gerard Loughran, *Birth of a Nation*, p. 67.

wealth to the discomfort of the country's Peters. If the newspaper was vague in its use of the term "formal equality," a second endorsement, "The Only Path," was lucid in its attack on the 'communist' Opposition and even more affirming in its support for KANU:

> It is also an aspect of the Government's foreign policy that aid is given without strings and in good faith should be accepted.
>
> These are the central points of difference between Kanu and KPU on foreign policy.
>
> The latter believes that the country must lean to the East. Having been a Western colony, the country must now move away from the West – lock, stock and barrel – and be friends with the East. The East must choose friends for us it says.
>
> It also happens that this is what Communist countries want. They do not believe in African Socialism; to be friends with them a country must be Leninist-Marxist. In this context, by far most of their money spent overseas goes not necessarily to governments but to bankrupt individuals who spread their gospel.
>
> Again it is our view that Kanu offers the best foreign policy consistent with Kenya's needs and aspirations. Those who would like to help Kenya develop along these lines of national independence should heed Mr. Kenyatta's appeal for active help.[106]

In this way, the association of the Opposition with communism continued right up to the actual voting day as the newspaper endeavoured to present its readers with a clear contrast between the two parties even when this meant exaggerating the extent of KPU's ideological inclinations. "Kanu Triumphs" was the *DN* headline that announced the Government party's victory to the country.[107] Beneath it, journalist Michael Chester reported that KPU had been "crushed" and that Oginga Odinga had been left with little more than a "handful" of representatives with whom to return to Parliament. The day's editorial termed KANU's performance "A Well Deserved Victory" that demonstrated the country's support for the Government's policies. As far as the paper was concerned the elections had been free and fair and the KANU Government had now to work even harder than ever to justify the confidence its

[106] *DN*, "The only path," no. 1771, Saturday 11 June, p. 6.
[107] *DN*, "Kanu triumphs," no. 1785, Tuesday 28 June 1966, p. 1 and *DN*, "Well deserved victory," no. 1785, Tuesday 28 June 1966, p. 6.

people had expressed in it. Nevertheless, it does appear that the weight it placed on the direction of Kenya's foreign policy and its impact on the local political economy was so great that the newspaper found it easy to suspend all doubts and concerns about KANU's commitment to just government and issue such ringing endorsements.

One such moment of concern came the same month the paper issued its endorsement when it had expressed serious concerns about the Government's Constitution of Kenya (Ammendement) (No. 3) Bill, 1966 that sought to establish preventive detention without trial in Kenya. The *DN* opposed the measure from the moment KANU's Parliamentary Group passed a motion meant to prompt the Government to bring the relevant bill to Parliament. Despite the Group's assurance in the motion's preamble that the party would still be committed to upholding human rights as enunciated in the country's Bill of Rights and the United Nations Charter, the newspaper clearly expressed its doubts that that was indeed a possibility. The paper's fears about the draconian nature of the law could not be mollified by the possibility that detention would be subject to approval by Parliament, the Judiciary or a special tribunal. Having seen the manner in which the Executive had prevailed over Parliament and KADU to make significant changes to the political scene and Government, the paper was certain that once the Executive had made its move in the future, approval would turn into a show of strength that it would inevitably win. So appalled was it by the proposed law that it did not dither in its criticism of the Government:

> It is clear, therefore, that once an Act is enacted all the freedoms of the people become useless, notwithstanding the provisions of the Bill of Rights or even the United Nations Charter.
>
> The reason for this line of reasoning is obvious. You cannot have freedom by destroying the basis on which freedom rests.
>
> How can freedom be maintained when the right of Habeas Corpus has been eliminated; when the Preventive Detention Act has eliminated access to the courts; when inalienable rights which are cornerstones of individual freedom have been eroded?

> As regards the argument that the Preventive Detention Act ensures the security of the State it is our case that it rather endangers it. The reason is simple. By preventing free and open discussion of public affairs, by intimidating the Opposition and driving it underground, there is no legitimate avenue left to citizens for criticism or dissent.[108]

The editorial was unique in its lack of any attempt to ensconce its withering critique in words of praise or support for some related aspect of Government or KANU. Its strident language must have surprised the Government, but the newspaper was also acting to protect its interests as a publication, for it could see within itself future victims of the proposed law. Thus, it argued that such a law "degenerates into a sordid instrument of tyranny" and was inimical to "freedom of the Press" as well as "academic freedom." The newspaper followed its critique by giving prominent coverage to Martin Shikuku, who led various MPs in not only opposing the bill but also the manner in which the Government sought to rush it through Parliament in a day "as if we're leaving for Heaven tomorrow."[109] It then underscored its May editorial with another equally harsh one in early June maintaining that the proposed law was not needed and that the paper would not flatter Kenyatta, the Government or the country by pretending that they had a place in the country's future.[110] However, in this particular editorial it did cushion its criticism of the bill by stating that as a newspaper it believed in the sagacity and good leadership of Kenyatta. It could take comfort in his assurances that the law would not be abused but it was worried that the country could not bank on the good will of future leaders. Eventually, the Government countered the newspaper's campaign against the *DN's* attacks on the bill through Tom Mboya. The newspaper published his attack on its stance on the front page next to news that Public Security Bill had passed through the House of Representatives.[111] It quoted him extensively assailing their

[108] *DN*, "Preventive detention," no. 1757, Thursday 26 May 1966, p. 6.
[109] *DN*, "Security Bill debate is put off," no. 1762, Wednesday 1 June 1966, p. 1 and p. 19.
[110] *DN*, "Security laws," no. 1763, Thursday 2 June 1966, p. 6.
[111] *DN*, "Security Bill is passed, no. 1764, Friday 3 June 1966, p. 1.

writing as "cheap" and "insulting," among other things, and insisting that the Government did not need the *DN* to instruct them as if they were schoolboys. The paper did not respond. Besides, the bill was now law and the battle against it fought and presumed irredeemably lost.

The following month, Ismailis commemorated Immamat Day and the *DN* devoted five pages to the commemoration which included messages from the Aga Khan and Sir Eboo Pirbhai. The Aga Khan addressed his message to East Africans in general and Ismailis in particular. He noted that he had observed with interest the endeavours of their governments to improve their lives and commended them. In accordance with the advice the Aga Khan had given Ismailis previously, he added that he hoped that "the members of my community will continue to contribute, as they have done so substantially in the past, to the welfare of the people of East Africa." He also disclosed that he was certain that East Africans would continue to strive for development and affirmed the continued commitment of Ismailis to that goal. Similarly, Sir Eboo Pirbhai used the opportunity to emphasise the commitment of Ismailis to East Africa noting that during previous visits to East Africa, the Aga Khan had "given us great encouragement to play our part in nation building, exhorting us to give our best to the countries in which we have made our homes and advising us to promote investments to help local economies."[112] Two pages were devoted to "I.P.S. – Partners in Progress," highlighting the role that the Aga Khan funded and founded initiative was already playing towards supporting the economic advancement goals of East African countries in addition to the Ivory Coast and Congo.[113] Though the share of East African governments in IPS was small in comparison to those of the last two (Ivory Coast 30% and Congo 40%) the article informed readers that the modest support nevertheless, amounted to the governments' recognition of the benefits of and

[112] *DN*, "Immamat Day," no. 1795, Saturday 9 July 1966, p. 9.
[113] *DN*, "I.P.S. – Partners in progress," no. 1795, Saturday 9 July, pp. 12 – 13.

goodwill powering IPS goals. At the end of the report was a list of IPS companies in each East African country producing clothing, textiles, household products and pharmaceuticals among other goods. It was a testament to the Aga Khan's ability to mobilise capital successfully and to implement plans that not only benefitted their shareholders but also contributed to a country's overall economic growth. Once again the *DN* was at hand to ensure that the progress that IPS had made did not go unnoticed. Unlike most investors, the Aga Khan not only had the successful enterprises but he also had the ability to to publicise such endeavours, which in turn reflected well on Ismailis as an immigrant community.

Nothwithstanding such efforts, periods of unease for the country's Asian communities did not disappear. "Moi warns Foreigners" was the *DN* headline that readers encountered on the morning of 4 August 1966. In his capacity as Minister for Home Affairs, Moi issued the warning after the government had deported two Asians, Dharamshi Hirji Shah and Odhavji Nathoo Nathwani from Kisii District in Western Kenya for what was vaguely referred to as a breach of national security. Below the headline and thus next to the story the *DN* placed a photograph of the Aga Khan's uncle and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Prince Sadrudin Aga Khan, participating in a dance at the Aga Khan Club in Nairobi while a note beneath it directed readers to more photographs on an inner page. This placement was clearly intended to reassure the *DN*'s Asian readers and was perhaps a caution to the Government to tread carefully. The situation escalated when the government deported to India six more Asians, two of whom, Pranlal Purshottam Sheth and Jamnadas Manji Bhadressa, were actually Kenyan citizens stripped of their citizenship. A Kenya News Agency statement charged that they had "shown themselves by speech and act to be disloyal and disaffected towards Kenya."[114] Once again this was a vague charge, but the nature of their "disloyal" activities can be gauged from the activities of journalist

[114] *DN*, "Kenya deports six Asians," no. 1826, Monday 15 August 1966, p. 1.

Pranlal Sheth, trade unionist and an acquaintance of both the *Tribune's* Sharda, and *Ramogi's* Oneko. Through the latter he had become an associate of Odinga, helped him write his autobiography *Not Yet Uhuru,* and was under government suspicion for helping to pen an anti-Kenyatta document, "Kenya People's Charter."[115]

A day after the deportation, the newspaper's headline announced "Kenyan Asians Under Fire." above a report based on a commentary released by the Government-owned broadcaster Voice of Kenya (VOK). [116] It was a venomous statement that must have been deeply disturbing and disheartening to Asians who had decided to make Kenya their home. "In nearly three years of independence can it honestly be said that Asian attitudes, Asian behaviour and Asian thinking has changed one iota? Have they really done anything but pay lip service to their integration into the new society of independent Kenya?" posed the commentary. It went on to accuse them of having always been "middlemen" who were unceasingly "vacillating like versatile weather-vanes between the African and European communities, depending on the gain involved."[117] It was a commentary that presumed the non-existence of African government loyalists during the colonial era or Asians who had endeavoured to work across racial lines in the run up to independence. It also, of course, ignored the investments of faith matched with capital that leaders such as the Aga Khan had made in the country. This time, obviously aware and highly disapproving of the nature of the deported Asians' 'disloyalty' the *DN* issued a convoluted editorial in which it stated that when a Government granted an individual citizenship it granted that individual rights, therefore citizenship could be justifiably withdrawn if an individual acted

[115] Robert Gregory, *Quest for Equality: Asian Politics in East Africa, 1900 – 1967.* New Delhi: Orient Longman Limited, p. 179.
[116] *DN*, "Kenya Asians under fire," no. 1827, Tuesday 16 August 1966, p. 1.
[117] Ibid.

in a manner that threatened those rights.[118] According to the paper, citizenship was therefore not a birthright even for a man such as Pranlal Sheth who was born and raised in Kenya. Moreover, the notion that freedom of conscience and association were values the country should aspire to was not even implied in this particular piece. Any threat to the politico-economic order, especially when the East was believed to be in play, had to be dispelled even at the risk of causing worry and instability within the minority communities the paper had strived to defend since its establishment.

Nevertheless, given the tense state of affairs, and what must have seemed like a dangerous case of selective amnesia on the part of the government to some, the crucial nature of the Aga Khan's visit to Africa in the year of his 9th Immamat anniversary was not lost to the *DN*. Unlike previous visits, coverage started even before his tour brought him to Kenya and continued after his departure from the country for Tanzania and Uganda. The newspaper gave readers the first glimpse of his tour on 21 November 1966 when a pictorial showed, among other things, Madagascar's Minister of State receiving him on his arrival at the airport and standing at attention in front of a guard of honour as the anthem was played.[119] Once in Kenya, the first photograph of the Aga Khan on the front page of the *DN* was equally noteworthy. He was pictured in animated conversation with the Speaker of the House of Representatives Humphrey Slade who had invited him to the Parliament Buildings, Minister of Defence Njoroge Mungai, and Jan Mohammed the Assistant Minister for Tourism and Wildlife.[120] Two days later there was a "Nairobi Factory Tour for Aga Khan" report on visits the Ismaili leader had made to the

[118] *DN*, "The state and citizenship," no. 1827, Tuesday 16 August 1966, p. 7.
[119] *DN*, "The Aga Khan in Madagascar, no. 1910, Monday 21November 1966, p. (?) For his Ugandan tour, DN news reports were accompanied by photographs of the Aga Khan with President Obote and Mrs. Obote, the Mayor of Kampala and some members of the Toro Royal Family in addition to those of him visiting health, education and manufacturing sites. See *DN*, "Aga Khan sees Kampala projects," no. 1922, 5 December 1966 and *DN*, "The Aga Khan's visit to Kampala in pictures," no. 1923, 6 December 1966.
[120] *DN*, Front page photograph, no. 1912, Wednesday 23 November 1966, p. 1.

printers of the *Daily Nation* and two other IPS companies. Accompanying the report was a photograph of the leader in the company of Lord Portsmouth, a director in the firm and his industrial advisor P. Hengel at the press of the Kenya Litho Ltd., an associate of the firm that published his newspaper. A note on the same page directed readers to the ninth page, which featured a pictorial devoted to the Aga Khan's tour of Nation House, the paper's offices.[121] The following day, the *DN* featured a photograph of the Aga Khan "from the top of the £500,000 IPS building erected in the centre of Nairobi in little more than a year."[122] There was also a full-page story and photographs on the graduation of 16 nurses from the Aga Khan hospital's school of nursing. His public lecture on "Education for Development" exhorting developing countries to establish school curricula that made use of foreign technologies for their own economic advancement was front page news towards the end of the week, albeit as a smaller story with a verbatim report of the speech taking a full inner page. He only briefly mentioned Ismaili-established schools towards the end of his speech. It was a week of intensive Aga Khan-related coverage and once again the paper provided vital publicity for the leader's accomplishments in the country, constituting an indirect but powerful rebuttal of the VOK commentary and those who thought along lines similar to it.

At the end of his 54-day tour of East Africa and Madagascar, the *DN* carried two stories on his return to Kenya before his final departure from the region. One of these, "Kanu Symbol of Unity," was located below a photograph of the Aga Khan shaking hands with Kenyatta's third wife Ngina Kenyatta and next to it another of him with his head out of the window of his car smiling broadly and waving goodbye to Kenyatta, whom he had visited at Gatundu before departing for the airport. The Ismaili leader was reported to have paid tribute to the Government

[121] *DN*, "The Aga Khan at Nation House," no. 1912, Wednesday 23 November 1966, p. 9.
[122] *DN*, Photo, no. 1913, Thursday 11 November 1966, p. 3.

party at a luncheon which Daniel T. Moi held in his honour and which other cabinet ministers and senior civil servants attended. According to the report, the Aga Khan observed that:

> One thing had struck him wherever he went – the sign of Kanu, which reminded him of the strength and conviction of the Kenya people united under the leadership of President Kenyatta. The Aga Khan spoke of developments in Kenya since independence and said that the atmosphere everywhere he went in the country augured well for a good country.
>
> He urged members of the Ismaili community to contribute sincerely to Kenya's advance and said that he hoped that this contribution would assist development. He assured the Kenya Government that members of the Ismaili community would continue to assist in all aspects of development, industrial and otherwise. [123]

It is highly unlikely that the Aga Khan was unaware of the volatile nature of recent Kenyan political developments as well as the expulsion of the six Asian men only a few months before. While there is nothing unusual about his visit to the region given the role and responsibility of the Aga Khan to his followers, these public remarks — in which he felt the need to make specific reference to KANU, praising it along with the President — made just before his departure seem to be not only a reiteration of his past statements to Ismailis and Government officials, but also the conclusion of a carefully orchestrated response to the Government in light of its then recent discomfiting remarks and actions.

Just over a week later, when the Executive moved to increase its powers once more by abolishing the Senate and merging its members into an expanded House of Representatives, the *DN* rallied to its side yet again. Though Charles Njonjo attacked the newspaper's headline, "Senate Abolition Bill Debate Today," and the use of the story lead "the Senate debates its own demise today" just before the bill's Second Reading as inaccurate and divisive (he insisted it was an amalgamation and not a destruction), the paper's editorial was supportive, characterising it as

[123] *DN*, "Kanu Symbol of Unity," Monday 12 December 1966, no. 1928, p. 3.

the "ending duplication."[124] It acknowledged that the Senate's existence offered certain checks and balances on the legislative process but bizarrely asserted that its members could continue to play their role in the Lower House. To those members who were complaining that the Government was changing the constitution too often and too easily, the paper counseled that it was a document that had to be re-modelled from time to time to suit the political realities of the day. For instance, a major change in the recent past was the dissolution of KADU and the dilution of the powers of regional authorities. It however failed to address the fact that the Executive was slowly transforming the Legislature into a subordinate appendage.

But hard as it worked to support the Government, it was continuously confronted by the ugliness of its flaws. When Tom Mboya was assassinated, the newspaper remonstrated against his assassins and zeroed in on political differences as being the cause of his death. Mboya had successfully championed the Government's agenda and his charisma and eloquence had garnered him recognition and fame in the region and beyond. The paper was of the view that in the course of his career his successes had in turn bred envy in others and earned him enemies. His murder was not only senseless, it was also dangerous because it was an act of violence that risked breeding more violence to the detriment of the country.[125] On 8 July 1969, with tensions riding high, the *DN* called for "national restraint" and observed that it was for the better that the rumours, conspiracy theorising, and anger that had marked the death were now being replaced by a more controlled grief.[126] The calm that the paper perceived was a mirage, of course, as violence erupted at the Minister's requiem when the large crowds of angry mourners stoned vehicles, including the presidential motorcade as it approached the courtyard of the Holy Family

[124] *DN*, "Senate Abolition Bill Debate Today," no. 1935, Tuesday 20 December 1966, p. 1, *DN*, "Attack on Nation," no. 1936, Wednesday 21 December 1966, p. 4 and *Ibid*., "Ending Duplication," p. 6.
[125] *DN*, "Murder most foul," no. 2719, Monday 7 July 1969, p. 6.
[126] *DN*, "National restraint," no. 2720, Tuesday 8 July 1969, p. 6.

Cathedral, and heckled Government officials. The Vice-President issued his appeal for calm to the public and specifically accused "a group of individuals, largely from the Luo community" for being guilty of various acts of violence.[127]

The ugly scenes outside the cathedral were of great concern to the *DN* and caused it to look once again over the country's borders to the political turmoil and attendant violence wracking Congo, Nigeria, Rwanda and others not mentioned but certainly in the consciousness of the paper's journalists.[128] Furthermore, the newspaper also had words of caution for the Luo and in reports that were published in the aftermath of a man who was essentially a national and even international figure, there would be several mentions of "Luos" and "Luo tribesmen" which in retrospect could only have further fueled the ethnicity-related theories surrounding the Minister's death.[129] When the Luo delegation travelled to State House to meet Kenyatta, the *DN* also featured a photograph of some of them giving the KANU salute. The delegation appeared eager to make it clear that it was presenting its grievances as loyal members of the party and not as dissidents. It also covered Kenyatta's weak defense against allegations of ethnic discrimination which he issued largely by pointing to Government appointments of persons of Luo ethnicity and stating his desire for national unity.[130] Towards the end of October 1969, he visited Kisumu and found himself amidst a crowd raw with anger and frustration that appeared not to have been mollified by his assurances of equal treatment for all Kenyans.

After the Kisumu violence and the imposition of the 12-hour curfew, the *DN* called for restraint and chastised those who had rioted as well as those who had heckled Kenyatta and other Government officials for having gone too far and provoked the use of strong force against them.

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[127] *DN*, "Breach of peace won't be tolerated," no. 2721, Wednesday 9 July 1969, p. 1.
[128] *DN*, "The road to danger," no. 2721, Wednesday 9 July 1969, p. 6.
[129] See for example *DN*, "Excited crowds in Kisumu dispersed," and "All quiet-then trouble," no. 2722, Thursday 10 July 1969, p.1.
[130] *DN*, "Kenyatta denies Luo report on tribalism," no. 2802, Saturday 11 October 1969, p. 24.

The editor regretted the deaths that had occurred as a result of the force but added that the protestors had exhibited a serious lack of self-control and ought to have sought a more peaceful way of airing their grievances. He added that the Government was justified in its reaction as "law and order must be maintained at all costs" and it was up to the leaders concerned to exercise more prudence in their conduct and to urge their followers to do likewise.[131] The following day, the newspaper's headlines announced the detention of KPU MPs and in its editorial pointed out that the detentions were all "in the name of law and order and for the sake of democracy." It also defended detention against its critics by adding that while it was an extreme measure, it was one that the Government only resorted to where all other "soft" measures had failed. What those measures were in the prevailing circumstances remain unclear unless one takes into consideration the campaign of harassment and intimidation the Government had metted out against KPU politicians. The country was experiencing a crisis and it was of utmost importance for the Government to show that it was up to the challenge of governing the country. It backed the assertions of one of the Province's MPs that a few people had sparked the region's problems and they had to be dealt with accordingly. Nevertheless, it also argued that the arrest of the KPU politicians ought not to be considered a punitive measure against an entire region of the country or even the party. According to the paper, "that the Opposition party should continue to function as a legally registered party is a victory for democratic thinking and the multi-party system we hold so dear." All that was necessary was for the free members of KPU to prove they were capable of pursuing their party's agenda in a "reasonably constitutional manner."[132] However, it is evident that the paper still believed that a one-party state was best for Kenya and it continued to attribute the turbulent political climate to problems of ethnicity. The paper endorsed the

[131] *DN*, "Restraint is now vital," no. 2815, Monday 27 October 1969, p. 6.
[132] *DN*, "The Government's action," no. 2816, Tuesday 28 October 1969, p. 6.

statements of two KANU MPs, Joseph Odero-Jowi and Samuel Ayodo, who had spoken against the path to isolation that they believed the Luo had chosen by embracing KPU. The paper commented that the Luo had embraced a party whose power was strongest in one region and which tended to be divisive in a manner that made it appear that this was its actual goal. The Luo were not suffering discrimination; instead, they had discriminated against themselves "by withdrawing from the national movement that KANU had become." The paper also asserted that the existence of the party was unnecessary. This was so because "KANU had proven that within itself there is room for the expression of views covering a wide range from Left to Right without the centrifugalism, the polarisation, the fragmentation of unity and the bitter and ill-to-be-afforded rivalry between KANU and KPU has tended to bring about."[133]

It is therefore not surprising that when the Government finally banned KPU at the end of the month, a mere three days after the *DN* had declared its continued existence a testament to the country's continued commitment to the multi-party system, the paper praised the action. It insisted that just as for deportations, the Government did not have to explain the banning fully. Instead, the paper urged readers to resort to something more akin to faith and believe that the ban was such an extreme measure that the Government could not possibly have gone ahead with it without giving it the greatest consideration.[134] The paper alluded to having found adequate justification in the Government's assertions that foreign powers were funding KPU to enable it to stage "ideological take-overs" as they offered the party "vulgar training" to destabilise the country.

As if the *DN* had not previously appeared to align itself very closely with the Government, in March 1975 it lost a great deal of credibility in the eyes of the public when it

[133] *DN*, "Forging national unity," no. 2817, Wednesday 29 October 1969, p. 6.
[134] *DN*, "Is the ban justified?" no. 2820, Friday 31 October 1969, p. 6.

published a report later proven irrefutably false following the disappearance and murder of popular M.P. Josiah M. Kariuki. After one of the M.P.'s wives had reported him missing to the police on 2 March 1975, the *DN* carried a report, "J. M. is Missing," on an inner page on 8 March in which it told of his wife's concerns and reported Justus Ole Tipis, an Assistant Minister in the Office of the Vice-President, assuring Parliament that the Government was doing all it could to get to the bottom of the matter. Martin Shikuku was also reported to have asked the speaker why VOK had not reported the politician's disappearance despite the fact that members had discussed the matter in Parliament.[135] This report by the newspaper's John Esibi, ought to have been on the front page, but a series of hurried decisions probably consigned it to lesser prominence. Instead, what appeared on the *DN's* front page was the headline "J. M. 'in Zambia'" over a report by editor George Githii and news editor Michael Kabugua. The two quoted "reliable sources" as having confirmed that Kariuki was in Zambia on a business trip and staying at the Hotel Intercontinental in Lusaka. They also reported that "well-informed" sources had dismissed rumours of the MP's disappearance and termed them "unfounded and dangerous."[136] After the politician's body was found in Nairobi's Ngong' Hills and then moved to the mortuary where one of his wives positively identified it, a *DN* headline hesitantly announced "Kariuki Dead, Claims Wife."[137] By this time, the paper also had to report that the manager of the Lusaka's Hotel Intercontinental had denied that Kariuki had ever stayed at the hotel. However, it also cited "unconfirmed reports" that Kariuki had left Zambia for Tanzania in a Cessna aircraft whose registration number was unknown and would soon be home. Two days later in a front page editorial, the newspaper admitted having published a false story but attributed the error to the paper's "zeal" for investigative journalism. In the editorial, the paper explained how it came

[135] *DN*, "J. M. is missing," no. 4484, Saturday 8 March 1975, p. 3.
[136] Ibid., p. 1.
[137] *DN*, "Kariuki dead, claims wife," no. 4487, Wednesday 12 March 1975, p. 1.

to publish the "J.M. in Zambia" story; apparently, it all started when "an informant" told the paper's journalists that the M.P. had gone to Zambia on a business trip from where he was expecting a delivery that appeared to have been delayed.[138] As people took to the streets to protest against the MP's killing, others simultaneously demonstrated against the *DN*, which looked as if it had lent itself to the Government to deliberately mislead the public. Loughran writes that as newspaper sales suffered particularly between the months of March and June, Frank Pattrick sent a letter to Paris disclosing concerns in Nairobi that the paper had gotten too close to the regime and was paying a price for this reason.[139] Nevertheless, *DN* weathered the storm of suspicion as well as lacklustre sales that hit it after Kariuki's death and its proximity to the regime did not change.

In the tense atmosphere characterised by rumours, trade union strike threats and University of Nairobi student demonstrations that followed Kariuki's death the *DN* editorially maintained a steady silence, and when it gave an opinion it steered clear of criticism of the Government or did so mildly.[140] When Kenyatta announced that unnamed people who were responsible for undermining the Government had been arrested the newspaper headlined the report "Plotters held" beneath a quotation from Kenyatta's speech disclosing that "it was well-educated people who campaigned against Government." Tellingly, the newspaper did not have an editorial on the matter on that day or the following day.[141] The arrests came shortly after the

[138] *DN*, "Editorial," no. 4489, Friday 14 March 1975, p. 1.
[139] Loughran, *Birth of a Nation*, p. 121.
[140] *DN*, Council slams the plotters," no. 4535, Wednesday 7 May 1975, p. 1, for editorials see *DN*, "The kind of aid Africa wants and UN action on Namibia," no. 4535, Wednesday 7 May 1975, p. 6. *DN*, "It's jail for the rumour-mongers," no. 4536, Thursday 8 May 1975 for editorials see *DN*, "The way ahead for Portugal," and "Thailand's new policy," no. 4536, Thursday 8 May 1975, p. 6, *DN*, "Man behind pamphlets 'in custody'," no. 4545, Monday 19 May 1975, p. 1, for editorials see *DN*, "Tourism versus local heritage" and "The curse of the vampires" (on World Health Organisation condemnation of human blood trade in South America and elsewhere) no. 4545, Monday 19 May 1975, p. 6.
[141] *DN*, "Plotters held," no. 4549, Friday 23 May 1975, p. 1 for the day's editorials see "Mirage of good neighbourliness" and "True meaning of women's equality" on p. 6 of the same issue.

President had urged a Nairobi local government delegation that visited him to assure him of their loyalty at State House, Mombasa to rid the city of subversive elements who were publishing and distributing literature of a seditious nature among other things.[142] During this period, another delegation from the Rift Valley Province also visited him at State House, Mombasa to pledge their loyalty to him and his Government. He used the opportunity to exhort them to put an end to the rumours and to deal with rumour mongers ruthlessly, so that "from now on whenever you hear them saying this or that against your Government deal with them physically without fear."[143] After police violently dispersed a University of Nairobi student meeting held to discuss the fate of three of their colleagues who had been arrested, the newspaper was finally moved to comment on the prevailing state of affairs.

In its discussion of the status quo, the *DN* did little to depart from the tableau that it had painted over the years of a placid Kenya staying steady despite having to ride on the choppy waters of communist threats and developmental challenges under an imminently benevolent and omniscient leadership. Referring to the rumour issue, the newspaper insisted that almost all Kenyans were unanimous in their abhorrence and rejection of those who had sought to undermine the authority of the Government. It went on to comment that "similarly, members of this nation are unanimously agreed on the enlightened leadership of President Jomo Kenyatta the Father of the Nation. Right-thinking citizens know it is because of his self-sacrifice and self-denial that Kenya is what it is today." The paper maintained that the President's wise leadership

[142] *DN*, "Council told to wipe out subversives," no. 4540, Tuesday 13 May 1975, p. 1 (for editorials see "Africanising the economy" and "Pledges not fulfilled," no. 4540, Tuesday 13 May 1975, p. 6). There were other such visits or meetings held elsewhere with those in attendance being reported in the press as having pledged loyalty to the President that made it to the newspaper's front pages during this period. See for instance *DN*, "Kiambu growers pledge loyalty," no. 4537, Friday 9 May 1975, p. 1; *DN*, "Massive show of loyalty to the president," no. 4539, Monday 12 May 1975, p. 1; *DN*, "Mzee assured of support: We'll fight to defend 'Uhuru'," no. 4551, Monday 26 May 1975, p.1.

[143] *DN*, "Mzee says 'Deal with the rumour-mongers'" no. 4546, Tuesday 20 May 1975, p. 1 for editorials see "The troubles in Angola" and "Language as a unifying force" on p. 6 of the same issue.

had afforded Kenyans unlimited freedoms, including the freedom of speech, so "that some of our youth, even those who are at the University of Nairobi at the moment, can enjoy freedom to speak out publicly, even some times to act as critics of the Government." Unfortunately, the paper added, Kenya was not devoid of anarchists and other harmful elements who were bent on destroying the country. The newspaper insisted that the fact that dissidents had resorted to disseminating their views anonymously meant that they lacked good will. The possibility that they did so as a result of an oppressive political atmosphere was not considered. The *DN* also insisted that Kenya was a democratic country and though its institutions of government were not perfect, it had faith in their ability to improve "through democratic means which are cherished in our Constitution." The editorial was lavish in its praise of the Government. It is only in the final paragraph of the editorial that a single sentence reflected the editorial's title, "Bring them to justice," as at this point the editor made what was either a bold or timid attempt to criticise the Government's policy of detention without trial by urging it to apprehend and subsequently take those held through due process.[144] A second editorial decried the demonstrations which university students had launched in the past few weeks and termed them "intolerable behaviour." The newspaper was of the opinion that the only valid demonstration students could launch were those directly related to their academics and denounced student behaviour that appeared to have descended into anarchy. The editor seems to have been particularly disturbed that on one occasion the students had cornered some of the policemen sent to disperse them and locked them up in the university's Central Catering Unit for "interrogation" during which one of them was relieved of his identity card.[145] Their behaviour was an insult to a Government that it claimed respected their freedoms of association and it urged it to consider putting university students

[144] *DN*, "Bring them to justice," no. 4552, Tuesday 27 May 1975, p. 6.
[145] *DN*, "Intolerable behaviour," no. 4552, Tuesday 27 May 1975, p. 6.

through some form of national service to rid them of what it perceived of as immaturity. In the end, state officials opted to shut the university and 94 students appeared in court charged with "rioting after Proclamation," which carried a maximum penalty of life imprisonment. The paper carried a dry front page report on the story with no related editorial comment.[146] It was undoubtedly an extreme reaction on the Government's part and this may have been disturbing to the newspaper. Nevertheless, when the Government released the students after their charges were dropped a few days later, the newspaper praised the President's "magnanimous gesture" in the day's editorial.[147]

Later that year, Shikuku and Seroney made their memorable negative assessment of KANU and the newspaper that had been calling for the rejuvenation of the party and probably agreed with them avoided condemning their remarks but without concealing its distrust of the two politicians. Instead, the editor used one paragraph to state that a Member of the House had asserted that KANU was dead and the Deputy Speaker agreed with him as he had not permitted further debate on the matter. Nevertheless, the rest of the editorial was a harsh critique of the actions of the Leader of Government Business and the members of Parliament who had chosen to walk out of the chambers a second time. The paper considered their actions unnecessarily disruptive of House business and advised that a better option would have been to pass a vote of no confidence on the Deputy Speaker. Apparently, the editor was concerned that a walkout could potentially backfire. If members walked out without doing the necessary calculations, they could leave behind a quorum that could continue conducting business and "assuming that there is a clear-cut division between Government supporters and their counterparts" those left behind

[146] *DN*, "University closed" and "Students face life sentences," no. 4553, Wednesday 28 May 1975, p. 1. For editorials see "Commendable decisions" (on Tanzanian Government's decision to pay ransom to Marxist Popular Revolutionary Party in Zaire for kidnapped college students) and "Russian imperialism" (a response to a speech made by former British Premier Edward Heath) on p. 6 of the same issue.
[147] *DN*, "Magnanimous gesture," no. 4555, Friday 30 May 1975, p. 6.

could be better positioned to vote against Government interests.[148] When Shikuku and Seroney were carted off to detention, the *DN* reported the story without comment.[149] Having been detained, the two men suffered the fate of KPU sympathisers who had preceded them and others who would follow for different reasons, as Kenyatta continued to elongate his list of detainees right up to the very year of his death.

