FROM INDEPENDENCE

TO THE REVOLUTION

By Yoga Adhola

With independence attained, Uganda and the Uganda People's Congress were now at a threshold. Engels once said:

> So long as a viable nation is fettered by an alien conqueror, it necessarily directs all its efforts, all its aspirations and all its energy against the external enemy; so long as its internal life is paralyzed in this way, it is incapable of fighting for social emancipation." (Engels, F. 1869; also quoted in Brutents, K.N 1977:168)

The kind of emancipation Uganda was poised for is national-democratic liberation and the Uganda People's Congress was in the saddle to lead this transformation. By national-democratic liberation it is meant the changes that not only remove colonial obstacles, but also lay important premises for socio-economic development. Initially the leadership of UPC did not have a clear picture of national-democratic liberation; however, the lack of clarity on this matter was not a fatal obstacle.

The situation the UPC leadership found itself in was somehow similar to what Fredrick Engels noted in his analysis of The Paris Commune when he observed that much as the organization was led by people with the wrong ideology, the group took a correct line, as he states:

> It does the commune the greatest honour that in all its economic measures the 'driving spirit' was not any set of principles but simple, practical needs. And therefore these measures--were not at all in accordance with the spirit of Proudhonism, but certainly in accordance with the spirit of German scientific socialism. (Marx, K & Engels, F. 1973: 86; quoted in Brutents, K.N. vol 1977 K.N. 219)

It is in this mould that the Uganda People's Congress leadership spearheaded the struggle for national-democratic liberation. Stumbling sometimes; but getting up and finding their way in the ensuing struggle.

In *The Buganda Factor in Uganda Affairs*, a book which is seriously anti-UPC and some aspects of which we intend to respond to, Professor Mutibwa titles his first chapter, "Things begin to Fall Apart", echoing Chinua Achebe's novel, *Things Fall Apart*. To a Muganda, imbued with the ideology of Buganda being a dominant power, Mutibwa was bound to view the events of the first three years of Uganda's independence as the beginning of things falling apart. There is a sense in which, because Buganda was beginning to decline from its previous dominant position, things were beginning to fall apart for the kingdom.

None other than Kabaka Mutesa himself gave us a glimpse of the feeling that this realization created in his kingdom:

> My first twinge of foreboding had come at midnight on 9 October, 1962, as I watched Milton Obote raise the flag of independence. My anxiety had no precise form or cause. It was more the sensing of an unfamiliar shift of emphasis, a gap between what was fitting and what was not. (Mutesa, E. 27)

On the other hand, those in the Uganda People's Congress who felt the need for this Buganda dominance to end had a totally different view from that of Professor Mutibwa. While Mutibwa viewed it as the beginning of things falling apart, the UPC saw it as the beginnings of the struggle for national-democratic liberation.

The Uganda People's Congress Youth League

Milton Obote always referred to the Youth as one of the pillars of the Uganda Peoples' Congress. There was reason for this. The youths by their very nature are rebellious. They want change. This is a characteristic the youths share with the UPC, the party being a liberation movement. It is in this context that the UPC encouraged the youths to participate in politics in the early 60s. The participation of the UPC youths have gone down in history as the actions of the UPC Youth League.

However, much as a lot has been said and written about the UPC Youth League, no organisation by that name was ever formally constituted. What has eventually come to be called the UPC Youth League began during the 1961 campaign for the General Elections. In his thesis, Mujaju tells us that as the preparation for the 1961 Elections advanced, the Party Secretariat felt there was need to have someone take charge of the youth. It was in this vein that Raiti Omongin was appointed to the Central Executive Committee of the party to represent the Youth. This action was done with the view to co-opt the Youth into the party. Shortly afterwards, Katabarwa, a brother of Grace Ibingira, was appointed Chairman of the Youth League. Katabarwa did not stay long in that position; he left to join the army. Charles Sebatanda from the "lost counties" was then appointed to take over from Katabarwa. Sabatanda occupied that position until the end of 1962 when, along with other party officials at the party headquarters, he was dismissed by John Babiiha, the National Chairman and Cuthbert Obwangor, the National Treasurer. Their case was eventually reviewed by the National Executive early in 1963 and they were reinstated. However, Sabatanda did not return to his office in the League; he instead moved on to become the Assistant Secretary for Information at the party headquarters. The substantive Secretary for Infomation was Kirunda Kivejinja who had returned from his studies in India in 1962.

In 1963 the Party Secretariat got the National Executive to appoint Perez Kamunanwire as the successor to Sabatanda. Before this appointment, Kamunanwire had been Assistant Publicity Secretary. The League drew a lot of interest in the early part of 1963. With this interest also came a desire for it to be formally organised. To this effect, preparations began for a sort of delegates

conference to formalise the League. Eventually it was agreed that such a meeting should take place in Mbarara in April 1963. A month before the Mabarara conference, another meeting with about 1,000 delegates coming from eastern and northern Uganda was convened in Mbale. This meeting was addressed by, among others, the Party President, Milton Obote, and the Secretary General, John Kakonge.

The Mbarara conference was held in April 1963 as had been arranged. Delegates came from all districts of the country. However, it is curious that Grace Ibingira chaired the conference instead of John Kakonge, the Secretary General, who only addressed the gathering. By this time it was already getting clear that Grace Ibingira and John Kakonge were antagonistic to one another. Cuthbert Obwangor, the National Treasurer of the party also addressed the meeting. The conference went on without a hitch until the last evening. That is when the conference suddenly faced the danger of a split. The issues themselves over which the split was imminent were not that serious, which leaves room for speculation that the real issues were not revealed yet. The two apparent issues were: the age limit for membership and dual membership (i.e. of the parent body as well as of the League).

There was the proposition that the age limit should be put at 30, maximum. This proposition was advanced by the relatively younger youth who were still at school or at university, many of whom, we have suggested, were from Buganda and the Western Regions. The other group suggested 40. It happened that those in favour of 30 as the age limit constituted a strategic majority on the constitutional committee at the conference and their proposal was made a committee recommendation to the conference. It is noteworthy that those who wanted the age limit to be raised to 40 called for dual membership, that is to say, a person could belong to both the League and the UPC. As it happened, some of them did, in fact, have positions in the Party. Those in favour of 30 called for exclusive membership. These issues were unresolved since the parties to the dispute could not compromise.

The former Mbale delegates who favoured 40 and dual membership suspected the intentions of the Western and Buganda delegates. There were feelings that the Western and Buganda youth were designing a constitution which would perpetuate their dominance by excluding those who had Party positions but also wanted to stand for elections to the League. This included Raiti Omongin who was the champion of the Mbale conference delegates. Raiti Omongin, in a letter to Obote in March 1965 actually revealed that Ibingira was trying to manipulate the conference to elect Mathew Rukikaire as Chairman of the League. (Mujaju, A. 1972: 126 footnote 30) There was another side of the crisis which was the concern of the old Party leaders about the implications of an exclusive league. Their solution was to raise the age limit, to include as many members of the Party as possible and to make the membership of both almost conterminous. This would act as a check to the drift of the League towards a distinct entity and away from the Party. This led to the collapse of the Mbarara Conference which broke up with the walkout of the Mbale delegates. That was a function of factors both internal and external to the position of Youth in the UPC.

After the Mbarara conference, it increasingly became difficult for Kamunanwire to continue as Organising Secretary because he was identified with the so-called western faction which had

been stigmatized at the conference. Fortunately, he had to go for further studies in the US. This provided an opportunity for new leadership and a fresh start. The party executive asked Raiti Omongin to resume duties as National Organiser of the Youth League. Raiti Omongin was popular among UPCYL members in Kampala. He had been involved in organising the Mbale Conference. In his 1965 Memorandum he asserted: "the Mbale conference held in March 1963, and which gave impetus to the Mbarara conference was initiated by me and I had to campaign upwards to the leaders for funds and to come to address." (Mujaju, A. 1972: 128) Mujaju further describes Raiti Omongin as "...perhaps the most articulate and has proved ever since one of the most consistent radical socialists the League or even the UPC itself ever produced." (Mujajau, A. 1972: 128)

Raiti Omongin's tenure of office was marked by greater militancy of the League. One of the things Raiti Omongin's tenure handled was the notorious Tank Hill affair. It had been reported that a party to mock the independence of Kenya was organised in a house in this suburb of Kampala by Britons calling themselves the League of Empire Loyalists. It is alleged that invitation cards were sent to about 200 people and that the replies to these cards were to be sent in a number of ways which were demeaning to Africans, including giving it "to a native bearer to take it in a cleft stick" as it used to be done in the olden days. In reaction to this incident, the League published a demand in the newspapers for the expulsion from Uganda of those Britons who were involved. The League promised to carry out an investigation of the matter with a view to getting the government to deport the culprits. Mukalazi, the League Secretary for Kampala, promised to organise a demonstration against the incident, adding that the party was "an insult to Kenya and an attempt to play with our sovereignty". (Uganda Argus 20th December 1963)

Matters did not stop there. The League made some dramatic moves. The house in which the party was held got burnt. Although the League denies this, there is strong suspicion that this burning was done by the League or one of its members. Secondly, League members abducted Mr Buse, the Managing Director of *The Uganda Argus* newspaper, who it was suspected was also at the infamous party as one of the organisers. They abducted him from his house in Kololo and took him to the outskirts of Kampala without hurting him. On the way back, they bought a bunch of *matooke* (bananas) and made him carry it to the car and then drove off shouting anti-white slogans. They then took Mr Buse to a police station and demanded that he be arrested. Of course, this behaviour on the part of the league was totally against the law. Shortly after, those involved, including Raiti Omongin, were arrested and charged with assaulting Mr Buse as well as for disorderly conduct. It is interesting that when Raiti Omongin was brought to court for a hearing on 20th January 1963, he told the judge: "I took this Tank Hill incident very seriously. It was not a question of license and not a question of maintenance of law and order; it was a question of state defense. I thought Tank Hill was one of the ways in which neo-colonialists were coming into our country and I told the police so, but some of them were not trying to take notice." (*Uganda Argus*, 21st January 1963) Raiti Omongin was jailed for two years and his four colleagues for a total of 18 months. However, they got somehow vindicated when the investigation that Obote ordered produced adequate evidence for the deportation of four Britons with a promise to discipline those who were employed in the service of the central government. (*Uganda Argus*, 22nd December 1963)

The other incident which we shall cite here is the strike at Boero, an Italian company and General Motors. Some workers from Boero and Company Ltd, an Italian owned showroom, as well as General Motors complained that their Asian supervisors had insulted them. Viewing their grievances as more political than simple trade union matters, they approached the League. By coincidence, around the time the workers lodged their complaints, the League officials led by Raiti Omongin had, in agreement with the party headquarters, decided to involve the workers in political struggles. The incidents at Boero and General Motors offered a unique opportunity where the interests of the League and those of the workers coincided. The League sanctioned a strike. About 80 workers from Boero and a similar number from General Motors went on strikes which were called for by the League. The striking workers listed their grievances which included a demand that Boero foreman, Mr Gennari, and the Assistant Accountant of General Motors, Mr Razzi, should be dismissed for allegedly abusing workers. Complaints of racial discrimination by the companies were also lodged.

