

W A POLITICAL BIOGRAPHY OF RONALD GIDEON NGALA 4

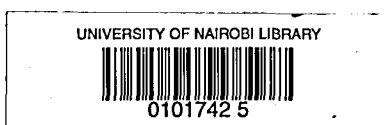
By

GEORGE M. GONA

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfillment for the degree of
Master of Arts in the University of Nairobi.

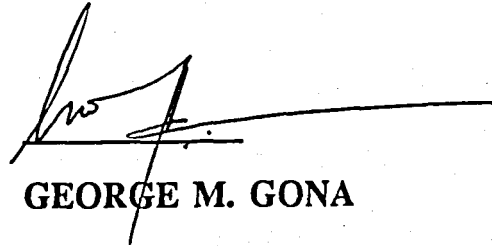
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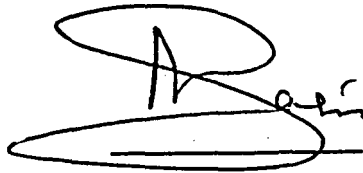
DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'G. M. Gona', written over a horizontal line.

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This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as University supervisor.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. I. Salim', written over a horizontal line.

PROF. A.I. SALIM

To my Parents

GONA WA KALAMA and SIDI WA MAITHA

for their Love and Encouragement

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ABSTRACT

This is a biographical study of Ronald Gideon Ngala, who became a prominent leader in Kenya. He was born in 1922 at Gotani, in present day Kilifi District. He attended his primary and secondary schools at Kaloleni Church Missionary Society Station and Alliance High School respectively, before going on to Makerere College in Kampala, Uganda.

As will be observed in this work, Ngala's contribution to the process of decolonization and nation-building in post-independence Kenya was immense. He belonged to the political group of the African educated elite, who established a new political tradition in Kenya's nationalist struggle to counter imperialism and colonialism. Equipped with this political tradition of negotiation and persuasion, Ngala and his group created the right conditions within which independence was handed over to the African majority.

Ngala joined politics in 1957 as the first African Legislative Council (LEGCO) Member for Coast Province. In Legco and in public, he was a central participant in the subsequent constitutional advances. In 1958, while enjoying his colleague's confidence and respect, Ngala was elected secretary to the African Elected Members Organization [AEMO], where he performed his duties without imposing his personal views at the expense of the solidarity of his group.

However, in the wake of political divisions among the African Members of Legco in 1959 and the subsequent fears and jealousies that were nursed by the minority groups, Ngala stood out as a moderate among the nationalists. His moderation was seen clearly when he involved himself in the multi-racial politics of 1959, which were European-initiated and said to dilute the African struggle. The subsequent Kiambu Leaders Conference of May 1960 which led to the formation of

the Kenya African National Union (KANU), was the climax of the political divisions: the minority groups explicitly lamented Kikuyu-Luo domination of Kenyan politics and Ngala became their rallying force. This led to the formation of Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU) in June 1960 as a counterweight to KANU. The result of this was a jostling for safeguards entrenched in the subsequent constitutions to suit KANU and KADU.

As shown in this work, Ngala was a central figure in the negotiations for an independence constitution. Accordingly, he secured for his adherents and, indeed, for Kenya a Regionalist type of constitution which was the constitution with which Kenya walked into independence in 1963. He was the first leader of the post-independence opposition, where he acted as the litmus paper for the government; helping it redirect or rethink its plans and policies. It is in this light that the government had to revise its first development plan.

With the political odds against him, Ngala dissolved KADU in November 1964 and joined KANU with the aim of acquiring the national stature that seems to have eluded him in the first year of independence.

However, his bid for a prominent place in Kenyatta's government and the party did not escape the opposition of the Arab-Swahili, who considered Ngala an intruder into the politics of Mombasa. Moreover, those, like Msanifu Kombo, who had been in KANU since its inception did not want to be led by a former KADU man.

Equally, with Mboya's star declining by 1968, Ngala's meteoric rise was also to be checked given that he (Ngala) had been Mboya's supporter since 1965. This strategy was a source of consistent frustration to Ngala and his supporters through intimidation, threats and sponsorship of Ngala's opponents by up-country politicians.

However, with the strong mandate and following he enjoyed at the Coast, coupled with his shrewdness in confronting his opponents he was able to win for himself a national stature after independence and to survive many political crises at the Coast. Unfortunately he died in a mysterious accident in 1972, an accident that raised eyebrows.

ABBREVIATIONS

- AEMO.....African Elected Members Organization
- AFC.....Agricultural Finance Corporation
- AHS.....Alliance High School
- APP.....African Peoples Party
- CAA.....Coast African Association
- CAPU.....Coast African Peoples Union
- CEMO.....Constituency Elected Members Organization
- CMS.....Church Missionary Society
- COTU.....Central Organization of Trade Unions
- DC.....District Commissioner
- DO.....Distric Officer
- EALB.....East African Literature Bureau
- EAPH.....East African Publishing House
- ECG.....Echaenceptiagraphic
- ICDC.....Industrial and Commercial Development
Corporation
- KADU.....Kenya African Democratic Union
- KANU.....Kenya African National Union
- KIM.....Kenya Independence Movement
- KNA.....Kenya National Archives
- KNP.....Kenya National Party
- KPU.....Kenya Peoples Party
- Legco.....Legislative Council
- MADU.....Mombasa African Democratic Union

NKG.....New Kenya Group

NPPPP.....Northern Province Peoples Progressive
Party

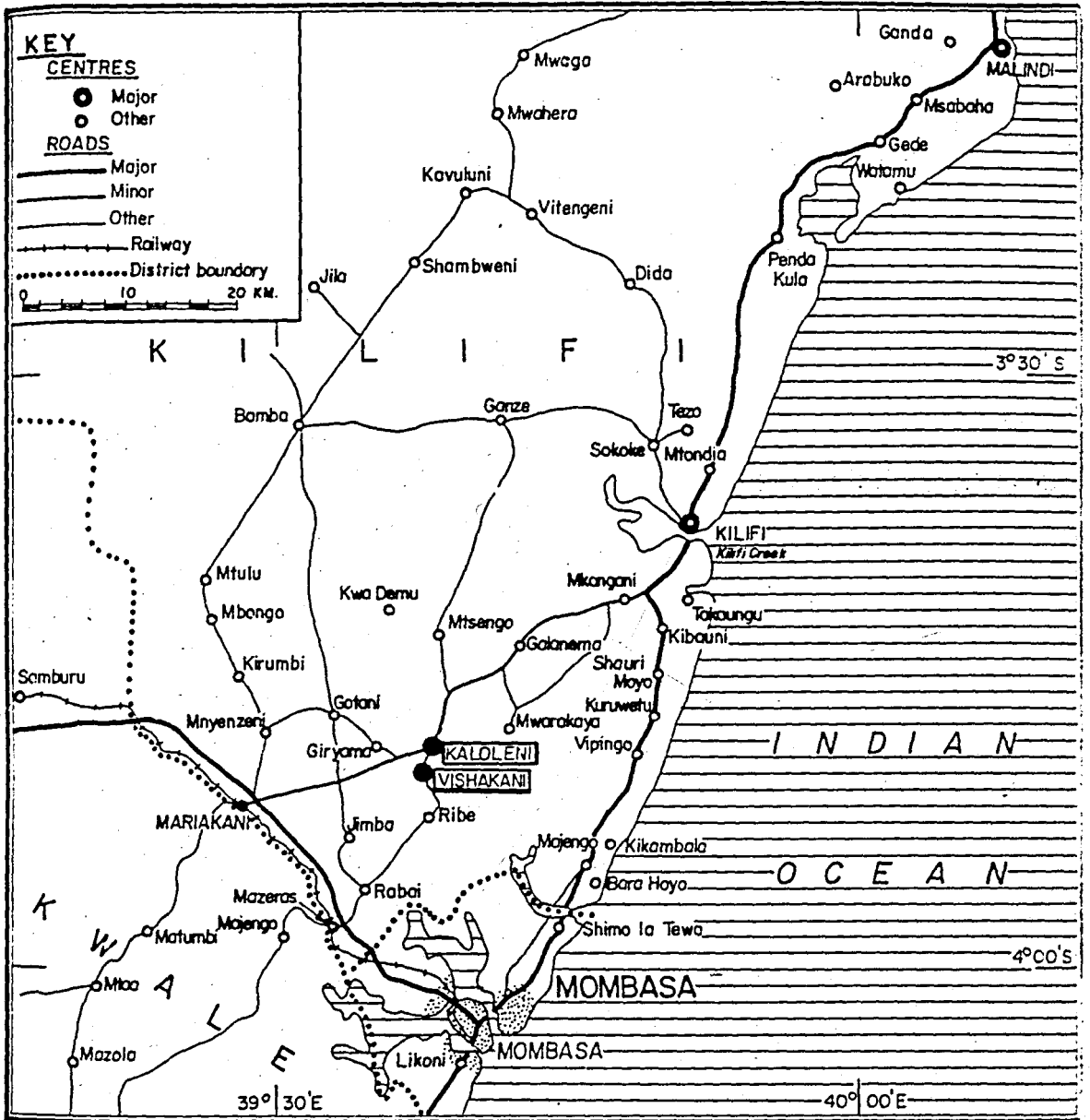
PAFMECA.....Pan African Freedom Movement of East
and Central Africa

SIP.....Somali Independent Party

USA.....United States of America

GLOSSARY OF GIRIAMA AND SWAHILI TERMS

<u>enye tsi</u>	owners of the land
<u>harambee</u>	pulling together
<u>kihako</u>	the pulling out of the rectum end through the anus. It is a disease
<u>majimbo</u>	Regionalism
<u>mganga</u>	medicine man/woman
<u>mwambao</u>	Coastal Strip
<u>mwananchi/wananchi</u>	Citizen/Citizens
<u>mzee</u>	old man
<u>namuvera mubomu</u> ...	I have a 'big' thank you
<u>uchi wa mnazi</u>	sap tapped from the coconut plant (mnazi). It is used as a beverage among the Mijikenda
<u>uhuru</u>	freedom
<u>wa-bara kwao</u>	up-country people back to their homes.



MAP 1: KALOLENI AND VISHAKANI AND THEIR ENVIRONS



MR. RONALD GIDEON NGALA

Minister for Labour, Social Security and Adult Education, 1960

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Thomas Carlyle wrote:

Great men are profitable company. They are living fountains - good and pleasant to hear.¹

On individuals, G.V. Plekhanov pointed out:

... individuals, thanks to the particularities of their characters, can influence, can even be very strong, but the possibility of such an influence, as well as its extent, are determined by the organization of the society, by the relation of social forces.²

Equally, John Hargreaves, on discussing biography and the debate about imperialism, says

While historians continue their debates, the layman may well turn to biographical studies in the hope of forming at least a provisional understanding of imperialism.³

Thus, a social entity, like Kenya's, can be fully understood only if we do not limit ourselves to the abstract study of its formal organizations, but, instead, analyze the way in which it appears in the personal experience of its various members.

Life histories of individuals reveal a lot about a society at large. Broad aspects of society are seen in the acts of the individuals. Issues such as living conditions, the type of education, labour conditions and political conditions of the times are revealed. This is because these people are active participants in their societies. Such individuals, whom society sometimes regards as heroes, have formed important subjects of study. Thomas Carlyle once remarked that,

"Universal History is at the bottom of the history of Great Men".⁴ In this perspective, history is the aggregate of the lives of all the individual men who constitute society. Attempts by David Goldsworthy⁵ and Guy Arnold⁶ seem to justify the importance of biographies. Through such expositions, for example, major historical episodes have been brought to light and have come to be understood better. Goldsworthy, in his study of Tom Mboya, exposes the labour conditions in colonial Kenya and also brings to light the labour movement in the country during the colonial period. Through Arnold's work, the 1963 elections in Kenya have been analyzed vividly. Equally important, it is hoped, is this attempt at a life record of Ronald Ngala. It will be a biography among many biographies of the individual men who constitute society. In this way, a biography of Ngala will, it is hoped, be a contribution towards a fuller Kenyan history.

By the mid-1950's armed resistance against the colonialists in Kenya had come to a halt, not to mention that militant political activity and passive resistances [in the name of peasant uprisings, and plantation workers protests] had gone underground. Active political activity had been banned following the Mau Mau. There seems not to have been any strong force to press forward the legitimate political struggle of the Kenya people. A minority group, consisting of the educated elite, emerged to articulate the array of grievances of the masses (workers and peasants) and brought it to the attention of the colonialists, that the problem of national independence was yet to be solved. Among these educated elite was Ronald Ngala. A look at these few African educated elite sheds more light on Kenya's history. Ngala was involved in the Legislative Council debates

after 1957, especially those concerning African representation. He equally played a major role in the bargaining process which brought independence to Kenya. This involved Ngala in the colonial drama in which he was one of the leading actors. The colonial government, colonial settlers and Ngala's contemporaries - Mboya, Muliro, Gichuru, Moi - were among the participants.

Statement of the Problem

When analyzing the major episodes in Kenya's nationalism, both during the colonial and post-colonial periods, Ronald Ngala's name cannot be missed out. Yet, apart from knowing that he was a man from the Coast, that he was a co-delegate with Mboya to London in 1957 to seek increased African representation in the Legislative Council and that he was the leader of Kenya African Democratic Union, very little is known about Ronald Ngala the man.

There is considerable systematic literature on Ngala's contemporaries, either in terms of what people have said and written about them or what they have written about themselves and their experiences. Such literature include Tom Mboya's Freedom and After⁷, Oginga Odinga's Not yet Uhuru⁸ and David Goldsworthy's Tom Mboya, The Man Kenya Wanted to Forget.⁹ As concerns Ngala, a man who had also played a prominent role in Kenya's nationalism, only scanty and scattered biographical material exists. Probably, this has been so because there has been no personal interest in pursuing a complete portrait of him.

Moreover, the existing scattered literature about Ngala is biased or is seen from one perspective. For example, should we agree with Odinga's contention

that Ngala was "always one of the most obedient proteges of the colonialists"?.¹⁰ Should we see Ngala in Goldsworthy's perspective, that Ngala was the meek, humble non-controversial man caught in a web of political jig-saw which always found him in a neutral position?.¹¹ An analysis of such allegations and judgements about Ngala could come to more light through an independent study of Ngala.

The existence of scattered non-systematised information about Ngala, and the availability only of allegations about him, only amount to a biased fragmentary story of Ngala; hence a gap in Kenya's history exists. This is a challenge to historians. This study is, thus, a modest response to this challenge.

Aims and Objectives of the study

This is an attempt at writing a life history of Ronald Gideon Ngala. It is therefore a record of his origins, background, personality, political beliefs and career. This portrait is drawn in reasonable depth against the background of the subject's professional and social milieu. It is viewed from various perspectives of his colleagues, his friends, his family and his critics.

While it is true that such a biography generally shows how public affairs are influenced by the personalities of national and local leaders, which is central to a political biography, my aim in this study is also to attempt drawing a broader picture of Ngala's life - a "life and times" approach that includes aspects of his life other than his political activities.

In this study I aim at investigating Ngala's life, what shaped this life and his educational experience and work. Central to this objective is to see how his

early life and education influenced his subsequent career as a teacher and politician.

Central to this study has been to establish how individuals in the colonial period chose their social, economic and political arenas. Towards this end, I have examined how Ngala is recruited into politics. At various instances, I have tried to establish Ngala's leadership qualities and the criteria by which he was chosen as leader. This has involved an analysis of his leadership acumen among his colleagues and especially in the Kenya African Democratic Union.

Suffice it to say that Ngala's role in Kenya's nationalist struggle has been assessed. This has involved an expose of Ngala's beliefs about the timing and method of achieving Uhuru. I subsequently examine Ngala's post-independence politics of reconciliation and his statesmanship. Last I throw light on his death.

Theoretical Framework

A multi-dimensional theoretical approach is used in this study. Three theories are employed, depending on what is being established about my subject: the Elite nationalism theory, the Leadership theory and, to a lesser extent, the Marxist theory-lesser because of the reasons given below.

The institution of society can be viewed as consisting of actions of a number of individual souls. It follows then, that there is a minority of individuals within a society who are creative and demonstrate above-average abilities. Through their actions upon the majority, they are able to influence the souls of the uncreative. Through such creative individuals, societies are able to

respond, partially or effectively, to human and physical challenges.

During the early years of the colonial intrusions, personalities like the Orkoiyots of the Nandi and Mekatilili of the Giriama led movements of resistance against the colonialists. They belonged to the minority that initiated action those days. In the mid-1950s and 1960s, personalities like Moi, Mboya and Ngala turned out to be the active minority. But why Mboya or Ngala of the Africans living in the 1950s and 1960s? This draws our attention to the theory of Elite Nationalism. The theory purports that it is the African elite of the 1950's and 1960's, armed with a new dynamism of persuasion and bargaining, as opposed to armed resistance, who identified themselves with the workers and peasants and, thus, articulated the various grievances of the Africans and successfully responded to the challenge of imperialism and colonialism. This group was compelled to carry on the resistance work in a new, non-military way.

Benjamin Kipkorir points out that historical analysis has tended to concentrate on broad protests and resistances, millenarianism, peasant uprisings and discontent among plantation workers, which offered challenges to colonialism and imperialism.¹² He asserts that because "it was not to the peasants, but rather the educated elite upon whom political and economic power devolved after independence", the nationalism that brought independence was an elite nationalism.¹³ I therefore analyze Ngala in the light of this theory, that as the elite, Ngala and his group were able to sit-down and bargain round the table to achieve solutions to the political, economic and social problems of the masses.

Politics could be viewed as a dependant variable of economic systems, economic institutions, communications systems, degree of urbanization,

distribution of labour force and other social, economic and demographic factors.¹⁴ The manipulation of these factors would amount to "doing politics". In other words, political action would be essentially action dealing with the means to satisfy competing and undetermined ends. From this point of view, political questions of both the colonial and post-colonial period appeared as a set of technical problems that were to be solved by the use of appropriate technical means. The efficiency with which these problems were tackled depended on the leadership of the various pressure groups. Thus, the theory of leadership becomes crucial to the whole question of the struggle to emancipate the Kenyan from the social, economic and political shackles of the colonial and post-colonial problems.

I herein apply John Cartwright's view of the Leadership theory as reflected in his article "Some Constraints Upon African Political Leadership".¹⁵ According to him leadership is the ability to obtain the compliance of others, an ability which some persons occupying the roles of leaders do not necessarily possess. Leadership, therefore, is evident when others do what the leader wants, for their own sake or for the society's, rather than for the sake of the leader himself.¹⁶ In seeking this compliance, the leaders manipulate and articulate institutional and personal resources. However, the extent of this articulation and manipulation of resources is curtailed by the degree of acceptability of the leader by the people he purports to lead. Two factors determine a leader's acceptability: that the people develop a "habit of obedience", or because the people expect a reward from their leader - that out of his leadership, good results are expected. On the other hand, the foresight and degree of the ambition of the

leader will equally determine acquiescence from the populace.¹⁷ Ngala's leadership is herein analyzed and assessed within Cartwright's leadership theory.

The Marxist theory is hostile to individualistic explanations of historical events. It discounts the effort to view individuals as prime movers of action in society. Karl Marx wrote,

...here individuals are dealt with only in so far as they are the personifications of economic categories, embodiments of particular class-sections and class-interests. My standpoint, from which the evolution of the economic formation of society is viewed as a process of natural history, can less than any other make the individual responsible for relations whose creature he socially remains, however much he may subjectively raise himself above them.¹⁸

Marx's objection to social analysis, which has individuals as starting points, takes three forms: that it refuses to see historical change as in any way the product of the initiative of 'great men'; that Marxism is not a variant of humanism. It does not see social action as undertaken by individuals in some sort of expression of human 'essence'; and that Marxism does not see relations among social groups as in some way reducible to inter-personal relation, that is, men are seen as genetic principles of the levels of the social whole.¹⁹

On the whole, the Marxist theory sees individuals becoming historical 'factors' only so long as they express views of the 'class' or articulate the grievances of their followers. If we take Plekhanov's contention that individuals have an influence on the destiny of society, depending on the social organization (Marx's view), then we can say that we can view individuals as pointers or tracer elements which show up the context in which the individuals work, hence the history of that society. We should like to see Ngala for example as a

'window' through which we can see the style and structure of political organization in the 1950s and 1960s. Indeed, while the Marxist view rejects individualistic explanations for historical events, it pays to place individuals in their categories or social classes. We will see how Ngala fits as one who speaks for which social class. However, because of its hostility to the individualist explanation of historical events, this theory is given less attention in this study.

Literature Review

In his book Nchi Na Desturi za Wagiriama,²⁰ Ngala aimed at putting on record the major tenets of Giriama ways of life from childhood to death. Traditions and customs of the Giriama are elaborately explained in the book. By inference, we note that Ngala showed a great attachment to his traditions and customs despite the missionary education and evangelism he received while at school. The book, however, does not tell us much about Ngala himself. Rather, it affords us a picture of what Ngala was supposed to go through in life as a Giriama. It does not say whether he went through any, some of, or all, the Giriama rituals he discusses or not. The book does not tell us where Ngala was born, when, who his family members were or when and where he went to school. Nothing concerning his career after school is mentioned in the book. The book is of very little significance as a source of information on Ngala the man.

In his article "The Coast African Association: Politics of Kenya's Coast 1940 - 1955"²¹, Joseph Harris asserts that the origins and leadership of the Coast African Association [CAA] are obscure. This is because the organization aimed

at articulating the political grievances of the coastal people working in Mombasa and in the area of Nairobi; yet its leadership was to be drawn from civil servants who were not supposed to indulge in political activity. CAA was, thus, until its dissolution in 1955, a social organization in disguise. Harris points out that the CAA expressed sentiments in support of Mau Mau and raised issues such as those of land, wages, education and welfare. According to Harris, Ngala matured politically in CAA. For someone to mature politically in an organization, he should have participated in its activities. It is not clear from Harris' discussion how Ngala participated in any of the activities of CAA. Ngala's contribution to the association is not mentioned either. Ngala is mentioned as having been a co-founder, with Francis Khamisi of Mombasa African Democratic Union (MADU). No further explanation is given for the formation of MADU, nor are its deliberations or aims discussed. The article, thus, is of little value as a reference on the life of Ngala. It is speculative and lacks tangible sources to support issues mentioned about Ngala.

Donald Rothchild in his article "Changing Racial Stratification and Bargaining Styles : The Kenyan Experience"²² presents a picture of shifting levels of 'bargaining' in Kenya during the colonial and post-colonial periods. He sees three shifts of levels: from the hegemonial bargaining in the early years of colonialism, to the direct bargaining of the 1950s and 1960s and to tacit bargaining after independence. He notes "unless sectional leaders could manage to negotiate their main differences a mutual disadvantageous economic and political crisis became unavoidable."²³ In this regard, the role of sectional leadership was of the essence. It was the leaders of these activities who engaged

in the give-and-take process. Sectional leaders, according to Rothchild, also concluded a series of group bargaining over ethnic representation in Legco and struggled for safeguards for the minority groups. Rothchild discusses the bargaining process as an institution but avoids to mention the persons involved in this process. Moreover, Rothchild does not mention anything about Ngala or other African members of Legco. Rothchild, thus, misses out Ngala's political background, family background and early life and education which are basic to a biography of Ngala. Hence his article is equally not very useful to this study.

Ahmed Salim discusses the "Mwambao Movement", a movement aimed at achieving the autonomy of the Coast.²⁴ Basically, Salim argues that the "Mwambao" movement arose out of the reaction of the Arab-Swahili against what they called "African Nationalism" and that they felt they were not getting a fair deal from the constitutional plans of the late 1950s and early 1960s. The article is more concerned with Arab-Swahili political leadership and aspirations at the Coast than with the African political leadership. However, to some extent the article reveals some issues about Ngala. It tells us that Ngala was one of the opponents of the "Mwambao" movement. He was against the privileges of the Arab-Swahili minority and vocal about the land problem at the Coast. In the final analysis, the "Mwambao" adherents became reconciled to defeat. Salim argues that "they opted for Ngala's regionalist policy not for its own sake as an ideology but for its absorption of many of their fears of immediate rule by upcountry Africans and the domination by Nairobi."²⁵ However, Salim does not say whether or not Ngala's regionalism was based on the same fears of the Arab-Swahili of the Coast. Nothing concerning Ngala's family background,

educational background, his influences, ideals, dreams, political life, both at the local and national level, are mentioned in Salim's article.

One very revealing discussion about Ngala is given by Hyder Kindy in his book Life and Politics in Mombasa.²⁶ The book, though an autobiography of Kindy himself, reveals quite a number of things about the politics in Mombasa and the man, Ngala, who participated in them. Kindy, for example, elaborates quite intricately on the nature of intra-party (KANU) political factionalism in Mombasa, especially in 1967 and 1968, when Ngala became the focus for opposition. Kindy exposes a few of Ngala's weaknesses then: arrogance and mistrust of even his own closest associates. The book equally exposes the political forces against Ngala at this time. Thus, as far as the post-colonial local political drama in Mombasa is concerned, Kindy's book is a basic and compulsory source. It, however, does not offer a fully-fledged discussion on Ngala. It concentrates on the post-colonial local political drama, saying nothing about the national political drama in which Ngala was also involved.

In his book Not Yet Uhuru²⁷ Oginga Odinga narrates with intensity the nature of the development of the nationalist struggle in Kenya. In this work, he clearly shows his disillusionment with this nationalism and offers a critique of it. He argues that Uhuru is yet to be achieved because Kenya did not achieve a structural transformation, in that Kenya has not been able to shed off the mother-child cultural and economic relationship with the former master. In the process of writing his discourse, Odinga offers us a subtle sketch of his colleagues, including Ngala [pp. 141 - 146]. On the whole, Odinga sees Ngala as one of the most obedient proteges of the colonialists. Equally, Odinga paints

a picture of Ngala as being a man only being used by Jomo Kenyatta and Mboya to dislodge him, seemingly unable to make independent and conscious judgement. Odinga, therefore, does not offer a detailed analysis of the factors affecting Ngala and his Kenya African Democratic Union men after independence. He also does not give us detailed information on the origins of his colleagues. Nevertheless, Odinga's book is basic as a source of information for this study. It is a compulsory source on Kenya's nationalist struggle.

Tom Mboya in his book Freedom and After²⁸ affords us a survey of the nationalist struggle in Kenya. He mentions the shaping factors of this nationalism and its constraints, especially the divisions that emerge among the African leaders. Mboya's book concentrates on the constitutional advancement period, 1957-1962 and, therefore, leaves out much of what Mboya's colleagues were involved in before they joined politics. Ngala, being one of Mboya's contemporaries, his origins, background, education are not mentioned in Mboya's book. Equally, since the book ends at 1963, it leaves out all the activities of Ngala after independence. The book is, however, informative especially on the constitutional developments in Kenya after 1957 which Ngala was involved in.

David Goldsworthy, on writing a biography of Mboya²⁹, mentions Ngala. He is mentioned as having been elected to Legco in 1957. He was a delegation leader to the Lancaster House Conference in 1960 and founder leader of Kenya African Democratic Union. Goldsworthy sees Ngala as the meek and not ill-intentioned reconciliatory man, characters that won him various leadership roles among his fellow African members in Legco. However, Goldsworthy does not discuss Ngala's origins, background and career before he joined politics.

Ngala's political, social and economic activities in the post-colonial period are treated peripherally and, if at all, they are only touched on. The book, to some extent, offers an insight into Ngala's character and is, therefore, helpful to this study.

Literature Overview

The literature reviewed above shows Ngala as having been a member of one organization or another. He is seen as having been a central actor in various activities. Despite the existence of this literature, the personality of Ronald Ngala is not dealt with in full by any of them. There is a lot of generalization about Ngala. There is an inherent fallacy in generalizations about personalities, for individuals differ in their peculiarities.

Generally speaking, none of the literature reviewed mentions Ngala's family background, his early life, education and his subsequent career after school. This forms an important stage of Ngala's life and, possibly, influenced his later political career.

Ngala's activities in the post-colonial period have not drawn much attention in the literature reviewed. For example, his politics of reconciliation and thereafter are not given due attention.

On the whole, there has not been a serious and comprehensive study of Ronald Ngala. It is towards this end that this study is written. It will serve a triple purpose: to fill in the gaps about Ngala's life, add on to the knowledge about his role in Kenya's nationalist struggle and put on record his post-colonial career and an assessment of this career. This, I hope, will be a contribution to a

national history of Kenya.

Sources and Methodology

This thesis is based on both documentary and oral evidence. As it will be noted, it draws much of its information from Newspapers. Mombasa Times is used widely, especially up to 1960. This is because it was a paper that was based in Mombasa and, thus, reported more on African Affairs in Mombasa than the other papers existing then.

Primary documentary material was assembled from the Kenya National Archives in Nairobi. This included information in government official reports, government files, annual reports, and minutes of various bodies in which, in one way or the other, my subject was involved. Other primary documentary materials included those obtained from family documents that I got access to.

Needless to say, a thorough reading was done of the secondary works that mention the subject. Where need be, these sources are quoted herein and accordingly acknowledged.

Before going into my research, I had to acquaint myself with the ideas behind the writing of biographies. Thus, I had to read widely on the theoretical nature and meaning of life histories. In this way, I was able to identify the major problems one encounters when researching for and writing a biography. Equally, I was able to draw a general scheme of issues I would address myself to in my research and writing on my subject.

A word on oral evidence. I managed to interview at least 35 informants. The questions addressed to informants were not administered on a questionnaire.

Rather, the questions were randomly asked. An informal type of interview was thus adopted. Much of the conversation was taped, while I recorded on paper some of it. Needless to say, the questions addressed to each informant varied according to the period for which the informant knew the subject. It should be noted that such a method was employed because at various moments of his life, my subject got to know different people. Some of those who saw him born and grow up in the village knew very little or nothing at all about his civic days in Mombasa or even his political activities at the national level. Equally, those who came to know him after 1957 did not know much about his life prior to that date. I framed many questions that had a bearing on the evidence I had got from newspapers, archival sources and secondary works. This created a temptation to frame leading questions, but it was a helpful way of filling in evidence that documentary sources are often silent on. A list of the informants is given in the sources and bibliography section.

Problems and Limitations of the Study

I was at times faced with unlikely and unconvincing interview reports, I had to make judgements, use my insight and imagination in the pursuit of the real man - Ngala.

The identification of, and approach to, informants was quite a problem. There were those who saw Ngala born and lived with him from birth to death. These were quite useful. Those who worked with him in various capacities before joining politics were equally helpful. Ngala's contemporaries in politics gave me a lot of problems, especially those who locked horns with him on

various occasions in their political career. Some did not want to discuss anything to do with Ngala; they would always argue that they would be doing injustice to talk ill of the dead. Moreover, some of the informants were cautious in their conversation with me precisely because of the nature of the struggle in political life in Kenya and, more so, because the circumstances of Ngala's death were "questionable".

Moreover, the rule that documents in the archives less than 30 years old from the date when they were written cannot be exposed for public inspection was a major limitation in my research. My subject was active in the post-1960 period, yet I was given access to documents with dates up to 1959 only. Despite a few concessions where the archivists went through some of the files and documents - which I could not have a look at - before they allowed me to peruse through them, the rule proved to be a major limitation on my research.

Perhaps the most trying time was when I had to stop my oral interviews because some of my informants were involved in the Nyayo Era celebrations in Kenya. I had to re-schedule my interviews. It was time wasting and a cause of delay in finishing the whole study.

Nevertheless, given all these limitations, it is my conviction that what follows is the first honest, objective attempt to give a portrait of Ngala, the Man and the Politician.

Footnotes

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3. John Hagreaves, "Biography and the Debate About Imperialism" Journal of Modern African Studies, vol. 2, No. 2, 1964, pp. 279 - 285.
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9. Goldsworthy, op. cit.
10. Odinga, op. cit., p. 296
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15. John Cartwright, "Some Constraints Upon African Political Leadership" Canadian Journal of African Studies, vol. II, No. 3, 1977, pp. 436 - 437.
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19. Ken Post, "Individuals and The Dialectic: A Marxist view of Political Biography" W.H. Morris - Jones ed., The Making of Politicians: Studies From Africa and Asia, London, Athlone Press, 1976, p. 18.
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22. Donald Rothchild, "Changing Racial Stratification and Bargaining Styles : The Kenya Experience" Canadian Journal of African Studies, vol. 7, No. 3, 1973, pp. 419 -433.
23. *ibid.*, p. 421.
24. Ahmed I. Salim, "The Movement For 'Mwambao' or Coast Autonomy in Kenya 1956 - 1963" B.A. Ogot ed., Hadith 2, 1970, p. 213.
25. *ibid.*
26. Hyder Kindy, Life and Politics in Mombasa, Nairobi, East African Publishing House, 1972.
27. Odinga, Not Yet Uhuru, *op. cit.*
28. Mboya, Freedom and After, *op. cit.*
29. Goldsworthy, *op. cit.*

CHAPTER 2

EARLY DAYS TO 1956

Ronald Gideon Ngala was born at Tiwi Village, Gotani sub-location, Kaya-Fungo location in present day Kilifi District. He was brought to Vishakani near Kaloleni¹ as a child. This is where he grew up as a boy and later went to School in the nearby school at Kaloleni Church Missionary Society (CMS) station.

The date of his birth, like that of many in his age group, who were born when recording was confined to the mission station, is hard to establish. However, memories of those who taught him at primary school and his own brother say that he was born in 1922.² His proper name at birth was Ngala wa Vidzo but later baptized at the Kaloleni mission as Ronald Gideon Ngala.

Ngala was born at a time of hardship. The Giriama country had been hit by dry weather. They had a name for that year: Mwaka wa dzua bomu ra pungulu - the year when the land was dry and too hot, such that the maize planted only produced small cobs (pungulu). During that year (1922), there was scarcity of water. People would wake up early in the morning to walk long distances to fetch water. The circumstances were such that when rain came, it was late and yet it was too much for any good cultivation. The result was a poor harvest.³

Ngala's father, Hinzano wa Ngala, belonged to the clan of Akiza cha Amwahinzano.⁴ It represents three other clans of the Giriama in the Kaya⁵ namely, Akiza cha Amwawale, Akiza Cha Amwafondo and Akiza cha Amwaiha. Hinzano wa Ngala commonly known as Vidzo⁶ among his fellow villagers, was a respected

man in his village, helping his fellow men in their day-to-day activities in times of happiness and sorrow. Vidzo was a carpenter by profession, having learnt the art from his father, Ngala wa Mwambegu and his uncles.⁷ The clan of Akiza cha Amwahinzano had been known among the Giriama to be predominantly carpenters. Thus, each generation had passed on this knowledge of carpentry to the next one. It is through this process that Vidzo came to learn carpentry. Vidzo is remembered to have been a good man at heart and at his work too. He extended this courtesy, especially on occasions of death of a villager, when he would make a coffin for the dead with his own wood and free of any charge.⁸ It is this helpful characteristic that Vidzo tried to inculcate in his two sons, Ngala and Justin Ponda, not to forget his five daughters, Kadzo, Mwenda, Kana, Dama and Sidi.

Ngala's mother, Bendera wa Wale, was of the Akiza Cha Amwawale clan, having married Vidzo at Tiwi, where Ngala was born. She is remembered by his son, Justin Ponda, as having been a loving mother, good to her neighbours and ready to extend her help when need arose. Ponda reckons that this could have been a character adopted from her husband, Vidzo.⁹

Ngala's grandmother, Mkenyeke wa Kombe was a Mwangari by clan. She was a famous woman among the villagers, having been a Mganga - medicine woman.¹⁰ She was an expert on a disease that used to kill so many children called in Giriama language Kihako - the pulling out of the rectum end through the anus. She would use herbs to cure the sick. This practice established her fame because she saved many lives in the course of her career as a Mganga.

Ngala's family, including both his father, mother and grandmother moved to Vishakani near Kaloleni involuntarily. At Tiwi, his family had lived for a long

time. They had a well-established farm and neighborhood too. However, in 1926, they had to move because Ngala's grandmother had fallen ill, allegedly bewitched.¹¹

They first moved to Kambe¹² country, just off Mombasa town, where the grandmother was to receive medication by a medicineman and was to be taken care of by the grandmother's sister, who happened to have married in Kambeland. After a short while, Ngala's grandmother got better. The stay at Kambe, therefore, was short-lived. They moved to Vishakani, where they borrowed a piece of land to farm, before acquiring their own land on which they settled.

According to Ponda, little Ngala grew up as the favorite grandchild of his grandmother because Ngala was a carbon-copy of his father. All that was good was attributed to him by his grandmother. Ngala was to grow as a quiet boy, concentrating on what he would be assigned to do. He was a hard-working little boy, always ready to finish his work and help his younger brother, especially on the farm. Ngala was, however, not keen to take up his father's profession of carpentry. He preferred working on the land with his mother and the rest, leaving his brother, Ponda, to learn his father's trade. It was, thus, his brother who inherited their father's profession. But, in character, Ngala was like his father.¹³ Ngala did not like idling. He would always find himself something to do. He would spend the whole day working. He would even go without eating until he had finished the task he had set for himself.

At Kaloleni School

Ngala joined Kaloleni C.M.S. School in 1932 at the age of ten. Compared

to his classmates and schoolmates, he was very small. Many of his colleagues often teased him for his small size. In many physical education classes, he would play the small light-weight. He joined the school that had begun four years earlier under Mr. Ken Stovold

as headmaster, with only one African member of staff, Mr. Reuben Kombe.

In October 1932, Ngala's school was to be described thus:

The general appearance of the station has improved almost out of knowledge since Mr. Durrant, Technical instructor, has been posted there. There are 70 boarders, all boys, 32 of whom are technical apprentices. There were on the day of the visit, 65 day pupils of whom 15 were girls. I understand that the number of boys increases in the months where there is no cultivation ... The course for teachers under training is for one year only. 23 pupils were taking this course, 'normal', while 15 were taking a preliminary course, and were called 'sub-normals'... Six of the 'normal' boarders are married, and are living in separate 'bandas' with their wives. They draw their rations from the school, but do their own cooking.¹⁵

In this same report of the Inspector of Schools, it was indicated that apart from the academic and technical subjects, there was also religion and drill instructions, that is physical fitness.¹⁶

Ngala was a day-boy throughout his school days at Kaloleni. He walked 3 kilometers to and from school everyday. It involved a lot for Ngala. He had to wake up early enough to beat the seven thirty morning bell for general cleaning of the compound at school, before classes began half an hour later. He was a hard-working boy at School. It is this keenness on his school work and obedience that the principal was to note. One heavy rainy day in 1938, Ngala was the only day-boy to report to school, completely wet. He had courageously

braved the heavy rain. Mr. Stovold, the principal at Kaloleni, was to comment, "This boy will be a great man in the future".¹⁷ Few among his age mates saw this as a prophecy by the principal. Even his own teachers thought Mr. Stovold wrong. Ngala did not present to his teachers the portrait of what Stovold called "a great man of the future".

According to his teachers, Ngala was a quiet student in class. He only chose to answer questions when asked. But when he did answer them, he was thorough and to the point. He was, on the whole, an average student, being good at writing excellent descriptive compositions.¹⁸ This thorough approach to work prevailed all through his career as we will show. He would always pursue matters to their minutest detail. Never did he leave issues pending in discussions.

Meanwhile, old age was catching up with Ngala's father. By 1937, Mzee Vidzo could not do much of his carpentry work. He had been hospitalized once in that year for tuberculosis. Ngala had to take up the family responsibilities at an early age. His young brother was equally sickly. This prompted Ngala to seek vocational employment in Mombasa to earn some money to feed the entire family. Peter Mukare a long-term friend of mzee Vidzo was instrumental in getting Ngala some vocational work.

In 1938, Ngala sat for his Kenya Preliminary Examination, (KPE), which he passed. At that time, this examination served two purposes for Ngala as a candidate. In the first place, having passed it, he was issued with a certificate as evidence that he had successfully completed his primary education. This

certificate was a necessary qualification for entry into training as a T.3 teacher and, nominally, to various other departmental training schools. Secondly, it was through this examination that Ngala was to be chosen to join a secondary school.¹⁹ These two aspects of the result of the examination in question posed a big dilemma for Ngala when he learnt of his success in the examination.

Two forces, both tempting, faced Ngala at this time. In fact, the family was willing for Ngala to obtain a job in Mombasa and help them. They would equally have been happy if Ngala had taken up a teaching job with the CMS at Kaloleni, his former school. A stronger pressure emanated from the missionaries. They tried to persuade Ngala to take up teaching at Kaloleni and forget about pursuing further studies. There was, indeed, urgency behind the family pressure. On their part, the missionaries were playing their role as instruments of subordination, that is, they were struggling to produce simple artisans - servants who would do equal work to that of the white volunteer who was still well-paid for that work, and yet the African teacher or servant would be paid poorly. This was the case in all sectors of the economy.

As it turned out, Ngala chose to pursue his studies at Alliance High School in Kikuyu country (Central Province). This did not mean indifference to the needs of his family. It was the zeal to obtain further education that had overwhelmed him. He had helped the family by obtaining vocational employment when on holiday. He would do the same when attending higher education. Ngala set himself to join the much-coveted school of those days (and even of today), Alliance High School (AHS).

At Alliance and Makerere

Ngala joined the Alliance High School in January 1939. The School had been started in 1926 under the leadership of G.A. Grieves aged 38, a graduate of Glasgow and Edinburgh Universities. Basically it was a school created, following the Education Ordinance of 1924 - which gave the government considerable power over control of African education - to impart education to the young Africans, "who would make the future African leadership".²⁰ Ngala was then the only Giriama student, and, therefore, the first Giriama to join the School. This was an achievement for Ngala, because this was the coveted school of the day.²¹ Moreover, there was pride in this because he represented the whole of Kilifi District.²² On the other hand, like many of those who went to school, he felt proud to be there. These were very much the pioneering years of secondary education. Kipkorir argues, "entrance to the AHS meant a great deal more to pupils then than perhaps entrance to university means today".²³

When Ngala refused to terminate his studies at primary level, he was determined to acquire more of the novel western education. According to Timothy Ramtu, Ngala was a tenacious man. Though not very well gifted scholastically, he always had the stamina and patience that kept him working on. Apart from academic work, he was also involved in hockey, football and other sporting activities.²⁴

At school, he was very close to his coastmate, Timothy Ramtu, and to Bernard Mate. His friends judged him to be sociable and resourceful. He was always true to his friends and straight-forward in his actions. In 1940, when Ramtu joined Alliance from Shimo-la-Tewa School,²⁵ Ngala always spared time

to explain to Ramtu difficult points in Ramtu's school work. The curriculum at Shimo-la-Tewa had put emphasis on clerical subjects. But this was not the case at Alliance. Ramtu had to catch up with the liberal subjects like History and Geography, as well as the sciences. Ngala helped him to obtain the relevant books. A close association between Ngala and Ramtu had begun. This was to continue into the social field up to Ngala's death.²⁶

Ngala went through the hands of Edward Carey Francis, principal of AHS from 1940. Francis had taken over from Mr. Grieves. It was a time when Alliance was perhaps by coincidence "going through a most politically active period during the first two years of the war".²⁷ This should have been significant to many of the students from Central Province, where political awareness was at a high level. On the other hand, this did not have much significance to, or even influence on, Ngala. This was because he came from an area that was less politicised and, hence, political awareness was at its minimal. Unlike the situation upcountry, land alienation at the Coast had not developed into an explosive issue leading to political agitation. This explains his earlier reluctance to join politics in 1955 as will be seen later.

Carey Francis was known for his unbending insistence on discipline and obedience to authority. He insisted on impressing upon his pupils his own personal values of life, his standards of behaviour and etiquette.²⁸ It is in this respect that we should see Francis' influence on his students, Ngala included. Ngala's insistence on strict discipline in the schools he later taught in and headed can be attributed to Francis' influence as well as to the earlier quasi-military discipline of his teachers at Kaloleni CMS school in Giriama land. His christian

background equally had something to do with this discipline.²⁹

The system of education in the 1940s required one to sit an examination at the end of the second year of secondary education. This was the Kenya Junior Secondary Examination at the end of Form 2. Like many of the students of that time, Ngala had to overcome this major hurdle in 1940. This meant that having successfully passed this examination he was issued with a certificate as evidence that he had successfully completed the Junior Secondary School course and that he was qualified to continue with his secondary education. It is sufficient to note that this certificate was a necessary qualification for entry into training as a T.3 teacher and, nominally, into various other departmental training schools.³⁰

In 1942, Ngala joined Makerere College. Among his fellow students were Bernard Mate and T.C.Ramtu from Kenya; Julius Nyerere, Abud Jumbe and Dunstan Omari from Tanganyika, and Edward Mutesa, later to be the Kabaka of Buganda, and William Mulema from Uganda.³¹ At that time, the students joining Makerere did not choose their own courses. The colonial government reserved the right to choose a course for a candidate. It would choose candidates for courses as per its needs. In other words, training in particular areas depended on the government's manpower requirements. Ngala was to train as a teacher for three years, obtaining a Diploma in Education at the end of 1945.³²

Back at Kaloleni as teacher

Before leaving Makerere, Ngala wrote to the Educational Secretary of the CMS in Nairobi, expressing his interest in joining the teaching profession on

completion of his diploma in education course. He sought to know from the secretary the terms of service given by the CMS. In the same letter, Ngala acknowledged that the terms of service would be out after the committee set up in 1945 had given its report on remunerations for African teachers. The letter concluded

I will get in touch with the Rural Dean, the Rev. K.E. Stovold Box 72 Mombasa as soon as I know the terms are out.³³

Ngala was thus employed as T.1 teacher in 1945; with a salary of 400/- per month.³⁴ This time he joined Kaloleni school that was staffed by African teachers or instructors. The school was now headed by Japhet Mumba. Ngala was soon made the deputy principal of the School. He also held the positions of games and scouting master.

As games master, Ngala was keen to see his school excel in sports and other games. It is important to note here Ngala's devotion to duty and his pursuit of truth. In 1948, there were competitions that were held at Buxton school in Mombasa. Participants were drawn from Buxton School, Kaloleni, Ribe and Mbale in Taita. Ribe, under a female principal, happened to arrive for the competitions late. They did not present their competitors for the heats, yet, in the final analysis, they were allowed to participate in the finals. There was a strong debate over the matter. Ngala was bitter about Ribe's participation in the finals without their participation in the heats. But who was Ngala to question a female principal? Female principals also got priority in most things. What they suggested was rarely opposed. Where there was both female and male teachers

qualified to head a school, priority would be given to the female.³⁵ But for Ngala this was not the obvious. Rules could not be ignored just because those who broke them were females. Accordingly, Ngala lodged a protest against Ribe's participation in the finals and demanded that their victory be rescinded. Mr. Symonds, the inspector of schools, asked Ngala to withdraw his protest letter, but Ngala did not do so until the sports board answered him.³⁶ Although the sports board did not pursue the matter further, Ngala had emerged triumphant; this time he was questioning what the rest saw as unquestionable. He was already challenging the status quo.

As a scout master, he was instrumental in sending students from Kaloleni to visit the Giriama Kaya at Kaya-Fungo. It was at such time that Ngala was to take notes for the book Nchi na Desturi za Wagiriama which he had published in 1949. Basically, his visits to the Kaya were aimed at a rediscovery of himself as a Mgiama. As a scout master, he was an example to many people in Kaloleni and Vishakani village in particular.

Ngala Marries

In 1943, mid-way in his course at Makerere, Ngala was faced by the issue of marriage. It should have disturbed him. In the first place he had not finished his course. On the other hand, pressure on him to marry came especially from his ailing grandmother, Mkenyeke wa Kombe, who was anxious to see her beloved grandson married before she died. Another force was the parents of the girl he had intended to marry. The girl, Mwenda wa Chula, later baptized Esther Mwenda, had grown up in the neighborhood of mzee Vidzo's home. The parents

of Ngala and Mwenda had been close associates, sharing many things in life. They fetched water from the same well and visited each other socially. Their children were more of little brothers and sisters than mere neighbours. Equally, Ngala and Mwenda used to go to church together. Thus, the relationship between Ngala and Mwenda grew out of mutual long term association from childhood. Mwenda had not pursued studies further than standard seven. Mwenda's parents could not see the reason why Ngala could not marry Mwenda with whom he had been friends for long. They thus pressured Ngala to marry her.³⁷

Ngala was to express his wisdom on this matter. All the pressures were to be taken care of. In the first place, he took his fiancée to a school at Wusi in Taita to study, thus warding off the insistence of the grandmother and the parents of the girl too. On the other hand, he was able to give the fiancée access to some education, up to form two. He was also able to continue with his studies and complete in 1945.

The marriage of Ngala and Mwenda was solemnised on 7th March, 1947.³⁸ Among those who attended the wedding at the CMS Church at Kaloleni were Ngala's teachers at the primary school, such as Reuben Kombe, who happened to be then teaching with him at Kaloleni school; Japhet Mumba, the principal of the school; and H.G.S. Harrison a clerk in the African Affairs department of the-then Mombasa Municipal Board.³⁹ It was a happy moment for the parents of both sides. It had been a long-awaited moment. The couple had their first child on 3rd February, 1948 and named him Katana Ngala. Ronald Ngala had moved ahead in the life cycle. This meant shouldering more

responsibility, apart from taking care of his ailing father and the entire family.

In the village, Ngala was viewed with high regard by the villagers and his colleagues. Many a people came to him to have him write them letters to their children who happened to be working far from Kaloleni. He was always at their service.⁴⁰ According to Ngala's colleagues at Kaloleni school, he was one man who was ready to step in to help in any activity in the school in the absence of another member of staff. Discipline on the part of pupils was his song of the day.⁴¹ As a husband, he was to Mwenda "the beloved one", always ready to help her in household work, especially in staying with the children when she was busy elsewhere.⁴² And, when Sunday came, Ngala was among the worshippers at the Kaloleni church. He showed great concern about, and interest in, church activities.