Before his death, there was the 1976 initiative to amend the constitution yet again to prevent Moi from succeeding Kenyatta in the event of his death and this time the *DN* opposed it. What made this particular demand for constitutional change unpalatable? The newspaper objected to its origins, arguing that they were external to the Executive or the Legislature and of the "mob" and "demagogues." In addition, it considered the initiative an attack on a presidential appointee and therefore an attack on the President himself. Apparently, previous amendments were acceptable to the newspaper because the above two arms of government had initiated them. Nonetheless, it ought to be remembered that the most vocal members of the "mob" or "demagogues" were MPs, Kihika Kimani and Njoroge Mungai, who belonged to Kenyatta's inner circle and were determined to keep power within it. In addition, the Executive had initiated all previous amendments to the Kenyan constitution before bulldozing them through a parliament that it had endeavoured to make more pliant over the years.[150] This arrangement had its obvious disadvantages and its hideous consequences were already in evidence across the country's political landscape. Moreover, the constitution had already been changed twice in the previous decade to make it difficult for a different vice-president and a cabinet minister, who were of

[148] *DN*, "Walking out is futile," no. 4670, Saturday 11 October 1975, p. 6.
[149] *DN*, "Seroney and Shikuku held," no. 4674, Thursday 16 October 1975, p. 1.
[150] *DN*, "…to the fringe of treason," no. 4977, Thursday 7 October 1976, p. 6.

course presidential appointees, to become president.[151] Thus, although the newspaper was apt in its condemnation of the self-interest and chicanery that underlay the initiative of the Change-the-Constitution initiative, those were not novel vices in Kenyan politics. Its comfort with an Executive that was too powerful can only be attributed to its support for an order that had generally served its interests best and its discomfort with elements within the Change-the-Constitution initiative it could not trust.

Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose: An Uneasy Party-Paper Dance Continues into a New Era

Over 80 countries were represented at Kenyatta's state funeral and just as in the *EAS*, the *DN*'s pages had several photographs of the dignitaries who attended the funeral but with a special highlight for the Aga Khan. The ninth page had a photograph of the British High Commissioner in conversation with Prince Charles, who was seated alongside President Abdallah of the Comoros, Liberia's President Tolbert and Uganda's President Amin. On the next page was a picture of the Aga Khan seated next to the Indian premier Morarji Desai, surrounded by photographs of Liberia's President Tolbert, President Stevens of Sierra Leone and President Jimmy Carter's son Jeff Carter and his wife. The paper featured a photograph of the Aga Khan again on the twelfth page beneath a title that read "Aga Khan Flies in to Share Kenya's Sorrow" and accompanying a brief report on his arrival and words of condolence.[152] A day later a story on a number of the delegations that had stayed on to meet with the new president was accompanied by a photograph of the Aga Khan and Moi. The prince assured the new leader of the Ismaili community's continued support for the new Government and its policies. He termed Kenyatta "a respected and an admired leader" as well as "a personal friend" and went on to remark that the

[151] Reference is to the 5th and 9th amendments to the first post-independence constitution that was replaced with a new one in August 2010.
[152] *DN*, "Aga Khan flies in 'to share Kenya's sorrow,'" no. 5562, Friday 1 September 1978, p. 12.

former president "loved and respected people of all communities and hence the whole world joined in mourning him."[153] The country's leadership had passed into new hands and the prince was at work forging a new relationship with the important regional leader. If he remembered that the new president was the same politician who as Vice President and Minister for Home Affairs had overseen the expulsion of eight Asians including Kenyan citizens from the country in the mid-sixties, he prudently made no mention of it. Instead, he used the opportune occasion to speak for the country's racial minorities in words lauding a figure beloved to many in the transition government.

In death, *DN* lionised the deceased President calling him once again, "Father of the Nation" as it added that it was he who "led this country to peace, progress and stability" and, even more grandiosely, the man "who spearheaded the freedom struggle on the African continent." He had ruled well, it claimed, steering the country to great heights and enabling it to stand as an example worthy of emulation by other emerging African countries. The editor also urged Kenyans to embrace Kenyatta's patriotism and "tread the path of constitutionality that he set out for us."[154] By 1978, that path had of course become very difficult to navigate as it was overgrown with the bushes that were the politically motivated constitutional amendments whose negative repercussions would continue to wrack havoc on all aspects of the country's life for decades to come. Kenya had indeed successfully avoided turbulence and bloodshed on the scale of the Congo and Nigeria, rejected costly experiments with Marxism or Socialism as in Guinea and Tanzania, avoided the coups d'état of Ghana and Ethiopia, and achieved modest economic growth under Kenyatta's leadership. But it was far from an example worth emulation by any country in Africa or elsewhere. Parliament was weak and had been turned into a government

[153] *DN*, "Let's be friends – Somalia," no. 5563, Saturday 2 September 1978, p. 4. Photographs of President Moi and four other leaders appear on p. 6.
[154] *DN*, "Mzee Kenyatta, Father of the Nation," no. 5554, Wednesday 23 August 1978, p. 6.

department; the multiparty system existed in name only as KANU had proven itself hopelessly and thoroughly incapable of tolerating dissent; the country's legal system and security forces frequently functioned as a joint apparatus of political suppression; human rights meant little beyond text set onto the pages of the United Nation's Organisation charter as dissidents, many nameless and faceless, continued to be detained indefinitely; assassinations littered independent Kenya's brief existence; the State employed an unofficial policy of politico-economic neglect of swathes of "stubborn" regions; a concerted effort to develop others was yet to be made; and the unrelenting rapacity of the country's oligarchs ensured that Kenya was indeed becoming the nation of a few millionaires on one hand and millions of impoverished citizenry on the other that J.M. Kariuki had cautioned against. Political crises had not caused Kenya to explode onto the pages of the world's newspapers. Instead, they would bubble beneath the surface year after year as its leaders and mainstream media continued to perpetuate the myth of a peaceful and contentedly progressing Kenya amidst the chaos and turmoil of its neighbours. Meanwhile, the country had to move on following Kenyatta's death. The same *DN* issue that carried news of Kenyatta's death also carried news of the swearing in of his successor, Daniel T. Moi, who soon promised to follow his predecessor's footsteps. Little would change – including the proximity of the *DN* to the Government.

After Moi's ascent to power, the *DN* focused its efforts on emphasising the peaceful nature of the transition and the need for order and stability with the same vigour that had guided it since 1960. In the days after Kenyatta was buried, the newspaper's front pages were filled with reports of various leaders pledging loyalty to and support for the President, commencing with that of the cabinet. The newspaper welcomed the cabinet's declaration and encouraged Kenyans to rally around him as well. Most likely with the shenanigans of the Change-the-

Constitution initiative in mind, an editorial called for adherence to the constitution for purposes of guiding the country through a tranquil transition. The paper recognised the right of others to vie for the presidency, but noted that such efforts had to be fair.[155] Another editorial further demonstrates that it was generally pleased with the manner in which politicians had lined up behind Moi and that he would be elected unopposed as KANU's president. The sooner the country was done with transition formalities, the sooner the president would be able to get down to addressing Kenya's ills. These ills the *DN* candidly identified as corruption, tribalism and nepotism without attribution to any person or institution past or present as if they had rained down on the country from clouds that had materialised unaided in the sky. The paper also pointed out to its readers that KANU was in need of revitalisation, having held its last annual delegates conference in 1966. This criticism was cushioned with words of praise for the party that the paper insisted had continued to exist in the hearts of its citizens and that it was confident that the new leader would take the necessary steps required to rejuvenate it.[156]

The *DN's* coverage of Moi's release of Kenya's 26 political detainees in December 1978 suggests that it had come to accept detention without trial as normal and necessary for the maintenance of peace and security. The paper's position in 1978 was a far cry from its withering and principled critique of it in 1966. While it celebrated their release as the ushering in of a new political age and a new beginning for the country by a generous and forgiving new leader, it not only highlighted Moi's remarks to the effect that he would not hesitate to detain anybody again if he deemed it necessary, but also implied (as a publication) that the existence of certain people did in fact make detention an indispensible tool of government. The paper pointed out that "we note that his mercy is tempered with the warning that the forces of law and order will continue to

[155] *DN*, "National interest must come first," no. 5563, Saturday 2 September 1978, p. 6.
[156] *DN*, "Kenya makes history today," Friday 6 October 1978, p. 6.

be ever vigilant in the task of dealing with loudmouths and braggarts – and there are many of them around – who love to indulge in boastful claims and who issue uncalled for threats to individual leaders or at Government." It went on to add that such characters would do much to help themselves if they remembered that the Government would watch them constantly "in their waking hours as much as in their dreams" and they would suffer consequences if they overstepped their bounds.[157] It was indeed a sharp turn-around for the newspaper, but not without precedent as it had come round to accepting Government actions on matters it had previously opposed. It regularly supported several of the Government's key political and economic decisions and when it did not, a combination of fear and expediency worked to silence the paper or compelled it to toe the Government line.

This compliance, however, does not mean that the *DN* would enjoy a smooth-sailing relationship with the Government. One clash the paper had with it over a trivial matter serves to illustrate the sensitivity with which it had to conduct its operations in Kenya. In May 1981 doctors in public service went on strike over their terms of remuneration. The *DN* followed the strike closely and on 22 May published a report on three of the doctors who had been released on bond after being charged with breach of contract by employees. Towards the end of the story, the newspaper tucked in a segment explaining that the Government's "Kenya News Agency released an anonymous statement, said to have been issued by Kanu," decrying the strike and urging the Government to move definitively against the striking doctors.[158] Unfortunately for the newspaper, the use of the word "anonymous" in its description of the agency's statement did not sit well with all its readers. The next day the newspaper had a front page story, "President blasts 'The Nation'," in which it explained the President charged that the newspaper had been

[157] *DN*, "Moi: The Man of Action," no. 5610, Wednesday 13 November 1978, p. 6.
[158] *DN*, "Court releases doctors on bond," no. 6364, Friday 22 May 1981, p. 1 and 32.

misrepresenting the facts of the doctor's strike so as to mislead its readers and destabilise the country. According to the President, the paper's parlous attitude could be gauged from its description of the agency statement, particularly the use of the word "anonymous" that appeared to question the statement's authenticity. He considered the statement an insult to KANU's leadership and went on to state that "Kanu was the ruling party. It is the Government and therefore, my voice. How then can the publishers of the NATION imagine their views of the party are anonymous? They also want to say that Moi is anonymous." The President threatened to ban the newspaper to protect Kenyans from a newspaper that was one of those that had "grown horns" due to the freedoms that existed in the country and added that he had put police on notice to deal with those who were a threat to the Government and the country.[159] The following Monday, a small report on the bottom left corner of the newspaper explained that five of the paper's six journalists whom police had picked up on the day the newspaper published Moi's remarks were still in custody. It identified those still in custody as Managing Editor Joe Kadhi, Chief Sub-Editor Philip Ochieng', News Editor John Esibi and reporters Gideon Mulaki and Pius Nyamora. Police had released the Editor-in-Chief Joe Rodrigues and ordered him to report to the headquarters of the country's intelligence agency that Monday.[160] It can be argued that as the Government's Kenya News Agency had issued the statement, the newspaper ought not to have used words that conveyed doubt about its origins. All the same, the Government's reaction was undoubtedly extreme.

On Tuesday probably fearing a ban and concerned about the fate of its journalists the paper published an "Apology to President Moi and Kanu," on its front page.[161] It attributed the inclusion of the word "anonymous" to human error adding that its use was unnecessary and

[159] *DN*, "President blasts 'The Nation'," no. 6365, Saturday 23 May 1981, p. 1 and 4.
[160] *DN*, "Journalists are still held," no. 6366, Monday 25 May 1981, p. 1.
[161] *DN*, "Apology to President Moi and Kanu," no. 6367, Tuesday 26 May 1981, p. 1.

apologised to the President and KANU officials. The controversy was not an abrupt turn-around in the President's temperament. In late 1979 he had shown his sensitivity to opposition when he used KANU's clearance procedures to prevent ten candidates, most of them ex-KPU members, from contesting elections on the ticket of the de facto sole party of the country for suing *The Standard* and the party's secretary general for libel. When Moi reached out after the elections and appointed Odinga Chairman of the Seed, Lint and Cotton Marketing Board, the newspaper praised the new leader for what was seemingly an effort to put the past behind him.[162] As the doctor's strike revealed, it was but a brief respite.

In March 1981 the *DN* found itself at loggerheads with the Government once when Hezekiah Ougo, the MP for Bondo, announced at a press conference in Nairobi that he was resigning from his seat to make way for Oginga Odinga's return to Parliament, arguing that Kenyans would benefit more from his political skills and experience.[163] Shortly after, reports surfaced that Odinga had made the Mombasa speech in which among other things he accused Kenyatta of having been a land grabber. When Moi reacted to the speech, the *DN* reported his response defending Kenyatta and likening the former president's regime to his own.[164] To the right of the article on the President's response, the newspaper positioned a smaller but nevertheless prominent report on a speech Odinga had made in Nakuru promising to work with the President if he was elected MP for Bondo. However, by this time he had also defended his remarks in yet another speech made at a fund raising ceremony for a science and institute in Kisumu in which he pointed out that he and Kenyatta had always been friends despite their disagreements. As such, although he would commend the deceased leader for his positive

[162] *DN*, "Why I picked Odinga – Moi," no. 5909, Friday 30 November 1979, p. 1. For editorial see same issue, "Odinga's new job: Proof of no Malice," p. 6.
[163] *DN*, "Ougo gives up seat for Odinga," no. 6314, Wednesday 25 March 1981, p. 1 and p. 28.
[164] *DN*, "Anti-Mzee men warned," no. 6324, Monday 6 April 1981, p. 1 and "Leave Mzee in peace," p. 1.

achievements, "where he went wrong I also tell."[165] However, by then Moi had already made a final assessment of Odinga's political stance and was not amused. "Odinga 'still not cleared'," was the newspaper's headline a week later over a report on the politician's inability to get KANU clearance to stand for the Bondo by-elections the following month.[166] The following day, "Odinga asks for forgiveness" was the headline.

Once it was clear that KANU was bent on exiling Odinga from the political scene once again, the *DN* weighed in on the issue for the first time, calling the day he was barred from standing "a sad day in the political life of this nation." Interestingly, the paper did not issue an outright condemnation of Odinga's references to Kenyatta's land grabbing, only terming them "imprudent to the extreme" as he had made them at a time when the President had made commendable steps towards the forging of national unity. Odinga was a complex individual with many sides ranging from freedom fighter to Opposition leader, continued the newspaper, but it was unfortunate that certain politicians had insisted on stressing the latter. The paper was still of the opinion that Odinga and his fellow MPs ought not to have gone into the Opposition as it observed that once they had recognised the folly of their ways, they had duly returned to KANU. Nevertheless, still riding the wave reconciliation of during Moi's transition to power, the paper asserted that the country had stayed more united than ever before through serious problems wrought by a combination of drought, global recession, rising oil prices and falling commodity prices. "Why then this sudden hiatus?" Why should the clearance of one man, even if he is Oginga Odinga, rock that ship?" What was needed now was an act of magnanimity from the President and the paper pleaded with him to permit Odinga to contest the Bondo seat. He was a human being who had "stumbled" in Mombasa and Moi was a leader who did not expect people

[165] Quoted in *DN*, "Leave Mzee in peace," no. 6324, Monday 6 April 1981, p. 16.
[166] *DN*, "Odinga 'still not cleared'," no. 6330, Monday 13 April 1981, p. 1 and p. 28.

to shrink in fear in his presence, one whose deeds earned him the respect due to his office, and by implication, not political demonstrations of strength. It was an optimistic assessment of the President from a newspaper desperate for an era of greater political freedoms but also one that showed that they were yet to understand him fully. Two days later, the newspaper's front pages carried the Government's condemnation of it. The Government had issued a statement accusing it of "trying to assume the role of an opposition party" and for exhibiting "a rebellious attitude." KANU had barred Odinga from participating in the elections and any implications that individual political machinations had led to Odinga's fate were false. KANU was the ruling party and its decisions bound all Kenyans. The Government therefore considered the *DN* guilty of perpetuating sectarianism and tribalism.[167]

The following year, the chastised newspaper held back from stating its position on key political affairs as Moi's intolerance for political dissent manifested itself ever more clearly. In May 1982 the rumours that Oginga Odinga had voiced his intentions to form a political party while in London emerged. When the paper headlined the report on Minister for Higher Education Joseph Kamotho and Minister for Basic Education Joseph Ng'eno's attack on Odinga for his alleged intentions to start a second party, the *DN* published a small photograph of Odinga beneath the headline "Kamotho, Ng'eno blast Odinga" that was captioned with the politician's response "Mr. Odinga... 'Leave me alone'."[168] There was no related editorial but perhaps in its positioning of the picture and the story carrying the attacks and Odinga's response the newspaper hoped to send a message that it did not approve of the Government's bullish behaviour. A day later, the newspaper also headlined Odinga's response to his critics on his return from London in

[167] *DN*, "Odinga: Govt slams 'Nation'," no. 6336, Monday 20 April 1981, p. 1.
[168] *DN*, "Kamotho, Ng'eno blast Odinga," no 6670, Monday 17 May 1982, p. 1.

which he denied contemplating the formation of a political party.[169] Odinga was nevertheless expelled from KANU and on the day the newspaper headlined the report on his expulsion it also carried a smaller front page story in which a British MP was reported to have denied that Odinga had announced his intention to form a political party while in London.[170] Once again, the paper steered clear of opining on the matter. The British MP's account of Odinga's seemingly benign activities while in London on its front page were as far the paper was prepared to go in addition to publishing former Kitutu East MP George Anyona's very bold call for a second party in Kenya on its back page. Despite his refusal to state that he would form a second party, the paper quoted him extensively condemning Africa's single party regimes as failures that had resulted in "monstrous dictatorships" and his insistence that Kenya's constitution provided for a "de jure multi-party State."[171]

KANU's call and subsequent legislative push for a one-party state in tacit acknowledgement of the veracity of Anyona's statement was reported generously but with continued editorial silence as the newspaper opted to enlighten readers on the benefits of insurance and the need for funding of projects in rural areas in its editorials.[172] These were of course not unimportant issues, but the paper's reluctance to discuss the coming of what was a major consitutitional change is revealing. Once the Executive had succeeded in piloting the relevant amendment through Parliament, the *DN* neither lauded nor condemned the move, arguing that "it would not serve any useful purpose now to debate the merits and demerits of the one-party system." However, it avoided confrontation with the Government by equivocally

[169] *DN*, "Now Odinga blasts critics," no. 6673, Thursday 20 May 1982, p. 1.
[170] *DN*, "British MP on Odinga's UK Lecture," no. 6674, Friday 21 May 1982, p. 1 and p. 28.
[171] *DN*, "Second party needed – Anyona," no. 6674, Friday 21 May 1982, p. 28.
[172] *DN*, "Kanu calls for one-party State," no. 6679, Thursday 27 May 1982, p. 1 and p. 20 (for editorial see "Making better use of insurance," on p. 6), *DN*, "'One-party State' Bills are published," no. 6686, Friday 4 June 1982, p. 1(for editorial see "More funds needed for rural areas," p. 6).

adding that the measure that had passed unanimously in Parliament was adequate proof that it was necessary for the country's future. In the piece titled "The Challenges of a One-party State," the newspaper's anxieties in the wake of the new amendment are clear in that which it considered the country had lost or had to ensure it cultivated in its transition into a *de jure* one-party state. The newspaper benignly presented these losses (*de jure* losses as they had been lost *de facto* over the years) as "hopes" and requisites for the KANU of the future. Thus, it stated its hope that KANU would find a way to create adequate room for a diversity of views and that it would encourage rigorous debate on controversial issues; that the party's structure would be well developed so as to enable all Kenyans, from the grassroots upwards, to play a role in decision making; that the party's officials would not only be competent but also tolerant of conflicting views; and that politicians would calm those who were anxious by explaining why the move was taken and what they stood to gain from it. The last point was an odd request, especially as the newspaper had started its editorial by stating that such an exercise was unnecessary after the amendment's passage. It appears to be more of a veiled reference to its opinion that the move was politically motivated and not a step taken for the wellbeing of the country.[173] *DN* then called on Kenyans to help make the system work as it had more or less resigned itself to the situation and the belief that people would have to make the best out of it.

The newspaper was also reluctant to comment on the Government's clampdown on dissent and subsequent detention of several politicians, academicians and other professionals in the same period (May-July 1982). These were the individuals picked up in the aftermath of the May strikes and demonstrations at the country's top colleges and Moi's Madaraka Day allegation that certain politicians and university dons were planning to incite workers and students to go on

[173] *DN*, "The Challenges of a one-party state,"no. 6691, Thursday 10 June 1982, p. 6 (for headlined report see same issue, "One-party State: It's now official," p. 1)

strike.[174] Soon after George Anyona made his remarks on the desirability of a second party in Kenya, the *DN* reported that police had picked him up not long after he had called the publication saying that he had a "very big story."[175] His detention as well as that of Nairobi lawyer John Khaminwa, Kenyatta University College dons Maina wa Kinyatti, Kamoji Wachiira, Al-Amin Mazrui, Edward Oyugi, University of Nairobi dons George Katama Mkangi, Willy Mutunga and journalist Wang'ondu Kariuki all made the front page without commentary. [176] The summary dismissal of *The Standard's* editor-in-chief George Githii during this period for his vitriolic editorial terming the practice of detention fiendish as well as the swift dissociation from and apology for the editorial by the newspaper's management acted as a warning to any like-minded mainstream journalist. More importantly, it also illuminates the extent to which both newspapers' motivations for continued existence compelled them to resort to self-censorship as a mechanism for self-preservation in a bid to avoid potentially fatal journalistic collisions with the Government.[177] In the midst of this tense political atmosphere, certain elements of the Kenya Air Force attempted a coup d'état.

The coup, as well as the loss of life and lawlessness that accompanied it, met with outright condemnation from the *DN* and it informed its readers that the chaos had served to

[174] *DN*, "Moi reveals strike plot," no. 6684, Wednesday 2 June 1982, p. 1. The dons were also accused of "trying to convert their students to foreign thought processes and systems," p. 6.
[175] *DN*, "Anyona picked up by police," no. 6682, Monday 31 May 1982, p. 1 (for editorial see same issue, "Learning from the Falklands crisis," p. 6. The following day's editorial: *DN*, "Nurturing the dreams of youth" and "Rain, but no water," no. 6683, Tuesday 1 June 1982, p. 6).
[176] *DN*, "Anyona detained," no. 6685, Thursday 3 June 1982, p. 1 (for editorial see "Farewell to the Thika Blunder," p. 6), DN, "Khaminwa picked up by police," no. 6686, Friday 4 June 1982, p. 1 (for editorial see "More funds needed for rural areas," p. 6); *DN*, "Lecturer held on sedition charge," no. 6689, Tuesday 8 June 1982, p. 1 (for editorial see "The cultural way to national unity," p. 6); *DN*, "Two lecturers picked up," no. 6690, Wednesday 9 June 1982, p. 1 (for editorial see same issue "The right road for soil conservation," p. 6); *DN*, "University crackdown," no. 6692, Friday 11 June1982, p. 1 and p. 32 (for editorial see "The taxing question of death duty," and "Protecting shrines," p. 6.); *DN*, "2 lecturers detained," no. 6722, Friday 16 July 1982, p. 1 (for editorial see "Children deserve better than this," p. 6); *DN*, "Wang'ondu gets 4 ½ years," no. 6725, Tuesday 20 July 1982, p. 1 (for editorial see "Preserving our historical buildings" and "Logic in the pipeline," p. 6).
[177] For the *DN's* coverage of the Githii sacking see *DN*, "Detain Githii demanded MPs" and "I'm not bitter, says dismissed editor," no. 6727, Thursday 27 July 1982, p. 1, 5 and 6.

demonstrate that "an elected government, *no matter how corrupt or bad* [is] in most cases preferable to a military junta." [178] The rebels were not only ideologically immature, but they had also conducted themselves like thugs in contrast to the disciplined, loyal forces that had crushed them. Only those the country's citizens had elected could speak for them and so the rebels who had fashioned themselves as "Robin Hoods" fighting for the common man mired in poverty wrought by the corruption of their leaders were actually silencing the people's voices and were nothing but a sham. Besides, Kenyans could change their leaders at the polls and not via coup d'états. However, despite the immensely disturbing fact that there had been an attempted coup preceded by an increasingly troubled political atmosphere, the paper made no attempt to analyse in depth Kenya's political and economic status quo which would have entailed exploring questions relating to the nature and pace of economic growth as well as the extent to which the populace was benefitting from it. Questions not asked included those pertaining to political openness or lack thereof; whether or not Kenyans participated in elections that were actually free and fair; what options a country's citizens had in the absence of political freedom and credible elections; and to what extent the country's constitution after several politically movitated amendments still served the needs of its citizens. The newspaper may not have considered these issues worthy of exploration or perhaps in light of its parlous relationship with the Government, its editor and management thought it could not delve into them without risking severe repercussions. In the case of the latter, one may conclude once again that other reasons for the paper's existence overrode the will to engage in any journalistic enterprise that could cause the Government to shut it down.

After the coup, the *DN* had called for national healing and transparency in the handling of all those arrested and continued to steer clear of any writing that would put it in direct

[178] *DN*, "The tragic folly of a coup," no. 6736, Tuesday 3 August 1982, p. 1. The italics are the newspaper's.

confrontation with the Government. Generally, editorials praised those who did not join the rebels in their coup bid and supported the Government in its efforts to stabilise the country as quickly as possible. One editorial urged the government to release the names and pictures of those arrested to the media so as to keep their relatives informed and because "not knowing creates more tension than knowledge, however unpleasant."[179] In line with the stance it had taken in 1966, the paper also called for those arrested to be processed through the legal system quickly, stressing that doing so would also contribute to stability. Ten days later, when G. G. Kariuki, the Minister for Lands, Settlement and Planning, urged the Government to allow the media to cover the martial law proceedings against the KAF rebels, the newspaper headlined his remarks and lauded his call as "one of the most bold and refreshing statements to come out of a Government Minister since the events of August 1."[180] His remarks had offered the paper another opportunity to push once again for the principle of fair and transparent trials for accused persons.

However, in the weeks that followed the coup, the *DN* generally maintained a steady silence as politicians, university dons and others were detained or harassed, opting to report on the arrests and detentions without weighing in on them as a publication. And so on the day it reported the detention of MP Michael Koigi wa Wamwere and University of Nairobi Law faculty Willy Munyoki Mutunga, an editorial pondered over whether or not Tanzania would repatriate the rebels who had fled to that country following the failure of the coup and bore no opinion articles on the matter.[181] Three days later it headlined a Monday report on the police raid on the offices of *Viva* magazine and the home of its editor, Salim Lone, while the day's editorial

[179] *DN*, "This is a time to heal the wounds," no. 6737, Wednesday 4 August 1982, p. 6. See also, *DN*, "Lessons from the abortive coup, no. 6738, Thursday 5 August 1982, p. 6 and *DN*, "Rumour mongering must end," no. 6739, Friday 6 August 1982, p. 6.
[180] *DN*, "Try the rebels publicly – GG," no. 6746, Saturday 14 August 1982, p. 1 and *DN*, "The whole truth must come out," no. 6747, Monday 16 August 1982, p. 6.
[181] *DN*, "Wamwere, Mutunga detained," no. 6745, Friday 13 August 1982, p. 1. For editorial see "Will Tanzania return the rebels?" on p. 6.

focused exclusively but perhaps indirectly with some pertinence to Lone's plight on G. G. Kariuki's weekend statement.[182] The paper also restricted itself to reporting without opining on the arrest of sixty university students as well as the Government's confiscation of passports belonging to six politicians.[183]

Shortly after the attempted coup, the Aga Khan chose Kenya as the first destination of his silver jubilee tour that year and as usual the *DN* gave generous coverage to his visit. His first published meeting was a private one with the President with whom he was photographed shaking hands at Nairobi's State House.[184] The same issue carried the Aga Khan's remarks at a luncheon which Charles Njonjo attended alongside Minister for Regional Development, Science and Technology Nicholas Biwott and Minister for Industry Andrew Omanga, among others. In his comments he made specific reference to the coup d'état and conveyed his appreciation for the President's call for assistance to those whose businesses had suffered looting. He also welcomed Moi's insistence that the Kenyanisation policy meant support for citizens of all creeds and colours, adding that the President was following in the footsteps of Kenyatta "whose strength and courage in the defence of democracy were an example to the whole of Africa, and I fully endorse President Moi's call for all to work together to help build a stronger Kenya."[185] The Prince reminded those present that as the Imam of the Shia Ismaili Community, he was responsible for their wellbeing and linked that responsibility to his involvement in commerce. At

[182] *DN*, "60 university students picked up," no. 6750, Thursday 19 August 1982, p. 1. For editorial see same issue "Getting on top of technical needs," and "Safeguarding our soccer stars," p. 6. For following day's editorial see *DN*, "Let's wait for new building by-laws," and "The Ruth First aims live on," no. 6751, Friday 20 August 1982, p. 6; *DN*, "Police search editor's office," no. 6747, Monday 16 August 1982, p. 1; *DN*, "The whole truth must come out," no. 6747, Monday 16 August 1982, p. 6. For the following day's editorial see *DN*, "A time to reflect on abortion," no., 6748, Tuesday 17 August 1982, p. 6. *Viva* was a popular Kenyan women's magazine and the government had taken offense at some of its contents. As was most often the case in that era, the government did not explain exactly what Lone had published to warrant the raid.
[183] *DN*, "Abuya's passport seized," no. 6755, Wednesday 25 August 1982, p. 1. For editorials see same issue "A welcome delay by City Council," and "Workers' welfare needs protecting, p. 6. For the following day's editorial see *DN*, "Namibia Day…and still no way out," no. 6756, Thursday 26 August 1982, p. 6.
[184] *DN*, "Aga Khan in talks with President," no. 6791, Wednesday 6 October 1982, p. 1.
[185] *DN*, "Aga Khan backs President's business plea," no. 6793, Friday 8 October 1982, p. 3.

the same time, he also sought to communicate a broader interest in the wellbeing of the country by noting that his commercial activities and those of his grandfather were not simply for profit but for the economic progress of developing countries. It is also for this reason that he must have thought it important to expound on the work of the Diamond Trust of Kenya and the Industrial Promotion Services, emphasising that two thirds of Jubilee Insurance Co's business engaged clients who were not Ismaili. In addition, over 80% of Diamond Trust's loans were made to non-Ismailis. He also pointed out that it was necessary for Government to provide business with an optimal environment for operation, one that was secure and in which all the laws necessary for commercial success were applied.