The strikers assembled in front of the company premises on 18th November 1963. Some youth leaders entered the premises. During the strike, the windows of the car belonging to the Sales Manager of Boero, who worked during the strike, were smashed. It was reported to the police that Raiti Omongin and Aurrah Mang'eni had entered the premises illegally. For this they were arrested and charged with criminal trespass and assault. They were remanded in police custody and refused bail for fear they would foment similar incidents. The news of the arrest and detention of Raiti Omongin, Emanuael Rembe and Aurrah Mang'eni shocked the League membership.

They charged the Minister of Internal Affairs, Felix Onama with conspiracy to undermine party policy as well as having an anti-League attitude. They claimed the police had been instructed to act like that by the Minister. In concert with the UPC Headquarters, the League members summoned the Minister, in his capacity as Assistat Secretary General of the party, to the party headquarters. Onama responded to the summons and duly reported to Headquarters. He explained that the arrest and detention was not on his instruction but following the normal course of the law. Onama also rejected the idea that the League should be preferentially treated by the law, and still less that it should be left to do whatever it liked in spite of the law of the land.

After meeting Onama, three members of the League (Bidandi Ssali, Kirunda Kivejinja, and S. Baguma) addressed a press conference at which they argued that the arrest of the League leaders was contrary to UPC policy. They also sent telegrams to the party President, who was at the time in West Africa, and to the Secretary General, who was in Moscow, requesting them to return and solve these problems. In the meantime, they caused the Party Headquarters to close down pending a decision. The matter was brought before the Central Executive when the Party President and Secretary General returned. Following this meeting, the party President paid a routine visit to the Party Headquarters on 18th December 1963 and later that day the officials were released from police by Executive Order in the exercise of the prerogative of mercy.

Then came the Kampala Club incident. Mujaju describes it as —"the most dramatic incident in the history of the League." (Mujaju, A. 1972: 164) Kampala Club was one of a network of clubs found in every urban area where British colonial servants lived. These clubs assumed the names of respective towns or districts. The clubs provided recreation places for colonial servants. The membership fees were usually so high that only a few Africans could join. The League members viewed the continued existence of these clubs in their previous colonial mode as an extension of an aspect of colonialism. The League initially arranged for a demonstration at Kampala Club. However, certain members of the Headquarters administration secretly decided to take over the club. The members of headquarters administration who went into the secret arrangement to take over the club included Otim Oryem, the Administrative Secretary; Stephen Mila, the Office Superintendent, and Nassan Opio who had been appointed secretary for the youth after the expulsion of Raiti Omongin and the others. The police had granted permission for the demonstration, but not the takeover. The UPC youth office had advanced 100 shillings for the purchase of placards, etc. The police had allowed the demonstration to begin at 2.00 pm but the organisers of the demonstrators decided to advance it by one hour and a half to 12.30 p.m.so that, being a Saturday, the shoppers would have had a chance to watch the demonstration. The later hour granted by the police, being a Saturday, would have found the town half empty. Advancing the timing also had the value of finding the club members, having done their Saturday shopping, at lunch or having drinks. As planned, the club was taken over at exactly 12.30 pm. Club members who were at their lunches got terrified and fled, leaving their food unfinished. Thereafter, some of the demonstrators went into the manager's office and demanded keys to the Club. Other demonstrators sang songs of victory; while others argued with some courageous members of the club who dared to assert their rights. A takeover memorandum was given to the management. The memorandum stated as follows: "... being a fact that Uganda is now an independent sovereign state, and the facilities now enjoyed by non-citizens of Uganda, the Kampala Club included, be the property of the people and government of this country, the UPC Youth League this day, 11th September, 1965, henceforth declares that the Kampala Club becomes the property of the people of Uganda..."

In April 1964 the famous or notorious (depending on your view point) Gulu conference about which we shall have more to say later was held. For now it suffices for us to mention that during that conference, John Kakonge, the undeclared patron/mentor of the League was removed from the position of Secretary General of the party and replaced by Grace Ibingira. The removal of John Kakonge from the post of Secretary General of UPC was a fundamental upset for the League from which it never recovered.

In July 1964, Ibingira as Secretary General of UPC ordered the party offices sealed off from the League members in Kampala. Prior to that, he had convinced the Party Executive to appoint new office bearers who were loyal to him and he had pushed out those who had been appointed by John Kakonge. Mathew Rukikaire replaced Charles Onyuta National Organising Secretary, Otim Oryem replaced Wadada Musani as Administrative Secretary, and Stephen Mila became the new Office Superintendent.

Ironically, these changes did not affect Raiti Omongin; he continued in his post of National Youth Organiser. In September 1964, Raiti Omongin, in his capacity as National Youth

Organiser, convened a conference which was chaired by Wadada Nabudere, a renowned left-wing lawyer from Mbale. Grace Ibingira was specifically invited and grilled on the concepts of non-alignment and socialism. The intention of this was to expose the reactionary character of Ibingira. John Kakonge was also invited. A number of observers, including some from the Soviet Embassy, were also present. This greatly annoyed Grace Ibingira. This conference did not hold elections; it instead set the machinery in motion to organise a representative conference later in the year.

And so sometime after this conference, preparations began for a League delegates' conference. These measures were made in secret for fear that Ibingira, the Secretary General of the UPC, might make it difficult for the meeting to be held. As part of these arrangements, a delegation was sent to meet the Party President, Milton Obote, who was also the Prime Minister. Not knowing what the delegation was up to, Obote at first refused to meet it. However, the delegation camped at the Prime Minister's office from 11.00 am until 4.00 pm. When Obote sent his Private Secretary to talk to them, they refused to talk to him. Eventually, at 6.00 o'clock, Obote agreed to meet them. Initially, Obote was hostile to the delegation. It is said that he even accused them of being anti-government. In an interview, Robert Kaijabwago, one of the delegates, told Mujaju that: "The Prime Minister was impressed by the representativeness of the delegation and their insistence that the party was being fragmented as a result of the intrusion of foreign money into the country. It was at this point that arrangements for the conference were agreed on." (Mujaju, A. 1972: 132 notes) It is reported that Obote advised the League delegates who went to see him to arrange the conference without the knowledge of Ibingira because Ibingira was against youth activities.

Eventually, the conference was held in March 1965 at the White Nile Club in Jinja. Each parliamentary constituency was to send two delegates. There were a total of 138 delegates, which means that not all 82 constituencies sent delegates. There also were 150 observers, including the Soviet Ambassador. Mujaju tells us in his thesis that by the time of the September conference Kirunda Kivejinja, Charles Onyuta, Wadada Nabudere and others were more or less looked at with suspicion in the main party and, especially after some of them had been ejected out of headquarters posts....." (Mujaju, A. 1972: 130) Feeling alienated from the main party, these people found the League their only refuge. In a series of articles by Hussein Bogere published in *The Monitor* of April 20 2008, Bidandi Ssali disclosed that around this time Grace Ibingira as Secretary General caused a Commission of Inquiry to be set up to establish who were introducing communism in the country. That the commission was headed by James Kahigiriza from Mbarara. He doesn't state it, but we know that James Kahigiriza was Ibingira's protegee (1) and hatchet man. In the article Bidandai tells us the commission gave the false report that he was seen together with Kirunda Kivejinja being given money by the Chinese somewhere on Masaka Roda near Mpigi. It is that commission which recomemend the expulsion of Kirunda Kivejinja, Charles Onyuta, Wadada Nabudere as well as Raiti Omongin and the suspension of Bidaadi Ssali.

The conference did two things: firstly, it agreed on a constitution and secondly, it carried out elections. These elections confirmed Raiti Omongin as the National Youth Organiser. Robert Kaijabwango, who had for a long time been active in League matters in Toro District,

became the Assistant National Youth Organiser. Ada Kya from Kampala became the Administrative Secretary, and J. Ruaga of West Nile, the Treasurer. The following were elected Committee members: F. Bainamawenki from Kigezi, Natolo Masaba from Bugisu, Lonny Ong'wena-Obbo from Bukedi and Charles Onyuta from West Nile.

As all this was going on, the League was beginning to be perceived in not very good light. The confrontations with the police and the holding of the Minister of Internal Affairs at the Party Headquarters for an hour began to alarm some sections of the public. The business community was feeling terrified. There was suspicion that the League was fomenting strikes in schools. This was driving fear into the expatriate staff. Kabaka Yekka and the Democratic Party were equally concerned. On 25th March, the Mengo government issued a statement in which it deplored what it called the hooliganism of the League. (*Uganda Argus* 26th March 1963) The conduct of the League became an issue for parliamentary questions and discussion. At one time the Leader of Opposition, Mr Basil Bataringaya, took the floor and asserted:

> Mr. Speaker, I am very serious on this [the affairs of the League]... surely the Youth Wing, be it DP or UPC or ICY Youth Wing is not primarily concerned with looking for political offenders and 'bringing them to justice, ... Mr Speaker, we cannot go on like this. Let us face the fact that these Youth Wingers, if they are not stopped in good time, are going to be very difficult to handle because other political parties are going to organise their Youth Wingers to meet the UPC and the result would not be good. (Parliamentary Debates Second series, Vol 15 (1963/64), page 666)

The threat predicted by Mr Bataringaya did not take long to materialise, for shortly after this the DP youth league announced the formation of vigilante groups for the protection of DP leaders against attacks by the UPC Youth League.Concealing the ambivalence among the UPC about the League, Onama denied that the UPCYL was terrorising people but was quick to suggest to Parliament that "nobody was above the law be they UPC or DP Youth Wingers", and advised MPs to report to police those who "would like to go around to intimidate the people." He further asserted that "we shall take a very big pair of scissors and trim their feathers off their wings so that they do not fly at all.." The UPC was, in fact, already sharpening its pair of scissors and it took the form of the creation of an alternate organization – the National Union of Youth Organisations (NUYO) as a non-partisan youth movement in Uganda.

Professor Mujaju, whom I rate as the foremost authority on the UPC Youth League and who was associated with the League at the time, expressed the view that "... it was not long after independence (October 1962) that it became obvious that the alliance between the Youth and UPC was not going to be a stable one. There emerged a process of estrangement..." (Mujaju, A 1973: 294) This view was/is shared by a number of League members as well as some youths of today. However, given what we have recorded here, it is obvious that the League members were ideologically undeveloped. It was definitely crude for one to have thought that making the Managing Director of *The Uganda Argus* carry matooke on his head was an assertion of the independence of Uganda. There is also no way private property would have been abolished in Uganda at the time or even today. However, to argue thus is not to vindicate the position of Grace Ibingira. It is just to say that without the necessary ideological nurturing, the youths of those days were bound to constitute some sort of anarchists. It wasn't their fault and there was nothing the UPC Government could do but dissolve the UPC Youth League as then constituted.