Nchi na Desturi za Wagiriama⁴³

In 1949, Ngala wrote his book Nchi na Desturi za Wagiriama. In this thesis it is not my concern to analyse the contents of the book. However, the book has something indirect to tell us about Ngala.

Ngala had come to realize that what the white man professed and what he practised were different and that the attainment of 'modernity' to which many in Africa aspired, could not be achieved without losing one's self-respect. Ngala also realized that the Giriama, and especially the youth, were losing their self-respect. They did not know their own culture. As one of the observant and reflective Africans, Ngala was to react against this loss of self-respect and dignity. In writing his book he aimed at putting on record what was to be

preserved and restored of the ancestral traditions and customs. He had been a student under the instruction of the White man. There was nothing African in what the white man taught. For instance, he put it straight that the process of courting involved the entire community one lived in;⁴⁴ that the Giriama was, and is supposed to be, closely involved with his community and opposed to the individualistic attitudes of the west. Ngala, therefore, was saying that the Giriama system of living was a direct extension of the family. The tribe had something to do with what the family unit did and vice versa.

Moreover, in writing his book he was placing on record some of the customs with which people were familiar, and preserving ancient oral traditions, which were not then being handed down by the elders to the young in the manner of days gone by. He, therefore, afforded us an opportunity to rediscover Giriama local history, traditions and customs, a study which would become a reflection of the entire African way of life.⁴⁵

On the whole, Ngala was saying that the Giriama, and, for that matter, any African, should not be understood in terms of European standards and values which are foreign to him and which he cannot subscribe to without losing his identity. Indeed, he was of the view that there was a core to the Giriama which could never be Europeanised. What Ngala was showing in 1949 was what Kenyatta did in 1938 - a reaction against Western cultural imperialism. Kenyatta in his book Facing Mount Kenya was concerned with the preservation and restoration of the ancestral traditions and with the recovery of "ancient liberties". It is in this respect that he compared clitoridectomy with Jewish circumcision. The former, Kenyatta believed, "is a mere bodily mutilation which, however, is

regarded as the conditio sine qua nom of morality"⁴⁸ This was a good example of a rationalized answer to the aggressive cultural nationalism of the West.

Transferred to Mbale School

Following proposals for teacher's personal preferences for transfers, the CMS Coast Rural Deanery Committee approved the transfer of Ronald Ngala to Mbale in Taita District as from January 1950.⁴⁷ This had been preceded by a good working record and congratulations from the committee in 1948 for Mr. Japhet Mumba and his deputy for managing the school funds properly. They had spent within the school's income and had reduced, substantially the school's debt from 2,482/26 to 900/12.⁴⁸ Ngala moved to Mbale as the principal of the school.

At Mbale, Ngala was to build for himself a sort of basis for his impending political future. He is remembered as having worked out a practical plan for the development of the school with both the youth and the elders. He had a great following and was greatly admired. This was principally because he was always ready to listen to problems from both students and parents.⁴⁹ It was at Mbale that he taught, among others, Rogers Msechu, who was later to be Ngala's strong Kenya African Democratic Union secretary-general at the Coast and his great campaigner.⁵⁰

Thus, at Mbale, Ngala made friends from among both pupils and parents.

At Buxton School, Mombasa

In 1953, Ngala was transferred to Buxton Intermediate School in Mombasa town as principal. This was another upward move in the social arena.

He had moved from a rural setting in Kaloleni and Mbale to an urban setting in Mombasa. He had to learn to deal with the new cosmopolitan challenges.

Moreover, Buxton School was a day-school. Discipline was a problem for most day schools.

He moved into Mombasa with an enthusiasm to work his way up even to greater heights. In his first year in the school, he was able to see 8 students join Shimo-la-Tewa school for secondary education. This, according to the principal who took over from Ngala in 1957,⁵¹ was an achievement on the part of Ngala, who had struggled to coordinate the teaching to obtain good results for the school.

Discipline on the part of the students was a problem at Buxton.

However, as Harry Fanjo testifies, it was clear that by the time Ngala joined politics in 1957, discipline at the school had become the talk and order of the day. Fanjo reckons that when he was called to replace Ngala at Buxton, he had expected indiscipline at the School. But his was not the case: he took over a calm and well-ordered school.⁵²

A touch of politics 1955-56

At this juncture it is important to address ourselves to the question of how one is recruited into politics. Initially, Ngala did not like to involve himself in politics, partly because he saw himself as serving God and, thus, not ready to mix God with politics, and partly because government policy did not allow civil servants and members of African Advisory Councils (he was a member of the Mombasa one) to involve themselves in politics. Having been serving under the

CMS, he was reluctant to indulge in political activity.

Ngala preferred to involve himself with the Coast African Association(CAA), which was more of a socio- economic association than a political one, purporting to express non-political grievances. At their meetings, members of the CAA articulated such issues as the appalling labor conditions of the Africans, poor housing and hygiene and racial salary scales.⁵³ The CAA, thus served as a platform for the education of the Africans to articulate the grievances of the Africans in Mombasa. The leaders of CAA, among them Lance Jones Bengo, who had been employed by the Mombasa Municipal Board in the department of education since 1935, used the petition method to have their grievances heard. They would either write to the town clerk of the Board, the Chief Secretary or the Provincial Education officer,⁵⁴ though with more success in the social arena than in the political one. However, by 1953, CAA had begun to "focus on certain political matters".⁵⁵ They, for instance, had begun calling for the appointment of an African District Officer for Kilifi District.⁵⁶ What was more important,

the Coast African Association served as a training center and launching ground for Coast African political leaders until fully-fledged political parties could be formed, and in this way the Association played a vital role in Coast and national political education and development.⁵⁷

It thus provided an important grooming ground for later political leaders like Ngala and Francis Khamisi.⁵⁸

Following the lifting of the emergency ban on all African parties in June

1955, a new era of district associations had dawned. Among the district associations that were formed were the Kenya African National Congress in Nairobi, which maintained that African political organizations should be allowed country-wide. It was not registered until it renounced this idea and thus was registered as Nairobi District African Congress under Clement Argwings-Kodhek. In Central Nyanza, there emerged the African District Association, in South Nyanza there was also the Kisii Highlands Association. In Mombasa, there was born Mombasa African Democratic Union, MADU, while in Nakuru, the Nakuru African Progressive Party was formed. The Taita at the Coast formed the Taita African District Union. While these associations resulted in a rudimentary parochial development of African politics, and therefore, were detrimental to African unity, they, nevertheless represented a departure from the old times.⁵⁹ They were now to put on the mantle of the nationalist struggle by seeking a forum with the government through correspondence and leaders' conferences between 1957 and 1958.⁶⁰

MADU was formed in Mombasa in November 1955, under the leadership of Khamisi as President and C. Ralph as secretary.⁶¹ Basically it was formed with two objectives-one, to press for elected representation of African on all public bodies; two, to take such steps as were lawful for the attainment of all legitimate African political aspirations.⁶² They equally argued that

It is the view and policy of the union that universal adult franchise is the only solution to this problem, and MADU will continue to strive towards its achievement.⁶³

Towards this end, MADU was to write to the Minister of African Affairs in November 1956, expressing their dissatisfaction with the unfair representation of the Coast Africans in the Legislative Council (Legco).

This mass meeting of MADU deplores and views with disgust the meager representation afforded to Africans of the Coast Province in the Kenya Legislative Council. In view of the fact that all racial groups resident in the Coast Province, namely, Europeans, Asians and Arabs have each two representatives in the Legislature, and efforts are being made to increase Arab representation, we consider it illogical, unjust, undemocratic and unfair for Coast Africans to have only one African member, and therefore strongly urge the government to take immediate steps to remedy the present anomaly by increasing the African representation for the Coast Province to fall in line with that afforded to members of other races.⁶⁴

In a similar protest letter, MADU condemned "the present attitude of the Administration in indirectly curtailing the activities of African political organizations by refusing, without any reason, to granting permission to hold open-air meetings and collecting funds in the furtherance of legitimate political activities and aspirations"⁶⁵ They, therefore, urged the government to review this attitude and restore the freedom of assembly, and referred the matter to their African representatives in the Legco to take up the matter with higher authorities for the benefit of their constituents.⁶⁶

In yet another letter, MADU wrote to the Chief Secretary demanding the release of Jomo Kenyatta. They termed Kenyatta's detention as unlawful and illegitimate.⁶⁷ From the foregoing discussion of MADU it is clear that national political party restriction by the government was generating more opposition from the Africans. The African was not passive in responding to the colonial government's restriction.

But why is MADU central and important to the biography of Ngala? It is important because it was from MADU that Ngala began to pick up political jargon and learn more about the art of articulating the problems of the African population, not only at the Coast but also in the entire country. In MADU he was able to make acquaintances with the educated elite like Juma Ferunzy, who gave him a lot of backing in the 1957 African elections. It is interesting to note that after MADU's formation in 1955, Francis Khamisi took the initiative to ask Ronald Ngala to join MADU. Khamisi regarded Ngala as one of the few educated Africans; a man of dedication and sense of purpose in his duties who could join hands with him to make MADU a strong party. Khamisi was serious in his bid to have Ngala join MADU. This can be seen in his move to obtain permission from the District Education Officer to have Ngala attend MADU's meetings. Even after Khamisi got a letter from the District Education Officer saying Ngala was not a government servant and could involve himself in a political organization, Ngala was still reluctant to do so. He was eventually convinced to attend MADU meetings, but only as an observer, preferring to sit at the back of the meetings, listening attentively. Ngala never joined MADU as a registered member.⁶⁸ While it is true that he never became a fully paid-up member of MADU, by virtue of his attendance, he was able to understand the political, social and economic grievances that were being articulated in the union, thus, gradually exposing himself to political conversion. It is equally important to note that when he joined politics in 1957, he was to gain political support from some members of MADU, like Benedicto Omamo and Benjamin Karanja who lived in Mombasa. Later, he gave political patronage to MADU, before

1960, when countrywide political organizations were formed.

Membership of the Municipal Board of Mombasa

It was not only Francis Khamisi who noticed Ngala's leadership qualities. Ngala's leadership qualities attracted many people and institutions, including the Municipality of Mombasa. Following the elections of the councillor's to the Municipal Board in December 1955, Ngala was nominated to the Mombasa Municipal Board in January 1956 to represent the Tononoka - Tudor ward.⁶⁹ This, however, did not mean he had given up his work as the principal of Buxton school. - There was also a directive from the government to have three Africans in the Municipal Board. By virtue of being the secretary to the African Advisory Council, Francis Khamisi was nominated to the Board; Ngala was to take the second seat, while another African filled the third.

Ngala served the Board in various committees and sub-committees. He was a member of the Health Committee,⁷⁰ African Affairs committee,⁷¹ General Purposes Committee, the Stadium sub-committee⁷² and the Education sub-committee. It is important to note here some of the various activities and functions of these committees and sub-committees. The Health committee was charged with the responsibility of supervising the cleanliness of markets, the fire brigade and the ambulances. Moreover, it saw to it that public lavatories and roads were clean. Wastepaper salvage and ventilation of public utilities all fell under this committee.⁷³ The Stadium sub-committee was charged with, among other things, the responsibility of arranging fixtures for football matches and motor racing at the Municipal Stadium, to liaise with the Coast Province

Athletics Association on events they wanted to hold in the stadium. The committee was also responsible for maintaining the stadium and collecting the stadium gate-proceeds and recommending to the Board what should be done with those proceeds.⁷⁴ Another committee he served on, as stated above was the African Affairs Committee. This one saw to it that there was an improvement in the housing of Africans and that public amenities in African areas were adequate.⁷⁵ In general, it looked into the welfare of the Africans.

As a member of the Board, Ngala now had a platform from which to articulate the grievances of the African people. Looking at the issues raised at the meetings of the African Affairs committee for instance, it was clear that African education, housing, wages and social amenities were comparatively very poor.⁷⁶ Ngala was, thus, to campaign for social and economic redress in the system. He should have unmistakably fought for an immediate redress to these anomalies. In one of the welfare committee meetings, where debates on African housing got hot, African representatives complained of the appalling conditions of houses, especially in Tudor and Buxton. Moreover, they complained of the high rents Africans were paying for these houses. Ngala was to go into the intricacy of the matter. He complained that the documents that tenants signed, on occupying the houses, were legally binding and, therefore, unfair to the Africans.⁷⁷ Equally important here is to note his leading role in the creation of the Coast Province Cultural Association for the development of games and other extra-curricular activities in African schools.⁷⁸

Using his education, knowledge and experience in the Board, he was instrumental in the setting up of a sub-committee that was formed to investigate

educational problems of African children from Standard 1 to intermediate standard and to consider the Competitive Entrance Examination, school fees and the education tax. Chairing this sub-committee, Ngala was to deplore the Competitive Entrance Examination. He saw this system of education as a complete waste of manpower and its development. The African system of education was inferior to the educational system provided for other races. He thought that this system which compelled African children to leave school at an early age was fostering the 'spiv' element in Mombasa town and all other towns in Kenya. He argued that the children were too young to work and simply wandered aimlessly about the streets.⁷⁹ In his view, the Competitive Entrance Examination was a useless examination because at the end of the day, it never awarded a candidate any certificate.⁸⁰ Following the discussions in the sub-committee chaired by Ngala, a recommendation for the abolition of the Competitive Entrance Examination for African school children was passed. The sub-committee also recommended the removal of the religious barriers that prevented teachers from one denomination from being transferred to another school of a different denomination. This, they argued, retarded social harmony and integration.⁸¹ There is no evidence to suggest that these recommendations were put into practice. However, Ngala had put the case for the Africans.

While racial segregation was less acute at the Coast than it was upcountry, it was still unpalatable. Ngala and other Africans were becoming more aware of their segregated position. What was happening was a perceptible move from the passive resistance on the part of the African towards a demand for redress of the economic social and political grievances. Ngala's articulation

of the social, economic and political disparities of the masses could be seen in the light of the general awakening of the Africans in Kenya in the mid-50s. There was a struggle to have a redress of the racial disequilibrium in the Kenyan system. It should be noted, however, that Ngala and other Africans at the time were bargaining as underdogs. Racial parity and the recognition of African rights were still to be fought for.⁸²

Ngala's nomination to the Municipal Board had an inevitable effect on him because it was a multi-racial Board. This had an influence on him in that later in his political career, he was able, willingly to be an actor and a participant in the multi-racial politics of 1959. This made it easier for him to work with the European Members of Legco when he joined the Government in 1961.

Given this prior knowledge and experience of inter-racial mixing in the Municipal Board, he adopted a wider perspective from which to tackle the politics of 1960's.

Like the few who were nominated to the African Advisory Council and the Board, Ngala was nominated for his personal intelligence and character, with no regard for his ethnic origin.⁸³ By his participation in the various committees of the council, Ngala strengthened his organizational and supervisory experience.

A changed Ngala-The Conference of African Educationists

One of the observations of the Beecher Report of 1949 was that there was a failure on the part of the CMS department to recruit an adequate inspectoral

and supervisory staff.⁸⁴ Therefore, the report recommended an increase in the number of supervisory teams where three African supervisors would work in association with one European supervisor to oversee 100 schools in the primary and intermediate systems.⁸⁵ The report thus seems to have encouraged an increase in the number of African supervisory staff. Ngala was to benefit from this recommendation. In October 1956, Ngala, in addition to his duties as principal at Buxton, took on the responsibility of supervising the work of the CMS schools in Mombasa.⁸⁶ This was a portfolio that had, until then, been held by a white man. It was rather a taxing job in that he had to do his normal duties as a principal and teacher and still arrange to oversee the running of other schools. Esther Mwenda, Ngala's wife, reckons that this was the time she began to miss the attention of her husband. She remembers Ngala as having been an early riser, doing some work in his office before having tea in the house at seven. By seven thirty in the morning he was in the compound supervising its cleaning by pupils. At ten, Ngala would pick up his motor cycle and ride out of the compound. She would not see him until around ten at night.⁸⁷

As a supervisor of schools, he was involved in seeing that the school system functioned properly. That is, he was supposed to see that public funds for primary and intermediate education were expended efficiently. He was to liaise with the CMS headquarters in Nairobi on matters on recruitment of new teachers and school requirements, and recommend any developments needed in the schools he supervised. Equally, he was to ascertain that principals of schools kept proper financial records. According to Harry Fanjo, then a principal of Isaac Nyundo primary school in Rabai near Mombasa (which fell under Ngala's

supervision), Ngala was a "thorough man at his work". He remembers Ngala as having been "a no-nonsense man" ready to put aside friendship for the sake of the good functioning of schools.⁸⁸

Towards the end of October 1956, Ngala attended the Conference of African Christian Educationists at Utah Mission in Southern Rhodesia (present day Zimbabwe). This conference was organized and convened by the World Council on Christian Education. The objective of the Conference was to enhance awareness of the lack of the African touch in the christian teachings.⁸⁹ Thus, the conference wanted to draw up a curriculum for African Sunday Schools which would cater for African needs and interests at all levels. Ngala noted at the meeting that although guidelines and pamphlets published in England and in America and used by different denominations were useful; they nevertheless lacked an African background. They also failed to recognize the changing situation that the modern African had to face.⁹⁰

As a result of his outspokenness and his eloquence at the conference, Ngala was appointed chairman of an editorial board set up to see that the African element was infused in the publications and pamphlets for Sunday schools.⁹¹

Ngala's attendance at this conference brought him face to face with the realities of racial segregation. While in Southern Rhodesia he had time to talk to Africans in the neighborhood of the Utah Mission. The Africans were wondering how Ngala and other African delegates in the Conference were mixing with the whites and even playing tennis with them. This never happened in Southern Rhodesia. Southern Rhodesia of 1956 was just like South Africa today. Ngala

was made to reflect on the situation at home.⁹²

Another incident that made him reflect on the liberal ideas the schools and the church taught involved him personally. On his way to the conference, he made a stop-over in Dar-es-Salaam, where he was supposed to embark on another plane to Southern Rhodesia. At Dar-es-Salaam, he was supposed to be met by the white priest in-charge of the Dar-es-Salaam mission. Ngala was treated with neglect and contempt by this priest. The priest asked Ngala to spend two nights in a store of old beds and planks of wood. Thanks to Mr. Edmund Fondo, a Kenyan who was a teacher - instructor at the East African Post and Telecommunications School in Dar-es-Salaam, Ngala was hospitably hosted for two days in Mr. Fondo's house before he flew to Southern Rhodesia for the Conference.⁹³

The foregoing occurrences witnessed by Ngala acted as an impetus to him. They markedly changed him. He was made to question the ideals the church taught and preached. He questioned in his mind the ideal society the church had always envisaged, that christianity would sanctify and support the political aspirations of the Africans, where christianity would produce the most perfect culture which had eluded human society. Ngala was made to think over the church's role. The church was supposed to eliminate the concept of ethnic or racial superiority and exploitation of one class by another; christianity was supposed to bring about a good government and compel Africans to practise the christian virtues of humility, love, good neighbourliness. Those in Southern Rhodesia were not reflecting any love or humility nor any good neighbourliness for the areas around the mission. Equally, the missionary at Dar-es-Salaam did

not treat Ngala as an equal. In short, they were not practicing what they taught and preached to the Africans.

Subsequently, Ngala returned home a changed man. He had already been critical of the racial type of education in Mombasa. This time he was looking far, at a wider perspective. He saw the degree of racial divide in Southern Rhodesia coming to Kenya. He was thus attracted to join politics to fight for African rights.⁹⁴

The Kenya political scene

Up to 1956, African representation in Legco was by nomination.

However, the Africans in Legco were not regarded as true representatives of their people. Even after they accepted the Lyttleton Plan after the modification of 31 October 1956, they still were regarded as 'small boys' of the white man. Thus, by the end of 1956 there were eight African representatives, one of whom was a minister and another a parliamentary secretary. At this juncture, Kenya was regarded as having moved to a stage of multi-racial government under the Lyttleton Constitution.⁹⁵ The main feature of this constitution was the creation of a Council of Ministers with collective responsibility, containing elected and representative members of all three main races. This council, together with the Governor, formed the executive instrument of government policy. Its members were bound to subscribe to joint statements of policy, and also undertook, while Ministers, to refrain from proposing or supporting legislation affecting the rights of different communities in land reserved for their use.⁹⁶

The case for these changes as a long-term constitutional advance was

reinforced by the need to unite together Kenyans of all races in the fight against Mau Mau, and to take advantage of their consolidated wisdom within the counsels of the government. In order for attention not to be diverted from the struggle, which had then reached a vital stage, the constitution included a double pledge: first that the British government would not, before 1960, take the initiative in altering the proportion of members of Legco or the Council of Ministers, or in changing the communal basis of franchise; and second, that the arrangements would be experimental until the next general elections and, if sufficiently endorsed, would continue until after the subsequent elections of 1960.⁹⁷ The Lyttleton Constitution thus proposed a complete freeze on any constitutional advancement in Kenya until after 1960. Moreover, it underscored the European dominance in the government of Kenya.

The Lyttleton Constitution stipulated that the government would initiate a study of the best method of choosing African Members of Legco as opposed to their nomination by the governor. It is in this respect that an inquiry was undertaken in 1955 by W.F. Coutts, who recommended the introduction of direct elections based on a qualitative franchise, with multiple votes.⁹⁸ These recommendations were accepted by the government with modifications designed to extend the franchise to all who had emerged sufficiently into western ways of life and thought to exercise their rights with understanding.

By the time of the general elections in September 1956, the emergency situation had very greatly improved. The need to concentrate the colony's efforts in combating the Mau Mau 'terrorists' was thus less pressing, and was

over-shadowed very largely by the ordinary problems arising from economic and social deterioration. Experience of the Lyttleton government, in the 30 months since its introduction in 1954, had made people in Kenya to think that modifications were needed. Support for the Lyttleton Constitution, however, was not seriously challenged among either the Asians or the Arabs during the election campaign. It was in the contest of the European seats that the merits of the 1954 Constitution were most hotly debated Goldsworthy says:

The most significant outcome was that the Briggs Group of Settler 'Independents' was slightly strengthened at the expense of the more moderate group of settler 'independents' led by Michael Blundell, and this was thought to reflect in part a European reaction against the whole concept of African election.⁹⁹

In fact those candidates who stood for the abandonment of the 1954 Constitution were all defeated.

Legislation for the direct election of the six African representative Members was done in January 1956. Since administrative arrangements could not be completed in time, especially regarding loyalty of Central Province 'tribes' for the general elections of September - October, the African general elections were postponed until March 1957. The government at least had taken heed of some of the ideas of the European liberals in Kenya and those in Britain. In concluding an address to the African Bureau Conference, Margery Perham, a liberal and well-known writer, was to say

Kenya settlers must recognize that Kenya is destined to be primarily an African State one day, and Africans must realize that it will be only primarily an African state, and that the minorities should play a large part in the future. Meantime, the British government must be an arbitral stabilizer.¹⁰⁰

Equally, the Minister for Finance in the Kenya government, Mr. E.A. Vasey, in his speech to the Royal African and Empire Society in February 1956 had spoken in the same vein by declaring:

... but I believe the political climate of Kenya will alter greatly in the next few years as the system of African election gets into full swing. We must make certain that there are channels existing - and widening - through which our best men, European, Asian and African, represent and work for the interests of the people as a whole. The need, therefore, for the creation of a common election, on however restricted a basis, is now very pressing, for it may not take many years before the habit of voting on a narrow social basis becomes too deeply ingrained to be easily changed.

I believe it would be wise today for the leaders of all communities, sitting round a table, to draw up a political development plan. That plan must visualize the increasing participation of the African in those discussions and decisions vital to us all, and in that respect it must be a plan liberal in its ideas. If we can get an agreement upon the degree of increasing participation, then I think we can get agreement upon political stability for that period...¹⁰¹

The government had for a long time ignored political planning for the Africans and concentrated on economic planning. The two go hand in hand. From now on the government had to plan politically in such a way that the African view was also included in all aspects of life. The political scene was destined to change. It would soon change in the light of the March 1957 African elections.

Ronald Ngala was thus to present himself for election in these African elections. He was to become part of the new brand of African political leadership, ushering into Kenya's political scene a new wave of dynamism and political lobbying.

Footnotes

1. Kaloleni is now a rural township north of Mazeras. It is about 12 kilometers from Mazeras railway station on the Mombasa-Nairobi railway line. It is predominantly a Giriama town, its people grow tree crops like coconuts, cashewnuts and oranges. Maize, simsim, cassava are other food crops grown. There is controversy over whether Kaloleni and Vishakani (near Kaloleni) are Giriama originally or simply because of de facto circumstances. If one talks to the Wajibana (an ethnic group of the Mijikenda) they say Kaloleni is "theirs" as is Vishakani; - Wakambe (another ethnic group of the Mijikenda) talk of Giriama "imperialism". The Giriama settled in Kaya-Fungo (see footnote 5 on Kaya) in the 17th Century and had, by the end of the 18th century, expanded to their present settlements. For detailed discussion of the settlement of the Giriama and the Mijikenda as a whole in their present land, see Thomas Spear, The Kaya Complex : A History of the Peoples of Kenya Coast to 1900, Nairobi, Kenya, Literature Bureau, 1978, Chapter 1.

See also Map 1 showing location of Kaloleni and Vishakani in relation to their environs.
2. Interview Report, Justin Ponda, September 7, 1988.
3. Interview Report, Salim Ngolo, June 5, 1989.
4. This is one of the 'big' and famous clans in the Giriama Kaya. It represents other clans like Akiza cha Amwafondo and Akiza cha Amwaiha.
5. Kaya - Fortified forest areas where the Mijikenda first settled. The Giriama refer to Kaya-Fungo as their first place of settlement and therefore an ancestral home. See T. Spear, The Kaya Complex op. cit., Chapter 1.
6. Vidzo in Kigiriama means 'good'.
7. Interview Report, Justin Ponda, September 7, 1988.
8. *ibid.*
9. *ibid.*
10. *ibid.*
11. Among the Giriama a sick person who is allegedly bewitched is moved away from his home to a medicineman for treatment. Moving him away from his home is in anticipation that the witch or wizard may not be

- near the sick person to revisit him or her and make the sick person worse.
12. Kambe is the home area and name of one of the Mijikenda groups.
 13. Interview Report, Justin Ponda, September 7, 1988.
 14. *ibid.*
 15. C.M.S., Education Department, "Report of the Supervisor of Technical Education", October 17, 1932. The Kenya National Archives (KNA), C.M.S. 1/112.
 16. *ibid.*
 17. Recollections of Ngala's teachers in 1932 - 38, Reuben Kombe and John Paul Kambi, Interview on September 5, 1988.
 18. Interview Report, Lawrence Kafwihi Bennett and George Kafwihi Bennett, September 5, 1988.
 19. African Education in Kenya, Report of a committee appointed to inquire into the scope, content, methods of African education, its administration and finance and to make recommendations, Government Printer, Nairobi, 1949, p. 16.
 20. It is the contention of B.E. Kipkorir that Alliance High School was the grooming ground of Kenya's African civil servants and nationalist leaders. B.E. Kipkorir, "The Alliance High School and The Origins of the Kenya African Elite", Ph.D. Thesis, St. Johns College, University of Cambridge, 1969; p. 128.
 21. Alliance High School Statistics file 1/30; see also B.E. Kipkorir, *op. cit.*, Appendix 3, "District Representation at Alliance High School", p. 402.
 22. Kipkorir, *op. cit.*, p. 402
 23. *ibid.*, p. 164
 24. Interview Report, Timothy Ramtu, March 28, 1989.
 25. Shimo-la-Tewa School is situated north of Mombasa close to Mtwapa Creek. During the second world war, at least after 1940, it was made a hospital for the British soldiers, injured in the war. Its situation was advantageous for the purpose then, because it was difficult to attack. The school was then moved to its original grounds at the Arab Boys School in Mombasa.

26. Interview Report, Timothy Ramtu, March 29, 1989.
27. Kipkorir, op. cit., p. 173
28. ibid.
29. The testimonies of the following verify this: Interview with Reuben Kombe, September 5, 1988; John Paul Kambi, September 5, 1988; and Harry Fanjo, September 21, 1988.
30. African Education in Kenya, p. 16
31. Interview Report, Timothy Ramtu, March 28, 1989
32. ibid.
33. Ronald Ngala to Secretary of Church Missionary Society Nairobi, December 5, 1945, KNA CMS 1/112.
34. KNA CMS 1/112
35. KNA CMS 1/208
36. Recollections of Reuben Kombe, September 5, 1988.
37. Testimony of Mrs. Esther Mwenda Ngala, September 7, 1988.
38. ibid.
39. Interview Report, Reuben Kombe, September 5, 1988.
40. Testimony of Mrs. Esther Mwenda Ngala, September 7, 1988.
41. Interview Report, Reuben Kombe, September 5, 1988.
42. Testimony of Mrs. Esther Mwenda Ngala, September 7, 1988.
43. Ronald Gideon Ngala, Nchi na Desturi za Wagiriana, Nairobi, Eagle Press 1949. Translated as 'Land and Customs/Culture of the Giriama'.
44. ibid., pp. 3-13
45. ibid., 'Introduction'
46. Jomo Kenyatta, Facing Mount Kenya, London, Secker and Warburg, 1961, p. 133.

47. KNA, CMS 1/408
48. Minutes of the Rural Deanery Education Committee, Coast, February 13, 1948, KNA CMS 1/208.
49. Interview Report, Rogers Msechu, September 28, 1988.
50. *ibid.*
51. *ibid.*, Harry Fanjo, September 21, 1988.
52. *ibid.*
53. Joseph Harris, "The Coast African Association :Politics of Kenya's Coast 1940 - 1955", William R. Ochieng (Ed.) The Journal of the Historical Association of Kenya, Vol. 4, No. 2, 1976, pp. 297-310.
54. *ibid.*
55. *ibid.*, p. 306
56. *ibid.*
57. *ibid.* p.309
58. *ibid.*
59. George Bennett and Carl Rosberg, The Kenyatta Election, London, Oxford University Press, 1961, p. 34.
60. *ibid.*
61. Mombasa African Democratic Union (MADU) to Minister for African Affairs, November 12, 1956, KNA CS 7/16.
62. Mombasa Times, February 2, 1956
63. *ibid.*
64. MADU to the Minister for African Affairs, November 12, 1956 KNA CS 7/16.
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98. Goldsworthy, *op. cit.*, argues that it was a limited and qualitative franchise - education, property ownership, government service, and loyalty to government especially of the Kikuyu, Embu and Meru qualified one to be a voter.
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CHAPTER 3NGALA AND THE POLITICS OF CONSTITUTIONAL
ADVANCEMENT 1957 - 1958The 1957 African Elections

On his return home after the Southern Rhodesia conference, Ngala made his intentions of joining politics known to his close associates: H.G.S. Harrison of the then Mombasa Municipal Board, Lance Jones of the same Board and Lawrence Kafwihi Bennett, his long-term friend at his village, Vishakani, all of whom gave him their support.

In January 1957, Ngala announced his candidature. He had considered himself eligible for election according to the Coutts qualifications. These stipulated that a candidate had to meet the following to be eligible for election: intermediate level education, that is up to form two of the secondary course or its equivalent, an income totalling pounds 120 in the preceding 12 months, or property worth pounds 500. The candidate should have either rendered service of at least five years in the armed forces, or the police; seven years continuous employment by the government, High Commission or local government provided - in both cases one should not have been dismissed or discharged. Seniority was another qualification. One should have achieved the status of elder or the age of 45. Moreover, higher education - a diploma or degree from a recognized institution or approved professional qualification - was another qualification. In addition one could be eligible for election if he had legislative experience in the Legislative Council or Central Legislative Assembly or three

years continuous membership of a local government authority, an African Advisory Council or an African Court.¹

Ngala qualified under the headings of age (he was 34 years of age and an elder). He also possessed a diploma of education from Makerere College. Equally important, he had worked as a teacher earning over 400 shillings every month. He had equally served in the Municipal Board of Mombasa from 1956 and the Mombasa African Advisory Council since 1954. According to the Courts qualifications, he was eligible for election.

The Campaign

In the elections of 1957, Ngala was pitted against Francis Khamisi, Claudius Mwashumbe, Dawson Mwanyumba and the incumbent Member for the Coast Province, Jimmy Jeremiah. Of these men, it was Francis Khamisi who had the longest experience in political life. He belonged to the old guard of the Kenya African Union (KAU). Khamisi was among the thirty three Africans, of various ethnic backgrounds, to meet on 1, October, 1944 to form KAU. He was elected KAU'S first secretary, with Harry Thuku as Chairman and Albert Owino as Treasurer.² With the return of Jomo Kenyatta from England in 1946 and his assumption of the leadership of KAU in 1947, KAU at least had a good opportunity to develop into the dominant vehicle for African nationalism.³ Khamisi was to use his long-term relationship with James Gichuru (who became KAU's president in 1945 after Khamisi persuaded him to join KAU) and Jomo Kenyatta to influence voters. Moreover, he had formed a party, MADU, which had even wanted Ngala to join in 1956. Khamisi had a formidable following

among the Mombasa residents. Mwanyumba was another popular man, though with only the support of his own Taita people. The rest, with the exception of Jimmy Jeremiah who was considered a stooge of the white man, were new men in politics. Ngala did not rely on a district party for political support. He relied on his fellow teachers whom he led as the Secretary General of the Coast Teachers Association. He also called for support from the Coast African Association of which he was then president.⁴

The campaigns of the elections of 1957 were fought on the issues of lack of proper African representation in Legco. There were cries throughout the country for a removal of the incumbents and their replacement by new blood. Ngala argued that the existing Legco member for the Coast had not been representing the views of the people. Indeed, the people felt that the incumbent member, Jimmy Jeremiah, was only a lackey of the colonial government. This criticism of the unrepresentative nature of the incumbent African members of Legco was emphasized by Ngala wherever he went for his election campaigns. He argued that the Coast was under-represented and that, in Mombasa alone, there had been a desire for an African member. Ngala felt that because of the extensive area the Coast member had to cover and the demands of his duties as a Parliamentary Secretary, he did not have enough time to devote to the specific affairs of Mombasa, leave alone the affairs of the whole Coast. He promised the electorate that if they voted him into Legco, he would press for another seat for the Mombasa area.⁵

Ngala saw his entry into politics and into Legco as a new opportunity to do more for better education for the Africans. This was emphasized in the

first point of his election manifesto which was in the tone of a typical educationist; a need for racial redress in the educational system:

I will urge for good education for all our children. The competitive entrance examination should be abolished and all children be given a run to standard 8 Primary Tops whether in reserves or townships.⁶

He deplored the poor participation of Africans in matters of trade. He thus argued for an adequate representation on vital trade committees, extensive and proper advice in co-operative societies.⁷

In his election manifesto, he further said that he would urge the government and employers to provide free housing for all workers on minimum wages.

House allowances are very ill-adjusted at the moment. I will closely look into that. I will ask for loans to be made available to Africans to enable them to put up their own houses - permanent or semi-permanent according to what one can conveniently afford.⁸

At his campaign meetings, Ngala deplored the nature of colonial segregational labour arrangements. He argued that it was quite immoral and inhuman to pay people differently while they occupied the same positions of responsibility. He was particularly concerned about remuneration in various government departments where the African, educated to the level of the Asian or European, was paid less and did equal work with these Europeans or Asians. In short, he was very much against the existing terms of service for the Africans.

Ngala was sympathetic to the Mau Mau movement. However, he regarded Mau Mau as an up-country movement articulated by the Kikuyu and

based on the land problem.⁹ He chose to campaign on the issue of the Coast African alienation from the land he had occupied for generations. He therefore, saw the Mau Mau issue as remote and divorced from the Coast African problems. While the Kikuyu fought to regain their land from the white settlers, Ngala was urging the unity of the Coast Africans so that they would forge a common front against the Arab-Swahili alienation of their land.¹⁰

Thus, while Khamisi chose to preach the national politics of the old guard (the fight against land alienation by the white man, the fight against the Lyttleton Plan and its policy of non-racialism and multi-racialism), Ngala talked of Coast African problems like racial education, poor health services and poor housing. The difference between the two contestants, who seem to have been the biggest crowd-pullers was one of emphasis: Ngala localized his campaign, articulating the immediate problems of the Coast African, while Khamisi expanded his concerns to cover countrywide issues.

By comparison, other African nationalists campaigning for election at this time expressed their views on the status quo. These views expressed what each saw what it meant to join politics. They argued over a range of issues, ranging from the call for a scraping of the Lyttleton Constitution to a redress of the educational system. This gives us a picture of the array of demands the Europeans were expected to face with the onslaught of the African Elected Members.

Africans voted on the weekend of 9-10 March. When the results were made public on 11 March, it was clear that Ronald Ngala had become the first Elected African Member of the Coast Province. He obtained 3,406 votes against

Mwanyumba's 2,539; Khamisi's 2,267, Mwashumbe's 712 and Jeremiah's 488.¹¹ Ngala had won with a clear majority of 867 over his closest rival Mwanyumba of Taita. His election to Legco and successful entry into politics could be attributed to the fact that his work with the Education Department of the CMS had brought him into contact with many thousands of Africans. This he acknowledged himself:

This is my thirteenth year with the education department, and work has taken me to nearly every district of the Coast Province.¹²

Thousands of voters knew him from previous years and, during the election campaign were prepared to listen to his views on how the education and the agriculture and health services of Kenya should be run. Ngala had not only won the hearts of his fellow Coast Africans, but, also, some of the Arab-Swahili of the Coast. Among those who congratulated him on his successful win was M.S. Ramadhani, the President of the African Muslim Society of Mombasa, who hoped that Ngala would do his "best for the African future in general and the Coast in particular, and turn out to be the most beloved African leader".¹³

What was interesting about the first African elections was that, among the six nominated Members, only two Members were elected back to Legco: Daniel arap Moi of the Rift Valley and James Muimi from Eastern Province. The Africans had shown through their vote that they were no longer interested in what the government thought was right for them. They had elected those representatives, who they thought, could best articulate their grievances. Another thing was clear: although these African members were to express militant

gestures, henceforth, having entered the corridors of Legco, they were to work within or conform to the rituals of Westminster decolonization.

Formation of the African Elected Members Organization [AEMO]

Following the elections, the new African Elected Members were: Oginga Odinga in Central Nyanza, Bernard Mate in Central Province, Ronald Ngala at the Coast, Lawrence Oguda in South Nyanza, Tom Mboya for Nairobi, Masinde Muliro in Elgon Nyanza, James Muimi from Eastern Province and Daniel arap Moi from the Rift Valley. This represented quite a new breed of African leadership - most of them having considerable higher education. The African elite had found its way into Legco. Soon they would be a force to reckon with.

The eight African Elected Members met for the first time on Wednesday 13 March at the Kenya Federation of Labour offices at Pumwani. They met and formed the African Elected Members Organization [AEMO].¹⁴ Thereafter, they issued a statement in which they declared in principle that the Lyttleton Plan was null and void, that none of the members would accept a ministerial post or post of parliamentary secretary under the Plan, and that the most urgent and immediate need was to secure constitutional reforms in Legco, giving every group, "effective and real representation, to which end it is our intention to direct all our efforts and energies."¹⁵ The statement recorded opposition to "any system which serves as a device to secure for certain people permanent political and economic domination of the sections of our community in Kenya."¹⁶ At this meeting, Mboya and Odinga were elected secretary and Chairman respectively of AEMO.

However, leadership in AEMO at this time was regarded as being collective, each regarding the other as a political equal. Ngala and the other African members constituted AEMO with one major aim: that of having a collective organized effort towards wrecking the Lyttleton Plan. The point was to have African solidarity against a formidable force, that of the Kenya colonial government and the settler representatives. Thus, each move by either one or two of the African Members was seen in this context, and not regarded as a credit to one person.

Ngala in the Legislative Council

The newly-elected Members took their seats in the council on Tuesday 26 March 1957. This was the very day when the Minister for Finance, Ernest Vasey, tabled Kenya's Development Programme for 1957 - 1960. Joining Legco had a meaning for the African Members. They were filling in the leadership gap that had existed for long between the people and the government. In effect they would circumvent the political restrictions which forbade national political organizations at that time. If they could not build a recognized colony-wide nationalist organization, they could begin to build, country-wide, through Legco, a national feeling and belonging. This was because it was only in Legco that they would speak their minds freely and with plenty of attendant publicity.

The early council sessions were marked by fiery and fearless speeches by the African Members, especially on the Budget speech by Vasey. In his maiden speech in Legco, commenting on the Development Plan, Ngala chose to deplore the weakness of the colonial education and proposed more funds for African education for the benefit of Africans. Talking as an authority in the educational

arena, he laid bare the shortcomings of the colonial education. He perceived education as a unifying force. This was not the case with the colonial education. It had not reached a level where it would be acceptable to the whole Kenyan nation. If education was to fulfil one of its major aims, that of preparing the individual for citizenship and life, then the problem with the colonial education was the type of curriculum offered. Ngala, therefore, envisaged a complete change of the educational curriculum, whereby some kind of technical or commercial subject was taught in school. He was of the view that at the age of 15, when most children left school at that time, children would have been prepared for life, and, therefore, technical and commercial education would be useful.¹⁷ If the aim in life is to achieve better standards of living, he envisaged education as a tool towards that end.

When three years later Ngala came to talk about regionalism and its main tenet - regions deciding their own affairs - it was not a new aspect in his thinking. Ngala's views of regional autonomy was not an issue of the 1960s - it had loomed large in his mind. When commenting on the Development Plan he said

I would like to see the African District Councils encouraged as much as possible in running rural schools.¹⁸

For Ngala, the educational plan within the Development Programme ought to have included allocation of money to these District Councils to run it. It was in this maiden speech that the opinion of both European Members and his colleagues about him was formed. He got a warm applause for his speech. His choice of words mattered a lot. He was vivid in his speech, putting across his

points without hesitation.¹⁹

Each of the African Members got up to speak with vehemence and clarity. In view of the hard-hitting speeches made by them, especially in public meetings, the government opted to impose stricter control on African meetings. On the whole, the attempt to restrict political expression was a move to keep the Africans divided. What should be underscored is that the government was failing to learn that to put the whole of the African political movement back into the straight-jacket which it had worn for an uncomfortably long time, was indefensible. The long deprivation of political freedom made it inevitable that there would be a sharp edge of militancy among the new leaders. It was no surprise, therefore, that Ngala and his colleagues were vigorously attacking the inadequate Lyttleton Plan, the inadequate and racial education and certain aspects of the agrarian reforms. A solution to the problems, which had potential for violence was, as The Observer noted,

to deal with the offenders under the numerous laws that exist for this purpose... They (Africans) may or may not be mistaken in these criticisms, but to let them criticize and listen to their criticism would be wiser than simply to hush them up.²⁰

Ngala deplored and castigated the move by the government to impose stricter measures on public meetings addressed by Africans. In an attempt to foster joint effort in solving the African problems, Ngala arranged for a meeting in Mombasa to be addressed by Mboya and Odinga. To his dismay, the other African Elected Members were not accorded permission to speak, the reason being

in accordance with the Government's recent statement of policy, permission has not been granted for speakers from constituencies other than the Coast, to address the meeting.²¹

Ngala himself was refused permission to address meetings in Nairobi.²²

He viewed the whole move as one aimed at depriving the African his basic rights of speech and association.

where is the freedom of speech if Mr. Odinga cannot address Mombasa people who voted for him three months ago? Where is the right of an African politician, if it is necessary for him to go on his knees to the District Commissioner or District Officer to get a licence to address his constituents?²³

It should here be observed that the belief of the white minority was that the African Members did not appreciate that the colony-wide organization, KAU, had allowed itself to be permeated through and through by Mau Mau. The European Members, therefore, expected similar development out of any formation of a colony-wide political organization. In other words, they saw similarities between the 1952 situation and the 'irresponsible' speeches the Africans were giving in 1957. They did not see in the 'new' African leaders, a new leadership, equipped with a new dynamism, ready to negotiate.

It was equally appalling and disheartening for Ngala and the other African Members that politicians of other races were free to hold meetings without a licence. There was no equality in the whole affair. On the whole, the move to restrict African public meetings was aimed at perpetrating a disjointed organization for the Africans. The Africans wanted to work in unison, they attempted to present colony-wide African opinion not merely the opinion of their

own constituencies.²⁴

Opposition to the Lyttleton Constitution

The African Members went to Legco from the beginning with the aim of rendering the Lyttleton Constitution unworkable. This they had shown in their first meeting when AEMO was formed. In a letter to the Chief Secretary, they reiterated their stand on the Lyttleton Constitution. They said they did not recognize the agreement nor the conditions requiring change of the constitution to take place only with the agreement of all the racial groups. The African Members posed to the government the question: did it not agree with them that African representation in Legco was inadequate? The fact was that the Chief Secretary's attitude towards AEMO was a negative one. The government did not see the urgency of the matter. It was thus the African Members contention that carrying on the government without them defeated the purpose, aim and spirit of the Lyttleton Constitution. They argued that the existing system was an "arbitrary design to ensure the dominance of one racial group over all others, thereby overlooking the significance of the individual in society".²⁵

In public meetings the Lyttleton Plan was a topic of ridicule and castigation. In a meeting in Mombasa attended by Odinga and Mboya, Ngala put it that the African Members had rejected the constitution because it encouraged parity between whites and non-whites. The constitution concentrated power in the hands of the white men, thus implying a white aristocracy. Ngala argued that the Plan also required the 'ineffective and inadequate' African representation to take up positions in government as ministers or parliamentary secretaries which

could not. He asserted that the constitution would lead Kenya into a situation similar to that of Rhodesia and South Africa, where there was segregation of the black man and no sharing and participation by him in any government deliberations and policies. He was for equal rights for all races and a removal of favours and principles based on race, colour and creed.²⁶

The argument of Ngala and the other African Members was quite simple: their demand for an increase to 15 seats of their representation was justified if factors of the area covered by each Member, populations represented, the nature of the problems to be dealt with, the mode of communication and the contribution of the African to the country's general economic well-being were considered. Cooperation from the Africans would be impossible if all the racial groups were not adequately and effectively represented in Legco. The African Members were, for instance, aware that the speedy development of Kenya was dependent upon outside capital and imported knowledge and skill. But they did not support the continuation of discriminatory European settlerdom. Increased African representation in Legco was part and parcel of their desire to see greater economic and social development among the African people, since it was only with an effective say in the affairs of the country that the Africans could participate fully and effectively in the formulation of policies and programmes and their implementation.

The white population disregarded the African demands. The Chief Secretary, Richard Turnbull, was essentially procedural: the Lyttleton Constitution was an outcome of agreement among several groups, and would not be amended without the consent of all.²⁷ To many of the European Members, it was the

Africans who were creating a barrier to change. There was ingenuity in this. The white population did not want to part with their favours and privileges which were in many ways against the interest of the Africans.

Dissatisfied with the progress made over their request for increased representation in Legco, the eight African Members decided that two of their Members, Mboya and Ngala, should fly to Britain to present two main issues: one, to interpret to the British people, British government and Members of Parliament, the case for increased African representation and, two, to explain the attitude of the African Members to the Lyttleton Constitution.²⁸

On 5 July 1957, before Ngala and Mboya left for London, the European Members issued a statement to the effect that they were ready to press for an increase in African representation without increasing the number of seats for other racial groups, provided that Africans participated in the government and the Council of Ministers. Realizing the intention behind this move, the African Members issued their own statement. It read in part,

The African Members note with interest the expressed fear of the European Members on Constitutional reforms that might lead to domination by racial groups, when they are aware that it is this very condition that the African Members object to under the present structure in relation to the Europeans' position.²⁹

The African Members doubted the sincerity of the European proposal. The statement could only have been regarded by the African Members as an attempt to influence public opinion in the colony and abroad, to prejudice the purpose of the delegation which AEMO was about to send to the United Kingdom.³⁰ Now that the Europeans had seen their bastions of privileges falling,

they had made this plaintive cry for no domination. The African Members, however, took the position 'Give us more seats and then we'll talk'. In other words, they wanted the increase without any compromise or guarantees to the Europeans.

Ngala and Mboya in London

The African Members chose Ngala and Mboya to represent their case. Mboya was chosen for his forcefulness and metropolitan lobbying experience since 1954, an experience that would be needed in the talks ahead.³¹ For Ngala, it was the high regard for his honesty, sincerity and trustworthiness by Members of AEMO that won him the journey.³²

Ngala and Mboya flew from Nairobi on 15 July, 1957 and arrived in London on July 18. Each day of their stay in London was followed closely by both Africans and Europeans back in Kenya. The governor of Kenya, Sir Evelyn Baring, was in London at this time as were Michael Blundell, Group - Captain Briggs and Wilfred Havelock.³³ According to Blundell, he and Havelock had gone to London to monitor the African deputation of Ngala and Mboya, with the hope of putting a case in favour of the African demand for increased representation.³⁴

Ngala and Mboya met the Colonial Secretary on 18 July. The Colonial Secretary sought an agreement to end the political deadlock in Kenya. Blundell remembers to have attended a meeting with the Colonial Secretary and Baring, which Ngala and Mboya attended, and which, among other things, considered the conditional offer by the councils' European Members of increased African representation.³⁵ Upon his return to Kenya, Ngala remarked that he and Mboya

had endeavoured to meet everybody in London - Members of Parliament, newspaper men, the public and the Secretary of State for the colonies.³⁶

It is difficult to assess the achievement of Ngala and Mboya in London.