The Aga Khan was well known to the country's politicians as was the nature of his enterprises. However, in light of recent events and despite the careful effort he and the *DN* had taken to publicise the work of the institutions he sponsored in Kenya over the last two decades, the shock over the manner in which anti-Asian sentiment had manifested itself in the looting that accompanied the coup must have caused him to craft this speech as he did. Asians by then had a heavy presence in both retail trade and manufacturing that was the cause of tensions between them and certain segments of the population. Thus even as he stated his support for Moi and his Government, he tactfully reminded the country's officials just how integral the enterprises of foreign capital and non-African Kenyans were to the development of the economy. There was a marked contrast in emphasis in tone and presentation in print between the manner in which he conducted his 1982 trip and one he made less than a year before in March 1981. The earlier trip made its debut on the front page of the *DN* when it announced the arrival of Aga Khan in Kenya for the International Press Institute conference at which he was to deliver the keynote address. The conference was to be part of a 17-day visit during which he would visit various projects that

the Aga Khan Foundation sponsored. [186] Not surprisingly, given the nature of the organisation's work, the newspaper gave the conference extensive coverage starting off with a special edition to mark the event.[187] However, perhaps convinced by then that Kenya was a unique creature of capitalism quite unlike its East African neighbours, the leader and his newspaper seemed content to rely on numerous photographs and dry reports to communicate the nature of his endeavours in Kenya. The Aga Khan appeared on the front page of the *DN* eight times; thrice in relation to the conference and two of those with Moi. When he did not appear on the front page there was usually part of a report relating to his visits to various companies or projects sponsored by him that started on the front page and continued on an inner page. Coverage of his visit to Nation House, for example, commenced as a small report on the lower left hand corner of the front page on 6 March 1981 and continued on the fourth page. The reader was informed that Aga Khan met the paper's chairman, directors, departmental heads, signed the guest book before going into the library "where he was shown personal files containing clippings and portraits of His Highness."[188] In contrast, the October 1982 visit was much shorter (seven days), but the paper accompanied pictures with reports on the more pointed speeches the Aga Khan made on his organisations, the role of private capital in developing economies, and security, as well as respect and equal treatment of all the country's citizens.

The Push for Reforms – with Limits

Towards the end of that turbulent year, KANU announced plans to hold grassroots elections and to expand party membership that the *DN* received cautiously.[189] Party leadership wrangles in the months preceding the announcement had added to the paper's already jaded

[186] *DN*, "Aga Khan flies in," no. 6294, Monday 2 March 1981, p. 1.
[187] *DN*, "Here is the remarkable story of a great idea," (no number), Monday 2 March 1981.
[188] *DN*, "Aga Khan visits 'Nation'," no. 6298, Friday 6 March 1981, p.1 and p. 4.
[189] *DN*, "Kanu drafts election plan," no. 6813, Monday 1 November 1982, p. 1.

opinion of the party. KANU Secretary General Robert Matano's announcement gave it yet another opportunity to draw readers' attention to whatever it perceived to be the ills of KANU in addition to elaborating on its vision of democracy and good governance in a one-party state. A key deficiency the paper wanted the party to remedy was the lack of a clear party policy statement and structure:

> And yet Kanu, as the ruling party in a one-party state, is indeed the "mother and father" [as some KANU politicians frequently referred to it] of our political life. That is why it is essential for the well-being of the party and our body politic, that the party's constitution, philosophy, procedures and practices be made known and understood by all, leaders and followers included.
>
> Recent Kanu leadership rows in Kiambu, Kirinyaga and now in Nairobi seem to indicate that the party's constitution, philosophy, procedures and practices are not well known or understood. In all those cases where party leadership wrangles have cropped up Kanu has been viewed by some of those involved as merely a mechanism to power. As a result the whole raison d'etre for the party – as a means of achieving democracy has been thrown out of the window.[190]

A one-party state therefore meant that KANU had to institute and guarantee democratic principles within its structure as it was the sole channel of political expression. It had to be well organised from the grassroots and the grassroots had to have a fair opportunity to elect or reject leaders to prevent unscrupulous politicians from hijacking the party for their own selfish interests. The paper also called on the party to ensure that all were well versed with the contents of its constitution so that all those concerned could determine for themselves whether or not the party was functioning in accordance with its provisions. It hailed Moi's announcement of the actual launch of KANU's recruitment drive on Jamhuri Day 1982 as proof that the party was finally getting serious about reforming itself and used the occasion to call once again for a national party that allowed for the free expression of all views. KANU's major weakness in the past had also been its major strength: "it has been too amorphous and all-encompassing."

[190] *DN*, "Making Kanu more understandable," no. 6813, Monday 1 November 1982, p. 6.

According to the newspaper, this meant that the party had been capable of accommodating those who embraced its policies and those who did not, but the use of "clearance" procedures against certain candidates in the recent past appeared to be turning it into a "closed shop." KANU in its opinion was a "popular party" and not a "mass party" as it did not have a strong and active grassroots presence.[191] This was an accurate but myopic description as KANU had always had methods of dealing with dissenting members dating back to the sixties and ranging from intimidation and isolation to detention. Its victims included Shikuku and Seroney who had dared to say that the emperor had no clothes.

In May 1985, the President received returns from Provincial Commissioners for KANU's membership drive which had netted 4.8 million members and raised over Kshs. 24 million. The *DN* was oddly silent about this achievement despite it being a step towards the sort of party reorganisation it had advocated.[192] The following month the newspaper reported Moi's disclosure of the election date for the party's local and national offices as it noted nonchalantly in the same article that the last time the party had held similar elections was in 1976.[193] In the weeks ahead, it gave KANU's election-related activities much coverage, including the novel use of the queue method of voting, but again did not publish its own views on the flurry of activity that ensued. It did however publish an editorial after the elections that strongly supported Moi's

[191] *DN*, "Kanu: New drive for popularity," no. 6850, Tuesday 14 December 1982, p. 6.
[192] *DN*, "Moi to announce Kanu polls after Madaraka," no. 7596, Thursday 9 May 1985, p. 1 and p. 24. For the editorial see "Let's reshape the Security Council," p. 6. The article revealed one aspect of the complicated relationship between the party and the Executive: the extent to which the two were enmeshed with the former, through members the civil service, subservient to and working in the interests of the latter. Not only did they supervise the KANU membership drive but they were also charged with the role of supervising its elections. In addition, those at the top echelons of the party had no qualms about appropriating their offices to attack and disable political rivals while others of lesser political weight feared them greatly. Emboldened in this way they could be quite arbitrary and draconian in their actions. Ten days before the elections the *DN* reported that the Central Province PC had banned campaign meetings because he deemed their interaction with the electorate during the membership drive adequate and one district a political hotbed (See *DN*, "PC bans campaign meetings," no. 7631, Wednesday 19 June 1985, p. 1 and p. 32). For article on election guidelines see *DN*, "Election guidelines out," no. 7628, Saturday 15 June 1985, p. 1 and 15.
[193] *DN*, "Moi announces Kanu's D-Day," no. 7625, Wednesday 12 June 1985, p. 1.

establishment of a KANU disciplinary committee despite the fact that it appeared to be another mechanism for stifling debate within the party, just like KANU's electoral "clearance" process for candidates.[194] The newspaper decried the heated political atmosphere in the months running up to the elections, the number of tongues that had been "too loose," particularly in Parliament, and the quarrels between election winners and losers. This was unacceptable to the paper and it supported the President's condemnation of the political scene and his warning that such characters were in fact "anti-Nyayo" and in future would face the disciplinary committee. The editorial explained that the President had stated his intention to move against those "who cannot control their mouths and their footsteps," in future and added its endorsement of his intent: "this is as it should be."[195] The following year, KANU announced that queue voting would precede the 1988 general elections during what would be a party primary of sorts. In a rather wordy and meandering editorial, the *DN* diplomatically allowed itself to wonder in print how a party primary would work in a single-party state, discussed KANU's heightened promotion of the queue voting system with apprehension, and then opted to adopt a wait-and-see approach.[196]

As these queer political reforms were taking place, the *DN's* pages continuously featured news on detentions as the crackdown on dissidence continued unabated in the mid-eighties. These were carried out under the guise of protecting public security from a clandestine organisation. In April 1986, former university student leader Mwandawiro Mghanga, who had just been released from a 12 month prison term in December for holding an illegal assembly on campus, was picked up as he was amidst preparations for his wedding the following day. A small note above this report referred the reader to the paper's back page for news on the detention of a

[194] *DN*, "Kanu to set up disciplinary team," no. 7642, Tuesday 2 July 1985, p. 1.
[195] *DN*, "Discipline is now essential to Kanu," no. 7642, Tuesday 2 July 1985, p. 6.
[196] *DN*, "Kanu announces new polls method," no. 7881, Thursday 10 April 1986, p. 1 and p. 24. For editorial see same issue, "The antecedents of the primary plan," p. 6.

lecturer, Kariuki Gathira of the University of Nairobi.[197] The following day, news that a technician from the same university had been sentenced to four years in jail for being in possession of two seditious publications made the headline. The paper identified the offending material as *Mpatanishi* and a draft programme of a secret group named Mwakenya.[198] A few days later, the newspaper reported that a businessman named Charles Njoroge had been sentenced to a 15 month prison term for not having prevented the seditious publication of *Mpatanishi* and *Mwakenya*.[199] Finally, the *DN* headlined a story in which the Minister in the Office of the President, Justus ole Tipis, issued a warning to those publishing the seditious material to stop doing so, calling them "misguided elements."[200]

In the days ahead, it proceeded to publish condemnations of Mwakenya as well as declarations of loyalty to the president from the usual choristers comprised of a homogenised collection of KANU and government officials. Only when Moi called for an end to the debate as security personnel were taking all the steps necessary to combat the organisation did the newspaper comment, reinforcing his message as it appealed to Kenyans to heed his call and end the rumours spread in the wake of a clandestine organisation's assault on "an unusually peaceful and stable society." It was certain calm would return as the Government "flushed out" Mwakenya members and put them on trial. There was an odd lack of journalistic curiosity or perhaps displaying one seemed imprudent and thus the Mwakenya affair died down with no

[197] *DN*, "Mwandawiro picked up," no. 7876, Friday 4 April 1986, p. 1 and p. 32. For editorial see same issue "Safari: Africans should train more," p. 6.
[198] *DN*, "Varsity man jailed over sedition," no. 7877, Saturday 6 April 1986, p. 1. For editorial see same issue "It's unspeakable folly by Gaddafi," p. 6.
[199] *DN*, "Sedition: Businessman jailed," no. 7879, Tuesday 8 April 1986, p. 1 and 24. For editorial see same issue, "Wife-beating ban truly newsworthy," p. 6.
[200] DN, "'Mwakenya': Tipis warns organizers," no. 7880, Wednesday 9 April 1986, p. 1. For editorial see same issue, "Punish those who destroy our trees," p. 6.

further probing into the exact nature of the organisation.[201] There was a return to the usual KANU politicking as the party prepared for its primaries and the general elections.

After the February 1988 KANU nomination process, the *DN* could barely conceal its incredulity as it reported that a stunning 60 out of the 188 parliamentary seats would be uncontested in accordance with the party's 70% rule in the March general elections after an "unprecedented party elimination process."[202] The paper's view of the elections was summed up in two editorial cartoons after the nomination process with the first appearing on the day it announced the number of seats that would be uncontested. In it a portly Vice President Mwai Kibaki with golf club in hand was drawn at the front of a long KANU nomination queue that snaked its way into the landscape as far as the eye could see while his equally stout opponent stood next to him as the only man who stood behind him angrily walked off blurting, "I'm off! I thought you bought more than one man beer – this is humiliating!" The day after as it published the grievances of several candidates, its editorial cartoon showed a number of them, including the most prominent complainant Paul Ngei, slipping after walking into a spilled pool of "election oil" as Ngei said to the rest "remember gentlemen, as I always say…to slip is not to fall!"[203] The cartoon was meant to impugn the integrity of party officials who had overseen the process but it was also prescient, for Moi soon cancelled the Kangundo results where Ngei had stood for nomination while others appealed to him to intervene in their constituencies as a party leader whose word was essentially law. Nevertheless, on the eve of the elections, the newspaper urged voters to go to the polls, take advantage of the secret ballot and exercise their democratic right to

[201] *DN*, "Stop Mwakenya debate says Moi," no. 7889, Saturday 19 April 1986, p. 1. For editorial see same issue, "Rumour mongering must come to an end," p. 6.
[202] *DN*, "No polls in 60 constituencies," no. 8463, Wednesday 24 February 1988, p. 1 and IV. For editorial cartoon see same issue p. 6.
[203] *DN*, Editorial cartoon, no. 8464, Thursday 25 February 1988, p. 6. Ngei eventually won the seat during the general elections.

choose leaders who would serve their interests and not their own.[204] However, there were of course those who considered the elections as already compromised by a flawed nomination process that also 'vetted' the candidates who were standing for elections, giving voters little influence over the final composition of their legislature.

In the days preceding and following the elections, the newspaper would proceed to give equal coverage to those for and against the queue voting system, turning its front pages into a stormy exchange on the issue. Through these reports, the newspaper was also able to disseminate information against a practice (queue voting) that it was opposed to in the most benign way it could muster to keep adverse Government reaction at bay. So on the day it reported "Leaders condemn 'Beyond' magazine," it not only reported attacks government officials made on the NCCK publication, but also briefly shed some light on the nature of its 'offending' contents, i.e. its negative assessment of the queue vote method.[205] The Government eventually banned the magazine, which served as cautionary note to *DN* among others, but the Church could not be silenced and the paper gave its views extensive coverage. Consequently, on 25 April 1988 "Vote: Muge calls for a referendum" was the headline over a long report as Church of the Province of Kenya (Anglican) Bishop of Eldoret Alexander Muge responded to the Assistant Minister for National Guidance and Political Affairs Shariff Nassir's headlined announcement "Secret Ballot to Go," issued only two days before.[206] The report had detailed the Assistant Minister's announcement of the Government's intention to alter the constitution to put an end to the secret ballot *"watu wapende wasipende"* (whether people like it or not). Then came the less prominent

[204] *DN*, "Come one, come all and cast your votes, no. 8485, Monday 21 March 1988, p. 6.
[205] *DN*, "Leaders condemn 'Beyond' magazine," no. 8476, Thursday 10 March 1988, p. 1 and 28. See also, *DN*, "More leaders attack 'Beyond'," no. 8477, Friday 11 March 1988, p. 1 and 32; *DN*, "Govt answers 'Beyond'," no. 8480, Tuesday 15 March 1988, p. 1 and 6; *DN*, " 'Beyond' banned," no. 8481, Wednesday 16 March 1988, p. 1 and 6; *DN*, " 'Beyond' editor on four-count charge," no. 8493, Wednesday 30 March 1988, p. 1.
[206] *DN*, "Vote: Muge calls for a referendum," no. 8515, Monday 25 April 1988, p. 1 and 24; *DN*, "Secret ballot to go, says Nassir," no. 8514, Saturday 23 April 1988, p. 1 and 24.

but front page answer to Muge — "Nassir rules out referendum"— as the Assistant Minister asserted that the method was "the wish" of the ruling party and "therefore the wishes of Kanu are the wishes of Kenyans and the question of referendums does not arise."[207] The following day, the headline read, "Bishop opposes queuing system" as the Catholic Bishop of Nakuru the Rt. Rev. Ndingi Mwana 'a Nzeki deplored the Government's push for the abolition of the secret ballot as a threat to democracy.[208] Then the Minister for National Guidance and Political Affairs James Njiru was headlined proclaiming "Queuing: It's a free debate," as he issued an assurance that the Government had no intention of stifling debate.[209] It was a rather vacuous assurance in light of its suppression of *Beyond* and indeed in early May a headline read "Moi calls for end to queuing debate," as the President declared that KANU would take its time to arrive at a decision on the matter in a manner that suited it best.[210] Debate on the queue system did end, but not before the Bishop of the Maseno South Diocese Henry Okullu made the headlines as "Churches have a right to be heard" over a report in which he asserted their right to comment on issues that affected the public. Although his remarks were not overtly directed at the President and he was careful not to mention the queue-vote debate, the newspaper set up the headline in a manner which made that appear to be the case and helped reinforce the bishop's carefully crafted message. In the meantime, KANU's authoritarian nature continued to breed a culture of mutual self-destruction within its leadership corps.

In the months that ensued and well into the following year, the newspaper's coverage of KANU politics made it clear that the rejuvenation it had hoped for at the beginning of the decade had not occurred. Almost each time KANU politics made the *DN's* pages it revealed a party

[207] *DN*, "Nassir rules out referendum," no. 8516, Tuesday 26 April 1988, p. 1 and 7.
[208] *DN*, "Bishop opposes queuing system," no. 8517, Wednesday 27 April 1988, p. 1 and 6.
[209] *DN*, "Queuing: It's free debate, says Njiru," no. 8518, Thursday 28 April 1988, p. 1 and 6.
[210] *DN*, "Moi calls for end to queuing debate," no. 8522, Tuesday 3 May 1988, p. 1 and 24.

steeped in infighting at local and national levels and where personal attacks as well as vendettas of all sorts were chronic. In the months of September and October 1989 for example, KANU politics made the front page 19 times and in all but two cases it involved a dispute of one kind or another; even the exceptions were of leaders calling for an end to the political confrontations. [211] The paper simply reported the conflicts as a wary Church looked on. Within the latter, some had already concluded that the single-party system was a failure and the self-absorbed nature of KANU politics would in future provide proponents of a multi-party system ammunition in their battles for expanded political space.

The Ghosts of Multi-Partism Return: Cartoons Take Over Editing at *The Daily Nation*

As 1990 dawned and two of Kenya's prominent clergy issued bold calls for the reinstatement of a *de jure* multi-party system, the *DN* gave them prominent coverage and resorted to cartoons to indicate that it did not agree with them. On the day Reverend Timothy Njoya delivered his sermon at Nairobi's St. Andrew's Church of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa he made specific references to the fate of Nicolai Ceausescu and Romania's political upheavals as he called on the Government to reconsider its commitment to the one-party system.[212] The reverend's sermon was titled "Towering Over the Wrecks of Time and Tempered by Persecution." A new decade was beginning and he called on the Government to come up

[211] See *DN*, "Karanja threatens to sue Mwenje," no. 8943, Saturday 2 September 1989, p. 1; *DN*, "Okondo isolated at Kanu meeting," no. 8950, Monday 11 September 1989, p. 1; *DN*, "Moi reprimands Moody Awori," no. 8953, Thursday 14 September 1989, p. 1; *DN*, "Sambu loses petition," no. 8955, Saturday 16 September 1989, p. 1, *DN*, "Mwangala calls for political solidarity," no. 8956, Monday 18 September 1989, p. 1; *DN*, "Wamalwa loses his parliamentary seat," no. 8959, Thursday 21 September 1989, p. 1; *DN*, "Muhoho takes on gossipy leaders," no.8965, Thursday 28 September 1989, p. 1; *DN*, "Kanu now dissolves Bunyala sub-branch," no. 8978, Friday 13 October 1989, p. 1; *DN*, "Kanu branch row: Wanjigi blamed," no. 8980, Monday 16 October 1989, p. 1; *DN*, "I am not involved in wrangling," Wanjigi wants my post, says Mungai," and "Stop this feuding advises Kamotho," no. 8981, Tuesday 17 October 1989, p. 1; *DN*, "Convene meeting, Mungai told," no. 8982, Wednesday 18 October 1989, p. 1; *DN*, "Confusion as Nairobi KANU meeting aborts" and "Bunyala polls: Okondo wins, Osogo boycotts," no. 8984, Friday 20 October 1989, p. 1; *DN*, "Moi issues directive on city Kanu row," no. 8985, Saturday 21 October 1989, p. 1; *DN*, "Moi: Kimemia has gone astray," no. 8987, Tuesday 24 October 1989, p. 1; *DN*, "Moi sacks, Kimemia, appoints 7 others," no. 8988, Wednesday 25 October 1989, p. 1, and *DN*, "Party branch now suspends Kimemia," no. 8990, Friday 27 October 1989, p.1.

[212] *DN*, "Njoya urges end to one-party systems," no. 9044, Tuesday 2 January 1990, p. 1 and 12.

with new ways of dealing with evils which he argued the system had become accustomed to over time. The *DN* headlined it as "Njoya Urges End to One-Party Systems." Reaction to Njoya's sermon was immediate and also received headline treatment: "Njoya's Suggestion – Madness." The KANU National Chairman Peter Oloo Aringo termed the utterances inane and argued that Njoya had gone too far in comparing Kenya's Government to those of communist Eastern Europe. Minister for Energy Nicholas Biwott was equally upset at the comparison and the report quoted other Government officials who joined the fray to pummel Njoya for his remarks.[213] The *DN* avoided commentary, however the newspaper's editorial cartoon featured a government official, presumably Oloo Aringo, seated on a bench with a smirk on his face and a smiling Reverend Timothy Njoya who stood nearby basking in the warmth of the sun in an idyllic land with birds in the sky and butterlies flapping their wings nearby. The cartoon's caption filled in readers on Aringo's remarks to Njoya: "Why don't you go to a socialist country and see if you'll get some sunshine there?" The newspaper's stand was clear; Njoya's call for a multi-party system was disingenuous and irresponsible. The following day, next to a front page story on other Government officials who dutifully added their voices to those that had already criticised Njoya, was the newspaper's front page cartoon, "Life's Like That" also by its editorial cartoonist, featured a drawing of a smiling Reverend Njoya as he was speaking and gesturing vigorously. In the reverend's speech bubble was the sharply topped head of a diabolical creature with sharp teeth, sharp, pointed ears and an equally sharp, pointed nose; the man was up to no good. The following week, the paper headlined Elijah Mwangale, Minister for Livestock Development, evoking the detentions of Seroney and Shikuku as he warned Njoya that he would end up in detention if he continued delivering "seditious" sermons that indicated his interest was

[213] *DN*, "Njoya's suggestion is madness – Aringo, no. 9045, Wednesday 3 January 1990, p. 1 and 21.

to "subvert this Government" as he hid behind his church. [214] A day later, the headline went the Assistant Minister for Livestock Development Reuben Chesire who called on the Presbyterian Church of East Africa to defrock Reverend Njoya for life. Below the report's headline, "Life's Like That" featured the bespectacled reverend in his underwear next to his vestments remarking, "oh no, it would be too cold out of that frock." The paper appeared to be communicating that such a measure would indeed silence the reverend who would be too afraid ("too cold") to speak his mind unprotected by the Church. A smaller front page headline, "We're not afraid of detention – Okullu," went to the Anglican Bishop declaring that the Government could not possibly succeed in their efforts to intimidate the country's clergy, as they were not afraid of detention or martyrdom.[215]

Despite its obvious distaste for Njoya's remarks, the *DN* appears to have been committed to giving equal coverage to both the Government and the church as it continued to inject itself into the debate with cartoons. Indeed, just as the dust Njoya had raised on New Year's Eve was settling down, in March renewed calls for more political space transformed the *DN's* pages into a battleground of both pro-democracy clergy and Shikuku on one hand and the Government on the other. This time conflict between the Government and the Church started when a PCEA minister, Reverend Lawford Ndege Imunde, was jailed for six years after being found guilty of sedition. The seditious material was contained in what the *DN* informed readers was a personal diary and Bernard Chunga, the Director of Public Prosecution, was quoted saying the diary entries were "expressive of an intention to bring into contempt and hatred and excite disaffection against the President of Kenya and the Government as by law established. In short the writings are

[214] *DN*, "Njoya: Detention warning issued," no. 9049, Monday 8 January 1990, p. 1 and 20.
[215] *DN*, "Defrock Njoya for life, PCEA urged," and "We're not afraid of detention – Okullu," no. 9050, Tuesday 9 January 1990, p. 1.

scandalous and belittle the Kenya Government."[216] Imunde pleaded guilty and apologised to the Government as he requested a non-custodial sentence. The day's editorial cartoon showed him behind bars, Bible in hand as he preached to three cell mates. One looked bored, another puzzled and the third looked at the reverend with disdain as he admonished them to "repent…stay out of trouble, the light!" The cartoon seemed to imply that Imunde was a hypocrite and was perhaps intended to impugn the character of other clerics. Most irritating to other clergy, during Imunde's trial the prosecutor informed the court that in his statement to the police, the reverend had indicated that the National Council of Churches in Kenya, the PCEA and the Church of the Province of Kenya were all part of a plot to topple the Kenyan Government. A government official called on the Government to mount an investigation on the Church alleging that they were receiving funds from abroad to cause chaos in Kenya. The charges were most alarming to certain clergy who quickly moved to disassociate themselves from Imunde. "Angry Churchmen Attack Politicians" was the next day's headline as the CPK leader proclaimed his church's support for the Government and its acceptance of Moi as "a God-given leader," while Njuguna accused the politician of using Imunde's case as an opportunity to attack the Church. [217] Nevertheless, various clerics including Kuria himself continued criticising the Government for a wide range of ills, accusing it of perpetuating ethnic prejudice, corruption and inefficiency.[218]

Meanwhile, as calls from clergy for drastic political change continued they captured quite accurately the position in which the *DN* found itself in early 1990. In April of that year the paper gave modest front page space to Okullu's call for constitutional change to abolish the one-party system, which he considered a grave error in the country's political system. The report also

[216] *DN*, "PCEA clergyman jailed for sedition," no. 9120, Saturday 31 March 1990, p. 1 and 32.
[217] *DN*, "Angry churchmen attack politicians," no. 9121, Monday 2 April 1990, p. 1 and 28.
[218] See for example, *DN*, "Kuria, Muge attack politicians," no. 9133, Monday 16 April 1990, p. 28 and *DN*, "Muge criticises former leaders," no. 9145, Monday 30 April 1990, p. 4.

quoted him turning down KANU Secretary-General Joseph Kamotho's offer for a debate on the best political system for the country, arguing that such a debate was not possible because Kenyans were too scared to speak if whatever they wanted to express was contradictory to KANU's policies. Accordingly, he continued, Kenyans tended to withdraw into their "professional ghettos." Those who did speak their minds had to brace themselves for the negative repercussions that followed. According to Okullu, "there is an assumption that the national destiny is and must remain in the hands of the party leaders, whether the future looks catastrophic or not and the party leaders themselves have stated and acted so." The cleric was speaking in general and what he said was arguably of great relevance for the *DN* establishment, as the paper had for decades aligned itself to KANU, cajoling and at times daring to issue strong criticisms of its most glaring flaws but nevertheless being unable to fathom a stable Kenya without a dominant KANU.

In fact, despite the obvious abuse of power on the part of the KANU Government over decades, by 1990 the *DN* remained convinced that the one-party system with reforms in the face of mounting opposition was the best form of government for the country. Regardless of its failings the familiar had become the predictable, the bravely and optimistically borne as well as the comfortable, while radical change in favour of a system that the country had barely experienced — despite its promise of greater freedoms — a discomfiture of unbearable proportions. The Church too was not united in its push for the restoration of multi-party politics in Kenya. Okullu tempered his condemnation of the one-party state with calls for a commission to look into the best system of governance for the country. Bishop Alexander Muge of the CPK and Bishop Lawi Imathiu of the Methodist Church of Kenya received prominent front page coverage when they issued statements supporting the one-party system but with reforms to

ensure that it had strong checks and balances. Their objection to the multi-party system arose from fears that parties formed would degenerate into ethnic enclaves for the nurturing of prejudices of all sorts. Nevertheless, their demands and constant criticisms of the Government reflected Okullu's insistence that the *status quo* could not continue; "let us accept change or change will change us."[219]

The headlines, reports and cartoons of the coming months would demonstrate that the Government was not ready to change its conduct and the *DN* was not ready for the kind of change for which Njoya and Okullu had advocated. Shortly after Okullu had issued his statement, Nicholas Biwott called on parliamentarians to ignore him. Beneath the headline, "Life's Like That" featured the Bishop amidst clouds of dust presumably left behind by people who were initially listening to his message.[220] Biwott's call came after another MP, Eliud Mahihu, had risen on a point of order to respond to Okullu. Biwott, amidst applause from a House beholden to the Executive, objected to the mere discussion of the matter, arguing that doing so would be awarding him credibility he did not deserve. "Okullu is alone. He is speaking for no one. All Kenyans are for one party," he had insisted. In another front page report, "You're Pushing Moi too far, Critics Told," Shariff Nassir, the MP for Mvita, warned clergy and others that Moi would react to their constant provocation. He threatened that Moi was human and would take action against those who were inciting Kenyans against the country's leadership and harming Kenya's image overseas. "Life's Like That" depicted a vigorously gesturing Shariff Nassir warning "careful now…careful now!" After the Butere KANU sub-branch suspended Shikuku, *DN* headlined his response, "I'll not be silenced, declares Shikuku," and quoted him telling the country's leaders that he was "not in transit in Kenya. I am a citizen of this country"

[219] *DN*, "Amend Constitution," no. 9140, Tuesday 24 April 1990, p. 1 and 2.
[220] *DN*, "Biwott to MPs: Ignore Okullu," no. 9141, Wednesday 25 April 1990, p. 1 and 5.

exercising his freedom of expression and association and whom mere mortals could not threaten. The front page cartoon showed the grinning politician with both hands raised with thumbs up saying "I was blessed with a mouth!" There was bold emphasis on the word "mouth," communicating that the veteran politician was all words and no substance.[221]

Balanced as it was in coverage of the Government's friends and foes, the paper gave Kenneth Matiba and Charles Rubia's call for the dissolution of Parliament, the repeal of Section 2A of the Constitution, and a referendum to decide the country's future prime space as it maintained its stand against their endeavours. Above the headline announcing their demand was a report on the United States Ambassador Smith Hempstone's speech to the Nairobi Rotary Club in which he had disclosed that there was a growing trend in America's Congress to concentrate economic assistance on countries that recognised human rights, cultivated democratic institutions, and practiced multi-party politics. In another article, it covered Martin Shikuku's call for the dissolution of Parliament in a move that was as daring as Njoya's New Year sermon.[222] The third article on the same page, "MPs Rise Against Tide of Criticism," focused on parliamentary responses to calls for political reform, especially multi-partism, as a legislature stuffed to the hilt with puppets responded in unison by objecting to the two men's calls. Vice President George Saitoti resorted to the image the country's leadership and media had carefully cultivated over the years as he insisted that there was nothing wrong with the country and was reported to have "likened Kenya, under the ruling party, KANU, to an island of peace in a sea of chaos." Nicholas Biwott at the same session called those advocating for multi-partism puppets and political failures who were out to deceive Kenyans. Referring to the support advocates of political reform were drawing from the West, he warned them to stay away from that which

[221] *DN*, "I'll not be silenced, declares Shikuku," no. 9145, Monday 30 April 1990, p. 1 and 2.
[222] *DN*, "Party sub-branch to grill Shikuku," no. 9134, Tuesday 17 April 1990, p. 1 and 2.

foreigners approved but was harmful to the country. Parliament's buildings were the subject of "Life's Like That" with remarks of one parliamentarian to the others at the top of the illustration reading: "my fellow MPs go out and sing KANU to the people. We are not stooges!"[223] The editorial cartoon showed a KANU building with a large padlock and two well dressed politicians, Charles Rubia and Kenneth Matiba, emerging with haste from the back with the former saying to the latter, "I say, Charles, we have to break down this door!"[224] According to the newspaper, the two men had not only failed to obtain KANU leadership posts legally, they had also tried to use the 'back door' before opting to acquire power forcibly using an alternative party.