Kabaka Mutesa's Election as President of Uganda

At independence on 9th October 1962, the Queen of England remained the ceremonial Head of State while Apolo Milton Obote became the Prime Minister and Head of Government. On the ground, the Queen was represented by the Governor-General, Sir Walter Coutts. It was only a year later, on 4th October 1963 that Sir Edward Mutesa, the Kabaka of Buganda, was elected to fill the position of President of Uganda. It had been part of the bargain for the KY/UPC alliance that the Kabaka of Buganda would be the ceremonial Head of State.

This was a very suave move. The Baganda of those days could not imagine anybody else occupying a status above their Kabaka. By conceding to make the Kabaka Head of State, the Baganda's sentiments were well-taken care of.

However, the Kabaka's appointment as Head of State also served another purpose. Ever since 1949, Buganda had sought to separate from the rest of the colony. Among the tasks Sir Andrew Cohen, as Governor, was sent to do in Uganda was to counter these separatist tendencies of Buganda. It was in the process of handling this that the 1953 crisis erupted. In 1961 Buganda actually filed for separate independence from the rest of the colony. It was only the KY/UPC alliance which got Buganda to participate in the elections of 1962. Agreeing to make the Kabaka the President of Uganda was a strategy to get Buganda to be more involved in the politics of the country.

The other reason for having the Kabaka become Head of State is what has been well-argued by Professor Wright:

> What can be the functional equivalents of monarchy in countries like the United States and India which have lost that institution irretrievably? One such (used by the Soviet Union in its constituent republics) is the ceremonial presidency which can be safely bestowed upon some prestigious and cooperative member of the former ruling elite for the vicarious satisfaction of the rest of the group. Indians never tire of pointing to the late President Zakir Husain, Chief Justice Hidayatullah and a convoy of state governors from the Muslim minority.
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> These men may be ineffective, or unwilling to be real representatives of their community, but they do seem to lend the state some of the desired legitimacy in the eyes of the minority. They constitute a kind of "tokenism" for the downwardly mobile. If the American presidency had developed in the direction in which it seemed headed under Eisenhower, it might have become a harmless sop of this sort for the Wasps in their decline. (Wright T.P. 1976:61)

How was the Kabaka to become Head of State? An election procedure of some sort was contrived. In this procedure, it was only Constitutional Heads who were qualified to contest. The heads of kingdoms and the Kyabazinga of Busoga automatically qualified. In order not to have those districts or nationalities without Constitutional Heads to feel left out, the position of

Constitutional Heads of each district was created and filled. Only Teso District refused to fill this position. With the posts of Constitutional Heads filled, elections for Head of State were then held.

Prior to these elections, the Uganda People's Congress caucus had discussed the matter. The majority of UPC members came up in support of their Vice President, William Wilberforce Nadiope, the Kyabazinga of Busoga. This left the UPC President, Milton Obote, backing the Kabaka without any support from his party. After prolonged deliberations, with Obote threatening to resign as leader, the UPC caucus grudgingly accepted to support Kabaka Mutesa. Mutesa himself has given us his take of the arduous struggle Obote went through to get him elected:

> In October I was elected president. Though important in my life and career, this moment was not so significant as a political straw in the wind as some thought. There were rumours that I must have made secret concessions to Obote over the lost counties, and that the Prime Minister was reversing his anti-Buganda policy, which was by now clear, if not threatening. These held no truth. Sir Walter Coutts had become Governor General after independence, but this was always meant to be a temporary appointment by the national assembly.
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> Indeed a few months before he said to me at a dinner in government house, where the next Head of State would live, "And when are you coming here?" Genuinely misunderstanding, I replied, "On Saturday for lunch. Don't you remember?" He probably took this as a diplomatic manouevre to avoid answering. After discussions, it had been decide to elect one of the rulers for a five-year term.
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> In that case there was little choice either for Obote or for me. He was not in a position to snub the Baganda, who would have been enraged if any other ruler was chosen, as the new president would have precedence over the Kabaka even in Buganda.
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> Similarly, it was difficult for me to refuse. I was told of the possibility of the election when I was in Ndaiga. The only factor which caused me to hesitate was wondering whether there would be a conflict between my duty as President and my duty as Kabaka.
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> I decided that I could separate the two roles as I could separate my position as Commander-in- chief from the position as colonel in the Granadiers, to which I had just been promoted. I sent a word to the Katikiro, still Michael Kintu. This illustrates my relationship with the Lukiiko. I would have felt free to refuse without referring to anyone, but I asked for permission to accept. Negotiations were secret as this was merely to allow my name to be put forward, a necessary manouevre to avoid the embarrassment of my being elected and then refusing. Kintu sounded public opinion through the chiefs, found it favourable, and I accepted nomination, knowing that in this case I had the full support of the Prime Minister and thus almost certain to be elected. Still there was some comedy before the election.
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> One of the candidates as the Kyabazinga of Busoga was Sir William Wilberforce, known as Uncle Billy, who was also Vice President of UPC. Perhaps in an unguarded moment someone had made him some promise. In any case, when the time came for the election he insisted on remaining in the national assembly, though it was suggested that as an interested party it might be more tactful for him to leave. As he

> sensed things were not going his way, he rushed up to the Prime Minister, who feared a physical attack and backed round the table. They completed two or three circuits with Obote explaining at a safe distance that all would be well and he must calm down. A special title of Vice President was created for him, but do not think he must have found his duties onerous. I was elected by more than two thirds majority, but it was a secret ballot so it is not certain how many members of DP voted for me and how many of UPC against, in spite of Obote having made his support clear … (Mutesa, E. 1967: 172)

It is also interesting to see what a Muganda academic, Professor Mutibwa, thought of Mutesa's election as President of Uganda:

> The choice and election of the Kabaka of Buganda, on 4 October 1963, as the first President of Uganda should not, in the normal course of events - at least in the view of the Baganda - have stirred any hairs and caused the hullabaloo it did at the time. Mutesa was the natural choice in appreciation of what Buganda had contributed to Uganda.
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> In particular, credit was due to Sir Edward's great grandfather, Mutesa I, for what he did in consolidating Islam which he patronized for ten consecutive years, and in bringing other aspects of civilization and modernity, particularly Christianity, to what until then was a dark corner of the African continent.
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> But there were other aspirants in the land, the leading one being Mr (later Sir) William Wilberforce Nadiope Kadhumbula, the Kyabazinga of Busoga and the one next to Obote as chief of the ruling party, UPC. But wiser counsel, as they say, prevailed. What knocked out Nadiope from the race was an unwritten and apparently closely guarded 'understanding' between Obote and Mutesa (or Mengo, which was the same thing), while the famous alliance was being negotiated, that as part of the reward for supporting Obote to become Prime Minister at independence, the Kabaka would become the President of Uganda.
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> And so it was, despite some stiff opposition to the choice of Mutesa and in support of the man from across the River Nile. For this, at least Obote should be commended for having stood up for his principle and word in favour of the Kabaka of Buganda.
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> The election of Sir Edward Mutesa as the first President of Uganda was no mean achievement for Buganda. It was a landmark in the history of the kingdom and a deserving recognition of the contribution the Baganda had made to the creation and development of Uganda ever since the first white men stepped on Buganda (or Uganda) soil on 19th February 1862 and were received by Kabaka Mutesa I at his palace in Banda, near present-day Kampala. It was another event that highlighted the significance of Buganda as a major factor in the politics and history of Uganda. (Mutibwa, P.M. 2008: 66)

The Identity Crisis of the Baganda

A section of the first chapter of Professor Mutibwa's book bears the title: "Securing the Integrity of Buganda and the position of the Kabaka." (Mutibwa, P.M 2008: 59) What the section discusses is really the identity crisis of the Baganda. Independence was just round the corner. And it was going to be a major turning point in the history of Uganda. Professor Wallersntein has argued:

> By ethnic (read nationality) I mean the sentiment shared by a group of people who define their boundary in cultural terms (a common language, religion, color, history, style of life rights in the political arena in order to defend the possibilities of their material conditions. Whether such a group prefers to call itself a nation, a nationality, or an ethnic group, a tribe, a people or any of the other sundry terms that are used is not very material to the fact that ethnic consciousness is latent everywhere but it is only realized when groups feel either threatened with loss of previously acquired privilege or conversely feel it is an opportune moment politically to overcome long-standing denial of privilege." (Wallernstein, I 1973: 168)

While the rest of the country had no fears of independence - as a matter of fact they thought it would bring them opportunity for relief, the Baganda felt their erstwhile position of dominance would be brought to an end. They were therefore facing a serious identity crisis.

The best delineation of this crisis so far has been done by Terence K Hopkins of Colombia University. She wrote:

> …On the surface, Uganda's politics has indeed been complex. But they have not been unstable, and they are probably no more baffling than those of any other country, once the underlying tensions they reflect are understood.
>
> Among these tensions one in particular has decisively shaped the country's politics, the tension between the Baganda and other peoples of Uganda. Politically, the tension takes the form of the Buganda question, the dimensions and ramifications of which are many but the core of which can simply be stated: what place should Buganda, its ruler the Kabaka, and its people the Baganda, occupy in the emerging national society? It has not been an easy question for Ugandans to answer.
>
> To many Baganda, they are an elite people, endowed with a superior culture, superior economic wealth, and superior political traditions. To those among them who have thought about the matter at all, it was until fairly recently almost inconceivable that they should not provide the leadership of the new state. To many non-Baganda such claims have appeared pretentious, the wealth not wholly deserved, and the traditions a liability. While valuing much that Buganda had attained, particularly the relative well-being of its people and its political success during the colonial period, the others have been no more prepared to put up with Buganda overrule than with British overrule.
>
> The Buganda question and its organizing role in Uganda politics form the principal subject matter of this essay. It is for such a young country, an old problem, for its roots lie in actions taken at the very beginning of the colonial period. Only in the 1950s, however, when the nationalist movement was getting underway and Ugandans began to concern themselves with how the new state should be organized, did it come sharply into focus. But at that point it rapidly devolved into the overriding problem for the country, and it retained that position throughout both the

> period immediately preceding independence and the first four years of nationhood, from 1962 to 1966, the period this essay is mainly concerned. (Hopkins, Terence K. 1967: 251).