They had gone to London with a high tempo but seem to have not impressed the British press much. While this was so for the press, there was however, no doubt Ngala and Mboya had made a good impression in London in other quarters by the moderation in the presentation of their case.³⁷ They met all sections of the British community. Of course many people were opposed to their views, but others seem to have agreed, that they had a case and they had to be given much greater representation.³⁸ Logic and the facts of political life were that the Africans were getting to be more aware of their rights. Perhaps the task of Ngala and Mboya back home was to see how they would win the European confidence and the willingness of the Africans to accept concessions for the minority Europeans and Asians in the 'transition' period before Africans took over. If this was to be so on the part of Africans, it would be the right step forward, hoping that in the light of subsequent discussions a solution would be found. They succeeded in convincing the Colonial Secretary to visit Kenya in October.³⁹

Ngala addresses a World Youth Conference

While on their constitutional campaign in London Ngala had the opportunity to address a seminar organized by the World Assembly of Youth in Geneva. In his speech he embraced the views of nationalism that had galvanized Africa after the Second World War. Africa had a sharpened political consciousness that was widespread. Africans, he argued, had legitimate

grievances which the colonialist must look into. He attributed the escalation of African political consciousness to some factors, namely, African reaction to the impetus given by external events, the independence of Ghana and Sudan, and also the important constitutional advancements that had been realized in Uganda, Tanganyika and Nigeria. More specifically in Kenya, he said the move to have Africans directly electing their representatives in Legco as another factor that contributed to this political awareness, not to mention the fear and suspicions of Africans arising from the events in South Africa.⁴⁰ Ngala envisaged a gradual change in the Kenya situation - change could not take place overnight. In this respect, he conceded that self-government would wait until African people were in a strong enough position to influence public affairs.

From the speech, we can see that Ngala believed that the ultimate purpose of all political activity and agitation was the full realization of economic development and social advancement of all peoples. To achieve these, the strategy for him was a clear move away from any racial discrimination where three tenets would prevail: political freedom, economic opportunity and human dignity, which symbolized the struggle in colonial Africa.⁴¹

Ngala back in Nairobi

We noted that assessing the success of the delegation to London was difficult. To many of the Kenya militants, "the delegation's achievements had not been tangible or dramatic enough".⁴² For Ngala and Mboya, this was only a primary stage of the constitutional discussions. They were satisfied and convinced that, on the whole, the deputation had been worthwhile.⁴³ What

remained for the people was to wait for the Colonial Secretary's visit to Kenya in October.

The Colonial Secretary visited Kenya twice from October 11 to 19 and from October 31 to November 8 1957. During these visits he had informal talks with individuals and with groups in Legco. However, the Colonial Secretary seems to have held on to the Lyttleton Constitution adopting a "take-it-or-leave-it glare".⁴⁴ The African Members maintained that their case for further communally-elected seats should be discussed and decided in absence of any other issue and that such further seats should actually be created before further discussions took place. This was unacceptable to the Europeans and Asians living in Kenya. As a result, it became clear that no further progress could be made towards any desirable constitutional advance or changes by local initiative.

In view of the binding factors imbedded in the Lyttleton Constitution and the pledges therein, the British government could not initiate such changes. To show their support for a change in the constitution, three European Members - Briggs, Blundell and Havelock - and two Asian Members tendered their resignation from the Council of Ministers on 7 November 1957. This made it possible for Lennox-Boyd to initiate new moves on constitutional changes.⁴⁵ Since the representatives of all races were now unwilling to hold office in the government, it was plain that the 1954 Constitution was unworkable and the Colonial Secretary declared it so on 8 November 1957. In a few months time, the new brand of African leadership had forced in a crisis which resulted in the dismantling of the Lyttleton Constitution.

This gesture by the European and Asian Members who resigned showed

that the case for increased African representation had been recognised. All other groups in Legco had recognised that the African community had a case for some increase in representation which could not be balanced by an increase in non-African representation. The result was a new constitution - the Lennox-Boyd Constitution announced on 8 November by Lennox-Boyd himself.⁴⁶ This day marked the death of the Lyttleton Constitution. It was the untiring efforts and the unity of Ngala and his colleagues that had forced the Colonial Secretary to join them in killing the Lyttleton Constitution.

AEMO rejects the Lennox-Boyd Constitution

Lennox-Boyd's constitutional proposals were, however, received with mixed feelings. The Member for Mombasa, C.G. Usher said:

In all circumstances I myself think that the Africans aspirations have been generally met.⁴⁷

The Nairobi Peoples Convention Party concluded that the Lennox-Boyd Plan "is just another Lyttleton Plan in disguise".⁴⁸ Ngala commented

This (is) just the beginning of a very long struggle. The new trap which has just been set must be studied very carefully.⁴⁹

It is within this perspective of Ngala's that

AEMO received the Lennox-Boyd Plan cautiously. They took two days or so to study it carefully and, in the final analysis, considered it not close enough to their ultimate objective: undiluted democracy.

The Lennox-Boyd Constitution endeavoured to increase African representation from eight to fourteen members, but, it preserved the element of multi-racial government; basically retaining the major principles of the Lyttleton Constitution. It is on this basis that AEMO rejected the new constitution. For instance, they argued that the increase of 6 more seats did not rectify the existing racial imbalance in Legco.⁵⁰ They equally objected to the idea of 'selective seats' because this would enable the Europeans, official and unofficial, to form a majority in Legco to control the selection of the new Members of all three races; hence discriminating against Africans.⁵¹

Another tenet of the Lennox-Boyd Constitution was the Council of State. AEMO saw this as an instrument to delay reforms that might be demanded. It was an intentional tactic by the British to delay constitutional advancements. By its own nature, the Council of State was discriminatory, leave alone its task of preventing discriminatory legislation. They insisted on having, in clear and definite terms, the destination. Thereafter, issues of how to reach this destination would be discussed. Though they envisaged that all changes and reforms were to be gradual and that they should seek to remove worries and fears, they equally wanted the British to commit themselves to the African cause.⁵² On the whole, the constitutional proposals favoured the Europeans and because they had been suggested without consultation, they had to be rejected. This was aired not only by AEMO, but, also, the Asian Members and even by the liberal Members of Parliament in London.⁵³ They all thought the new constitution was an imposed one.

The rejection of the constitution by AEMO was regarded by Lennox-Boyd as not representative of African opinion. This did not deter the African Members from their efforts to show their indignation about the new constitution. To further their efforts in opposing it, they distributed copies of a leaflet, in Kiswahili and in English, detailing their opposition.⁵⁴ The African Members, took the view that the imposition of the plan would be against the expressed and unanimous wishes of the African community.

Following the Lennox-Boyd Constitution, new constituencies were created to cater for the six new African Members. Ngala, the African Member for the Coast was to hold the Coast Rural Seat, which was the Coast Province, less Mombasa. Thus, the elections for the new seat were to be held in Mombasa which was the administrative centre. There were no arrangements to have increased voters on the roll. Those entitled to vote were those who were on the electoral roll at the first African elections in March.

Ngala and the election of 'Special' Members

The election of the new six special African Members was viewed by Members of AEMO differently. On the one hand, the wrangle on how to deal with this issue centered on Mboya and Odinga. Mboya was of the view that the election of six more Africans into Legco would provide an entree for his friend and adviser, Julius Kiano. Odinga, on the other hand, argued militantly for opposition on the grounds that the "offer of a mere six seat was derisory and, more importantly, that the new constituencies had been deliberately located in decile districts with a single new member for 'radical' Nyanza; that is, it

reflected a European plot to undermine the Africans' solidarity in opposition."⁵⁵

Instead of dwelling on the wrangles between Odinga and Mboya, Ngala took his time off to his constituency, holding several rallies with the aim of analyzing the Lennox-Boyd Constitution and explaining it to his constituents. He did explain why, for example, the African Members were rejecting the constitution. On the election of the six African Members, he did not object to this move. He instead campaigned to see that the African community ensured the election of members who would support the rejection of the Lennox-Boyd Constitution and who would unite with the other African Members to 'fight' the Ministers and the Council of State, the ten-year standstill and stipulated non-increase in communal seats.⁵⁶

These divergent views in AEMO did not, however, stop them from unanimously announcing a boycott of the elections for the 'specially elected' members. Odinga's argument for a boycott won majority support.⁵⁷ AEMO thus tendered a notice that they would boycott the debate in Legco on the governments proposal for six extra African seats.⁵⁸

Despite the absence of the African Elected Members, Legco was set to pass the legislation of the 'Special Seats' for six more Africans. In thirty minutes the Bill went through all its stages of legislation.⁵⁹ Nomination day was set for 20 February and polling was to be during the weekend beginning 22 March 1958. It was obvious that the government had decided to go ahead with the first stage of the Lennox-Boyd Constitution. It was the hope of the government and the European community that the election of six new African members would produce a type of African group that would be ready to

co-operate with them in seeing the Lennox-Boyd Constitution workable.

Arguably, the hard-line policy against the colonial government had no alternative. The reluctance the Europeans were showing had to be brought into contempt - this way it would surrender to the demands of the Africans. Indeed the nationalistic tide was high. It was now irreversible. It was patently clear that the Europeans and Asians had to change from thinking about 'if' there was to be an African majority and get down to details of 'how' and 'when'. One would further point out that there is no perfect human being and that mistakes can be made in the formulation of plans. In recognizing these facts, one can therefore work out a system by which mistakes could be corrected. In this perspective, the Lennox-Boyd Constitution could as well have been corrected by having what was good and dropping what was bad for the Africans.

It was nourishing to the hearts of those who had wished for 'rejectionists' to be voted in for the 'special seats'. This was the case for Ngala and Mboya. In Mombasa, Francis Khamisi, a friend of Ngala's was voted in. Gikonyo Kiano, had been voted in too. Others included Justus Ole Tipis a Maasai from the Rift Valley, Taita Towett a Kipsigis, Mumo from Ukambani and Jeremiah Nyagah from Embu. To think in the tribal terms of those days, Odinga had a problem finding allies among the new lot. It always favored Mboya and Ngala.⁶⁰ It was not difficult for Ngala, from his early days in Legco, to avoid the tribal disputes in AEMO. He had been voted into Legco not by one 'tribe' but by a multiplicity of coastal 'tribes' with a divergent denominational background. This had a bearing on his relationship with his colleagues and other

faces.

Ngala elected secretary of AEMO

The leadership wrangle in AEMO became apparent as early as March 1958. This leadership in-fighting was fought between Odinga and Mboya on the basis of age and the need to outweigh each other in the struggle for support from other members of AEMO. The Kikuyu 'members of AEMO at this time were not a strong force. With most of their prominent leaders in detention and the ban on their participation in politics, they cherished to see the wrangle between Odinga and Mboya continue.⁶¹ It was clear that they wanted a split between Odinga and Mboya. If the two were to become friends, they would have formed a strong formidable force not easy to reckon with, even if Kikuyu leaders were still to be released from detention.

An opportunity arose when Tom Mboya was away in Ghana for Odinga to assert more authority. Odinga ordered new elections for office-bearers of AEMO, in which he retained the chairmanship, while Ngala was elected secretary in place of Mboya. Ngala was chosen for his neutrality and not because he was campaigning or struggling for power.⁶² Rather than count on the splits and divisions among the African Members, Ngala took up the reconciliatory and neutral position, arguing for a more united front than divisions. From then on, he was to earn credit for conducting the affairs of AEMO without asserting more of his personal views at the expense of the solidarity of their organization, something Mboya had been accused of. At this time, Ngala was aware that leadership was not campaigned for. Rather its qualities were noticed in one and

then one was appointed as leader.

Under the Lennox-Boyd Constitution four other Africans were to be elected by the Council sitting as a multi-racial electoral college. The Council elected Musa Amalemba, Gibson Ngome, Wanyutu Waweru and John Muchura.⁶³ Accordingly, AEMO had announced that they would not cooperate with any of those nominated to stand for the special seats. They released a statement on 25 March which was regarded as contemptuous⁶⁴ by the European and led to seven of AEMO Members to be prosecuted. Among those prosecuted were Ngala, Moi, Odinga, Muimi, Mboya, Muliro and Oguda. Judgement was delivered on 11 June: they were found guilty of criminal libel and fined pounds 75 each for defaming Africans who had announced their candidature for the 'Special seats'.⁶⁵ In essence, Ngala and his colleagues were only opposing the constitution and thus rightly doing so. They felt morally and politically entitled to do what they did, in what they thought was their public duty. On the whole, "a painless martyrdom was theirs"⁶⁶; all along they had received approval and support of the Africans and were afforded the services of Mr. D.N. Pritt who had been Kenyatta's lawyer at the Kapenguria trial.

AEMO went ahead on 27 June to demand another constitutional conference by re-stating their position in a long statement: "Our Pledge, Our Goals, and Our Constitutional Proposals" in which they hoped to draw positive reaction from the government, the colonial office and the European Members.⁶⁷

In June, while debate in Legco centered on the 'Kapenguria convicts'⁶⁸ Ngala chose to talk about detainees coming from his coast rural constituency. He preferred to ask about what rehabilitation arrangements were being made for

Coast people who were detained or whose movements were restricted.⁶⁹ He was assured that there was only one detainee from the Coast and those restricted were being rehabilitated at their homes. Odinga's mention of the Kapenguria convicts in Legco was quite untimely because the Members from Central Kenya thought this would delay the lifting of the emergency. AEMO preferred at this time to keep off talking about those at Kapenguria and concentrate on the issues of the constitution. To discuss absent leadership was idle talk. For Ngala what was important was how to make best use of the situation with the existing leadership. One could ask the question: could constitutional advancement take place without Kenyatta? The answer is, of course, it could and it did.

Further opposition to the Constitution

Central to the arguments in Legco was the struggle to wreck the Lennox-Boyd Constitution. In June, a motion asking the government to convene a round table conference having been defeated, Ngala, on behalf of the African Members, wrote to inquire if consideration had been taken of their June proposals. Nothing happened until Ngala and his group asked in October to see the Governor. At this meeting, it was stated by the Governor that he expected a communication from London and would get in touch with the members as soon as possible.⁷⁰ It was, therefore, the expectation of the African Members that when the Governor came to open Legco on 4 November, he would, in turn, give the African Members a reply to their June proposals.

During the opening speech of Legco by the Governor, the African Members walked out before the Governor had finished the following sentence,

However, as it is now constituted it can and, if necessary, it will carry on the administration of the country ... The basic constitutional position of the country remains unchanged.⁷¹

The African Members felt that there had been a deliberate attempt to ignore and ridicule their position and, in the circumstances, they considered that the best way to show their indignation was to walk out during the Governor's speech.

The walk-out of the 14 African Members culminated in their suspension for three days from the Council proceedings. Not that they would have minded extra suspension days. They were all ready to continue the boycott.⁷² It was revealed by Mumo that in their series of secret talks, resignation from Legco had been paramount. He, himself, through the Governor's persuasion, had decided to resume attending the council sittings, unless he had been instructed otherwise by his constituents.⁷³

Perhaps with the aim of luring the African Members back into attending Legco sittings, the Governor summoned them on 12 November. He told the African Members that his speech from the chair had nothing to do with the replies to their June proposals which were expected from London. From this meeting, Ngala and his colleagues knew that without pressing their demands, nothing fruitful of their expectations, would come. They resolved not to resign from Legco but continue to boycott Legco proceedings until they received an official reply from the Colonial Secretary. In a statement signed on behalf of the chairman, by Ngala and Arap Moi, they declared their continued boycott of Legco proceedings.⁷⁴

The reply to the demands of the African Members for increased representation and the abolition of the specially elected seats and the Council of State, among others, was relayed to the AEMO through the Governor on November 27. It said that the African proposals ran directly contrary to the principles underlying the constitutional arrangements which had been put into force in April.⁷⁵ In essence, the Colonial Secretary reiterated the same stand about the constitutional arrangements. The British government was still opposed to the demands of the African Members.

Thus, the year 1958 came to a close with bleakness concerning the future of constitutional advancements. The hopes of the African Members were shattered by Lennox-Boyd's reply. This, however, had not deterred them from public solidarity.

Footnotes

Tom Mboya, Freedom and After, London, Andre Deutsche, 1963, p. 118.

C.G. Rosberg and John Nottingham, The Myth of Mau Mau": Nationalism in Kenya, Stanford, Leland Stanford Junior University, 1966, pp. 214 - 219.

ibid.

"Ronald Ngala's Record", Mombasa Times, February 7, 1957.

Interview Report, Lawrence K. Bennett, September 5, 1988.

Mombasa Times, February 7, 1957

ibid.

ibid.

Interview Report, Juma Ferunzy, July 29, 1989

ibid., For a discussion of acquisition of land by the Arabs and Swahili at the Coast see A. I. Salim, Swahili - Speaking Peoples of Kenya's Coast 1895 - 1965, Nairobi, East African Publishing House, 1973, pp.120 - 128 and 136 - 137.

Mombasa Times, March 12, 1957.

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M.S. Ramadhan, President of the African Muslim Society of Mombasa, in Mombasa Times, March 13, 1957.

Goldsworthy, op.cit., p. 73

African Elected Member's Press statement "The Lyttleton Plan" Appears in Mombasa Times, March 20, 1957.

ibid.

Legco Debates, Vol. 72 Part I, Col. 63 - 66.

ibid., Col. 65 Other contributions of Ngala in this debate (early contributions in Legco) Col. 428-430.

ibid., Col. 66

The Observer, quoted in Mombasa Times May 23, 1957.

Mombasa Times, May 30, 1957

Legco Debates, Vol. 72 Part II, Col. 1013.

Mombasa Times, May 30, 1957

It is imperative to note that up to today the African politician has not yet had that freedom Ngala envisaged. There has always been public conflicts between D.O's, D.C's and politicians.

Letter from AEMO to Chief Secretary, April 24, 1957 signed by all Members. KNA SVC/15 Cooke Papers.

Mombasa Times, June 4, 1957

Turnbull to AEMO, April 8, 1957, Goldsworthy, op.cit., p.77

Mombasa Times, June 5, 1957

East Africa and Rhodesia, July 18, 1957, "Sincerity of European Offer Doubted".

The European wanted to show the public that they were genuine in their move, though their organization had been riddled with severe division which had led to the resignation of S.V. Cooke from it. See Mombasa Times, April 6, 1957.

Goldsworthy, op. cit., p. 82

ibid.

Interview Report, Michael Blundell, February 27, 1989.

ibid.,

ibid.,

Ronald Ngala, reported in Mombasa Times, August 19, 1957.

Kenya Weekly News August 16, 1957, East African Standard, August 12, 1957.

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Mombasa Times, August 9, 1957

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Press Statement signed by Ngala and Mboya. Kenya Weekly News, August 30, 1957.

Tom Mboya, Freedom and After, London, Andre Deutsche, 1963, p.120.

Transcript of interview between Philip Mason and Lennox-Boyd, KNA OP/IB/203.

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ibid.

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AEMO Press Statement "The Lennox-Boyd Constitutional Proposals" November 13, 1957, KNA OP/IB/203.

ibid.

ibid.

A.J. Pandya, Member for Eastern area of Nairobi expressed the views that the Lennox-Boyd Constitution was created not out of consultation or negotiation, Mombasa Times, November 15, 1957.

Interview Report, Musa Amalemba, March 10, 1989.

Goldsworthy, op. cit., p.94.

Mombasa Times, January 7, 1958.

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Mombasa Times, January 7, 1958.

ibid.

Interview Report, Francis Khamisi, September 22, 1988.

Interview Report, Musa Amalemba, March 10, 1989.

ibid., Francis Khamisi, September 22, 1988.

ibid., Musa Amalemba, March 10, 1989.

AEMO Press Statement March 25, 1958. Appears in East African Standard, March 26, 1958. This statement had referred to those who sought to stand for election for special seats as stooges, quislings and 'black Europeans' and traitors to the African course.

65. Goldsworthy, op. cit., p. 98.

66. ibid.

67. ibid.

68. Legco Debates, Vol. 75, Col. 2175 - 2261.

69. ibid.

70. Mombasa Times, November 13, 1958.

71. ibid.

72. Interview Report, Francis Khamisi, September 22, 1988.

73. Mombasa Times, November 13, 1958.

74. ibid.

75. East African Standard, November 28, 1958.

CHAPTER 4NGALA AND THE BEGINNING OF DIVISIONS AMONG
THE NATIONALISTS 1959-60

By the late 1950s the nationalist force had become explosive, running through the African mind. The issues for Ngala and his colleagues were fundamentally centered around the need to express themselves as Africans and to be independent individuals without the need for control, influence and guidance from overseas. There had been a shift in demands, from increased African representation to a call for a round-table conference to negotiate constitutional advancement.

There was indeed a call by some of the African Members declaring 'we want political power now'. A second, moderate view or school of thought believed that ultimately Kenya must have predominantly African influence and control within the government and over many of its operations. Such differences in Kenya's nationalistic struggle were not clear until early 1959. By the end of 1958, these differences only occurred in the minds of the white man.

Among his colleagues, Ngala seems to have been the cooling factor in the wrangles for power between Odinga and Mboya, not, however, to the detriment of his personality but to his credit. This chapter attempts to survey the realm of differences that emerged among the nationalist figures and, therefore, will attempt to demonstrate where Ngala fell vis-a-vis the two different groups: radicals and moderates. Imperative to the analysis of these reasons for the divisions will be a discussion on the formation of the two major African political parties: Kenya African National Union (KANU) and Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU).

Ngala, as we will note, comes out vividly as a moderate as from 1959.

Differences in opinion

As noted above, the tide of African political awareness was rising very high by the late 1950's. Africans were now aware of the political direction which Kenya should take. Yet there was a deliberate move to stop this move forward by the British government. The District Associations were calling for the African Members in Legco to resign from the Council to show that they were strongly refusing to recognize the imposition of the Lennox-Boyd Constitution, which was designed to serve only the interests of the immigrants. In a two-day meeting in Nairobi between the African Members and the delegates of the District Associations, the issue of resignation was considered. The meeting voted in favour of continuing the boycott, but with thirty one votes to twelve against resignation.¹

In the two-day meeting, another issue that was considered was the tour of Kenya by the Queen Mother. A decision was passed to boycott the tour of the Queen Mother to show the resentment by the Africans of the government's neglect of African demands. Africans were, therefore, advised by AEMO and District Associations not to do anything which might show disrespect to the Queen Mother nor to cause disturbances of any kind, but merely to remain at home or place of work.

From the meeting in Nairobi, Ngala had shown that he was not ready to boycott the Queen Mother's visit.² A man ready to stand on his own decisions,

was the only person to vote against a resolution in a meeting at Tononoka in Mombasa to "adhere very strictly" to the resolution passed at the African Leaders Conference in Nairobi, urging Africans to dissociate themselves from the Queen Mother's visit. Ngala explained:

Since the Queen Mother's status keeps her outside any politics, I deem it politically unwise and improper to boycott her forthcoming visit.³

Thus, Ngala came out as an individual fighting against an African consensus. He reiterated that his decision was an individual decision and did not change the deliberations of the meeting in Nairobi and Mombasa. He was not ready to be vague to his constituents about the issue, "however, much I deplore and disagree with the British attitude to our constitutional demands".⁴ Here it was clear that tactical differences existed among the African leaders. Ngala would not go along blindly with the utterances of Mboya and Odinga at this moment.

Ngala seems to have grasped the idea that the Queen Mother was above politics. But it was clear that, to the African majority in Kenya, such a conception of British politics was not appreciated at all. In a colonial territory, a Governor and the Queen were symbolic of British authority and agents of imperialism, and, therefore, it was difficult to show the indigenous people that the Queen was not part of the colonial system. At a time when pressure for constitutional change was mounting, it was hard to convince the African of that action. Clearly, Ngala came out as a maverick, differing in opinion and action with Mboya, Odinga and Kiano, who had led the vote to boycott the

been Mother's visit. However, he was to fulfil his obligations as secretary of AEMO. Subsequently, he had to act for AEMO to further their deliberations,⁵ to mediate the conflict between the individual and group decisions. He was not ready to impose his own decisions.

One very important thing to note at this juncture was the reaction Ngala had generated at the Coast by his dissent. Following his individual rejection of the boycott at Tononoka Hall in Mombasa, other people and groups announced their dissociation from the African boycott of the Queen Mother's visit. First was the Mombasa African Muslim Association, which openly dissociated itself from the decision of the Leader's Conference in Nairobi and appealed to all Africans in Mombasa to follow "the sound advice" of Ronald Ngala to participate in all activities connected with the royal visit.⁶ MADU, led by Francis Khamisi, followed suit, issuing a similar statement of dissociation on 31 January 1959.⁷ Thus, at the Coast, the people continued to acknowledge Ngala as their undisputed leader. Here, he was the power broker.

The formation of the Constituency Elected Members Organization [CEMO]

Soon it was recognizable that the African and Asian⁸ boycott of Legco meetings was biting into the system. The liberal and progressive Europeans, like Michael Blundell, had begun to give support to the call for a statement of policy. Ngala and his group saw this as an encouraging move. Indeed, the only movement that could bring Kenya out of its uncertainties was one which was clear and precise, took into account the interests of the African. To imagine that there would have been an exception in a continent that was then thinking and

ing of democracy, would have been the height of folly. Kenya's development as a self-governing nation could not be held up just because European leaders, in their panic, were unable or unwilling to produce workable policies. It was only when that the European leaders began to educate their people as to the inevitability of African majority rule. Blundell argued correctly that any attempt

shut out the African people from their reasonable expectations of taking a further responsibility in the affairs of an expanding Kenya must have been doomed.⁹

The nationalist movement was beginning to enjoy its heyday. At a continental level, the struggle seems to have taken off. The colonizing governments were talking of timetables for independence of the African countries.¹⁰ It was only in recognition of the African demands that the white minority would find in Africa their security and hope for their future.

To acknowledge the goodwill gesture by the moderate Europeans, the thirteen African Members, in early March 1959, met the Asians, the Arabs, the Muslims and one White Member, the liberal S.V. Cooke (Cooke had resigned from the European Members Organization, accusing it of reactionary tendencies). They met as the Constituency Elected Members Organization (CEMO). This was a new alliance and was inclined towards multi-racialism. It needed a new leadership. Kiano was, thus, elected leader of the organization. The organization set out to forge ahead with a common front, basically to form a deputation to present the case for the early appointment of a commission of constitutional reform, followed by a round-table conference, and for a clear declaration of the

ate objectives of the British in Kenya.¹¹

Subsequent to the formation of CEMO, a statement of political policy was issued on 1 April 1959 by a group of 43 Legco Members, led by Michael Blundell. It reiterated the need for a progressive programme to reduce racialism and the knitting of the people of Kenya into one nation.¹² Ngala seems at this time to have been quite encouraged by the forward-looking statements made by some of the European Members. He was among the 43 Legco Members who signed the statement of policy.¹³ On the other hand, the conservative whites did not receive Blundell's statement with approval. Thus, four European Members, led by Briggs, dissociated themselves from Blundell's statement. Blundell, at least in the eyes of Briggs and his die-hard group, was a sell-out and a disgrace to the European cause. Thus, Blundell was to contend with a European opposition to progressive, multi-racial policies.

The formation of CEMO on the Kenyan political scene was an epoch-making event, being the first-ever body to represent all the races of Kenya. Ngala was to lead the multi-racial delegation to London; Kiano, Moi and Muliro were to be accompanied by Cooke, three Asians and one Arab.¹⁴

Before the departure of the multi-racial delegation to London, the Colonial Secretary issued a statement in the House of Commons, on 22 April, which was to have given an answer to the African demands. He talked of the future of Kenya. He reiterated that he could not foresee a date when it would be possible for the British government to surrender its ultimate responsibilities for the destiny and well-being of the colony. The statement, however, reflected a glimmer of hope.¹⁵

The Colonial Secretary's utterances were received with mixed feelings. CEMO met to consider the statement and resolved still to send the deputation to London. While the statement had contained replies to some of the African demands and those of CEMO, like the convening of a conference and the seeking of expert advice on constitutional advancement, Ngala took the position that a few aspects of the statement needed clarification. He was to comment,

We are grateful to the Colonial Secretary for accepting in principle our suggestion of a conference and expert advice, but there are very important points, including the limitations imposed on the scope of the conference by reference to the dispatch of November 24, 1958, which we find deeply disturbing and which needs clarification.¹⁶

There was doubt in Ngala's mind whether the statement was a departure from the 1958 stand by the colonial government or was yet another trick to have African Elected Members go back to Legco. His cautious welcome of the statement was proved right when, later, the Colonial Secretary issued another one to clarify what he called the 'confusion' that had been created by his statement of 22 April. The Colonial Secretary reiterated that the British government had altered its views concerning the basic principles which they felt should continue to govern Kenya's future constitutional advance. The backbone of the Colonial Secretary seemed to be bending, but with a lot of reluctance.

On arrival in London, the multi-racial delegation expressed general approval of Lennox-Boyd's statement of 22 April. The outcome of the meeting of the deputation with Lennox-Boyd was a break-through in the dark clouds that had overcast Kenya's political scene. Dr. Kiano sent a telegram to

probi recommending the return of the absent African Members to the House. Within this atmosphere of hope that we find that Ngala and his colleagues, in Kenya, together with the Asians, return to the House on 20 April.

Ngala and the multi-racial politics of 1959

A good expose' and analysis of the kind of multi-racial politics that emerged after June 1959 is given by Blundell¹⁷ and Goldsworthy.¹⁸ There is no need to repeat the episodes here. What was clear was that divergent views on the nature of the nationalist struggle were becoming more pronounced. What the Europeans had branded 'extremists' or 'radicals' and 'moderates' were clearly showing in the formation of the Kenya National Party (KNP) and the Kenya Independence Movement (KIM). This followed after proposals for the formation of non-racial political parties on a country-wide basis were accepted by the Kenya government on 24 July, subject to certain qualifications providing for "order and sensible precautions".¹⁹

Now that the Kenya government had decided to allow the formation of non-racial parties, CEMO was trying to form such a party, to be called the Kenya National Party. CEMO had worked on a statement which they later showed to the press but was only signed by 8 of the African Members. Mboya, Oginga, Oguda and Kiano objected to the statement. This was to the dismay of the other Members because the four non-signatories to the statement had worked on the statement of policy put forward by CEMO from the start to finish. The

four non-signatories of the statement argued that they needed something more specific than what the Colonial Secretary had said on 22 April, hence a clear division between the radicals and moderates became apparent. The moderate group of Muliro seems by then inclined to be carried away by the wave of multi-racialism.²⁰

The split in AEMO was widening. From June, seven of the Members of AEMO, excluding Ngala,²¹ had shown an interest in resigning from the organization. Ngala kept on attending AEMO meetings with regularity. In fact, Ngala seems to have been holding the organization together, for he was the one who kept on persuading the other seven members, who had shown an inclination to resign from AEMO, to attend the meetings.²² For Ngala, AEMO was the basis of survival for the African Members in their fight against the powerful European organization and to get the necessary constitutional advances. At least the individual African Members could not work on their own. But Ngala could not hold AEMO together all by himself.

The climax of the split came when, at a meeting of AEMO, Odinga was expelled from the organization for what the Kenya National Party [KNP] Members termed mismanagement of the affairs of AEMO. The feeling among KNP members was that the Nairobi people, who were not members of AEMO, would influence the voting on any matter at the meeting. They wanted these people out of the hall. Following this, the meeting was called off because it was marred by confusion.²³ Odinga and five other African Members formed their own party, as a counterweight to KNP, representing more radical members - the Kenya Independence Movement had been born.

Clearly, two groups among AEMO had emerged. Ngala, Muimi, Khamisi, Mumo, Ole Tipis, Moi and Towett were members of the KNP, led by Muliro. The KIM group included Mboya, Odinga, Oguda, Mate, Kiamba and Nyagah. It was a clear split between the minority African ethnic groups and the Luo-Kikuyu alliance (Mate, Kiamba and Nyagah, though not Kikuyu, belonged to Central Kenya 'tribes'). Soon accusations from Muliro's group started. They accused the militants of being emotional and geared towards tribal self-glorification. They equally deplored intimidations, hooliganism or any other tactics characteristic of all forms of dictatorship.²⁴ The radical group of Mboya saw the moderates as too accommodating of the multi-racial sentiments of the day, such that this led to the dilution of the whole African struggle.²⁵ With the benefit of hindsight, it was the same KNP group that was to express these kinds of fears about Kikuyu-Luo domination in Kenya politics later in the early 1960s. The political alignments of the 60s show clearly that the KNP group later formed the Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU) and the KIM formed the Kenya African National Union (KANU).

But why did Ngala ally with the Muliro group at this time? In a long letter to the editor of the East African Standard, Ngala elaborately put forward the KNP case: that a big difference lay between KNP and Blundell's New Kenya Group (NKG), particularly on matters of education, land, constitution and method of voting; that the KNP believed in complete integration of, and not co-operation with, the white man. Co-existence was the issue and not partnership with the whites after independence. He was to emphasize

I have joined the Kenya National Party because it fully supports the African interests as included in our statements from 1957 to date.²⁶

For him, methods other than seeking constitutional advances was his main idea. That was why he pointed out that all African Members were anxious to attain African majority rule, "but we now seem to differ seriously on the time and method."²⁷ For Ngala, there was not much difference between KNP and KIM. Though by then KIM had not produced a policy blue print, he did not see them producing one that would be very different from what KNP had produced.

The result of the rise of these antagonistic groups was a creation of a situation where subsequent negotiations for any African political advancement was going to be difficult. The conference talked about by Lennox-Boyd was yet a few months ahead. It was going to be difficult to present to the British a unified African front. Kenya was now heading for a head-on collision of ambitions.

The editorial of the East African Standard of 14 August 1959 commented:

Fighting out the conference beforehand, through a series of claims and counterclaims, can only lead to a hardening of attitudes and inflexibility at the conference itself.²⁸

Perhaps the African Members had involved themselves too early in policy discussions and decisions. Mboya wrote:

A nationalist movement cannot immediately be run on the same basis as a modern political party in Britain or Europe or North America, with committees and research workers and discussion groups on this and that problem. Such a system brings people too much into discussion of details and creates too many opportunities for differences and divisions.²⁹

This is what had happened to AEMO. CEMO equally proved unworkable with the rise of KNP, KIM, and Blundell's Kenya New Group.

Ngala appointed delegation leader to the Lancaster House Conference

The constitutional conference was drawing closer. The circumstances prevailing among the African Members were quite responsive to any act of negotiation. The African Members sought to reunite, to speak with one voice for full and responsible African government at the conference. They were possibly acting on the call by the Pan-African Freedom Movement of East and Central Africa (Pafmecca) which had requested the African Members, as part of their resolutions at the Moshi Meeting, to revive AEMO.³⁰

Ngala realized too that a compromise was unavoidable. Ngala came in here to do his ever-cherished job among his colleagues - he reconstituted them and then paved the way for reconciliation. After some go-between work by him, all the African Members were brought together for a leaders conference at Kiambu in November.³¹ The meeting agreed on an African united front, at least for the duration of the London Conference. Something worth noting was how Ngala stood out as the unescapable leader.³² There were Muliro and Odinga, leaders of KNP and KIM, respectively. There was Mboya who had asserted his leadership role for a long time now. In the first place, Muliro lost his temper when expressing himself and, therefore, was not the right kind of leader for such an important conference for Africans.³³ With the leadership rivalry between Odinga and Mboya, none of the two could accept the other to lead the group to the conference. Not that Odinga or Mboya could not accept the leadership of the

delegation to London. Mboya, in particular, was unacceptable to some African Members for what was considered to be his arrogance and attempts to amass credit for himself.³⁴ Ngala was, thus, the remaining individual to consider. He stood above the leadership squabbles among the Africans. He was the trusted member. None of the members feared him. This he showed during AEMO meetings. He would listen to people's views, and give sound judgement on situations. He equally enjoyed the trust of the people. He had won the acclaim of even the white man. He, was, thus chosen a leader of the delegation to London because of his modesty, composed mind, fair judgement, his display of common sense, and respect for others.³⁵ Moreover, his objectivity and reasonableness in his requests in Legco were thought to have had a bearing on his acceptability as the leader of the delegation by the white men themselves. Since Ngala was a KNP member, the secretary was to come from KIM. Mboya, with his long experience in secretarial posts, was elected to that position for the delegation. It was time to negotiate for a majority rule at the table in London.

Meanwhile, in the administrative hierarchy, Sir Evelyn Baring retired. His successor was Sir Patrick Renison. Lennox-Boyd had also been replaced by Ian Macleod as Colonial Secretary.

The Lancaster House Conference, 1960

The Lancaster House Conference opened on 18 January 1960 with Macleod, Renison and their officers present. All African Members of Kenya's Legco were present. The four European Members of the United Party, under

Briggs, were present also, as was the multi-racial delegation of the New Kenya Group, led by Michael Blundell.

The central subject of the conference was clearly the form of elections to be used in building a nation based on parliamentary institutions to replace the communal elections of the past, and proceed to universal adult suffrage on the common roll basis of 'one man one vote'. In his opening speech, Ngala reiterated and emphasized these points. In part he said

the goal for Kenya is independence under a democratic system of government in which rule will be placed in the hands of the majority party and every adult will have to vote.³⁶

Ngala stated the African case that they wanted a responsible government to be granted that year,

to mark the beginning of the end of the Colonial Office rule.³⁷

The conference did not decide on the property rights and the issue of the Coastal Strip. The Colonial Secretary, argued that the issue of the Colonial Strip was not a subject for the conference. On safeguards, he said he was going to suggest a suitable solution to the British Cabinet.

The result of the conference was a victory for the Africans. European domination in Legco was replaced with an African majority. Moreover, a common roll for the first time was introduced. Even the 20 reserved seats for minorities, stipulated by Macleod, depended largely on African votes, with the result that those of outstanding capability, plus a readiness to

cooperate with Africans, would be voted in. On the African influence over other seats, Ngala added:

Since Africans will be the majority they will have a tremendous influence on the type of people who will fill National Seats.³⁸

To Ngala and his colleagues it was a successful conference. For the first time, the Colonial Secretary declared that Kenya would be given African majority rule. This was a complete change in British thinking. The Europeans would not hold the balance any more; hence change was inevitable. Ngala proved dramatic on this occasion. He and Blundell arranged for a press conference, where they addressed Kenyans then in London. After Blundell had finished speaking, Ngala seized the microphone from him and shouted on it as if he was addressing the audience without the microphone. He was sweating and shaking with excitement.³⁹ This showed the intensity of feeling Ngala had about the success they had achieved at the conference.

The feeling of European conservatives about the results of the conference was best expressed by Briggs:

I regard the outcome of this conference as a death blow to the European Community in Kenya.⁴⁰

The direction of the conference definitely was given by the Colonial Secretary; so was the outcome. But credit should go to Ngala for his composure during the conference period.⁴¹ He was responsible for holding together, the Africans who were deeply divided, irked by what was regarded as Mboya's control and struggle to steal the limelight.⁴² Equally, Masinde Muliro attributed

the success of the conference to Ngala:

The success of the conference and the cohesion among the African Members, with their divergent views on various arrangements, are a definite credit to Mr. Ngala. He is the only person who has been able to weld us together, even under threats of rebellion in his own group, and still we have come out successfully.⁴³

Ngala left the conference triumphant. He had projected not only his own personality but a Kenyan personality at large. Indeed, he had been able to persuade a few British Members of Parliament and Americans (who gave Ngala a grant to tour the United States in April and May 1960) that it was high time Kenya progressed to self-rule. Nationalism had become a catching and fashionable disease, borne on the favorable currents of Mr. Macmillan's 'wind of change'.

Ngala as Minister

On arrival back from the London conference, there were all signs that AEMO's main internal divisions would soon re-appear. There emerged a perceptible difference between the approach of Ngala, who conceived the task of the leaders as to interpret the Macleod Constitution to the people and considered it viable as a step towards majority rule, and that of Mboya, who saw the Macleod Constitution only as a constitution to be "tolerated as an instrument towards attaining our full demand".⁴⁴

Moreover, there was the question of participation in the government pending the elections in 1961. In a private audience with E. Griffith-Jones, then acting Chief Secretary, Ngala came to learn of the Governor's intention to give

three ministerial positions to African Members, even though the Macleods Constitution had stipulated that this would be possible only after the 1961 elections. However, following a stormy meeting on March 16, the African Members, through Ngala, announced that none of them was prepared to accept a ministerial position under the Lennox-Boyd Constitution until the executive part of the Macleod Constitution was applied.⁴⁵

But the days of genuine African unanimous decisions were gone. On the day after this meeting, Mboya, Muliro, Ngala, at their own request, re-opened a series of talks with the Governor, indicating their willingness to accept ministerial positions. Following yet another meeting which Nyagah, Mboya, Kiano, Ngala and Muimi attended, three African Members were prepared to accept ministerial office under a caretaker government to be formed for the period of transition from the Lennox-Boyd Constitution to the Lancaster House settlement. The three Ministers were Ronald Ngala, Labor, Social Security and Adult Education, Muimi, Health and Welfare, and Dr. Kiano, Commerce and Industry. Taita Towett would become Assistant Minister for Agriculture and would, in that capacity, be eligible to attend meetings of the Council of Ministers on the authority of the Governor.⁴⁶ Their demand that Kenyatta be released was not granted. On their appointment, Ngala and the other designated Ministers said:

As prospective Ministers, we shall give His Excellency our own views and advice as far as Kenyatta and other security matters are concerned.⁴⁷

While accepting their responsibilities, they did not hesitate to note that

they would still pursue the campaign to have Kenyatta released.

On the radical African front, accepting ministerial positions was seen as a betrayal of the African cause. It was questionable that, even after the Governor had warned that the release of Kenyatta would be a danger to security, Ngala and the other designated African Ministers would take up the posts. Indeed it was unheard of to see the three Members rushing to join the government immediately after the state of emergency was lifted, and while Kenyatta was still in detention. However, the African Members had not really rushed into accepting these posts. They had accepted these posts after negotiations that they were serving an interim government that was preparing for the new Lancaster House Constitution and not under the Lennox-Boyd Constitution.

But why was it essential for Ngala and the two other Africans to take up the ministerial posts? Because it seemed essential for the future that the Africans should learn the trade of shouldering posts as ministers in the government, where they would work alongside European and Asian Ministers, both official and unofficial. It was only in this way that a Cabinet would emerge which would not be racially - inclined or represent aspirations and sentiments of one racial group. Ngala was aware that developments like participating in the government was a step towards self-government; it was vital to pursuing their demands for political advancement.

Ngala's American tour

Ngala's appointment to a ministerial office in the caretaker committee to serve in the transitional period between the Lennox-Boyd Constitution and the ushering in of the Lancaster House Constitution coincided with his being awarded

a grant by the African American Institute. This was a non-governmental organization in New York devoted to improving contacts, and, thus, an understanding between Africans and Americans. Ngala was drawing a lot of attention from lands beyond Kenya. This is particularly so because of the way he had carried himself during the Lancaster House Conference as the leader of the African delegates. The journey to America would be a general tour to see as much of the American way of life as possible. Was he going to solicit for advice on the Kenyan political scene? Was he going out for funds? In his own words Ngala said:

I am keen to observe the educational system in America and to study industrial developments, particularly those which can be related to the Kenya situation.⁴⁸

His tour to America took him to New York, Chicago, Washington and Nashville in Tennessee. There he met American businessmen, other professional people, e.g., journalists, and even people in their own homes. At Roosevelt University he had a lengthy talk with Mr. Frank Mc-Allister, director of the institution's labour education programme. Ngala concluded from the talk that more African students should go to America to study labour management issues.

During his tour, Ngala visited American foundations in New York that were interested in aiding Africans and showed intentions to follow up contacts after returning home.⁴⁹ There are no signs of Ngala having followed up anything to do with sponsorship by these foundations in the wake of his initiative. No wonder, therefore, he is blamed by his own Coast people for not doing what Mboya did for up-country people.

What appalled Ngala in Tennessee was racial discrimination, especially in schools. If America was the 'home' of democracy, he argued, it was equally disturbing to find that schools were still segregated and some of the worst places for segregation were churches, at Sunday services.⁵⁰ For Ngala, churches were supposed to preach against the colour bar, and yet, it was rampant there. This was a contradiction. Equally, as he believed that schools were supposed to be centres of secondary socialization, they were not serving that purpose. In essence, schools in America were conditioning children to hate others because they were segregated schools.

The Formation of KANU

Before the leaders conference that was to be held in Kiambu on 27 April 1960, a group of ten African Elected Members and five Africans who were not Legco members, led by Odinga and Moi, sought to solicit support from their colleagues to form a national party with doors open to all true citizens of Kenya. The party would be called 'the Kenya Uhuru Party'. They, thereafter, issued a statement that they were launching the party with a view to inaugurating it at the meeting at Kiambu.⁵¹ The desire for a national organization was strong. The question was whether there was the possibility of the formation of a national organization that would accommodate the divergent views the African Members held at that time. One thing was clear: the combination of Odinga and Moi, was an effort to harmonise two incompatible elements. Moderation of Ngala's group

could not work with the radicalism of Odinga, who, at the same time, was struggling to exclude Mboya from the leadership of the Africans.⁵²

At the leaders conference held at Kiambu, during Ngala's absence in America, the decision to form a nation-wide African political party to be called Kenya African National Union (KANU) was taken.⁵³ An interim committee to draw up a constitution and a policy for the new party was elected. James Gichuru was to be the interim President and the Secretary was Njoroge Mungai. Other members of the committee were Kiano, Ngala, Mboya, Odinga, H. Mureithi and James Nyamweya. It was interesting to note how Ngala was elected a member of this committee in absentia. They had realized his formidable following among the African Members and to miss him out would have been folly. The inclusion of the moderates who were well represented at the meeting, in this interim committee was seen as an attempt to counter the weight of the radicals who seem to have been predominant in it.

At a subsequent meeting held on 14 May, while Ngala was still in America, office bearers for KANU were elected. It was a stormy and tense meeting. Towett was even shouted down when he came up with the idea that the suggestion to have the detained Kenyatta as the president of KANU would be rejected by the government and KANU might not be registered. To quote Towett,

It was a badly conducted meeting with everybody speaking and nobody listening and Mr. Gichuru dominated everything.⁵⁴

Signs of fear and mistrust loomed among the attending delegates. Mboya

was elected secretary; Gichuru was to be acting president to hold the place for Kenyatta; Odinga was to be vice-president; and Arthur Ochwada Assistant Secretary. Ngala and Moi, who were both away in America and London respectively, were elected treasurer and assistant treasurer respectively. The election of Ngala, which in American politics is called draft, demonstrates how he was regarded by the African members. Perhaps the meeting was fiery in the absence of the cooling factor, Ngala. Could it have made a difference if Ngala had been present?

It was at this meeting that the political division among the Kenya African leadership reached its climax. What Muliro had termed dictatorial tendencies and personal aggrandisement among some members were to be seen clearly.⁵⁵ There was even a call by Gichuru to have the African Members resign to seek to be voted through a KANU ticket. Apart from the fact that KANU was not registered, it had no members yet; only officials who were elected that Saturday. KANU had not given the African Elected Members votes to Legco and, therefore, it was unrealistic at that time to call for the resignation of the African elected members. It was still the constituents that had the mandate to do so.

Among the differences that arose at the Kiambu meeting was the proposal that all political organizations should form themselves into branches of KANU. It was too abrupt an action to make. These political organizations had been formed with different aspirations by their members. To join KANU without proper consideration and consultation was unwise and a naive move.⁵⁶ It was clear that some political organizations would accept affiliation to KANU, provided they could maintain their ability to make decisions and with safeguards

for each ethnic group that formed them. Gichuru's outspokenness at the meeting and the choice of office-bearers caused the split. It split the unanimous voice the Africans had at the Lancaster House Conference and before.⁵⁷

All was taken with suspicion by the moderate delegates at the meeting and was interpreted as a move by Gichuru, Odinga and Mboya to have a Luo-Kikuyu dominance in political affairs. Gichuru had even taken the initiative of arranging a meeting in Mombasa, where the small parties at the Coast would resolve to dissolve themselves to join KANU and form branches of it. But following a leaders meeting, the decision to form a branch of KANU at the Coast was rejected until Ngala came back from America. They were fighting off up-country 'imperialism'. The attempt to convince the small parties at the Coast to become KANU branches in the absence of Ngala, was seen as a move to weaken Ngala's hold over the Coast people. To win the Coast peoples' support would have been difficult without Ngala's hand in it. This was the beginning of KANU's failure to have a strong following in the Coast Province. It would remain a Ngala -dominated area until his death.

Formation of KADU

Ngala arrived back from the United States on 16 May, 1960. He was sworn in as Minister of Labor, Social Security and Adult Education on 17 May.

Ngala learnt of his appointment as treasurer for KANU, but declined to take up the post. Taking into account the leadership influence he had in AEMO, Ngala was of the opinion that the post of treasurer would be too modest for

him.⁵⁸ At that time, a treasurer's post was a weak one in a party's hierarchy.

Treasurers did not matter in decision-making. Having been influential in leading roles since entering Legco, it might have appeared to him as tantamount to saying that Ngala obtained nothing in the elections of office-bearers for KANU. His feeling was that he merited a higher position than that of treasurer.⁵⁹

Moreover, the aim of Ngala and his supporters to stick to gradual decolonization, along with their feeling that victory would be theirs in the final analysis, tempted Ngala to dissociate himself from the radical group that included Mboya.

Besides this, there were Ngala's personal feelings of frustration and resentment acquired from experiences within the group of African Members of Legco, and from the irritation with, in particular, Tom Mboya. The frustration was born out of the Lancaster House Conference, in particular, where Mboya had been given prominence by the press during and after the conference. So, personal ambition for leadership, adhesion to the moderate policy towards the decolonization process and the long-term frustrations in AEMO dictated Ngala's decision not to take-up the treasurers' post in KANU.⁶⁰

A new current of nationalism within the general wave of the nationalist struggle was brewing - a current born out of fear and suspicion - a struggle to get 'Uhuru' but with safeguards for the African minority 'tribes'. A network of alliances that reflected this fear and a defensive mechanism against it began to emerge: The Kalenjin Political Alliance led by Moi and Towett, was founded in May 1960. A common basis for action lay in the claim to the European lands having been historically theirs, and in fears that the Kikuyu would spread out from their over-populated reserves to seize these lands. There were reports in

1961 of Kalenjins collecting weapons and early in 1962, a parliamentary secretary from this group, W.C. Murgor, publicly advised them to poison their arrows and sharpen their spears.⁶¹ Similarly, in the flurry of Kenya's developing politics, the few educated Masai formed the Maasai United Front and obtained, in May 1960, the approval of their tribal elders for this.⁶² They were equally disturbed about the future of their land. Links were shortly formed with the Kalenjin Political Alliance. These pastoralist 'tribes' were later to give financial support to KADU from their sale of cattle.