Following their call for a referendum, the *DN* carried a headline in which Moi called Matiba and Rubia "tribalists" and with the US Ambassador's remarks in mind, "dictators and puppets of foreign masters." The *DN's* front page cartoon helped reinforce his message. As the media had not yet broken the taboo against drawing the head of state, it featured a man who bore no semblance to the President in black tie remarking "now we know the wolves in sheep's clothing."[225] A third front page story depicted what would become one of the Government's line of attacks against the Opposition, that is that they were hypocrites and lackeys of foreign powers who were funding and using them to destabilise the country. It was titled "Don't dictate to us, Kanu tells the US" and reported on a statement from the Kanu headquarters which its National Organising Secretary Kalonzo Musyoka signed and in which he remarked that Smith Hempstone had confirmed to all that his country was behind the agitation for political reform. He insisted that Kenya's political system was a unique creature of its history and that it could only be

[223] *DN*, "Matiba, Rubia call for a referendum," US mounts pressure for multiparties," MPs rise against tide of criticism," no. 9149, Friday 4 May 1990, p. 1, 2 and 5.
[224] Ibid., p. 6.
[225] *DN*, "Matiba, Rubia are tribalists – Moi," no. 9150, Saturday 5 May 1990, p. 1 and 2.

appropriately characterised within that context. Musyoka added that Kenya was a sovereign state that objected to and would not bow to foreign interference.[226] Matiba and Rubia denied the allegations, insisting the ambassador had simply voiced the facts of congressional debate in his own country, and the fact that his statement was published on the same day they made their announcement was purely coincidental.[227] Security officers eventually interrogated Rubia regarding allegations that he was receiving funding from the US, communicating with Smith Hempstone and planning to form a political party. "Piece by piece, we might get to the truth of the matter," remarked a man smiling wryly in "Life's Like That" as the paper made its attempt to add weight to the allegations. [228]

More allegations of unlawful plans were to follow, including those from the president, who claimed that there was a plot by Matiba, Rubia and the CPK to murder Government officials so as to stain his administration and to subvert trade unions. Coming so soon after the gruesome murder of Robert John Ouko, it must have been very unsettling for the accused. In addition, Murang'a leaders also denied claims by the Nandi District KANU chairman, Mark Too, that a Murang'a Take Over (MTO) Group existed in their district as he had alleged. "Life's Like That" featured a burly man with Murang'a on his shirt firmly asserting that "This thing MTO is not us!!!" Inside, a poignant editorial cartoon featured Rubia and Matiba outdoors fleeing in desperation from a large fire as the latter remarked to the former, "I wish we had just kept quiet!"[229] On another occasion when Murang'a leaders "disowned" Matiba and Rubia, they revived Mau Mau as a bogey to justify their stance, arguing that they saw no need to fight another liberation war as they had already achieved their goals in their battle against British

[226] *DN*, "Don't dictate to us, Kanu tells the US," no. 9150, Saturday 5 May 1990, p. 1 and 2.
[227] *DN*, "Matiba and Rubia defend US envoy," no. 9153, Wednesday 9 May 1990, p. 1 and 2.
[228] *DN*, "Rubia quizzed over parties, US funds," no. 9154, Thursday 10 May 1990, p. 1 and 2.
[229] *DN*, "Moi tells of plot to kill leaders," and "MTO does not exist – Murang'a leaders," no. 9155, Friday 11 May 1990, p. 1 and 2. For editorial cartoon see same issue p. 6.

imperialism. Next to the report, "Life's Like That" featured a stern looking professorial-like figure echoing their words as he pointed to the picture of a devious-looking, dreadlocked man on the wall. "How can we go back to the forest and fight for what we achieved long ago?" posed the man.[230] The present was what mattered and the two were seeking to revive a relic of the past that was so obsolete that it only existed in hackneyed images. As for claims that the opposition was planning to infiltrate trade unions and use them to cause strikes in support of their course, a man on the front page cartoon stated "all I need is a job" next to an article reporting that Central Organisation of Trade Unions (COTU had declared support for the single-party system. The editorial cartoon featured a COTU official at the entrance of a factory with a shady looking man tapping his back as he hid behind the wall, a sign reading "New Parties" tucked underneath his arm and Shs. 500 bills in his hand. Inside the factory a 'loyal' worker angrily shouted at the COTU official to "tell that man behind you that all we need is good bread," as his two wary colleagues looked on.[231]

The paper was communicating that Matiba and Rubia's calls for political change were too radical as well as unnecessary. To be sure, the newspaper used every opportunity it could to communicate its stand. When Moi announced that over 960 workers laid off from Kenya Airways during a major restructuring process would be absorbed into other parastatals, "Life's Like That" featured three children remarking "this makes more sense to us than multi-party debates."[232] The children represented the offspring of one of the affected employees who had made an appeal to the Government that the press highlighted. The newspaper used their appeal to depreciate the multi-party debates that discomfited it by separating political from economic

[230] *DN*, "We won't go back to the forest – Murang'a," no. 9158, Tuesday 15 May 1990, p.1 and 2.
[231] *DN*, "Moi reveals design to bribe unionists," and "Cotu states its stand," no. 9156, Saturday 12 May 1990, p. 1 and 2. For editorial cartoon see p. 6.
[232] *DN*, "Moi gives sacked KA staff new hope," no. 9151, Monday 7 May 1990, p. 1 and 2.

issues and implying that the latter were more important and could be dealt with exclusive of the former.

The *DN's* first fully textual editorial references to the multi-party system debate came in May 1990 and it confirmed the stance of the newspaper's cartoonist; the publication did not support calls for a multi-party system. The first came when the Government declared four parliamentary seats vacant following the deaths of three MPs and the expulsion of one from KANU. The newspaper called on those whom the party had cleared to stand for elections to avoid personal attacks and cheap pro-establishment platitudes, adding that the candidates had the opportunity to raise the level of political debate and offer well-thought out criticisms of the system. The paper observed that the ongoing Kenyan multi-party debate was indicative of a more sophisticated and discerning electorate that would not be content to listen to routine political rhetoric and promises of development which politicians made ubiquitously each election to would-be constituents. As it had argued in the early eighties, it maintained that something was amiss with the country's political system, but the *DN* stopped short of declaring multi-partism the way forward for the country.[233] As on this day the paper headlined Moi cautioning that the existence of multiple parties in Kenya would lead to ethnic conflict, the *DN* addressed the matter fully for the first time. The day's editorial cartoon featured a pot-bellied man in ragged clothes and a t-shirt reading Northern Democratic Union and carrying a club and angrily pointing at a better but simply dressed man in a Southern Patriotric Front t-shirt as he shouted "hey you! I can tell your tribe by just looking at you!" The cartoon added the newspaper's perspective to the President's remarks even as it visually reinforced them. Not only would multiple parties cause inter-ethnic conflicts, but also the common man would suffer most. Three days later in another

[233] *DN*, "Let's see a game of serious politics," no. 9150, Thursday 17 May 1990, p. 6. Editorial cartoon is also on p. 6. For report on the President's remarks see "Parties will mean tribal wars – Moi," p. 1 and 2.

editorial, "Reasons why aid may stop coming," the paper referred to the necessity for political reform but in reference to Africa, in general, and not as it pertained to Kenya's party politics. The editorial was penned in response to fears that the fall of communism in Eastern Europe would divert Western aid from Africa to these countries. The editorial asserted that such fears were unfounded and that Africa would have to compete for aid on two grounds: proper and transparent use of the resources advanced and political reform. It observed that "a number of African states" had to acknowledge and change the fact that they were "not as democratic as could be." If they opted not to change, they would have to live with the repercussions of their decision.[234]

Finally on 22 May 1990, an editorial informed its readers that "It Can Work Even Under One Party." While it was difficult to determine just how many Kenyans were for or against a multi-party system, the paper explained that what the debate had revealed was a widespread desire for "political change." It made it clear that it did not welcome immediate calls for the implementation of a multi-party system, as the possibilities that it could lead to ethnic conflict and sectarianism were too disturbing to ignore. At the same time the ills of the present system were clear because:

> It is not difficult to see why so many Kenyans are disenchanted with the one-party arrangement which, in a sober reflection, may be the optimal system for Kenya's short and medium-term politico-economic objectives.
>
> The basic reason is that wananchi feel betrayed by a leadership which is exhibiting obvious elements of bad party management – intolerance to criticism of any kind, an insularity which removes it from the mainstream of wananchi's fears and aspirations, a dangerous tendency towards bullying and authoritarianism, and a subtle erosion of some fundamental rights enshrined in Kenya's Constitution which Kanu has vowed to respect and protect.[235]

[234] *DN*, "Reasons why aid may stop coming," no. 9161, Friday 18 May 1990, p. 6.
[235] *DN*, "It can work even under one party," no. 9164, Tuesday 22 May 1990, p. 6. See also *DN*, "Kanu's past lights up the days ahead," no. 9181, Monday 11 June 1990, p. 6.

KANU needed to reform itself urgently and once again the newspaper called for a mass party that embraced all views, including those of dissenters. The expulsion of members who disagreed with the party's leadership was unacceptable as was the chronic use of disciplinary committees to harass such members. The result was an abnormal ideological uniformity amongst leaders. Equally unacceptable was the use of the controversial queue-voting system which had been abused and had harmed the image of the party when its leadership had ignored egregious irregularities. The paper hoped that the party would be genuine in its efforts to remedy all that ailed it during the party convention it had then recently announced. The editorial was a candid statement of the newspaper's opinion on the debate, a bold assessment of the Kenyan political scene, and a sharp as well as vigorous critique of the single-party state. At the very least, it proved that while the *DN* was not open to calls for multi-partism, it was consistent in its calls for the better management of KANU and the country's government.

Nevertheless, the continued locating of the paper's abridged opinion next to or within the text of reports on KANU officials making far less substantive and nuanced contributions to debates on the multi-party system or political reform greatly diluted the paper's call for moderate reforms. For example, just three days after the above editorial, "Life's Like That" was located within a report on Moi's Kenyatta-like call to Kenyans to demand that multi-party proponents prove their worth first by showing how many development projects they had set up and generally what they had done to improve their lives.[236] In it a simply dressed man in a gatsby giving the 'thumbs-down' sign remarked "down with multi-parties!" The cartoon did little to reinforce the paper's call for political reform and instead simply highlighted a rather pedestrian contribution to the multi-party debate. When KANU eventually held its Delegates' Conference in June 1990 the President called for an end to party infighting and announced the formation of the KANU

[236] *DN*, "Moi's challenge to multi-party agents," no. 9167, Friday 25 May 1990, p. 1 and 2.

Review Team (KANU Electoral Review Committee). At the same time, he asserted that he was in charge of the country's well-being and national security and would sanction those who threatened it even if it meant invoking the Preservation of the Public Security Act. The newspaper ignored the more belligerent segment of the President's speech and instead focused on the first, and so "Life's Like That" had an illustration of a cock (the party's symbol) incongruously sheltering chicks under its wings as it clucked "the spirit of reconciliation puts all of us under one roof of friendliness!" [237] To make matters worse, the President's call for an end to intra-party fighting appears to have been less of a genuine effort to welcome diverse opinion and than one to stamp out battles that were harming the party's image.

Once Matiba and Rubia sought licenses to hold a meeting with the intention of expounding the proposition for a multi-party system, the newspaper's opinion or its choice not to comment at crucial moments reflected its anxieties and fears that accompanied the rising political tensions. Shortly after they announced their intention to hold the meeting, the paper's front page cartoon showed the two men confidently walking into the relevant government building as a man outside pondered "now, what next?"[238] When it became clear that the two were bent on holding the meeting the *DN* headlined the PC's warning to people not to attend the unlicensed event and beneath it, the man in "Life's Like That" remarked "I've got the message!"[239] Forever greatly apprehensive of anything politically unfamiliar and in this case one that threatened to descend into chaos, as well as in a bid to take the air out of what promised to be a meeting that would be dispersed forcibly and perhaps spark even more violence elsewhere, the newspaper was keen to discourage attendance. When Moi alleged that the opposition had promised to pay Kshs. 500,000 to the family of every person killed at the rally as he also

[237] *DN*, "End confrontation in Kanu, says Moi," no. 9185, Friday 22 June 1990, p. 1 and 6.
[238] *DN*, "Life's Like That," no. 9183, Wednesday 13 June 1990, p. 1.
[239] *DN*, "Waiganjo warns over July 7 Kamukunji," no. 9194, Tuesday 3 July 1990, p. 1 and 2.

promised to deal ruthlessly with those who threatened "state security," "Life's Like That" had a man declaring "my life is priceless!"[240]

A day before the meeting, when the *DN* headlined news that the Government had detained Rubia and Matiba as security officials picked up John Khaminwa, Raila Odinga and five others, the front page cartoon highlighted a less prominent report on 19 shop attendants who had been charged with possessing seditious audiocassettes.[241] When it did react to the detentions, "Life's Like That" expressed the newspaper's long standing discomfort with the practice through the rare use of female characters depicting the wives of two detained lawyers, Florence Imanyara and Joyce Khaminwa. "Oh…how we miss our husbands" they remarked tearfully.[242] When police dispersed the rally violently and street protests followed, "Life's Like That" was absent from the front page and the newspaper maintained its page six editorial silence on the matter. On 10 July, the cartoon was back, but not positioned beneath the headline announcing the death of six amidst continuing violence. Instead, the man in a gatsby was back to condemn the US Embassy's criticism of the detentions and its grant of refuge to lawyer Gibson Kamau Kuria. "Mr. Hempstone, this is not Panama!" retorted the cartoon character.[243] Inside, an editorial and editorial cartoon decried the violence. The situation with its attendant killings, rioting, and looting was deeply disturbing and the newspaper condemned the actions of those who had

[240] *DN*, "Moi tells of July 7 rallies death price," no. 9196, Thursday 5 July 1990, p. 1 and 2.
[241] *DN*, "Now Rubia and Matiba detained" and "Music cassettes: 19 on sedition charge," no. 9197, Friday 6 July 1990, p. 1 and 2.
[242] *DN*, "Lawyer's wives in plea," no. 9198, Saturday 7 July 1990, p. 1 and 2. Puzzlingly, after George Anyona was released from detention, he publicly discussed the horrendous conditions he had to endure and the *DN* in contravention of tradition had a "Life's Like That" character commenting, "well it's not King George's hotel…" next to the relevant report. See *DN*, "Crowd sobs as Anyona tells of his prison woes," no. 9225, Wednesday 8 August 1990, p. 1 and 2.
[243] *DN*, "Kenya condemns US Embassy, no. 9200, Tuesday 10 July 1990, p. 1 and 2.

provoked the Government into reacting with force. Kenya had enjoyed the benefits of "peace and political stability" and the violence threatened to plunge the country into unredeemable depths.[244]

Eventually, as the violence died down and Bishop Henry Okullu made his audacious call for Parliament to be dissolved and the holding of fresh elections, his remarks were too daring for the *DN* to opine, so once again, the paper resorted to equal coverage of his views and those of his opponents without comment. On 17 July 1990, "Okullu: This is my prayer" was the title of the report on his sermon. The headlines went to COTU Secretary-General Joseph Mugalla's attack on clerics pushing for political reform after the leaders of the CPK, PCEA, Methodist Church and NCCK had written to the President proposing that he set up a forum to facilitate discussion on Kenya's future.[245] When KANU leaders responded, calling Okullu's remarks everything from arrogant to treasonable, they too got the front page but not the headlines, which went to Minister for Commerce Arthur Magugu advice to his constituents at a rally to attack anyone who threatened the peace.[246] Magugu's remarks did get editorial treatment as the paper termed them irresponsible, incendiary and a threat to stability.[247] Okullu's call received added impetus the following month when the clergy of the Machakos Catholic Diocese delivered a memorandum to the KANU Review Team appealing to them to urge the President to dissolve a Parliament that they accused of having ignored the suffering of the impoverished by refusing to address matters that affected them as the prices of basic commodities soared.[248] The appeal of the Machakos diocese came less than a week after the Most Reverend John Njenga, a Catholic Archbishop, called for reforms that would align Kenya with the teachings of the Gospels at the

[244] *DN*, "Such violence is a recipe for chaos," no. 9200, Tuesday 10 July 1990, p. 6.
[245] *DN*, "Okullu: This is my prayer," and "Cleric's motives sinister – Cotu," no. 9205, Monday 16 July 1990, p.1 and 2.
[246] *DN*, "This is subversion, leaders tell Okullu," and "Magugu issues 'arm and destroy' call," no. 9206, Tuesday 17 July 1990, p. 1 and 2.
[247] *DN*, "Just as Kenyans felt all was well," no. 9206, Tuesday 17 July 1990, p. 6.
[248] *DN*, "Dissolve House after this session – Church," no. 9228, Saturday 11 August 1990, p. 1 and 2.

Kenya Catholic Church's centenary celebrations in Mombasa as he condemned a host of ills including corruption, oppression, and the gap between the rich and poor. The newspaper headlined both stories and used its front page cartoon to highlight the latter with the picture of a cleric leaning against a cross as he remarked "indeed such evil in society should go!" [249] The Church was pointing out problem areas in Kenyan society that *DN* had noted over the years albeit in non-religious language.

As 1990 came to a close, the *DN* held on to its belief that the single party state would continue to exist as a unique democratic entity after reforms. It welcomed Moi's announcement at the end of November that the KANU Special Delegates' Conference that would be held the following month to discuss the findings of the KANU Review Committee would be open to the public, including members of the press. "Life's Like That" highlighted the story with a man observing that "now I can go and see democracy at work!"[250] It celebrated the abolition of the queue vote system and the 70% rule with a jubilatory headline and a smiling "Life's Like That" character proclaiming "wananchi's calls have been heard."[251] An editorial cartoon also lampooned the U-turn the delegates had made on the queue vote, vociferously defending it on the first day and sheepishly supporting its abolition the next. This was in contrast to the puzzled character that implicitly expressed the newspaper's disappointment by announcing "now it's the leader's stand!" when most leaders at the first session of the KANU Delegates' Conference had expressed support for the ending of the 70% rule but the retention of the queue vote system.[252]

After the conference came to a close, the *DN* expressed its satisfaction with the proceedings, particularly the electoral reforms and the ending of member expulsions, hailing

[249] *DN*, "Catholic church calls for change," no. 9223, Monday 6 August 1990, p. 1 and 2.
[250] *DN*, "Kanu review meeting open to all, says Moi," no. 9323, Friday 30 November 1990, p. 1 and 2.
[251] *DN*, "Queuing, 70 pc rule and expulsions out," no. 9327, Wednesday 5 December 1990, p. 1 and 7. For editorial cartoon see same issue p. 6.
[252] *DN*, "Retain queuing but scrap the 70 pc rule," no. 9326, Tuesday 4 December 1990, p. 1 and 2.

them as "a start that must lead to good times." With caution, it assessed the meaning of the reforms:

> So, what will be the immediate effect of these changes? For one, Kanu acquires the ambience of being as true a democratic party as is possible within a single party arrangement. By virtue of having a polling system which has as few fetters as possible, and by assuring its members that it will not resort to extra-legal methods of punishment, Kanu may be said to be objectively democratic. The test of this will, of course, be the extent to which its stipulates are respected in practice.[253]

The newspaper had watched KANU implement reforms in the last decade that served to increase its size and power as political freedom decreased, so it could only bring itself to support the conference's recommendations with reservations. In addition, and perhaps with demands for a multi-party system in mind, the paper insisted that the reforms were a genuine attempt to consolidate Kenya's past successes and for the delegates to have adopted more changes than they had would have been "politically imprudent." However, it did note that people had put forward other questions of importance for consideration that the Review Committee had not dealt with as it considered them beyond their terms of reference, for example, presidential term limits and the dissolution of Parliament. The editorial expressed hope that adequate room would be made for the continued discussion of such matters.

The Aga Khan did not visit Kenya that year but throughout the eighties, the carefully nurtured and thus continued existence of the *DN* ensured that he, his ideas and IPS enterprises continued to receive prime coverage when need be and that the newspaper itself continued to grow and flourish as a self-sustaining enterprise in accordance with IPS principles. As always, it was not enough that enterprises he sponsored had taken root and those for whom he was responsible appeared to be safe; a conducive environment for the growth and further development of both had to be skillfully nurtured and promoted in a geopolitical space over

[253] *DN*, "A start that must lead to good times," no. 9328, Thursday 6 December 1990, p. 6.

which he had no jurisdiction and whose political direction was far from reassuring or predictable. The coverage of one more visit in that decade demonstrates the continuation of this policy. In 1986, the *DN* was at hand to cover the four-day Enabling Environment Conference the Aga Khan sponsored in conjunction with the Kenya Government, the Kenya Association of Manufacturers, the African Development Bank, the Voluntary Agencies Development Assistance and Inter Action in Nairobi from 21–24 October to "highlight the role of the private sector in Africa's socio-economic development."[254] For three out of the conference's four days, the Aga Khan appeared on the front page photograph alongside the President and the newspaper provided special multi-paged supplements on the conference throughout. The President and crucial stakeholders attended the event and were again reminded of the role private investors played and could continue to play in Kenya and elsewhere in an atmosphere conducive to their activities as they in turn made the sort of statements the sponsors wanted to hear and hoped they would act on or continue to act on. During the conference, the *DN*, also featured a special advertiser's supplement on the official launch of a new Leather Industries of Kenya factory at Thika, an IPS enterprise which the President opened in the presence of the Aga Khan.[255] Similar reminders accompanied the Aga Khan's tour of East Africa in December 1988.[256] Although media focus was on the President and the lavish festivities that accompanied Kenya's celebration of twenty five years of independence, the *DN* ensured that the comparatively modest coverage it gave to

[254] *DN*, "Major conference opens today," no. 8047, Tuesday 21 October 1986, p. 1.; *DN*, "Moi challenge to private investors," no. 8048, Wednesday 22 October 1986, p. 1 and 36 , p. 6, 11, 12, 25 and 26; *DN*, "Moi holds talks with Aga Khan," no. 8049, Thursday 23 October 1986, p. 1, pp. 12 – 14; *DN*, "Moi reassures investors," no. 8050, Friday 24 October, p. 1, pp. 13 – 14; *DN*, "Enabling Environment Conference," no. 8051, Saturday 25 October 1986, p. 1, pp. 12 – 13.
[255] *DN*, "Advertiser's Announcement: Leader Industries of Kenya," no. 8049, Thursday 23 October 1986, p. I – IV.
[256] *DN*, "Aga Khan tours Zanzibar ruins," no. 8710, Thursday 8 December 1988, p. 24; *DN*, "Aga Khan to restore Zanzibar," no. 8711, Friday 9 December 1988, p. 4; *DN*, "Aga Khan arrives today for Jamhuri," no. 8712, Saturday 10 December 1988, p. 24; prominent photograph of Aga Khan in *DN*, "Joy, colour and rhythm as Kenyans enter the grand finale," no. 8714, Tuesday 12 December 1988, pp. 12 – 13; *DN*, "IPS-owned firms reward employees," no. 8715, Wednesday 14 December 1988, p. 2

the Ismaili leader on this occasion underscored his contributions and planned contributions to the development of the region through private enterprise.[257]

"Did We Do Our Best?"[258]

Thus, 30 years on the newspaper was still in existence striving to promote economic development and its recipe for political stability within Kenya for the benefit of not only Ismailis, but also those amongst whom they lived and with whom their fate was inextricably intertwined. On the occasion of the *DN's* 25th anniversary, it published a message from the Aga Khan in which he stressed that he had always believed that the newspaper could play a vital role in helping the newly independent nations of Asia and Africa forge stable nations. This responsibility demanded that journalists such as those at the *DN* view these countries as being at a fragile stage in their development which in turn demanded a uniquely fashioned tone of criticism as their institutions of government and administration were in their "infancy." The newspaper in its editorial echoed the Aga Khan's message. It noted that the paper had indeed set out to help create a nation that was unified in its diversity and to act as a "mirror" of the people of Kenya. This meant that the newspaper had to be a "fearless purveyor of truth" no matter how unpleasant it was to its readers, while at the same time it exercised "restraint and a keen sense of proportion" as a consequence of its existence in a young country.[259]

However, it is evident that the *DN* was not always possessed of a "fearless" disposition. It had certainly from time to time issued strong, adverse critiques of Government policies and actions as well as of the ruling single-party KANU. At the same time, it was not above being

[257] *DN*, "Aga Khan's E. Africa visit starts today," no. 8708, Tuesday 6 December 1988, p. 32; *DN*, Aga Khan jets into Zanzibar," no. 8709, Wednesday 7 December 1988, p. 2; *DN*, "Aga Khan tours Zanizbar ruins," no. 8710, Thursday 8 December 1988, p.24; *DN*, "Aga Khan to restore Zanzibar," no. 8711, Friday 9 December 1988, p. 4; *DN*, Aga Khan arrives today for Jamhuri, no.8712, Saturday 10 December 1988, p. 24; *DN*, "Joy, colour and rhythm as Kenyans enter the grand finale," no. 8714,Tuesday 13 December 1988,pp. 12-13.

[258] Gerard Loughran, *Birth of a Nation*, p. 311. This sub-heading is the title of the *DN*'s corporate history's afterword.

[259]

cowed into retractions and mostly preferred to adopt editorial silence in the face of gross injustices and human rights violations. On these occasions, restraint in what was undeniably an oppressive political environment appears to have dictated the prudence of publishing reports without commentary. Take for instance its publication of dissident arrests and 'trials.' The paper may be commended for the very act of publishing these reports, yet this is undermined by revelations in *Birth of a Nation* that the Government actually encouraged their publication probably to instill a chronic state of fear amongst dissidents. Its position may have been to perform the bare minimum of its journalistic duties, save its journalists from harassment or worse, and avoid closure, but on these occasions it ended up being a cog in the wheel of the Government's political machinery.[260] In addition, as a publication it had a set notion of what political structure best secured Kenya's future — the single party system. This position meant that for the three decades following its establishment the *DN* always haboured reservations towards pluralistic politics. Amidst the uncertainties of the early sixties, it had cast its lot with KANU and, despite its statements to the contrary, got stuck in an ideological rut. It remained convinced that KANU as the country's sole party – and with reforms where needed – remained the best guardian of the Kenyan future it envisioned. So convinced was it of this position that its "mirror" fudged the images of those who thought otherwise. In its strong, noble desire to promote a stable nation, it remained remarkably impervious to exploring with rigour the various ways in which that goal could be achieved even in the face of KANU's gross failures.

Thus on its anniversary the *DN* delivered a cloaked account of its methodology of survival for over two decades: self-censorship. A newspaper that had been founded to help cultivate a country in which Ismailis and other minorities could safely flourish in a secure environment had too critical a role to play to risk closure at the hands of a draconian government.

[260] Ibid., p. 180.

Their fate was enmeshed with the fate of the newly independent Kenya and its peoples. Kenya had to succeed politically, economically and of course socially for them to be able to live up to the counsel of the Aga Khan to make their homes wherever they found themselves. Its owner and management had worked out a formula for running a newspaper that served minority interests in postcolonial Kenya as it reached out to those who determined their fate in the governing majority. This entailed employing the pages of the *DN* to continuously reinforce the commonalities of their interests in print, particularly working to ensure that an appreciation of demographic diversity as well as the needs and benefits of private capital became deeply ingrained in the state psyche. It also meant an uneasy co-existence with the government – the *DN* was doing its best to survive.

"SERVE…AS BEST AS WE CAN"[1]

The Nairobi Times: 1977-1983

These reports only make Ng'weno laugh, for he wishes he had the kinds of resources some people imagine he has, but those who know him realise how fiercely independent he is. The last thing he would dream is to place his editorial independence in jeopardy through any financial arrangement which is ostensibly aimed at solving Stellascope's financial problems.[2]

We have been lucky, and we have been dedicated. Lucky to have had enormous support from the government through its financial institutions which have offered us credit on which we still live…[3]

On 30 October 1977, a young Kenyan Harvard University graduate, Hilary Ng'weno, put out copies of the country's first African post-colonial competitor to the two largest and best established English newspapers in the country, the *Daily Nation* and the *East African Standard.* The newspaper was named *Nairobi Times* and as its competitors were both under foreign ownership he took great pride in his Kenyan based and owned enterprise. Ng'weno had cut his journalistic teeth at the *Daily Nation* where he had served as its first Kenyan editor-in-chief for just 18 months between the years 1964 and 1966. While there, he had observed as the Government expelled foreign journalists who had published stories that it deemed dangerous or offensive. For the young editor, the journalistic atmosphere was volatile as years later his newspaper would recall that by 1964, in addition to the tensions between Kenyan politicians, authorities had banned the *Daily Nation's* co-publications in Tanganyika, Uganda and Zanzibar in the aftermath of a coup in the latter and military upheavals in the first two. In an extensive story on the holding company of the new newspaper in its inaugural issue, Stellascope Limited, an unnamed writer (most probably Ng'weno himself) identified the key factor that disturbed him

[1] *NT*, "Where we stand," no. 1, Sunday 30 October 1977, p. 6. This phrase is taken from the first editorial. The complete sentence reads: "We do not intend to state in categorical terms what our editorial policy will be other than to say that we shall endeavour at all times to serve the interest of our readers in particular and those of society in general as best as we can."
[2] *NT*, "The birth of a Sunday newspaper," no. 1, Sunday 30 October 1977, p. 20.
[3] *NT*,"We are a year old today," no. 52, Sunday 29 October 1978, p. 11.

during his tenure at the *Daily Nation*. He discloses that he found his work a rather thankless endeavour, for "despite a lot of hard work, most of it involving long hours into the night to see the final page proofs in order to make sure that nothing politically sensitive sneaked into the front page,"[4] he felt he was adding very little capital to his name. Although Ng'weno's name appeared at the end of his editorials, it seemed to him that the government considered his position at the *Daily Nation* as a purely cosmetic appointment at a foreign-owned and run publication. It was therefore not long before he resigned from the newspaper for a more low-key post as the East African representative of an American publishing firm. Yet, a passion for writing that Ng'weno had developed while at Harvard needed an outlet. He was also keen on finding a way to support and secure his young family financially. As a consequence, a series of struggling enterprises in film and the print press led to the establishment of the *Nairobi Times* that October.

In his inaugural editorial as the editor-in-chief, Ng'weno explained that while the newspaper would work with the Government to achieve its goals of serving the interests of its readers in particular and Kenyans in general, it would not naively assume that relations between the press and the Government would not be without challenges.[5] At moments of friction he hoped those in authority would remember that he shared their goal of improving the lives of Kenyans. In the same issue, the story on the paper's 'birth' stated that although Stellascope Limited was struggling financially and depended heavily on borrowed capital to kick off the venture, Ng'weno would never allow its financial affairs to compromise the independence of the newspaper.[6] Nonetheless, it is precisely the financial aspirations of its owner and the financial

[4] *NT*, "The birth of a Sunday newspaper," p. 18.
[5] *NT*, "Where we stand," p. 6.
[6] *NT*, "The birth of a Sunday newspaper," p. 20

struggles of the newspaper that would ensure that he could not be as "fiercely independent" as he hoped to be and that the voice of his newspaper would be variously muffled during its brief run.[7]

Dreams of an Entrepreneur: Government Credit Lines Pave the Way

By the time Stellascope Ltd. birthed *Nairobi Times* it had a long history of financial distress behind it. In 1968 Hilary Ng'weno got the opportunity to return to Harvard University as a fellow of the Harvard Centre of International Affairs. While there, he developed an interest in film making, obtained funding from the Ford Foundation to study film production at Brandeis University, then returned to Kenya with the intention of putting all he had learned to practice. A Kshs. 150,000 loan repayable over a period of five years from the government's Industrial and Commercial Development Corporation enabled him and his partners to set up Cinevision Limited. Their simple business plan estimated the production of two films each year at a profit of Kshs. 20,000.00 rising to about Ksh. 80,000.00 in the final year of the loan repayment period. By then "Ng'weno and his colleagues would have already entered into the film world in a big way." He and his partners were thus very optimistic, even brashly so. "If the old film producers in Hollywood – Griffith, Goldwin, Mayer and others could do it with simple black and white comedies…why not us?" thought Ng'weno and his colleagues.[8] However, the vagaries of a local market that included competition from Europeans who produced commercials cheaply and later the Government owned broadcaster Voice of Kenya soon humbled them.

In 1974, Ng'weno apparently realised that he would have to defer his film production dreams and opted to return to writing. Before that time and as a struggling film maker, he gladly took up an offer to contribute a science column and a humour column to the *Daily Nation* on a freelance basis. Shortly after, Terry Hirst started illustrating the humour column's fictional

[7] Ibid., p. 18.
[8] Ibid., p. 20.

character Joe and it became very popular with the newspaper's readers. This inspired the two to start independently *Joe Magazine* as a monthly humour magazine with Ng'weno holding 51% of the shares through Stellascope Ltd.[9] However, his work and frustrations with film production became chronic distractions and he eventually agreed to sell his shares in the magazine to Terry Hirst and his wife, Nereas Gicoru, towards the end of 1974. In February of the following year, Ng'weno launched a weekly magazine, *The Weekly Review*, for the in depth analysis of political matters that he modeled on *The Economist of London*. It soon became a widely respected political journal, particularly after the brutal assassination of Josiah Kariuki during which it gained a lot of respect amongst readers. Although it earned itself a loyal following amongst ardent observers of local politics and members of the diplomatic corps, the magazine — which the *Daily Nation* printed and distributed — chronically struggled with spiraling overhead costs, poor advertising revenue and challenging submission deadlines to printers. To make matters worse for Ng'weno and the skeleton staff that ran the magazine, Stellascope Ltd.'s financial constraints meant that he could not attract and retain the experienced journalists and skilled staff that the publication required. Consequently, Ng'weno did most of the writing and he and his staff were overworked as the company's financial situation continued to exert a lot of pressure on him. Eventually, an overdraft from government-owned National Bank enabled Ng'weno to shift his publication to a less costly printer, General Printers, and also enabled him to venture into the production of two more publications in 1976.[10] *Rainbow* was the first children's magazine in the country (produced in colour) which his wife Fleur Ng'weno helped to edit and produce. The other magazine was *Picture Post* which he modeled on picture journals in Europe and the United States. He obtained an attractive printing package deal from the *Daily Nation* and returned his

[9] Ibid., p.19.
[10] Ibid.

publications to their presses however, these publications did not improve the financial status of Stellascope Ltd. and the latter was in fact a total failure.[11]

The establishment of *Nairobi Times* was apparently an accident of Ng'weno's difficult situation. As financial problems threatened to kill Ng'weno's publications, he resolved to approach the National Bank again for more funds to keep the company running as he planned his next move. The bank agreed on condition that he hired professionals to conduct a feasibility study to determine what was best for the company in the long-term. The study proposed that Stellascope Ltd. expand its human resource base in addition to setting up its own printing facilities. National Bank duly advanced Ng'weno the funds he needed and even agreed to adjust his repayment plan when he stumbled upon a web-fed printing press that was more expensive than the sheet-press for which he had originally budgeted. Having acquired a better press on which Stellascope could even print a newspaper, Ng'weno opted to replace *Picture Post* with a Sunday newspaper. In doing so he was aware that he was for the first time taking on the two major dailies in the country. The *Daily Nation* already had a Sunday newspaper and the *East African Standard* had only just changed from a broadsheet to a tabloid publication and was rumoured to be planning the launch of a Sunday newspaper too. Nevertheless, Ng'weno was convinced he could bring a unique product into the market that would withstand the competition from his better financed contemporaries. It would be a broadsheet, "a quality" and "serious" Sunday newspaper that he felt the country lacked. With the money the bank advanced him, he was able to hire better staff and journalists, notably Horace Awori who had earlier left the *Weekly Review* in search of greener pastures as assistant editor of *The Nairobi Times,* and

[11] Ibid.