As we have already indicated in the chapter on the social base of UPC, Buganda had been a dominant power for over 300 years before it lost that dominance to the British at the beginning of the period of colonization. Moreover when the British became dominant, they ensured that the Baganda as an identity had a sort of superior status as compared to the other nationalities. Professor Mutibwa himself addresses this status issue in his book, "Uganda since Independence: a story of unfulfilled hopes."

The riots which broke out in Buganda in the 1940s against the Kabaka, the Buganda government and the colonial administration were the first signal of resistance. Thus in politics as well as in the economic sphere the Baganda had stolen a march on the rest of the protectorate.

This led to serious problems as the country moved towards independence. First it elevated the political importance of the Buganda and made them proud and arrogant in their approach to political problems. Up till the 1960s they did not consider their political destiny as part of the country as a whole. (Mutibwa, P.M. 1992: 11)

> We have maintained that the roots of Uganda's agony lie in the colonial era. We have seen the British government's deliberate policy of making Buganda into a state within a state at the same time widening the historical division between the north and south of the country. The result was to make Buganda the pivot of the protectorate, with development in the north and south proceeding at different speeds. While Pax Britannica ruled, the contradictions involved could be contained; after it ended, the motor had to be readjusted." (Mutibwa, P.M. 1992: 21)

As independence approached and, with it, the looming decline of Buganda relative to other identities/tribes, Buganda began undergoing the syndrome of a formerly dominant power on the eve of its decline. Professor Wright tells us that "....a former ruling elite minority in the early stages of its decline exhibits a tendency to think of itself and its interests as identical with those of the whole country. It is unable to recognize itself as and to protect its interests as a minority." (Wright, T.P. 1976: 60) Wright also tells us, ".....a former ruling elite minority i s likely to regard itself as especially fit to rule the country." To this effect, at a meeting of the Lukiiko in 1957, the Omuwankia (Treasurer) of Buganda let slip a remark that Uganda ought to become "a Federal state under the Kabaka". (Low, D.A. 1971: 191) Then in 1958 a committee of the Lukiiko announced that they had asked the colonial authorities to ensure that the Kabaka became "king" of the self-governing Uganda.

Professor Mutibwa also unwittingly reveals this when he is talking about the Kabaka after his return from exile in 1955:

> As we have noted above, the conclusion of a new agreement between the British and Buganda in 1955, as part of the settlement for the Kabaka's return from deportation, meant an enhanced position of Buganda vis-a-vis other parts of the protectorate, something that did not go down well with the non-Buganda areas. Buganda too no doubt gained confidence from her enhanced and seemingly strengthened position vis-a-vis the Protectorate Government, which placed her in a position somewhat above the other Ugandan regions. Buganda had now achieved a status where the only people she would negotiate with now were the British in Entebbe and London rather than with other

> Ugandans. Thus, Buganda continued with an intransigent stance on the decision to go it alone in complete disregard of the interests of the other regions in Uganda, including non-cooperation in formulating the roadmap to independence. This was bound to backfire, for, as far as the British were concerned, Buganda was still a mere province, a part of their protectorate on an equal footing with the rest of the protectorate." (Mutibwa, P.M. 2008: 27)

An example of what Mutibwa is talking about is the refusal by Buganda to participate in the Wild Committee as well as the boycott of the 1958 elections for the Legico.

Another syndrome which the Baganda as a formerly dominant elite have exhibited is lack of adaptability. Again Professor Wright points out:

> .....the self-image of dominance and superiority (even after erstwhile subordinates have ceased to believe in it) renders the declining former elite peculiarly lacking in adaptability. The British and North American Wasp is both notoriously incapable of learning foreign languages, and complacent about his own culture. I suspect that this, rather than religious fear, is the real reason why Indian Muslims lagged (if they did) behind Hindus in learning English instead of Persian in the nineteenth century. Arab traders have learned other languages when they needed them." (Wright T.P. 1976: 60)

The Baganda are very poor at learning the other languages of Uganda, something which contrasts with how the others learn Luganda.

The other syndrome which the Baganda as a formerly dominant power have exhibited is the tendency to "value and romanticize the past." (Wright, T.P. 1976: 60) We can see a lot of this in the writings of Mutibwa.

In this chapter, we have had to discuss the identity crisis of the Baganda in some detail because it constitutes a major impediment to the integration of the Baganda into the mainstream of national politics.

Their problem is very similar to that of the Muslims of India who had been dominant in India for 600 years before the British overthrew their dominance. About the Muslim identity crisis in India, Professor Wright had this to say:

> .....they are a case of status reversal in which some of them feel, rightly or wrongly, that their erstwhile Hindu subjects have become their rulers. A grasp of this perspective, and of the attitudes and values which accompany it will help to explain the difficulties which the Indian National Movement and, since independence, Government of India, has had in integrating many Muslims into the "mainstream" of national politics, as well as to explain the failure of Pakistan to accommodate its Bengali "subordinate mass subjects" in 1947-1971. (Wright, T.P. 1976: 58).

And just like the case of the Muslims of India, the Baganda who had been dominant in the region for some three hundred years too feel their erstwhile subordinates have become their rulers.

Professor Mutibwa tells us how the prospect of being ruled by a non-Muganda sent the Baganda into a panic:

> As a reaction to the publication of the Wild Report, whose Committee Mengo had boycotted, Buganda authorities decided to demand once again separate independence for their kingdom. The Baganda appear to have been in a near panic. There were attempts to form a party of their own - the Uganda National Party (UNP) which, it was even suggested, could merge with the new UPC.
>
> It was all a gamble, especially as the Mengo Establishment was faced, apparently for the first time, with fears that Obote might become Uganda's first Prime Minister. Certainly the prospects of being governed by a non-Muganda filled the Baganda with dismay. It is against this background that the decision to renew the demand for separate independence by 1 January 1961 should be viewed. (Mutibwa, P.M. 2008: 32)

Professor Mutibwa was also to write: "On the other hand, the Baganda too harbour a somewhat arrogant attitude towards the non-Baganda, particularly those who come from non-kingdom areas. For instance, an ordinary Muganda, however poor or uneducated he may be, believes that people from non-kingdom areas are unruly, uncouth and are not fit to rule." (Mutibwa, P.M. 2008: xi)

The "Lost Counties" Issue

To grasp what was at issue with the "lost counties", we need to go into its history, its genesis.

It all began in December 1893 when Colonel Colville led a full military campaign against Kabalega and the Banyoro. After suffering a series of defeats, Kabalega was driven from his country and forced to take refuge in Lango in 1894. As a reward for assistance against the Banyoro, Colonel Colville in the early part of 1894 promised the Baganda chiefs that all Bunyoro territory south of River Kafu would be incorporated into Buganda. This was roughly the area comprised of Buyaga and Bugangazzi (Bugangaizi) northern Singo, Buruli and the formerly semi-independent area of northern Bugerere which had been part of Bunyoro territory.

Colonel Colville was forced by illness to leave Uganda before implementing this promise. However, when E.J.L. Berkeley who succeeded Colville was in 1896 appointing a Munyoro to be chief of this area, the Ganda chiefs present reminded him that his predecessor had pledged the area to be part of Buganda. Berkeley consulted the Foreign Office who instructed him to implement the promise.

The incorporation into the Kingdom of Buganda of this territory, which was clearly part of Bunyoro with Banyoro inhabiting, was so blatantly unjust that two British officers then serving in Bunyoro (Pulteney and Forster), resigned their posts in protest against the decision. The Banyoro never accepted this situation and this loss of territory was to become the festering "lost counties" issue which was a subject of many deputations by the Kingdom of Bunyoro to the British throughout the colonial period.

The Banyoro in the lost counties were subjected to various forms of cultural oppression. (Green, Elliot D. 2008) They were not allowed to engage in Kinyoro dances. About this, the Bunyoro king, Omukama Tito Winyi, expressed himself in the following words: “Dancing in Kinyoro style is illegal, and all dancing must be in Kiganda style, which is foreign to the Banyoro people.”

The area MP from the lost counties, Mr N.K. Rugemwa, also broght this into the open

before the Uganda Constitutional Conference in 1961. He reported that "if the Banyoro do anything in a way different from and practiced by Baganda, they are liable to be prosecuted for breach of Ganda customary law. These breaches included dancing and singing in their Kinyoro traditional style."

The use of Lunyoro, the language of Banyoro, was discouraged. In 1960, the Mubende Bunyoro Committee (MBC), a pressure group, noted: "The suppression of our mother tongue, Lunyoro, hurts beyond imagination. Our children are taught in a foreign language in the very first year of their education, and our language has been banned in courts, offices, and churches in addition to schools."

The Banyoro were being forced to register the births of their children with Kiganda names. In 1958, the Omukama addressed this issue thus: "…when the Banyoro go to register births at Gombolola (sub-county) offices, they are compelled to enter in the register Luganda names for their children, and to register their clans according to the Kiganda clan system.

The Banyoro were also discriminated against in the award of scholarships. A British MP, Eirene White, who went to the area in 1957, reported this to the House of Commons and it was recorded in the House of Commons Hansard of May 6, 1957, page 738-739, that the only way a Munyoro from the lost counties could get a scholarship is to declare himself/herself a Muganda.

The following year, in a petition to the Queen, Omukama Winyi claimed that only "pure Baganda" could be considered for a bursary or scholarship. "If an applicant for such a scholarship states on his application form that he is a member of any other tribe than Baganda, his application is not considered," he said. Between 1931 and 1958 various Bakama of Bunyoro petitioned the British government nine times to have the matter investigated but their petitions were simply ignored.

The Mubende Bunyoro Committee petitioned the Colonial Secretary in 1951, 1953 and 1955. The Legislative Council member for Bunyoro, Mr George Magezi, also petitioned in 1955. The British responses to the petitions took rather standard forms as exemplified by the response of two officials.

In 1931 the Secretary for the Colonies argued: "it is a long time [since the lost counties were incorporated into Buganda] and this matter was settled during the time of fighting, so we cannot now do anything further in the matter." Later in 1957 Governor Crawford said: "...nothing can be done about that now." (Green, Elliot D., 2008: 476)

The persistence of the petitions also annoyed some British officials. In 1955 C.H. Hartwell, the Chief Secretary, was exasperated enough to burst out "...in a matter of this kind there must be a finality, and in this case it must be accepted that the final decision has been taken."

Eventually the matter came before the Constitutional Conference, which was preparing for independence in London in 1962. The matter was discussed and on June 27. As the Buganda delegation was walking out of the Conference, having sensed the dominant mood, the Colonial Secretary, Mr Maudling, delivered the verdict of the British government. Buyaga and Bugangazi were to remain part of Buganda while being administered by the Central Government. It was added that "after not less than two years, the National Assembly shall decide on the date for a referendum - in which the people of the counties will say whether they prefer to be in Buganda

or Bunyoro, or remain under the Central Government." (Mutibwa, P.M. 1982: 296)

Obote, the Prime Minister, accepted this ruling but both Buganda and Bunyoro had misgivings. Dr. Majugo, a member of the Bunyoro delegation, declared on his return to Uganda, that Independence Day, 9 October, would be "a funeral in Bunyoro" and that Bunyoro would not be part of the independence celebrations. (Mutibwa, P.M. 1982: 297) Be that as it may, Uganda became independent on 9 October 1962, with Milton Obote, the leader of UPC, as Head of Government.