In Elgon Nyanza, Muliro formed the Kenya African People's Party, a skeleton of the KNP. Muliro was expressing suspicion of Luo-Kikuyu domination in Kenyan politics and the personality cult within KANU.⁶³

Fears affected the Mijikenda peoples of the Coast where Ngala came from. The Mijikenda would not like to see jobs in Mombasa fall to the Kikuyu, Luo, the Akamba and other up-country workers.⁶⁴ Ngala, thus, formed the Coast African People's Union that called for each African to stay in his own area - no up-country African to come to the Coast, hence fighting off 'up-country imperialism' so to say.⁶⁵ Thus, feelings of resentment among coastal 'tribes' at any invasion by up-country workers had provided a basis for an alliance with the Kalenjin with their own different fears of the Kikuyu. Ngala was to carry on the brunt of this struggle. He was the rallying force of the Coast people.

All the minority groups then shared the apprehension of Luo-Kikuyu dominance in Kenyan politics. There was a feeling among these minorities that to accept Kikuyu-Luo domination meant their domination in all fields of life;

even after independence. Thus, the minority groups had the feeling that when the Europeans went, the Luo and Kikuyu would dominate all spheres of social, economic and political life. In the final analysis, to them, it would only amount to a change of masters - from a European domination to a Luo-Kikuyu domination. This they very much resented.⁶⁶ Moreover, the minorities felt they were less politically developed, with few of them educated. To accept Luo-Kikuyu leadership meant that they would have to contend with Kikuyu and Luo people dominating most areas through the civil service.⁶⁷

At a meeting, on 25 June, 1960 in Ngong, representatives from five tribes of the Kalenjin, Masai, Africans from the Coast, Nyanza and Somali from the Northern Frontier District hammered out an agreement to form a party - Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU). This would be a counter force to KANU.

It is important to analyze here how Ngala was elected President of KADU. Tipis and John Keen of the Masai United Front by then were not a strong force to reckon with among the moderate African Members. Moi of the Kalenjin Political Alliance came from a rather small ethnic group or 'Sub-tribe'. His influence had not yet spread among the rest of the Kalenjin. Muliro easily lost his temper. Coming from the Bukusu, he could not claim yet, that he was the spokesman of the Luhya local groups. Ngala stood above the rest. He represented a wider area with ethnic diversity. He had been a nominated member of the Mombasa Advisory Council and a principal of many schools. Acceptability of his leadership was thus based on, one, his experience. Second, the other Africans had associated with him and come to accept him as a leader. Moreover, the other members came to view him as being able to understand and

articulate the problems of his moderate group. In the party hierarchy of KADU, Ngala was elected president, with Muliro as his deputy; Tipis became Treasurer; Moi was made Chairman; Martin Shikuku, Secretary, and Keen, Organizing Secretary.⁶⁸ There was soon a call by Ngala's followers to have him as Prime Minister after the General Elections of 1961.⁶⁹

Ngala's election to head KADU did not happen without problems. Muliro was against the election of Ngala.⁷⁰ He thought Ngala was not forceful enough to counter the dynamism of Odinga and Mboya in KANU. It was his feeling that Ngala had been chosen as the leader of the African delegation to the Lancaster House Conference as a good compromise and that it was not necessarily the case that Ngala should lead the new party.⁷¹ To Ngala this meant that he was going to lead a party where somebody did not appreciate fully his leadership prowess. Moreover, Ngala was to be alert and aware of the different fears of the minority groups that formed KADU and consider them at all times as leader of the party. This was indeed a difficult task.

So, what emerged out of the politics of the day were two political parties jostling for support and recognition by the public. They at least stole the limelight of the politics of the day, being the major parties that were going to fight the elections in 1961.

Ngala's dilemma in the caretaker government

When Ngala became Minister for Labor, Social Security and Adult Education, he put himself in a difficult position. It was hard for him to express, in full, the demands of the African members. In the first place, there was the

campaign to have Kenyatta released by the government. One thing was quite clear. Any African leader, whether in KADU, KANU or an independent, had not much chance of success at the forthcoming poll unless he advocated Kenyatta's release. Immediately after the Lancaster House Conference in 1960, there was a large-scale revival of the campaign to have Kenyatta released.

Ngala did not oppose the release of Kenyatta. It was the argument of Mboya and KANU that Ngala was a Member of the government and that the government was refusing to release Kenyatta; so he, Ngala, was as much responsible for Kenyatta's continued restrictions as anyone else. They argued that Ngala had a duty to the African people to see that Kenyatta was released. They should have further argued that Ngala ought to have asked for the release of Kenyatta in the Council of Ministers and, if this was not granted, resigned.⁷² Suffice it to say that Ngala was aware that the question of the release of Kenyatta was solely the responsibility of the Governor. It had never been brought before the Council of Ministers since Ngala had become a minister, so he did not share any collective responsibility for Kenyatta's continued restriction.⁷³ Ngala was to add:

Even if there were terrorists in Kenya they should be set free to return to their people once they had been punished and reformed.⁷⁴

Just like any campaigner, Ngala saw the importance of having Kenyatta released. It was a difficult time for Ngala to justify his presence in the Council of Ministers in the face of the African demands.

Moreover, Ngala found himself in more difficult situations, as when he

had to represent the government at the opening ceremonies of the Fort Jesus Museum in Mombasa and Vasco da Gama Pillar at Malindi; where the Portuguese Vice-Premier, Dr. P.T. Pereira, was to preside. A motion was moved by Mboya in Legco asking the government not to go ahead with its plan for the visit of Pereira.⁷⁵ The opposition to Pereira's visit was because Pereira and his country did not recognize the human freedom of choosing ones' own government and that Portugal still believed in colonialism and imperialism, as her rule in Mozambique showed, and given her close association with South Africa.

Here was Ngala serving a government that was not wholly African. At this moment his colleagues were against the government he was serving. He had always to be cautious in his deeds. That is why he said,

When I was first invited to represent the government at these ceremonies and did not know who Dr. Pereira was and now that I do know, and, in view of the strong feelings of myself and my union-Kenya African Democratic Union - I will have to reconsider my decision. I would like to make it clear that my acceptance was quite voluntary, and if I change my mind it will not mean that I am acting against the government.⁷⁶

He then announced a week later that he would not attend any of the functions in connection with the visit of Dr. Pereira in "appreciation of African freedom and humanity".⁷⁷

Ngala at the Helm of KADU

Ngala as leader of KADU represented the view of Africans who wanted a gradual advancement to independence. He was of the opinion that Europeans and Asians should stay and continue to help with the development of the country,

but should not have the wrong attitude of wanting to hold political power.⁷⁸ His concern was to have the British recognize African predominance, hence the struggle to have political power.

As leader of KADU, Ngala sought to have authority to be dispersed and shared between his fellow leaders. Thus, he envisaged a sense of compromise on any issue.⁷⁹ The aim was to attract and accommodate divergent interests, views and peoples. This allowance for divergent views from members of KADU sometimes led to problems for Ngala. Musa Amalemba notes of Ngala:

I think he was too democratic. He allowed too much discussion on matters and allowed even what should not have been condoned. If he had been a bit more forceful, he would have been better off as leader of KADU.⁸⁰

Like all other adherents of KADU, Ngala believed in tribal loyalties at the local level which, in the long run, would merge with other loyalties to form a national front. The local level was for Ngala the basis for development; that is, for any development to take place, local initiative was basic. Imposition of aspects of development was out of the question in any development effort. To give coherence and meaning to KADU, Ngala emphasized the ideology and achievement of democracy in a free Kenya.⁸¹

Ngala believed that KADU was founded on faith, a faith in its leadership, and not on particular personalities.⁸² KADU's hierarchy was, therefore, staked with men who were not among the so-called 'leaders of Kenya'. These had been elected by the people because they realized that they could lead the country and give to Kenya the true 'Uhuru' without bloodshed.⁸³

Ngala was against a one-party government. He argued that for there to be

democracy in Kenya:

Everybody - good, bad, rich and poor - should have a say in the government of the country. To have one party would not mean everybody having a say in the affairs of the government.⁸⁴

For him, opposition in any governmental system was quite a healthy situation. He reiterated:

We believe a two-party approach to independence is the best safeguard for democracy and individual freedom. It is undesirable and undemocratic to suggest that all candidates in the following General Elections should stand for KADU or KANU.⁸⁵

Ngala thus headed a group of countrymen who, in the wake of the political struggle, were disillusioned by the already economically, socially, and politically, developed or informed Kikuyu and Luo. These were people from the rural areas who knew the troubles of life, who owned cattle, sheep and goats; people who tilled the land.⁸⁶ Thus, they were rural-oriented (as opposed to the urban-oriented leadership of KANU) with fears already mentioned, especially the would-be intruders from the cities or central Kenya.

Ngala a stooge of the white man?

In politics, the individual can use any tool to disown or discredit his opponent. Ngala's enemies or political opponents could brand him with any name to suit their ends, be it a 'stooge' or 'a little boy' of the Europeans.

Ngala came into the forefront of KADU and Kenyan politics on his own merits.

What was clear was that he believed in working with other races because they

were part of Kenya and, secondly, Kenya needed them. The Europeans and Asians had lived in Kenya for a long time. Unquestionable, they had brought development to Kenya. Ngala was simply saying that, despite this development, the Europeans and Asians were running short of the African expectation. In essence, he was of the feeling that they were going too far - the Africans had to take their place then. Ngala's independent Kenya was to have each community participating in the day-to-day activities, but under African majority rule.⁸⁷

There was no way Ngala would have allied with any European party at this time (1960).⁸⁸ There was no way whites would have a say in an African party, be they official or unofficial. Being a moderate, Ngala would be attacked from both ends, by whites and by fellow Africans. This is because the conservative Europeans, in particular, saw Ngala as they did any African who was struggling to displace the white man. Any African policy, no matter what its moderate stance was, would be viewed with suspicion and scrutiny by the whites. Equally, the radical Africans would oppose Ngala for his moderation in pursuing African demands.

Towards the end of June 1960, Michael Blundell popped up at a press conference in London in a bid to restore confidence in Kenya. Towards this end, he announced an intention to press the British government to allocate money for the purchase of land in Kenya. In no time, he also announced that his New Kenya Group would link with KADU.⁸⁹ This was perhaps a wrong move on his part. He must have known, or he should have known, that European support at this time for any African political party was potentially equivalent to the kiss of death. To have European support would mean one's alienation from one's

constituents and a failure for one. Thus, the African Elected Members of KADU disassociated themselves from Blundell's patronizing character.⁹⁰ In effect, the fact that Ngala and KADU and the NKG remained afloat was a tribute to their resilience, certainly not to the political judgement of Michael Blundell, who considered his moderation as being more considerate than the conservative stances of his fellow whites.

Ngala saw both the United Party of Briggs and the NKG as having no policies to fit with KADU's. He emphasized:

Well, KADU does not believe that the United Party has a policy which is attractive and we do not believe that the New Kenya Party (Group) has any policy at all, because its policy of multi-racialism and partnership was shot down by Mr. Macleod during the Lancaster House Conference. We have no intention of creating a coalition with such organizations. If we are forced to affiliate it will be certainly with KANU provided that we can see eye-to-eye with their leaders.⁹¹

On whether KADU was supported by the New Kenya Group, by Blundell or by the British Conservative Party, Ngala answered:

These statements have no foundation ...Mr. Blundell has stated that KADU was started in his absence. KADU is a purely African political party, just as KANU is, I believe. I am not aware that these misleading statements have caused any falling away in African support for KADU. Africans read a great many newspapers in which I and other KADU leaders have stated very clearly that our party is not in any way affiliated to the New Kenya Party (Group).⁹²

Ngala was struggling to safeguard his party and himself from attacks by his African colleagues in KANU for his type of moderation which they saw as sponsored by the liberal Europeans.

With the passage of time, however, there came truly to be a close association between Ngala's KADU and Blundell's NKG. As Wassermann has noted:

The relationship of the NKG with KADU while not entirely clear continued to be more intimate than usually mentioned.⁹³

Michael Blundell qualifies this intimacy. He notes that the intimacy was based on the common fears the African minority groups had with the Europeans under him. The NKG found in men like Ngala consolation; for KANU seemed to have been unclear as regards the safeguards for the minority groups. A point rarely mentioned was the fear by Europeans to associate themselves with the people of Mau Mau (in reference to Kikuyu in particular). The moderate European lot thus saw people like Ngala less, or not, affected by Mau Mau and, therefore, more accommodating of their hopes and fears. It is in this light that we should view Ngala and KADU's association with NKG in 1961. It was based on a mutuality of fears and hopes of Ngala's KADU and Blundell's NKG.⁹⁴ It is to be noted that Ngala's shrewdness in lobbying for help from members of NKG is well appreciated by Blundell. At one level, Ngala would castigate Blundell's policies and at another he would befriend Blundell to acquire the use of some of his microphones. Ngala would say "that is politics."⁹⁵

The year 1960 came to a close with a clear division showing among the African Members. Independence would soon be granted. But this could not take place in those turbulent times. A number of issues had to be sorted out. This is what we will address ourselves to in the next chapter.

Footnotes

1. East African Standard, January 20 and 22, 1959.
2. Interview Report, Francis Khamisi, September 22, 1988.
3. Mombasa Times, November 13, 1958.
4. *ibid.*
5. Ngala as Secretary of AEMO signed the telegram to London explaining AEMO's position about the tour of the Queen Mother.
6. Mombasa Times, January 20, 1959.
7. *ibid.*, January 30, 1959
8. Asians had joined the African Members in boycotting Legco sittings as from 17 February, 1959.
9. Mombasa Times, May 8, 1959
10. Goldsworthy, *op. cit.*, pp. 111-114
11. Interview Report, Michael Blundell, February 27, 1989.
12. *ibid.*
13. *ibid.*
14. Michael Blundell, So Rough A Wind, London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1964, pp. 147 - 52.
15. East African Standard, April 23, 1959.
16. *ibid.*
17. Michael Blundell, So Rough A wind, pp. 147-152
18. Goldsworthy, *op. cit.*, pp. 126 - 127
19. Legco Debates, Vol. 80, Col. 214 - 287
20. Interview Report, Francis Khamisi, September 2, 1988, Musa Amalemba, March 10, 1989.

21. Tom Mboya acknowledged that Ngala did not say he intended to resign from AEMO. Ngala was always ready to attend AEMO meeting. East African Standard, August 24, 1959.
22. Interview Report, Francis Khamisi, September 22, 1988.
23. East African Standard, August 24, 1959
24. *ibid.*
25. *ibid.*
26. Ronald Ngala to Editor, East African Standard, September 4, 1959
27. *ibid.*
28. Editorial, East African Standard, August 14, 1959.
29. Tom Mboya, Freedom and After, *op. cit.*, p. 65
30. Among the resolutions passed at the PAFMECA Conference at Moshi in Tanganyika was a request to have AEMO revived, East African Standard, September 12, 1959, Interview Report, Francis Khamisi, September 22, 1988.
31. Francis Khamisi acknowledges Ngala's efforts towards this end. Interview Report, Francis Khamisi, September 22, 1988.
32. Interview Report, Musa Amalemba, March 10, 1989, Francis Khamisi, September 22, 1988.
33. *ibid.*, Musa Amalemba, March 10, 1989
34. *ibid.*, Francis Khamisi, September 22, 1988
35. *ibid.*, Musa Amalemba, March 10, 1989
36. Ronald Ngala, opening speech at the Lancaster House Conference, quoted in East African Standard, January 26, 1960.
37. *ibid.*, January 26, 1960
38. *ibid.*
39. Interview Report, Michael Blundell, February 27, 1989.
40. East African Standard, February 22, 1960.

41. Interview Report, Musa Amalemba, March 10, 1989, Francis Khamisi, September 22, 1988, Michael Blundell, February 27, 1989.
42. This could have been a biased view of Mboya given that Mboya held a radical stand on African nationalism.
43. Masinde Muliro in Mombasa Times, February 25, 1960.
44. Goldsworthy, op. cit., p. 137
45. Mombasa Times, March 17, 1960
46. ibid., March 28, 1960
47. ibid., April 1, 1960
48. ibid., April 17, 1960
49. ibid., May 20, 1960
50. ibid., May 17, 1960
51. ibid., May 16, 1960
52. Goldsworthy, op. cit., p. 139
53. Mombasa Times, March 28, 1960
54. ibid., May 18, 1960
55. ibid., April 24, 1959
56. Interview report, Rodgers Msechu, September 28, 1988, Francis Khamisi, September 22, 1988.
57. ibid.
58. ibid.
59. Msechu and Khamisi, who were at the Kiambu Conference thought Ngala would be made president or vice-president of KANU, certainly not treasurer.
60. Interview Report, Francis Khamisi, September 22, 1988.
61. George Bennett, "Pre-independence Kenya" Civilizations Vol. XIII, No.

1/2 1963; p. 127, KNA, Matson Papers MSS 8/19.

62. George Bennett and Carl Rosberg, The Kenyatta Election, London, Oxford University Press, 1961. p. 40.
63. George Bennett "Pre-independence Kenya" op. cit., p. 127.
64. Interview Report, Francis Khamisi, September 22, 1988, Rodgers Msechu, September 28, 1988.
65. *ibid.*
66. *ibid.*
67. *ibid.*
68. Sunday Post, June 26, 1960
69. Towett suggested so, Mombasa Times, July 16, 1960
70. Interview Report, Rodgers Msechu, September 28, 1988
71. Interview Report, Francis Khamisi, September 22, 1988, Rodgers Msechu, September 28, 1988.
72. Mombasa Times, December 9, 1960.
73. *ibid.*
74. *ibid.*, July 10, 1960.
75. *ibid.*, October 20, 1960.
76. *ibid.*
77. *ibid.*, October 27, 1960.
78. *ibid.*, July 12, 1960.
79. Interview Report, Rodgers Msechu, September 28, 1988, Francis Khamisi September 22, 1988.
80. *ibid.*, Musa Amalemba, March 10, 1989. There was even a time Peter Okondo a national member of KADU asked Ngala to resign as KADU's president because Muliro seemed to have been assuming too much power in KADU.

81. Bennett and Rosberg, op. cit., p. 42
82. Interview Report, Rodgers Msechu, September 28, 1988, Francis Khamisi, September 22, 1988.
83. *ibid.*
84. Mombasa Times, July 12, 1960
85. *ibid.*, October 30, 1960
86. Interview Report, Rodgers Msechu, September 28, 1988.
87. *ibid.*, Michael Blundell, February 27, 1989.
88. Bennett and Rosberg, op. cit., p. 42
89. Sunday Post, September 11, 1960
90. *ibid.*
91. *ibid.*
92. *ibid.*
93. Gary Wassermann, Politics of Decolonization: Kenya Europeans and the Land Use 1960 - 1965, Cambridge, University Press, 1976, p. 67.
94. Interview Report, Michael Blundell, February 27, 1989. Contrary to the persistent refutation by Ngala that KADU did not depend on NKG for finance, Blundell acknowledges the fact that there was considerable financial and organizational help from his group.
95. Interview Report, Michael Blundell, February 27, 1989.

CHAPTER 5NGALA AND THE ROAD TO INDEPENDENCE 1961 - 63

From the utterances and hints of the Colonial Secretary in the Lancaster House Conference there was the possibility of giving Kenyan Uhuru¹ in 1960. On the same note, it was clear that the future of Kenyans now lay more in the hands of their leaders. They were to show that they were ready to take up responsibility.

While the possibilities of independence existed, this independence could not come before some obstacles were tackled. Among these obstacles on Kenya's road to independence was the question of the release of Kenyatta, the membership of the government after the General Elections of 1961, the 'Mwambao' issue and the fears of the minority groups in Kenya. This chapter therefore attempts to address itself to these obstacles and Ngala's views and policies towards them.

The Kenyatta Election²

Until early January 1961, Ngala was the only candidate for the Kilifi Constituency. He was quite sure of success and this was envied by his rivals from KANU, who felt that he should face opposition. It was noticeable that KANU candidates at the Coast feared to face Ngala at the polls. Many of the KANU candidates were more willing to contest a seat in Mombasa than face Ngala in Kilifi. Despite many people's wishes that Chokwe should stand against Ngala in Kilifi, Chokwe went instead to contest the Mombasa West seat.³

The campaign tactics were perhaps outmoded. In essence, a continuation of the accusations and counter-accusations that were rampant during October-December 1960 spilled over into January 1961. Because Kenyatta's release was central to this campaign, it came to be dubbed the Kenyatta election. Mboya wanted to use it to win support not only in his constituency in Nairobi, but also garner a greater following in KANU and the entire country. Mboya initiated a move to have people in the country boycott work on February 1, 2 and 3 so as to increase the pressure for Kenyatta's release.⁴ The days of boycott were gone. This move was criticised by Ngala and even Mboya's men.⁵ Ngala condemned this boycott describing it as "another bluff for Africans" and declared that KADU would not recognize the boycott.⁶ He regarded such a move "hypocritical and insincere" because the poor Kenyans were the ones to suffer.⁷ Ngala favoured Kenyatta's release so that people could know his stand on the political issues of the day. His aim was to see Kenyatta released so that people would discover what type of man he was:

If he favours dictatorship, I will be the first to resist him. But if he is a leader of tolerance and wisdom KADU will recognize him.⁸

In the contest for the Kilifi Constituency, KANU opposition was only a token one. Ngala had represented the Coast since 1957, remaining closely in touch with the area, more particularly so with his own Mijikenda people of Kilifi District.⁹ Seeking desperately for a candidate there, KANU persuaded, after nomination day, Seif Suleman, an independent, to accept their name and support. Although Suleman tried hard to find issues that would take votes from Ngala, there was little doubt as to the outcome.¹⁰ It was a landslide victory for Ngala.

He won 16,305 votes over his only opponent, Suleman, who polled 308 votes. In one of the highest percentage polls, Ngala scooped 76 per cent of the poll. This only confirmed his strong support and following among the Mijikenda peoples of the Coast.

Ngala gave a strong backing for some candidates, especially at the Coast. In Kwale, Robert Matano, who had been nominated as KADU's candidates at a district electoral conference, received Ngala's backing. However, one of Matano's main problems was to get the scattered votes together; and during the campaign he spent a considerable amount of time teaching the Duruma how to mark their ballot papers properly. In the lowest open seat poll, 55 per cent, Matano won easily.¹² Ngala had acquired one man who would be a close associate in his political life.

Taita, which had been in Ngala's constituency since 1957, had an independent candidate. Ngala was conversant with the area, but could not counter-act the support of KANU among the Taita. Thus, Apolo Kilelu, KADU's candidate could not dislodge the long-established Taita political leader who had the support of KANU. Ngala's candidate, Kilelu, was finally defeated by D. Mwanyumba.¹³ Ngala had lost one of his stronghold to KANU.

Contrary to many gloomy prophecies, the general elections of 1961 went off so quietly and so well. While compliments were to go to the Colonial Secretary for the skillful and peaceful outcome of the elections, credit should go more to the people of Kenya. They had made it a success for themselves. KANU won the elections because they had made Kenyatta's name a household name among themselves and its followers. It was an impetus to them to win.

Ngala Agrees to Form a Government

After the general elections, what was central to Kenya's political future was the formation of the government and the release of Kenyatta.

For those who were to form the government, it was apparent that a realization that the question of whether the man was or was not released from restriction was in no circumstance a matter on which the colonial government could bargain.¹⁴ The release of Kenyatta lay in the hands of the Secretary of State for the colonies, with the advice from the Governor. Thus, Renison insisted that Kenyatta could not be released until a government was established and seen to work. On the other hand, KANU (which was supposed to form a government because of its victory) insisted that it would not form a government unless Kenyatta was released.

Assured that Kenyatta could not be released, Gichuru, Ngala, Muliro and Mboya demanded to go and see Kenyatta at Lodwar. Concerning the utterance of the Governor that Kenyatta could not be released, Ngala was quoted to have said,

I feel it was quite unfortunate that the statement went out before consultation with the political leaders. We are very much concerned about the request made by the two political organizations, KANU and KADU, for permission to go immediately to see Kenyatta and get to know his ideas and political policies.¹⁵

He was of the view that the sooner Kenyatta was released, the better, because his name was being used as a political trade-mark.¹⁶ Indeed, this was clearly seen in KANU. While the suggestion to visit Kenyatta at Lodwar had

been made in the presence of Mboya and Gichuru, Odinga thought that the two would try to persuade Kenyatta to authorise them to enter the government "as the best means of securing his release."¹⁷ KANU resolved not to go and visit Kenyatta. Subsequently, Ngala led a KADU-only delegation to visit Kenyatta on 8 March. In his report on the KADU delegation to Lodwar, Ngala said that Kenyatta had not hinted nor said that he wished to become Kenya's Chief Minister.¹⁸ Kenyatta had expressed the feeling that one would be a good leader without even being in Legco. Ngala reported that Kenyatta was disgusted with the habit of his name being used in vain - and the unfulfilled promises being made on his behalf.¹⁹ On the question of the formation of the government Ngala said

The delegation did not seek Kenyatta's advice on the question of KADU forming a government. Apart from the need for an African united front on all national issues he just said Uhuru na Vumbi.²⁰

The impression Ngala got of Kenyatta was that Kenyatta was just depending on the people of Kenya for his release and he (Kenyatta) also wanted to be free. Equally important, Ngala had the impression that Kenyatta was a very knowledgeable person as far as Kenya's political issues were concerned. Ngala described Kenyatta as a very 'shrewd', intelligent and active man' and, thus was of the view that Kenyatta was capable of taking his place as a political leader.²¹ He gathered from Kenyatta that he (Kenyatta) regarded the "present constitution as the basis for a future move towards independence".²² That Ngala had regarded KANU as the party to form the government, he did not discuss the

issue of Africans taking part in the Council of Ministers or in the government. He noted, however, that he would agree to consider the possibility of forming a government if he were asked to do so, but this would require a party decision.²³

To express concern and the need to have Kenyatta released, Ngala on several occasions, led delegations to the Governor to request this. Ngala thought Kenyatta would be active in politics if freed and that there would be no danger of Kenyatta being over-dominant.²⁴ For him, Kenyatta's release was not a prerequisite to independence. Ngala wanted to have Kenyatta released so that he could participate in the independence process.²⁵ To resolve the deadlock on the formation of the government, Ngala invited the Colonial Secretary to visit Kenya while 'en-route' to Tanganyika. Macleod, however, refused to intervene. On 14 March, Ngala met the Governor, Renison. Nothing fruitful emerged concerning Kenyatta's release. In the eyes of the liberals in London, an intervention by the Colonial Secretary to have a breakthrough in the formation of the government was necessary.²⁶ However, it was the opinion of the Colonial Secretary that it was erroneous to appear in any way to intervene in what was clearly the Governor's affair in forming the administration.

Even after a KADU-KANU delegation went to see Kenyatta at Lodwar, KANU delegates returned to reaffirm their decision not to participate in the government. According to Moi, nothing new had been discussed at Lodwar; the position was similar to that when Ngala and Muliro returned from Lodwar on 9 March. All that the visit produced was a move towards co-operation between the two parties in a bid to achieve independence in 1961.²⁷ Before their visit to Lodwar, Ngala, Towett and Kiano had tendered their resignations from the

Council of Ministers in protest against the non-co-operation moves by the Governor on the issue of the release of Kenyatta.²⁸

By the end of March, it was apparent that KANU would not form a government. The deadlock was officially recognised on 4 April.²⁹ The opinion of the day was that in the event of failure to form the government by the majority party, the governor had two alternatives to run the country: "A council with a majority of the Governor's nominees or a government by decree with no council".³⁰ On the public front, talk went round that the constituents were 'tired' of deadlocks and were ready to go to the poll to choose a different set of leaders altogether.

Since KANU would not form a government, KADU was called upon to do so. Ngala then accepted to form a government. Indeed, he had struggled to secure the release of Kenyatta. In fact, from the All Africa Peoples Conference in Cairo that was held towards the end of March 1961, Ngala had headed for London to find some way out of the deadlock. If the deadlock was due to the 'release of Kenyatta issue', then for Ngala to succeed in breaking the deadlock, he had to seek concessions on Kenyatta. In London he, submitted to the Colonial Secretary a new memorandum setting out a case for immediate release of Kenyatta.³¹ It was after several days of protracted discussions with Macleod that Ngala realized that the release of Kenyatta would be forthcoming and it all depended on the Colonial Secretary with the advice of the Governor. Since the governor had made the formation of the government as a prerequisite for Kenyatta's release, he thought it wise to join in the formation of the government so as to secure the release of Kenyatta.³²

Moreover, Ngala had the feeling that to fall back on a government by decree, for instance, would amount to a step backwards as far as the struggle for independence was concerned. To have the governor still have the powers to appoint and nominate members of the Council of Ministers would mean undoing all that their efforts had achieved since 1957.³³ Ngala was, therefore, envisaging a change of power within the government. To form the first African - led government meant that the previous white rulers would have to be displaced and hence a step forward was inevitable.³⁴ Participation in the government by the African was thus a necessary step on the road to independence.

Ngala decided to join in the formation of the government with Kenya's economy in mind. The Kenya economy was in disarray. In fact, a delegation under A.N. Galsworthy, a financial expert, had been sent to Kenya earlier in January to study Kenya's financial position. Its verdict was that, "Certainly Kenya is going through a period of financial difficulty".³⁵ Ngala was aware of the feeling of foreign investors. No one man at this time felt like giving Kenya money and, infact, many people were sending their money outside the country because they did not trust the activities of some of the politicians. To form a first African-led government meant a step ahead. Negotiations with the donors would be possible through this African-led government. He recognised that the release of Kenyatta was no longer in doubt, only the timing of it. Thus, to form a stable government and have it workable would be a prerequisite for Kenyatta's release and step towards restoring the confidence of donors and investors in Kenya.³⁶

Admittedly, the Kenyatta issue did arise in the Lancaster House

Conference in 1960, but Kenyatta's release was never made a condition of acceptance of the proposals. Ngala, after the conference, had conceded that the proposals were a step in the right direction and were acceptable to African Members as the basis for constitutional advance towards independence.³⁷ That the proposals had stipulated a formation of a government by the majority party after elections, and that KANU was invited first, by virtue of its size, and rightly so, to form a government but declined, the Governor was unquestionably right to appeal to Ngala to form a government, basing it on the fact that KADU was the alternative.³⁸ Equally, it is safe to argue that by agreeing to form the government, Ngala was accepting 'responsibility now' towards furthering the Africans aim of achieving independence in 1961.³⁹

Ngala thus accepted to join European, Asians and civil servants to form a government that was supported by sufficient nominated members in Legco to give it a majority. When Legco met for its first session in 1961, the following was the composition of the government: Ngala became the Minister for Education and Leader of Government Business; R.W.S. Mackenzie, Legal Affairs; A.M.F. Webb, Defence; A.C.C. Swann, Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Waters; M. Blundell, Commerce, Industry and Communications; M. Muliro, Labour and Housing; T. Towett, Local Government and Lands; W. Havelock, A.D. Jamidar Works.⁴⁰ By virtue of its composition, it was largely a KADU government without a racial bias. Of the white ministers, Havelock and Blundell were strong supporters of KADU. Only Mackenzie, who was a KANU supporter, agreed to serve in the government led by Ngala. Indeed, it was unquestionably the strongest cohesive block there was in Legco at the time.

KANU, under Gichuru, thus, formed the Opposition in Legco. On 31 August, the Opposition was formally recognised. Its leader, Gichuru, would receive an emolument of Pounds 400 more on top of his allowance of Pounds 500 per annum as a Member of Legco.⁴¹

When Ngala formed the government, he was not aware of the difficult position he was getting into. He was supposed to carry out policies for all races. But given his moderation, he was vulnerable to radical African opinion. The opinion was that he was not bold enough to push ahead with the African cause. Equally, criticism of Ngala would come from the conservative Europeans who saw Ngala as any other African nationalist, out to deprive them of their economic and political power. However, one thing should be clear here: that, unlike in post-independent Kenya, Ngala was able to tolerate militant opposition from KANU and the minority whites. There was that tolerance in him because he knew what an opposition was meant for in Legco. KANU, as will be seen, would not tolerate Ngala's Opposition after independence.

Kenyatta Released

Speculation on the release of Kenyatta began when the Mombasa Times and East African Standard of 28 July, 1961 reported that he would be released on Tuesday 15 August.⁴² On 1 August, the Colonial Secretary told the House of Commons that Kenyatta would be moved to Kiambu 'about the middle of August' and that his restriction order would be revoked a few days afterwards.⁴³ On 14 August, Kenyatta and his family took off from Maralal to Kikuyuland

after 9 years of detention. This had been possible through Ngala's participation in the government and, more so, due to Ngala's effort to have the Governor realize that it was important that Kenyatta was released.⁴⁴

Following the formation of the government by Ngala and his group, a series of meetings between Ngala and the Governor took place. These meetings were in particular aimed at having Kenyatta released.⁴⁵ After the East African Commission Service Conference that was held in London between 19 and 27 June, the Governor was to acknowledge Ngala's success in making the British political fears over the release of Kenyatta disappear.⁴⁶ The Governor said that following such efforts by Ngala, business people, who were interested in investing in Kenya, had also said it was time Kenyatta was released.⁴⁷

In the despatch to the Colonial Secretary that recommended Kenyatta's release, the Governor vividly showed Ngala's effort to have Kenyatta released.

In part, it said

The African Elected Members of my Government have continuously advised me that Kenyatta should be unconditionally released. Indeed, they agreed to join the government in the belief, which was certainly right, that the formation of a Government would lead to his earlier release.⁴⁸

It was KADU that advised the Governor to have a house built for Kenyatta in Kiambu and it was KADU that supervised the building of this house.

In the same despatch to the Colonial Secretary, the Governor noted

At the time of the formation of the new Government based on elected Members of the Kenya African Democratic Union and their associates on April 18, 1961, the following further statement about his restriction was issued: 'The Governor has agreed that the Government will now begin to build a house for Mr. Jomo

Kenyatta and his family in readiness for Mr. Kenyatta's return from Maralal to his home in Kiambu in due course.⁴⁹

So when Kenyatta set foot in his new house, it had been a result of concerted effort of Ngala and his KADU men to have him released. As Ngala put it at Gatundu: he was very glad to have brought Kenyatta home. This had been the reason for forming the government and it had been achieved.⁵⁰ W.

Havelock commented:

Kenyatta' release was only the fulfillment of what KADU said it intended to do when it decided to join the government.⁵¹

Ngala and the Fears of the Minority Groups

Following a meeting of Ministers of the government and leading Opposition members on 28 June 1961, it was agreed that there was sufficient common ground between the two main political parties to make it possible for the Governor to initiate discussions under his chairmanship at any early date. Such discussions were to include working out a joint proposal for constitutional advancement and matters relating to the land problem and property rights.⁵²

A KANU-KADU joint committee under the chairmanship of Odinga was established to work out a memorandum for Kenya's constitutional advancement. Following discussions of this committee, it was agreed that independence should come to Kenya on 1 February 1962 and that Kenyatta be the first Prime Minister. The committee agreed that land titles, including tribal rights and private property rights, would be respected in the interests of the people of Kenya; and that fair compensation would be paid for any land acquired by any future government for public purposes. The committee also agreed to reshuffle

the existing government (KADU government) to accommodate KANU members. Equally, they pledged that the future government of Kenya would review the Masai Treaty.⁵³

Among the issues agreed upon was the issue of land titles that was of paramount concern for both parties. On the whole, both parties favoured private ownership of property. Needless to say, this agreement sparked off a debate. While Ngala saw this agreement as Kenya's blue print for independence and that it went far to settle the fears of many groups,⁵⁴ nevertheless it was not taken without reservation by some groups. The Northern Frontier District, dominated by the two parties, the Somali Independent Party (SIP) and Northern Province Peoples Progressive Party [NPPPP], came out to dissociate itself from the KANU-KADU joint agreement. Both Somali parties demanded the right to determine the future of the province which, they said had to secede from Kenya and join the Somali republic. Indeed, this feeling of insecurity by these people would be allayed if, as Ngala put it, "we could talk with them and reach a sensible agreement with them". But as the editorial of the East African Standard of 9 October noted

There have been unmistakable warnings of these fears which assailed representatives of many of Kenya's tribes - and although not a great deal has been done to minimize the doubts - indeed many public utterances since the start of the talks can have caused simmering suspicions to reach boiling point.⁵⁵

Ngala and his KADU men seem not to have had a solution to this problem except through dialogue which, it was hoped, would create an atmosphere of understanding between the two big parties and the parties of the

Northern Frontier District.

Equally, the Masai came out openly to oppose the move by the KANU-KADU agreement to have the Masai Treaty reviewed by the future government.⁵⁶ The Masai were not satisfied with the joint assurances, that the two big parties agreed on land titles. They, therefore, appealed to the Governor to have the treaty remain unaltered.

After the KANU-KADU joint committee presented its memorandum to him, the Governor assumed his place as chairman of the constitutional talks. Clearly, the talks were a success as regards issues of land titles and future constitutional advancement. The talks, however, foundered over the difference of opinion between KADU and KANU on the interpretation of parity and the place of the four non-African Ministers. KADU argued for a four-four division with four non-African Ministers in the status quo ante. On the other hand, KANU insisted on ministerial appointment without racial specification. Thus, their formula was a six-six split between the two parties.⁵⁷ It was logical that in such a crisis a resignation of some ministers (white), as had happened with the Lyttleton Plan which resulted in the Lennox-Boyd Constitution, should take place.

Moreover, on 4 December, KADU's leader Ngala, presented to Gichuru a document on Regionalism which was intended for discussion.⁵⁸ However, KANU made the contents of this document public. The KANU leaders attending the constitutional talks decided to boycott the proceedings of the talks until KADU had withdrawn a preamble in the document that demanded acceptance of its views "by those who aspire to working with us in the government".⁵⁹ Even when

The KANU group resumed the talks after KADU withdrew this preamble, they still could not agree on the type of interim government to be formed.

Emerging from the talks was the notion that independence was coming.

But the issue was in what form. During and after the talks, public utterances by some leaders had increased the fears of the minority, especially concerning their land. An example was that given by Paul Ngei

You must condemn those who give assurances to the Europeans that the land they hold is theirs.⁶⁰

This was seen by Ngala and other KADU leaders as a breach of the KANU-KADU agreement on land titles and private property. The minority groups, including the Europeans, were worried about this. As noted above, the Masai equally wanted exclusive rights over their land. There was, therefore, a need to seek an independence where individuals of every community had a full opportunity to play their part in the life of their country. In the constitution that was to come, adequate safeguards for minority groups were to be apparent. Taking into consideration the details of the document on Regionalism, [See Appendix 1], almost all the details emanated from tribal fears and a desire for protection from the colossus of the Kikuyu allied to the Luo. It was pointless to ignore these fears. Therefore, the solution the government sought was one which would include not only representatives of such big 'tribal' groups as the Kikuyu, Luo and the Kamba, but also provide for lasting recognition of the rights and freedoms of the minority groups such as the Masai, the Kalenjin, Abaluhya and the Mijikenda. KADU, and therefore Ngala, saw the solution to these fears in

Regionalism.

Meanwhile, it was announced in London that Ian Macleod was to be replaced by Reginald Maudling as Colonial Secretary. Under Macleod, Kenyans had received many concessions towards independence.⁶¹ However, the appointment of Maudling did not mean a change of policy. No matter who was the Colonial Secretary, it would be up to the Nairobi politicians themselves to govern the pace of independence. Macleod had been central to the constitutional advances made so far. Inevitably, Maudling had to rely on Macleod's experience, particularly on matters concerning Kenya. How Maudling was to reconcile the two leaders, Kenyatta⁶² and Ngala, and steer Kenya to independence was causing anxiety in both Kenya and in London. Macleod had achieved much and had convinced many that he had the "magic" touch to push across negotiations.

To reconcile the two major parties was one major issue for Maudling to tackle. In the midst of economic disarray, inter-tribal suspicion, party rivalry, insecurity and decline in law and order, Maudling sprung on the Kenyan scene. How was he going to handle the Kenyan scene? Perhaps this was seen in the way he handled his first problem in the Kenya scene: the KANU delegation to London.

After the breakdown of the constitutional talks in Nairobi, KANU decided to send a deputation to London to have the Colonial Secretary declare a date for a constitutional conference and new elections to be held.⁶³ They were referred back home. Renison was to give them the reply from the Colonial Secretary. What perhaps was important to note out of the talks between the KANU

delegation under Kenyatta and the Colonial Secretary was that the time when Kenyan politicians would run to London expecting arbitration and a solution to their problems was over. The KANU delegates had to contend with this - that a degree of agreement was the key towards any constitutional accord. This was not to be done by the British government but was to be achieved by discussion among the Africans themselves.⁶⁴ Maudling was to emphasize this in his speech, read by the Governor to the delegates who had met again for the talks in Nairobi on 2 November 1961.⁶⁵

Back in Nairobi, Ngala had been comfortable with Maudling's move to visit Kenya that November. He had been of the idea that Kenyatta was to join the KADU-KANU talks and that KANU should vacate a seat to make room for Kenyatta to become a member of Legco because it was not legally possible to remove the restrictions on his entry before the end of the year.⁶⁶ No heed was paid to any of Ngala's suggestions.

According to the communique given by Maudling at the end of the KANU delegation's visit to London, little seems to have been gained by KANU.⁶⁷ Before the delegation left for London, Maudling was to visit Kenya at the end of November; that much was known when the Governor returned to Nairobi from his London visit. Depending on the progress made on the constitutional talks, Maudling on his return to Kenya, hoped to fix a date for the constitutional conference, but not for independence. A conference for February or March 1962 was also well known.⁶⁸ So KANU heard nothing new in London. For Ngala, it was all a waste of time for KANU to have led a delegation to

London.⁶⁹ In essence, the time wasted could have been better spent on concentrating on, and facing up to, daily problems in Kenya and that the money spent on the trip could have been better spent on famine relief.⁷⁰

Regionalism

Ngala considered one major difference between KADU and KANU at this time was the type of government system each party espoused. This difference lay in the fact that KADU wanted a constitution for a free Kenya that would give reserved powers to be regions as well as the regional representatives to its parliament, and that such reserved powers were to be respected by the central government.⁷¹ On the whole, this was the basis for Regionalism. KANU, on the other hand, wanted a unitary government where powers of authority would be centralised.

The idea of Regionalism is an echo of an idea of European parties that emerged in the 1950s - the Federal Independence Party and the Progressive Local Government Party. Indeed, these two parties aimed at devising a method whereby the White Highlands could be retained as a virtually self-governing entity for ever under European control, while African development continued at its own pace 'over the fence' as it were.⁷² According to Ngala, this was quite different from his Regionalism. While the European parties' suggestions were a form of apartheid and was to be constructed along a predominantly racial basis, Ngala's Regionalism lay in "promoting a free and voluntarily association of people, joined together in one region because they trust one another".⁷³ In other words, a common thought and purpose was the unifying factor and a man's

origin did not enter into it. Ngala's idea of Regionalism was that the regions would have powers as of right and enshrined in the constitution, as opposed to increased powers of local government authorities whose powers were rationed by the central government.⁷⁴

When Maudling visited Kenya at the end of November 1961, Ngala and KADU stuck to their demand to have Regionalism accepted in the constitution. Ngala was vocal on this aim. It was his argument that it would be folly that a unitary system of government, which worked well in Britain because of history, tradition and tolerance of the majority for the minority, was a system suitable for Kenya, where apparent unity was maintained by the British administration.⁷⁵ Accordingly, any attempt to impose an artificial unity from the centre was to be resisted. He reiterated

The stable, viable and lasting entity of Kenya could only be achieved by using tribal loyalties in a federal framework. This would create a firm basis for willing co-operation at the centre.⁷⁶

But what did Ngala mean by 'using tribal loyalties in a federal framework'? He was saying that old loyalties to the tribe or clan, which existed before the advent of the colonialists, still existed. They may have been suppressed on the surface, but for all that, they were there and still prevailed. Arguably, therefore, Kenyans were to be proud of themselves as members of their own tribes. This was part of Kenya's national heritage and, therefore, a source of pride. In his view, to ignore tribal loyalties was to ignore the facts of life as they existed. This was summarised well in his speech to the United Kenya Club on 7 November 1961:

The Colonial System is a form of dictatorship because however benevolent it may be ultimately it can only maintain itself by force. We are seeking to replace the Colonial System by democracy, or ruling with consent. To make such a system work, it is necessary to rally people to a local loyalty and then build the sum of local loyalties into a national awareness and, eventually, a national loyalty and effort.⁷⁷

According to Ngala, therefore, a unitary system of government would not serve the purposes of the minority groups. It was not sufficient to delegate powers to the local government. By giving independent powers to the regions, the interest and energy needed at this level to speed up the various developments that were required would be created.⁷⁸

On 28 November, having realized that the difference between KADU and KANU on points of detail and fundamental principles were only one of degree, Maudling went ahead to announce that the promised constitutional conference would be held in London on 14 February 1962.⁷⁹ The two parties however, were to approach this conference with the same adamancy, each sticking to its principle: KADU Regionalism, KANU Centralism.

What emerged from the party talks with the Colonial Secretary was that, truly, there was justification for the existence and viewpoints of both KANU and KADU. Each, however, had not recognised the importance of the other. The idea of only one being recognised as the voice of the people of Kenya was out. It was high time Ngala and the other leaders in KANU realized this point: that each had such essential viewpoints to contribute to an independent Kenyan nation.⁸⁰ It was equally important to note that the constitution that was to be drawn at the conference ought to be above pressures of party groups. It would

not be Ngala's constitution, neither would it be Kenyatta's. It would mean that the party that would govern would not govern in any way it wished at any moment. Above both parties and individuals, like Ngala, would stand the independence constitution and the rule of law would therefore be paramount.⁸¹

Before the constitutional conference, Ngala was given more responsibility in his ministerial position. He took over most of the responsibilities of the existing Chief Secretary's office and was to assume the title of Leader of the House. A new Minister of Education was appointed.⁸² This was made possible because the colony had no Chief Secretary after Griffith-Jones had been appointed Deputy Governor. Ngala also attended the Tanganyika independence celebrations. Among those attending these celebrations were the Governor and Ngala's deputy in KADU, Muliro.⁸³ While in Tanganyika, Ngala expressed the sentiments that he would have liked Kenya to achieve Uhuru at the same time as Uganda so that the East African Federation (an issue that was of current talk) could become a reality in 1962.⁸⁴

The Tanganyika journey had a meaning for Ngala. It gave him and the other Kenyan political leaders of all parties an encouragement to step up their efforts to find a constitution which suited Kenya so that it, too could achieve independence soon.⁸⁵

The 'Mwambao'⁸⁶ Episode

Independence was soon coming to Kenya. One issue at stake, however, was whether or not the 10 mile Coastal Strip for the Protectorate of Kenya, would be integrated into an independent Kenya, ruled by a black majority.⁸⁷

Under the 1895 Agreement between the British government and the Sultan of Zanzibar, a ten-mile strip of land on the Kenya Coast was recognised as being part of the Sultan's dominions, but the British government was given the right of administration and the collection of duties and taxes in exchange for an annual fee which went to Zanzibar. By this agreement, the Arabs and many other people at the Coast became subjects of the Sultan of Zanzibar and, at the same time accepting the sovereignty of the Queen. This apparent division of loyalties, and it was more apparent than real, particularly as the Sultan was a great and valued friend of Great Britain, had at times caused confusion and embarrassment, and no more often than when the Kenyan constitution and the future of Zanzibar had been under discussion.

As from 1960, the Coast Arab-Swahili people were struggling to have the Coastal Strip have its own autonomy, hence the 'Mwambao' movement.⁸⁸ Evidently, it seems that those who were for autonomy were disunited and uncertain in their minds as to what the real issues were and what they wanted.⁸⁹ Moreover, there were too many groups, each having slightly different objectives. This resulted in a disjointed movement.⁹⁰ On the other hand, those against 'Mwambao' were united and their opposition was clear cut.

Ngala played a major role in the fight against the 'Mwambao' movement. He made it an issue for people to rally behind him. In 1961, Ngala was remembered to have said:

When the treaty was made there was no democracy in the Coastal Strip. Now there is democracy and the people of the area must decide.⁹¹

In essence Ngala was saying that when the treaty was signed, the Africans were never consulted. In support of the move to oppose the movement for 'Mwambao' he collected 10,000 signatures at the Coast; all in the struggle to have the Coastal Strip joined to the rest of Kenya.⁹²

A commission of inquiry on the Coastal Strip was appointed under Sir James Robertson, first Governor - General of independent Nigeria. The reference of work for this commission was to report on changes which were considered to be advisable in the 1895 agreement relating to the Coastal Strip of Kenya as a result of the course of constitutional development in East Africa.⁹³ Ngala presented the case for the Mijikenda peoples of the Coast on 29 October basing his arguments on the fact that by virtue of African settlement on the Coastal land for many centuries, the Mijikenda were indigenous owners of the strip - Enye Tsi. The fact that other groups came to inhabit and settle along the Coastal Strip did not mean that Africans could not be left to determine their own government on the basis of being the majority.⁹⁴ He did not hesitate to point out that integrating the Kenyan peoples was basic to the achievement of independence. What he was against was giving the Arab-Swahili privileges or favors on a racial basis.⁹⁵ His solution to the Coastal Strip problem was a complete integration with the rest of Kenya under the Regional Constitution as planned by KADU.⁹⁶ In this plan, the Coastal Strip would be part and parcel of the Coast Region, with no foreign regime at all.⁹⁷

Just prior to the publication of Sir James' report on the Coastal strip, Ngala chose to dramatise his hate and dislike of the whole idea of 'Mwambao'. The red flag, symbolic of that of the sultan of Zanzibar was ceremoniously

hauled down at Malindi.⁹⁸ Ngala was visualizing the final demise of the Sultan's rule at the London conference in February 1962. This act of Ngala caused a lot of indignation and protest from members of Legco, especially from the Coastal Strip. Towards this end, the Member for Mombasa Central, Sheikh Abdillahi Nassir wrote a letter to the Governor, deploring Ngala's action and it is reported that he signed the letter with his own blood to draw attention to the seriousness of the matter.⁹⁹ Equally, the Coast People's Party (CPP) the vanguard of the 'Mwambao' movement, issued a statement protesting against the lowering of the sultan's flag.