Odhiambo Okite, former editor of *Target* and *Lengo* publications to work as assistant editor of the *Weekly Review*.[12]

The editorial page of *The Nairobi Times'* inaugural issue bore several messages of good will, including one from the Minister for Information and Broadcasting Daniel Mutinda located at the top of the page. In it, the Minister congratulated Ng'weno for being the first "indigenous Kenyan" to publish a newspaper in a sector that he argued was in great need of Africanisation. He hoped that Ng'weno's initiative would encourage other Kenyans to venture into the sector so that the country's key instruments of mass communication would eventually be in the hands of citizens. The Government therefore considered the launch of the paper a commendable development and wished him well. Mutinda also assured Ng'weno that his ministry would always be at hand to provide support and guidance if and when he needed it; Ng'weno would later take the Government up on this offer. In the short-term, the latter took an interest in the success of the newspaper they hoped would be more 'sensitive' to the interests of the country or more appropriately, amenable to those of its ruling clique. In spite of the extent to which the Government had ensured the private press either kowtowed or cowered in the face of its brooding presence it was still very suspicious of the implications, manifest and otherwise, of its foreign ownership. And so it retained an interest in Ng'weno's journalistic enterprises, watching keenly and providing moral support in addition to the financial support that its institutions had made available to him.

Officials were already well acquainted with Ng'weno's political opinion on major issues as expressed in the pages of the *Weekly Review,* certain that they were not intolerably at variance with their own (at least not openly) and were relatively comfortable in giving his newspaper what in some circles was probably viewed as a trial run of sorts. Ng'weno's efforts to craft

[12] Ibid., p.20.

carefully his criticisms of the Executive are evident in the very first issue of the *Weekly Review*, "Can Kenya's Third Parliament assert itself?" [13] In a review of Parliament's past performance, he states clearly that KANU had dominated it for years.[14] This he implicitly blames on KANU's authoritarian tendencies and explicitly on the quality of MPs in Kenya's Second Parliament. The situation is untenable and must change. However, Ng'weno manoeuvres his report into a position that enables him to extricate the Executive from blame for Parliament's past troubles or as a target for any efforts to address them. He argues that "for the eventual evolution of a strong democratic system in Kenya, the Third Parliament needs an image different from that of the Second Parliament which tended to be viewed by the public as a rubber stamp for the Government [Executive]. It needs to assert itself, not so much against the Government [Executive], but in defence of its constitutional supremancy. Whether it will do this or not is the big question."[15] He takes similar care when commenting on the Government's domination of the media and does not end the article without noting that although the President is an MP and therefore a parliamentarian (who consequently shares blame for its inadequacies), "he is first and foremost the Head of State and the leader of Government" whose power and prestige dwarfs Parliament.[16] This enables Ng'weno to assure those in power that he has communicated to his readers that the President is therefore bound to emerge the victor in any confrontation with Parliament. In making this statement, the magazine also safely attributes the President's powers to an innate incandescence of sorts that comes with his position and for which he is not being accused of having usurped from other centres of power. In addition to being relatively at ease with Ng'weno's endeavour, the Government thought it a good opportunity to demonstrate its

[13] Ng'weno's efforts to balance carefully his criticisms of the Executive are evident in the very first issue of the *Weekly Review*, "Can Kenya's Third Parliament assert itself?" 8 February 1975, pp. 6-8.
[14] Ibid., p. 6.
[15] Ibid. p. 8.
[16] Ibid, p. 8.

stated commitment to Africanisation to the wider public. A year into its existence, the Ministry of Information and Broadcastng's Permanent Secretary sent a letter to Ng'weno commending him for seeing his "indigenous venture" through its first year of publication noting that his publications "make us proud to know and see what a Kenya-owned and Kenya-based operation is capable of doing."[17]

Watching its Commercial and Political Feet

The first months of its publication indicate that *The Nairobi Times* was designed to inform as it entertained and to help its readers relax on weekends with a minimum of politics, most probably to prevent competition with the Stellascope's *Weekly Review* as well as minimise collisions between the infant publication and the Government. In the year of its launch, the newspaper was divided into four parts: the segment that carried the headline, the editorial page, local and international news; a financial news segment named "Business Times;" a "Weekend Review" segment with a front page dedicated to book serialisations as well as extensive in-depth articles on matters such as law and education which various professionals contributed to the publication as well as columns on cinema, photography, music, photography, theatre and books; and *The Nairobi Times Magazine*. The magazine, whose colour content the newspaper touted on its front page had a different editor who was also a co-owner of Stellascope Ltd., Sarah Elderkin, and initially it was a pullout that featured stories on a wide range of topics from cars, batik works, and wildlife, to the achievements of a budding local swimmer.[18] It also had three pages at the back devoted to word games and American cartoons probably reflecting the lower costs involved in purchasing rights to publish them in the newspaper as opposed to hiring a cartoonist.

[17] AHC/1/44, Correspondence from the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, to the Editor/Publisher of the *Nairobi Times*, 28 October 1978. Nairobi: KNA.
[18] These are the cover features of the following issues: *NTM*, "The great car carper," 30 October 1977 in *NT* no. 1; *NTM*, "The splendor of Senkooto's batiks, 6 November 1977 in *NT* no. 2; *NTM*, "Death in the afternoon," 20 November 1977 in *NT* no. 4; *NTM*, "Record breaker," 4 December 1977 in *NT* no. 6.

The first issue had a total of 51 pages including the 31-paged colour magazine. On its front page were stories on Nairobi City Council's proposal for an organisation to regulate the operations of the city's privately owned passenger service minivans, the United Nations' Security Council debates on the nature of international sanctions which could be imposed on South Africa's apartheid regime, the Horticultural Society of Kenya's donation of food and other items to victims of a fire that broke out in a Nairobi slum, and two other apolitical items.[19] This was a structure the newspaper would continue in future issues as it featured articles on its front and inner pages that steered clear of politics or controversy and devoted a generous amount of space to international news. Each week, there were articles that touched on the words and deeds of government officials, varied aspects of ministries and parastatals and Kenyans' interactions with these organisations.[20] However, these were strictly examined within the context of their roles and functions in the state and how their operations impacted the ordinary Kenyan. As such, the content of the *Nairobi Times* as a publication stood in sharp contrast to that of its rivals the *East African Standard* and the *Daily Nation* that carried articles such as these but also plenty of political news.

Nonetheless, the nature of Kenya's oppressive political system meant that the repercussions of its leaders' actions were often too egregious to be ignored. And so towards the end of 1977, the paper featured the banning of Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Ngugi wa Mirii's play

[19] *NT*, "City Hall calls for body to control matatu operations," "Food for Mathare fire victims, what else?" "Too much money in Kenya," UN sanctions likely" and Rhodesian whites in court," no. 1, Sunday 30 October 1977 p. 1.
[20] See for example, *NT*, "Teachers to strike over pay increases," and "Mzee raises funds," no. 2, Sunday 6 November 1977, p. 1 and 5; *NT*, "Nairobi City Council is broke," and "Kenya's economic outlook is good," no. 3, Sunday 13 November 1977, p. 1 and 3; *NT*, "Njonjo blasts Kenya's education ministry," "KCC on verge of financial collapse," "Church body to move from Nairobi," "Civic workers stand by strike call," no. 4, Sunday 20 November 1977, p. 1 and 3; *NT*, "Kenya civil servants asked to declare business interests," no. 5, Sunday 27 November 1977, p. 1; *NT*, "Equality won't obstruct other goals – Kibaki," no. 6, Sunday 4 December 1977, p. 1; *NT*, "No Embakasi congestion, say clearing firms," "Kenya, Tanzania near agreement on border," and "Ministry denies plans for free education by 1980," no. 8, Sunday 18 December 1977, p. 1 and 3.

Ngahika Ndenda (I Will Marry at My Will) at the bottom of its front page.[21] It quoted the District Commissioner of Kiambu insisting that the play was not promoting the interests of Kenyans and was too provocative. The weekly explained that according to the DC, the play's music and script were aimed at igniting class wars in the country. In addition, the frequent use of the word "homeguards" in it also troubled him and he argued that it was not in accord with Kenyatta's 'forgive and forget' rhetoric. At the end of the report, the newspaper pointed out that the DC had banned the play even though he had not seen the play himself and that he was "satisfied with the information fed to him by his juniors."[22] The tone of the report was unmistakably disapproving of the official's actions. The main story of the paper's next issue reported the grilling of Oginga Odinga and others, including one Member of Parliament, for presiding over an event the police believed was illegal. The politician was presiding at a fund-raising event for the Kowak Welfare Association in Nairobi when the Senior Superintendant of Police interrupted the event and demanded that he be shown the event's license. Odinga, probably considering it part of the Government's long-term campaign to intimidate and harass him refused, insisting that the Government already had a copy of the licence. An exchange ensued and he and his colleagues ended up at a local police station for questioning. Although the editorial of the day was unrelated to this headline story, the report did attempt to clarify that the event was non-political and had not been licensed in Odinga's name in the first place. As police had released his colleagues but continued to hold Odinga, the newspaper posited that this could have been the result of Odinga having used threatening language towards the police and could appear in court to face a felony

[21] For commentary on Ngugi wa Thiong'o's detention see: Ahmed Rajab, "Detained in Kenya," *Index on Censorship*, vol. 7, issue 3, 1978, pp. 7-10.
[22] *NT*, "Ngugi play banned because 'provocative'," no. 6, Sunday 4 December 1977, p. 1.

charge if the Attorney General gave his consent for the prosecution of his case.[23] Nevertheless, the report was structured in a manner that communicated to the reader that the paper thought the whole matter was 'much ado about nothing' and thus inconsequential as far as matters of state security were concerned.

The following year, the newspaper issued its first commentary on a delicate issue; the Government's detention of Ngugi wa Thiong'o. The writer was picked up on 31 December 1977 but it was not until 12 January 1978 that the Government communicated his detention in the *Kenya Gazette*. On its front page, the newspaper informed its readers that a government official had told them that it had detained him in the interests of national security as a consequence of what he vaguely referred to as "his activities" and not his writing.[24] Inside, the week's editorial rapped the Government for not clearly stating why it had detained Ngugi and while it expressed the newspaper's regret that the Government had found it necessary to detain anybody for expressing views that disconcerted those who wielded power, it steered clear of an outright condemnation of the law that made it possible to detain Kenyans without trial. As a result, explained the newspaper, speculations as to the causes of his detention included the possession of subversive literature and the staging of the play *Ngahika Ndenda*. To blunt the blow of its opening salvo, the editorial's second paragraph averred that:

> With respect to the latter issue, only the authorities can tell how provocative the play by Ngugi was and what kind of law and order problems it might have created for the local administration had it been allowed to run its full course. There is probably more to it than meets the eye and it is quite possible that besides that play, the government might be in possession of other evidence which it deems warrants the drastic step taken to detain Ngugi..[25]

[23] *NT*, "Odinga picked up by police for questioning," no. 7, Sunday 11 December 1977, p. 1. A similar sense of caution as well as a healthy dose of skepticism is evident in the newspaper's report of another Odinga story based on documents an unnamed source handed to it claiming that he and others were using the Luo Union to raise large sums of money for the next general elections. See *NT*, "Odinga said to be behind sh 20 million plan," no. 11, Sunday 15 January 1978, p. 1 and *NT*, "Government silent on Luo election allegations," no. 12, Sunday 22 January 1978, p. 1.
[24] *NT*, "Ngugi detention was 'over his activities, not writing'," no. 11, Sunday 15 January 1978, p. 1.
[25] *NT*, "Reasons for detentions should be given," no. 11, Sunday 15 January 1978, p. 4.

The *Nairobi Times* also presented its critique as one that was not simply targeted at the relevant officials' silence on the matter but also as one that was for the good of the Government, too, because the speculative atmosphere on the matter was harmful to its well being.

Similarly, the newspaper attempted a critique of the Government's censorship laws in the same editorial arguing that it was time that it reviewed its list of banned publications that included former American Ambassador to Kenya William Atwood's "condescending book," *The Reds and The Blacks,* as well as a host of Chinese literature banned in the wake of Prime Minister Chou En-Lai's visit to Africa. By describing former ambassador's book as "condescending" as well as referring to "the kind of material Atwood was peddling" the newspaper was being careful to signal its support for the initial Government ban of this and other publications on its list. This it also did by observing that it recognised the need for the Government to remain on the alert for the machinations of governments that wished to exploit "disgruntled elements" within the country for their own purposes. However, the times had changed and the editor insisted that the political circumstances that had necessitated the banning of these works no longer existed, hence its call for a review of the existing banned publications list. In fact, argued the newspaper, it believed that no such list should exist in the first place but then, lowering the benchmark for ethical rule for the Kenyan government, it went on to state that it understood that "as political realities may not permit such an excess of liberalism in the country" the best the Government could do was to review the list frequently.[26] Readers would have to await an assault on the freedom of expression from a less threatening source to gauge better what the newspaper really thought about literature bans.

The occasion availed itself when Wahome Mutahi contributed an article to the *Nairobi Times* titled "Ban these Books." Mutahi, a future satirist for both *The Standard* and the *Daily*

[26] Ibid.

Naiton, was at the time a student at St. Paul's Seminary in the Central Province of Kenya. The books he wanted the Government to ban were American and British novels that he argued did not "tally with our national ideals." They included novels by James Hardley Chase, Nick Carter, Mickey Spillane and Peter Cheney as well as Kenyan authors who were publishing works of "crude sex and crime fiction."[27] He was also offended by Western propaganda in the case of the foreign authors whom he insisted were experts at exalting the values of their countries and propagating Cold War politics that favoured them. The *Nairobi Times* disagreed with his call for a ban and commenced its commentary on the article by publishing a cartoon above it that could only have riled the young seminarian. On the right a man (presumably James Bond) had his arm around a woman, on the left a man lay dead atop an Agatha Christie novel as another with his arms raised in surrender appeared set to expire shortly at the hands of a gangster, while at the centre a nude couple got intimate atop a James Hardley Chase novel. Next to the guest column, an editorial, "In Defence of Free Expression," gave a passionate defense of the individual's freedom of expression and freedom of choice:

> There are many aspects of western or generally foreign culture which many people in Kenya consider offensive. There are many books on sale in the country's bookstores which a good many Kenyans would not wish to buy or read. And there are some which ought not to be made available to children because of their offending nature. But to jump from this observation to the prescription that such books or literature should be banned is indefensible. Who is to decide what should be banned? What national criteria are to be used in such decisions? Who draws these criteria up?[28]

Ng'weno made it clear that he thought censorship as Mutahi was advocating was a slippery slope indeed. It would be a subjective process that would entail the imposition of the sensibilities and views of a few on the majority and this was unacceptable. His critique of Mutahi's article was sharp, crisp and unequivocal, unlike the dithering and meandering that had characterised his

[27] *NT*, "Ban these books," no.62, Sunday 7 January 1979, p. 4.
[28] *NT*, "In defence of free expression," no.62, Sunday 7 January 1979, p. 4.

response to the banning of Ngugi's play and his subsequent detention. Ng'weno argued that the solution to the large number of Western literature in Kenyan bookstores lay elsewhere:

> The answer to the proliferation of foreign reading matter in Kenya is not fewer books, but more books – written by Kenyan authors for their own people. It is foolhardy to expect the Kenyan reading public to wait for the half a dozen or so novels which are published by Kenyan writers every year in order to satisfy their appetite for reading. Kenyan writers can serve the nation a lot better by writing books, novels and plays than by engaging in ridiculous laments about the proliferation of foreign literature in the country.[29]

Ngugi had attempted to meet this need instead of engaging in "ridiculous laments," but the result had been rather unfortunate. The works of Kenyan writers could only be disseminated freely if they passed the Government's litmus test (whatever its indicator was) for mass consumption. Ng'weno had not issued or was unable to issue a similar rousing defense of the freedom of expression in Ngugi's case and it is only in his response to Mutahi's demand that readers of the newspaper got a clear view of what he really thought about the matter.

Manoeuvring Through the Kenyatta – Moi Transition

Nairobi Times was very similar to its competitors in its coverage of Kenyatta's death and Moi's transition into the presidency. There were the numerous, uncritical articles and editorials on Kenya's deceased "Man of Destiny" and exhortations for a stable and peaceful transition although the newspaper, which was by now more modest in size than its debut copies, was evidently less capable of sparing as many pages to the related stories as its competitors.[30] When Daniel arap Moi gave a speech at the end of August promising to uphold the constitution including its provisions on the presidency as well as the basic human rights contained within it, the *Nairobi Times* reported it on its front page and published the speech in its entirety on an inner

[29] Ibid.
[30] *NT*, "Mzee Jomo Kenyatta: man of destiny," no. 43, Sunday 27 August 1978, p. 4.

page.[31] In its editorial the newspaper acknowledged the president's pledge and demanded another from the country's politicians. According to the publication, Kenyatta was not only a unique leader, he had secured Kenya's journey to economic progress thanks to his "deep commitment to constitutional procedures in the service of the democratic process." It went on to state that Kenyatta had ensured the respect of the freedoms in the constitution, that the three arms of government had remained as such, and that parliament and the rule of law remained supreme. Thus for the newspaper it was commendable that Moi had promised to uphold the same constitution. No allusion was made to the inconvenient fact that the commitment of his predecessor to constitutional procedures was rooted in his quick denaturing of the document shortly after the country became self-governing and his subsequent manipulation of Parliament to stamp its approval on changes he and a small clique in the upper echelons of the Executive deemed necessary for the accruement and preservation of their power and positions over the years. What the newspaper emphasised now was that the country's politicians declare their support for the president. The following week, it was more evident that the editor had in mind the Change-the-Constitution Movement of 1976 when he called on politicians to demonstrate their devotion to Kenyatta's "principles of unity" by throwing their weight behind the new president and his government.[32] The existence of malcontents arising from the ascendancy of Moi to the presidency was a threat to security that worried the newspaper.

It was in the interest of national peace and stability that the *NT* took great interest in the state of KANU as the country's only political party. After KANU had announced that it would hold a special delegates conference to focus solely on the nomination of a party presidential

[31] *NT*, "Govt. to uphold constitution pledges President Moi," and "President Moi appeals to Kenyans to place national interest above everything else," no. 44, Sunday 3 September 1978, p. 1 and 3.
[32] *NT*, "A pledge from the President: let's have one from politicians," no. 44, Sunday 3 September 1978, p. 4. See also, *NT*, "Priorities must be kept in perspective," no. 45, Sunday 10 September 1978, p. 4.

candidate on 6 October 1978, the *NT* reported that there were murmurs from disgruntled members of the party who wanted the day to include the election of members of the National Executive Committee to rush the President into choosing a Vice-President, preferably the one of their choice (the National Executive Committee included the party vice-president).[33] It was certain about who would be nominated as the party's presidential candidate for by then all KANU branches had endorsed Moi as their candidate for the position and the newspaper could boldly declare "Moi's Election now Forgone Conclusion" in its second headline that September. Nevertheless, it was also evident that the period of transition remained a delicate time for the country and rebuked those who were demanding that the October 6 conference broaden its agenda. It also had a word of caution for those who wanted the day to mark the beginning of a more rigorous exercise to restructure and rejuvenate the party. While there was an indisputable need for party reforms, the newspaper advised the election of NEC members after the priority of the moment that was essential to political stability, that is, the election of a party president.[34] Once the party had elected Moi its president, the newspaper urged it to commence and see itself through a genuine reform process which would include grassroots elections.

For the *Nairobi Times* it was important that reforms did not stop after the election of members of the NEC scheduled for 28 October 1978 and it cautioned KANU against lapsing into laxity once it had filled its highest posts. Grassroots elections were a necessity and it pointed out that Kenyans would be watching party leaders closely to see whether they would actually restructure the party to improve its functions in a manner that reflected the wishes of the masses, or whether it would fall into its pattern of postponing elections endlessly. Besides, the party's constitution required it to hold grassroots (branch and sub-branch) elections every two years. The

[33] *NT*, "Moi's election now foregone conclusion," no. 45, Sunday 10 September 1978, p. 1.
[34] *NT*, "Priorities must be kept in perspective," no. 45, Sunday 10 September 1978, p. 4.

newspaper advised the party to hold the elections as soon as it was possible after the setting up of the NEC. It acknowledged that there were those who probably felt that 1979 was going to be too busy a year to hold the party elections as a population census, voter registration and general elections were scheduled for that year too. That schedule, however, simply underscored the necessity of holding the party's elections before the end of 1978. Whatever the case, the paper maintained that democracy "is not the easiest system of government to follow, and it is not convincing to argue that because the system is difficult to implement it should therefore be abandoned." And so just like the *Daily Nation*, the *Nairobi Times* saw in the one-party state a system of government that could serve the country well as long as KANU was reformed and became a vibrant political vehicle whose officials represented the will of the people. It also appeared unable to fathom a country with its political structure configured in a different manner despite its failure to foster an environment that encouraged political debate and did not consider differences of opinion as threats to national security.

During this period, the *Nairobi Times* was the only newspaper to call on the President to release political detainees to mark a fresh beginning and enhance a spirit of reconciliation as the country moved forward. The newspaper issued the plea shortly after Moi made a statement in which he stated his intention to detain people only when absolutely necessary. Once again the newspaper treated the statement with great tact. First, it did not issue an outright condemnation of detention as provided for in the Kenyan constitution and as it had been employed against political dissenters:

> President Moi has told the nation that he will use political detentions only as a last resort in matters of preservation of law and order. This should not be taken as criticism of the late president in any decision he might have taken to detain people he considered were a threat to public security, for most of the detention orders were, in fact, signed by President Moi in his capacity as the minister for home affairs. Rather, it should be taken as an invitation to his

> countrymen to operate within the laid-down rules for political activity and to avoid extra-constitutional confrontations with the authorities or adopting postures which threaten the foundations upon which the constitution is based.[35]

Thus argued the newspaper, detention served a purpose and would only occur when individuals forced the hand of the president. It was therefore imperative that those in the public sphere engage in politics "within the accepted rules of the political game," which according to the paper was "an invitation which should not be difficult for political leaders to accept.[36] Second, the newspaper argued that those in detention had already learned their lessons. The question of whether or not it was just to detain them in the first place for their political beliefs did not arise as it had already ceded all power to judge their culpability to the almighty government that had seen it fit to withdraw them from society. In the paper's opinion, releasing the detainees would give them a chance to prove that they were willing to join hands with other Kenyans in nation building efforts. Besides, it added, if they returned to their errant ways after having been released, then the president would still be able to detain them if all else failed.

After the President released detainees in December of that year, the newspaper commended his "magnanimous gesture" and insisted that by releasing them, he had posed a challenge to party leaders and those in government to read it as the public's desire for the burial of past conflicts and reconciliation. The newspaper called on such leaders to welcome the ex-detainees back into daily life and refrain from conduct that made it difficult for them to reintegrate into society. The newspaper observed, for example, that ex-KPU members in particular had found it difficult to re-enter public life "because of a variety of obstacles placed in their path." Those released had already expressed a desire to return to public service and the *Nairobi Times* argued that the extent to which they would be able to do just that would in turn be

[35] *NT*, "Invitation to all," no.47, Sunday 24 September 1978, p. 48.
[36] Ibid.

a measure of the extent of the spirit of accommodation and conciliation within Kenya's political system. However, it also cautioned them against making demands the government could not meet, particularly during Kenya's delicate transition period, and hoped people would give the new President and his administration a chance to settle down and live up to the ideals he had delineated since August. The newspaper still held hope that if the Government met the standards it had set for itself, "we could in a fairly short time transform Kenya into a democracy which would be the envy of most nations."[37]

In October 1978, the Stellascope Ltd. newspaper commemorated the anniversary of its first year in operation that revealed yet again just how carefully it had to be when issuing critiques of the Government. In an article written for the occasion, Hilary Ng'weno recalled Moi's launching of the newspaper the year before at a ceremony in the capital. The President had argued that it was imperative for the press to "keep at heart the interests of the nation" instead of focusing on those at its periphery who neither understood nor were interested in understanding the intricacies underlying developments within the country from which the news that the media disseminated originated. He had gone on to state that the press ought to identify with the needs and interests of the country and ought to be "a vehicle for national advancement." Journalists were to strive for balance and "portray their own identity and nationality" as opposed to allowing themselves to be used by others. Moi had then stated that if the press met those conditions then the Government would have no problem honouring its constitutional commitment to freedom of the press. Ng'weno argued that the newspaper had in fact done its best to live up to the ideals the President had outlined during that occasion. The editor-in-chief also recalled that the *Nairobi Times* in its inaugural issue had pledged to adopt editorial stances that were in the best interests of the country and its people in accordance with the principles of "justice, equality, freedom and

[37] *NT*, "Moi's welcome statesmanship," no. 59, Sunday 17 December 1978, p. 4.

social stability." He felt that it was too early to state whether or not the newspaper had lived up to that pledge but thought it had made some progress towards that direction.

In addition, by 1978 Ng'weno, who had honed his skills at self-censorship while serving as the editor-in-chief of the *Daily Nation,* told his readers that *Nairobi Times* operated without any strictures in what was also a free society:

> Newspapers are often said to be mirrors of society. A society in which newspapers are truly free is also a society which enjoys freedom in most areas of its life. Since independence, Kenya has nurtured an atmosphere which has encouraged the growth and survival of independent newspapers, with the government staying out of involvement in newspaper work except through supply of information and monitoring what newspapers have published. This is an atmosphere which we at *Nairobi Times* and our sister publications *The Weekly Review* and *Rainbow* would like to see continue and grow in strength and we will do whatever we can to justify the faith which the leaders of this country and the framers of our constitution have placed in the concept of a free press. This we shall do by trying to be as responsible as possible in our reporting as well as by avoiding the biases which sometimes make newspapermen partisans in personality squabbles among political leaders.[38]

Kenya certainly had a vibrant newspaper sector, but it was definitely not free to express itself on a wide range of sensitive politico-economic issues without fear of governmental retaliation. Ng'weno was well aware of this having served at the *Daily Nation* and now as editor of his own publication. If the Government "monitored" the contents of publications what was its response when a certain publication was deemed to have breached the guidelines the president had outlined in October 1977? The resulting reaction was one of the key factors that had driven him from his first newspaper sector job in 1964. Yet by 1978, the resilient entrepreneur appears to have forgotten these difficulties in addition to not having experienced any such pressures at the *Nairobi Times*.

Reasons for Ng'weno's rapprochement with the Government probably lay in part in his acknowledgement of the extent to which he was beholden to the government's financial

[38] *NT*, "We are a year old today," no. 52, Sunday 29 October 1978, p. 11.

institutions for the credit facilities Stellascope Ltd. so desperately needed to purchase its presses and generally get the company up and running. Ng'weno had benefitted greatly from the counsel and loans of the National Bank of Kenya, Industrial Development Bank and the ICDC. Thus a year into the life of the newspaper, he considered the company that published it most fortunate to have received "enormous" financial backing from the government's financial institutions for what he viewed as a high-risk enterprise. He undoubtedly did not wish to jeopardise his company's relationship with the provider of Stellascope Ltd's financial lifeline. At the same time, he does seem to have had a genuine interest in putting out a publication that did manifest his stated desire to edify society through the provision of information and prudent criticism of the Government. This commitment meant finding a way to survive its critiques of the Government. In 1978 he recalled that in its inaugural issue, the newspaper had pledged to "carefully weigh the different interests in question," that is in society, before taking its editorial stances that would always be geared towards the promotion of freedom and liberty. Those interests were the Government's, as well of different segments of society and Stellascope Ltd.

1979 being an election year, the *Nairobi Times* increased its coverage of politics and when the dark nature of KANU's "clearance" procedures for approving candidates for office reared its head again it was moved to comment. On the day it published Oneko's reaction to KANU's intervention in the dispute between the editor-in-chief of *The Standard* and former ex-KPU members whom he had called a security risk and Anyona's ouster from the KANU Kisii branch vice-chairmanship, it also headlined the party's refusal to clear former Assistant Minister Abdi Sirat Khalif on grounds that he had just returned from Somalia.[39] The politician was aghast and insisted that the last time he had visited Somalia was in 1968 when he had returned, stood

[39] *NT*, "KANU bars former Asst. Minister," "Kisii leaders split over Anyona's axing," and "Kanu's involvement unfortunate," no. 101, Sunday 7 October 1979, p. 1.

for elections, and emerged the victor. The party had cleared him for elections again in 1974 although he later lost that election. Having been cleared for election twice, Khalif could not understand why KANU would not clear him a third time. In the week's editorial, Ng'weno attempted to balance the blow of his critique of KANU's conduct with praise for doing that which it was required to do as the country's sole party anyway; clearing close to 800 candidates to vie for seats in the general election. He argued that as the party had barred 'just' ten of the prospective candidates out of hundreds the party's record could not be considered "bad." He then proceeded to discount the party Secretary General's assertion that the five ex-KPU candidates barred from contesting seats had sued KANU. The truth, Ng'weno insisted, was that the five politicians had not sued KANU but Robert Matano for calling them "security risks." He boldly asserted that "if the ruling party is trying to obscure the issue of who is being sued, it is probably because the matter of the legal suit happens to be a convenient excuse for the party to do what it was going to do anyway."[40] He thought the same applied to Kisii KANU branch's expulsion of George Anyona and its subsequent refusal to clear him to contest the Kitutu East seat.