However, much as the Constitutional Conference had resolved that a referendum would be held in the "lost counties" to determine where the residents wanted to be administered from, things were not that easy and straightforward. The imminence of this referendum unleashed one of the most fervent political struggles Uganda has known. The protagonists in this struggle were the forces of national-democratic liberation led by Obote, on the one hand, and Buganda chauvinism organized by the neo-traditionalists on the other.

Since the Government of the day was an alliance between UPC and KY, the latter having a stake in the referendum, the UPC leadership had to ensure that it had the necessary parliamentary strength to pass the legislation authorizing and laying down the ground rules for the referendum. By the middle of 1964 this strength had been attained and Parliament passed the Referendum Bill which provided that only those who were previously registered to vote in the counties in 1962 would be eligible to vote.

This provision was aimed at excluding the Baganda ex-servicemen who the Buganda administration was settling into the area under the so-called Ndaiga Scheme intended to influence the results of the referendum. The Ndaiga Scheme had been set up as a device to make double sure Buganda did not lose the "lost counties".

To accord it legitimacy, the Kabaka had lent it his personal involvement. He had moved in and resided in the "lost counties" for some time. One Sunday the Kabaka "went on an expedition to the lost counties with 8,000 ex-servicemen, demonstrated his royal prerogative of being above the law by one morning shooting nine Banyoro peasants gathered in a market place..." (Mamdani 1976: 244). The scheme had also been allocated money well in excess of 30,000 British pounds sterling.

Notwithstanding all these efforts, when the results of the referendum were declared on 5th November, the residents had voted overwhelmingly to be part of the Kingdom of Bunyoro. It was a decision that was welcomed not only in Bunyoro, but by all the minority nationalities/identities in the country.

The loss of these counties was very painful to Buganda. To fully appreciate the pain, one should read an article written by I.K. Hancok's "The crisis over the loss of the 'Lost Counties' to Bunyoro brought other developments in Mengo when the results of the referendum were announced. There was a state of despondency, confusion and disbelief at Mengo, if not in the rest of the kingdom. During the session of the Great Lukiiko at Bulange that debated the matter,

Kabaka's ministers were shouted down from the rowdy crowd in the public gallery. The Katikkiro of Buganda, Michael Kintu, was heckled and shouted down as he addressed the Lukiiko. He was booed and insulted as he left the Lukiiko Hall and he was rescued from the angry crowd wanting to lynch him by officials of the Lukiiko who guided him out of the Bulange Building through a back door and smuggled him out of sight in a Volkswagen! Michael Kintu resigned as Katikkiro....." (Mutibwa, P.M. 2008: 80)

It is great irony that when Kintu's resignation was announced, the crowd celebrated as though some sort of victory had been won.

The Gulu Conference, 1964

Professor Mutibwa is right to say: "The first serious issues which preoccupied the UPC, after it came to power at independence, were internal problems centred on ideology and rivalry over the leadership of the party." (Mutibwa 73) However, he is wrong in asserting that what he calls the rivalry in UPC caused the 1966 revolution or to use his own words "...the falling out of Obote and Ibingira, which occurred around the beginning of 1965, appears to have been one of the 'immediate' causes of the 1966 Crisis." (Mutibwa, P.M. 2008: 88) Demonstrating why he is wrong should not detain us here; we shall do that later. In the meantime, let us deal with the Annual Delegates Conference of 1964.

The most important event that took place at the conference in Gulu was the election of Secretary General of the party. To understand this election we need to give a brief characterisation of the two candidates, John Kakonge and Grace Ibingira. The following is a character profile of each of the two men compiled by Andre de la Rue (3) who was their contemporary:

> **Grace Ibingira** rarely committed himself on issues unless he could do so on terms that all major forces felt supported their position. His speeches were models of platitudes dressed in superficially new and intellectual language. His forums were the corridors and ante-rooms, not the market places of power. His tools were the private conversation and the mutual special interest, not the public address or the shared concern for national welfare. In short, Grace Ibingira had the courage of all the day's popular convictions and the belief that more power should be his.
>
> He and his close ally, the Vice-President and Kyabazinga of Busoga, Sir Wilberforce Nadiope, had wide contacts among the more conservative and aristocratic UPC local notables. Ibingira is Bahima [sic], that is a member of the cattle-raising aristocracy; who ruled the Kingdom Ankole on watered-down Tusi lines. He is therefore a southerner, 'but not strictly speaking a Bantu.' He and Nadiope were instrumental in convincing Obote that Kakonge was a danger to him and in securing his support on the removal of Kakonge in favour of Ibingira. Ibingira's support sprang from four sources:

(a) the Ankole UPC Machine, which he later lost to a commoner who had crossed the floor from the Democratic Party, Basil Bataringaya, now Minister of the Interior.

(b) a collection of ambitious southern local and district leaders who wanted power and feared what they saw as Prime Minister Obote's populism;

(c) a coterie of relatively conservative intellectuals who viewed Obote as pedestrian and lacking in polish and glitter (which most of his speeches are); and

(d) a growing working relationship with Mengo Palace and the " separatist" Kiganda aristocracy headed by the then President and Kabaka, Sir Frederick Mutesa.

Until October 1965, Grace Ibingira was a Machiavellian of The Prince model. Thereafter, he seems to have become intoxicated by the nearness of power and forgotten the danger of wounding his opponent while leaving him the power to strike back at a time of his choosing.

John Kakonge, Minister of Economic Development and Planning, is a very different man. He is a radical nationalist. Despite his aristocratic Nyoro background, he has no roots there.

A professed "scientific socialist" he has more in common with Yugoslav revisionism, the quasi-Marxist radicalism of Michael Foot, or the philosophy of African radical social reconstruction enunciated in vague words and concrete actions by Mwalimu Julius Nyerere and TANU, than with Marxist-Leninist orthodoxy.

A strong proponent of East African federation and co-operation, he is well thought of both in Nairobi and in Dar es Salaam.

The most striking point about John Kakonge, however, is that he is basically not a politician either by inclination or natural ability. As UPC Secretary-General (1960-64), he built the mass base and party structure that won the 1962 elections - a base Ibingira allowed to erode away within a year of taking office.

As Director of Planning (1963 onward) he supervised the creation of Work for Progress. He was and is an effective speaker: charismatic to mass audiences, studiously grounded and substantive to intellectual ones.

No one would deny that John Kakonge has definite ideas how Uganda should develop in the interest of Ugandans or that he believes that the political system and political power are critical to realising them. However, Kakonge has never shown adequate understanding that to carry out his aims for Uganda, he must hold and use political power nor a fortiori [sic] that he, as a radical and a man with power in his hands, inevitably has political enemies who seek his downfall. At Gulu, he might have held the Secretary-Generalship against Obote and Ibingira had he not believed up to the last moment that both were his friends. (He held to this faith despite the warnings of his supporters.)

After Gulu he did not fight back. His excursion into Buganda politics in 1965 like his condemnation of US-Congo policy early in that year and of "hired agents of foreign powers" (Ibingira and co.) in October were fairly clearly in loyal support, and partly at the behest of Prime Minister Obote. Apart from his lonely vote on the Ochieng Inquiry motion and an earlier muddled and withdrawn criticism of the Nyoro aristocracy (whom he detests as did his father, a member of the puritan Balokole sect of the Anglican Church of Uganda) when such criticism seemed to attack Obote's Bunyoro supporters.

> John Kakonge took no active part in the 1966 political events. A man of ideas and ideals but also of programmes and organising ability, an intellectual by temperament and ambition if not fully by training nor uniformly [by] performance, John Kakonge is not fully a politician. Perhaps this is largely because he is very unwilling to believe any individual he knows can be basically hostile to his ideas or to him, a noble illusion but a very dangerous one in political life. (Andre de la Rue, 1967)

Theory and history (or experience) teaches us that "... it may take a long time for national democratic liberation revolutions to determine their social orientations since this is not an instantaneous and irrevocable action but a consequence of contradictory processes, progressive movements and retreats. In other words, it may be drawn out over virtually the whole period of the revolution and take place at both its phases. The national democratic (and also the popular democratic) tendency of development in the revolution can gain the upper hand either at the first or the second phase of the revolution." (Bruntents, K.N. part one 1977: 148)

What took place in Gulu in 1964 was just an aspect of UPC as a national-democratic liberation movement trying to determine its orientation. There were two forces in this struggle. There was the national-democratic force represented by Milton Obote. I must hasten to say that by 1964 this force was still not clear about the struggle. That is why it was split by Grace Ibingira who was leading the anti-national-democratic faction.

Grace Ibingira, as Kirunda Kivejinja has said, was "....a gifted palace politician. He had a tongue so agile he could dissuade a couple from joining in matrimony even if they were a step away from the waiting priest." (Kirunda Kivejinja 79-80; also quoted in Mutibwa, P.M. 2008: 76). However, there was more to this than just Ibingira's sweet tongue.

We also have a report from Akiiki Mujaju, a youth-winger at the time. He wrote:

> Raiti Omongin's time was marked by greater UPYL militancy. Because of this militancy, a growing restlessness in business and political circles began to register itself, and ascapegoats for the youth actions were searched for. It is evident that this scapegoat was John Kakonge, the party's Secretary General, who was believed to be the moving force behind the League's militancy. Kakonge had never been popular with the older members of the party. This posture of aggressive socialism and nationalism among the youth added to Kakonge's difficulties with his party colleagues. Thus, when in 1964 the party's Delegates Conference in Gulu was held, and later when all sorts of accusations were labeled against Kakonge, for example, that he was introducing communism under the guise of socialism..... (Mujaju, A. 1972: 129)

This, coupled with the support of the notables, enabled Ibingira to capture the important position of Secretary General of the party at the Annual Delegates Conference held in Gulu. After his election as Secretary General of the party, in December 1964, Grace Ibingira left for the US to shop for funds and support. William Wilberforce Nadiope and other Ibingira supporters were also to make trips to the US.

It is said that while they were in the US "...they freely hinted that Milton Obote would soon be out of office and that the USA could expect a more friendly and responsible government when they assumed power. (Andre de la Rue Part two page 24)

From the US, Grace Ibingira returned with money estimated by Obote to be one million dollars. (Obote, A.M. 1968:35). "By 1965 there was a sudden manifestation of opulence among a section of UPC leadership generally associated with Ibingira, including Branch Chairmen. There was talk about Ibingira and 'the dollars' at all levels of the party."(Nabudere, D.W. 1980:259) With this money, the resistance to national-democratic liberation embarked on a protracted struggle to remove Obote from the leadership of the UPC.