Ngala's action could only be interpreted by the adherents of the 'Mwambao' movement as an insult to their political aspirations that were embedded in the Sultan's flag. However, Ngala explained that the lowering of the flag was not a sign of enmity, as Africa wished to live peacefully alongside people of other races, but they wanted to remove all foreign flags that were symbolic of foreign domination.¹⁰⁰ Ngala's act was not intended as an act of disrespect but only as an expression of the local people's wish for an integrated Coast Province, where all the people living there, including Arabs could live in peace, equality and amity. (As argued above, Ngala was against any privileges enjoyed by the Arab-Swahili).

When the Robertson Report was published on 19 December, it was a slap in the face of the autonomists. It seems to have favoured the African nationalists. It came out very strongly in favour of integration of the Kenyan Protectorate with Kenya Colony before self-government took place.¹⁰¹

The 'Mwambao' movement came to a halt in London. The Coastal Strip

talks started on 8 March 1962 and, by 13 March had been shelved until the end of the constitutional talks that were also taking place in London. On 13 March, the Sultan indicated, through a message read by his lawyer D.C. Dingle Foot, to the delegates to the talks that whatever solution was reached delegates should bear in mind the welfare of his people living in the Coastal Strip.¹⁰² From this it seems the Sultan did not say categorically that he would renounce his sovereignty over the Coastal Strip, but, by inference, he left no doubt in the minds of the audience that given the proper safeguards, he would renounce his nominal sovereignty. The hope by the Mwambaoists that at one time Zanzibar and the Coastal Strip would be one state within an East African Federation were doomed.

The supporters of the 'Mwambao' movement were soon reconciled to defeat. By December 1962, strong adherents of 'Mwambao' like Sheikh Nassir were coming close to accepting Ngala's 'Majimboism' (Regionalism).

But if on the other hand, the powers given to the Regional Assemblies are so weak that there is no significance between a Region and an ordinary administrative province then we will find it exceedingly difficult to advise the Sultan to hand over his sovereignty.¹⁰³

A.M. Jeneby, then Member for Tana and Lamu had, since the inception of the movement, supported it. However, by December 1962 he had changed his position. He was of the view that autonomy for the Coastal Strip was impossible.¹⁰⁴ Alternatively, he suggested that subjects of the Sultan should have a five-year choice of citizenship after Kenya's independence: agreement should have to bind a regional civil service which would include some of the Sultan's subjects; land rights to be protected, and Muslim education and courts of law be

maintained.¹⁰⁵ Sheikh M.A. Alamoody, a protectorate Member pointed out that

The autonomists will only agree to integration of the strip into a greater Kenya if they are satisfied that the constitution has enough safeguards.¹⁰⁶

While Jeneby had, by December, been recruited into the

Regionalist group, Nassir and Alamoody seem to have been ready to accept

Ngala's Majimboism provided sufficient powers were given to regions.

The final blow to the autonomists came in October 1963 when the Sultan of Zanzibar finally renounced all sovereignty over the Coastal Strip in return for assurances on the part of the Kenyan government to protect Muslim rights.

While there were divergent views on what each group pushing for 'Mwambao'

stood for the most featuring parties: Coastal League and Coast People's Party

shared one fear in common with Coastal leaders such as Ngala; the fear of

domination by the large dynamic up-country African groups. Thus, the

Mwamboists chose to ally with Ngala. They opted for his regionalist policy not

for its own sake as an ideology, but for its absorption of the above fears of

domination by Nairobi.¹⁰⁷

Ngala thus came out triumphantly for the African cause in the case of the

Coastal Strip. However, on the matter of the Northern Frontier District, where

the two parties - the Somali Independent Party and the Northern Province

Peoples Progressive Party - wanted to secede, Ngala did not give a lasting

solution to it. It seems Ngala's Regionalism did not satisfy them. The Somali

Northern Frontier District was to become a formidable force against the

independent government after 1963.¹⁰⁸

Lancaster House Conference, 1962

The constitutional conference of 1962 was to set up the framework for the conduct of political activity after independence. That is why each delegation to the conference struggled to entrench as many concessions for itself as possible. It is in this respect that we should see the protracted bargaining by KANU and KADU at the conference: a clear fight for regionalism on the part of KADU and centralism on the part of KANU.

KADU's case for regionalism was put vividly by Ngala at the opening session of the conference. In part he stated:

...It is an indisputable fact that power corrupts, and that obsolete power corrupts absolutely. Therefore, in the constitution we are to devise, provision must be made for the decentralization of power, so that power is shared out between many. That is the reason why we favour a federal concept of government.¹⁰⁹

He thus reasoned:

The people of Kenya are many and varied. Whenever such a situation exists there is a genuine danger of domination and conflict between the differing groups. Therefore, it is essential to look for constitutional devices capable of preventing domination by a political party, or personality, group or tribe.¹¹⁰

Underlying the Regional Constitution advocated by Ngala and KADU was the philosophy that power is evil and that a weak, and, if need be, incoherent government is a reliable safeguard against despotism. But should the conference be seen in the light of only conflicting ideas between KADU and KANU? It should equally be viewed as an effort to find a compromise solution which would meet Kenya's special needs.

After nearly eight weeks, the critical negotiations ended on 16 April. The

Participants drew a balance; it was a blend of KANU and KADU policies. Delegates to the conference endorsed the agreements providing for the formation of a coalition government and the Majimbo Constitution (Regionalism) which led Kenya into independence.¹¹¹ This constitution provided for a bi-cameral legislature. There were to be two houses, the Senate and the House of Representatives, seven Regional Assemblies which would have entrenched powers but limited financial powers.¹¹² Ngala left the conference content with its success. He had worked hard to see that a regional constitution was set up in Kenya. His composure and stature was well described by the Mombasa Times.

Mr. Ngala quiet and unruffled, has emerged from the conference with a tremendous fillip. His public relations have been excellent and his dedication during the protracted discussions quite remarkable.¹¹³

From the benefit of hindsight, the Majimbo Constitution pleased few people. Indeed, it was the price KANU paid to have a leap ahead towards independence because Kenya leaped into the unknown independence with many restraints and shackles which were not sorted out at the conference. As it will be seen, the majimbo Constitution was short-lived. When KANU took the realm of power in 1963, the appropriate constitutional changes were to follow. However, Ngala saw the Majimbo Constitution as a move to give all Kenyan people a large measure of self-government in the conduct of local affairs.¹¹⁴ That people should be left to control their resources and have the last say in their day to day life. His regionalism was thus against authoritarianism.

A Regional Assembly would have the power to make laws in respect of those matters which were expressly specified in the constitution, either as being

within the exclusive legislative jurisdiction of the Region or as being within the concurrent jurisdiction of both the Central Legislature and the Regional Assemblies. The Central Legislature would not be able to divert itself of its legislative power in favour of a Regional Assembly.

Ngala, however, emerged from the conference not satisfied with the land scheme that was to be administered by the Central Land Board. Though the scheme would be of benefit to the Africans in that "European assets would be realized; property values maintained; African rural discontent alleviated; and an African landed class established,"¹¹⁵ this would only serve a small group of Africans in the Highland areas. Ngala was not interested in getting land in the Highland areas. By virtue of tradition, he had no historical claims to this area. However, as per the agreement on the scheduled areas, he was of the view that these areas would be seen by the rest of Kenyans as being treated with special attention.¹¹⁶ It meant that the Land Board would only favour farmers who wanted to be bought out quickly. Adversely, it would lead to increased inequality.

On the whole, as argued above, the Lancaster agreement of 1962 was a great success for Ngala. It was equally acceptable to many of the delegates.¹¹⁷ In the coalition government, Ngala and Kenyatta were to hold an equal status as Ministers of State for Constitutional Affairs, Ngala being responsible for Administration and Kenyatta for Economic Development. Ngala's responsibilities covered the same matters he dealt with as Leader of the House.¹¹⁸ Along with Havelock, Towett, Muliro, Jamidar and Mate, Ngala would form part of the coalition government with KANU.

The Coalition Government

The Coalition Government that existed between April 1962 and 1963 was marred by unwarranted accusations by one party against the other. Evidently, the accusations and counter accusations that were witnessed during this period amounted more to a campaign to win supporters for election and yet the elections had not been declared.¹¹⁹ There was least interest in Ngala and Kenyatta to see the Coalition Government work.¹²⁰ Thus it never worked smoothly. It was occasionally weakened by unwarranted and upsetting speeches by Members of Legco. That the conflicting ideas of the conference were still fresh in the minds of those in the government, it was difficult to have the two groups work together. Moreover, the Colonial Secretary seems not to have trusted the 'new' African Ministers at this time.¹²¹ In fact, as Blundell notes, the Colonial Secretary still was working through the Permanent Secretaries to keep watch and inform him on how the 'new' ministers were working.¹²² This showed how cautious the colonial government was about yielding to the African majority rule.

The Coalition Government was yet faced with another problem: that of who was to form the Opposition in the House.¹²³ It was the suggestion of Odinga that KANU and KADU members on Opposition benches form a 'Coalition Opposition' to criticise the government in all fields.¹²⁴ Accordingly, opposition in such a coalition would therefore have had the duty to keep the people of Kenya properly informed when they felt that the Coalition Government was delaying the course of independence. Neither Ngala nor Kenyatta had a solution to this fix. In the end, it was left to those members of both KANU and KADU who wished to be on the Opposition to do so.¹²⁵

Towards the end of 1962, the KANU-KADU working committee on the details of the independence constitution nearly came to a standstill. Ngala was accusing Kenyatta of breaking the Lancaster House Agreement by denouncing Regionalism. Equally, Kenyatta counteracted by branding Ngala a quisling of the white man, expressing the ideas of the imperialists.¹²⁶ In essence, such public accusations were a characteristic of this period. Apart from working on the constitution, the coalition government was, on the whole, an alliance of incompatibles.

Ngala's Second American Tour

By mid-1962, the two figures, Ngala and Kenyatta, now spearheading the Uhuru struggle had drawn more attention all over the world. Invitations by private American organizations were being extended to them. In May, Ngala and Kenyatta were invited by USA government to visit America so as to improve and foster closer relations between their respective countries. As put by the US Assistant Secretary of State, "to come and see us as we are".¹²⁷ This was part of the move by the USA to have alliances with emerging African independent states.

It was a move to have close alliances especially with the leaders of these countries. Kenya was soon going to be independent. Arguably, Kenya's Prime Minister would either be Ngala or Kenyatta - at least by virtue of their leadership of the two parties - depending on which party won the 1963 elections. It was therefore important that acquaintances with these two leaders be made.

Independent Kenya was soon to be more integrated into the world

capitalist system through its own leaders. On his way to the USA, Ngala spent four days in Formosa at the invitation of the Nationalist Chinese Government.¹²⁸ Here he met President Chiang Kai-shek and several other distinguished members of the Formosan Government and discussed with them future economic co-operation between Kenya and Formosa. A stopover in Japan was equally necessary; for Japan was also emerging as a major foreign investor.¹²⁹ Ngala was going to America to lobby. In particular, he was to talk to Americans about assistance in rural development, fighting unemployment and obtaining technical aid. Ngala was not aware of the effects of such aid. It was true that unemployment had increased because of the political instability during the transitional period because most of the economic development had been by Europeans. Europeans had slowed down activities during this period. Aid was therefore a necessary condition for any economic recovery.

In America, Ngala was to deplore the race barriers existing there.

Addressing representatives of the diplomatic, financial and educational world, he said that race segregation was "the only remaining black mark against the United States".¹³⁰ Emphasizing his opposition to any form of segregation, he argued that the question of race and colour would not be solved by further discrimination.¹³¹ He failed to understand the contradiction: whereas America claimed to be the father of liberty yet she encouraged racial segregation. To talk against racial segregation was in a way drawing the attention of financiers and investors - that he was aware of such ills which retarded the development of the individual. Equally, he was suggesting that such conditions would not exist in an independent Kenya and that financiers and investors were free to come to Kenya.

It was in part, a lobbying exercise.

The General Election of 1963

A detailed discussion and analysis of these elections is given by Sanger and Nottingham.¹³² However, a few remarks will serve a great purpose for this study. At the beginning of 1963, KANU's morale was at its lowest ebb.¹³³ There was even talk in Nairobi of the possibility of a KADU - African Peoples Party (APP) coalition government emerging from the elections due in May 1963.¹³⁴

By the time of the elections in May 1963, Ngala had lost the grip over nominations to KANU. As Amalemba argues, Ngala made the mistake of letting Muliro be the mastermind behind the nominations.¹³⁵ In the end, Muliro muddled up with the nominations in the Western Region and this led to splits which let in KANU candidates.¹³⁶ Thus while Kenyatta and his group consolidated their position and attained a cohesive approach to the elections, Ngala was not able to establish control over the nomination process. KADU thus, lost in some of the constituencies to KANU, especially in the Western Region.¹³⁷ Further, a dispute, arising from the report of the Regional Boundaries Commission about the future of the town of Kitale, had caused friction between Baluhya and Kalenjin supporters of KADU.¹³⁸ This posed for Ngala yet another problem for which he had no solution.¹³⁹

One should mention at this juncture the differences in policy between KADU and KANU as contained in the manifestoes of the two parties. A look at the manifesto of the two parties shows Kenyatta stating that his party would work for a Democratic Socialist Kenya.¹⁴⁰ In other words, he was saying that

Kenya would be a free society which would develop from what was indigenous, whilst developing, at the same time, a country free from economic exploitation and social inequality. Ngala on the other hand said that his party's aim was to achieve nationhood through Majimbo. That is, the creation of a national identity was to spring from the willing co-operation of all Kenyans and not from a superficially imposed identity - arising from arbitrary colonial boundaries drawn on the map of Kenya.¹⁴¹ In other words, the nation was to be created in the years to come. What was clear from this was that each party was struggling to obtain political power. They seem not to have a clear concrete economic policy for independent Kenya.

The issue of Pan-Africanism, perhaps, summed up the major differences in the party leadership in terms of ideology and policy. While Kenyatta saw Pan-Africanism as a continental issue and that Kenya was part of it,¹⁴² Ngala saw it differently. KADU under Ngala seems to have relied on a primarily domestic policy of 'Kenya First'.¹⁴³ "Pan-Africanism" he argued "doesn't mean that all the constituencies of the African states must be the same. They must be devised by the individual's preferences and requirements of the people concerned".¹⁴⁴ In other words, Ngala was arguing that freedom must first be developed at the purely local level, in the regions, in fact, before it can blossom to national maturity, and then become established at a continental level.

At the electoral level, KANU strove hard to see that Ngala was challenged in the 1963 elections. KANU, through Mwinga Chokwe, managed to recruit Kilian Ngala who not only opposed Ngala in these elections but also in the subsequent elections of 1969.¹⁴⁵ Chokwe's efforts, and therefore KANU's

were not fruitful. In the first place, Chokwe himself had lost favour among the influential Kaya elders for allying with up-country politicians and opposing Ngala whom to them was the true spokesman of the Mijikenda.¹⁴⁶ Secondly, Chokwe had once caused a lot of loss to the Rabai when he allegedly set fire on their farms.¹⁴⁷ He could not be forgiven for this. All this was to Ngala's favour. When the elections were held, Chokwe's man; Kilian Ngala could not stand Ngala's formidable strength and following that had the strong support of influential men like Birywa wa Masha, Reuben Kombe, Lawrence Kafwihi Bennett in his Kilifi South Constituency.¹⁴⁸ Ngala thus easily won the elections. Moreover, a clear indication of the strong support of the Coast for Majimbo was the success of the KADU candidates there. Of the House of Representative and Senate seats, it was only Chokwe who managed to win the Mombasa West seat. Virtually all other constituents seats at the Coast were won by KADU men.¹⁴⁹

The overall result of the election was a majority victory for KANU. For instance of the 117 House of Representative seats KANU won 64 against KADU's 32 and APP's 8. In the Senate KANU had 18, KADU 16 and APP1.¹⁵⁰

Kenya entered the era of self-government on 1 June 1963 with Kenyatta as its first Prime Minister. Ngala and his followers seem to have taken the defeat at the polls in good grace and only cautioned that all would be well in Kenya provided that the government behaved in a constitutional manner. Ngala was to lead the Opposition. He was to lead the Opposition with the hope that Majimbo would be put into practice. However, those against his leadership of the Opposition (Mboya especially) felt that constructive criticism of the government and its ministers could be possible and permissible within a one-party

system, hence an independent opposition composed of a different party or parties was wholly unnecessary.¹⁵¹ But how could Ngala abandon his Opposition? To abandon the Opposition would only mean abandoning Majimbo. For Ngala and KADU, Majimbo was an article of faith. Indeed, KADU, could not abandon the policy at this early moment. They had been the architects of this phenomenon.

What Ngala failed to see was that Regionalism was adopted as a means to an end and not an end in itself. The real end was nationhood. It was unlikely that under Regionalism this important aspect of nation-building would have been achieved.

Independence

Before independence was to be granted, the Colonial Secretary, Duncan Sandys convened a conference in London to discuss issues of independence for Kenya. Fundamental differences arose at these talks centered on the balance of power between the Central and Regional governments to be defined in the independence constitution. There was thus a deadlock over Kenyatta's proposals for increased powers for the centre to ensure effective government of a united country and Ngala's demands for retention by the seven regions of the powers in the self-government constitution which favored both KADU and KANU.¹⁵² Perhaps what Ngala and Kenyatta were missing in their struggle for political power was that they were thinking of the basic problems in terms of how to extract the greatest possible advantage for their parties instead of thinking of what was good for the nation.

To strike a balance between the warring parties, Sandys initiated a few

changes in the self-government constitution. The major changes concerned paragraph 19 of the constitution. Hitherto it had been necessary for any party to achieve 90 per cent majority in the Senate and 75 per cent majority in the House of Representatives to effect major constitutional changes, or to alter the powers of the region. In future, except for certain reserved subjects such as land ownership, the Bill of Rights, the composition of the Senate and the preservation of the Regional Structure, a 75 per cent majority in both Houses would be necessary.¹⁵³ Equally, a two third majority in a national referendum would suffice in any case of a deadlock in both Houses as concerns a change in the constitution.¹⁵⁴ Other major changes initiated concerned the control of the civil service and the Police. While Ngala wanted them to remain regional responsibilities, Kenyatta wanted them brought under Central government. Sandys decided to bring the civil service under the control of an independent Public Service Commission, which would provide civil servants for both Central government and regional authorities. The police were wholly consolidated into one force as required by KANU.¹⁵⁵ Moreover, the Majimbo Constitution was to be implemented in stages. It was expected that most of the regional powers would be handed by the Central government to the regions before independence and the remainder would be handed over shortly afterwards.¹⁵⁶

The above changes on the Majimbo Constitution riled Ngala. He saw them as a betrayal of the British promise that the Majimbo Constitution unaltered, would remain the constitution at independence. For him, the changes brought in had diluted the constitution. He even threatened to have Kenya partitioned where the Coast Region would be an independent state if Regionalism

was not going to be implemented immediately.¹⁵⁷ He returned from the talks in London a disappointed man facing a political storm within his own party.

After a discussion with his party members, Ngala came up with a new approach towards unity with KANU. He proved his statemanship, when as a man who put the long term interests of his country ahead of his own personal power and interest, agreed to work together with KANU towards the achievement of independence.¹⁵⁸ By this action he proved himself responsible indeed. By 24 October he had announced that KADU had dropped the idea of partitioning Kenya.¹⁵⁹ Ngala's acceptance to work together with KANU did not miss reservations. He openly stated some of his fears for the future and strongly reaffirmed his belief in the two-party system with its Parliamentary Opposition.¹⁶⁰ Most noteworthy of his fears was what he called the danger of muzzling freedom of expression through the application of the emergency regulation issued just over a week before by the Acting Governor Sir Eric Griffith - Jones.¹⁶¹

Such statesman-like and responsible gestures by Ngala were a sigh of relief to many Kenyans. The arrangements for Kenya's independence day were thus made without any incidence and hence the peaceful launching of Kenya into independence.

Independence came to Kenya on 12 December 1963. But was this the end of the struggle? Was it only the freedom the nationalists wanted?

Footnotes

1. 'Uhuru' is a swahili word meaning 'freedom'.
2. This sub-heading is drawn from George Bennett and Carl Rosberg, The Kenyatta Election, op. cit.
3. Mombasa Times, January 5, 1961.
4. Goldsworthy, op. cit., p. 176. Mombasa Times January 25, 1961.
5. Goldsworthy, op. cit., p. 176. The call for boycott of work led to Odinga, Kiano, Ogada, Ochwada to call a press conference to lash at Mboya for what they described as a premature announcement of the boycott and accused Gichuru for dashing off to Dar-es-Salaam instead of attending the executive committee meeting.
6. Mombasa Times, January 25, 1961.
7. ibid.
8. ibid., January 17, 1961.
9. Bennett and Rosberg, op. cit., p. 163 Mombasa Times, March 1, 1961.
10. Bennett and Rosberg, op. cit., p. 163.
11. KNA, OP/IB/505
12. Bennett and Rosberg, op. cit., p. 164.
13. ibid., p. 164
14. At least the Governor had made this clear in his broadcast. Mombasa Times, March 1, 1961.
15. ibid., March 3, 1961.
16. ibid.
17. Oginga Odinga, Not Yet Uhuru, London, Heinemann 1967, p. 205.
18. Mombasa Times, March 9, 1961.
19. ibid.
20. ibid., Uhuru na Vumbi-'Freedom and Dust'.

21. *ibid.*
22. *ibid.*
23. *ibid.*
24. *ibid.*, March 10, 1961.
25. *ibid.*
26. Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, Questions and Answers March 2, 1961, KNA, OP/1/27.
27. Editorial, East African Standard, March 24, 1961.
28. East African Standard, March 15, 1961.
29. Bennett and Rosberg, *op. cit.*, p. 194.
30. Public Relations Office, "Formation of Government/Mr. Jomo Kenyatta", London, April 7, 1961, KNA, MSS115/51/152.
31. Bennett and Rosberg, *op. cit.*, p. 195.
32. Interview Report, Robert Matano, July 24, 1989.
33. *ibid.*
34. *ibid.*
35. Mombasa Times, January 10, 1961.
36. Public Relations Office, "Formation of Government/Mr. Jomo Kenyatta", London, April 7, 1961, KNA, MSS/15/51/152.
37. Mombasa Times, February 26, 1961.
38. Parliamentary Debates, House of Common, Questions and Answers, May 11, 1961, KNA OP/1/247.
39. Editorial, East African Standard, March 24, 1961.
40. Legco Debates, Vol. 87, Part 1.
41. Acting Chief Secretary, E.N. Griffith-Jones to Humphrey Slade (speaker of Legco) August 30, 1961, KNA OP/IB/555.

42. Mombasa Times, July 28, 1961, East African Standard, July 28, 1961.
43. Mombasa Times, August 2, 1961.
44. Interview Report, M. Blundell, February 27, 1989.
45. Mombasa Times, July 26, 1961.
46. *ibid.*, July 4, 1961
47. *ibid.*
48. Dispatch from Governor to the Colonial Secretary, East African Standard, August 2, 1961.
49. *ibid.*
50. Mombasa Times, August 15, 1961.
51. East African Standard, August 15, 1961.
52. Mombasa Times, June 29, 1961.
53. East African Standard, August 25, 1961.
54. *ibid.*, August 24, 1961.
55. Editorial, East African Standard, October 9, 1961.
56. According to the treaty, the British Government undertook to ensure that Masailand would be reserved for the Masai so long as they existed as a 'tribe' or race. They did not want the agreement altered. East African Standard, August 29, 1961.
57. East African Standard, September 25, 1961.
58. *ibid.*, October 5, 1961.
59. *ibid.*
60. *ibid.*, September 11, 1961.
61. Mombasa Times, October 10, 1961.
62. Kenyatta by this time had assumed the leadership of KANU. See "Kenyatta takes Leadership of KANU" Mombasa Times, October 30, 1961.

63. Background letter No. 5 Ian McCulloch to Malcolm Archer, November 6, 1961, KNA, MSS 1/5/51/79.
64. *ibid.*
65. East African Standard, November 3, 1961.
66. Mombasa Times, November 7, 1961.
67. Editorial, East African Standard, November 13, 1961.
68. *ibid.*
69. Mombasa Times, November 14, 1961.
70. *ibid.*
71. *ibid.*, September 25, 1961.
72. East African Standard, October 5, 1961.
73. Ronald Ngala "The idea of 'Friendly Regionalism'". East African Standard, October 5, 1961.
74. *ibid.*
75. Mombasa Times, November 25, 1961.
76. *ibid.*
77. Ngala speaking at the United Kenya Club, Mombasa Times, November 28, 1961.
78. Mombasa Times, November 28, 1961.
79. *ibid.*, November 30, 1961.
80. Ian McCulloch to Malcolm Archer, November 29, 1961. KNA MSS/15/51/79.
81. Mombasa Times, November 30, 1961.
82. *ibid.*
83. *ibid.*
84. *ibid.*

85. *ibid.*
86. 'Mwambao' is a swahili word meaning Coastal Strip.
87. Richard Stren "Introduction" in Hyder KIndly, Life and Politics in Mombasa, Nairobi, East African Publishing House, 1972, p. xiii.
88. Ahmed Salim, "The Movement for Mwambao or Coast Autonomy in Kenya 1956 - 1963" B.A. Ogot Hadithi 2, ed., Historical Association of Kenya, Nairobi, 1970 p. 213.
89. For example, before the shelving of the Coastal Strip talks in London in March 1962, there were already conflicting ideas among the autonomists. See Mombasa Times, March 14, 1962, See also Kindly, Life and Politics op.cit., p. 185, 189. See also A.I. Salim Swahili-Speaking Peoples of Kenya Coast 1895 - 1965, Nairobi, East African Publishing House, 1973 p. 237. The parties that had various views and were for 'Mwambao' were: Shingwaya Freedom Party, Coastal League, Coast Peoples party and the Kenya Protectorate Peoples National Party.
90. Kindly, op. cit., p. 185-191.
91. Mombasa Times, September 7, 1961.
92. *ibid.*
93. Daily Nation, December 21, 1961.
94. Ronald Ngala, Memorandum to the commission appointed to inquire into the Coastal Strip. Mombasa Times, October 30, 1961.
95. *ibid.*
96. *ibid.*
97. *ibid.*
98. Mombasa Times, December 18, 1961.
99. *ibid.*, December 19, 1961.
100. *ibid.*, December 22, 1961.
101. A.I. Salim, 'The Movement for Mwambao' op.cit., p. 222.
102. Mombasa Times, March 14, 1962.

122. *ibid.*
123. Legco Debates, Vol. 89 Col. 17. There was a feeling of nervousness among the KANU/KADU government members for being forced to sit next to their foes. This feeling was demonstrated as a KANU man in government would ask a question to a fellow KANU minister, a question that should have come from the Opposition.
124. This was a crafty idea of Odinga, but the idea was not heeded by neither KADU nor KANU.
125. Legco Debates, Vol. 89, Col. 113-114.
126. Mombasa Times, October 29, 1962.
127. *ibid.*, May 11, 1962.
128. *ibid.*
129. *ibid.*, September 10, 1962.
130. *ibid.*, September 19, 1962.
131. Clyde Sanger and John Nottingham, "The Kenya General Election of 1963" *op.cit.*, PP 21 - 33.
133. George Bennett "Pre-independence Kenya", Civilization, Vol. XIII, No. 1/2 1963 P. 130, KNA Matson Papers MSS/18/9.
134. Interview Report, Musa Amalemba, March 10, 1989.
135. *ibid.*
136. *ibid.*
137. *ibid.*
138. George Bennett, "Pre-independence Kenya" *op.cit.*, p. 130.
139. Interview Report, Musa Amalemba, March 10, 1989.
140. KANU manifesto 1963. For a 'balance sheet' between KANU and KADU see Sunday Post, May 19, 1963.
141. KADU election Manifesto 1963, 'Uhuru na Majimbo'.
142. Sunday Post, April 28, 1963.

103. *ibid.*, December 22, 1962.
104. *ibid.*, December 13, 1962.
105. *ibid.*
106. *ibid.*
107. A.I. Salim, 'The Movement for Mwambao' *op. cit.*, p. 215.
108. KADU was also against succession but it offered to the Swahilis Majimboism as a compromise within the scope of its doctrine of "let those who want to be together be together".
109. Kenya Constitutional Conference Minutes (1962) opening session. Speech by Ronald Ngala, February 14, 1962, KNA MSS 115/51/40.
110. *ibid.*
111. The Masai Delegates did not sign the Agreement on the Land Board. They argued that the powers on Land were vested in the elders and that because the elders had not given them the mandate to sign, they could not sign.
112. Goldsworthy, *op. cit.*, p. 195
113. Mombasa Times, April 16, 1962.
114. Interview Report, Francis Khamisi, September 22, 1988.
115. Goldsworthy, *op.cit.*, P. 192.
116. Mombasa Times, March 23, 1962.
117. Interview Report, Musa Amalemba, March 10, 1989.
118. Acting Governor E.N. Griffith - Jones to R.G. Ngala. March 7, 1962 (Gazette Note. 1792, The Kenya Constitution) order in Council 1958.
119. Clyde Sanger and John Nottingham, "The Kenya General Elections of 1963" Journal of Modern African Studies Vol. 2 No. 1 March 1964, P. 4.
120. Interview Report, Musa Amalemba, March 10, 1989.
121. Interview Report, Michael Blundell, February 27, 1989.

143. ibid.
144. ibid.
145. Interview Report, John Kambi, September 5, 1988.
146. Interview Report, Harry Fanjo September 21, 1988.
147. Interview Report, John Kambi, September 5, 1988.
148. ibid., John Kambi, September 5, 1988, Justin Ponda, September 7, 1988.
149. Daily Nation, May 29, 1963.
150. ibid.
151. House of Representatives, Official Report, Vol. 1 Part 1, Col. 290-326, 344-366.
152. Sunday Post, October 20, 1963.
153. ibid.
154. ibid.
155. ibid.
156. ibid.
157. ibid., October 21, 1963.
158. Daily Nation, October 24, 1963.
159. Editorial, Daily Nation, October 22, 1963.
160. ibid.
161. ibid.

CHAPTER 6UHURU AND AFTER 1964 - 1967

When the dust settles over history's battlefields, on which the struggle for Uhuru is won, it becomes clear that national independence is, often, only political independence. It is only but a means to an end in itself. When Kenya won her independence it was only political independence, that is, Kenya's had obtained only but political power, economic power was yet to be achieved. It was a necessary step forward if Uhuru would have a meaning for the citizenry. It foreshadowed yet another struggle. This is what Ngala and the other nationalist leaders embarked on after obtaining political independence.

Moreover, a group of humans settled in a geographically defined area, who have more in common among themselves than with any other group, aspire to national independence essentially in order to ensure that they will be able to organize their collective living according to ideas most cherished by, and most familiar, to themselves. This is the process of nation-building. Nation-building involves in effect at least five major processes. These are firstly, some degree of cultural integration; secondly, the promotion of exchange relations between different groups as a mode of fostering economic interaction; thirdly, the process of institution - building for the resolution of conflict; fourthly, the psychological accumulation of shared national experience. The fifth process concerns the emergence of new social classes.¹ These processes are inter-related and supplement each other. They tend to transcend time and are recurrent.

This chapter attempts to show how Ngala viewed some of the above

aspects of life and how he was involved in them. This Chapter will also survey Ngala's politics of reconciliation, especially his move to dissolve KADU and join KANU, and his subsequent involvement in the politics of KANU.

Economic Independence

At independence, one of the first tasks Ngala and the other nationalists had was to overcome economic underdevelopment, and promote rapid economic growth, for no where in the world has political independence been found adequate without economic independence. The question, however, was whether this economic independence was to be achieved and assessed on a regional basis (Kenya had walked into independence with a regional type of government)² or a national one.

Ngala viewed Uhuru only as a beginning of yet another struggle. He argued that the fact that Kenya had attained its political independence did not mean the end of the struggle. On various occasions, he emphasized this idea of a renewed struggle after obtaining political independence. In January 1964 he said

We must realize now that we are on the first rung of the ladder and must make concerted efforts to climb it. We should not be satisfied with minor success and remember that God helps those who help themselves.³

On another occasion, when he addressed his constituents at Mtwapa Majengo in Kilifi District, he is remembered to have said

We should look forward and work constructively in our region to

build up its wealth. No body should sit idle and think somebody else will do the work of developing the region for us. Self-help schemes must be started in every location by the people and they will be helped by the regional authority.⁴

Addressing the Duruma people of Kwale District, he said:

Uhuru means that we have got to do things by ourselves because the colonial rulers are no longer here to do things for us. We are proud of our freedom, but no body should sit back and wait for either the Prime Minister or the President to do things for them. The Duruma should start to show their desire for progress by sending their boys and girls to school. Every effort will be made by the regional government to assist you if you help yourselves".⁵

According to Ngala, to achieve economic independence Kenya would require the full co-operation of all, namely, the administration, the politician and the ordinary man and woman.⁶ Only through the joint efforts of these people would the basic problems - poverty, disease and ignorance be combated. It was equally important that self-help activities be the bases for sorting out these three enemies. This is to say that, though the central government and regional authority would come to the people's assistance at the grass-root level, the initiative was to come first from the people themselves.⁷ Accordingly, economic independence would be achieved by producing well- educated citizens who would be prepared to render their services in the agricultural industry in the rural area, where the bulk of the people live.⁸

Presenting a motion urging the government to set up an economic commission, with a view to recommending a more balanced plan which could eradicate economic colonialism and imperialism in Kenya, Ngala said that Kenya

lacked a bold, reforming economic policy, which would give the indigenous people a chance to have a big share in the capital formation of their own country.⁹

Political independence without control of our wealth is useless and meaningless, and we must eradicate economic colonialism and imperialism.¹⁰

He pointed out that the government's first development plan was based on the old idea that Kenya was an agricultural country and that development must be wholly centered on agriculture.¹¹

I believe Kenya must quickly develop its industry to cope with the increasing number of unemployed people.¹²

Consciously or unconsciously, Ngala was sounding the bell for an early diversification of the economy to achieve a more viable economic independence. He equally urged Africans to participate in the country's economy, especially in hotels and supermarkets.¹³ But was this enough to bring about economic independence? Kenya was still technologically backward, not to mention that its populace had not been trained in the necessary skills to have the technical know how for such economic participation.

If there was anything the Opposition under Ngala would be proud of, it was its criticism of the first development plan. Noting that the Minister for Finance and Economic Planning had said that the labour force was inevitably increasing at a much faster rate than the country could possibly hope to absorb through industrial development, Ngala wondered why the government could not find a suitable solution to this problem. Thus, as noted by Heyer, a high rate of

unemployment and lack of skilled labour were a bottleneck to the plan.¹⁴ Ngala criticized the plan for emphasizing that development assistance would be given to the high potential areas. This to him was wrong. He argued that a development plan for a country should embrace the whole country and not just certain areas.¹⁵ Worse still, the plan did not show any signs of re-structuring Kenya's poor marketing system.¹⁶ The result was a relative deprivation of the rural peasant farmer who could not get access to the credit that was to be provided to the already 'developed' farmer. Such criticism led the Minister for Finance and Economic Planning, Gichuru, to review the plan resulting in the 1966-70 revised Development Plan.¹⁷

While there was no doubt that political and economic independence were concomitant aspects in national life, there was doubt whether economic independence could come about so easily. Perhaps Ngala overlooked certain factors operating within Kenya and his own Coast Region in particular. These factors could not aid his well-conceived ideas. The Coast grew a few crops, like cashewnuts, sugarcane, cotton and coconuts. These crops like tea and coffee from up-country, depended on external markets and, thus, prices were determined by the buyer and not the seller. Obviously, the prices did not favour Kenya or the Coast Region. The Coastal climate has been equally against sustained effort and a large part of the area has remained relatively undeveloped, while the production of some of these crops varied with the price. Like any African economy, the Coast's agriculture is combined with subsistence agriculture so that, with the family assured of food-supplies, a considerable incentive in price is necessary if extra effort is to be made to overcome inertia caused at the Coast by

climatic and customary way of life.¹⁸

Given such climatic and cultural factors, coupled with the lack of economic incentive in terms of high prices, the Coast had come into independence one of the least developed regions. With the inherited colonial economic structure¹⁹ that encouraged inequalities in development and the new Development Plan that emphasized the 'improved approach' the Coast, like other regions that were regarded as low potential areas, would lag behind.²⁰ Ngala's economic independence could not be easy to achieve as early as he wished it.

Moreover, there were large numbers of squatters on the underdeveloped lands. In many cases, squatters had been (and still are) on the same piece of land for as many years as fifty or more. These squatters cannot hope to win titles to this land. This issue had been a thorny one during the nationalist struggle and at independence, it remained a disturbing problem. There were those who were said to be landless too. To achieve economic independence when some were dispossessed of their native land in the name of squatters was to think in vain.²¹ But what were Ngala's views on the squatter problem? Did he have any solution for it?

We know there would have been no squatter problem if these people had their own land to live on and for cultivating. We are doing our best to find land where these squatters could be permanently settled.²²

On another occasion, Ngala advocated

having a crash settlement programme on some of the regional land available, acquisition of neglected private land for settlers, and making enactments on unused land developed by squatters.²³

Settlement schemes were part of the solution to the squatter problem. Among the schemes started was that at Mtwapa in Kilifi District. But such schemes needed financing. The Coast region like other regions did not have funds to implement such projects. The financial responsibilities that were supposed to be transferred to the regions were held by the central government. On 28 May 1964, the government decided to extend the transitional powers for financing the regions.²⁴ Withholding the handing over of the financial responsibilities to the regional authorities meant that any issue of development that needed finance was to be referred to the central government. It rendered majimbo unworkable. It was thus, difficult to settle squatters without financial assistance.

Notwithstanding the above, Ngala's ideas on economic independence could not work because of political factors. The Coast was particularly isolated economically, because it had the most strong regionalist followers.²⁵ So, without financial support and without political will by KANU to see Majimbo work, there was no way economic independence could be achieved not only at the Coast, but, also in any region that had KADU support.

Ngala and the Politics of Nation-building

In a democratic state, sovereign power lies with the people; and this sovereignty is exercised through the people's representatives in parliament and in the government. But a people consisting of many thousands of individuals naturally cannot be represented by any one point of view. Opinions about political, economic and social programmes differ and politicians thus diverge widely. This diversity of choice and of policy can be expressed in a diversity of parties and ideologies within one single country; hence the advantage of a multi-party system.

But was the multi-party system necessarily beneficial for Kenya, which was then unexperienced and without a firm political tradition? In retrospect, looking at African nationalism, it was never as virile and as effective as when it was confronting the colonialists. Equally, there has not been a time in Kenya's history when Kenya's executive came to be questioned and put to task than when the first independent government had the first Opposition from Ngala and his

party, KADU.²⁶ That is to say that the Opposition in post-colonial Kenya was part and parcel of the whole process of nation-building.

The institution of Opposition has been seen by some as a tool of perpetuating tribalism, instability and division in African states and that is why the multi-party system has been the object of criticism by many African leaders. However, in the process of nation-building, the Opposition plays a big role. It affords the government a chance to rethink and redirect its policies.²⁷ The Opposition sees to it that unscrupulous methods of acquiring wealth are avoided. Moreover, unnecessary expenditure by the government is pointed out. Thus, the Opposition becomes an instrument of nation-building in that it works as a corrective tool. Apparently, Ngala, on various occasions, acted energetically towards such an end. For example, in objecting to the high cost of Ministers' visit to the Coast, he vehemently protested against what he termed "unnecessary expenditure" in bringing 11 government ministers to Mombasa during the Prime Ministers visit in February 1964. On this Ngala was to say

When Ministers visit any region officially, they do so at the expense of the tax-payer. The government is spending tax-payer's money wastefully and this is shown in the visit of 11 Ministers who came to the Coast this weekend. In my opinion, they came to Mombasa to assist their weaker politicians in the Mombasa Municipal Council by-election campaign. This is spending a great deal of government money on KANU government and propaganda. There was no need for all Ministers to visit the agricultural research centre (at Mtwapa) and Shimo-la-Tewa School. The regional authority had invited only the Prime Minister, with a view to getting further grants to expand those schemes. The government seems to have forgotten the poor who used work, food, housing and yet it is giving unnecessary trips to Ministers to do their politics during official duties.²⁸

As leader of the Opposition, Ngala was putting issues straight, taking a corrective measure to the government. While Ngala could have been correct in pointing this out, he was undoubtedly wrong to suggest that they had only invited the Prime Minister and he need not have come with all those Ministers.²⁹ The

Prime Minister was to work in consultation with his ministers and, therefore, their presence was vital. Be that as it may, Ngala was simply sounding the cautioning bell that those who had been vocal on the issues of the exploitation of the African by the white man were falling short of their pre-independence promises - to work for the benefit of the relatively deprived African. They were not providing for the poor, but providing for themselves. The poor were subsidizing the rich in that the poor paid tax to have the ministers enjoy their rides in big cars. Ngala was thus suggesting to the government moves towards more purposeful expenditure on programmes that would be regarded closer to national interests.

When Kenyatta summoned parliament to give its approval to the declaration of emergency in the North Eastern Region,³⁰ Ngala's opposition here was paramount.³¹ Ngala's worry was that if Kenyatta could have emergency regulations enacted without debate, it meant that this could happen to any other region without the consent of parliament.³² Such a step was against the democratic process. In this debate, it became apparent that Kenyatta was consolidating his position and fighting off the opposition. In principle, it had been agreed between Kenyatta and Ngala that consultation between government and Opposition be done before any state action was implemented on national matters. This seems to have been lacking at this juncture; for when the debate was voted for, it only won support in the House of Representatives; but in the Senate, could not attain the 65 per cent majority that was required for such legislation.³³ Indeed, it seems that up to this time, Ngala and Kenyatta had not yet designed a channel of communication to be used on such occasions. If

Kenyatta had talked to Ngala before the debate, Kenya would probably have avoided the razor's edge of a constitutional crisis. In his contribution to the debate, Ngala attempted to put the onus for this on the Prime Minister.³⁴

It was stated at the beginning of this chapter that one of the tenets of the process of nation-building is institution-building for the resolution of conflict. The military perhaps is one method of conflict resolution. At independence, there was need for the creation of an army; not with external ambitions, but for the basic need of assuring the country's security. But in the politics of the day, such an institution was seen by Ngala and KADU as an institution that would be used by KANU to suppress KADU adherents.³⁵ That is why Ngala demanded an assurance that recruitment into the army would only take into account the applicants suitability for the army, regardless of their political affiliation.³⁶

The party affiliation of the army is one area of conflict in emerging nations like Kenya. It is arguable that the move by Nyerere, for instance, to have links between the army and the ruling party, demanding that the soldiers should be politically committed to the goals of the ruling party³⁷, could not have worked in Kenya at this time, when KADU existed as an Opposition party. KADU would have also demanded to have its own members recruited in the army. This would have led into having factions within the army. These considerations prompted Kenya to build an army with no party affiliation.³⁸

The Dissolution of KADU and the Opposition

From time to time, it will be necessary to advice on the suitable working of the constitution.³⁹

This mild warning of anticipated changes to the constitution was made by

Mboya in March 1964. This was only but the beginning of the call by the government to have the Opposition dissolved - to Mboya there was no need for an Opposition in Kenya.

The call for a change of the constitution intensified after Kenyatta went round all over Kenya preaching his ideas of one Kenya. In March 1964 at a meeting in Kimilili in Western Kenya, Kenyatta did not get the reception expected by a Prime Minister. Here, people were shouting slogans for Majimbo.⁴⁰ The Opposition seemed not to be answering the call to unite with the government.

Between March and May 1964, the rumour that the government was favoring a one-party system had become apparent. On the other hand, the Opposition, led by Ngala, with the support of radical KANU backbenchers, intensified its criticism of the government. For example Ngala pointed out KANU government mistakes:

It will not be long before KADU forms the next government because KANU has failed in three important things. First, it cannot effectively defend the citizens against a few Somali shifita. Secondly, it has failed to produce a national direction in matters of economic policy. Thirdly, it is sadly disappointing the landless, who are now being put behind barbed wire, for example at Naivasha, instead of settling them on land as promised during the election campaign.⁴¹

Ngala was touching on issues that were then disturbing the government.

In a way, the government had not got solutions to these problems. To criticize the government on them meant a greater awareness of public sentiment and engineering indignation among the people. Such criticisms led to the government

to ban public meetings of the Opposition on 13 April.⁴² Ngala saw this as an easy short-cut to "muzzling the voices of the elected representatives of the people".⁴³ Ngala further deplored the decision to ban public meetings:

We fought against the colonial regime for greater freedom than mere political independence. Our African government today is using methods of domination and suppression and denying the citizens knowledge of the truth.⁴⁴

It was his view that the public who shape the destiny of the country should not be kept in the dark by simply being kept ignorant of what was happening.⁴⁵ By banning public meetings, the government aimed at minimizing the public debate on the shifta problem, unemployment and the problems of the landless. In particular, the ban was aimed at curtailing public debate on the issue of the proposed changes in the constitution.

The ban on public meetings was followed by a statement by Kenyatta that extended the transitional powers for financing the regions.⁴⁶ This was yet, another move against Ngala's regionalist policy. In essence, the government was intending to take over the regional powers and change the constitution. This, in turn, meant a paralysis of the Majimbo Constitution.⁴⁷ Withholding the handing over of the financial responsibilities to the regional authorities meant that the Majimbo Constitution was unworkable.

All this time, Ngala seems not to have been against any changes to the constitution provided these changes were not instituted unconstitutionally. He was aware that the government had the intentions of reviewing the constitution.

This concern, however, was that the government wanted to do it through issuing circulars and consultations with Cabinet Ministers without consulting the National Assembly.⁴⁸ This he regarded as unconstitutional way to change the constitution. He therefore argued that any attempts to change the constitution through illegal means would make the people forget economic development and get preoccupied with the dispute.⁴⁹ His ideas of the way the constitution could be changed, came out clearly like this

...If they try to impose a constitution on Kenya we will not have it. We want a constitution to be negotiated properly and in a constitutional manner. If we need to form another constitution, we want to sit down with the government and Head of State to take part in its formation.⁵⁰

The warnings against the Opposition were soon to take effect. Gradually, the Opposition got weakened. Some of KADU'S strongholds like the Western Region began showing signs of siding with the government following Kenyatta's declaration that the financial transitional powers of the Regional Assemblies were being deferred and the constitution was being reviewed. The Western Regional Assembly hailed this move and unanimously supported the Kenya government's decision. They argued that there was no country in the world which had two governments opposing each other.⁵¹ It seems the economic and political isolation of strong Majimbo adherent areas was beginning to take its toll.

Perhaps, taking into consideration Ngala's fears of instituting constitutional changes unconstitutionally, the government took the step to have the review of the constitution done in the House. On 11 June 1964, in the House of

representatives, it was announced that the government was considering the question of amending the constitution to make Kenya a republic within the commonwealth.⁵² It was also considering whether the president of the republic was to be an executive Head of State, with Ministers appointed merely as his advisers or whether the government was to take place, through a cabinet.⁵³ While these changes were not to be expected to take place overnight, the government did not hesitate to give Ngala and the Opposition a warning:

If the Opposition cannot be reasonable then the government will use its wisdom to get round the Opposition.⁵⁴

And on 26 July, Kenyatta showed more clearly his bias for a one-party system. He is quoted to have said:

From now, we shall work towards that end, but we must have a way of working out our problems.⁵⁵

By August, it was obvious that the debate on the review of the constitution had taken a definite shape. As expected, Ngala was publicly opposing such moves. He did not see the reason why Kenyatta had decided not to honor the Majimbo Constitution. After all, the constitution per se was working. What was evident however, was that Ngala and his group were yet to justify their belief that his regional system of administration, which was based solely on tribal minority fears was necessary after all. Clearly, what Ngala had failed to do up to that moment, was to identify his Opposition with policies and ideologies clearly distinct from those of KANU. His Regionalism had proved expensive and made planning rigid. As noted by Sanger and Nottingham,

Under the Fiscal Commission's division of revenues, the Kenya Government receives 59 per cent of the customs and excise

revenues. This, and the fact that all fuel-tax proceeds go to the regions, mean that the Treasury officials, possess little flexibility in planning how to raise the extra revenue now needed for development.⁵⁶

Having made sure that its intentions of changing the constitution were known, the government then lifted the ban on public meetings on 17 June.⁵⁷

The final blow to KADU and the official Opposition came between October and November. The intentions of the government were put into action on 20 October, when the government tabled the amendments to the constitution.⁵⁸ The bill tabled proposed the creation of the post of a President, who would have wide executive powers, particularly in the matter of official appointments and the appointment of a Vice-President. It proposed changes in the powers of the Regional Assemblies and the relationship between regions and the central government.

It also sought to provide for the abolition of the Central Land Board within the first year of the proposed republic and also the abolition of the Public Service Commission and changes in the control and operations of the Police.⁵⁹ This bill, as per the standing orders, required the support of 75 per cent of all Members of the House of Representatives and 65 per cent of the Senators before it could be implemented. Failure to get this support would necessitate a national referendum - without alteration - and if it gained 65 per cent of the votes cast, it would be brought back to the National Assembly and passed by a single majority of both Houses.⁶⁰ It was the hope of Ngala that if a referendum had to be used to determine support for the bill, a supervisor of the referendum, independent of the government such as an electoral commission, would be

appointed.⁶¹ He felt that the government would not be impartial in such an exercise.