The editorial registered his regret that an opportunity for the party to put its ugly past with the now defunct KPU behind it had been lost, but he nevertheless thought it important to end the piecel on a positive note after what must have made rather difficult reading for certain party officials. And so once again the editorial returned to praise; KANU had failed to clear only ten candidates and had also apparently resisted several attempts on the part of outgoing MPs to bar several would-be contestants from being cleared for the elections. In addition, the paper insisted that congratulations were in order for not barring anybody from contesting for civic seats as it expressed its hope that KANU would permit all who wished to stand for the next round of elections after 1979's to do so. Once again the party had failed to act in a democratic manner and

[40] *NT*, "A matter of clearance," no. 101, Sunday 7 October 1979, p. 4.

once again the *Nairobi Times* had found a way to defend its poor performance. After the elections were held the paper hailed them as yet "another brick in Kenya's democratic foundation."[41] There were winners and losers but what was crucial, it asserted, was that people had participated, as that was what was most important in a democracy. It did not elaborate on whether the process they had participated in could be considered truly free and fair. Thus, like Kenya's other major newspapers, the *NT* gave the Government a pass and tried to reconcile the incongruous nature of the free Kenya it had insisted existed and KANU's behaviour. Before the year ended, Moi appointed Odinga to the chair of the Cotton Lint and Seed Board which the newspaper welcomed as a critical act of conciliation, a genuine effort to exorcise the KPU ghost that it had called for: but of course this truce did not last very long.[42]

By March 1981, just as in the case of the *Daily Nation*, the front pages of the *Nairobi Times* were turned into a programme for the theatre of the absurd as the fallout from Odinga's "baba" remarks unraveled itself.[43] In May, the weekly finally commented on the issue in an editorial which begun by observing that the ruling party had a "credibility problem" in clearance related matters. It also pointed out that when confronted about the murky nature of its clearance procedures, KANU tended to restate its claim that it was supreme (and therefore infallible as well as irreproachable). The paper argued that this amounted to "an effort to silence opposition to its dictates" and in addition to the disciplinary actions the party meted out to various politicians from time to time enabled the party to "weather otherwise political seas." What was most

[41] *NT*, "Another brick in Kenya's democratic foundation," no. 106, Sunday 11 November 1979, p. 4.
[42] *NT*, "Backing words with deeds," no. 109, Sunday 2 December 1979, p. 4.
[43] *NT*, "Moi hits out at Odinga," no. 179, Sunday 12 April 1981, p. 1 and *NT*, "No room for agitation, says Moi," no. 183, Sunday 10 May 1981, p. 1. For the newspaper's coverage of related events see also, *NT*, "Odinga should go in unopposed – says Omamo," no. 177, Sunday 29 March 1981, p. 1; *NT*, "Njonjo defends Kanu on Bondo," no. 180, Sunday 19 April 1981, p. 1; *NT*, "Omamo in court bid to nullify Jalang'o nomination," no. 181, Sunday 26 April 1981, p. 1; *NT*, "Campaign activity in Bondo slows down," no. 182, Sunday 3 May 1981, p.1; *NT*, "Bondo candidature ruling on Tuesday," no. 183, Sunday 10 May 1981, p. 1 and *NT*, "Omamo declared MP for Bondo," no. 187, Sunday 7 June 1981, p. 1.

probably sparked by Odinga's clearance woes then took a turn and focused on the clearance problems of a constituency that had less national prominence and was less controversial, that of Busia South where the party secretary-general, Robert Matano, and its national treasurer, Justus ole Tipis, were feuding over whether or not the latter's clearing of Peter Okondo to stand unopposed for a seat left vacant after the High Court nullified the election of its previous occupant, James Osogo. Apparently, the disagreement between the two party officials had degenerated further into a physical fight. Then referring to the Odinga by-election saga, the newspaper observed that when various people attacked the party's decision to bar the politician from contesting for the Bondo seat during the by-elections it defended itself by stating that the party's headquarters had made the decision to do so arguing that since "Kanu was supreme, … its decisions in such matters were binding upon all Kenyans." However, in the case of the Busia South by-election the newspaper observed that it did not appear that the party executive had met and so Matano's attempted nullification of Tipis' clearance of Okondo was a consequence of both having used the party's name to sort out what were personal decisions based on personal opinions. "No wonder Kanu continues to have a major credibility problem," ended the column.[44]

Thus it was the Busia South by-election and not the Odinga saga that was the motivator of the editorial on Kanu's credibility problem. One could therefore conclude that the *Nairobi Times* had been more irked by the Busia South clearance matters than that of Bondo; however, given its consistent coverage of the latter it appears that the paper had simply tried to voice its disapproval of the manner in which the party had handled the Odinga affair without leaving the sting of its attack in place for retaliatory action. Having stated its opinion that Kanu's clearance procedures were being used as weapons against political foes generally, it then opted to focus on

[44] *NT*, "Kanu's credibility," no. 184, Sunday 17 May 1981, p. 4. See also, *NT,* "Fair choice," no. 319, Saturday 20 November 1982, p. 6.

a less controversial political issue to illustrate its point without condemning the party outright for barring Odinga.

In June of the same year, the newspaper relayed news that KANU's long-awaited revitalisation was beginning with caution. One of the significant steps in this direction was the party's taking over and restructuring of several offices on the second floor of the Kenyatta International Conference Centre where it would establish a permanent party secretariat. Although the centre belonged to the Government and therefore the people of Kenya, its use for party purposes drew no comment from the newspaper. The *Nairobi Times* informed readers that the Friedrich Ebert Foundation of West Germany's Social-Democratic Party had encouraged KANU to establish a permanent secretariat. It also explained that KANU had approached the Foundation for advice on how to proceed with its rejuvenation and the foundation had since organised a workshop in Nairobi in addition to putting together study tours for party officials to West Germany. The foundation deemed a permanent party secretariat essential as it would not only deal with routine administrative matters on a daily basis but would also enhance communication between the party's headquarters and its 41 district branches. The secretariat would also be staffed with skilled personnel to manage the party's finances under the supervision of the National Executive Committee. The *Nairobi Times* reported that some party officials had mooted the idea of establishing a party newspaper to further facilitate communication between the party and its members but the foundation had discouraged any such measure. They had explained that political parties in Europe were stopping the publication of such newspapers as they were often unable to compete with commercial newspapers and instead recommended the establishment of a public relations division. Another idea the foundation reportedly discouraged was the establishment of a party institute for the training of party cadres similar to the Lumumba Institute

that it had shut down in the aftermath of the KANU-KPU showdown of the sixties. However, in a move indicating its recognition of the conflicting position between its own objectives and its position as adviser to the ruling party of a single-party state the foundation was reported in the newspaper to have been opposed to "an institute which catered for party officials and cadres alone and merely propagated party ideology." If such an institute was established, they advised that it focus on general civic education. At the same time, they were also of the opinion that such an institute could be used to train party officials after party elections on how to carry out the functions of their new dockets. As a newspaper that had encouraged the reorganisation of the country's sole party in the hope that it would lead to a flourishing democracy the *Nairobi Times* had seen KANU fall short of its own rules and goals too many times to believe that it was definitely making a turn for the better and ended its front page report on the party's rejuvenation plans by stating that "whether or not Kanu can achieve its ambitious plan, only time will tell."[45] Nevertheless, the newspaper retained the belief that Kenya's one party system could change for the better and continued to use its pages to badger the party to live up to its words.

Thus from mid-1982, having returned as a daily after a six month hiatus brought on by financial difficulties, the newspaper intensified its coverage of political news, which meant KANU news as it continued its critiques of the party. These critiques can also be viewed as the newspaper trying to live up to its stated objective of serving society by advocating for a well-run and open political party. After all, it was part of that society and depended upon a stable political system for its own optimal functioning. Take for instance the political jostling that accompanied debates about the filling of party office vacancies as a consequence of the deaths of their previous occupants, among other reasons, before the next round of party elections. Kiambu District in particular, sparked volatile debates due to the nature of its heated arguments about

[45] *NT*, "Move to revitalise Kanu under way," no. 187, Sunday 7 June 1981, p. 1.

how and when to fill in its KANU branch chairman position after the death of prominent politician James Gichuru. The newspaper not only splashed the squabble about the row on its front pages, it also published an editorial that criticised the party's national organising secretary and its secretary general for sending conflicting instructions to its Kiambu Branch on how to handle its vacancy issue.[46] To the paper this was probably another symptom of KANU's structural and communication problems manifesting itself in what it viewed as a simple matter that only required reference to the party's constitution.

This problem was exacerbated because the headquarters appeared to be sending mixed messages to Kirinyaga's branch office on a similar issue at about the same time.[47] Once Kirinyaga held its grassroots by-elections following instructions from the Office of the President, the newspaper commended them and used the opportunity to urge the party in general to live up to the provisions of its own constitution by holding regular party elections. "After the national party elections, which ideally should take place this year, have been held the ruling party should now get into the habit of conducting elections regularly as its own constitution stipulates," commented the newspaper.[48] It went on to add that party members valued the opportunity to vote even though their leaders viewed the elections with trepidation. Furthermore, it considered the elections essential to the cultivation of a vibrant party. Its comments were therefore those of a publication that had the best interests of the party and its members at heart, and it would repeat

[46] *NT*, "Kanu Kiambu row," no. 267, Friday 10 September 1982, p. 4. See also *NT*, "Nassir backs Munoko over Kiambu row," no. 263, Monday 6 September 1982, p. 1; *NT*, "Nassir told to keep off Kiambu row," no. 264, Tuesday 7 September 1982, p. 1; *NT*, "Gatuguta was imposed by Kiambu – Munoko," no. 265, Wednesday 8 September 1982, p. 1; *NT*, "Let Kiambu decide, says Nyandarua, Thursday 9 September 1982, p. 1; *NT*, "Kiamu Kanu branch leaders agree to meet," no. 267, Friday 10 September 1982, p. 1.
[47] *NT*, "Kirinyaga to kick off party polls?" no. 268, Monday 13 September 1982, p.1. See also, *NT*, "Matano's directive overrules Munoko – Kirinyaga," no. 269, Tuesday 14 September 1982, p. 1, *NT*, "Kirinyaga to hold Kanu elections," no. 272, Friday 17 September 1982, p. 3.
[48] *NT*, "Kanu elections," no. 274, Tuesday 21 September 1982, p. 4.

them when another dispute over electoral procedure erupted at the party's Nairobi branch.[49] Towards the end of the year as the party's membership drive was in full swing, the newspaper made an unprecedented press challenge to KANU to develop a clear line of distinction between itself and the government. It did not approve of the party using officials of the provincial administration to sell receipt books during the drive in what appeared to be an attempt to prevent party officials from discouraging likely voters of opponents from registering. This practice was further evidence that the KANU needed to develop a proper structure and procedures to manage its own affairs.[50]

The newspaper made yet another unique local newspaper challenge to the Government in the aftermath of the attempted coup that year when it called on it to inquire into its possible root causes with the seriousness it deserved. It observed that the Government had instituted an inquiry into the coup with the intention of uncovering the plotters of the coup and all that was related to its planning and failed implementation. However, what was equally if not more important was an inquiry into what had caused it in the first place. It argued that what was required was an effort that "addresses itself to the basic question of the circumstances which could have given rise to the attempted coup." Moreover, "such an investigation addressed itself to the basic question of the circumstances which could have given rise to the attempted coup."[51] It was an exercise in which both the Government and the country's citizens needed to be involved to ensure that it did not happen again. Thus, while in related news the newspaper was very similar in its commentary of related events to its rivals, publishing its appreciation to loyal forces who had stamped out the rebellion, stating its condemnation of the coup plotters and the chaos that had followed in their wake as well as promoting a return to normalcy, it did register its desire for a concerted effort at

[49] *NT*, "Concern needed," no. 305, Wednesday 3 November 1982, p. 6.
[50] *NT*, "Kanu Tickets," no. 341, Thursday 16 December 1986, p. 6.
[51] *NT*, "National inquiry," no. 248 , Monday 16 August 1982, p.4.

national introspection and retrospection. This it did without making overt references to the country's politics.

As the Government herded various people into detention in the days following the coup, the *Nairobi Times* also resorted to a safe editorial silence in a pattern that mirrored its position on the detentions that occurred in the months preceding the coup.[52] Immediately after the coup, however, the newspaper does seem to have approved of the detentions that preceded it:

> For some time now, the government of Kenya has charged that there were subversive elements who were trying to overthrow the legally constituted government in the country. It has been for this reason that very tough measures, including the detention of some political dissidents were recently taken. One area of attention by the government has been the University of Nairobi several of whose lecturers have been detained. The government has charged that some lecturers have been inciting students to rebellion.[53]

It conceded that there was no evidence or "clear case" of a connection between the students, those who taught them, and the coup plotters, but based its argument on the support university students had shown the instigators of the failed putsch. But at the same time it went on to state that "the Sunday incident has clearly vindicated the government's suspicions about dissident elements at the university [prior to the coup], and it is going to take some time before the university's relations with the government can return to normal."[54] In view of this editorial, the newspaper's shying away from further commentary in the following weeks and months is curious. It may be argued that after stating its views in this column the newspaper saw no further

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[52] For examples before the coup see: *NT*, "Lecturer at K.U.C. formally charged," no. 219, Tuesday 6 July 1982, p. 2. For editorial see same issue, "Beating 'magendo' [the black market]," p. 4; *NT*, "Police officer testifies in journalist's case," no. 221, Thursday 8 July 1982, p. 2. For editorial see same issue, "Export subsidy," p. 4; *NT*, "Lecturers call off meeting: fear of police action blamed," no. 223, Monday 12 June 1982, p. 1 and 16. For editorial see same issue, "World Cup fiesta," p. 4; *NT*, "Lecturer flees Kenya," no. 226, p. 1. For editorial see same issue, "Namibia accord," p. 4; *NT*, "Two more lecturers detained," no. 227, Friday 16 July 1982, p. 1. For editorial see, "War in the gulf," p. 4. For examples after the coup see: *NT*, "Wamwere, Mutunga detained," no. 247, Friday 13 August 1982, p. 1. For editorial see same issue, "A great leader," an obituary for James Gichuru, M.P, p. 4 and *NT*, "Odinga restricted," no. 285, Wednesday 6 October 1982, p. 1 and 16. For editorial see same issue, "Medical services," p. 4.

[53] *NT*, "Government's recent suspicion of trouble at university vindicated," no. 238, Monday 2 August 1982, p. 3.

[54] Ibid.

need to express itself. What then about its silence on the detentions preceding the coup? Was it simply not bothered? This would be an incongruous status for a publication that had positioned itself to serve society only a few years before. It would mean it was oblivious to major human rights infractions in that society which is highly unlikely. There is thus room for conjecture that it was disturbed by the detentions but feared governmental reprisal and thus kept quiet. Alternatively, it did not think the public ready for an opinion supportive of the government's actions until an event such as the coup occurred, as this could have proved commercially imprudent for the newspaper. The struggling Stellascope Ltd. had only just resumed publication after a hiatus brought on by financial strains and could not afford another setback.

The End: The Bottom Line Dictates

The newspaper's financial struggles were in evidence not only in its carefully measured commentaries but also in its diminishing size over the years. As a weekly in the first month of its existence, the newspaper averaged 16 pages in addition to the 24-paged colour magazine.[55] At this stage, *Nairobi Times* had advertisements on almost every page. By November 1978, which was shortly after its first anniversary, the newspaper was down to 12 pages while the colour magazine had also gone down in size to 16 pages and advertisements had decreased noticeably with those from government ministries as well as parastatals featuring with increasing frequency.[56] Then on 29 November 1981, a small front-page announcement informed readers and advertisers that the publication would go "into recess" the following month and would not return until 3 January 1982.[57] The publication of the *Weekly Review* and *Rainbow* would continue as usual. However, it was not until 28 June 1982 when the newspaper reappeared on the streets of Nairobi. It returned as a daily newspaper which meant direct competition with *The*

[55] *NT*, weekly issues for the month of November 1977.
[56] *NT*, weekly issues for the month of November 1978.
[57] *NT*, "*Nairobi Times* special announcement," no. 212, Sunday 29 November 1981, p. 1.

Standard as well as the *Daily Nation*, this time without a Sunday edition or a magazine pull-out on any day. Once in a while the newspaper published an advertisement exhorting readers to buy the newspaper because among other reasons "We are 100% Kenyan" as it appealed to their feelings of patriotism in the hope that they would choose the paper over its foreign-owned rivals.[58] The following year, the *Nairobi Times* plodded on as a 16-page daily with anaemic advertising. In the first issue that January and several others that followed, a prominently displayed notice "To all Government Departments and Ministries" informed them that the *Weekly Review* had once again obtained an exclusive government advertising contract for all its notices and advertisements for the period 1 January 1983 to 31 December 1984.[59] The Government was certainly a major contributor to the newspaper's advertising revenue but even so it averaged only six to eight advertisements on its 16 pages that month. On some days there were just two or three advertisements per issue. Finally, at the end of March 1983 the editor penned an editorial bidding its readers and "patrons" farewell in what was its last issue. Stellascope Ltd. had sold the *Nairobi Times* to the ruling party KANU which would now publish its own newspaper; *Kenya Times,* as well as the Swahili language *Kenya Leo*. The editor expressed confidence in the two new ventures, certain that they would build on the "high standards of journalism" *Nairobi Times* had set and encouraged its readers to support them.[60]

The Government had been an integral part of both *The Nairobi Times'* establishment and denouement. In the first issue of the *Weekly Review* the following month, Hilary Ng'weno gave his account of the financial problems that had led to the sale of the newspaper. *The Nairobi Times,* he explained, had always been part of a company with a very fragile capital base as it was established "almost entirely" on loans from the National Bank and the Industrial Development

[58] See for example, *NT*, "We are 100% Kenyan," no. 226, Thursday 15 July 1982, p.13.
[59] *NT*, "To all Government departments and ministries," no. 354, Monday 3 January 1983, p. 4.
[60] *NT*, "Au revoir," no. 429, Thursday 31 March 1983, p. 6.

Bank. From very early on its founding publication, the *Weekly Review*, experienced severe difficulties mainly as a result of its inability to garner advertisements. In addition, in the late seventies as Kenya just as other African countries was experiencing an economic downturn, the meagre advertising revenues that had been trickling in plummeted as a number of advertisers who had already placed advertisements in the newspaper defaulted on their payments. At the same time, suppliers of goods and services the company needed to function insisted on being paid in advance. All this resulted in grave cash flow problems for Stellascope Ltd. such that by 1980 Ng'weno was forced to consider as options bankruptcy or the sale of the newspaper. He was keen on avoiding the first option to shield the banks and creditors who had advanced him capital in addition to the distress it would cause him personally and those linked to the newspaper. And while selling the newspaper looked like a good idea, he was sure potential buyers would shy away from an enterprise that was suffering huge losses. Besides, the publications were too integrated with his own person, which meant that the publications would be less attractive to a buyer if his continued presence as an editor was not part of the deal. As such, Ng'weno settled for a third option: establishment of the Press Trust of Kenya.

On 6 December 1980, the Government registered the Press Trust of Kenya as a non-profit organisation limited by guarantee with Ng'weno as the editor-in-chief and President Moi as the patron. Its first role was to take over the existing publications of Stellascope Ltd. before taking on the ambitious task of expanding its portfolio to include the publication of other periodicals, including dailies. Ng'weno hoped that the trust would go a long way towards relieving the company of the financial problems that had so plagued it.[61] The plan was for the Trust to operate as a non-profit organisation which placed the ownership of the publication in the hands of the

[61] AHC/3/17, Briefing from the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting to the Senior Management Committtee, 22 October 1982. Nairobi: KNA.

country's citizens through a wide range of groups such as the Law Society of Kenya, the Kenya National Farmers Union, the Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry as well as a number of religious groups whose diverse interests would insure that the publications attracted donations from those interested in supporting a free, indigenous, press enterprise. Stellascope Ltd.'s two major creditors approved the plan and some potential donors indicated their interest. Ng'weno noted, however, that the Kenya Union of Journalists turned down the offer to join the trust as did the National Council of Churches in Kenya. He also argues that a powerful clique within the Government was opposed to the trust, which caused some donors who had indicated their interest in joining it to withdraw. In addition, the article explains that although Ng'weno had written to several embassies and organisations seeking financial support for the trust, none was forthcoming despite initial responses that seemed to indicate an interest in doing so. In these letters, he had urged them to support what was an effort to maintain an indigenous and independent press effort and as he waited for their donations with optimism he transferred the company's titles to the trust on 1 July 1981. However, by the end of that year it was evident that no funds would be forthcoming and the trust suspended the publication of *The Nairobi Times* as *Rainbow* became a monthly publication.

In March of 1982, the titles returned to Stellascope Ltd., which underwent a major restructuring effort that resulted in the laying off of over 40% of its staff, but this made little difference as far as debt servicing was concerned. So, in June 1982 Ng'weno relaunched the newspaper as a daily with money borrowed from friends and with the assistance of a newly established paper manufacturer in Nairobi who was willing to supply two month's worth of newsprint on credit. In spite of the editor's determination, the newspaper was unable to surmount

its financial problems and as a result opened negotiations with KANU for the sale of Stellascope Ltd., its printing subsidiary, and *The Nairobi Times* title.[62]

As a consequence of his experiences, Ng'weno in 1982 made the disputable declaration that the Government was a genuine supporter of press freedom. Embittered by his inability to raise funds from foreign sources and his general struggles to keep the publications alive, he stated that "when the chips were down, it was two government institutions – The National Bank of Kenya and the Industrial Development Bank – who came to our aid and kept us alive. Their belief in press freedom showed itself in concrete terms unlike a lot of empty rhetoric which I have heard on this subject only too often."[63] The Government certainly does seem to have been genuinely interested in seeing an indigenous daily thrive, but its record in its dealings with the press in postcolonial Kenya do not support Ng'weno's claims. The extent to which the *Nairobi Times* had to censor itself also does not support this claim, which appears to be that of a frustrated entrepreneur more than anything else. The National Bank and the Industrial Development Bank were godsends to some African entrepreneurs in the years following independence as the government sought to encourage the latter to enter sectors of the economy from which they were absent. Being government institutions, they could make lending risks that other banks (all foreign owned) could not or did not want to make. They specialised in lending to a market segment that such banks were also not interested in and therefore could not be waited upon to develop credit packages that catered to African entrepreneurs with meagre assets for security and who faced all sorts of odds in their quests to enter sectors such as retailing and transport. This reality does not mean they were not interested in making a profit out of the loans they advanced. Ng'weno was one of those entrepreneurs who benefited from their lines of credit

[62] *The Weekly Review*, "Survival struggle: the story behind Stellascope Ltd.," 1 April 1983, pp. 5 – 9.
[63] Ibid., p. 9.

and while the Government provided it with moral and financial support, there were implicit conditions for the funding; Stellascope's publications would be permitted to flourish as long as their editorial policies did not disconcert the Government. Ng'weno, too, was not interested in upsetting the political and financial balance upon which his company was based as its attainment of a healthy bottom line had always been important to him as was its provision for an outlet of his desire to write. The result was self-censorship and a newspaper that was a carefully trimmed and manicured publication designed to co-exist with the Government.

LEVIATHAN'S PRESS IN A NEW ERA

The Government, its Party and Newspapers: 1962-1990

Newspapers have a very important role to play in conditioning the minds of people. If for example they deliberately persist in giving prominence to opposition statements they can make the position of the government very awkward, indeed.[1]

That our president enjoys the full support and loyalty of the ordinary Kenyan is not in question. This has been demonstrated on many occasions including the times when the traitors in our midst have attempted to plunge this country into chaos.[2]

Leviathan Needs its Own Press

In January 1968, the visit of United States Vice-President Hubert Humphrey to Kenya as part of an official African tour sparked a conflict between the *East African Standard* newspaper and the Government. The newspaper took exception to Humphrey's description of Kenya "as different from the remainder of Africa as Palm Springs from an area of poverty."[3] How was this possible, posed the newspaper, when according to one of the Government's own Ministry of Economic Planning reports, the average Kenyan family of six lived on produce and cash worth £11 5s in 1964 while the monthly spending target was £13 by 1970? Could the country really be compared to Palm Springs when a Minister had recently reported to Parliament that unemployment was high with only 700,000 employees in salaried employment while 300,000 school-leavers entered the labour market each year? On the same day, the Government's television station, the Voice of Kenya, responded attacking the newspaper for distorting Kenya's image by contradicting and diluting "high praise for Kenya from a distinguished international figure" which also had the effect of denigrating the achievements of a country that many had

[1] INF. 10/22C**,** "Need for public relations," undated (refers to previous circular dated 3 October 1966 which is available in AHC/1/20/26, Correspondence to all Permanent Secretaries, the Attorney General and Provincial Commissioners from the Permanent Secretary and Director of Information, 3 October 1966). Nairobi: KNA.
[2] The ruling party's newspaper comments on the Kenyan political landscape in which it was constitutionally the only party allowed to exist. *KT*, "Don't misuse president's name," no. 20, Friday 20 May 1983, p. 6.
[3] *EAS*, "Report on African safari," no. 16698, Wednesday 24 January 1968, p. 8.

praised for being one of the most progressive and stable on the continent. Besides, pointed out the Government, the *EAS* had gotten its unemployment figures wrong and insisted that had it used per capita income to compare Kenya's performance between 1963 and 1968, a different picture of the country's economic performance would have emerged. When the newspaper struck back, it had lost none of its pugnacity. It described the station's news commentaries as "couched in such vitriolic language, and often are so oddly illogical, that nowadays they only raise a laugh and do not warrant serious answer."[4] Moreover, pointed out the newspaper, it had obtained its unemployment figures from Robert Ngala's contributions to a parliamentary debate in his capacity as the Minister for Co-operatives and Social Services and it wondered whether the station was willing to question the accuracy of the minister's figures.

In the end the P. J. Gachathi, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, wrote a letter to his counterpart in the Office of the President in which he noted that as the Government did not have its own newspapers nor was it advisable for it to embark on such a venture, it had to rely on "the off-chance" that the private press would support its public relations goals.[5] His point of view reflected an ongoing governmental suspicion of the private press that had its roots in the colonial era. And though he did not think it judicious for the Government to embark on a newspaper venture, its continued discomfort with a lack of full control over the privately owned press and its awareness of the limits of the private press' geographical reach made an alternative a desirable objective. In addition, there was the desire to ensure that it had a reliable print press outlet through which to send its messages to the public as it had fashioned them in its own interests and those of its ruling party, which eventually led it to enter the newspaper sector.

[4] *EAS*, "Malicious broadcast," no. 16700, Friday 26 January 1968, p. 6.
[5] AHC 1/20, Correspondence from the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting to the Permanent Secretary in the Office of the President and attached appendices, 30 January 1968. Nairobi: KNA.

According to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, the key goal of the Government's public relations machinery in the late sixties was to ensure that the public saw it and the political party its leaders belonged to as the best entity to drive economic growth and development for all citizens:

> We have the machinery to carry out all the work necessary to project the Kenya Government as a progressive dynamic entity, dedicated to the rapid development of this country, ceaselessly striving to improve the standards of living of the people, by raising their incomes in accordance with the principles set out in Sessional Paper No. 10 and all other policy documents. Above all we have a responsibility to convince the population at large, that they are better off than they were under the colonial rule. We have also a responsibility to inculcate a sense of pride in the people, build up confidence in themselves and the Government and boost their general morale. Equally important is that they are better off under the present Government of the Ruling Party than under an alternative Government. And finally our propaganda on the world scene must consistently and effectively portray Kenya as a progressive, stable, and rapidly developing country, where justice, good order and popular Government prevail.[6]

It was 1968 and KPU was now up and running as an Opposition party that argued it would make it possible for more Kenyans to have a more equitable share in the benefits of country's economic growth. The Government understood well that there was a segment of the population that was disillusioned with the postcolonial state and that KPU was tapping into their discontent. The late sixties were therefore characterised by a sense of urgency as far as the politico-economic projection of the Government's image was concerned.

The ministry was certain that great effort had to be made to convince the masses that "the present Government of the Ruling Party" was doing all it could to alleviate their problems. This entailed colouring the news with a partisan tint for which the Government was not certain it could rely on the private press. After all, although both the country's major dailies had thrown their support behind KANU in 1964 and continued to do so, they both variously maintained that they were non-partisan and reserved the right to change their positions. Moreover, the

[6] Ibid.

newspapers had their own interests and questions arose as to how to deal with them when they did not toe the government line. Yet, it believed that newspapers had "a very important role to play [in] conditioning the minds of people" and worried that in a scenario where the private press aligned itself with the opposition, the Government risked losing support countrywide if it did not meet the opposition's challenge with a formidable public relations (or propaganda) machine. This was also the reason why officials were bent on restricting the extent to which commercial papers could express themselves, insisting that it respected freedom of the press while at the same time resolving to "keep a close eye on the activities of the Press," presumably to ensure that press freedom was "not abused or used for the purposes of sowing discord or furthering other undesirable ends."[7]

The press is, of course, not an infallible institution, however in correspondence Gachathi sent to the Minister of Finance Joseph Gichuru on the Government owned and run Voice of Kenya and Kenya News Agency the line between that which it considered "undesirable ends" and fair critique of the Government was non-existent. Referring to government-owned broadcasting services in unnamed countries as he attempted to chart a policy line for the above two institutions he argued that in such countries, measures were taken to ensure that only programmes supporting the Government were broadcasted as those that "are critical or Government policy or not in accord with the Government's views are downplayed or ignored." He averred that even in instances where such institutions were only partially controlled, there had to be guidelines to ensure that they were not "consistently critical of the Government." He went on to note that it was due to the Government's apprehension that the country's broadcasting services could end up being used "for purposes inimical to Government polices" that led it to

[7] INF. 10/22C, "Need for public relations," undated (refers to previous circular dated 3 October 1966. Nairobi: KNA.

nationalise the Kenya Broadcasting Service. Commenting on the newsroom, Gachathi bemoaned the actions of personnel who had "gone out of their way to give publicity to individuals when what the individual had to say was inconsistent with or even critical of Government policies."[8] It does appear therefore that the ministry's top brass considered critique of government policy an inconvenience that could be tolerated but only in so far as it did not threaten its stability and helped it maintain its image as a promoter of press freedom.

Getting Started

It is for this reason that the Government tried to maintain a presence in the newspaper field by publishing broadsheets and made government publications available in the country's provinces. These included the coastal, monthly broadsheet *Pwani Leo,* the Rift Valley's two monthly broadsheets *Kalenjin* and *Habari za Rift Valley*, Nyanza's *Nuru ya Nyanza,* Machakos District's *Mutai,* Western Province's *Nyota ya Magharibi*, North Eastern Province's *Wark Oghoyi Bari,* as well as a wide range of leaflets including the following published in the sixties and typical in their titles of the Government's political concerns: "The Kenya Constitution," "Kenya's Development Plan," "What is Local Government[?]," "Towards a One Party System," "The Republican Constitution" and "Kenya Citizenship."[9] Provincial information offices also had libraries and reading rooms open to the public. Those who walked into these reading rooms particularly in the mid- to late sixties and early seventies were able to access government publications as well as those received from foreign governments. In January 1965 for example,

[8] AHC/1/14/2, Correspondence from the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting to the Minister of Finance, 9 June 1965. Nairobi: KNA.

[9] See for example, AHC 10/38, Annual report for the Coast Region from the Senior Information Officer to the Permanent Secretary, 20 January 1965; Annual report for the Rift Valley Region from the Senior Information Officer to the Permanent Secretary, 28 January 1965; Publications Section Annual Report, 4 February 1964; Nyanza Province Annual Report from the Provincial Information Officer (P. I.O.) to the Permanent Secretary, 10 August 1971; Annual Report for Kitui District from D.I.O. to Eastern Province P.I.O., 21January 1972, Nairobi: KNA and AHC 10/42, Monthly report for August-September 1972 from Western Province P.I.O. to Permanent Secretary Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 4 October 1972, and monthly report for July from Coast Province P. I. O. to the Permanent Secretary M.I.B., 25 August 1972, Nairobi: KNA.

the Coast Region's Senior Information Officer reported that they received over 92,000 publications from the Head Office (Nairobi) on various subjects and 6,317 publications from foreign governments out of which 3,371 were in Swahili and the rest in English. That year, 6,000 people "of all races" visited the reading room to go over the available literature in addition to listening to afternoon radio bulletins.[10] The officials who managed these offices were also charged with collecting news stories from their areas and forwarding them to the Kenya News Agency who then released them to the local press and the VOK. They were also responsible for overseeing the publication and distribution of provincial broadsheets and this they did until, apparently, financial constraints intervened.

Leviathan's Press Struggles in a New Era

In the early seventies reports of delays in the publication and distribution of government publications started to show up and never receded. In the year 1970, for instance, the Nyanza Province PIO cited poor printing equipment and distribution difficulties for problems encountered in getting out the province's broadsheet, while the following year, the Kitui District's DIO reported similar problems. Both also complained of not having enough reading material to satisfy "hungry readers" as literacy rates rose rapidly.[11] In July of the following year, the Rift Valley PIO reported that his office had been unable to publish the province's broadsheets for the month of June due to a lack of funds.[12] The next month, his counterpart in

[10] AHC 10/38, Annual report for the Coast Region from the Senior Information Officer to the Permanent Secretary, 20 January 1965. Nairobi: KNA.
[11] AHC 10/38, Nyanza Province annual report from the Provincial Information Officer (P. I.O.) to the Permanent Secretary, 10 August 1971, Annual Report for Kitui District from D.I.O. to Eastern Province P.I.O., 21 January 1972, Nairobi: KNA.
[12] AHC 10/41, Monthly report for June 1971 from Rift Valley P.I.O. to P. S. of M.I.B., 16 July 1971. Nairobi: KNA.