As though to underscore his national-democratic credentials as well as draw a stark contrast with Ibingira, Milton Obote later in the middle of 1965 made a prolonged visit to the socialist countries of Eastern Europe and China. On his return Obote was faced with a concerted series of increasingly bitter challenges to his visits and foreign policy.

In a blazing speech - whose lack of specific names was a device which left few Ugandans in doubt as to its targets – Grace Ibingira, the Minister of State, claimed that Obote had aligned himself with the East and forfeited Uganda's independent foreign policy, thus betraying the UPC. For this, Ibingira held, Obote must be summarily removed from Office.

Speaking for the Prime Minister, A.A. Nekyon (Obote's kinsman and his regular hatchet man) and John Kakonge in substantive near-identical speeches blasted certain Ugandan politicians - evidently the Ibingira group -as bought agents of a foreign power - presumably the USA, condemning their betrayal of the people of Uganda and calling for their removal from office by the proper authorities – meaning the Prime Minister and a UPC Delegates Conference. (Andre de la Rue: 1967: 24-25)

As Andre de la Rue observes of this debate, "... foreign policy was not central in the thinking or strategy of either camp - the prize was government."

The struggle against Obote had begun. Before this debate, Grace Ibingira had enlisted the support and involvement of the Kabaka of Buganda. This could not have been that difficult. In the first place the Kabaka was well-predisposed to working with Grace Ibingira against any moves of the national-democratic liberation. As a king and a leader of the dominating identity, he was not only a target of but was also ideologically inclined to fight national-democratic liberation.

In fact we are informed by Professor Mutibwa that the Kabaka and his advisers were actually on the hunt for allies outside Buganda. That was why Mutesa and his advisers, who included influential people such as Prince Badru Kakungulu, his uncle and the leader of Uganda Muslim Community, worked out plans which would get them political friends outside Buganda while at the same time controlling their sub-state. In this lies the plan of their coalition with Grace Ibingira, the UPC Secretary General, who was working on recruiting allies to join and penetrate the UPC with the aim of outvoting Obote.

The Baganda faithfully joined the UPC en masse, and strengthened Ibingira's group which consisted of all those leaders who came from families that possessed traditional authority in the colonial system, who now ranged themselves against Obote's leadership of the UPC. Such leaders included men like as Nadiope (Kyabazinga of Busoga and the Vice-President of Uganda and UPC), Matia Ngobi and George Magezi. Mutesa saw the rift between the Right and the Centre of the UPC, and he decided to exploit it." (Mutibwa, P.M. 89-90) More pointedly Mutibwa tells us: "The political dispute between Obote and Ibingira and his supporters centered around the control of UPC and ultimately the very leadership of the country in terms of the political and economic ideologies that were to be followed.

Obote claimed - not without justification - that Ibingira's group, which included the President, Sir Edward Mutesa, and the Buganda government at Mengo and which also counted

on the support and assistance of the Army Commander, Brigadier Opolot, wanted to remove him from power and that plans to this end were in an advanced stage by the end of 1965. No one, let alone Ibingira and his supporters, has denied that they wanted to see Milton Obote and those who believed in socialist philosophies removed. Their only regret is that they failed." (Mutibwa, P. 1992: 38)

Initially the alliance worked on enlarging the Annual Delegates Conference of the Uganda People's Congress, the organ which elects the President of the party, in such a manner that the resistance to national-democratic liberation would be in the majority. (Obote, A.M. 1968:20) For this, a scheme which Professor Mazrui appropriately named the "Trojan Horse" was contrived. As many Baganda as possible were to be "herded" into UPC.

To effect this, in July 1965 Edward Mutesa, the Kabaka of Buganda and President of Uganda convened and chaired a meeting of Kabaka Yekka at which it was decided that KY members should join UPC in large numbers. Once in the UPC, they were to use their numerical strength to change the leadership of the party.

To spur the Baganda into joining the UPC, members of the Cabinet who were part of the plot deliberately leaked to the press cabinet resolutions on the plan to call surprise elections. In the leakage it was pointed out that the impending elections could affect the re-election of Mutesa as President of Uganda, unless the Baganda were in a commanding position within the UPC.

As expected the leakage alarmed the Baganda, and they enlisted as members of the UPC in large numbers. While all this was happening, in the absence of Obote who was out the country visiting the Far East, Grace Ibingira as Secretary General of UPC convened an executive meeting of the party to consider proposals to increase the number of representatives from Buganda to the National Council from 3 to 18. (Obote, A.M. 1968: 23) Although this proposal was resoundingly defeated, it was tabled again for discussion in the first week of October 1965 when it was once again defeated.

When it became clear that the "Trojan Horse" stratagem could not work, Obote's opponents resorted to attempting an outright military coup. Scheduled to take place on Independence Day (9th October, 1965), clear evidence of it first got revealed on 7th October, the day when five incidents which initially appeared coincidental, but which were later found to have been orchestrated, occurred.

First, Obote in his capacity as Prime Minister received a letter from Mengo (Mutesa) informing him that a group of left-wingers (Communists) were intending to overthrow the Government on or about 9th October 1965. The letter requested the Prime Minister as head of Government to issue a statement condemning any such plot.

The second incident was an allegation made at the end of a Cabinet meeting by Grace Ibingira that he had uncovered a plot to assassinate several people, including himself, during the Independence Anniversary celebrations.

The third was a letter written to the Minster of Internal Affairs by Daudi Ochieng, a Kabaka Yekka Member of Parliament, and copied to the Prime Minister, requesting Obote to send a senior Police Officer to take a statement from an unnamed person regarding the activities of Idi Amin, Deputy Commander of the Army. In the letter Daudi Ochieng observed that upon taking the statement, the Government should suspend Amin from the Army.

The fourth incident was a report by the Commander of the Uganda Army, Brigadier Shaban Opolot, delivered to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Defense. In this report Opolot stated that he had received information that the Baganda were plotting to assassinate him and that

soldiers from the Congo would attack Army Headquarters during the Independence Anniversary celebrations. The object of this report - which was investigated and found to be false - was to create confusion and panic so that the coup could be carried out.

The fifth aspect of the conspiracy regards the activities of Major Katabarwa, the brother of Grace Ibingira, who was Commandant of the Army Training Wing stationed in Jinja. On 7th October 1965 Katabarwa went to Kampala on a secret mission. On his return to Jinja, he contacted a number of officers, including two who were on open charge and therefore not on duty, to draw arms and report to Brigadier Opolot at Army Headquarters in Kampala. However, much as these officers reported and "virtually took control of the Army Headquarters", the army refused to carry out their orders and the intended coup failed. The failure of the October coup plot did not discourage the plotters but rather it spurred them to make a more daring attempt.

The major move in this attempt was made in November 1965 when Brigadier Opolot arranged for two units of the Army to exchange barracks.(Obote, A.M. 1968:23) The intention of this change was to remove the army unit stationed in Jinja, and which had refused to participate in the coup attempt the previous month. However, according to the regulations then in force, such a change could only take place after notification has been issued six months in advance and with the approval of the Chief of Defense Staff Committee composed of senior officers and chaired by the Minister responsible for Defense. Brigadier Opolot was violating all these regulations.

The notification was made on 28th November 1965 in a secret letter to the Commanders of the two units, and the changeover was to be completed by the end of December 1965. The Chief of Defense Staff Committee knew nothing about the change, and the Ministry was not informed although the secret letter was said to have been copied to the Ministry. (Obote, A.M. 1968: 23) The secret leaked out and Obote ordered Brigadier Opolot to follow proper procedure.

Then in December 1965, Mutesa placed orders for heavy weapons with a Kampala firm. The arms were to come from Britain. On this Obote was later to write:

> We have letters from a British firm which show that the firm was not happy with the orders on the grounds that the weapons ordered were too heavy for an individual and that the firm had always dealt with Governments only. One of the letters from the Kampala firm states that President Mutesa had placed the orders on behalf of the Uganda Army and that, although the Kabaka's Government was to pay for the arms, that only meant that the President, in his capacity as the Kabaka, was to have the first trial of arms before handing them over to the army. (Obote, A.M. 1968)

The Gold Allegation

The next move was made in Parliament on 4th February 1966. Daudi Ochieng', a Kabaka Yekka Member of Parliament moved a motion: "That this House do urge the Government to suspend from duty Col. Idi Amin of the Uganda Army forthwith pending conclusions of police investigations into allegations regarding his bank account which should be passed on to the appropriate authority whose decision on the matter should be made public." (Obote, A.M. 1968: 24-25)

The circumstance under which this motion was moved is very revealing. Prior to the movement of this motion, at a UPC Parliamentary Group meeting on 31st January 1966, it had been agreed that when Daudi Ochieng tables his motion about the Gold Allegations against Idi Amin on 4th February 1966, it would be rejected by UPC. Obote had told the Parliamentary Group that he would be leaving for a tour of northern Uganda soon after the meeting and would not be around for the debate and the vote on the Ochieng motion. In contravention of this, some 15 minutes before Parliament assembled on the mentioned date, the Cabinet was hastily assembled and the earlier decision of the Parliamentary Group reversed. All UPCs were then required to vote for the motion.

The cabinet which met on 4th February and decided to reverse the position of the UPC Parliamentary group was dominated by the Ibingira faction, which included the ministers who were later detained. Also half of the members of the Cabinet were absent. Curiously, the three members of the cabinet whom Ochieng's allegations were targeting were not present. And those absent included Onama, the Minister of Defense, who should have been there by virtue of the fact that the Ochieng allegation concerned his office. We should also point out that the cabinet meeting was held when it was clear there would not be time for Obote to be contacted nor, even if he could be contacted, for him to come in time for the debate and vote on the motion. Another point to be noted is that the UPC Members of Parliament only learnt of the changes from the floor. This created a lot of confusion among them.

During the course of introducing his motion, Ochieng' took liberty to cast aspersions on the credibility of Obote (the Prime Minister), Felix Onama (the Minister of Defense), and Adoko Nekyon (the Minister of Planning). The three officials, Ochieng' alleged, had improperly obtained ivory, gold and money from Congolese rebels. Daudi Ochieng' asserted that within 24 days since 5th February, 1965, Amin had banked a total of 340,000 Uganda shillings - at that time definitely a very large sum of money.