The proposed changes to the constitution had a lot of implications. In a hard-hitting press statement, Ngala declared:

The powers proposed for the president would be more befitting a medieval tyrant rather than a democratic leader of the 20th Century. KADU maintains that what Kenya needs is a humble democratic president and not some little Nero or Caligula.⁶²

To him, the proposals would only amount to Kenya having a totalitarian regime, in which all the reality of regional and local responsibilities would be eliminated.⁶³ The proposals seem to have suggested that the president would be above the law and that he would have overriding powers over the legislative functions of the National and Regional Assemblies. To Ngala, it was possible to have an executive president, but if he was to be above the law, as suggested by the amendment, he was to be made a mere figurehead.⁶⁴ By the same token, if the president would be above the law, the sovereignty of the National Assembly would be jeopardized,⁶⁵ in that the president would have the powers to impose his wishes upon Parliament without Parliament's approval. Ngala warned,

KADU must warn all the people of Kenya that their hard-won liberty, dignity and self-respect as free men and women is now absolutely jeopardized by KANU's totalitarian mono-party stateism and an ugly personality cult.⁶⁶

In a way it was the beginning of a process of the decrease in the control of the Head of State by the National Assembly.

The alternative Ngala offered to any changes in the constitution was to amend certain clauses of the existing one so that the constitution allowed for the coming of the Republic, and that any necessary major amendments should only be made with all the political parties together after Kenya attained republican status.⁶⁷ He was thus suggesting a withdrawal of the bill pending consultations among all groups outside to reduce the area of disagreement.⁶⁸ This seemed viable and for the benefit of the Opposition. But Ngala overlooked the fact that the government was out to get rid of the Opposition.

The way the bill was handled left a lot to be desired. The Opposition was not approached or put into the picture about the suggested changes before the bill was tabled. Equally, members were not allowed to propose any amendments to the bill.⁶⁹ This was, Ngala argued, contrary to section 71(8) of the constitution which allowed any alterations to be made in good time outside Parliament.⁷⁰ On the whole, it was, first, a breach of the parliamentary order, and, secondly, an erosion of the powers of parliament. A process of an increase in the powers of the executive was being initiated.

On 3 November 1964, the House of Representatives, approved the bill making Kenya a republic within the commonwealth by 12 December.⁷¹ On the second reading, the government gained 101 votes to KADU's 20⁷² - three more than it required for a 75 per cent majority. On the third reading, the government majority increased from 101 to 117.⁷³ At this third reading, a KADU Member Stanley Oloitiptip, crossed the House of Representatives to take up a seat on the government side.⁷⁴ This was a beginning of the crossing of the floor in the subsequent days, especially in the Senate, where the bill had yet to be voted for.

By the time the bill came to be voted for in the Senate, Ngala had very little to do to have the Senators vote against it. A series of meetings in the Masai area during the period of the debate, at which elders and chiefs expressed the wish that Masai should join the ruling party, were held.⁷⁵ These series of meetings culminated in the meeting between Kenyatta and Masai and Samburu leaders at Gatundu on 8 November. At this meeting Senators G.K. Kipury, Philip Lemeni and John Lenaryarra pledged support to the government and said that a referendum would be "unnecessary, expensive and not good for the country".⁷⁶ They also informed Kenyatta that all Masai and Samburu Regional Assembly members had crossed to KANU and supported the constitutional amendments to make Kenya a republic.⁷⁷

The government prospects of success to have the bill passed by the Senators were enhanced still when the announcement of Masai and Samburu support for the government was followed by a report that a Senator from the Coast; Msallam A. Ali, had also agreed to vote with the government.⁷⁸ Needless to say, this was the time when members of KANU were fighting hard to see that many senators were lured into voting for the government. At a meeting at Kitale Stadium, attended and addressed by Odinga, a resolution was passed instructing Senator William Wamalwa to vote along with the government in the Senate.⁷⁹

Despite these announcements from some of the colleagues of Ngala, he was not discouraged in his bid to see the bill defeated in the Senate. He saw the actions of the Masai and Samburu leaders as uncalled for and only a move by Kenyatta to bribe the senators into voting for the government.⁸⁰

Events took a new turn when Ngala announced on 10 November 1964,

that KADU was joining the government. As he later explained this quick momentous action:

If we had not, we would have watched the Masai, Kalenjin and possibly the Abaluhya KADU group cross the floor leaving very few members in isolation on the opposition bench. To save my party under the circumstances, I and my colleagues had to take a quick and momentous decision.⁸¹

Solemnly announcing his party's decision Ngala said:

I have a full mandate to declare today that the Official Opposition is dissolved. KADU is joining the government under the leadership of Mzee Jomo Kenyatta and the Opposition today will vote with the government for the new Constitution in the Senate.⁸²

He said he had moved to the government to strengthen the national front and speak with one voice on all issues that confront the Kenya nation. Ngala's pragmatism came out clearly here. Seeing that the odds against him were too strong, he had to give in. After all, he should have realized that there were not many differences in opinion or ideology between him and Kenyatta or Mboya. To validate his move to join the government, Ngala ceremoniously bought a KANU card from the secretary of the Mombasa KANU branch,⁸³ thus becoming officially a paid-up member of KANU.

But why dissolve KADU ? On the face of it, one could argue that parliamentary democracy had worked its own way - the majority had wanted a one party system. But there should have been more to it to explain Ngala's dissolution of KADU and hence the final demise of Kenya's first post-colonial Opposition. It has been observed that up to May 1964, Majimbo was the song

in major KADU areas - the Rift Valley, Western and Coast. By July the Western Region had shown signs of supporting the government. The actions of up-country ethnic groups, to some extent, prompted Ngala to take the move of dissolving KADU. As he put it, when explaining his sudden move to his Coast people, KADU members up-country had let down Coast party followers by their unexpected decision to join the government with the sole aim of isolating the Coast.⁸⁴

One would argue that Ngala should have consulted his Coast followers before making such a move. As an experienced politician, Ngala shrewdly argued that it was a wise move to have dissolved KADU. On forming the government, after KANU had refused to do so in 1961, no consultation was made with any of his constituents,

As you agreed to our action at the time, you will again live to realize that my action has been the best and only solution.⁸⁵

Ngala had realized that to be in the Opposition meant an exclusion from the politics of consensus for nation- building, to lack access to information and finances, to give up the publicity and prestige of being part of the Kenya he had struggled to achieve its Uhuru. Moreover, it was clear that since the achievement of independence, the majority of the Coast people had appeared to be discriminated against by the government because the people loved Majimbo.⁸⁶ Because of political reasons therefore, the Coast had lagged behind economically. By joining the bandwagon of the government, Ngala aimed at having his Coast people enjoy the fruits of Uhuru. Ngala himself expressed these sentiments:

In order to eat the fruit of Uhuru, KADU supporters in general and Coast people in particular had to share the cooking by fully participating in the day-to-day tasks of nation-building.⁸⁷

The neglect of the Coast due to political reasons was expressed by Ngala in an interview with the Mombasa Times

I think the government must admit that in the Coast Region they did not have a strong hold and they have several times admitted that since I crossed the floor to the government. They have told me frankly that, from the beginning, they did not think they had any grip on the Coast. But I think lack of assistance at the Coast partly was political and, I think, partly it was lack of knowledge of the Coast as a Region.⁸⁸

Ngala should have thought, therefore, that political security as well as economic development, each could be obtained more easily by joining with the centralists (whom he had earlier distrusted) in a single party than by remaining in Opposition.⁸⁹

The question was whether Ngala was joining the government to save his Coast people from a long-term isolation or he was jumping on the bandwagon of the government seeking personal benefits.

Not all KADU members were satisfied with the decision to disband the party and join KANU. Sammy Omari, then a Senator and Secretary General of the Coast African People's Union (CAPU) - an affiliate of KADU - expressed the sentiments that members of KADU, especially at the Coast, remained "dissatisfied and bitter" about Ngala's decision.⁹⁰ Such feelings, were expressed

by members of CAPU even after their President, Alex Karisa, had officially dissolved the party.⁹¹ On the same note, KADU's Mombasa branch chairman, John Bao said that the decision taken by Ngala was not worth taking:

We do not back him and we no longer recognize him as leader of the Coast people. KADU is not the personal property of anyone and no one has the right to use it as he likes.⁹²

KADU's Secretary General, Martin Shikuku, though agreeing with Ngala that he had to dissolve the Official Opposition in the House, argued that Ngala had no powers to dissolve the party. He stated that

According to the Constitution, the party can only be dissolved by the executive committee. No such committee has met and therefore, the party still officially exists.⁹³

Shikuku remained in the House of Representatives as an independent until, as he argued, his constituents had given him the mandate to join the government.⁹⁴

Such then were the reactions of some KADU politicians to Ngala's decision to dissolve KADU. These reactions amounted to casting doubt on Ngala's decision - a man who all this time had talked against unconstitutional means of doing things. Had he kept the consultation norm that KADU was known to uphold? Despite these utterances by his colleagues, Ngala was able (as noted above) to argue his decision well such that by 15 November he had received approval of the decision by his own Coast people.⁹⁵ This did not mean that dissent from him had been eliminated. By his action to dissolve KADU, he

sowed the seeds of opposition to himself among some of his own Coast people.

From then on, people like Sammy Omari became his opponents.⁹⁶

Ngala in KANU

At the time of purchasing the KANU membership card Ngala had pledged:

I have now become a member of KANU. I have joined KANU with all my heart and strength and I will work for the good of the party and of the country as laid down by the policy of the party with whatever modifications are desired and agreed upon.⁹⁷

Ngala was ready to involve himself in the day-to-day activities of KANU and its deliberations. In the true spirit of nationhood, he equally called on his former KADU supporters to follow his example so that they would have a voice in the affairs of KANU and in the selection of officials when the time came.⁹⁸ This is what Ngala strove to achieve in the political drama of 1965 - 69: to secure a prominent place within the KANU parliamentary caucus and to capture the leadership of KANU in Mombasa. In the process, he won for himself a place in Kenyatta's government. So did other prominent former KADU members.

Ngala joined a KANU that had been ravaged by leadership rivalry from its inception in 1960. This leadership conflict centered upon Odinga and Mboya. Ngala could not avoid this conflict and had to side with one of them. Thus the dissolution of KADU had serious effects upon KANU.⁹⁹ It led to a re-alignment of alliances within KANU. Both at the national and local level, it intensified the competition for power within KANU itself.

Omitted from the Republic's Cabinet, [3 former KADU Members got cabinet posts: Moi became Minister for Home Affairs, Robert Matano became Assistant Minister for External Affairs and J. Konchellah became Assistant Minister for Education], Ngala became a backbencher, devoting his energies there.¹⁰⁰ However, his presence in the backbench group led to a dilution of their critical attitude towards the government.¹⁰¹ This was because former KADU

members, like Ngala, were more inclined towards moderation than the radical elements within KANU's backbench group.

First, Ngala was to be instrumental in the dissolution of the backbenchers group. Basically aimed at containing the radical elements in KANU, a unanimous resolution in the House was passed that the KANU backbencher group should cease to function immediately and that matters of concern to M.P.'s would in future be discussed at the meeting of the KANU Parliamentary Group.¹⁰² In the elections that followed, the President was named Chairman, with Ngala as Vice-Chairman, and M.T.N. Mahinda as Secretary.¹⁰³ This, as Gichuru stated in London, was perhaps indicating "the trends of events".¹⁰⁴ the take-over of the back bench by more moderate members of the parliament. Ngala, therefore, replaced Odinga, who had only withdrawn from vying for the vice-chairmanship.¹⁰⁵ In effect, this was replacing Odinga in a very important position, since the Parliamentary Group in a one-party system is a kind of informal, and private parliament.¹⁰⁶

On 23 July 1965, Ngala moved yet another private members motion to change the composition of the Sessional Committee on the grounds that a majority of the Parliamentary Group had lost confidence in some of its members.¹⁰⁷ He urged that the changes were necessary in the light of the proven political ganging-up in the Parliamentary Group. He further argued that the existing Sessional Committee had proved to be biased in the selection of motions, in the selection of items to be discussed and therefore undutiful.¹⁰⁸ What Ngala was aiming at was to have the radical element of KANU, which had been in the forefront in making sure that the motions brought for discussion in the House were critical of the government, were removed from the Sessional Committee. These radical elements had, at many times, sided with former KADU Opposition to criticize the government.¹⁰⁹ Ngala's motion was passed. Thus, with the subsequent elections of this committee that controls the business of the House, nine radical members were removed. Among these members were Job Tanui, Gideon Mutiso and B. Kaggia.¹¹⁰ By its composition now, it was basically moderate. Dr. M. Waiyaki described this committee as sponsored by Ngala and having a "particular bias to the right".¹¹¹

Similar beliefs and ideologies seemed to be binding together Ngala, Kenyatta and Mboya. Fundamentally, even during the days when Ngala led the Opposition, Ngala and Kenyatta had more in common. What Mboya was advocating in 1965 - private enterprise, individual property rights - was what Ngala envisaged in 1964. Ngala is remembered to have declared that

Broadly our land policy must respect individual property.¹¹²

Broadly, the political debate in 1965 had centered on property rights.

Two emerging groups within KANU differed therefore in policy formulation and implementation.¹¹³ One of the groups - the radicals - insisted on greater participation by a much larger number of Africans, through state and corporate enterprises.¹¹⁴ The essence of their argument lay in their emphasis upon the need to create the kind of egalitarian society in which the full range of economic opportunity would be open to a much larger section of the population than was then the case, and, thus, precluded sharp economic class distinction.¹¹⁵ These were identified with "scientific socialism" as opposed to "African socialism" which the moderates were advocating. They were sometimes branded "pro-east" and even "communists".

On the other hand, the moderates, led by Mboya in Parliament, accepted the legitimacy of individual property or ownership on a much larger scale than the other group and, therefore, the continued existence of inequalities between different sections of the community based on property.¹¹⁶ Gertzel argues that their policy, which was government policy because they dominated the government, was well explained in Sessional Paper No. 10 of 1965.¹¹⁷ In October, when the anti-communism campaign had become fully blown (moderates fighting off radicals) Ngala joined in to condemn those KANU members in Mombasa (and

definitely the whole country) who were advocating communism and aligning with China.¹¹⁸

Ngala's support for official government policy came out clearly in October when he said that Kenya was not capitalist or communist; it was part of Africa which had decided to follow the path of "African Socialism" as its economic and social pattern. This policy, he argued, was embodied with the government Sessional Paper No. 10 which was endorsed by the National Assembly under the guidance of Mboya. In a hard-hitting press statement he was quoted to have said:

We can now no longer stomach the so-called government Ministers, KANU officials or members who are playing the game of hide-and-seek and lip service within KANU. Such people seem to use the name of Mzee Kenyatta and KANU as a thick blanket with which to cover their dishonesty and insecurity. While the policy of our government is non-alignment and African Socialism, in Mombasa we have KANU members who are advocating communism and aligning with China, the United Kingdom or any other foreign power.¹¹⁹

Ngala was criticizing those Mombasa KANU members, like Msanifu Kombo, who had the support of Odinga, and had been identified as the government minister having eastern support.

Was Ngala dancing to the tune of Kenyatta? It could have been so, but strategically done. He was struggling to have a place in Kenya's politics. To achieve this, he had to be shrewd and aggressive against his political opponents and show a greater inclination towards government policy. Thus, he called to the people to follow the example of Kenyatta of tolerance and sacrifice in order to help build the new Kenya nation. He equally sounded what Kenyatta was

preaching; that Kenya's Uhuru was not "given" but "snatched" and none should condone anyone who worked underground to overthrow the government.¹²⁰

By June 1965, Ngala had secured for himself a prominent place within the KANU Parliamentary caucus. However, he had yet to secure a political base from the district level as a district boss.¹²¹ If his national stature was not to diminish he had to capture the control of the Mombasa KANU branch. The question we should pose is : why did Ngala choose to go for the Mombasa branch instead of the Kilifi one, where his constituency was? In retrospect, Ngala had begun indulging in politics in Mombasa.¹²² Moreover, the Mombasa people were more politically aware and, therefore, more inclined to understand his political intentions than rural Kilifi. But more important was the magnet Mombasa had in terms of political maneuvering at the Coast. In effect, an effective control over the politics in Mombasa was a prerequisite for the control of the province as a whole.¹²³ Because of Mombasa's strategic position as a port and being the second largest town in Kenya, political office in Mombasa conferred disproportionate benefits on groups bargaining for power at the centre.¹²⁴ On the same note, since the object of political activity is to gain control of the decision- making machinery then to control the political affairs of Mombasa would have meant a closer grip on the decision - making machinery there. To have a grip over the decision making process would easily make Ngala have access to facilities within the town that would enable him to offer his patronage with ease and command.

As we have noted above, Ngala joined a KANU that was ravaged by a conflict centered on Odinga and Mboya. KANU, as an organization, itself

remained weak, since it had weak national institutions.¹²⁵ This is attributed to the rival leaders who had cherished such a weak organization. Thus KANU remained a "loosely knit organization vigorously resisting any suggestion that one man could impose his leadership".¹²⁶ While this was the case at the national level, the branches were no better. They equally lacked organization: rent for offices were not being paid; membership dues were not being collected.

Ngala joined the local political arena in Mombasa that had been anything but dormant. The local political arena had been witnessing factional rivalry surrounding Chokwe and Kombo during 1964. However, by the end of 1964, Kombo was secure in his position as chairman of the Mombasa branch. The entry of Ngala into this arena led to an intensification of the struggle at the national level. With the factional conflict between Mboya and Odinga, Ngala found himself siding with Mboya and, hence, the intensification of the conflict, both at the local and the national level.

Ngala's entry into the political drama was facilitated by the trend in national politics of the time. In early 1965, Mboya, as Secretary-General of KANU, appointed provincial re-organization committees for the Coast, Rift Valley and Western Provinces.¹²⁷ These re-organization committees were expected to integrate former KADU leaders into KANU. It should be noted that these provinces to be re-organized were the former KADU strongholds. To facilitate easy re-organization, Mboya was clever enough to use former KADU men. At the Coast he found no other person than Ngala for this task. It was personalities like him who would convince their former followers that it was wise for them to join KANU.

The appointment of Ngala at the Coast to take over as Chairman of the caretaker committee to facilitate the June 1965 KANU elections was not received calmly. It was seen by long-term KANU followers like Msanifu Kombo, who until then was Mombasa KANU branch chairman, as a move to sideline them. This initiated a factional rivalry among KANU branch members, specifically between Kombo and Ngala. This rivalry in Mombasa took the form of former KADU leaders like Ngala now in KANU seeking to preserve leadership by taking over from former KANU officials.¹²⁸ However, this conflict in Mombasa sometimes took a more unique line in that it was equally influenced by both ethnic and religious differences. In effect, Ngala always found himself being rallied behind by his fellow Mijikenda Christians while the Arab-Swahili Muslims would support their own candidate.¹²⁹ A new phenomenon in post-independence Kenya was mushrooming. The Kikuyu-Luo alliance was dwindling. Kenyatta was picking on the Kalenjin, Luhya and Kamba for prominent leadership positions. Mboya, at the helm of the "moderates" picked on Ngala as a close ally because of his support for conservative ideologies and, specifically, because of his long-term stature as a nationalist. Ngala had been at the centre of the struggle against the radicals under the leadership of Odinga. Thus, in the Mombasa wrangle, Mboya threw his weight behind Ngala, hence the national wrangle was given a local replica: Kombo for Odinga and Ngala for Mboya, and vice versa.

Such moves by Mboya to nominate Ngala as chairman of the re-organization committee in Mombasa, were suspected by Kombo as moves to force through Ngala as Chairman in the June 1965 elections. Kombo chose to

retreat from KANU politics and concentrate on municipal matters.¹³⁰ There was a dramatic turn of events at this juncture. In a branch governing council meeting in Mombasa, a group of youth wingers interrupted the session in the midst of a discussion over the forthcoming elections. A youth leader stood up and announced that they had installed their own candidates and the meeting was over: Ngala was named the interim Chairman of a new roster of officials.¹³¹ Kombo who had not attended the meeting denounced the 'coup' as further evidence of a secret plot to take over the branch, the mayorship and, finally, to destroy him.¹³² In the subsequent elections, amidst denunciation by Kombo of what he called illegal occupation of KANU branch offices, Ngala defeated a Kombo man, Maalim Juma by 107 votes to 101 on the second count. After protests, the result was confirmed by Mwai Kibaki at party headquarters in Nairobi.¹³³

What did this election victory mean for Ngala? It meant that, despite the ethnic and religious difference in Mombasa, he could rally some support (apart from his Mijikenda christians) from the Arab-Swahili Muslims. He had become the district KANU boss and since district bosses had the powers to choose the delegates to the KANU national conference, it was easy for Ngala to select his supporters who, in turn, would support him in a bid for a national post.

In August, Ngala reinforced his grip over the Mombasa branch by sponsoring Soud Mohammed Mandano for the Mombasa Senate elections. He even threatened to have those in KANU who supported unofficial candidates suspended.¹³⁴ He suggested that KANU independent candidates should step down instead of creating division and hostility in their own party.¹³⁵ In these elections,

Ngala showed his support for Mandano by voting for 'aeroplane' sign; Soud Mandano's election symbol. Mandano won the seat against his most strong opponent, David Kioko by 4,137 votes to 2,801.¹³⁶ Ngala's man had defeated Kioko. This was equally a defeat for Kombo because Kioko had been for a long time a Kombo man. The election of Mandano showed both that Ngala could rally some Muslim support and that official party endorsement carried considerable weight.¹³⁷ Ngala was then the official spokesman of the party in Mombasa; therefore, a candidate sponsored by him would go through.

Ngala took over the KANU branch office that was poorly organized.¹³⁸ He thus sought to revitalize the Mombasa Branch. He formulated a bold plan for re-organization. He was instrumental in the building of a 'VIP' office inside the KANU offices at Lohana Road for the use of Mombasa M.P.'s and Senators.¹³⁹ It was a common phenomena to have rent for KANU offices not paid for even at the national headquarters.¹⁴⁰ To avoid this practice, Ngala made possible a new agreement between the branch and the trustees of the Muslim Association building that housed the KANU offices, assuring these trustees of the payment of rent, commencing from the date of the takeover by the new office-bearers.¹⁴¹ To make sure that party officials adhered to party principles, it was resolved at the first meeting of the new office-bearers that there would be a local KANU governing council meeting each Monday at 5 p.m. to discuss party affairs and, in future, every officer would have to report to the main office at least once a day and sign a book.¹⁴²

In November 1965, Ngala had the opportunity, as vice- chairman of the Parliamentary Group, to represent Kenya at the Commonwealth Parliamentary

conference in New Zealand. On his way to New Zealand, he stopped on a visit to South Korea, where his attention was drawn to the quality and prices of Korean products which he thought would attract the Kenyan government.¹⁴³ In Japan, where he also stopped briefly, Ngala took the opportunity to defend the Kenyan government on its import restrictions on Japanese goods. He explained that the move was aimed at rectifying the trade imbalance which was in favour of Japan.¹⁴⁴ While he explained the governments position in such matters, he readily accepted a plan for rice field development in Mwea by an agricultural machinery company in Tokyo.¹⁴⁵ He promised he would consult with Kenya's agricultural ministry on the plan.¹⁴⁶

At the Commonwealth conference, Ngala addressed himself to continental issues that concerned Kenya. The issue at hand was that of Rhodesia (present day Zimbabwe) where, on Thursday 18 November 1965, the whites had announced a seizure of power from Britain and declared themselves independent. This was interpreted by people like Ngala as a deviation from the legal course towards self-determination. He thus called for New Zealand's moral support and their influence to press for a Commonwealth Prime Ministers conference on Rhodesia.¹⁴⁷ He was critical of Britain's tardiness in imposing economic sanctions against Ian Smith's illegal regime.¹⁴⁸ Ngala was to add:

So far our confidence in Mr. Harold Wilson's government is very much shaken and I voice the views of all Africans attending this conference.¹⁴⁹

Ngala's basic concern was the emancipation of the Africans in Rhodesia from colonial bondage. However, the situation had been made difficult by the

seizure of power by Ian Smith. That Ian Smith had taken powers, negotiations for independence for the Africans would be done with Smith and not Britain which was ready to decolonize. Negotiations would depend on Smith's willingness to listen. Relating the Rhodesian case to Kenya, Ngala voiced the sentiments that Smith had failed to learn from the Kenyan example, where a minority of Europeans were comfortably living under a Black majority led by Kenyatta.¹⁵⁰ He argued therefore that, it was not too late for the British government to ensure that they respected democracy and the civil rights of all Rhodesian citizens. This would be done through Britain's effort to scrap the 1961 Rhodesia Constitution which gave privileges to the white minority and gave the Governor powers to administer the colony and make sure that white politicians and civil servants in the country remained loyal to the Queen's government.¹⁵¹ If the British failed to intervene, then it remained for the United Nations and the African states to intervene because "Smith's politics had reached a dead end".¹⁵²

It is this outcry by people like Ngala that prompted the United Nations Security Council to endorse total economic sanctions on Rhodesia.¹⁵³ However, these demands for economic sanctions and calls for armed intervention against the 'Rhodesia rebels' could not go farther than that. There was division over the declaration of economic sanctions on the British side. For example, Edward Heath, the Tory (conservative) leader told the British that his conservative party opposed the United Nations call for a total economic embargo against Rhodesia because it would not restore a constitutional government to the break-away

territory.¹⁵⁴

Ngala was to feature prominently in a stormy debate over whether there was to be a military intervention in Rhodesia. He was particularly angered by the British delegate who had told the conference that instead of using force in Rhodesia, the British Government intended leaving the door open as far as possible in order to promote a peaceful solution and that some members of the conference were of a bloodthirsty mind.¹⁵⁵ Ngala led a walk-out from the conference to protest against these insulting words.¹⁵⁶ What Ngala and the other African delegates to the conference should have gathered from this opposition to their call for sanctions against Rhodesia was that African governments had not yet (and have not yet) had an impact on the formulation and implementation of United Nations resolutions.

Before he reported back home on this New Zealand conference about how Kenya's stature was held in high esteem worldwide, Ngala's integration into the party hierarchy had been acknowledged back home. In the absence of Ngala, Odinga had visited the Coast and had been vocal about some former KADU members who, he said, were causing trouble and confusion in some parts of the country.¹⁵⁷ He was principally referring to Ngala at the Coast and Moi in the Rift Valley. At the Coast, Ngala had been an implacable opponent of Odinga's supporter, Kombo. Odinga's words riled many, including Moi the former Chairman of KADU, then Minister for Home Affairs. Odinga's statement prompted Moi to comment:

Odinga's problem emanates from his differences with a few KANU members. If there have been some former KADU leaders who

have refused to agree with the Vice-President, then this is a different question because we are not sub-leaders, but rather, leaders directly responsible to the Head of State. The unity of all the people of Kenya should be that which is behind President Kenyatta. KADU joined KANU and the government voluntarily.¹⁵⁸

Support for the former KADU members in KANU then gaining prominence, came from Mboya who declared,

The past must be forgotten and it is wrong for any of us who were in KANU before to try to undermine or bar the way for former KADU leaders. True integration in the party must mean that even former KADU leaders have the same opportunity and influence within the party.¹⁵⁹

Ngala's place in KANU and his influence was thus fully endorsed, at least by KANU's Secretary-General.

Ngala had come into KANU as an underdog. However, his strategic manoeuvrings in parliament and KANU had, by the end of 1965, won him a great national stature reminiscent of that he enjoyed in pre-independence days. He was now at the centre of political activity in Parliament. He was equally a district KANU boss. However, it was clear that the battle had not been an easy one. It was still to be fought, his political opponents were down but not out.

Ngala appointed Cabinet Minister

The political tide in Kenya was blowing in Ngala's favour. The party rivalry in KANU, at both national and local level, culminated into the events of the 1966 Limuru re-organization conference that had been announced by Mboya. When this conference took place in March 1966, a number of important things took place. In the first place, the re-organization that was initiated was of less

administrative importance and fell short of solving the problems KANU was facing (as mentioned above). It was politically motivated.¹⁶⁰ The post of National Vice-President was abolished, and eight posts of Vice-Presidents, one for each province and one for Nairobi, were established instead. Those Vice-Presidents, while elected by the party conference, were to be responsible directly to the President.¹⁶¹ Ngala was elected at this conference as one of the Vice-Presidents representing the Coast. Another new development emanating from the conference was that national posts needed no-longer to be filled by full-time appointees. In future, the national office-bearers, elected by the party conference, would be part-time, assisted by full-time party employees to be appointed by the National Executive Committee.¹⁶²

It is important to note how Ngala was elected a Vice-President at this conference. Representation at the conference definitely favoured the former KADU areas, where overwhelming support for the previous leaders of KADU persisted.¹⁶³ In fact, after the series of the 1965-66 local party elections, a considerable political calm ensued. People like Ngala and Moi, who had established a strong following among their people, were voted back under a KANU label. Due to the fact that district KANU bosses had the powers to choose delegates to attend KANU national conferences, Ngala was easily elected, for he had chosen to attend the conference those who supported him.¹⁶⁴

Ngala left the Limuru conference with an added national stature. The Limuru conference was the watershed of the political differences between Ngala and the conservative in KANU led by Mboya and Kenyatta. Having secured the post of KANU Vice-President, it was yet a step farther towards the core of the

political machinery and, therefore, power. The conference also was the terminal end of the Luo-Kikuyu alliance that had existed since the pre-independence days. For in April, having been riled by attacks by his fellow Cabinet Ministers and Mboya in particular, Odinga resigned as Kenya's Vice-President on 14 April.¹⁶⁵ On 17 April, a number of trade union leaders quit KANU in support of Odinga. Among them were Dennis Okumu, Ochola Mak'Anyengo and Vicky Wachira, former officers of the left-wing trade union movement, the Kenya Workers Congress. Within few days, 19 Representatives and Senators had resigned from KANU, with the intention of sitting as a formal opposition and when Parliament resumed at the end of May; they chose Odinga as their leader, and Bildad Kaggia as his deputy.¹⁶⁶ A new Opposition, the Kenya Peoples Union (KPU), was born. Ngala's Opposition had been an opposition from the right. This new Opposition, KPU, was an opposition from the left.

The formation of the new Opposition prompted a Cabinet reshuffle. Unlike the cabinet making process of European Prime Ministers, Kenyatta had to satisfy powerful interests, like those of Ngala, in his Cabinet. Indeed, it meant that those who had established a dominant position in a particular ethnic group would be considered. Ngala was undoubtedly the strong man from the coast. Thus, in the reshuffle of May 1966; having dispossessed Odinga and his group of political power, Kenyatta chose among others, Ngala to take the portfolio of Minister for Co-operatives and Social Services.¹⁶⁷ Under him, were B.C. Maisor as Assistant Minister, and S.K. Boit as the Permanent Secretary. According to the President's circular of 3 May 1966,¹⁶⁸ Ngala was to lead the Ministry which had the following functions: Co-operative Development and Social Services.

Under Social Services, Ngala was to see to the smooth running of community development, self-help schemes, Kenya Association of Youth Centers, Kenya National Council of Social Services, Social Welfare, Social research and sports.¹⁶⁹

His appointment to a Cabinet post in Kenyatta's government not only added to his national stature but also increased his strength to offer political patronage at both national and local level. For example, in the July 1966 Municipal elections, he decided to back John Mambo in Mombasa for the mayorship.¹⁷⁰ He used his KANU office to ratify Mambo as the official KANU candidate. Equally, the KANU Mombasa governing council chose its own candidates for chairmen of the nine standing committees of the Municipal Council.¹⁷¹ The result of the contest was that Mambo won by 14 votes to 12.¹⁷² Though not a member of the Municipal Council, Ngala's group had won the elections. This visibly and officially demonstrated the predominance of Ngala's faction over that of Kombo (who by then had joined KPU) in the political affairs of Mombasa.¹⁷³

By mid-1966, Ngala's struggle to reach the top and secure a prominent place in both the government and the party had been fully realized. He now held two party posts and a Cabinet one. Having realized the weight of his political power, he took the opportunity to finish (politically) his greatest political opponent in Mombasa, Msanifu Kombo. In a meeting of the Coast advisory Council¹⁷⁴ at the Mombasa provincial headquarters, chaired by Ngala himself, KPU was unanimously rejected. It followed that because Kombo had identified himself with Odinga, he was voted out as vice-Chairman of the Coast Advisory Council and recommended for removal from the Council.¹⁷⁵ This was duly

communicated to the Attorney-General. It was clear that like Odinga at the national level, Kombo was equally isolated in all matters of access to information and finances - political rewards which could be used for political patronage. While Kombo's image was dwindling, Ngala was succeeding in monopolizing and predominating party, municipal and government manoeuvring channels.

By the end of 1966 Ngala's leadership at the Coast had been acknowledged by even the Bajuni Muslims. In a letter dated 28 December 1966 and written in Kiswahili, the chairman of the Bajuni Union, Bwana Bwanadi acknowledged Ngala's long term leadership of the Coast people.¹⁷⁶

Ngala as a cabinet Minister

As a Cabinet Minister in Kenyatta's government, Ngala proved himself helpful in many ways. He had a cabinet experience that he had acquired when he was a Minister in the pre-independence days. His approval of, and support for, government policy came out more clearly at this time. Perhaps at no other moment did he show this support than when he represented the Kenyan government at the conference for African Minister of Social Affairs in Cairo between 10 and 13 April 1967.¹⁷⁷ His speech at this conference proved him a man who had grasped the ideology of the government. His grip of the government's ideology and policy came out strongly when he defined and explained the rallying cry of Kenya - Harambee. In his own words Harambee is

the call of the peasants, workers, boatmen or porters carrying out heavy work.¹⁷⁸

He attributed the success of the Kenyan communities to the response to this call.¹⁷⁹ He took the opportunity to emulate the success of the Kenyan society.

He argued that this success was seen in the increasing participation of the people in the development process.¹⁸⁰ What Ngala drew attention to was that every freedom fighter and the independence movement were struggling for had been achieved - that each nation had the ability to manage its own affairs. But how true was it that Kenya was managing its own affairs? Was Ngala only but acting as a good government minister? Indeed, he was glorifying the struggle and achievement of independence. But was each freedom fighter, peasant, worker really enjoying the fruits of independence?

Ngala noted that the need to further manage one's own affairs prompted Kenya to choose African Socialism as its ideology which was well stated in Sessional Paper No. 10 of 1965; that Kenya believed in practical democracy as well as social justice.¹⁸¹ Was Ngala justifying the ideological basis of Kenya's inherited capitalist economy? He equally pointed out that to develop the people, the Kenya government had to recognize the felt needs of the people.¹⁸² To facilitate this, the government, he argued, had to hear the people who had long been neglected. Therefore, establishing small development planning committees across the country that incorporated farmers, workers, M.P.'s youth leaders and government officials, with one aim of planning their future, were essential. This is what the government was trying to do. ¹⁸³ Perhaps no greater stamp of difference existed between the colonial and the Kenyan government than in this respect - the involvement of its people.

Ngala argued that social responsibility is the basis of African society and its development.¹⁸⁴ However, he pointed out that it was being eroded by the infiltration of urbanization. He, therefore, saw the Kenyan government faced

with an assignment.

to strengthen ties between people and reaffirm some of our traditions of group planning and group labour.¹⁸⁵

He was saying that however good the national planning may have proved to be, the implementation of any plan rested on the action of the people and, therefore, to involve them in planning was a necessary prerequisite to any development.¹⁸⁶

What came out clearly in Ngala's speeches was that he was advocating a move from the non-participation process in planning by implementors of the plans, to a participatory role in the process of planning by the implementors, hence the partnership of people and the government. It was through such a planning set-up that

the needs and desires of the people are communicated upwards from location, district and province.¹⁸⁷

He saw this as possible through the government policy of African Socialism, where community development would be used as the basic unit through which this policy would be expressed and achieved.

Ngala's long-term ideas seem not to have eluded him. Where he saw them blending with those of the government he was ready to fit them in. Ngala, from 1957, had envisaged an education for the creation of a national personality, a culture which is difficult to share. It was important to him that small nations like Kenya should want to train their community development staff locally. It was through local training that this staff would be involved with their own

culture, and hence was fully conversant with government policy and remain close to their own people.¹⁸⁸ These were ideas he had envisaged for a long time. Back in 1962, he had expounded on this subject of culture:

We see colleges as centers of a new Kenya culture; through them people can be brought up from the limitations of the traditional tribal culture into the full modern citizenship. It is in colleges of this kind that the true African personality suited to the modern world would be discovered, in that teachers and pupils altogether will work out how to retain the best and the essential parts of tribal culture and weave them into the modern way of life. This is a task essentially for Africans.¹⁸⁹

In comparison to what Ngala was suggesting in 1967, he was seeing local training centers as centers of intensive local pride to which the people would look for guidance and inspiration in the immensely difficult task of nation-building.

Ngala's Domestic Field

In his private life, Ngala had made a happy home. He did not lose touch with his family. He would in most cases, spend his weekends at his home at Vishakani or at his house at Buxton in Mombasa. Back at Vishakani he would be at ease with the Kaya elders with whom he always had discussions centered on the welfare of the Mijikenda and their unity. Ngala would sit with these elders taking Uchi wa Mnazi.¹⁹⁰ Equally, he welcomed many a visitor and guest from as far as Pokomo country in Tana River District. He thus, not only served his own constituents but also other groups of the coast.

On the economic fields Ngala had by 1967 accumulated some wealth. By the end of 1967 he had bought houses in Malindi namely, Zawadi House and Skyways. In Mombasa, he had acquired for himself the house in Buxton and,

two others at Majengo and Ganjoni. At Mtondia, near Kilifi town he had also acquired a big piece of land extending from the Mombasa - Malindi road down to the Indian Ocean.¹⁹¹ That was wealth to reckon with at the time.

By the end of 1967 we could say that Ngala had become both a man of the people and of the Government. He had rightly secured a place for himself in the national political system of Kenya.

Footnotes

1. Ali A. Mazrui, "Africa's Experience in Nation-building: Is it relevant to Papua and New Guinea?" East Africa Journal, vol. 7, No. 11. 1970, pp. 15- 23.
2. The ambiguity of Regionalism was apparent from the beginning. It was not clear how Economic growth could be measured for Kenya given the type of Regional government then existing.
3. Mombasa Times, January 23, 1964
4. *ibid.*, January 24, 1964
5. *ibid.*, April 6, 1964
6. *ibid.*, January 23, 1964
7. This was one basis of the Regional Policy: projects would be initiated by the people themselves based on their felt needs as opposed to central dictated plans and projects.
8. Mombasa Times, April 7, 1964
9. *ibid.*, October 16, 1964
10. Official Report, House of Representatives, vol. III Part III col. 3572 - 3574, 3575.
11. *ibid.*
12. *ibid.*
13. *ibid.*
14. Mombasa Times, October 16, 1964. See also Judith Heyer "Kenya's Cautious Development Plan", East Africa Journal, vol. 5, 1966.
15. Mombasa Times, October 16, 1964.
16. *ibid.*
17. Revised Development Plant 1966 - 1970, Nairobi, Government Printers, 1966.
18. N.S. Carey Jones, The Anatomy of Uhuru, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1966, pp. 10-11.

19. Kenya had inherited a dependent economy based on primary products for export. It was in the tentacles of the capitalist system. To pull out would have been difficult.
20. See Geoff Lamb, Peasant Politics, Julian Friedmann Publishers Limited, p. 142
21. The problem of squatters was and has been a disturbing one. It has transcended times. See case reported in Daily Nation March 22, 1989. At Shariani, near Vipingo Sisal Estate, people were evicted from tracts of land in October 1988, land they had occupied for over fifty years. See also Weekly Review, August 4, 1989 p. 18-19.
22. Mombasa Times, February 17, 1964
23. *ibid.*, March 25, 1964
24. *ibid.*, March 29, 1964
25. Interview Report, Robert Matano, July 24, 1989.
26. Open criticism of the Prime Minister and the Government was more open in 1964 than it was after the dissolution of KADU. At least under the cover of the official Opposition, KANU radical backbenchers were able to criticize their own KANU government.
27. Like when Ngala and his Opposition criticized the First Development Plan that led to its revision.
28. Mombasa Times, February 25, 1964.
29. *ibid.*
30. Official Report, House of Representatives vol. II col. 142-145.
31. Ngala's contribution to this debate, *ibid.*, col. 155-160, 180, 182, 183.
32. *ibid.*
33. Yash Ghai "The Government and the Constitution in Kenya Politics: Pros and Cons of those drastic Constitutional changes" East Africa Journal, vol. 4 No. 8, 1967, pp. 9-14. Mboya had to take the unconstitutional step by addressing the Senate and eventually gaining Senate support for the move.
34. Official Report, House of Representatives, vol. II col. 180, 182, 183.
35. Mombasa Times, March 11, 1964

36. *ibid.*
37. Mazrui, *op.cit*; p. 19
38. Mombasa Times, March 11, 1964
39. *ibid.*, March 19, 1964
40. Sunday Post, March 22, 1964
41. Mombasa Times, March 30, 1964
42. *ibid.*, April 14, 1964
43. *ibid.*
44. *ibid.*
45. *ibid.*
46. *ibid.*, May 29, 1964. This was a breach of an agreement whereby the central government would transfer funds to the Regions within a year of the transition period, according to the Fiscal Commission Report.
47. *ibid.*, May 29, 1964
48. *ibid.*, May 30, 1964
49. *ibid.*
50. *ibid.*
51. *ibid.*, June 1, 1964
52. Official Report, House of Representatives, vol. III part I 1964 col, 134.
53. *ibid.*, col. 135, 136, 137, 138
54. *ibid.*, col. 152
55. Sunday Post, August 2, 1964
56. Clyde Sanger and John Nottingham, "The Kenya General Elections of 1963" Journal of Modern African Studies, vol. 2, No. 1, 1964, p. 39.
57. Mombasa Times, June 18, 1964
58. Official Report, House of Representatives, vol. III part III 1964, col. 3695-3698.

59. *ibid.*
60. *ibid.*
61. *ibid.*, col. 3698 - 3703
62. Mombasa Times, October 23, 1964
63. *ibid.*
64. *ibid.*
65. *ibid.*, The President to be above the law meant depriving parliament of its powers of being the supreme authority in the country.
66. *ibid.*
67. Mombasa Times, November 9, 1964
68. This would possibly have been done through setting up a commission to collect the evidence on the need for a review of the constitution.
69. Mombasa Times, November 9, 1964
70. The Kenya Independence in Council, 1963, Section 71(8).
71. Official Report, House of Representatives, vol. III Part III 1964 col. 4209 - 4210. See also Mombasa Times, November 4, 1964.
72. *ibid.*, November 4, 1964
73. *ibid.*
74. Official Report, House of Representatives, vol. III part III col. 4228.
75. Daily Nation, November 9, 1964
76. *ibid.*
77. *ibid.*, This announcement by the Masai and Samburu leaders followed the crossings that had already been made in the House of Representatives by Oloitiptip and J.K. Ole Tipis.
78. *ibid.*
79. *ibid.*

80. *ibid.*
81. *ibid.*, November 14, 1964
82. Official Report, House of Representative, vol. III Part III, 1964, col. 4415 - 4416.
83. Mombasa Times, November 28, 1964.
84. Ronald Ngala "Upcountry KADU men let me down" Ngala at Ziwani Football Stadium in Mombasa where he addressed probably the largest rally he ever addressed Mombasa Times, November 16, 1964. The defection by Tipis and Oloiptip together with the Masai and Samburu Senators proves Ngala's point. See footnote 77:
85. Mombasa Times, November 16, 1964
86. *ibid.*
87. *ibid.*
88. *ibid.*, December 11, 1964
89. *ibid.*
90. Daily Nation, November 13, 1964
91. Mombasa Times, December 6, 1964
92. *ibid.*, November 16, 1964
93. Daily Nation, November 13, 1964
94. *ibid.*
95. *ibid.*, November 16, 1964
96. Interview Report, Juma Ferunzy, July 29, 1989
97. Mombasa Times, November 18, 1964
98. *ibid.*
99. The Luo-Kikuyu old alliance was beginning to break down. Kenyatta begun picking on Luhya, Kamba and Kalenjin ethnic elements as allies.
100. Ngala did not get a cabinet post in the Republican Cabinet. Three former KADU colleagues got cabinet posts: Moi; Minister For Home Affairs, R.S.

Matano; Assistant Minister for External Affairs, J. Konchellah; Assistant Minister for Education.

101. Gertzel, op.cit., p. 41
102. ibid.
103. ibid.
104. Mombasa Times, July 22, 1965
105. ibid.
106. Special correspondent, Transition vol. 5, No. 25, p. 45-46.
107. Official Report, House of Representatives, vol. 5 1965 col. 1349.
108. ibid., col. 1489
109. See Cherry Gertzel, op.cit., pp. 41-42
110. Transition, vol. 5 No. 25, 1966, p. 45
111. Transition, op.cit., p. 45
112. Mombasa Times, March 25, 1964
113. Gertzel, op.cit., p. 54. Gertzel gives the two groups as 'conservatives' - those prepared to conserve the existing structure, though they saw the need to modify the economic system. 'Radical' - those who were seeking to change the structure of the economy overnight. I here use 'moderate' and 'radicals' respectively in the same way.
114. Gertzel, op.cit., p. 53
115. ibid.
116. ibid.
117. ibid. See also Government Printer, Nairobi, Sessional Paper No. 10, 1965
118. Mombasa Times, October 19, 1965
119. ibid.
120. ibid., October 21, 1965
121. See chapter 4 above on the parochial nature of political organization created by the colonial system due to the restriction on country-wide

political organization. That this was practiced (emphasis on District KANU based bosses) shows the extent of the colonial legacy within the political set-up of post-colonial Kenya.

122. Ngala had, since 1957 been the Coast's representative in Legco, and Mombasa was his base.
123. Stren, *op.cit.*, p. 43
124. *ibid.*
125. Gertzel, *op.cit.*, p. 58
126. Bennett and Rosberg, *op.cit.*, p. 42
127. Mombasa Times, March 18, 1965
128. Gertzel, *op.cit.*, pp. 60-61
129. Interview Reports: Bwana Bwanadi, September 27, 1988, S.R.D. Msechu, September 28, 1988.
130. Stren, *op.cit.*, p. 43
131. *ibid.*
132. *ibid.*
133. *ibid.*
134. Mombasa Times, August 14, 1964. In a local party governing council meeting, chaired by Ngala, the KANU Mombasa branch endorsed Soud Mandano as the official party candidate for the Senate elections.
135. *ibid.*
136. *ibid.*, August 7, 1965
137. Stren, *op.cit.*, p. 45
138. Gertzel, *op.cit.*, p. 58. Gertzel argues that the decay in KANU national institutions was equally present at the local level.
139. Mombasa Times, July 21, 1965
140. Gertzel, *op.cit.*, p. 58

141. Mombasa Times, July 21, 1965
142. It is questionable whether such laudible ideas as suggested by Ngala were ever put into practice.
143. Mombasa Times, November 4, 1965.
144. Dr. Kiano, then Minister for Commerce and Industry, had banned almost all types of imports from Japan in July, 1965
145. This could probably be have been the foundations of the negotiations that led to the present day Mwea-Tabere rice scheme in Central Province.
146. Mombasa Times, November 7, 1965
147. *ibid.*, November 17, 1965
148. *ibid.*, November 22, 1965
149. *ibid.*
150. *ibid.*
151. *ibid.*
152. *ibid.*
153. *ibid.*, November 26, 1965
154. *ibid.*
155. *ibid.*
156. *ibid.*
157. *ibid.*, November 28, 1965
158. *ibid.*, November 30, 1965
159. *ibid.*, December 4, 1965
160. Gertzel, op.cit., pp. 70-71
161. *ibid.*
162. *ibid.*, See also Transition, op.cit., p. 47

163. Transition, op.cit., p. 47
164. *ibid.*, For example, the Rift Valley and the Coast Province, where in 1963 KANU had won less than 25 per cent of the House and Senate seats, now controlled 40 per cent of the votes at the conference. This explains how and why Ngala and Moi were easily voted as Coast and Rift Valley Provincial vice-Presidents respectively.
165. Transition, op.cit., p. 48
166. *ibid.*
167. Government of Kenya, Organization of the Republic of Kenya, President's Circular No. 1/196 March 1966 p.9.
168. *ibid.*
169. *ibid.*
170. Stren, op.cit pp. 45-46. Interview Report, John Mambo, September 22, 1988.
171. Stren, op.cit p. 45-46
172. *ibid.*, p. 46
173. *ibid.*
174. The Provincial Advisory Councils were vested with the task of advising the provincial administration on matters of development. They set development priorities. They were not different from Ngala's Regional Assemblies in terms of duty.
175. Provincial Headquarters, Meeting of the Coast Advisory Council, September 14, 1966, p. 4 KNA DC/MSA/2/15/11.
176. Chairman, Bajuni Union to R.G. Ngala, chairman KANU Mombasa branch December 28, 1966. This letter was found in possession of Bwana Bwanadi a Bajuni leader and famous medicinemen at Majengo Spaki Mombasa.
177. R.G. Ngala, Minister For Co-operatives and Social Services, "Community Development and Social Services" Conference of African Ministers of Social Affairs, Cairo, 10th and 13th April 1967.
178. *ibid.*, p. 1

179. *ibid.*
180. *ibid.*, p. 2
181. *ibid.*
182. *ibid.*
183. *ibid.*
184. *ibid.*
185. *ibid.*
186. *ibid.*
187. *ibid.*
188. *ibid.*
189. KADUs Plan, "Pastoralism and Agricultural Development." 1962.
190. Oral Interview, Lawrence Bennett, 5 September, 1988.
191. *ibid.*, Justin Ponda, 7 September, 1988.