Western Province observed that the response to his request for more copies of *Kenya Yetu* was the halving of his office's monthly allocation.[13]

A report reviewing the state of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in 1978 revealed that most of the districts and sub-districts lacked adequate numbers of information officers and the Department of Information lacked funds for many basic requirements such as cameras and transportation.[14] Writing to the permanent secretary of the ministry, the Acting Director of the Department of Information reflected on the challenges besieging the department and ruefully stated that "efficiency cannot be achieved without taking into consideration a number of factors." He had requested field offices to increase the daily number of news stories they filed "but at times I wonder how they can achieve this if they haven't got independent and reliable transport." According to him, funds were so meagre "that it is a miracle we are able to provide the services that are demanded from us." He was also of the opinion that field staff were underpaid and considered it a grievous anomaly that despite repeated requests, they had no scheme of service and were operating on terms of service that were inferior to those of their peers in other ministries. As a result, a number had opted to leave the civil service for the private sector which worsened the ministry's personnel problems in their cadres. Consequently, field staff were not performing optimally, morale was low despite his efforts to encourage and motivate them, and he was adamant that "we should not ask them to perform miracles with the impossible facilities at their disposal." [15] The director believed that if the Central Government allocated more funds to the ministry and granted information officers a scheme of service, the ministry's performance would improve in all areas due to enhanced efficiency and personnel

[13] AHC 10/41, Monthly report for July 1971 from Western Province P.I.O. to P. S. of M.I.B;, 3 August 1971. Nairobi: KNA.
[14] AHC 13/18, A Review Report of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 1978. Nairobi: KNA.
[15] AHC 13/18, Correspondence from the Acting Director of the Department of Information to the P. S. of M.I.B., 26 October 1978. Nairobi: KNA.

morale. Throughout the seventies, the publications section limped on, its activities affected by the general morass besetting the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. At the beginning of that decade, the ministry was able to continue the publication of material such as the president's portrait and cabinet charts but as the seventies progressed it appears to have been unable to address the basic issues behind the production and distribution problems of its publications.

Faced with a severely denuded publications section, in 1979 senior staff of the ministry meeting in Mombasa called for a thorough review of the publications that the Department of Information oversaw.[16] They observed that the department had several libraries but these were poorly stocked and lacked leaflets, brochures and pamphlets that they deemed necessary for its information dissemination goals. The flagship titles *Kenya Today* and *Inside Kenya Today* were published irregularly and when they were published they were distributed when their content was already stale and of no interest to readers. The Acting Director of Information attributed these problems to the inability of the Government Printer to meet publication deadlines in addition to alluding to internal administrative challenges within the department. Those in attendance also felt that the time was ripe for a review of the ministry's publication figures as they had noticed that many copies of *Inside Kenya Today* were "lying in huge heaps at certain embassies abroad." They were uncertain as to whether this was because the publications were unpopular or whether the embassies were experiencing distribution problems. Whatever the case, it was clear to them that an urgent review of the situation was necessary. Furthermore, officials acknowledged that the stable of publications the ministry had relied on for many years to keep various audiences informed "had more or less gone out of production."[17] These included: *Kenya Yetu*, *Jifunze Uraia*, *Kenya Calling*, *Kenya Newsletter*, *Sports Review* and *Teach Yourself Citizenship*. In

[16] AHC 1/72, Minutes of the senior staff meeting held at Sauti House, Mombasa on 8 June 1979. Nairobi: KNA.
[17] Ibid.

addition, although material such as the President's portrait, *Baraza la Mawaziri* charts, and *Manaibu wa Mawaziri* charts were still in demand, they were not available.

Officials nevertheless believed that the department could surmount its problems. They believed they could work towards improving the distribution of publications and urged PIOs and DIOs to contribute articles and features for the publications even though they would be paid no honorarium as such activities were "considered as part of their journalistic work." Additionally, the department's senior staff felt that the ministry's allocation of funds for its publications kitty was inadequate as officials had expressed their fear "that the Ministry was looking at the publication issue from the publication point of view rather than from the education side." In their opinion, "the main aim for a publication is not necessarily to raise revenue for the Government but to inform the public."[18] It thus seems that they viewed the results of their work as immeasurable and less evident in the short term but indispensible in order for the ministry to meet the goals of its information output. At the same time they were concerned that the evanescent qualities of their work appeared to render their activities less visible to the Government. And herein lay the key problem that stood in the way of the solutions they proposed to deal with the ministry's dying publications section. Without adequate funding and without co-operation from the Central Government in dealing with staffing issues, very little could be done within the ministry to reform the dire state of its publications section.

Nevertheless, the Government had not lost interest in the newspaper sector and in the next decade it proceeded to source external funding for the publication of rural newspapers. It was conscious of the fact that a majority of the country's population lived in the rural areas and was directly dependent on agriculture for much of its livelihood. They too needed to be in a position to behold the image of care and responsibility that the Government was trying to project.

[18] Ibid.

And so in the early eighties the ministry launched three rural newspapers: *Sauti ya Pwani* at the Coast, *Sauti ya Gusii* in Nyanza Province, and *Sauti ya Kericho* in the Rift Valley Province with funding from UNESCO's International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC). On the occasion of the official launching of *Sauti ya Pwani* the minister described the goals of the rural newspapers as the provision of reading materials for those who had just learned to read, encouraging dialogue between people and "agents of change, the promotion of development in all spheres of life and lastly the promotion of government programmes and development goals.[19] Arthur Changawa, who edited the colonial era *Sauti ya Pwani* and was now the editor of its independent era namesake, announced that "this is not a propaganda paper like the earlier one."[20] He explained that the newspaper would be a forum for the expression of the people's views and those of their own elected government. Although he was referring to the colonial government's newspaper, the same could be said of its postcolonial version given the government's previously stated public relations goals. Whatever the case, it was in the interest of all those concerned with the publication that it be seen as one that concerned itself with the developmental interests of its readers. When the president of IPDC, Gunnar Garbo, visited staff and the editorial advisory board of *Sauti ya Kericho*, Assistant Minister Eric Khasakhala remarked that the government was committed to the rural newspapers because it recognised that Kenya's economy was heavily reliant on its agricultural sector for growth and therefore placed a high value on its rural economy. There would be little room for politics and propaganda in such a newspaper, especially given its UN funding. It meant party politics had to take a back seat or search for an alternative medium. This medium soon availed itself courtesy of Hillary Ng'weno's financial struggles and *Kenya Times* was born.

[19] AHC 3/16, "Sauti ya Pwani to be a tool of development," and "IPDC chief visits Kenya," in *Access* (staff newsletter of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting), no. 1, p. 4 and 5, July 1982. Nairobi: KNA.
[20] Ibid.

Trinity: The Government, the Ruling Party and the *Kenya Times*

Despite its status as a party newspaper, the line between government and party resources for the publication was blurry indeed to the publication's advantage. A little over two years after its establishment (May 1985), a statement the Minister for Labour made to Parliament in an effort to demonstrate the ethnic diversity of the newspaper's board and management identified most of its members as Government officials with emphasis on their cabinet posts. The Minister observed that "Kenya Times has a high powerful board of directors" which was led by the Vice-President and Minister for Home Affairs Mwai Kibaki. The other members included a Minister for State in the Office of the President Justus ole Tipis, the Minister for Health Peter Nyakiamo and the Attorney General Justice Mathew Muli. The other two members listed were businessmen Justus Kalinga and Joe Wanjui. The Minister also expressed his confidence in the skills and diligence of the newspaper's staff including that of its first managing director Japheth Shamalla, "who was my own permanent secretary" and Abel Nyamu, "formerly the principal of the Kenya Institute of Administration, Kabete."[21] The latter two appointments show that the young publication also appears to have encountered little difficulty in attracting senior civil servants.

The following year as the newspaper struggled to stay afloat the party cast its eyes beyond the country's borders in an effort to avert its collapse. That very year the government, on an apparently unrelated course, rolled out a new programme to encourage the investment of foreign capital in the country. In what Kenyans were expected to read as a matter of chance, KANU and the British Mirror Group of Newspapers under the chairmanship of Robert Maxwell signed a memorandum of intent at State House Nairobi on 20 October 1986. *Kenya Times* presented the event as a matter of perfect timing on the part of the party and the Mirror Group with the latter having expressed its intent to invest £30 million in the venture. In a special, partly

[21] *KT*, "Kanu papers have set a good example – Ouko," no. 669, Friday 31 May 1985, p. 1 and 5.

colour supplement publicising the arrangement, the newspaper explained that "the venture will be the first to gain Government approval under new regulations encouraging foreign investment."[22] It would result in a new profit-making enterprise, The Kenya Media and Textbook Company, 60% of which KANU would own while the Mirror Group would own the remaining 40%. The two parties envisioned a company that would result in the *Kenya Times* becoming the leading publication in Kenya. It was also probably hoped that party muscle, and by extension Government muscle, would enable the company to enter and dominate the most lucrative book publishing sector of the market – textbooks. The Mirror Group's investment would also enable the company to construct a 30 storey twin tower which would house a new press and communication centre. And so while the company would begin operations at a temporary location, it would eventually move into the twin towers as "a permanent site has been made available by KANU in the centre of the city at the intersection of Kenyatta Avenue and Uhuru Highway."[23]

It is interesting to note that the memorandum between KANU and the Mirror Group was signed at State House, the official residence of the President of Kenya and therefore a publicly owned, non-partisan property. Equally interesting is the fact that KANU had allocated public land for the construction of the twin towers, an action which the Constitution empowered only the Government to take. Vigorous civic opposition to the allocation of this land, particularly by future Nobel Peace Prize winner and environmentalist Wangari Maathai, would ensure that the twin towers never saw the light of day. However, in the single-party state that was KANU, it was always to the party's advantage that KANU and the Government took on identities and functions that were difficult to differentiate. It imbued the party with immense power and enabled it to tap

[22] *KT*, "Agreement that laid the foundations for a great new venture," no. 1176, Tuesday 20 January 1987, p. 9.
[23] Ibid.

into Government resources to bolster its position further. It is this relationship that enabled the party to introduce its venture to the Kenyan public as part of a wider Government-led effort to encourage private investment that would benefit the ordinary *mwananchi* by providing jobs and helping its populace advance to greater prosperity. The party was careful to embed the venture in the language of Kenya-centred development, probably because the Mirror Group was as British as Lonrho and therefore having ownership with roots as foreign as those of *The Daily Nation* and *The Standard,* both of which had been at the receiving end of the Government's barbs when it suited its purpose to emphasise their foreign ownership. The supplement carrying news of the venture was introduced on the front page of the *Kenya Times* with the title "My Land of Opportunity" above the President's official portrait.[24] It featured a brief history of the country, several reports on its resources, an elaboration of the Government's new plans for foreign capital which included the setting up of an Investment Promotion Centre in Nairobi as well as a feature on the venture itself. The venture if well executed would be a boon to KANU. The party's coffers would be on the receiving end of funds that would enable it to expand and entrench itself further. The Mirror Group would also benefit as the arrangement offered it the opportunity to test the market in a new part of the world where it would enjoy tremendous Government support and which offered it the opportunity to diversify its investment portfolio geographically. A brief note in the supplement informed readers that part of the company's plans included the setting up of a television station in the not too distant future. When plans were finally underway to set up the channel in 1990, readers were treated to a photograph of a helicopter belonging to Kenya's 82

[24] *KT*, "My land of opportunity," no. 1176, Tuesday 20 January 1987, p.1.

Air Force lowering the station's antennae onto the roof of the Government-owned Nyayo House which would house its offices.[25]

At the launch of KANU's *Kenya Times* in April 1983, President Moi told those present that the newspaper would not be run as a party or government propaganda mouthpiece.[26] Instead, it would have its foundation in the principles of press freedom which he claimed that his government upheld. He also assured them that the paper would spare none from criticism, including government institutions, and it would "feel free to examine and expose any unbecoming matters likely to mar the good image of our country," for his administration "had nothing to fear or hide." The newspaper would be guided by its reader's interests and would strive to educate, inform, and entertain them and he urged them to support the paper.[27] Nevertheless, the newspaper's inaugural editorial made it clear that the newspaper was a party newspaper and would seek to promote the achievement of its goals as defined in the party's manifesto and constitution. This meant that the newspaper would lay emphasis on that which promoted peace and unity and set Kenyans on the path to prosperity. To this end, KANU would set a good example for Kenyans and the newspaper would join it in promoting these values. The editor then reiterated the President's assurance that the newspaper would be focused on the ordinary citizen, particularly the weakest and poorest, and would defend them "against the more privileged and the blind forces of bureaucracy" as it retained a vigilant eye on the use of public resources. *Kenya Times* would be a "people's paper" and not a mindless organ of the ruling party.[28]

[25] *KT*, "Behold KTN signal," no. 598, vol. 2, Monday 15 January 1990, p. 1. After the attempted coup of 1982, the Kenya Air Force was disbanded, reconstituted and renamed the 82 Air Force.
[26] *KT*, "President welcomes party paper," no. 1, Tuesday 5 April 1983, pp. 1 and 16.
[27] Ibid., p. 16.
[28] *KT*, "The people's paper," no. 1, Tuesday 5 April 1983, p. 6.

Setting the Tone

Kenya Times attempted to live up to its "people's paper" moniker by frequently publishing stories on low-level government corruption or inefficiencies and other 'government at your service' type reports on its front page. Reports on corruption in the first month of its publication are typified by those on the suspension of Mombasa's town clerk for the loss of millions of shillings following allegations of contractual irregularities in relation to a construction project under his jurisdiction; the exposure of a transportation racket at the Nairobi City Council in which money was apparently paid for spare parts that were never supplied; and another revealing that the country's national referral hospital had expensive, sophisticated equipment but lacked skilled personnel to utilise them effectively.[29] There was also the significant announcement that parliament had resolved to give house allowance to married women just as it did to working men and single women.[30] These efforts were supported by editorials such as that on "public morality" which decried public servants who betrayed the

[29] *KT*, "Mombasa town clerk suspended," no. 2, Wednesday 6 April 1983, p. 1, *KT*, "Kenyatta Hospital lacks properly trained technicians," no. 4, Friday 8 April 1983, p. 1. There were certainly bigger fish to fry. Examples are evident in the consistently and dutifully recorded Republic of Kenya, *The Appropriation Accounts, Other Public Accounts and the Accounts of the Funds for the Year 1983/84 Vol I. Together with the Report thereon by the Controller and Auditor-General.* Nairobi: Government Printer, 1985. For instance, in relation to "Payments under Loans Guarantees," the Auditor General observed that in previous reports he had noted that considerable amounts of inadequately accounted for funds had had been paid to overseas bank accounts with regard to loans made to a certain Ken-Ren Chemicals and Ferlizers Limited that the Government had guaranteed. The company went into liquidation in 1978. Amounts paid to the company in 1980/81, 1981/82 and 1982/83 totalled K£5,913,024-11-75. According to the Auditor General "the liability outstanding in respect of Ken-Ren guarantees is still not known" (p. v). The Auditor General also criticised the Ministry of Finance and Planning for irregular exemptions from duty and tax payments amounting to Ksh. 16,905, 637 which revealed "a tendency for some Senior Treasury Officials" to issue improper exemption letters to the Commissioner for Customs and Excise (p. viii). A litany of other irregularities litter sections on other ministries in the same report. And there was much more for any newspaper to follow up on from the report that preceded this one (1982/83). The latter's report on the Ministry of Finance and Planning (vol. I) starts with an observation that the Treasury's main Clearance Fund Account reflected an overdraft of over K£8 million. The sum was the result of the failure of various ministries, departments and governmental organisations to reimburse the Fund for expenditure incurred on their behalf. Furthermore, a balance of over K£15 million was reflected in the Fund's account for the year 1979/80 and subsequent years including 1982/83 as being owed by "Other Governments and Administrations." The Auditor General observed that "I have not been able to ascertain the Governments and Administrations in question." In addition, he had not "so far been informed why the amount has not been reimbursed or what action is being taken to have it reimbursed" (p. v).

[30] *KT*, "Women to get house allowance," no. 3, Thursday 7 April 1983, p. 1.

ordinary citizen's trust in them and called on the government to establish a national code of conduct that it insisted would be more effective in curbing corruption; another urging the government to promote the construction of decent housing using affordable, locally sourced materials; and a third noting the poor enforcement of contractual agreements which resulted in "disappearing contractors" who left projects incomplete and which the newspaper blamed partly on the procrastination of government officials. This particular editorial came after the Minister for Works and Housing gave the contractor in charge of electrical installations at Eldoret District Hospital an ultimatum to return to the project site within a week, failure to which would result in the cancellation of the contract. The editor also reminded readers that towards the end of the previous year, the President had ordered the completion of extensions to the Nakuru Hospital that had taken years to complete as equipment lay idle and in deterioration.[31] With articles such as these, the newspaper hoped to establish itself in the public's eye as its fearless, impartial watchdog and the publication of a party that truly had the interests of the nation at heart. To avoid controversies that had the potential of being disruptive to KANU, corruption exposés never touched the uppermost echelons of the administration.

Equally noteworthy is the extent to which the newspaper promoted an image of the President as the flawless, indefatigable leader who had his eye on everything and who steered the country steadily and selflessly with a firm but just hand. Moi was an almost daily presence on the front pages of the newspaper in text and photographs issuing directives and commenting on almost every issue under the sun. Naturally, there were reports that covered the president performing his official duties, for example leading a soil conservation exercise during the country's soil and water conservation week, presiding over the commissioning ceremony for

[31] *KT*, "Public morality," no. 2 Wednesday 6 April 1983, p. 6, *KT,* "Housing for the people," no. 5, Saturday 9 April 1983, p. 6, *KT*, "Disappearing contractors," no. 10, Friday 15 April 1983, p. 6

cadets at the Kenya Army Training College, calling on developed nations to lower their trade barriers in his capacity as the chairman of the Organisation of African Unity, or signing an anti-rebel pact with Ugandan President Milton Obote in which the two countries promised not to harbour dissidents from either state. Not surprisingly, there was no criticism of the President, the party he led, or high level government officials unless they had fallen from grace and were politically besieged. This editorial line, combined with the saccharine manner in which the newspaper covered the president was geared towards setting him up as the ultimate embodiment of perfection in leadership.

Four days after the newspaper was launched, the president was in the headlines repeating his message that the *Kenya Times* would be a "fearless" and objective source of news. Next to this headline report was a smaller one, "Moi orders district births, deaths registration," on the President's directive to the Attorney General to open more registration offices in the rural areas, to speed up the process for locals. A photograph on the same page showed him in the process of being made an elder in the Western Province constituency of Butere. In other directives, the President ordered the subdivision of certain farms in the Rift Valley as the High Court had ruled and an order of disciplinary action against the ruling's petitioners, issued new working hours to civil servants ostensibly for the benefit of those in rural areas, and banned members of parliament and politicians from travelling abroad before the September 1983 general elections as "some leaders' intentions were to import foreign money to cause chaos in the country."[32] He was also on the front page giving words of wisdom to Kenya's youth who were encouraged to promote a spirit of understanding amongst themselves in the course of remarks he made to

[32] *KT*, " 'Times' to be fearless – Moi," and "Moi orders district birth, deaths registration," no. 5, Saturday 9 April 1983, p. 1 and 16; *KT*, "Moi orders subdivision of Naivasha farms," no. 7, Tuesday 12 April 1983, p. 1; *KT*, "New hours for civil servants," no. 24, Monday 2 May 1983, p. 1 and *KT*, "Ban on trips abroad," no. 47, Saturday 28 May 1983, p. 1.

winners of the Kenya Schools Drama Festival.[33] In another instance, the front page featured his words of counsel to musicians whom he advised to use their music to advance national unity. On the lower half of the same page the paper featured his greetings to the Netherlands' Queen Beatrix on the occasion of her birthday and the country's national day as it usually did when he sent greetings to foreign dignitaries.[34] In another message, he called on Kenyans living in border areas to cultivate harmonious relationships with those in neighbouring countries in the spirit of his Nyayo philosophy that "did not advocate hatred against anyone."[35] Above all, the newspaper presented Moi as the inexhaustible fighter of a wide array of evils under prominent headings: "Moi Vows to Fight Exploitation of Members by Land Companies," "Fight Corruption Moi tells the 'Times'," "Moi Exposes Smuggling Racket," "Moi Blasts Land Ministry," and even "Moi Hits at Witchcraft" made the headlines, apparently because certain politicians were using oathing to prevent their supporters from defecting to rivals.[36] Moi also fought those who threatened to upset the political order and the *Kenya Times*, not surprisingly, provided him and his officials with a ready medium to wage battles against dissent.

The newspaper showed its distaste and lack of tolerance for adverse criticism within the first month of its publication. This response followed the Government's publication of the detention order of Raila Odinga, a former director of the Kenya of Bureau Standards and son of Oginga Odinga, former *Sunday Standard* assistant managing editor Otieno Mak'Onyango, and Alfred Vincent Otieno, a don from University of Nairobi's School of Engineering, following allegations made against them in the aftermath of the failed August 1982 putsch. News of their

[33] *KT*, "Youth are important – president," no. 7, Tuesday 12 April 1983, p. 1,
[34] *KT*, "President advises musicians," and "President sends greetings," no. 23, Saturday 30 April 1983, p. 1 and 16.
[35] *KT*, "Moi urges border people to improve ties with neighbours," no. 31, Tuesday 10 May 1983, p. 1 and 16.
[36] *KT*, "Moi vows to fight exploitation of members by land companies," no. 11, Saturday 16 April 1983, p. 1; *KT*, "Fight corruption Moi tells 'Times'." No. 45, Thursday 26 May 1983, p. 1 and 3; *KT*, "Moi exposes smuggling racket," no. 128, Thursday 1 September 1983, p. 1 and 24; *KT*, "Moi blasts lands ministry," no. 130, Saturday 3 September 1983, p. 1; *KT*, "Moi hits at witchcraft," no. 131, Monday 5 September 1983, p. 1.

detention made the headlines of the *Kenya Times* above a matter-of-fact report that chronicled what amounted to the Executive's interference with and manipulation of the judiciary system resulting in the three being denied a fair chance to defend themselves in a court of law. Inside, the editorial of the day focused on contractors who disappeared from the sites of government projects before completing their agreed tasks.[37] In the course of the weekend that followed the detention of the three men, as reported in the *Sunday Nation*, the UK's Liberal Party leader David Steele, who was in the country at the time, criticised the Government for its lack of tolerance for dissent. A member of his party who was also in Kenya at the time, Derek Pope, distanced himself from Steele's remarks and demanded that he apologise to President Moi and the people of Kenya. According to the newspaper, Pope was touring Kenya for business purposes and had just signed a contract with one of the country's major hotels.[38]

Commenting on Steele's remarks, *Kenya Times* first attacked the *Sunday Nation* for having "made an issue of an otherwise unimportant matter." In doing so, the publication had drawn attention to criticisms that the ruling party and its newspaper would have preferred to have flown under the public radar. It then proceeded to insinuate that the UK could have been behind the failed coup attempt, arguing that it was "by strange coincidence" that Odinga's visit to the UK where he had interacted with various MPs had preceded it. The *Kenya Times* argued that in the weeks and months following the coup, the government had conducted itself in an exemplary fashion as it had followed the relevant legal procedures in dealing with accused persons instead of sending them to kangaroo courts and firing squads as had occurred in other parts of the world.

[37] *KT*, "Odinga's son detained," no. 10, Friday 15 April 1983, p.1. For editorial see same issue, "Disappearing contractors," p. 6.
[38] *KT*, "Steele blasted over remarks," no. 13, Tuesday 19 April 1983, p. 1. The British High Commission also issued a statement to the *Kenya Times* complaining about the manner in which the *Sunday Nation* had highlighted David Steele's off the cuff remarks made towards the end of a speech that had otherwise praised the country's socio-economic development. The High Commission also criticised the *Kenya Times'* reaction to the remarks. See, *KT,* "British embassy complains to 'Nation" over Steele's remarks," no. 14, Wednesday 20 April 1983, p. 16.

As for detention, asserted the newspaper, there was nothing to hide. "It is provided for and has been applied in strict conformity to our laws which, in turn, are derived from the country's constitution."[39] Whether or not it was a just law was not a question the newspaper was willing to explore. Despite its irritation at the publicity that Steele's remarks had gained, the *Kenya Times* found space on its front pages that week to air a compliant parliament's condemnation of the remarks as well as those of the President because it was duty-bound to maintain the image of the Government as a flawless institution.[40]

Generally, the newspaper was at the forefront of its contemporaries in promoting the maintenance of the political status quo. In May of its debut year, President Moi announced that the general elections would be held in September of that year.[41] The announcement came amidst Moi's allegation that a certain highly placed Government official was a traitor whom unspecified foreign powers were grooming to take over the presidency. Kenyan newspapers, including the *Kenya Times*, speculated at great length on the identity of this traitor for weeks between the months of May and June 1983. In the end, a cabinet minister identified the traitor as the powerful and influential Attorney General Charles Njonjo. The resulting fallout was to exile him from public life for many years. Soon after making the traitor allegations, the President sought public support for the anticipated major repercussions of Njonjo's tribulations by calling for the elections, which was in effect a well timed referendum that would act as a show of support for his administration on the exiling of Njonjo, among other issues. The newspaper welcomed the announcement as a courageous one in light of the traitor matter and called on Kenyans to use the opportunity to choose leaders who would be unstintingly loyal to the President. It argued that

[39] *KT*, "Steele and dissent," no. 13, Tuesday 19 April 1983, p. 6.
[40] *KT*, "Parliament becomes stormy over Steele's Kenya remarks," no. 14, Wednesday 20 April 1983, p. 1 and 16 and *KT*, "Moi condemns Steel's [sic] criticism," no. 17, Saturday 23 April 1983, p. 1 and 16.
[41] *KT*, "Disloyal leaders to be sacked – Moi," and "Jubilation at the news," no. 38, Wednesday 18 May 1983, p. 1 and 24.

although the country had made a lot of progress in the previous years, its biggest problem as far as development was concerned was the disloyalty of some leaders for whom the welfare of the country and its citizens was a secondary concern. According to it, the disloyalty of some leaders was an even bigger problem than the inefficiencies of various government institutions.[42]

Following Moi's announcement, a number of party officials and assistant ministers called for Moi to be the sole candidate in the forthcoming elections. The newspaper reported one assistant minister as having said that "Moi would for many years to come remain the sole candidate for the presidency," and that Kenyans would hardly be able to imagine a more hardworking man for years to come, while another on behalf of his constituents "appealed to the people of Baringo Central [Moi's constituency] to portray their love for the President by returning him unopposed." *Kenya Times* published their remarks and others under the headline "Call for Moi to be Sole Candidate," but apparently their hagiographic tributes and words of support were hardly the endorsement the newspaper was seeking for the political order.[43] Alternatively, the newspaper had thought their praises worthy of the front page until communication from 'above' stated otherwise. Whatever the case, it soon emerged that the mere vocalised assumption that theoretically one could dare to oppose the President was unacceptable and so the newspaper demanded that they cease to do so as "to do this is to pre-suppose opposition where we all know there is none."[44] As far as it was concerned, the president was respected by all and the show of support he received from the public during moments such as the 1982 coup was adequate evidence of this fact. It went on to dismiss their declarations of support for the President as self-interested political campaigning and advised them to worry about their own campaigns based on their own records. The newspaper maintained that the elections were

[42] *KT*, "Voice of wananchi listened to," no. 38, Wednesday 18 May 1983, p. 6.
[43] *KT*, "Call for Moi to be sole candidate," no. 39, Thursday 19 May 1983, p. 1 and 16.
[44] *KT*, "Don't misuse president's name," no. 20, Friday 20 May 1983, p. 6.

simply about giving Kenyans a chance to elect leaders who would be wholly supportive of the President.

In due course Moi was declared the sole presidential candidate at an outdoor ceremony in the capital which the paper reported on under the headline "Moi Promises Greater Prosperity," while the words next to the headline announced "President is the Only Candidate."[45] Inside, the newspaper gave a spirited defense of the manner in which the Government had conducted elections over the years:

> There has been no departure from the manner in which we have conducted our elections since independence. The party and the electorate has seen not enough reason to field more than one candidate for the presidential election. The outcome has been a viable insititutionalised sole democracy at the apex, saving the country from political turmoils [sic].
>
> It takes years to build an acceptable political institution. Kenyans are saying that the system has worked because the business is carried out smoothly.[46]

With these assertions, the newspaper attempted to whitewash the country's turbulent political history. Kenya had always conducted elections in the same way because the Government enjoyed the unequivocal support of all its citizens and not because it had ruthlessly suppressed dissent or nipped opposition politics in the bud whenever and wherever it emerged. According to it therefore, there was no need to change a system that it presented as flawless and a necessary guard against violent upheaval. Once the president was elected unopposed in his Baringo Central constituency and officially became President of the Republic of Kenya for a second term, he defended Kenya's single party state as a democratic entity, a position that the newspaper endorsed, consigning to inanity anyone who dared to think otherwise.[47] The *Kenya Times*, KANU and the Government were a veritable trinity.

[45] *KT*, "Moi promises greater prosperity," no. 122, Thursday 25 August 1983, p. 6.
[46] *KT*, "A political system that works well," no. 122, Thursday 25 August 1983, p. 6.
[47] *KT*, "The president we need: The Kenya we want," no. 126, Tuesday 30 August 1983, p. 6.

Promoting a Stable, Routine, Compliant Today for the Trinity's Certain Future

Once KANU's grassroots elections and rejuvenation plans were underway in 1985, *Kenya Times* similarly presented the exercise, including the queue voting method, to readers as crucial but routine. Its stance eliminated the need for more introspective pieces on the party's maladies such as those the *Daily Nation* put out during this period. It also made the admission as well as analysis of KANU's problems unnecessary. Consequently, the newspaper plied readers with mundane news on the ongoing registration exercise, candidates, polling dates and procedures.[48] An editorial urged voters and party leaders alike to adhere to the election guidelines KANU published. It encouraged them to conduct themselves accordingly to ensure a peaceful electoral process so that "the party can get back to its business of minding the welfare of the people through the Nyayo government."[49] The guidelines included instructions on the novel queue voting method which the newspaper published inconspicuously as part of a report detailing the party's election guidelines on the day it published a special centerfold on KANU, its objectives and the polls.[50]

After the elections, *Kenya Times* highlighted the President's defense of the entire process against its detractors as he urged them to accept the verdict of the voters. In a speech to residents of his Rift Valley home area, he insisted that voters had made their choices in a distinctively African election and "in the open by lining up behind the candidates without force," so their decision was to be respected.[51] The following year, the party announced its intention to hold

[48] See for example, *KT*, "Cards received," "Wananchi get cards assurance," "Show loyalty," and "Nassir happy with Kanu registration," no. 643, Wednesday 1 May 1985, p. 5; *KT*, "I will not contest Narok post – Tipis," and "Probe urged into unsold Kanu cards," no. 647, Monday 6 May 1985, p. 1 and 3; *KT*, "Well done Kirinyaga leaders," no. 648, Tuesday 7 May 1985, p. 6; *KT*, "Kanu elections after Madaraka," no. 650, Thursday 9 May 1985, p. 1; *KT*, "Kanu drive to go on – Tipis," no. 651, Friday 10 May 1985, p. 1; *KT*, "Kanu national polls on July 1," no. 679, Wednesday 12 June 1985, p. 1 and *KT*, "Kanu election guidelines out," no. 682, Saturday 15 June 1985, p. 1 and 20.
[49] *KT*, "Follow Kanu guidelines," no. 683, Monday 17 June 1985, p. 6.
[50] *KT*, "The guidelines," no. 686, Thursday 20 June 1985, p. 11. See also, "Focus on Kanu elections," pp. 10 – 11.
[51] *KT*, "Moi cautions election losers," no. 691, Wednesday 26 June 1985, p. 1 and 22.

primaries before the general elections using queue voting. The newspaper promoted the decision, praising it as a method that KANU had already tried and tested successfully. It claimed the method had the support of all and "even President Daniel arap Moi had to stand up to be counted leading his queue of supporters in Baringo district." There had been no complaints, it claimed.