The context in which these allegations were being made was the situation in which the Government of Uganda was involved in covert operations to aid the rebel government led by Gbenye which was fighting against the newly installed government of Congo (Kinshansha) then headed by Moise Tshombe. The Congolese government had retaliated by bombing villages in the then West Nile District of Uganda. (Mujaju, A.B. 1987: 484)

The bombings were well known in Uganda, and Ochieng sought to take advantage of it to arouse anger and outrage in the country by cynically portraying the money as a kind of war booty which should have been reported to the government but which Amin had improperly put to his own personal use. Presented thus, Amin needed to be investigated. The object of this motion, however, was not so much to seek investigation nor was it to seek a vote of censure on the officials mentioned; rather, it was two-fold.

First, it was intended to provide the premise from which Amin could be temporarily removed from the post of Chief-of-Staff, where he constituted a stumbling block to the planned coup.

Secondly, the motion and the discussion consequent to it was to create what *The Guardian* newspaper called optimum conditions for a coup. (Mujaju, A.B. 1987: 499)

The accuracy of this observation is borne out by the fact that at the Cabinet meeting to discuss the motion, "those Ministers who had sought to achieve their objectives on 4th February

did not support the subsequent appointment of a Judicial Commission of Inquiry into the allegations."(Obote, A.M. 1968: 26) They had merely wanted action on immediate suspension of Amin.

As all this was happening, Obote maintained his cool and continued with his schedules as usual. The previous November he had promised but not fixed a date to tour the northern region in January or February of 1966. The date for the tour was fixed in January, and he left Kampala on 1st February.

While Obote was still on the tour, a contingent of well-armed soldiers was on 7th February sent to arrest him in northern Uganda. Unfortunately for the mission, a secretary at Army Headquarters heard about the mission and told her brother who immediately went and alerted Obote of the plot.

When the contingent arrived at where Obote was, they found him under heavy guard. The contingent was disarmed. The only thing they ended up doing was to deliver their cover message which was that Opolot wanted Obote to go back to Kampala and call the Defense Council to settle the case against Amin for allegedly plotting to kill Opolot. In response to this, Obote told them to tell Opolot that a Defence Council meeting to handle the matter would be held in Arua. Opolot never responded to this proposal. (Akena Adoko 1970: 58-59)

On 8th February Army Headquarters, presumably under the direction of Opolot, instructed Jinja Barracks to send recruits to Kampala under the rationalisation that they were going to protect the capital. Specific troops had been recruited and prepared for this mission.

However, whether by design or by default, Brigadier Okoya who was in charge of the Jinja military outfit sent the wrong troops. This matter of wrong troops was reported to Mutesa that same day. "The Uganda army is bad; it supports Obote. If you want to bring changes, you may need to try other armies," he was told. (Akena Adoko 1970: 60)

Following this advice, Mutesa the following day called two people: the British High Commissioner and the Chief Justice, Sir Udo Udoma (a Nigerian). He requested the British High Commissioner for military aid and the Chief Justice for advice on how to fire the Prime Minister, Apolo Milton Obote.

As ceremonial president, Mutesa had no powers to do these things. About the approach to the British, Professor T.V. Sathyamurthy, the author of the encyclopedic book, *The Political Development in Uganda*, had this observation to make: "But the Kabaka's approach to foreign emissaries was born more out of foolishness than craft. For, it was the strongest card in Obote's possession when it came to delivering the final blow." (Sathyamurthy, T.V. 1986: 434)

In an attempt to vitiate the seriousness of this request for foreign troops, on 4th March1966 the Private Secretary to Mutesa issued a statement in which he contended that the request was precautionary. To this Obote responded: "I have noted that it is now being explained that these were precautionary requests. The fact remains that there was no provision whatsoever in the Constitution for the President to make such requests."

An attempt was made to justify this serious matter by allegations made in Parliament on 4th February that there were troops being trained in secret with a view to overthrow the Constitution.

Obote returned to Kampala on his own volition on 12th February and, in his own words, realized "the situation was very serious."(Obote, A.M. 1968: 25) He immediately ordered the troops back to their barracks, and sought to discuss the situation with Mutesa, the then President. He also convened an emergency meeting of the Cabinet on 14th February at which he called on the Ministers who had lost confidence in him, and had believed in the allegations by

Daudi Ochieng, to resign. Nobody resigned.

Three days later, Obote left for official duties in Nairobi, returning on 19th February when he learned of a circular by Brigadier Opolot to all army units directing them to go for field exercises. In this circular, "Opolot actually stated that because the situation had been normal throughout February 1966, and because for some period of months the army had not done field exercises, February 1966 was the most suitable."(Obote, A.M. 1968: 26)

Obote found these astounding observations curious to, say the least, for the period mentioned had been turbulent. He ordered cancellation of the exercises and later took what he termed "drastic action". The drastic action was the detention of the five ministers: George Magezi, Mathias Ngobi, Balaki Kirya, Dr Lumu and Grace Ibingira, who were involved in the plot to overthrow the government. The detention of the five ministers completely upset the strategy of the anti-national-democratic forces and set the stage for a confrontation which would result in a national-democratic revolution.

With Ibingira out of circulation, the leadership of the anti-national-democratic forces reverted to Kabaka Mutesa. However, lacking the political acumen of Ibingira, Mutesa was like a "rudderless ship moving from blunder to blunder" and playing right into Obote's hands.

Considering the situation unveiled by the detention of the ministers as requiring drastic measures, Mutesa took steps to arrange for a military takeover. For this he enlisted the support and participation of Brigadier Opolot, and also sought military intervention by a foreign country, suspected to be Britain. When none of these materialized, Mutesa, as Kabaka of Buganda issued an ultimatum for the Central Government to vacate the soil of Buganda before 30th May 1966. Although he later said this was a mere bargaining chip, his friends and foes alike interpreted the ultimatum to mean the de facto secession of Buganda from the rest of Uganda.

As a response to the ultimatum, Obote, as Head of Government, declared a State of Emergency throughout Uganda. Subsequently, on the 1st June, in a move which treated the ultimatum as an act of rebellion, Obote ordered units of the Uganda Army to march on the Kabaka's palace in Mengo.

It had been reported that the Kabaka had amassed arms in the palace in readiness for war, and the troops were to search the palace. A clash between the advancing Uganda Army and the palace "guards" ensued. As Professor Mutibwa tells us, the battle was stiff: "Although Mutesa, assisted by his lieutenants equipped with Lee-Enfield riffles put up a stiff resistance and the Amin forces were obliged to call in a large contingent of reinforcements, it was not to be expected that Mengo could hold out for long against the Uganda army." (Mutibwa, P.M. 1992: 39) Eventually, after twelve hours of fierce fighting, the Uganda Army established control. The Kabaka had escaped from the palace, and the stage was set for a new order in Uganda.

The process of defining the national-democratic revolution in Uganda went through two stages. The first was the abrogation of the 1962 Constitution and its replacement by the 1966 Constitution, which, though interim, made sweeping changes. It nullified all federal provisions which had been the principal character-defining aspect of the old order as enshrined in the 1962 Constitution, and replaced them with instruments for a single unified government.

The kingdom of Buganda and the three federal states of Ankole, Bunyoro and Toro lost their autonomy and semi-autonomy respectively; Buganda lost its right to elect its Members of Parliament indirectly; and the Kabaka of Buganda lost his privileged status.

In the national arena, the posts of Prime Minister and leader of government, as well as that of ceremonial Presidency were abolished and in their place was instituted the post of Executive President. This interim Constitution was effective for a year, and then the 1967 Constitution that

gave the final definition to the national-democratic revolution was passed by Parliament sitting as a Constituent Assembly. Thus 1967 totally overhauled the body politic of Uganda.

One of the major things the Constitution did was to abolish the institution of the monarchy. By this abolition, the national-democratic revolution had initiated a process of eradicating the survival of pro-capitalist ideological structures which were either a hindrance to or a drawback to the social progress of the country.

In feudal societies, "monarchs are symbolically, and indeed actually, the centre around which society is organized as a state. They are considered mediators between the various parts and interests that make up the social order and between the human and extra-human worlds. The king holds the social cosmos together. Thus his rule is like that of the supreme being of man's religious systems, a symbol of totality." (Grottaneli, C 1987: 313; Ray, B.C 1991: 202) As a result, the monarch/monarchy is the central symbol of power and legitimacy - a situation totally inimical to the evolution of the Ugandan nation and the adoption of democratic governance in the country.

By abolishing the kingdom of Buganda and demarcating it into four districts, Obote instituted fundamental changes in the social and political climate of the society of the former kingdom. Up to 1967 Ganda society was a curious mixture of the pre-colonial social structure and the colonial one instituted through the 1900 Agreement. Pre-colonial Ganda society has been described as characterized by "the absence of cohesive and clearly delineated strata, but not, of course in the sense of egalitarianism."(Tuden, A. & Plotinicov, L. 1970: 141) All those who occupied position of authority had objective and economic advantage. These positions also accrued immense social status and prestige. Below the strata of the officials were the common people, the undistinguished ordinary people who were not anything but that. These were the people who did manual labor and paid tribute to the chiefs. As Wrigley observes: "inequality seemed natural to the Baganda; it aroused envy but not resentment."(Wrigley, C.C. 1964: 20)

Upon this pre-colonial polity, the British, through the 1900 Agreement, superimposed a social structure based on religious affiliation and some degree of class differentiation. In colonial Buganda, one's religion determined one's status and advancement in the Buganda civil service; however, in situations where there were two competitors of the same religion, then the social class in a system which came to be known as "*mwana wani"* (whose child) tipped the balance. The operation of all this intricate system was nominally in the hands of the Kabaka whose power was exercised by those around him, the neo-traditionalists. The abolition of the Kabakaship and the kingdom, and their replacement by the district administration brought all this to an end. By instituting District Appointment Boards, a measure of meritocracy was introduced and one's qualifications rather than family or religion was to determine the appointments.

The abolition of the kingdom of Buganda and the demarcation of the territory of the former kingdom into four administrative districts had major long-term consequences for the relations between Buganda and the rest of Ugandans. We have already alluded to the chauvinism of the Baganda, an attitude which set them apart from the rest of the Ugandans. In addition to the sources of this chauvinism which we have already elaborated upon, another contributing factor was the erroneous comparison which would be made between Buganda and other entities.

Unable to isolate the operation of the factors of economies of scale and the differential treatment of Buganda by the colonialists, the Baganda chauvinists ascribed their apparent relative success to what they viewed as their intrinsic superior qualities of the Baganda. From this attitude soon developed an acute form of superiority complex. None other than Abu

Mayanja, long-regarded as a "progressive Muganda" was to succinctly express this complex in April 1962 when he said that while the Constitution could create legal equality in Uganda, natural equality could never exist.(Hancock, I.R. 1966: 265; Mayanja, A.)