CHAPTER 7NGALA'S LEADERSHIP CHALLENGED 1968 - 1969

During the two years, 1968 - 69, Ngala faced the greatest challenge in his post-colonial political career. The fact that he had gained access to the centre of Kenya's political stage did not mean that his challenge to Kenyatta as a man of national stature would have been overlooked by Kenyatta himself. His post-independence manoeuvres and his meteoric rise to national stature should have raised concern in Kenyatta.¹ Though he had been fully incorporated into KANU, it was apparent that Ngala's progress was to be checked lest he assumed too much power. More so, because up-country politicians wanted to have a say in the running of matters in Mombasa.² To achieve this, those leaders in Mombasa were expected to be in favour of the up-country politicians. Thus, Ngala must have been viewed in light of the above, as an obstacle to fulfilling the ends of up-country politicians.³

Moreover, having neutralised the radical elements in KANU and, subsequently, those of KPU, Kenyatta became a central actor in the politics of the day. It is safe to argue that a new split within the KANU conservative group became imminent. Here it is argued that it is naive to view Kenyatta as one who always acted only defensively in post-colonial politics.⁴ He was particularly central in the move to have Ngala's leadership challenged at the Coast.⁵ In the split within the conservatives, there were those close to the president. Included here were James Gichuru, Njoroge Mungai and Charles Njonjo. In the second group were those who had lost the President's favour,

Mboya being the main example⁶ Apparently Ngala had been Mboya's supporter from 1965 and, therefore, a check on Mboya was necessarily a check on Ngala. To ally with Mboya at this time was getting close to political danger.

We noted that by the end of 1967, Ngala's leadership was acclaimed almost by all people at the Coast and beyond it. How then could he be challenged? Kenyatta saw no man in Mombasa who could challenge Ngala other than Ngala's long-term political opponent; Msanifu Kombo. Msanifu Kombo re-emerged into the political scene in January 1968. The dramatic change from a KPU man back into a KANU one was done at the provincial headquarters.⁷ This should have shocked Ngala because such an announcement should have been done through the KANU branch and then communicated to the party headquarters for recommendation. In effect, Kombo had by-passed Ngala and gone ahead to use the administration to recognise his comeback to KANU.⁸ The factional differences in Mombasa had, thus, re-surfaced.

Basic to the differences in the factions was the legitimacy of each faction to exist. Kombo came straight out to attack Ngala for holding both the national office (Vice-President for Coast Province) and a party branch office (Mombasa KANU branch Chairman) contrary to section 4 (e) of the KANU 'Limuru' Constitution.⁹ The weakness of the KANU party machinery became evident when Ngala defended himself with the same 1966 KANU Constitution that a specific amendment to that constitution provided for national officials to occupy local party positions if so requested by the local people.¹⁰ Ngala was hinting that he had the legitimacy to hold the two posts under the constitution and that he had the full endorsement of the local people.

Following the Local Government Regulation (amendment No. 2) Bill of 1968¹¹ where no independent candidate could stand for election to any local authority unless his nomination was supported by the leader of a political party, Kombo's group was thus at a disadvantage. But a prerequisite for gaining party nomination at the local level was clearly a control over the district branch and its sub-branches.¹² Since Ngala would not be forced to hold fresh party elections before the August civic poll, Kombo's faction faced the prospect of total exclusion from both the local party and the council.¹³

Notwithstanding the fact that the factional battle at the Coast was a hot one, the administration allowed Kombo's group to hold meetings.¹⁴ The result was an intensification of the wrangle.

Subsequently, having realised that he could be left out in the nominations for the coming civic elections, Kombo sought to circumvent Ngala's control of the nomination procedure.¹⁵ In a new move he formed four new sub-branches at Tononoka - Tudor, Sarigo, Kikowani and Muvindeni.¹⁷ This was officially recognised by the Attorney - General's office when the four were issued with registration certificates.¹⁷

In the wake of these developments, Ngala went ahead, in July 1968, to deny some members of the Kombo group nomination. A direct challenge to Ngala's leadership at the Coast thus emanated from this act of denying his opponents nomination. Ngala by then had assumed too much power at the Coast. He under-estimated the strength of his opponents and the support they had from the central administration. In a period of such political turbulence, he should have weighed the consequences of his actions. He did not take into

consideration that his opponents could easily capitalise on his very mistakes. Ngala had lost trust and confidence in everyone, even his closest associates¹⁸. At this juncture, Ngala seems to have lost some of his political tolerance and acceptance of different views which had helped him gain praise among his fellow members during the days of Legco and AEMO. Ngala was now not keen to allow anyone else to speak at meetings even if he were an invited guest.¹⁹ He had become very cautious indeed, lest his position was usurped, especially as the supreme leader of the Coast.

When the Kombo group realised they had not been nominated for the civic polls, Mohamed Jahazi, Ngala's deputy in the Mombasa KANU branch (who had sided with the Kombo group) held a meeting to select their own candidates for their sub-branches. This prompted Ngala to suspend Jahazi as vice-Chairman for associating with the "fictitious"²⁰ sub-branches. These nominations were rejected by Ngala.²¹ Kindy argues that "the choice of yes-men in the nominations ran the party the risk of having inexperienced politicians and councillors".²² Equally, Ngala's authority was defied when the four sub-branches, supported by S.M. Balala, then a nominated M.P. and an assistant minister in Kenyatta's government and Sammy Omari, selected Abdallah Mwidau, Maalim Juma, A.M. Kahui and Shariff Abdallah for the Tudor and Tononoka electoral area.²³

A more direct challenge to Ngala came from Hyder Kindy who had been denied nomination to the Kuze sub-branch. Kindy objected to the nominations of the Kuze sub-branch and took the matter to court. In a contested court battle between Ngala and Kindy, the court upheld Kindy's appeal and declared the

nominations of the Kuze sub-branch null and void.²⁴ Ngala had lost the battle. It was yet another moment when his political leadership suffered a setback.

As an arbitrating President, Kenyatta had suspended the nominations in Mombasa in early August. In a subsequent meeting in mid-August, chaired by the President and attended by the Provincial Commissioner, the Kombo and Ngala groups were made to iron out their differences.²⁵ In perhaps the only public confrontation between Ngala and Kenyatta, Ngala had to withdraw from the meeting for what he termed as "unfair treatment of him by Kenyatta".²⁶ It was thought to be a reconciliation move by the President. But was it really reconciliation in the true sense of the word? Kombo had successfully won his way back into KANU.²⁷ It was a great humiliation for Ngala who, at this time, had tried to keep Kombo out of the Mombasa KANU leadership. Thus, Kenyatta's direct intervention should not be seen necessarily as an arbitration in a political crisis but a direct challenge to Ngala's leadership at the Coast by Kenyatta himself. This was because, in the final analysis, though Ngala remained at the top of KANU, he was left unsure of his future in KANU, for out of the 24 councillors nominated by Kenyatta, 18 were Muslims.²⁸ This did not mean that all these Muslims were against Ngala (we noted earlier how he commanded some respect and support among Bajuni Muslims). In fact, in the subsequent elections for mayorship and chairman of the standing committees, Kombo was elected mayor, replacing John Mambo, a Ngala man; Mwidau became deputy mayor and all the leading committee chairmanship's on the council were taken up by Kombo's group.²⁹ The battle was not over. The year 1969 was to prove yet another formidable year for Ngala.

After the disguised intervention in Mombasa politics by Kenyatta, a period of relative calm ensued, but it was shortlived. Trouble arose again over KANU branch elections in January 1969. In that month, the rival group, led by Maalim Juma³⁰, elected Juma as the Mombasa KANU branch Chairman together with other party officials.³¹ In February, Ngala's bid to have separate local branch elections was also granted. This intensified the wrangle, for Maalim Juma's supporters walked to the rival's office where the elections were in progress. There was a scuffle and many were injured.³² The Provincial Commissioner called off any elections in the district "until the KANU factions learn to resolve their differences in a peaceful and orderly manner".³³ But, by the end of March 1969, Maalim Juma's group had been recognized by the Attorney-General's Office in Nairobi.³⁴ Ngala was to hand over the office to Maalim Juma's group. At the time of the recognition of Maalim Juma's group, Ngala tendered his resignation from the National Executive Committee in protest against it, describing it as "meaningless, disrespected and ineffective".³⁵

The fact that Ngala was to hand over the keys of the branch office to Maalim Juma's group confirmed his earlier complaint that some civil servants and members of the police force were co-operating with and assisting the 'illegal' (Maalim Juma's) group unconstitutionally in Mombasa.³⁶ Contrary to the expected co-operation between the party and government, he deplored the attitude of the civil servants supporting unconstitutionally elected KANU officials.³⁷ He argued that this demonstrated positive participation in politics by certain administrative and public servants.³⁸ He added that

KANU unity and harmony is destroyed by these civil servants. Co-operation is a two way traffic in the sense that when we co-operate with the government servants, they must also co-operate with the constitutional leadership of the party seriously, harmoniously and sincerely.³⁹

It was true that KANU's constitution, as shown by the Mombasa case, was not being adhered to. After all, Ngala had been acknowledged party chairman in a letter from Nathan Munoko; KANU's Organizing Secretary to the Registrar of Societies dated 21 March. The letter noted that Ngala was the chairman of the Mombasa KANU branch and that KANU headquarter did not recognise any other officials.⁴⁰

The recognition of Maalim Juma's group by the Attorney- General's office was thus contrary to Munoko's ruling on this matter.

Talking in Kisumu on March 30, 1969 Ngala reiterated that he was the constitutionally elected chairman of the Mombasa branch.⁴¹ He outlined three measures which would help restore unity at Mombasa: that under no circumstance should any group be registered on the directive of a single individual person through the back door; to achieve harmony the party's constitution must be upheld.⁴² In essence, Ngala was pointing out the weakness at party headquarters. That, all the legally and constitutionally elected officials at sub-branch and branch levels must be respected and protected.⁴³ They must live in confidence, that is, if they have problems in their areas, the national headquarters of KANU would come to their aid. Thirdly, the procedure for elections, as contained in the constitution must be enforced without any favouritism or back door methods.⁴⁴

Ngala's suggestions fell on deaf ears. Soon both the two KANU offices

in Mombasa, occupied by the rival factions - one at Kikowani, under Maalim Juma's group and the other on Lohana Road, occupied by Ngala's group - were closed by the District Commissioner. The D.C. Mr. Eliud Njenga, asked the two groups to issue certificates of legality of their branches.⁴⁵ When closing the offices Njenga stated that the "keys to the Lohana office will be handed over to the registered branch officials".⁴⁶ Mr. Njenga's utterances at the closure of the offices were ambiguous in that when he later gave Maalim Juma the keys to the Lohana Road office, it was questionable whether Maalim Juma's group was legally entitled to occupy the offices. Moreover, to indicate that there was a higher force, in the name of the President, and therefore, having interests in the continued wrangle in Mombasa, the KANU National Executive Committee met on 9 June but did not say anything about the Mombasa dispute.⁴⁷

What was happening was that Mombasa people had been denied the right to elect councillors of their choice in the August 1968 civic polls and now they were being denied the right to elect district party officials who enjoyed the confidence of party supporters. There was even fear that because of such intimidation, people were going to abstain from voting in the coming 1969 general elections and this would give an upper hand to KPU in Mombasa, something the Mombasa people were trying to avoid.⁴⁸

Ngala, therefore, questioned the impartiality of the administration in politics. He bitterly expressed the view:

I disapprove of the action of the District Commissioner in handing the keys to the Maalim Juma group. This is very much contrary to the promise given by the provincial administration that the administration would have nothing to do with political matters.

This action had already aided the already-existing confusion, disunity and disharmony within KANU in Mombasa.⁴⁹

The awareness by the public of the backing Maalim Juma obtained from the administration against Ngala was clearly shown in the protest placards displayed after Maalim Juma was installed as the Chairman of the Mombasa KANU branch. One placard read,

we have no confidence in Maalim Juma's office group.⁵⁰

another read,

No politician in the world is guided by the police.⁵¹

These words were only expressing the disapproval by the Mombasa people of the administration's action.

It was unquestionable that even if Ngala was to enter any election, his supporters would sweep him to victory against the Maalim Juma group. Ngala was popular among the people of Mombasa and the Coast in general.⁵³ But where politics are mingled with the administrative apparatus, as was the case in Kenya, those inclined towards the administration hold an upper hand in any outcome in the event of an election [Ngala however, refused to recognise the Maalim Juma group]. The Maalim Juma group had this administrative support and this is why Ngala was at a disadvantage over his opponents. Here we see a move by the President through his powerful provincial administration, to impose his will on the people. Despite the administration's insistence on its

non-participatory nature in politics, it was here directly participating in them. The President, through his administrative officers, was deliberately and consciously putting a check on Ngala's political career and thus was party to the challenge facing Ngala as the Coast's leader.

Ngala did not, however, surrender easily in his bid to hold the KANU office in Mombasa. Instead of being resigned to the situation, he kept on calling for moves to correct the mistakes and wrongs in KANU that Ngala and other leaders had so outspokenly pointed out in the past.⁵⁴ Equally, he did not hesitate to point out that leadership should be rested in the hands of people chosen by the people and not "stooges or puppets" who had no mandate from KANU members.⁵⁵ This was obviously in reference to the installation of Maalim Juma by the administration as Mombasa's KANU branch chairman. He did not believe that KANU was not functioning as a party. What he feared was planting "fictitious leaders" in various parts of Kenya which he described as "a very dangerous political undertaking."⁵⁶

To put to an end to the KANU wrangle in Mombasa, Kenyatta ordered new sub-branch and branch elections.⁵⁷ These elections drew public attention because they were held in public (queuing system) under the supervision of seven KANU provincial vice-presidents.⁵⁸ Basically, these elections were fought on an ethnic or sectional basis, although supporters of Ngala included a comparatively larger number of the two main groups from Nyanza, the Abaluhya and Luo.⁵⁹ The Mijikenda Christians voted for Ngala supporters while the Arab-Swahili Muslims voted for Juma's group. The closest fight was witnessed at the Tudor/Tononoka sub-branch election, in which losers included the former speaker

of the Senate, T.M.C. Chokwe, who wanted to become a member of the sub-branch committee, the Deputy Mayor, Councillor A.N. Mwidau, who contested the post of vice-chairman and Jahazi, who was a Member of Parliament for Mombasa Central and wanted to become sub-branch Secretary. At this sub-branch, Ngala's men swept all the posts, Ngala being elected the treasurer.⁶⁰ In the branch elections supervised by Kenyatta, Ngala won a strong victory.⁶¹

It should be noted that Ngala's challenge to his supremacy at the Coast was not questioned by up-country politicians through the Arab-Swahili alone. It was equally questioned by some of his own Mijikenda people.⁶² It has been noted that when Ngala dissolved KADU, some of his former supporters fell out of his following. Among these were Sammy Omari and Gilbert Mwatsama.⁶³ These had been Ngala's strongmen in Kilifi District. Thus, Sammy Omari was to lead the second rival group against Ngala (as opposed to the Arab-Swahili group led by Maalim Juma). What we should note here is that Sammy Omari's group's opposition to Ngala was not based on the same sentiments as those of the Maalim Juma group. Their opposition was rooted in their disillusionment with the leadership of Ngala; they were dissatisfied by Ngala when he crossed the floor to join KANU.⁶⁴ They reasoned that Ngala was no longer their leader. The other reason for opposing him was that Ngala did not do what Mboya did for up-country people. This was in reference to Mboya's student air-lift abroad.⁶⁵ They argued that Ngala never tried to have his Coast people secure scholarships abroad nor even made them obtain good positions in the civil service; yet, Ngala allowed up-country people to 'invade' the Coast where they filled most of the high ranks of the civil service.⁶⁶ Omari and his colleagues thus still harboured the

pre-independence slogan Wa Bara Kwao - 'up-country people back to their homes' - which Ngala was opposed to.⁶⁷ [see also Chapter 8]

Thus, when the occasion arose when Ngala was cornered in the political wrangles of the Coast, Omari's group came forward to fan the squabble. Not that they would join hands with up-country politicians on any political issue but just because the odds were against their common enemy, Ngala. For example, when the KANU Mombasa branch wrangle was at its peak, Samuel B. Chivatsi and Pekeshe Ndeje, purporting to be branch officials of the Kilifi KANU branch called upon the President to 'suspend' Ngala from his ministerial post and accused Ngala of "meddling in Coast politics, causing disunity among KANU followers".⁶⁸ On yet another occasion, Chokwe, Jahazi, Mwatsama and Omari equally called on the President to remove Ngala from his cabinet post for acting "in a disrespectful way towards some ministers".⁶⁹ On one rare occasion, Sammy Omari and Chokwe⁷⁰ organized Kaya elders who later sent a memorandum to the President seeking the removal of Ngala from his ministerial post because they alleged he was holding secret meetings.⁷¹ This was yet another great challenge to his leadership. Indeed, to have the Kaya elders talk against Ngala meant that they did not bless his leadership any more. His opponents were out to block all his avenues.

In an answer to his Mijikenda critics, Ngala said:

Since these are personal grudges against me, I would like to advice Kaya elders not to be misled by politicians who have lost their senses of direction and have resorted to dirty, personal mudslinging. These people's attempt to undermine me will never succeed so long as they are based on force and cheap politics.⁷²

By the end of 1969 Ngala came out triumphant both as the chairman of the Mombasa KANU branch and as MP for Kilifi South. In the general elections of December 1969 he was opposed by Kilian Ngala who was sponsored by Chokwe.⁷³ In Kilifi North Constituency, Ngala supported Kazungu Ziro who won the seat against Gilbert Mwatsama. He equally held a cabinet post and was still a member of the KANU National Executive Committee (it seems his resignation was rejected by Kenyatta). What was clear, however, was that Ngala was not secure in KANU. More so because his friend, who had supported him in KANU and in Parliament had been gunned down on 4 July 1969.⁷⁴ He had to fight subsequent battles alone.

Footnotes

1. Not to have caused any danger to Kenyatta's presidency.
2. Interview Report, John Mambo, September 22, 1988.
3. Interview Reports: Bwana Bwanadi; September 22, 1988. Ngala Kibanzu, September 29, 1988, R.D Msechu September 28, 1988.
4. Gertzel, op.cit., Chapter 1, Richard Stren, op.cit., pp. 53-55. Both Gertzel and Stren, argue that the increase of power of the executive after 1966 through the Provincial Administration led to more participation of the administration in politics than hitherto denied.
5. Interview Report, Juma Ferunzy, July 29, 1989.
6. Goldsworthy, op.cit., pp. 271-272.
7. Daily Nation, January 13, 1968.
8. This indicates that Kenyatta had nudged Kombo back into KANU presumably with the intention of dislodging Ngala. See Stren, op.cit., footnote 37 p. 46.
9. Daily Nation, February 12, 1968, Stren, op.cit., p. 47.
10. Daily Nation, March 24 and 25, 1968
11. Kenya Gazette Supplement, No. 26, Bill 5, March 29, 1968.
12. Stren, op.cit., p. 47.
13. ♣♣ ibid.
14. This was aimed at Ngala. There was no justification for the administration to allow the continuation of the factional differences if not for the prime purpose of dislodging Ngala.
15. Stern, op.cit., pp. 48-49.
16. Hyder Kindy, Life and Politics in Mombasa, Nairobi, East African Publishing House, 1972, p. 196.
17. Stren, op.cit., p. 49
18. Kindy, op.cit., p. 196

19. *ibid.*, p. 199
20. Daily Nation, July 22, 1968
21. *ibid.*
22. Kindy, *op.cit.*, p. 198
23. *ibid.*
24. *ibid.*, On p. 203, Kindy gives a vivid discription of the court case between him and Ngala.
25. Stren, *op.cit.*, p. 49
26. Interview Report, Juma Ferunzy, July 29, 1989.
27. Stren, *op.cit.*, p. 49.
28. *ibid.*
29. This meant that he had lost the grip over political affairs in Mombasa hence losing a control of the various range of resources and services that were a source of both development and patronage.
30. Maalim Juma had been nominated a councillor by Kenyatta at the August 1968 'reconcilliatory' meeting.
31. Daily Nation, January 31, 1969.
32. Stren, *op.cit.*, p. 49
33. East African Standard, February 27, 1969.
34. Daily Nation, March 22, 1969.
35. *ibid.*, March 24, 1969
36. *ibid.*, January 31, 1969
37. *ibid.*
38. *ibid.*
39. *ibid.*
40. Daily Nation, March 25, 1969.

41. *ibid.*, March 31, 1969
42. *ibid.*
43. *ibid.*
44. *ibid.*
45. The legality of the matter was unquestionable. Ngala's group had come in through the polls. The step taken to close the Lohana Road office housing Ngala's group was in a way recognizing the Maalim Juma group.
46. Daily Nation, June 6, 1969.
47. *ibid.*, June 10, 1969
48. *ibid.*
49. *ibid.*, June 9, 1969
50. *ibid.*, June 10, 1969
51. *ibid.*
52. Interview Report, Juma Ferunzy, July 29, 1989, Juma Ferunzy acknowledges the fact that the Maalim Juma group did not have the support of the majority of the Mombasa people. It relied on patronage from 'above'.
53. *ibid.*
54. East African Standard, July 15, 1969.
55. *ibid.*
56. *ibid.*
57. *ibid.*, July 15, 1969
58. *ibid.*
59. *ibid.*, July 16, 1969
60. *ibid.*
61. Stren, op.cit., pp. 50-51.

62. Interview Report, Harry Fanjo, September 21, 1988.
63. *ibid.*
64. *ibid.*
65. *ibid.*
66. Interview Report, John Paul Kambi, September 5, 1988.
67. Interview Report, John Mambo, September 22, 1988.
68. Daily Nation, March 22, 1969.
69. East African Standard, March 26, 1969.
70. Rare occasion because these two, though Rabais would not face each other in politics. Chokwe was identified with up-country politicians and was therefore mistrusted by his fellow Mijikenda.
71. East African Standard, March 26, 1969.
72. Interview Report, John Kambi, September 5, 1969.
73. *ibid.*
74. Here I am refering to Tom Mboya.

CHAPTER 8**THE LAST THREE YEARS 1970 - 72**

It was seven years since Kenya had got her independence. Equally, it was five years since the government had issued Sessional Paper No. 10 of 1965 that gave the guidelines and policies that Kenya would follow to achieve her social and economic development. Quite a good bit of social and economic development had been achieved. What Kenyans were asking themselves was whether this development accrued to them or not. Another question was how well-distributed this development was. Ngala, like everybody else in Kenya, should have posed to himself these important questions. It is our aim in this chapter to show Ngala's views on and attitudes towards this achieved development.

Equally important will be the concern to show Ngala's stature in both national and local politics. It was five years since he had joined KANU. Had he been accommodated the way Tom Mboya had envisaged? How did Ngala view KANU policies? Among other issues, we will indicate Ngala's position concerning issues of unemployment and succession to the presidency. Did he want to do so? These questions, as noted above, will draw our attention to national and local politics in Kenya which tended to reinforce and complement one another. Last, but not least, a look at the circumstances that led to Ngala's death will be attempted.

Ngala as Minister for Power and Communication

In Kenyatta's cabinet of 1970, Ngala was offered the portfolio of Minister for Power and Communication. As the name of the ministry suggests, it was responsible to the government for formulation and implementation of policy on matters related to power, transportation and communication. It thus played an important role in the field of power development and co-ordination and the development of a coherent transport and communication network in Kenya and, by then, a network for easy communication for the whole of East Africa. It was involved in matters such as civil aviation and meteorology, which are important aspects of travel and weather forecasting.¹

Compared to the ministry Ngala had headed since 1966 [the Ministry of Co-operatives and Social Services], his new ministry, was one that seldom hit the news headlines unless there was a big function such as the opening of a satellite station or an appeal to curb carnage on the roads. Politically, it was a ministry with little resources to influence client and patronage distribution. He had been moved away from a ministry that had touched the fabric of society; a ministry that had involved community development, adult education and social welfare, to a less important ministry.² By 1970, the issues at hand were concerned with the development of the people - which his former ministry touched on - the citizenry was concerned more about this than about having electricity. Perhaps, to them electricity or the telephone was not as of high a priority as the marketing of their farm produce.³ Thus, the Power and Communication ministry had less political influence and leverage.

Ngala, however, did his best with what he had at his disposal. He took

up the ministry at a trying time when the rate of accidents on Kenya's roads was at a high peak. He lamented this carnage on the roads and did everything possible to curb it.

Following the public outcry concerning the problem of road accidents, Ngala issued a ministerial statement in Parliament to the effect that all tanks and heavy commercial vehicles of 6720 pounds and above would only be allowed to travel on all trunk roads, and other main roads linking provincial and district centres, between the hours of 6.15 a.m. and 6.45 p.m. These curbs, he hoped, would help reduce the road carnage that had become rampant.⁴

Amazingly, soon after the directive by Ngala had been issued, in the wake of a strong public outcry and parliamentary representations, it shocked Ngala when he learnt of heavy criticism of and accusations made against the ban.⁵ He described this criticism as "senseless" and added

we cannot be afraid of taking decisions because of a few individuals.⁶

What Ngala was overlooking was that these 'few individuals' were a force to reckon with on Kenya's economic and political scene. Moreover, Ngala's efforts were being defeated from within the government system. By 27 May, five days after he had made the ministerial statement, the ban had not been put into effect or enforced. Ngala's ban was gazzetted on 27 May⁷ and yet it was lifted the next day.⁸

The lifting of the ban put Ngala at the centre of a debate in Parliament. Indeed, there was the accusation of Ngala yielding to pressure groups.⁹ This criticism came up because the lifting of the ban came after a strong

representation by the Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry [KNCCI] had met Ngala. They had argued that "Kenya's economy would come to a stand still" if the ban was enforced.¹⁰ Ngala argued, however, that he did not lift the ban because of any pressures, but was instead motivated by the assurances by heavy commercial vehicle owners that they would take care on the roads and that was why he lifted the ban.¹¹ To express more concern over the matter, he appointed a committee, under Japhet Kase, to consider reports and measures to curb the high rate of accidents on the roads.¹² While Ngala went ahead to justify his action of lifting the ban, it became clear that the government had to reckon with the strong pressure groups like the KNCCI that had joined in the bargaining for resources after independence.¹³ Where matters of policy came in, these groups would be considered at all cost.

As Minister for Power and Communication, Ngala saw to it that Kenya joined the rest of the world in certain deliberations. In the wake of hijackings in the Middle East in mid-1970, the government, through Ngala's ministry, proposed a legislation that would ensure safety of East African Airways planes.¹⁴ The bill proposed to implement the Tokyo Convention of September 1963, that would consider as criminal offences any misconduct on board aircraft within the jurisdiction of Kenya's courts.¹⁵ The bill was passed on 23 September.¹⁶ Thus, hijacking became an offence carrying a sentence of life imprisonment. Here, Ngala acted as an agent of the government. Through his ministry Kenya was enacting an international law and it was imperative that there should be a standard policy to deal with hijackings.

Ngala and the Development Issues of the 1970s

The Kenya government, through its 1970 - 74 Development Plan, rightly believed that it was only through an accelerated development of the rural areas that a balanced economic development could be achieved and necessary growth of employment opportunities thereby generated.¹⁷ A fundamental objective of the government in this rural strategy was to secure a just distribution of the national income between both sectors and areas of the country and among individuals. But there were shortcomings in the economy at this time. There was a high degree of unequal development and inequalities of income aggravated by unemployment.

While Ngala was a great supporter of government policy and priorities, he did not hesitate to point out loopholes in government plans and strategies and suggested alternatives. One major problem confronting Kenya in the 60s and early 70s (and has remained rampant to this day) was the problem of unemployment. The problem was so acute that the government had to select a committee to investigate the situation with a view to scrutinizing thoroughly all possible measures for alleviating unemployment and, also, submitting a report to Parliament proposing policies to be introduced in the country.¹⁸

Ngala advocated a "one-man one job" policy to ease unemployment.¹⁹ He argued

Time has come for the government to enact a law so that every person gets one salary and leaves other salaries to be earned by others.²⁰

He saw the unemployment problem expanding even further and becoming even more acute because many students with good education were continuing to leave schools and colleges for the job market.²¹ The situation, he envisaged, was worsened by people who earned two or three salaries without consideration for others.²² On this issue Ngala added

There are some people who earn salaries from the government and at the same time they are directors of some companies, which also pay them salaries. Some are Members of Parliament, at the same time work in three different places and get paid three other salaries. This habit denies other wananchi with good education chances of getting employed. This is the time for 'one person, one salary', so that there is some fairness in distributing the wealth of the country.²³

Ngala saw the policy of "one-man one job" as a good example of harambee (pulling together). This was because by doing so, people could get jobs and, secondly, it would be helping the government solve the unemployment problem. There was no other area Ngala was vocal on as the area of unequal development that was evident since independence. He was particularly concerned about land. In his contribution to the debate on the vote for the Ministry of Lands and Settlement, Ngala complained of the unequal distribution of financial resources for the development of some areas in Kenya.²⁴ He regarded the ministry as very important for satisfying political demands in various areas and for making people enjoy the fruits of independence.²⁵ He pointed out that since the settlement schemes were began in 1967, "money had not been directed to the Coast Province for purchasing land."²⁶ While the government was buying out European settler farms in the former Kenya (White) Highlands and the Rift Valley and settling Africans, it was not doing the same at the Coast:

I urge the Minister to make sure that money is directed to the Coast Province to relieve our people from former Arab Colonialism. This is very clear and very important because land is available in all the areas I have mentioned including Takaungu, Mtwapa and all these former Coastal areas. The land, should be purchased and money should be deducted. Our people are agreed that if they get the loan they will repay and things will just be as usual as elsewhere.²⁷

Other Members of Parliament expressed fear that those who had not lived on these new settlement schemes were being settled.²⁸ Ngala took the view that priority should be given to those people who had lived in the areas, noting that ad hoc settlement committees were a danger; they would locate land to people who did not belong to the areas concerned.²⁹

Ngala equally deplored the method of land allocation and ownership in towns. He saw it was quite the same as it was in the colonial days. According to Ngala, the government had not yet devised a new land policy regarding land rights in towns:

I think that the Minister should look also into what land policy is right for a township. In Malindi, for example, the land is entirely Arab as it used to be before the colonial days. In most parts of Mombasa, the land is entirely Arab or Asian as it used to be before the colonial days. In Lamu the same thing applies and it is exactly the way it was during the colonial days.³⁰

Ngala was drawing the attention of the government to the fact that the land policy in urban centres of the Coast still favoured the Arab-Swahili. He therefore could not see how the African in these towns could develop. He urged the adoption of a new land policy to bring about change and money to be loaned to Africans in these towns to enable them to purchase such land and build houses which they could use as security for loans so as to improve their economic

status.³¹

Credit facilities for African enterprises had been extended considerably since independence.³² Large scale state corporations like the Agricultural Finance Corporation [AFC] and the Industrial and Commercial Development Corporation [ICDC] were created to fulfil this purpose. Though these financial institutions did not require large securities for loans, nevertheless, a significant amount of assets, in terms of land or property, was demanded as security.³³ For areas like the Coast, where people still lived as squatters, loan acquisition was hard or impossible. While Ngala always advised his followers "not to just wait for a loan from the government,"³⁴ he equally expressed the view that people living as squatters were facing problems in obtaining loans as they did not have title deeds. He suggested that the government consider the Coast Province, and other areas where the squatter problem was rampant and unresolved.³⁵ as special cases, where methods other than security should be used to purchase property.³⁶

It was not only in credit extension that Ngala saw inadequacy, and hence the perpetuation, of inequality, but also in the Kenyan marketing system of farm produce, where a lot of money went to the middlemen and not farmers.³⁷ For instance, he pointed out that there was no reason why a mango sold at 10 cents in Malindi should be sold at 1.50 cents in Nairobi. He argued that this was a self-defeating system and discouraged young men, and everybody else, from engaging in farming which in turn, retarded development.³⁸ It was his view, therefore, that it was only through the co-operative movement that Kenya could re-model her economy, and, thus, her marketing system. Middlemen, who always worked to gain at the expense of the poor farmers, should be done away with.³⁹

Prior to the 1970s, the government could have been justified in placing the blame for unequal development on the colonial authorities - that to redress these inequalities was not something that could be achieved overnight. By the 1970s, this explanation had become outdated. The colonialists could no longer be used as a scapegoat. For Ngala, the government was perpetuating the colonial type of development and, therefore, perpetuating the inequality that had been inherent in the colonial system.⁴⁰

Ngala was of the opinion that those areas that had been neglected and not funded during the colonial period should, in the post-colonial period, receive more funds.⁴¹ He, therefore, wanted to see areas, like the Central Province, where colonialists concentrated their development receiving less development funds. The idea was to have the neglected areas catch up with the already advanced areas.⁴² Such areas were the Coast and North Eastern Province.

Ngala's ideas were too ambitious, half-thought out and not comprehensive enough given the circumstances prevailing. For example, Ngala's ideas of 'one-man one job' overlooked the fact that Kenya was predominantly a capitalist state; and that, under such a system, where there was room for free enterprise, to enforce Ngala's idea would have been difficult. This is to say that firms would employ people no matter how many jobs or salaries they obtained elsewhere, so long as they could maximise profits. Ngala did not face the core of the problem of unemployment. Kenya had inherited an economy that was using capital intensive methods of production and that was why people were not getting employed. Equally, the issue may not have been the production of many school-leavers, but rather high population growth which was, by then at 3.3%.⁴³

Seeking increased employment opportunities for school leavers was not solving the problem. It was only through a long-term and vigorous population control policy, designed to bring about a steady decline in the rate of population growth, that the alleviation of unemployment could be achieved. So long as there were income differentials between the rural and urban areas, unemployment would always be on the increase especially in the urban areas, where high incomes acted as a pull-factor.

On Ngala's complaints over the poor marketing system, it was true that Kenya had a poor marketing system for its farm produce. This had not changed after independence. The absence of a new strategy for marketing produce in both the 1966-70 and 70-74 Development Plans indicates the shortcomings of the 'Development Plans'.⁴⁴ Ngala also overlooked the fact that those who controlled political power at the time also controlled the economic basis of the country. To expose the idea that areas like Central Province be given less development funds was being unrealistic. It was impossible for Kenyatta to fund his people less. In fact, the opposite happened. Those areas that had been well-developed during the colonial period developed even further.

Ngala in National Politics

The assassination of Mboya in July 1969 created some imbalances and uneasiness in the national politics of Kenya. In the first place Kenyatta, became more cautious of his Cabinet Ministers, only maintaining his inner-core group-Charles Njonjo, Njoroge Mungai and Mbiu Koinange as his closest associates and advisers. This isolation from most of his own ministers created a

situation where each Cabinet Minister became cautious also, that he was the next victim⁴⁵ (in reference to Mboya's death). The question in the public mind was "after Mboya, who else".⁴⁶ This was in reference to Mboya's national stature and command of a countrywide support. Another question was on Kenyatta succession. How did Ngala fit in this political drama of the 1970s?

At the national level, Ngala had a following that could only be compared to that of Mboya at his death.⁴⁷ Those who had been on Mboya's side threw their weight of support behind Ngala. Among them were the Coast Members of Parliament: Francis Tuva, John Ziro, Robert Matano and Japhet Kase. Others included J.M. Kariuki, Masinde Muliro, Omolo Okero, Lawrence Sagini, S. Ayodo, Jeremiah Nyagah, Ngala Mwendwa and Members of Parliament from North Eastern Province.⁴⁸ He, like Mboya, drew support from a multi-tribal following to be reckoned with.

Kenyatta's uneasiness with his Cabinet Ministers arose out of the fear instilled in him by his advisers on the issue of the succession to the presidency. By early 1971, the issue of succession to the presidency had been so openly discussed that it was brought to Parliament for debate. As a matter of fact, two issues were paramount here. First, the inner-core group that dominated Kenyatta's decisions talked of wanting to have the leadership of Kenya remain within "the House of Mumbi". Equally, those not associated with the House of Mumbi (ethnic groups other than the Meru, Embu and Kikuyu), were talking along the lines of "we have had enough of the Kikuyu".⁴⁹ Indeed, the speculation on who was to succeed Kenyatta had risen high. The government was said to be arranging to have a change of the constitution to provide for a

Prime Minister, and this would be Njoroge Mungai.⁵⁰ This was refuted, but the truth was that such movements were not far from possible, given the nature of behind-the-scene activities of the inner-core group. Word went round that, when the inner-core group posed the question to themselves and other close associates as to who they thought could lead the country after Kenyatta, they got a straight answer: "Ngala".⁵¹ It was argued, for instance, that, prior to the death of Mboya, it was Mboya and Ngala who could command countrywide support after Kenyatta.⁵²

The law of succession to the presidency provided that the vice-President would take charge of the presidency for 90 days on the death of the President. Thereafter, an election for the presidency would be held and the vice-President could present himself as a candidate.⁵³ In this case, Moi would succeed Kenyatta. If this provision was followed, Ngala had no chance to be in the line of succession to the presidency.

Arguably, Ngala's position as a Cabinet Minister, as KANU vice-President and KANU District chairman could have put him as a prospective candidate for the presidency. This was however, only through a crisis.⁵⁴ In the event of the death of the President, the Cabinet would sit as a committee to endorse their support for the vice-President who would then, in turn, take over the presidency for the stipulated 90 days before elections. In the event of the cabinet rejecting the vice-President, a crisis would emerge. The matter would then be brought to the attention of the party governing council. The party would then choose its own President to run the country. This is how Ngala would have triumphed given his multi-tribal backing and the influence he had on other members of the

governing council; who held him in high regard.⁵⁵ It is this flexibility in the party constitution, especially on matters of succession to the presidency, that disturbed the inner-core group.

Since the party organization conference of March 1966 when the elections of national office-bearers were held, no other elections had taken place. This was against the rule that party office-bearers should hold their positions for a period of two years.⁵⁶ Robert Matano took over as acting Secretary General of KANU after the death of Mboya. Within a short time, there were public demand for party elections and a re-organization of the party.⁵⁷

In April 1970, following the public outcry for the party to be reorganized, Kenyatta announced the formation of a committee to look into the matter. The committee was set up with grandiose ideas.⁵⁸ Among other things, it was to seek ways and means of reorganizing and revitalizing the party to meet the challenges of the time, to look into the economic welfare and social well-being of the people of Kenya and to make the hard-won independence meaningful.⁵⁹ The committee was composed of Moi as Chairman, Matano as secretary, Nathan Munoko as the party's supervisor of elections and vice-Presidents of KANU : Nyagah for Eastern, Kibaki for Nairobi, Gichuru for Central, Lawrence Sagini for Nyanza, Eric Khasakhala for Western, Jabat for North Eastern and Ngala for the Coast. In addition, the committee included other Executive Committee members : J.K. Ole Tipis, Mbolu Malu, Jesse Gachago, Muliro, Charles Rubia and Omolo Okero.⁶⁰

Even after the formation of this committee, the Members of Parliament thought it wise to debate the issue of party reorganization in Parliament. The

feeling of dismay and disillusionment concerning the party was expressed best by Members of Parliament themselves. They were appalled by how many things were getting into a mess in the party, while leaders of high integrity held top posts in the party.⁶¹ Members expressed the view that the party was not run properly and that it was not following its constitution [This applied especially to the question of party elections which had not been held since 1966]. It was argued that there had only been two delegates conferences (1960 and 1966) since KANU was formed. While KANU delegates were supposed to be policy-makers, this was not the case. Only a few individuals in KANU formulated policy.⁶² More humiliating, a sub-chief of an area was stronger than a KANU chairman; the District Commissioners had overtaken KANU leaders in all areas and KANU funds were not properly looked after.⁶³ After a long debate on the ills of KANU, Parliament resolved:

That this House deplores the lack of any or proper organization in the political party, KANU, and its misuse for ends other than those set out in its constitution or prescribed by law, and requests the Government either to cancel the registration of KANU as a political party or to take drastic steps to ensure:

a) that KANU is organized and kept distinct from the Government, Ministers and Provincial Administration; and b) that KANU strictly adheres to the letter and spirit of the provisions of its constitution and the law and serve Wananchi as their instrument of participation in effective democratic government.⁶⁴

Ngala had his own views on the state of the party and how it could be revitalized and re-organized. For him, KANU could be re-organized, strengthened and revitalised by moving outside the traditions and the tribes, which he saw as the only way to sort out the problems of tribalism within the party and the country at large.⁶⁵ Was Ngala having second thoughts about tribal

loyalties which, in 1961, he said could not be discarded? He considered it futile to talk about unity in the party and in the country when the leaders "were not actually doing anything to give the people an alternative of unity and also give them an ideology which will be consonant with this unity".⁶⁶ To him, the problem of KANU was that it was run by a few people. He suggested solutions to KANU's appalling situation.

First the ordinary person must have a say about things going on in this country, through his party. If the ordinary person does not have a say through the party, he feels that he is isolated and that he is a stranger to the affairs of his country. Therefore, I hope that it will be possible for us to strengthen the party so as to give the ordinary man a say. I hope that it will also be possible to give the office bearers of the party the respect they deserve in a political country. In a country which is independent you can not get away from giving respect to the elected officials, either at the national level or local level. This must be recognised in a political government.⁶⁷

He reiterated the fact that people knew those they wanted to represent them in their party and, thus, should be allowed to produce capable party officials, who would be in a position to lead them.⁶⁸ Though he regarded his suggestions as covering the whole country, Ngala was also having in mind the personal vendettas in Mombasa politics that had been encouraged by the administration. He did not want to see a similar situation in Mombasa, where people had been denied the right to elect councillors of their own choice in the civic elections of August 1968.⁶⁹

The committee set up by Kenyatta to look into KANU's affairs took almost a whole year to deliver its report- hereafter referred to as the Moi report. When the committee gave its report and recommendations in August 1971, all it

did was to pledge to bring economic well-being and self-sufficiency to the nation and build up a self-generating economy under conditions of freedom and democracy as well as promoting unity irrespective of tribal, religious or racial considerations, as stated in the KANU manifesto of 1960.⁷⁰

Among the changes recommended by the Moi Report and adopted by the delegates conference in Mombasa on 30 August 1971 was the election of a national vice-President of the party, and the abolition of the seven provincial vice-Presidents.⁷¹ This change had more of political significance than an administrative one. Instead of decentralising power, the creation of a national party vice-President only amounted to more concentration of power at the top of the party hierarchy. This would worsen the situation of the party being run by fewer people. Administratively, the Moi report did not say how it was going to off-set the KANU debts and how it was going to manage its finances, which, as noted by the Members of Parliament, were in a mess.

Subsequent upon the issue of the report, Ngala's position in KANU was jeopardised. Among the party vice-Presidents and the members of the National Executive Committee, he was held in high esteem and enjoyed influence over others.⁷² Of the party vice-Presidents, he had the support of Nyagah, Sagini, Khasakhala, Kibaki (who seems not to have been close to the inner-core group and differed with them in terms of economic policy) and Jabat.⁷³ Among the other Executive committee members of the party, he commanded the support of Robert Matano,⁷⁴ Muliro, Ole Tipis, Nathan Munoko and Mbolu Malu. It was only Gichuru who supported the inner-core group. Moi was neutral, given that he was neither very close to the inner-core nor on Ngala's side.⁷⁵

Given such a backing in the KANU National Executive Committee [which was only existing by name but its suggestions were never effected; the inner-core ran party matters hence the allegation that KANU was being run by a few people] and that a crisis emerged on the death of Kenyatta, Ngala would have been easily voted in as the President of the party and the Republic's President.⁷⁶ It was this backing the inner-core group was fighting, hence the abolition, of the vice-President post.⁷⁷ Though it partially reduced the backing for Ngala, it was hoped to be a way of curbing his increasing influence.

The Moi Report noted that one major weakness in the party machinery was the personality cult among its leaders.⁷⁸ However, it did not state how this problem could be solved. While it was stated clearly in the report that the party constitution should be adhered to by both leaders and members,⁷⁹ the truth of the matter was that the constitution was not adhered to. For example, one was not supposed to hold two party posts, but there were cases where somebody like Ngala was holding both a District post and a National one; the same people were in the governing council and the National Executive Council of the party.⁸⁰ The report fell short of any proposals for re-organisation or revitalization. It had nothing to show that things would change and that it had taken into consideration the issues of the loss of popular confidence in the leadership of the party, that new blood was needed within the hierarchy of the national party officials and that the ordinary man had little to do with the affairs of the party. A delegate to the delegates conference in Mombasa noted that the conference was only but a formality, nothing seem to have changed. Kenyatta was out to maintain his own group.⁸¹

After the delegates conference it was announced by Munoko, the party's organizing secretary that KANU elections would be held as from 1 March 1972.⁸² The question was why the extensive period for the preparation of the party elections that were already overdue? March 1972 came but there were no signs of any elections going to be held. By the time Ngala died in December 1972, there were still no such signs. Kenyans were only treated to persistent postponement of the elections with promises that they would be held "soon".⁸³ However, by the time Ngala died, he had declared his candidature for the national chairmanship of the party. At least it had been agreed in private that Sharif Nassir, the deputy chairman of KANU in Mombasa would stand for the branch chairmanship while Ngala would go for the national one.⁸⁴

Ngala and Local Politics in Mombasa

Up to the end of 1969, the aim of Ngala's political opponents in Mombasa had been to challenge the legitimacy of his leadership. On the other hand, Ngala strove to show his opponents that he was the undisputed leader at the Coast and the efforts of his opponents to dislodge him from the KANU leadership would prove fruitless. It was clear that after five years in KANU none of the 'old' KANU members could trust Ngala as a true KANU follower.⁸⁵ They were suspicious that Ngala was not genuine in his activities in KANU. As one observer saw it:

they thought Ngala still nursed KADU hangovers.⁸⁶

This feeling was fanned by up-country politicians.

However, as at December 1969, Ngala had succeeded in having the KANU Mombasa branch dominated by his adherents. He was the chairman, Sharif Nassir was the deputy chairman; John Mambo was the organizing secretary; Mwavumo, Secretary; Soud Mandano, treasurer; Juma Ferunzy, executive officer; and Morris Mboja; assistant secretary. It was Ngala's brain child to co-opt Nassir into his group.⁸⁷ Nassir was a Mwambaoist and Ngala thought it wise to draw the Mwambaoists into KANU and government. Thus, he aimed at further breaking the backbone of the remaining 'Mwambao' elements and at the same time, showing his opponents that he could still rally Muslim support in Mombasa.⁸⁸ Thus, by 1970 it was common talk in Mombasa that there were two groups in KANU: KANU A and KANU B. KANU A was led by Kombo and included Juma, Abdalla Ndovu Mwidau, Mohammed Jahazi, Sheikh Balala and Hyder El-Kindy. KANU B was led by Ngala with his followers who included J.J. Mugalla, Alex Karisa, Mwavumo, Morris Mboja, Rodgers Msechu and Sharif Nassir.⁸⁹

As we noted above, Ngala's opponents opposed him on two grounds: One, they thought he was not a genuine KANU follower and two, they did not want to be led by a former KADU man.⁹⁰ Thus, from 1970, there was an intensification of the opposition to Ngala's leadership. What they aimed at was to frustrate Ngala and cause him to lose his following and stature as both Coastal leader and national statesman. This was supplemented by up-country politicians who wanted to see Ngala's national stature diminished.⁹¹

In mid-1971, Mwavumo was arrested without a valid explanation. The KANU Executive Council in Mombasa paid Shs. 2,000 bond to have Mwavumo

released. When the matter was brought to court the magistrate dismissed the case and let Mwavumo go free. This was part of the campaign to curb Ngala's political supporters. In July 1971, Ferunzy received a series of calls and letters threatening to fix him if he did not pull out of Ngala's camp.⁹² All was done in the name of higher authorities.⁹³ Ferunzy surrendered to these threats. He made it public to the press that he was disassociating himself from Ngala.⁹⁴ This was yet another move to weaken Ngala's hold over politics in Mombasa by dislodging and depriving him of, his strong supporters. Threats to Nassir seem not to have worked, for Nassir remained a close associate of Ngala up to the time of Ngala's death.

Another move against Ngala was to see to it that he did not get involved in the mayoral elections of 1970. In July 1970, Kombo warned members of Parliament and KANU officials, who were not concerned with the elections of the Mayor, deputy Mayor and councils committee chairmen, to keep their hands off the civic election campaigns.⁹⁵ Denying the contention that KANU should have nothing to do with mayoral elections, Ngala rebuked Kombo since all councillors were KANU members and everything connected with the party had to be done through the normal machinery.⁹⁶ Since the post of Mayor was a political one, it could not be detached from KANU. This was one controversy to be resolved - local councils and the role of KANU in these councils, how far KANU could or should influence civic polls. In the subsequent elections, A.N. Mwidau won the elections and became the new Mayor. This was a setback for Ngala because Mwidau was a Kombo man.

Perhaps more humiliating for Ngala was the way he was refused access to

information and arrangements for Kenyatta's visits to the Coast. Ngala was rarely welcomed in such preparations. People like Msanifu Kombo who, at the time, were only councillors mattered more than Ngala. Ngala, as a Cabinet Minister and chairman of KANU in Mombasa could only but watch things happen.⁹⁷ Kenyatta's frequent visits to the Coast in December, April and August which, sometimes, were extended further, curtailed and overshadowed Ngala's image at the Coast. He could not hold political meetings, neither could he attend to development issues. People of the Coast were always expected to attend Kenyatta's rallies.⁹⁸ Tactfully, Kenyatta was able to usurp Ngala's leadership image, not to the extent of killing it, but considerably reducing its stature.