Nonetheless, as we have seen previously, there were those who did not approve of the method, chiefly the NCCK, and through the *Kenya Times* KANU attempted to frame the debate in terms favourable to its interests. Shortly after the NCCK issued a statement opposing the queue voting method and stating that their members would not take part in KANU primaries, the paper splashed a headline in response: "NCCK Challenged to Explain Motive." The report paraphrased the Minister for Energy and Regional Development, Nicholas Biwott, demanding that the NCCK explain its motives for opposing a KANU resolution it insisted had the support of all Kenyans represented by the 4,000 KANU delegates who had endorsed the procedure. He also insinuated that its opponents had sinister motives as they were opposing a procedure the party had designed to bring transparency into the voting process. The report also featured other government and party officials and a non-NCCK church group condemning the statement and declaring their support for the process.[52] The day after, another headline informed readers that the President had announced that KANU's resolution to use queue voting for preliminary elections would be legalised through an act of parliament. The relevant report paraphrased the President, explaining that "the government strictly observed the country's constitution and it was, therefore, necessary to legalise the resolution passed by the Kanu Delegates' Conference." Moreover, added the President, the new system matched African traditions of free and open processes and as such was based on nothing that was culturally radical to the environment in

[52] *KT*, "NCCK challenged to explain motive," no. 1052, Monday 25 August 1986, p. 1 and 20.

which it would be operating.[53] On the same page, a smaller report informed readers that the party's chairman had called the NCCK statement "unfortunate and disrespectful."[54] A few days later, the President would repeat the party's assertion that the delegates' conference was a body adequately representative of the wishes of the country's populace and, that the queue voting resolution was therefore not imposed, as he added that he was "a servant of the people" exercising their mandate and not a dictator.[55]

Generally during this period, the newspaper featured a barrage of prominent reports restating the party's insistence that the resolution was arrived at following a free and fair process, condemning the NCCK's position, questioning the patriotism of its members, and declaring the supremacy of the party and its determination to stand firm in the face of opposition.[56] By the last quarter of the year, *Kenya Times* was assisting KANU in its depiction of the NCCK as a clandestine, criminal organisation. It made front page news of the government's allegations that the NCCK was receiving funds from abroad to destablise the country as it did allegations of sedition in connection to a plot to kill an evangelist the organisation had fired, apparently because he was going to reveal their links to an unnamed clandestine movement.[57] On 10 December 1986 the newspaper informed readers that a Minister in the Office of the President,

[53] *KT*, "Queuing system to be legalised – Moi," no. 1053, Tuesday 26 August 1986, p. 1 and back page (no. not visible).
[54] *KT*, "Amayo criticises NCCK's 'disrespectful statement'," no. 1053, Tuesday 26 August 1986, p. 1 and 4. See also same edition, "NCCK pastors urged to avoid confrontation" and "Municipality hits at NCCK," p. 3.
[55] *KT*, "New polls system not imposed – Moi," and "Queuing system not new – Njiru," no. 1055, Thursday 28 August 1986, p. 1 and 24. See also *KT*, "Polls: it's a decision of the people," no. 1061, Thursday 4 September 1986, p. 1 and 20.
[56] See for example, *KT*, "Bishop now question's NCCK's patriotism," no. 1053, Tuesday 26 August 1986, back page (no. not visible), *KT*, "Leave Kanu alone, Moi tells NCCK," and "Pastors described as wolves in sheep skins," no. 1054, Wednesday 27 August 1986, p. 1 and back page (no. not visible), *KT*, "Kanu will not succumb to pressure, warns Amayo," and "Another church decries NCCK stand on queuing," no. 1058, Monday 1 September 1986, p. 1 and 20, *KT*, "Let no one pretend that secret ballot is free from evil," no. 1064, Monday 8 September 1986, p. 10 – 11.
[57] *KT*, "Pastors meeting, foreign funds used," no. 1067, Thursday11 September 1986, p. 1 and backpage (no. not visible). See also editorial in *KT*, "Destructive foreign aid is unwelcome," no. 1068, Friday 12 September 1986, p. 6, *KT*, Sedition: NCCK was involved, court told," no. 1137, Tuesday 2 December 1986, p. 1 and 4.

Justus ole Tipis, had announced that the Government was conducting a probe into the affairs of the NCCK. The Government deemed the probe necessary because "there is reasonable evidence indicating the existence of some elements opposed to the policies of the government and the party within the National Christian Council of Kenya." It also accused the organisation of "clearly attempting to play the role of an opposition party" as he advised it to re-write its constitution to exclude political activity of any kind. In addition, the Minister warned that any member of the organisation who was found to be engaging in activities that compromised the security of the state would be "dealt with severely and in accordance with the established laws of this country."[58]

During the party and general elections of 1988 *Kenya Times* strove to engender a spirit of compliance vis-à-vis KANU's electoral and government policies within the citizenry. The party had not forgotten the adverse criticism NCCK had levelled against it in 1986 and it sought to preempt more protests against its controversial electoral procedures by maintaining that all was well with KANU and the country in general. In February it covered the forthcoming party primaries generously by outlining rules and procedures in addition to reporting on the activities of various contestants enthusiastically. The newspaper steered clear of discussing any disadvantages arising from the withdrawal of the privacy of the secret ballot in the party primaries. As the primaries approached, it offered a bizarre defense of the queue system, arguing that it allowed voters to "stand up and be counted" and seemingly found its virtues in its ability to allow voters to fulfill that phrase in a literal sense in addition to providing their votes with unimpeachable protection:

> Tens of thousands of card-bearing members of the ruling Kenya African National Union (Kanu) will voluntarily and methodically line-up at the forthcoming nomination of civic and parliamentary elections, and the flawless

[58] *KT*, "NCCK is being probed – Tipis," no. 1144, Wednesday 10 December 1986, p. 1 and 5.

> procedures to be followed in the massive, grassroots exercise have already been formulated.
>
> There will be no coercion whatsoever and the chances of any activists trying to indulge in any manner of rigging or trickery will be nil.
>
> Indeed, unlike the balloting procedure, the Kanu lining-up system in the countrywide nomination of candidates exercise, will afford every registered member of the ruling Party the opportunity of standing up to be counted – and in broad daylight.[59]

The newspaper assured readers that the entire process would be a great success which would stun the party's critics at home and abroad, ensuring that it would "eventually endear itself to fraternal ruling parties elsewhere in Africa."[60] Once the President dissolved Parliament in preparation for the March 21 general elections, the newspaper rushed to hail his routine action as proof that "Kenya remains in stable and good hands…!" It insisted that the country's populace was "very fortunate indeed that, under President Moi's dynamic and pragmatic leadership, the country is wholly stable and peaceful; and, as one people and one nation, they will all keep it up."[61] According to the newspaper, the party had been nothing short of exemplary in everything whether it was in governing the country well or designing its own electoral procedures. If there was discord during or after the elections, it was sure that this would be due to the "traditionally hypercritical and markedly affluent Kenyan electorate."[62] In 1986, the newspaper had implied that the queue system's most ardent opponents belonged to the same group.[63] It was an argument that it hoped would enable it to strike a populist chord that would find resonance with the lower classes within the electorate.

After both the primaries and the general elections, the newspaper doubled its efforts to encourage acceptance of the results and the method that had delivered them. A headline, "Moi

[59] *KT*, "They'll all stand and be counted…!" no. 1498, Wednesday 3 February 1988, p. 6.
[60] Ibid.
[61] *KT*, "Kenya remains in stable and good hands…!" no. 1501, Saturday 6 February 1988, p. 6.
[62] *KT*, "Looking forward to the big polls," no. 1504, Wednesday 10 February 1988, p. 6.
[63] *KT*, "Let no one pretend that secret ballot is free from evil," no. 1064, Monday 8 September 1986, p. 10 – 11.

'no' to Appeals," two days after the holding of the primaries was how *Kenya Times* broke news to its readers that there were those who were not content with the conduct of the elections.[64] Above the headline, a smaller title communicated the President's insistence that the queue system had worked as the party had intended. Nonetheless, when the President ordered a re-run of the Kangundo primaries that pitted Paul Ngei against Jackson Mulinge the paper moved to present the turn of events in the best possible light. In an editorial, it argued that Moi's action was evidence that he was a fair leader willing to listen to criticism.[65] Generally, as compared to its contemporaries it covered complaining candidates on a far more modest scale in the weeks that followed both elections. Once the President was elected unopposed for another five-year term, *Kenya Times* insisted that all Kenyans took pride in "the unprecedented stability which has existed in Kenya since the Nyayo era was ushered in." Moi, averred the paper, had pushed the country's economy forward and Kenyans had rewarded him with a fresh mandate as he was a leader who had demonstrated his care for them even through turbulent times.[66]

Inside in *KANU News*, the weekly party magazine and *KT* insert, the newspaper touted a valuable endorsement of the recent elections that was geared at tamping down even its most vociferous opponents:

> President Ronald Reagan of the United States of America, has highly commended Kenya's "democratic parliamentary elections" just concluded this week under the guidance of the ruling party Kanu.
>
> President Reagan noted with deep satisfaction that Kenya, under [the] mature leadership of President Daniel arap Moi and the ruling party Kanu, was among few African countries in Black Africa which were still committed to parliamentary democracy.

[64] *KT*, "Moi 'no' to appeals," no. 9, vol. 2, Wednesday 24 February 1988, p. 1.
[65] *KT*, "A fair and just decision," no. 11, vol. 2, Friday 26 February 1988, p. 6.
[66] *KT*, "Congratulations Mr President, no. 36, vol. 2, Saturday 26 March 1988, p. 1.

However, the elections were not all that Reagan thought was positive about Kenya. A paragraph which started by repeating what the newspaper hoped was a definitive *coup de grace* against its opponents added another of the American president's observations:

> Said President Reagan: "We are particularly gratified to note that, once again, Kenya has undergone democratic parliamentary elections. We are pleased by the market orientation of Kenya's economy and believe that Kenya serves as an economic model for many African countries."[67]

Above the report was a large file photo of Moi shaking hands with President Reagan. The Cold War was continuing its decades-long roost on the Kenyan political scene. Politico-economic expediency meant that the United States had gone ahead and endorsed a flawed political process. Its actions provided KANU and its press organ, *Kenya Times*, with more ammunition to use against those who dared to oppose the environment in which both were thriving.[68] Its goal was the maintenance of the political order and so even as the queue debate raged on there was little evidence of it in the party paper.

On 25 April 1988, a condensed version of events appeared under the innocuous headline, "Queue Vote: the Talks Carry On." The opening paragraph revealed that the so called "talks" were less than amicable. It quoted the Right Rev. Alexander Muge condemning the introduction of the queue voting system as amounting to the substitution of "democracy with totalitarianism and aristocracy." A highlighted segment within the story, "What Leaders Have Said," summarised the views of prominent leaders supporting the method and even calling for the

[67] *KT*, "Democracy at work in Kenya: Reagan says it is a model for African countries," no. 36, vol. 2, Saturday 26 March 1988, p. I.

[68] Nevertheless KANU insisted that the Government pursued a foreign policy of non-alignment guided by the Nyayo philosophy of peace, love and unity. Next to a file photograph of Moi receiving Thatcher on her official state visit to Kenya see *KT*, "Love, peace and unity: that's the basis of Kenya's foreign policy," no. 36, vol. 2, Saturday 26 March 1988, p. 14-15.

amendment of the constitution to vanquish the secret ballot from the Kenyan political system.[69] These leaders included Moi himself, the Attorney General, and the Minister for National Guidance. Three days later another front page report communicated Moi's intention to expand queue voting to the general elections and then finally in early May, his demand that debate on the issue end as protests continued.[70] These protests could not be ignored but it did not serve the party's interests for the newspaper to dwell on them. It acknowledged them by offering its readers a brief glimpse of the ongoing debate as it ensured that KANU's position on the matter dominated throughout.

The Ghost of Political Pluralism Returns: The Trinity Fights its Biggest Threat Yet

Rev. Timothy Njoya's call for the introduction of political pluralism in Kenya presented the newspaper with its biggest public relations challenge since its establishment.[71] The sermon was too explosive for the party newspaper to publish. Its editorial team appears to have resolved to wait for its cue from party officials. And so, just as was the case for *The Standard*, *Kenya Times'* front page focused on a robbery report, this time one that had occurred in Kenya's Lamu District.[72] On the paper's second page it reported Njoya's sermon under the title "Njoya Sees Danger." The report focused on a less controversial angle of his speech in which he called Kenyans to rid themselves of social evils including corruption or face severe repercussions.[73] The following day, KANU leaders' response to Njoya received headline treatment as the newspaper finally ventured to publicise the more controversial segment of his sermon. It reported KANU leaders' insistence that Njoya's call was irresponsible as they stated that Kenya was not

[69] *KT*, "Queue vote: the talks carry on," and "What Leaders Have Said," no. 61, vol. 2, Monday 25 April 1988, p. 1 and 3. See also *KT*, "Shikuku petitions" and "Challenge to Ngei election," no. 58, vol. 2, Thursday 21 April 1988, p. 1.
[70] *KT*, "Moi will give queue vote to all," no. 64, vol. 2, Thursday 28 April 1988, p. 1 and *KT*, "Queuing: end debate says Moi," no. 68, vol. 2, Tuesday 3 May 1988, p. 1.
[71] See chapter 5, p. 480 and chapter 6, p. 584 for Njoya-related coverage in *The Standard* and *Daily Nation*.
[72] *KT*, "47 bandits on the rampage," no. 587, vol. 2, Tuesday 2 January 1990, p. 1 and 2.
[73] Ibid., "Njoya sees danger," p. 2.

ready for multi-party politics, which they argued would fan negative ethnicity to the detriment of peace and stability within the country. Other front-page headlines and headings followed attacking the cleric, including one highlighting Mark Too's accusation that the Presbyterian Church of East Africa to which he belonged was "tribalistic" and another screaming "One-party Critic is a Mad Man" in reference to Moi's assertion that Njoya was "a man whose head was not normal."[74] Another dramatic headline, "Now Wanjau Slams Njoya," was located above an article that actually reported on a far less pugnacious Moderator of the PCEA, the Rev. George Wanjau, stating that Njoya's statement was his own personal opinion and not that of the church. The paper went on to report the Moderator urging clergy to refrain from making disruptive statements as he reserved their right to condemn corruption even at the cost of their own lives.[75] As was the case for its competitors, but having dwelt on the debate less comprehensively than either one of them, the issue then retreated from the headlines for several weeks before returning in April.

When the debate on pluralism returned to the front pages of the *Kenya Times*, the views of KANU leaders dominated the reports. As such the newspaper continued to give less publicity to pro-pluralist views than its competitors. For instance, in the first April 1990 multi-party news report titled "It's One Party or We Perish," the party newspaper commenced by informing the reader that support for Kenya's single-party state continued to pour in from various quarters.[76] The report then went on to focus on the comments of a number of KANU branch executives' assertions that the introduction of multi-partisim would result in a catastrophe of epic proportions for Kenya as its people would be unable to deal with the consequences of negative ethnicity that they predicted would be part and parcel of the system. Another common refrain was that the

[74] *KT*, "Njoya church is tribalistic," no. 591, vol. 2, Saturday 6 January 1990, p. 1 and 2 and *KT*, "One-party Critic is a Mad Man," no. 595, vol. 2, Thursday 11 January 1990, p. 1 and 13. " See also *KT*, "Why Njoya is wrong," no. 588, vol. 2, Wednesday 3 January 1990, p. 1 and 13,
[75] *KT*, "Now Wanjau slams Njoya," no. 97, vol. 2, 7 January 1990, p. 1 and 2.
[76] *KT*, "It's one party or we perish," no. 669, vol. 2, Saturday 7 April 1990, p. 1 and 12.

country was too young and so was not ready for the complexities of multi-party politics. No indications were given as to when the country would be ready for free and open political space, how that readiness could be attained, or who would gauge it. Similar reports on the debate were headlined: "President Affirms the Single-Party State" and "Saitoti [the Vice-President]: Kenyans Support One Party System."[77]

Clues as to the restive nature of the political scene during this time appeared on the pages of the newspaper as reports on Government allegations or accusations of sedition or ill will made against dissidents or dissenting organisations, including the Anglican Bishop Henry Okullu after he called for a debate on the issue as well as presidential term limits.[78] The party also revived its National Disciplinary Committee as the newspaper announced Moi's intention not to spare the rod in his efforts to instill total compliance within KANU even as he urged reconciliation.[79] Subsequently, a number of expulsions and disciplinary reports graced the front pages of *Kenya Times* and the newspaper's reporting always made it clear that the individual on the receiving end deserved whatever KANU was meting out against him. For instance, when Shikuku ignored summons from the Butere sub-branch as a consequence of his demand that Parliament be scrapped, the relevant article commenced with the observation that the "persistently recalcitrant former Butere MP engaged in endless confrontations with leaders in Kakamega District…"[80]

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[77] *KT*, "President reaffirms the single party state," no. 674, vol. 2, Friday 13 April 1990, p. 1 and 2 and *KT*, "Saitoti: Kenyans Support One Party System," no. 682, vol. 2, Monday 23 April 1990, p. 5.
[78] See for example, *KT*, "New leaflets over Central," no. 664, vol. 2, Monday 2 April 1990, p. 1 and 18. See also, "NCCK Editor, 3 Officials Quit," p. 1 and 2 of the same edition in which it was alleged that the officers quit after the organisation harassed them for communicating to the press that NCCK was riddled with "corruption, tribalism and nepotism." Ibid., "CPK head: I'm ready for probe, p. 2. In this article both the CPK and NCCK denied being subversive organisations. *KT,* "Mukaru goes missing again," no. 665, vol. 2, Tuesday 3 April 1990, p. 1 and 2, *KT,* "One party: Okullu speaks out," no. 683, vol. 2, Tuesday 24 April 1990, p. 1 and 12 and *KT*, "Okullu caned in parliament," no. 684, vol. 2, Wednesday 25 April 1990, p. 1 and 4.
[79] *KT*, "No sparing the rod," no. 669, vol. 2, Saturday 7 April 1990, p. 13.
[80] *KT,* "Shikuku snubs Okwara group," no. 687, vol. 2, Saturday 28 April 1990, p. 1 and 12.

In May the tone of these reports reached a crescendo after Kenneth Matiba and Charles Rubia called for the dissolution of Parliament and the introduction of multi-party politics. The newspaper led the article on their demand with the headline "MPs Say No to Many Parties" above a smaller one that read "Now Rubia, Matiba say their Piece."[81] In the weeks that followed the party newspaper was at hand to publish a host of accusations against the two and other dissenters, alleging all sorts of schemes of interference and plots against the government: "Rubia, Matiba Traitors – Moi," "Leave us Alone – President tells Outsiders," "Matiba Buying Support – Claim [of the KANU Secretary General]," "Takeover Bid Group Named [on the alleged Murang'a Takeover Group]," "Lay Off, Moi to Meddlers [his response to U.S. Ambassador Smith Hempstone]," "Moi Reveals Murder Plot: Uganda-based Guerilla Hit Squad Formed," "Moi: Lawyers, Media in Plot [to bring the Government into disrepute]," "It is Sh 1 Billion for Sabotage [assertion of the Minister for State in the Office of the President]," "Protect our Freedom - Moi: Opposition will Cause Civil War," "It's Mwakenya Agitating - Moi," and "The 400 plots Rubia Grabbed."[82] While it is clear from some of these reports that the party was simply lashing out at critics, it is difficult to ascertain the veracity of the more serious allegations. Whatever the case, through its newspaper KANU was in a position to attempt the dilution of the calls for political change, impugn the character of its opponents who lacked a similar medium to react with the same intensity, and keep its hold over the psyche of those who

[81] *KT*, "MPs say no to many parties: now Rubia and Matiba say their piece," no. 692, vol. 2, Friday 4 May 1990, p. 1 and 4.
[82] *KT*, "Rubia, Matiba traitors – Moi," no. 693, vol. 2, Saturday 5 May 1990, p. 1 and 2. See same edition, "Leave us alone – President tells outsiders," p. 1 and 12; *KT*, "Matiba buying support – claim," no. 694, vol. 2, Monday 7 May 1990, p. 1 and 12; *KT*, "Takeover bid group named," no. 696, vol. 2, Wednesday 9 May 1990, p. 1 and 20; *KT*, "Lay off, Moi to meddlers," no. 697, vol. 2, Thursday 10 May 1990, p. 1 and 2; *KT*, "Moi Reveals murder plot: Uganda-based guerilla hit squad formed," no. 698, vol. 2, Friday 11 May 1990, p. 1 and 2; *KT*, "Moi: Lawyers, Media in Plot," no. 699, vol. 2,Saturday 12 May 1990, p. 1 and 4; *KT*, "It is sh 1 billion for sabotage," no. 700, vol.2, Monday 14 May 1990, p. 1 and 2; *KT*, "Protect our freedom – Moi: opposition will cause civil war," no. 703, vol. 2, Thursday 17 May 1990, p. 1 and 2; *KT*, "It's Mwakenya agitiating – Moi," no. 704, vol. 2, Friday 18 May 1990, p. 1 and 2; *KT*, "The 400 plots Rubia grabbed," no. 727, vol. 2, Thursday 14 June 1990, p. 1 and 4.

were apprehensive of political change with its dire warnings of doom and gloom should the proponents of multi-partism succeed. In an editorial commenting on the allegations, the newspaper agreed with KANU leaders who argued that the debate was nothing but a distraction from important matters of state and was granting trouble-makers unnecessary publicity. It also added that it constituted a threat to the security and stability of the country, which would in turn decrease investor confidence and harm economic development.[83] In June, the newspaper placed the blame for Liberia's ongoing civil war on the doorstep of multi-partism as it warned that a similar fate inevitably awaited countries that adopted the system. It went on to exhort all to "cherish the peace that we have so far enjoyed under the leadership of Kanu." The paper therefore sought to instill in its readers a sense of comfort in the status quo and a sense that political change meant uncertainty and insecurity as debate on political pluralism contined.[84]

Accordingly, *Kenya Times* presented Matiba and Rubia's attempt to hold a multi-party rally as a security threat and commended the Government for detaining them on the basis of evidence whose exact nature remained a mystery:

> In all civilised society, whenever an individual or group plans murder, especially on a mass scale, they must expect the severest punishment should the authorities catch up with their plot. And plotters know very well that they do so often on the pain of death when brought to book.
>
> Yet this is what former Cabinet Ministers Kenneth Matiba and Charles Rubia had set out to do today. We have it on authority. We have it on the evidence of none other than President Moi, who last week, reported that the two politicians had planned to create such an ugly situation at Nairobi's Kamukunji this morning as to discredit the Government completely.[85]

The newspaper went on to allege that the politicians had planned on ferrying armed groups to the venue to fire on those assembled in the hope that the police would be blamed and that even more chaos would ensue when the police responded. Once again the veracity of the newspaper's

[83] *KT*, "Kenyans know the democracy they want," no. 703, vol. 2, Thursday 17 May 1990, p. 6.
[84] *KT*, "Let's consolidate our achievements," no. 725, vol. 2, Thursday 12 June 1990, p. 6.
[85] *KT*, "A clear warning to rabble rousers," no. 746, vol. 2, Saturday 7 July 1990, p. 6.

claims cannot be ascertained. However, this version of events that was exclusive to the newspaper enabled it to react to the ongoing upheaval without examining the substance of Matiba and Rubia's message as well as the political environment in which they were operating. In addition, by criminalsing the activities of the two politicians, the newspaper hoped to deal a blow to any local or international arguments that the men were exercising their freedoms of speech and congregation. The paper also did not venture to examine the role Government strictures on politics played in the chaos that ensued, which it only captured from angles epitomised by reports with headlines such as "Police Quell Lawlessness" and "Now it's Full War on Thugs." [86] However, as the disruption was the most severe the country had experienced since the 1982 coup attempt coupled with external pressure on the Government to democratise, the newspaper's pages were soon part of KANU's endeavours to manage political change.

Political reforms of some sort were inevitable but the party's daily was determined to project KANU as the initiator of a rigorous and open reform process as well as an organisation that was in total, unshaken control of all that was ongoing. In early August a headline publicised the Vice-President's call on Kenyans to feel free to express their views to the KANU Review Committee without reservations, while another the following day garlanded the front page with US Assistant Secretary of State for Africa Herman Cohen's remarks that Kenya was "on the right track" while a sub-heading highlighted his promises of more aid.[87] Although the newspaper opened the report with his insistence that the US did not intend to dictate the form of government a country set up, the second part of the article on an inner page frankly reported his support for Ambassador Smith Hempstone's insistence that his country favoured political pluralism in addition to an environment that fostered a respect for individual rights and civil liberties. More

[86] *KT*, "Police quell lawlessness," no. 747, vol. 2, Monday 9 July 1990, p. 1 and *KT*, "Now it's full war on thugs," no. 748, vol. 2, Monday 10 July 1990, p. 1.
[87] *KT*, "V-P: tell Kanu team anything," no. 669, vol. 2, Friday 3 August 1990, p. 1.

pertinently for the daily, Cohen had expressed his interest in the ongoing reform process, wished the Government well in its endeavours, and observed that there was openness in the manner in which people were expressing their views.[88] Similar coverage was given to Rev. Njoya's compliments to the Review Team and Martin Shikuku's recommendations to it.[89] All these were representative of quarters that had previously been severely critical of Kenya's Government and the ruling party. That they were interacting favourably with the Review Team was the newspaper's opportunity to present the team's work as an exercise of integrity and justice. At the same time, headlines such as "Moi: I Won't be Bullied About," in which he insisted that he would not be pressured to institute changes that were harmful to the country and maintained that political pluralism could only work once the country was "a completely unified state," enabled the newspaper to communicate that the President was in ultimate control of the entire process and could dictate its direction.[90]

Once agreed on, *Kenya Times* presented KANU's reforms to the public as "drastic changes."[91] Certainly the ending of the queue system of voting and the use of expulsions as disciplinary measures was significant. Nonetheless, the newspaper's assertion that the changes were drastic was disputable as two days later it announced KANU's adoption of the Review Committee's reports alongside news that the single-party state would remain, detainees would not be released, and the crackdown on dissidents would continue.[92] However, for the *Kenya Times* what mattered was the possibility that its interpretation of the reform process could dominate the public's perception of the events. It hoped that the resulting perception would tamp

[88] *KT*, "U.S. says: Kanu on right track," no. 770, vol. 2, Saturday 4 August 1990, p. 1 and 2.
[89] *KT*, "What Shikuku recommends," no. 773, vol. 2, Wednesday 8 August 1990, p. 1 and 4 and *KT*, "Njoya lauds Saitoti team," no. 776, vol. 2, Saturday 11 August 1990, p. 1 and 4.
[90] *KT*, "Moi:I won't be bullied about," no. 774, vol. 2, Thursday 9 August 1990, p. 1 and 12.
[91] *KT*, "Queuing to go: no expulsions," no.873, vol. 2, Monday 3 December 1990, p. 1.
[92] *KT*, "The Kasarani Declaration," no. 875, vol. 2, Wednesday 5 December 1990, p. 1.

down calls for truly drastic political changes that would interfere with the functioning of the 'trinity' and its domination of the country's politico-economic life.

Conclusion

What emerges between the years 1962 and 1990 is the picture of a government press whose establishment and operation was influenced by the very fact of its operation in a single-party state. KANU as the ruling party had an interest in maintaining its hold on the power it had acquired and monopolised in the years after the country gained independence from Britain. Once in charge of government it was keen on ensuring that the citizenry did not miss the significance of its achievements and how these impacted on their lives. It was in its own interest that they perceived the government as an efficient, accountable and fair entity in the delivery of the fruits of development to all, whether or not it was doing so at its optimal best. At the same time, the party had to contend with governmental challenges of operating a press within a large bureaucracy riddled with efficiency and funding problems. Its struggles in this regard made the possibility of buying Hillary Ng'weno's *Nairobi Times* in the mid-eighties and its conversion into a private party newspaper very attractive indeed. Equally attractive was the chance to create an income earner for the party that if successful could augur well for its strength and influence in the future. Ideally, it was to be privately established, owned and run, but the powerful combination of KANU and Government in a single-party state resulted in a party newspaper that benefitted greatly from public resources even as it later sought foreign investment that arrived in the shape of the Mirror Group of Newspapers in 1987. The resulting publication was a medium with which the ruling party endeavoured to foster an environment which would further enhance and entrench the power of the 'trinity' that was the Government, KANU and the *Kenya Times*.

CONCLUSION

Of These Places and Other Places

Perhaps we should ask to what extent is it in the calculus of this everyday behaviour of helping a friend, seeking a romance, organizing a dance, scrounging in a market place, participating in a rally, hanging out, caring for one's physical person, that the architecture of social and political life gathers its form and is carried into new moments and other places?[1]

Of These Places

In August 2010, following a brief period of political upheaval in early 2008, Kenya held a referendum at which voters approved the adoption of a new constitution. Its provisions revealed a majority's determination to confront the woes of their past. Amongst other things it curtailed the powers of the Executive significantly and entrenched an enhanced Bill of Rights within its contents that included a guarantee of freedom of the media.[2] Shortly after the referendum, the constitution was promulgated in a country that was by then generally recognised as having one of Africa's most well-developed and vibrant media environments.[3] That status was just as hard won as the new constitution. Rapid growth and expansion in both print and broadcast media had followed advancements in the political arena in the 1990s, particularly after the 1991 repeal of Section 2A of the superseded constitution.[4] The repeal made multi-party politics legal again. Amongst the beneficiaries of the new political developments are media houses whose publications are examined in this dissertation albeit under different proprietary arrangements.

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[1] David Cohen and E. S. Atieno Odhiambo, *Siaya: The Historical Anthropology of an African Landscape*. London: J. Currey; Athens: Ohio University Press, 1989, p. 132.
[2] Government of Kenya, *Constitution of Kenya*. Nairobi: National Council for Law Reporting with the Authority of the Attorney General, 2010, http://www.kenyalaw.org/klr/fileadmin/pdfdownloads/Constitution_of_Kenya__2010.pdf, accessed Wednesday 31 October 2012.
[3] See for example, BBC World Service Trust. *Policy Briefing, no. 1*. London: BBC World Service Trust, 2008, p. 3, http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/trust/pdf/kenya_policy_briefing_08.pdf
[4] Government of Kenya, *Constitution of Kenya*. Nairobi: National Council for Law Reporting with the Authority of the Attorney General, 2009, p. 7, http://www.kenyalaw.org/klr/fileadmin/pdfdownloads/Acts/ConstitutionofKenyaRepealed.pdf, accessed Wednesday 31 October 2012.

Undoubtedly their audience has much to gain from a free press – but so do their owners. The argument in this dissertation has been that the newspapers examined were set up to serve the political and economic interests of their owners such that those interests dominated the publications' editorial policies.

This study animates newsprint and considers it as much more than a disinterested purveyor of news and information. It views the newspaper sector as one comprised of institutions with objectives that sometimes worked for the benefit of society but also could and did conflict with those of the wider society. It reveals how the interaction between press interests and those of Government combined to fashion editorial and corporate policies. Nevertheless, this study does not claim that newspapers, particularly in their earliest years, were read by more than a small percentage of the targeted population. However, it does insist just as Louis Leakey did vis-à-vis the colonial-era African press that many newspapers had more than just one reader and various members of the public became privy to its contents by other means.[5] This is a matter to which newspaper owners were not oblivious. It was a vital motivator as they sought to shape public opinion as well as to harness it for their own benefit. This dissertation also recognises that power and decision-making processes in Government as well as the fourth estate were concentrated in the hands of an elite few, regardless of their race. As such it has entailed the study of an elite minority. At the same time, it is cognisant of the fact that the actions of this minority had far-reaching consequences that cannot be ignored.

Of Other Places

Nevertheless, this study does also call attention to the limited extent that audiences were participants in the production of the publications they read, that is, it exposes the minimal extent to which newspapers reflected their audiences' priorities and concerns. As such a detour here is

[5] See chapter 4 p. 346.

necessary. In their "experiment," *Siaya: The Historical Anthropology of an African Landscape*, David Cohen and E. S. Atieno Odhiambo attempted to write a history "about" and "for" the Luo people who inhabit that rural area. It was a bid to demonstrate an alternative to the study of African societies that steered away from challenges that caused crises in the discipline of anthropology in the last quarter of the twentieth century. That is, to show how societies could be studied in ways that acknowledged and utilised their own epistemological bases. They selected a number of subjects, for example, the social impulses and intellectual processes that contributed to the development of collective identities, the powers of women, and food scarcity; then they proceeded to study how the Luo discussed and deliberated such matters. Their search for the relevant voices took them to the remains of fortified and compact settlements, market places, homesteads, farms, residential areas in the capital city Nairobi, sports clubs and churches among other places. For the authors, these sites were all places where people had always produced and continued to produce their own histories and anthropologies as they discussed their own lives and societies. The endeavour also caused Cohen and Atieno Odhiambo to ponder whether the daily activities in these places did not warrant even more concerted investigation as sites in which "the architecture of social and political life gathers its form and is carried into new moments and other places." That may be so. This dissertation highlights the importance for continued historical research into "other places" inhabited by a more variegated cross-section of society that does not have access to or whose imprints on more privileged places is limited. But, it also highlights the necessity of viewing the print press as one of the many sites in society from which proceed much more than histories (valid in their own right) of machinery and technological development. Indeed, the actions of its exclusive membership had significant repercussions on both the included and excluded.

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