This kind of attitude was not only setting the Baganda apart from the rest of the country, it also constituted a form of oppression which results from attitudes. (Linlon, R. 1943: 500, 502) As this was arising from Ganda chauvinism, which in turn was also arising from the sense of belonging to a superior entity, the abolition of the kingdom of Buganda brought all this to an end. In the words of Ali Mazrui: "In 1966 Buganda was humbled."(Mazrui, A.A. 1970: 1087) There is no doubt that the nurturing of Ganda humility in place of chauvinism was an essential pre-requisite for the greater integration of Uganda.

The social structure of the former Ankole kingdom was also to be overhauled by the national-democratic revolution. In the dim past, probably several centuries back, the Bahima pastoralists arrived in present Ankole, conquered the Bairu who were the indigenous population and established Hima domination in the area. This domination was "expressed by inferior legal status and the obligation of tribute paying; and along with inferior legal status went inferior social status amounting essentially to a caste difference." (Oberg, K. 1940: 128)

The dividing line between Bahima and Bairu was not only marked by race - the Bahima have different racial features from Bairu; but also by certain prohibitions and different modes of livelihood. The Bahima depended for their livelihoods on cattle while the Bairu depended on agriculture. The Bairu were not permitted to own productive cows; nor were they allowed to marry Hima women yet Hima boys could take Bairu girls for concubines. If a Mwiru came to possess a productive cow, any Muhima had the right to take it away from him. The Bairu were barred from military service and no Mwiru could hold high official positions. Traditionally too, the Bairu were serfs whose exploitation took the form of tribute in food and labor. Furthermore, they had no political status, being serfs.

To maintain this system of oppression and exploitation, the Bahima had not only to get politically organized and also to evolve a state apparatus. Centered around the Mugabe (King) as the hub of Hima political apparatus, the Hima state provided protection against foreign aggression and also maintained Bairu in a subordinate position. When the British came, they merely refashioned the Hima state and, through the system of indirect rule, used it to run this part of the colony. Thus British colonialism, for the time that it lasted, served to entrench Hima domination over the Bairu, with the ruling stratum in Ankole being numerically dominated by Bahima throughout the colonial period.

As time went on, colonialism occasioned social development that undermined social stratification along caste lines. The effect of modern education was to instill egalitarian orientations and aspirations among an increasing number of Bairu, giving rise to a growing sense of dissatisfaction over their status as second class citizens. Bairu also developed an awareness of greater self-sufficiency from this mastery of modern skills, as well as from new sources of income made available to them through the cultivation and sale of cash crops. This led Bairu to demand for equality, particularly following the Second World War. In this agitation against Hima domination, the most articulate and vocal voices came from those who eventually became leading figures in the Ankole branch of the UPC.

The abolition of the kingdoms and their paraphernalia brought these struggles to an end: the dominance of the Bahima over the Bairu ceased.

The other structure that got overhauled by the national-democratic revolution of 1966 was the Babito dominance of the former kingdoms of Toro and Bunyoro. The abolition of the monarchy, which was the hub of the power of the Babito caste in the two kingdoms, also dismantled the three-tier social structure of the two kingdoms. Up to 1966 the social structure of Bunyoro and Toro consisted of the Babito caste at the pinnacle, followed by the cattle-keeping Hima, and the cultivating Iru at the lowest rang of the ladder. These social scales were marked by status, privileges and prestige. Thus the Babito provided the kingdoms with the ruling dynasty, and most of the chieftainship went to them by virtue of a mythical charter:

"The Babito were chosen long ago to rule us," an old peasant once told Professor Beattie, "if it were not for them there would be no royal line to govern, and to be governed by Bairu would be intolerable." (Beattie, J. 1971: 100) Such feudal tendencies pervaded the whole Nyoro society and tended to be reinforced by the monarchy. The Babito expected to be treated with feudal decorum and the common people felt obligated to do so. All this was brought to an end by the 1966 revolution.

Following the revolution, there was some resistance, and some of those who were leading the resistance got arrested. Among those who were arrested was Michael Matovu, the Saza Chief of Buddu in Buganda. Matovu was detained on 26th May 1966. On 6th September 1966, he applied for a writ of habeas corpus, and the case came before Justice Jeffrey Jones on 14th September 1966. (Udo Udoma 1966: 525) Because the application raised questions about the validity or constitutionality of the 1966 Constitution, Justice Jeffrey Jones referred the matter to a higher court for interpretation.

The court to interpret the question raised consisted of three Judges: Sir Udo Udoma, the Chief Justice, and two other judges: C.J. Sheridan and Jeffrey Jones. This is the case which has come to be known as: Uganda vs Commissioner of Prisons, ex parte Matovu. Abu Mayanja represented the applicant, Michael Matovu. Godfrey Binaisa, the Attorney General, and Nkambo Mugerwa, Solicitor General, represented the respondent. In their judgment, read by the Chief Justice, Sir Udo Udoma, the judges argued: "In his alternative submission namely that the 1966 Constitution is a valid Constitution in law because it came into existence as a result of a revolution or a coup d'état, the learned Attorney General would appear to be on firm ground."

The Attorney General urged the Court to hold that the incidents which finally culminated in the promulgation of the 1966 Constitution had taken place abruptly. Most people were taken unawares. What happened then was a coup d'état. And coup d'états are recognised in international law as a proper and effective legal means of changing governements or constitutions in countries like Uganda, which is politically and completely independent and sovereign. In his attractive and impressive submission, the Attorney General contended that the four cardinal requirements in international law to give the 1966 Constitution and Governement of Uganda validity in law have clearly been fulfilled. These requirements are:

1. That there must be an abrupt political change, i.e. a coup detat or a revolution
2. The change must not have been within the contemplation of an existing Constitution.
3. The change must destroy an entire legal order except what is preserved; and
4. The new Government and Constitution must be effective.

Developing his arguments on these requirements, Counsel submitted that the declaration of the Prime Minister on 22nd February 1966, Annex a: followed by the statement of 24th February

1966, in which the 1962 Constitution was suspended; the seizure of all power by the Prime Minister; the setting up of the Security Council for Uganda; the forcible ejection of the President and Head of State and Commander-in-chief from State House, in consequence of which he later ultimately fled the country; the abolition of the 1962 Constitution, followed immediately by the promulgation of the 1966 Constitution by resolution of the National Assembly; the removal from 1966 of the Order in Council by the authority of which the 1962 Constitution was established; the automatic assumption of office by operation of law by the then Prime Minister as Executive President of Uganda with the power to appoint anyone as Vice President of Uganda; the abolition of appeals to the Privy Council; the abolition of the federal system of government and High Court of Buganda; and the enfranchisement of the people of Buganda who had been disenfranchised since 1962 - all these were not only abrupt but such fundamental changes not within the contemplation of the 1962 Constitution and therefore revolutionary in character. The end result was in law a revolution. (Udo Udoma 1966: 534-535 also referred to in Kasfir, N. page 201 note 12)

The foregoing is a legal perspective. There is also a Marxist perspective, based on structural analysis. This perspective stems from the fact that the colonisation of Uganda was a means of imposing the capitalist mode of production in the area that became Uganda. In the initial period of its imposition, the capitalist mode of production does not have the wherewithal to operate. It therefore "...subsumes the labour process as it finds it, it takes over an existing labour process, developed by different and more archaic modes of production.....The work may become more intensive, its duration may be extended, it may become more continuous or orderly under the eye of the interested capitalist, but in themselves these changes do not affect the character of the labour process, the actual mode of working" (Marx, K.1977: 1021; also quoted in Han, D.R. 1992: 88)

This is done through a process called articulation of modes of production. That is to say the modes of production which have been operating up to the point of colonisation are articulated to the incoming capitalist mode of production. This stems from a clear realisation "that capitalism can never immediately and totally eliminate the preceding modes of production, nor above all relations of exploitation which characterise these modes of production.

On the contrary, during an entire period it must reinforce these relations of exploitation, since it is only this development which permits its own provisioning of goods coming from these modes of production or with men driven from these modes of production and therefore compelled to sell their labour power to capitalism in order to survive." (Hahn, D.R. 1992: 13; also cited in Forster-Carter 1978: 47-78).

What we then have is a process which Charles Bettleheim captured very well when he said that the pre-capitalist modes of production are "both undermined and perpetuated at the same time" in a process he called "conservation-dissolution". (Alavi, H. 1982: 175 ff 6) However, as the dissolution or undermining process gets under way, the pre-capitalist modes of production do not take things lying down; they resist and thus giving rise to contradictions.

One instance of the contradictions between the capitalist mode of production and the pre-capitalist modes of production did occur in Buganda in the 1920s. On colonisation, since the incoming capitalist system did not have a labour process of its own, it was decided that in Buganda the feudal production system then in place would be utilised. Initially, this worked very well. However, the potential of the arrangement got exhausted and it eventually became a fetter to production. "As fruits of increased cultivation were appropriated in the form of *bussulu* and *nvujjo*, the tenant lost all material incentive to extend his cultivation of cash crops.

In fact in the second decade of colonial rule cotton acreage declined in Buganda from 27,380 acres in 1911-1912 to 20,100 in 1916-1917, while it increased in Eastern Province from 29,720 to 97,961 acres in the same years." (Mamdani,M. 1976: 122-123) To remedy this problem, the colonial authorities passed the Bussulu and Nvujjo Law of 1928 which put a limit on what the landlord could appropriate and guaranteed the tenant complete and hereditary security of tenure. According to Mamdani: "The effect of the law was to render the relation between landlord and tenant by and large formal, substantially robbing it of its class content."

There were other contradiction in which the capitalist mode of production sought to supplant the pre-capitalist ones such as the one which led to the deportation of Kabaka Mutesa which we discussed in chapter 3. Of all these contradictions, the most serious was to occur in 1966 and resulted in the abolition of the monarchy and the transformation of Uganda into a republic.

ENDNOTES

(1) Who was Kahiriza? He was Ibingira's protégé and hatchet man. After the elections to the Eshiengereo (district Council) of Ankole in 1963, although Bananauka was three times elected Engazi (Prime Minister), Ibingira used his influence to veto the election of Bananauka as Engazi and placed James Kaigiriza.

(2) In 1921 an organisation called the Mubende Bunyoro Committee (MBC) was formed to fight for the return of Omukama Kabalega, to recover Banyoro land from Buganda which was registered as Mailo, Crown and Estates land, to reinstate socio-cultural freedom to Bunyoro society and to resist non-Banyoro rule, exploitation and other forms of subjugation.

(3) To fully appreciate the pain Buganda went through, please read: "The Buganda Crsis 1964,' by I. Hancock found in "African Affairs", volume 69, number 275, April 1970.

(4) In the article, *The Rise and fall of Grace Ibingira* written by Andre de la Rue and from which these details were obtained, Andre de la Rue is a pen name of someone descrbed as "an obsever of African affairs resident in East Africa". I have endeavoured to find out who this is and have failed to get a definitive answer. However, his article is extremely perceptive, which sometimses makes me think he could have been an academic at Makerere.

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