Despite these strong forces against him, Ngala never lost the backing of his people. It is to be noted that he kept on reminding the country that political leaders were elected by the people and not imposed on the people.⁹⁹ He suggested that leaders imposed on the people tended to cause too much friction among themselves instead of working together as a team. This was the case in Mombasa.¹⁰⁰ To solve such a problem, he called for all the councillors in Mombasa Municipal Council to resign. Addressing a public meeting at Mwembe Tanganyika in Mombasa, where the Mayor, Mwidau, and Kombo were listening, he declared that everyone in Mombasa and countrywide knew that all Mombasa councillors had been nominated by Kenyatta.¹⁰¹

Was Ngala counteracting the President's decision of 1968? Here we see Ngala talking against what the President had ruled on. The truth of the matter was that none of the councillors of Mombasa were elected by ballot. When he demanded that councillors who did not pass through the ballot boxes resign, he

meant to give the people of Mombasa a chance to elect people of their choice, and not those imposed on them. He reiterated the fact that councillors in Mombasa had 'ceased' to play their correct roles, and anybody on the council who had not been given a mandate by the people could not claim to be speaking on behalf of the people of Mombasa.¹⁰² Equally, he suggested, the Mayor of Mombasa had been imposed on the people; that people had not been given the chance to elect the Mayor and councillors of their choice. In March 1972, he said

I must make it very clear that I have nothing against the Mayor. But my great interest is to see that the party constitution is followed.¹⁰³

In the early 1970s, there was talk among Mombasa residents that indignation against up-country people living and working in Mombasa was rising. There were reports circulating in Mombasa that up-country people were unwanted at the Coast and that certain senior civil servants in Mombasa were unpopular with the party branch in Mombasa because they also came from outside the province. This general feeling among the people of Mombasa and the Coast at large had even rekindled the slogan of the 1960s - wa-bara kwao¹⁰⁴ - " upcountry people back to their homes". Ngala's political opponents took this as an opportunity to associate him with such a slogan. They wanted to use this as a technical weapon to further intensify their crack-down on him and brand him a tribalist and one against the unity of the country. Addressing a KANU governing council at Mombasa, Ngala refuted these reports in the following strong words:

I condemn those who go round spreading hostility and hatred,

especially to up-country men, that they are unwanted here. As chairman of KANU in Mombasa and as a Government Minister I shall be the first person to resist such nonsense, even by going as far as resigning my ministerial post as I believe that no Kenyan should be discriminated against by his own fellow Kenyans.¹⁰⁵

Similarly, in March 1972 Ngala further condemned those leaders who preached disunity and tribalism. He argued that they were doing Kenya harm and had no place in the future leadership of KANU. He emphasized:

I have never advocated that the tribes from up-country working and staying at the Coast be removed to their own (part of the) country. Kenya belongs to all the people and, under the constitution, they are free to work and stay anywhere in the country.¹⁰⁶

Whether the feeling of the Coast people had a justification or not, may not be our concern here. Ngala at this juncture was fighting against disunity. Had he perhaps learnt a lesson from the drawbacks caused by relying on tribal loyalties for development which had cost the Coast people the development other areas like Central Province had achieved after independence? There was no way he would want all the Coast to be isolated for the mere sentiments of wanting to control major economic fields and jobs at the Coast.

Ngala seems to have been aware of all the forces against him. He expressed this best when he once confided with Ferunzy and said:

These people cannot do anything to me. The only thing they can do is to kill me. I cannot stop my activities.¹⁰⁷

Ngala did not mention the names of 'these people'. However, he was definitely referring to his political opponents at both local and national level.

Did they really "kill him"?

The Death of Ngala¹⁰⁸

On 12 December 1972, a day when Kenya was celebrating her Independence (Jamhuri) Day, it was announced over the Voice of Kenya's National Services that Ronald Ngala had been involved in an accident near Konza, while on his way to Nairobi. This was again reported in the newspapers on 13 December. The East African Standard reported:

The Minister for Power and Communication Mr. Ngala was yesterday afternoon in Kenyatta National Hospital's Intensive Care Unit as he suffered injuries in a traffic accident near Konza on the Mombasa - Nairobi road.¹⁰⁹

Subsequently, the Kenyan public was furnished with a series of unconvincing and confusing reports on the condition of Ngala. On 14 December, it was reported that he had no internal injuries after ultrasonic echoenceptiographic (ECG) tests on his head had been done.¹¹⁰ On 21 December the East African Standard reported "Ngala critical",¹¹¹ and yet another report read on 23 December that Ngala's condition was better.

Such inconsistent reports came to an end on Christmas Day of 1972. It was yet a news bulletin over Kenya's National Service that broke the news of Ngala's death at 1 o'clock in the afternoon of that day of festivities. Was it mere coincidence of events that the accident had to take place and announced on a public holiday (that is Jamhuri Day)? and that the death be announced on a joyous day, Christmas Day? In many Kenyan homes, where Christmas was being celebrated, lunch had been served. On the whole, Ngala's death spoilt so many peoples' Christmas. The agony could be seen in all those who heard the news

over the Radio.¹¹² But was someone celebrating somewhere? Many activities scheduled for Monday afternoon were dropped as people in the Coast Province turned to mourn their leader.

Ngala's death was mourned all over the world. The British Foreign Minister Mr. A. Douglas - Home said:

I learnt with great sorrow of the death of Mr. Ngala and, on behalf of the British Government, I send you our sincere condolences on the untimely loss to Kenya of one who had been so prominent and respected figure in the country's constitutional history.¹¹³

On 27 December, Ngala's body was flown to Mombasa where a funeral service, attended by among others Kenyatta, was held at the Mombasa Anglican Cathedral. His body was then driven by road to his home at Vishakani, where he had grown up, and was buried on 28 December amid heavy mourning. An eyewitness at the burial ceremony noted that there was heavy security that included both uniformed and plain clothes police officers.¹¹⁴ This same eye-witness noted that it was in all the people faces that they had lost their beloved leader, not in the name of a 'normal death' or 'normal accident' but a 'hand' was involved in it. High ranking dignitaries attended Ngala's burial. Among them were Wamune Kibedi, Uganda's Foreign Minister and Job Lusinde, Tanzania's Minister for Power and Communication. Of all the messages at the burial ceremony, Odinga's stands out unique:

Oh Ronald my dear, you began politics as a teacher surrounded with (sic) religious atmosphere and deep respect for humanity. You overcame all temptations waves of political struggle with sagacity built in simplicity. But you die so young while the seeds of Uhuru still hanker for your most-suited moisture needed for

their germination.¹¹⁵

Ngala had joined his ancestors.

Ngala's death raised eyebrows. It was thought by many that it was not a 'normal' accident that caused his death. On 2 January, Fred Omido, the Central Organization of Trade Union (COTU) President, said that a "thick cloud surrounded the minds of the people of Kenya as a result of Mr. Ngala's death".¹¹⁶ Omido requested the government to hold an inquest to determine the cause of Ngala's death. Juma Boy, then deputy secretary - General of COTU and Member of Parliament for Kwale Central, asked the government to clear some doubts from the minds of Kenyans, particularly those of the Coast, about certain circumstances surrounding the accident. Omido expressed the suspicion that probably there had been no accident at all, because there had been no photograph of the car involved in the accident in the newspapers. As for Boy, he considered it necessary for the government to clear some points because, contrary to repeated announcements by the Voice of Kenya that Ngala was travelling to Nairobi, he was in fact travelling to Mombasa. Boy added that rumours circulating suggested that it had been a "planned accident" and some said it was not an accident at all.¹¹⁷

The request to the government to hold an inquest on Ngala's death was endorsed by KANU's Mombasa branch on 21 January 1973.

The public outcry and demand for an inquest were met by the government. An inquest was granted and it started its hearing on 19 February. A Senior Resident Magistrate Mr. S.K. Sachdeva, was to lead the inquest. The state was represented by the Deputy Public Prosecutor, James Karugu. W.S.

Deverell, an advocate, held a watching brief for the family of Ngala.

We will not be bogged down by the details of the inquest. Perhaps it is more important to draw attention to witnesses that were thought to have shed light on the case during the inquest. On the first day of the inquest, people went out of the Court-room to see the car Ngala was riding in when the accident took place. According to Justin Ponda, the condition of the car at Machakos Police Station, where he went to see it first on 14 December, was quite different from the way it was brought for exhibition at the Court. It was more damaged and it seems someone had tampered with it to show the seriousness of the accident.¹¹⁸

A witness by the name of Jonathan Msomba told the inquest that Ngala's driver was trying to chase out some bees that got into Ngala's car when he lost control and the car overturned.¹¹⁹ Karuga asked Mr. Msomba whether he was sure the driver had talked of 'ngatata', meaning wildebeast or bees in Kikamba. Msomba repeated that the driver had talked of bees and not wilde beast.¹²⁰ A Mrs. Esther Ngoloma gave evidence to the same effect: that the driver had lost control when he tried to chase bees that had entered Ngala's car.

Contrary to the above evidence by Msomba and Mrs. Ngoloma, the driver, who strangely enough was called last as witness, instead denied that he had talked of chasing bees out of Ngala's car. The driver, Elijah Nzibo said he lost control of the car while trying to avoid hitting some wildebeast. He said he did not at anytime, tell anyone the accident was caused by bees and he did not say the bees got into the car.¹²¹ But why the difference in the evidence? Could there have really been any linguistic confusion given that the driver, Mr.

Msomba and Mrs. Ngoloma were all Akamba people?¹²² Note here that Nzibo was asked by Karugu whether anyone had asked him what had happened and he replied:

the one who asked me....I asked them if they could help me to take him to Machakos which they said they would.¹²³

He never said if anyone asked him what had happened and what he told them. Was the driver still confused even after three months from the date of the accident?

One of the aims of the inquest was to establish why Ngala had decided to travel to Mombasa so abruptly and for that matter by road and not by plane.

Mrs. Esther Ngala told the inquest that she did not receive any telephone call from her husband, who was in Nairobi, to say he was returning to Mombasa.¹²⁴

From another wife of Ngala, Wairimu Said Ngala, it was recorded that Ngala would attend Jamhuri celebrations in Nairobi then fly to Mombasa where he would spend a night before proceeding to Malindi to meet her.¹²⁵ A driver who had driven Ngala for a period of 14 years told the inquest that Ngala seemed to have been unhappy when they went to Nairobi Airport to check on the wife who did not turn up. This contradicted Mrs. Wairimu Ngala who said that she had talked over the phone with her husband and had cancelled her journey to

Nairobi.¹²⁶ There was no way Ngala would have been upset by her not coming. Equally, Sharif Nassir told the inquest that he talked to Ngala over the phone on 11 December inquiring from the Minister whether he would attend the Jamhuri celebrations in Mombasa so that he could spare him a seat. Ngala had said that he was attending the celebrations in Nairobi. Nassir added that since Ngala

became Minister in 1966, he had at no time travelled to Mombasa to attend any national day there.¹²⁷

When W.S. Deverell gave his submission, he drew the attention of the Court to the fact that none of the witnesses had established one important thing: "what was the specific reason for the Minister's journey to Mombasa on that particular morning?".¹²⁸ He submitted that it seemed that the death was indeed the direct result of internal or head injuries suffered by the deceased, and that these injuries were caused by an accident which the evidence pointed at. He, however, attributed the cause of the accident to the negligence of the driver, Mr. Nzibo.¹²⁹

Karugu outrightly dismissed Deverell's submission describing it as unkind. He said Deverell's submission was not only unfortunate but misleading; that it was not supported by any evidence given in Court and that it was a matter of speculation and conjecture on the part of Deverell to make such statements.¹³⁰ At least from Karugu's submission the state had proved that a normal accident had taken place and, as a result of it Ngala died.¹³¹

Did the inquest quell the rumours that had been circulating all over Kenya concerning the death of Ngala? In his ruling, Sachdeva said that no one was to blame for the accident and that it was only an unfortunate accident that caused the death.¹³² He ruled out that Ngala's sudden change of mind to travel to Mombasa on Jamhuri Day was due to the worry that his wife had not arrived in Nairobi for the Jamhuri holiday. Perhaps, as a note of warning, Sachdeva brought to the attention of the Court that while F.E. Omido, J.O. Okumu and Juma Boy were expressing their rights of free speech in a

public spirited manner to express the fears and rumours among the people about Ngala's death, he noted that that obligation could have been detrimental to others, and to the state basically, because it could have amounted to sedition.¹³³ In other words, Sachdeva was warning these gentlemen not to sensitise matters such that they would easily arouse public unrest. Sachdeva concluded:

I am satisfied that Mr. Ngala died as a result of injuries which he sustained in this most unfortunate motor-accident - since the loss suffered is not by his family alone but by the whole nation - and that no offence is disclosed to have been committed by any living person in connection with his death.¹³⁴

Sachdeva hoped, that this verdict would stop further speculation on the matter.

The ruling satisfied quite a few people. It was still held that the inquest was marred by conflicting evidence and intimidation. It did not bring out the truth of the matter. There was even talk that the family of Ngala wanted a repetition of the inquest. However, the case cooled down and ended with shrugs of resignation. But, to date, Ngala's death remains a mystery, few would want to talk about, let alone un-ravel.

After Ngala

At the local level the question was: who would step in Ngala's 'big' shoes? Among the existing Coastal Members of Parliament none commanded the following Ngala had at the Coast. None could talk with the authority of a Coast leader. Those left were but leaders of their constituencies. Ngala was their star. The Coast people expressed the loss of their leader in the following terms:

Our Kenya star has left us. God keep him in peace. The Coast is in darkness. Poor Ngala, his body is in the grave, but his work and leadership will continue forever.¹³⁵

At the national level the question was straight forward: who, after Ngala, could command a national following and could succeed Kenyatta? This was a central problem in the mid-70s and was a major issue of debate among Cabinet Ministers and the public at large.¹³⁶

Ngala's legacy extended beyond his death time. In the 1974 elections, Sharif Nassir, a strong Ngala - man defeated Mohamed Jahazi for the Mombasa Central Parliamentary seat. It is important to note that Nassir was not allowed to speak at any of his campaign meetings. It was Msechu who did the talking at these Meetings.¹³⁷ This was done by the administration with the aim of preventing Nassir from expressing strong support for Ngala and use it as a way to win the elections. This intimidation by the administration did not help. It was Ngala's image in Nassir that won him the elections.¹³⁸

In the same elections of 1974, a cousin of Ngala's won the Kilifi South Parliamentary seat which had been held by Ngala. In the contest of this seat, Morris Mboja won against long-term political rival of Ngala, Kilian Ngala. In the Kilifi North constituency Ngala's son Katana Ngala, won a landslide victory over John Ziro, Gilbert Mwatsama and Chokwe in what was seen as a win by sympathy votes. As one observer noted:

it was not Katana's articulation of the people's problems that won him the election, but the name of his father.¹³⁹

Other areas where Ngala's name stands as a mark of admiration and

dedication are the Ngala Memorial Secondary School at Tiwi, Gotani Location in Kilifi District where Ngala had been born. There is also the Ronald Ngala Primary School at Buxton in Mombasa, which was a name given to the former Buxton School, which he gave service between 1953 and 1957. There is a Ronald Ngala street in Nairobi, and one in Mombasa. The street in Mombasa was relegated to a much less conspicuous place in Tudor estate. It first used to crisscross Kenyatta Avenue. Was this a way of trying to sideline the memories about Ngala? In Malindi and Kilifi, there are estates named after Ngala.

Footnotes

1. East African Standard, December 12, 1970
2. At least this is the opinion of Robert Matano who sees this more as a demotion than a mere shift of ministries. Interview, Robert Matano, July 24, 1989.
3. *ibid.*
4. The Kenya National Assembly Official Report, vol. xxi Part 1, col1016 - 1017.
5. Daily Nation, May 25, 1970.
6. *ibid.*
7. Kenya Gazette, Legal Notice No. 83, May 27, 1970.
8. Daily Nation, May 28, 1970.
9. Kenya National Assembly Official Report, vol. xxi, Part 1, col. 12181.
10. Daily Nation, May 26, 1970
11. Kenya National Assembly Official Report, vol. xxi Part 1, col 1281.
12. *ibid.*, col. 128.
13. Donald Rothchild, "Changing Racial Stratification and Bargaining Styles: The Kenyan Experience." Canadian Journal of African Studies vol7, No3, 1973 pp419-433.
14. Daily Nation, May 12, 1970
15. *ibid.*
16. Kenya National Assembly Official Report, vol. xxi, Part 1, col200-201, 221-224.
17. Kenya Development Plan 1970-74, Nairobi, Government Printer, 1970.
18. Kenya National Assembly Official Report, vol. xxi Part II, col751.
19. Daily Nation, May 19, 1970

20. *ibid.*
21. *ibid.*
22. *ibid.*
23. *ibid.*
24. Kenya National Assembly Official Report, vol. xxi Part 1, col337-339.
25. *ibid.*
26. *ibid.*
27. *ibid.*, col.338
28. *ibid.*, vol.xxi, Part 1, col.162-163
29. *ibid.*
30. *ibid.*, vol. xxi, Part 1, col. 337-339
31. *ibid.*
32. Nicola Swainson, The Development of Corporate Capitalism in Kenya, 1918-1977 London, Heinemann, 1980, p191.
33. *ibid.*
34. Daily Nation, April 4, 1970
35. This still remains a big problem today. Seventeen years after the death of Ngala, policy makers in Kenya have not been able to resolve the problem of squatters at the Coast. See Weekly Review, August 3, 1989.
36. Daily Nation, October 5, 1970
37. *ibid.*, July 3, 1970
38. *ibid.*
39. *ibid.*
40. Interview Report, Juma Ferunzy, July 29, 1989
41. *ibid.*, Juma Ferunzy, July 29, 1989, Robert Matano, July 24, 1989.

42. *ibid.*, Matano, July 24, 1989.
43. D.P. Ghai, "Employment in Kenya" East African Journal, vol. 7, No. 11, 1970 p.10.
44. See Judith Heyer, "Kenya's Cautious Development Plan" East African Journal," vol.3, 1966.
- 45.. Robert Matano argues that the only other people who had a national following after Kenyatta were Mboya and Ngala. J.M. Kariuki had just began getting that following. Matano was from 1969 Acting Secretary General of KANU and, therefore, had a lot to observe in the politics of Kenya.
46. Goldsworthy, *op.cit.*, pp. 271-272.
47. Interview Report, John Ziro, September 23, 1988. Matano, July 24, 1989.
48. Interview Report, Matano, July 24, 1989. -
49. *ibid.*
50. *ibid.*
51. Charles Njonjo explained at length the succession procedure in the event of the death of the President Daily Nation, March 3, 1971, East African Standard, March 3, 1971.
52. Interview Report, Matano, July 24, 1989.
53. *ibid.*
54. *ibid.*, Matano, July 24, 1989, Ziro, September 23, 1988.
55. *ibid.*
56. *ibid.*
57. *ibid.*
58. Daily Nation, April 29, 1970.
59. *ibid.*
60. *ibid.*
61. Kenya National Assembly Official Report, Vol. xxi Part 1, col.1025.

62. *ibid.*, col.1030.
63. *ibid.*, col.1031.
64. *ibid.*, col.1034.
65. *ibid.*, col.1327-1328.
66. *ibid.*
67. *ibid.*
68. *ibid.*
69. See Chapter 7 for discussion on this and Kenyatta's role in the matter.
70. East African Standard, August 20, 1971.
71. *ibid.*, August 31, 1971.
72. Interview Report, Robert Matano, July 24, 1989.
73. *ibid.*
74. *ibid.*, Matano reckons he was in a bad fix when he became acting Secretary General. He as a supporter of Ngala by sincere conviction but his position could not allow a free association with Ngala as such. He, however, notes that he did not really play the role of Secretary General the way Mboya did. He was a mere rubber stamp.
75. Interview Report, Robert Matano, July 24, 1989, Ziro, September 23, 1988.
76. *ibid.*
77. *ibid.*
78. East African Standard, September 1, 1971.
79. *ibid.*
80. Interview Report, Robert Matano, July 24, 1989, Juma Ferunzy July 29, 1989.
81. Interview Report, Juma Ferunzy, July 29, 1989.
82. East African Standard, September 9, 1971.

83. Robert Matano gives reasons for this. Kenyatta did not want to see changes in the party hierarchy Kenyatta did not like dealing with 'strangers' After the death of Mboya, Kenyatta embarked on a campaign to consolidate his own position in KANU Prior to this, he had joined a party he had not formed and could do little about in the presence of Mboya It was after Mboya's death that Kenyatta wanted to have his position in KANU felt Any moves against Kenyatta would be thwarted Interview Report, Robert Matano, July 24, 1989.
84. East African Standard, September 9, 1972.
85. Interview Report, Juma Ferunzy, July 29, 1972.
86. Interview Report, Robert Matano, July 25, 1972.
87. *ibid.*, Msechu, July 25, 1989, Ferunzy, July 29, 1989.
88. *ibid.*, Bwana Bwanadi, September 27, 1988.
89. Interview Report, R. Msechu, July 25, 1989, Juma Ferunzy, July 29, 1989.
90. Interview Report, Robert Matano, July 24, 1989.
91. Interview Report, Juma Ferunzy, July 29, 1989.
92. *ibid.*
93. *ibid.*, this wrangle between KANU A and KANU B was fanned and encouraged by the country politicians who were politically opposed to him because he had been a Mboya man. Ngala's rise in stature had to be checked further More so, because upcountry politicians wanted to have a say in Mombasa affairs.
94. Interview, Juma Ferunzy, July 1989. Ferunzy accepts that it was the threats of being 'fixed' that made him give up his political alignment with Ngala, not that he did not support Ngala's policies and views.
95. East African Standard, July 14, 1970.
96. *ibid.*, July 20, 1970.
97. Interview Report, Robert Matano, July 24, 1989.
98. *ibid.*
99. East African Standard, February 28, 1972.

100. *ibid.*
101. *ibid.*
102. East African Standard, March 13, 1972.
103. *ibid.*, March 20, 1972.
104. Interview Report, Juma Ferunzy, July 29, 1989.
105. East African Standard, July 20, 1970.
106. *ibid.*, March 20, 1972.
107. Recollections of Ferunzy. Interview Report, Ferunzy, July 29, 1989.
108. Much of the narratives of this section are drawn from reports in the East African Standard.
109. East African Standard, December 13, 1972.
110. *ibid.*, December 14, 1972.
111. *ibid.*, December 24, 1972.
112. Interview Report, Kahindi Ngoro, July 28, 1989.
113. East African Standard, December 28, 1972.
114. Interview Report, Job Orira, July 26, 1989.
115. Odinga's message at the burial, report in East African Standard, December 29, 1972.
116. This was reported in the East African Standard, January 2, 1973.
117. East African Standard, January 3, 1973.
118. Interview Report, Justin Ponda, September 7, 1988.
119. East African Standard, January 21, 1973.
120. *ibid.*
121. *ibid.*, February 28, 1973.
122. *ibid.*, One should note the possibility of conspiracy between the witness

Nzibo and Karugu who had at the beginning of the inquest on cross-examining Msomba brought the attention of the inquest on the issue of linguistic confusion between "ngatata" and bees.

123. East African Standard, February 28, 1973.
124. *ibid.*
125. *ibid.*
126. *ibid.*
127. *ibid.*, February 26, 1973.
128. W.S. Deverell's submission, *ibid.*, March 24, 1973.
129. *ibid.*
130. James Karungu's submission, East African Standard, 1973.
131. *ibid.*
132. *ibid.*
133. *ibid.*
134. *ibid.*
135. These words were printed on leaflets in Kiswahili and distributed in Mombasa. East African Standard, January 22, 1973.
136. Interview Report, J.Ziro, September 23, 1988
137. It was feared that Sharif Nassir might talk about Ngala in his campaigns. It was possible he would talk of the discontent about the outcome of the inquest. These he would articulate for his own benefit in the campaign.
138. Interview Reports, Robert Matano, July 24, 1989, Juma Ferunzy, July 29, 1989, R. Msechu, July 25, 1989.
139. Interview Report, Ngala Tuva, July 26, 1989.

CHAPTER 9
CONCLUSION

Ngala's forebearers on his fathers side were carpenters and he was born and brought up in a family without any formal educational background. Ngala's own zeal and determination to acquire western education therefore enabled him to come to the fore and acquire the new "western civilization". He became a member of the African educated elite through his own efforts; but he was not born into it. It is this zeal for education that determined his attitude to hard work towards life and, hence, forged his character. He was not a man who easily surrendered to problems. He would struggle to overcome them to the end.

Starting out as an ordinary teacher at Kaloleni strongly influenced by christian education, he rose to high place and eventually became a headmaster and supervisor of schools in the colonial days. And, when he was appointed to the African Advisory Council, and, later, to the Municipal Board, credit had been given to his work. But, no less important, had been his personal qualities: modesty, adherence to principle and the fight for truth.

From a non-participatory stance in MADU, he agreed to be co-opted into the Mombasa Municipal Board. He was able to re-orientate his ideas from a rural setting to an urban setting. In the Board, he was able to appreciate multi-racial views given the multi-racial nature of that authority; an aspect that influenced his later career. In 1959, he became a willing participant in the multi-racial political experiments of the day.

When he offered himself to be elected African Member to Legco for the

Coast seat in 1957, it was the hope of the people that, as one of the few African educated elite, Ngala would be able to articulate well the problems and grievances of the Coast Africans and the country as a whole. Once in Legco, Ngala and his colleagues, in a few months' time, rendered the existing Lyttleton Constitution null and void and constitutional advancement became inevitable.

Ngala featured prominently in major landmarks in Kenya's history: the elections of 1957, as Member of a delegation to London 1957; AEMO secretary 1958; the multi-racial politics of 1959; Lancaster House Conference 1960; the formation of KADU and that of a government 1961; the 'Mwambao' episode 1961 and the Independence Constitutional talks of 1962. He was the architect and mastermind behind "Regionalism" and hence the independence constitution. Remarkably, his historic crossing of the floor in November 1964 in itself was an epoch-making step. His joining KANU ushered in a new phase in Kenya's history. He took a clear position in acting as a central figure in dislodging the KANU radical Parliamentary caucus led by Odinga. Out of this, a new opposition party, KPU was formed. But notably, Ngala set the ball rolling for another phase in Kenya's history: that of in-fighting among the conservatives in KANU. In the end, Mboya fell out of favour and so did Ngala.

Like many of his contemporaries, Ronald Ngala was a product of the colonial system. From the humble beginnings of a rural christian school boy, he lived to counteract the same colonial system that created him. He was determined to destroy it. He was one of the African educated elite who, disgruntled by the appalling segregation in schools and further discrimination in areas of employment, decided to leave teaching to join politics in order to have the situation redressed.

That is, having been missed out in the sharing of the 'liberties' preached by the church and at school, Ngala turned round and identified himself with workers and peasants. He served them by articulating their grievances: racial segregation in the educational system, poor health services for the Africans, and inadequate African representation in Legco, to mention just a few of these grievances. Ngala therefore belongs to the nationalist group; that group of politicians, the educated elite, who took to the negotiation table and bargained for Uhuru with the colonial government and other races. It was Ngala's group that created the right conditions within which independence was handed over to the African majority. It is the willingness of Ngala and his group to negotiate for independence that characterise them as 'saviours' of their society as 'great men' of their time and generations to come. They not only negotiated with the Europeans, but also were ready (though with varying and differing opinions) to negotiate among themselves on the timing of Uhuru. Ngala and his group established a new political tradition: that of negotiation and persuasion, as opposed to the protest movements, millenarianism of the pre-1956 days. Ngala was, thus in the forefront of the struggle for independence, and was deservedly appointed to high office in the country he so loved to see free.

Ngala was a central figure in Kenya's constitutional advancement. He was indeed a pragmatic constitutionalist who sought to adhere to the constitutional reforms initiated and believed that these facts and obligations, solemnly undertaken, in the full knowledge of their consequences, led Kenya towards independence. It is in this strong belief in constitutionalism that when the deadlock on the formation of government was apparent in 1961, he decided to

join in its formation. This he saw as a necessary step forward towards shouldering responsibility and learning the art of governing. While he also wished Kenyatta to be released, he differed with others on the methods to be used to that end.

This portrait of Ngala has demonstrated how Ngala championed the fears of the minorities and fought hard to secure the Majimbo [Regionalist] Constitution which ended up being the Independence Constitution. The task of devising the Independence Constitution in itself was a success for Ngala and other participants in the conference of 1962. It enabled independence to be decided upon and reflected well the tensions and anxieties of the time. Pride was Ngala's because he got content with the Majimbo Constitution. This study has equally shed light on why Majimbo failed. Two reasons have been highlighted: the lack of political will on the part of the KANU government to see Majimbo succeed and, two, the lack of financial help from the central government which paralysed Majimboism.

It has been observed that the nationalists differed in their aspirations, method and timing of independence. There were those who believed in the gradual process of decolonization in which, eventually, the end would be an African majority rule. The second group believed in achieving independence in the shortest time possible. Ngala belonged to the former group. Despite the differences in opinion and strategy among the nationalist, Ngala's portrait has shown that all the nationalist figures were agreed on one fact: they needed political power. However, none of them seems to have thought seriously about the future economic structure of the post-colonial state. The result was a

concentration on the fight for political power at the expense of an economic structural transformation.

This study has been a clear pointer to the Mijikenda people's resentment to long-term domination by external groups. Ngala was in the forefront of the opposition to any type of favours or privileges accorded to the Coast Arab-Swahili. It was for this reason that he opposed the 'Mwambao' movement. The domination especially by the Arab-Swahili had cost them their land. They had become squatters on land they had lived on for a long time; they were the Enye tsi - owners of the land. When the Mijikenda people rallied behind Ngala they expected him to help them out of this squatter problem. However, Ngala was carried away by the wave of nationalism. When he agreed to the structure of the Central Land Board at the Lancaster House Conference in 1962, he exposed his Mijikenda people to an issue that had very little relevance to his people. The Land Board was to deal with the scheduled areas and Crown Lands and not the Coast Land under the Arab-Swahili. The Land Board was able to buy out settler farmers in the Highland areas but did not do anything for the squatters at the Coast. Ngala failed to solve the squatter problem which has remained to this day. Moreover, when some of the Mijikenda people became disillusioned with Ngala's leadership, they resorted to their old slogan - wa-bara kwao. This is because Ngala failed them by joining KANU - a party dominated by "external" groups. He was accepting up-country people to occupy economic positions at the Coast. This clearly shows how the Mijikenda resented external groups.

In this survey of Ngala's life, it has been shown how the local politics of the Coast were a replica of the national politics especially after independence.

The struggle to dominate local politics reflected the struggle at the national level. But the Coast local politics, as argued here, had a unique dimension. In the end, this unique dimension favoured Ngala and always found Ngala at the top. But which was this unique dimension? It was the differences in the aims of the opponents of Ngala. The aims of the Arab-Swahili group opposed to Ngala were different from those of the Mijikenda group.

In the tapestry of Kenya's power struggle during the nationalist struggle and after independence, Ngala is seen as the meek, the non-controversial man, the reconciler. But this is to oversimplify Ngala, the man. In the wave of increasing political activity, he emerges as a schemer, strategist and a tactician. He was a master of his own times, calculating well the odds against him. He was a courageous and sagacious politician ready to challenge his political opponents on a public platform. He was indeed a master of political intrigue. Even after the dissolution of KADU, he strategically fought hard to secure a national stature by tactfully helping to dislodge the KANU radical group which, by 1966, he had successfully achieved. That he could lock horns with Kenyatta, especially over Mombasa politics, exemplifies his courage. It is with this courage and shrewdness that he survived so many political crises at the Coast that saw him being regarded as a "political wizard"- his wizardry being in his manipulation of the circumstances and not in true magic.

In this portrait of Ngala, he is seen as a man who helped in the establishment of parliamentary democracy in Kenya. As the first Leader of the Opposition, he displayed honesty by acting as the litmus paper for the functioning of the government, and towards this end he did his best. We noted

however, that his leadership of the Opposition was not radical enough. It was an Opposition from the right. When the second Opposition came to exist in 1966, it was an opposition from the left. With the demise of the second Opposition (KPU) in 1969, Kenya was once again back to the state of a single-party state. What this demonstrates is that if the one-party system in Kenya is inevitable, the trend is not unilinear. Equally, as a believer in parliamentary democracy, Ngala fought hard to oppose the move to initiate changes in the Independence Constitution that would have given sweeping powers to the President. Ironically, it is the same Parliament that endorsed these changes and hence gave the President sweeping powers. This has been the nature of the political evolution in Kenya since independence.

Ngala was a man of unswerving principles which at many times made him enemies. Where truth mattered he would always uphold it, no matter the odds. Equally, he was a realist. He would see no fault in changing his mind if events showed him he had been mistaken in an earlier opinion. This realism showed itself in his handling of the affairs of his portfolios. It was also evident in his unequivocal approach to politics.

Ngala disliked nepotism especially in matters of employment and promotions. This, in particular, diluted his popularity among his people from the Coast Province. They criticized him for not taking much interest in getting his people into high positions by using his influential positions as others were doing. Ngala would rather lose his popularity than encourage nepotism. In essence, he was a strong believer in merit in all walks of life.

One question has yet to be answered: Ngala's closeness to the European

at a time when his militant colleagues were far aloof from them. His association with the Europeans was multi-dimensional. One, his insight into the recognition of the European's importance in Kenya's development since their coming was basic to his belief that it was impossible to just do away with them. He saw them as part and parcel of Kenya. His foresight and pragmatism is seen in this light; that Kenyatta's government did not throw out Europeans after independence. They were encouraged to stay and help in the development of the country. Secondly, his association with Europeans reflected his background. That he came from an area (Coast) where different races lived in harmony - he did not see the reason why he could not associate with Europeans.

Thirdly, at no time was Ngala a puppet of the Europeans. Politics being a game of the possible, and that it all depends on how one calculates the times and sees his ends meet, Ngala was simply playing the game of politics by associating himself with the Europeans. That he was able to master the game at the time and indeed succeeded to keep his party afloat on its own is creditable - it was all politics. What brought the Europeans and Ngala together was his belief in evolutionary change. They formed another minority. They shared fears and suspicion that were nursed by the African minority groups.

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3. Jimmy Ngala
4. Sammy Omari
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10. Bwana Bwanadi
11. Edmund Fondo
12. Reuben Kombe
13. John Paul Kambi
14. Ngala Tuva
15. Francis Khamisi
16. Harry Fanjo
17. Robert Matano
18. John Ziro
19. Michael Blundell
20. Timothy Ramtu

21. Juma Ferunzy
22. Aisha Ferunzy
23. Musa Amalemba
24. Masinde Muliro
25. Khamisi Magogo
26. Lawrance Bengo
27. Birywa wa Masha
28. Harry Kakoti
29. Morris Mboja
30. David Chivatsi
31. Henry Fara
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APPENDIX 1

The following is KADU's statement on Regionalism handed over to KANU's leader, James Gichuru, during the September-October 1961 KADU-KANU joint talks for discussion, but was made public by Gichuru. It formed the basis for Regionalism. The statement advocated for:

Tribal Land

- (1) A form of protection for tribal and spheres of influence against undue infiltration by persons not belonging to such an area.
 - (2) Protection for tribal areas and spheres of influence against deliberate manoeuvres by a Central government designed to result in the administration of such areas by persons not acceptable to the inhabitants of such areas.
 - (3) Protection against deliberate measures by a central government to starve any particular area of money for development and recurrent services.
 - (4) Protection against a forceful acquisition of land or property by a central government from individuals without fair compensation.
 - (5) The right of association freely entered into by tribes and areas to form blocks to which powers will be granted, providing the types of protection mentioned above.
 - (6) Adequate and fair representation for all regions in the central legislature.
 - (7) A constitution which will provide for free expression and criticism by an opposition and which will not allow the entrenchment of a one-party system.
- The statement end: "All these matters will have to be recognised and provided for in the constitution for internal self-government, and such powers must be constitutional to the areas and people concerned, not merely delegated by a central government".

SOURCE: East African Standard, October 5, 1961.

APPENDIX 2

The following is a summary of the Kenya Constitution (1963) issued as a Press Handout No. 251 by the Kenya Government Information Services on 11th March 1963.

SOURCE: KNA, OP/IB/200

THE KENYA CONSTITUTIONCHAPTER 1PROTECTION OF FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS OF THE INDIVIDUAL

This Chapter carries into effect the recommendations of the Committee of the Kenya Constitutional Conference which is included in the Report of that Conference as Annex 'A'. This Chapter will re-enact, but with certain additions, the Fourth Schedule - Fundamental Rights - of the Kenya (Constitution) Order in Council 1958, as amended in 1960, and in particular will ensure the right of persons to associate in trade unions.

CHAPTER IITHE GOVERNOR AND THE DEPUTY GOVERNOR

This Chapter is only relevant in the context of internal self-government and is based upon, and closely follows, the existing provisions contained in Part 2 of the Kenya (Constitution) Orders in Council, 1958 to 1963.

CHAPTER IIICENTRAL LEGISLATURE

Part 1 provides for the Central Legislature, consisting of a National Assembly comprising two Houses, the Senate and the House of Representatives. The Senate consists of 41 Senators, one representing each District and one the Nairobi Area. The House of Representatives will consist of 117 elected members, representing each of the

constituencies delimited by the Constituencies Delimitation Commission, subject to certain minor variations which have been agreed by the Council of Ministers. In addition there will be 12 specially Elected Members elected by the constituency members on the same principle of voting as is now employed by Legislative Council in electing the Kenya representatives to the Central Legislative Assembly of the East African Common Services Organization.

No person shall be qualified to be elected as a member of the National Assembly if he is under any acknowledgement of allegiance to any foreign power or State; or is of unsound mind; or is an undischarged bankrupt; or has any interest in a contract with the Government; or holds or is acting in any office of the public service of the Government or of any Region. All members of the National Assembly must be British Subjects or British protected persons who are at least 21 years old and are literate in English.

There will be a Speaker of the Senate and a Speaker of the House of Representatives, elected in each case by the members of the House concerned, being either themselves members or persons who are qualified to be members.

There will be an Electoral Commission, consisting of the two Speakers, a member appointed by the Governor after consultation with the Prime Minister and one member representing each Region appointed by the Governor after consultation with the President of each Regional Assembly. The Commission will review the number and boundaries of the constituencies for the House of Representatives at intervals of not less than eight nor more than ten years. The decisions of the Commission are executive but come into effect only after the next dissolution of the House of Representatives.

Part 2 of this Chapter deals with procedure in the National Assembly and provides that the Senate cannot delay a measure passed by the House of Representatives for longer than one year or two Sessions at the most. Except for money bills, any may be introduced in either House, but money bills, which are strictly defined, can only be introduced into the House of Representatives and can only be delayed by the Senate for one month.

Part 3 of this Chapter deals with the summoning, prorogation and dissolution of the National Assembly. The Senate will never in fact be dissolved since one-third of its members retire each year and it thus continues in existence; nevertheless, the Senate cannot normally meet or transact business at any time when the House of Representatives is prorogued or dissolved. The Constitution requires that those members of the Senate who retire each year shall be spread evenly throughout Kenya.

Part 4 deals with the legislative powers of the Central Legislature and vests in it the residual power to make laws in respect of any matter except those in respect of which exclusive power to legislate thereon is conferred upon the Regional Assemblies. There will also be a small list of matters where both the Central Legislature and Regional Assemblies have power to legislate, but in any such case the legislation of the Central Legislature will prevail. A Regional Assembly will not be able to transfer its law-making function, in respect of those matters for which it has that responsibility, to the Central Legislature.

The Central Government will be enabled to proclaim a state of emergency if

circumstances warrant this action and thereafter the Central Legislature will be able to make laws even in respect of matters otherwise the exclusive responsibility of the Regional Assemblies. Such a proclamation may be limited to only a part of Kenya, and it can only be made with the prior authority of a resolution of either House of the National Assembly supported by the votes of 65 per cent of all the members of that House or if it is endorsed by a similar resolution of the other House within seven days. No proclamation of emergency can remain in force for longer than two months unless its continuance is similarly approved and ratified.

In certain circumstances the Central Legislature will be able to assume the legislative or executive authority of a Regional Assembly if that Regional Assembly is impeding or prejudicing the exercise of the executive authority of the Central Government or failing to comply with a law made by the Central Legislature.

CHAPTER IV

EXECUTIVE POWERS

The executive authority of the Central Government extends to the maintenance and execution of the Constitution and to all matters which are not specifically conferred upon Regional Assemblies. The Central Government will be able to delegate any of its functions to a Regional Assembly and, through that Assembly, to any officer or authority, including a local authority, within a Region.

The Governor, acting in his discretion, will appoint a Prime Minister, who will be the member of the House of Representatives who appears likely to command the support of a majority of that House. The other Ministers will be appointed by the Governor acting in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister and while they must be members of the National Assembly, may come from either House. The Governor, acting in his discretion, may remove the Prime Minister if a vote of no confidence in the Government of Kenya is passed in the House of Representatives and within three days the Prime Minister does not either resign or advise a dissolution of the House of Representatives. The offices of the other Ministers become vacant if the Governor acting in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister so directs or upon the resignation of the Prime Minister.

There will be a Cabinet consisting of the Prime Minister and the other Ministers; the Cabinet will advise the Governor in regard to the Government of Kenya and it will be collectively responsible to the two Houses of the National Assembly for any advice which it may give and for everything done by or under the authority of any Minister in the execution of his office.

During internal self-government the Governor, acting in his discretion, will continue to be responsible for defence, including naval, military and air forces, external affairs and internal security; but he will normally act in all these matters through a Minister.

Except in respect of those matters which the Governor is explicitly empowered to act in his discretion, the Governor must obtain, and act in accordance with, the advice of the Cabinet.

Provision will be made for the Attorney-General to continue to exercise unfettered control in relation to the prosecution of persons charged with criminal offences.

CHAPTER V

REGIONS

Kenya will be divided into the Nairobi Area and seven Regions, the boundaries of which will be specified in the Constitution.

Any boundary between one Region and another may be amended by a decision by a two-thirds majority of the two Regional Assemblies concerned and a simple majority of each House of the Central Legislature.

Notwithstanding the above, within six months from the coming into force of the new Constitution, any boundary between one Region and another may be amended by a decision by a simple majority of the two Regional Assemblies concerned, provided that the area transferred, together with any other areas which may have been previously transferred, does not comprise more than five per cent of the population of the Region from which it is being withdrawn.

Each Region will have a Regional Assembly consisting of elected members and specially elected members. The elected members will be elected by constituencies on the basis that each District within a Region shall return the same number of members to the Regional Assembly. The specially elected members will be elected on the same principles as the specially elected members of the House of Representatives and on the basis of one specially elected member for each eight constituency elected members.

Each Regional Assembly will have a President, elected by its members from among persons who are members or are qualified to be members. A person shall not be elected

President unless he is supported by the votes of two-thirds of the votes of the Regional Assembly.

A Regional Assembly will have power to make laws in respect of those matters which are expressly specified in the Constitution, either as being within the exclusive legislative jurisdiction of the Region or as being within the concurrent jurisdiction of both the Central Legislature and the Regional Assemblies. The Central Legislature will not be able to divest itself of its legislative power in favour of a Regional Assembly.

CHAPTER VI

FINANCE

Part 1 deals with the financial procedure of the Government of Kenya and provides for the Consolidated Fund and the necessity for legislation to authorise any expenditure of money.

Part 2 makes provision to the like effect with respect to a Regional Fund for each Region.

Part 3 implements the recommendations of the Report of the Fiscal Commission. Except in respect of those taxes, royalties and fees which may specifically be imposed or levied by Regional Assemblies or local authorities, the Central Government and the Central Legislature retain the residual power to raise taxes.

CHAPTER VII

POLICE

This Chapter implements the agreement reached at Lancaster House and set forth in Annex 'B' to the Report of the Kenya Constitutional Conference, 1962.

CHAPTER VIII

THE JUDICATURE

Part I establishes the Supreme Court and provides for a Chief Justice and the other judges. The Chief Justice will be appointed by the Governor acting in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister, who will consult the Presidents of the Regional Assemblies and will not advise the Governor to appoint any person as Chief Justice unless the Presidents of not less than four Regional Assemblies concur in the proposed appointment.

The other judges will be appointed by the Governor acting in accordance with the advice of the Judicial Service Commission.

This Commission will consist of the Chief Justice as Chairman, two other judges appointed by the Governor acting in accordance with the advice of the Chief Justice, and a member of the Public Service Commission appointed by the Governor acting in accordance with the advice of the Chairman of that Commission. A judge can only be removed from office on account of inability to perform the functions of his office or for mis-behaviour and then only after the matter has been investigated by a tribunal comprising persons who hold or have held office as a judge of a Superior Court in any Commonwealth country.

Provision is made in Part 2 for the establishment of a Court of Appeal for Kenya, although unless and until such a Court is established the existing Court of Appeal for Eastern Africa will continue to exercise appellate jurisdiction from the Supreme Court of Kenya except in relation to cases involving the construction of the Constitution or allegations that fundamental rights have been abrogated; in such cases an appeal will lie direct from the Supreme Court to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council.

Provision is made for the establishment of other subordinate courts and in particular for Khadis' Courts.

CHAPTER IX

THE PUBLIC SERVICE

The Central Government and the Regional Assemblies (referred to below as the "employing authorities") should each have its own public service (i.e. eight services).

Each of the employing authorities should be free to decide the conditions of employment (excluding pensions) and the composition of the establishment of its own public service.

There should be eight Public Service Commissions with a common element.

Each Public Service Commission should have seven members and be composed as follows:-

(a) four Independent Members (including a Chairman and Deputy Chairman), all of whom should be common to all eight Commissions; and

(b) three Representative Members appointed by the employing authority.

The Independent Members would initially be appointed by the Governor acting in his discretion. Subsequent vacancies would be filled by the Governor, acting in accordance with the advice of the Judicial Service Commission. No person should be appointed to be an Independent Member:

(a) if at any time he has been an elected member of, or a candidate for election to, either House of the National Assembly or any former Legislative Council or any Regional Assembly, or if at any time he has held any office in any political organisation which has sponsored or supported candidates for either House of the National Assembly, a Regional Assembly, or any local government authority; or

(b) if he is a public officer.

Provision should be made for the temporary replacement of any member of a Public Service Commission who is absent through illness or any other cause.

Each Commission should have executive responsibility for appointments, promotions and discipline. All matters relating to discipline or the termination of employment should be dealt with by the Independent Members alone.

Any decision of a Public Service Commission would require the concurrence of a majority of the members entitled to attend.

Each Commission should be empowered to transfer its functions in respect of any sector of the public service to such officer as may be agreed with the employing authority. Each Commission should be entitled at any time to resume any of the functions so transferred.

The Commission should have the right to prescribe minimum qualifications for entry into any branch of the Public Service. The Independent Members should as far as practicable endeavour to ensure that the standards set are comparable in all eight services.

Officers should be allowed to transfer from one public service to another in accordance with the procedure outlined below.

When a vacancy occurs in the public service of the Central Government or of any Region, the employing authority concerned should inform its Public Service Commission which would advertise the vacancy; and any officer in any of the public services should be entitled to apply for appointment.

Before any appointment is made which involves the transfer of an officer from the public service of one employing authority to that of another, the authority which is currently employing him should be consulted. If it objects to his transfer, and if a majority of the Independent Members consider it to be in the interest of good administration in Kenya that the officer concerned should not be transferred, they should have the right to exclude his candidature for the vacancy.

Pensions should be fixed on uniform principles by the Central Legislature and should be safeguarded by the Constitution.

In order to facilitate the transfer of officers from one public service to another and in order to avoid undesirable competition among employing authorities, all such authorities should endeavour to maintain reasonably uniform rates of pay and conditions of service throughout all the public services. These matters should at regular intervals, be jointly reviewed by the Finance Minister of the Central Government (acting as Chairman) and the Chairmen of the Finance and Establishment Committees of all the Regional Assemblies, who should make recommendations to the employing authorities. The Independent Members of the Public Service Commissions should attend meetings of the reviewing body in an advisory capacity.

When making appointments and promotions the Public Service Commission of the Central Government should seek to ensure that, as far as practicable, the public service of the Central Government includes a reasonable number of officers from all Regions and from Nairobi. The Public Service Commission of each Region should seek to ensure that a substantial proportion of the posts in the public service of that Region is staffed by persons of that Region, insofar as they are available.

CHAPTER X

LAND

Part I provides for the establishment, constitution and functions of the Central Land Board.

Part 2 deals with land tenure and confirms all estates, interests and rights in or over land which the Governor on behalf of the Crown has granted or created at any time before the coming into operation of the Constitution. Subject to existing titles, Crown land will vest in the Regions and, in the case of Nairobi, in the Central Government while Native lands will vest in County Councils. Certain areas of Crown land which are now reserved for the use of specific tribes will also vest in County Council.

Provision is made for the acquisition of land for Central Government and for Regional purposes and for the disposition of land which is no longer required for such purposes.

Part 3 provides for the control of all transactions in agricultural land throughout Kenya, by requiring the approval of a Divisional Land Control Board to any dealing in such land. In the case of Divisional Boards having jurisdiction over Native land, there will be an appeal to the County Council concerned, while a special tribunal, comprising the chairman of the Agricultural Appeals Tribunal (set up under the Agriculture Ordinance) and two assessors, one appointed by each Region and one by the Central Government, will hear appeals from other Divisional Boards. Divisional Boards having jurisdiction in the Scheduled Areas will only be able to refuse consent to a transaction on agricultural or economic grounds.

CHAPTER XILOCAL GOVERNMENT

This Chapter provides that the whole of Kenya must be comprised within the area of some local government authority, or which there will be two basic upper tiers, municipalities and county councils, and four types of lower tier; urban councils and township authorities, and, in the rural areas, area councils and local councils. Provision is made for the election of councillors and councillors both by other local authorities and by Regional Assemblies or other bodies, so as to ensure adequate representation of, e.g., the Central Government and the East African Common Services Organisation or any of its services.

Local government is a matter exclusively reserved to Regional Assemblies, but the procedure for establishing new local authorities or varying existing local authorities is included in this Chapter, which also specifically deals with the temporary replacement of a local authority by a commission when a local authority is in financial difficulties or is failing to exercise its functions properly.

The Nairobi Area, which will be the direct responsibility of the Central Legislature, will be a municipality administered by the City Council of Nairobi. There will, however, be a Standing Committee of the Senate, upon which each Region will be represented, which will advise generally in connection with the administration of the Nairobi Area.

CHAPTER XIIMISCELLANEOUS

This Chapter will contain certain miscellaneous provisions and, in particular, the definitions, and their interpretation, of words and expressions used in the Constitution.

E N D

PRESS OFFICE,
KENYA GOVERNMENT INFORMATION SERVICES,
NAIROBI