

Africa's liberation generation

ROBERT I. ROTBERG

Email: rirotberg@gmail.com

Today's African political class is much more diverse in character and aspiration than the one that overcame colonial rule and inaugurated independent governments. Sons of early liberation leaders now jostle for power in a few countries (Chad, Kenya), descendants of successful autocrats perpetuate family rule in others (Gabon), several long-serving hegemony remain in control after decades in office (as in Cameroon, Djibouti, Rwanda and Uganda), a clutch of kleptocrats continue to defraud citizens (as in Equatorial Guinea and Zimbabwe), upstart soldiers oust elected placeholders (Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mali), and here and there democratic stalwarts (Botswana, Ghana, Malawi, Senegal, South Africa, Zambia) are delivering authentic, uplifting, leadership to their followers.

Africa today is wealthier, if more unequal in Gini-coefficient terms, than it was when the colonists were removed and settler oppressors ousted. It is also much more a part of the global village than ever before. The advent of the mobile telephone has enabled much of Africa to become as connected to the rest of the globe as any other section of the planet. Africans are also more broadly educated and much more middle class in aspirations and attainments than earlier. They often, but not always, demand good governance – the delivery of improving quantities and qualities of essential political goods such as health-care, schooling opportunities, security and safety, political participation, rules of law, transparency and sustainable economic development.¹

Today's youthful cadres of Africans, and especially contemporary political leaders, may only generally realise what the liberation generation was about – how amid a context of very limited educational opportunity members of the founding political generation stood out, overcame immense obstacles and became liberationists. At first anyway, and specifically in British East and Central Africa, this initial cohort of political change makers were the ones who had achieved – who possessed the skills and seized opportunities to get ahead, were accomplished scholastically, and became notable as well-articulated antagonists to colonial rule and white domination.

Most of these early nationalists – the men and sometimes women of the 1950s – became skilled in adapting the very training and socialisation in Western ideas and Western political theory that the colonial powers had

delivered (to achieve different objectives) to their subjects. The introduction of a sense of individual responsibility, of natural law notions, of respect for civil liberties and human rights, and of the rightness of dignity and toleration, all revealed and underscored disparities between overlords and subjects. Oppression became personal.

A few influential liberal Christian missionary denominations also preached a Gospel that translated into a cry for freedom. In almost every Anglophone country, at least, many of those Africans who both assimilated and sought to advance themselves and their peoples within the colonial dispensation also appreciated, especially after India's independence and – closer to home – the transformation of the colonial Gold Coast into an independent Ghana, that as creatures of foreign occupied territories they could themselves change their fate – that they could and should claim a similar right to freedom from colonial oversight.

In the Francophone territories, too, this was in several cases an obvious next move. Some of their existing leaders already represented subject peoples in the *Assemblée Nationale* during the Third and Fourth Republics. Going from expressing views there to legislating in the separate jurisdictions into which France had carved its sections of Africa for administrative purposes was a natural, even obvious, advance in the wake of the Algerian war and the existence of a Free France in Africa during the Second World War.

The young men (most were in their twenties and thirties when they became fully engaged nationalists) who grasped the nettle of potential political change in the 1950s comprised a generation that emerged from among the ranks of those who had learned exactly how the colonists functioned. Having mastered colonialism and its rules, they simply (their word) wanted to continue to mature as fully Westernised citizens who could control their own destinies and the destinies of a less privileged proletariat. The argument for a transition to home rule seemed to these youngsters obvious and inevitable – and just. And as they were opposed and rebuffed, so they became increasingly vociferous in proclaiming their cause, and increasingly impatient. They saw themselves as *the* generation to assert home rule and bring about the kinds of economic growth and social advancement that would enable the former dependencies to become nations.

Naturally, colonial overlords opposed change. Then, understanding the impossibility of withstanding the onrushing tsunami of indigenous demand forever, they sought to retard the process. 'Africans were not ready', came the cry.² But in East and Central Africa a further major impediment to easy grants of independence was the existence of thousands of whites who, British or no, had 'settled' in Her Majesty's dominions over decades and owned farms and plantations (employing African labour) and urban service industries that catered to the agricultural establishment. Northern Rhodesia had copper, too, vital for British economic growth, and Kenya profitable crops of tea and coffee. The generation of Africans that came to maturity in the 1950s wanted to shift aside the settlers together with British administrators and to uplift

themselves and their followers in the manner of the new Indian, Ghanaian and Sudanese political pioneers.

When I was first becoming acquainted with Africa as a neophyte social science researcher, I interviewed freedom fighters and aspiring politicians wherever I travelled, often for other research purposes and other projects. But I was always interested in the rising political class – with the men (they were nearly all men at that stage) who saw themselves as conquerors of colonialism – as liberationists and future leaders. Who were they? How and why did they become anti-colonialists? What were their ideological leanings? What did they hope to do when they sent white rulers packing? And when they overcame settler hegemony, how would they rule their newly conquered domains?

THE INTERVIEWS

Between 1959 and 1962, I interviewed approximately 50 persons of the liberation generation. Each was an aspiring or an already successful young politician. Some had just taken office, or were about to do so. Others, especially in Zambia and Malawi, were still uncertain of success, but poised. This article draws on my notes (not transcripts, except in one case) of a sample of 17 of those interviews. (All of my notes, mostly typed, some handwritten, will be deposited with my other Africa papers in the Harvard University Archives, and will be available to future researchers.) These raw source materials constitute a unique and hitherto unavailable commentary on the founders of at least a key portion of contemporary Africa. As a whole they shed additional light on the origins of African anti-colonialism. Indeed, they do so intimately, through the candid testimony of persons who were reshaping the destinies of colonial Africa. We should regard what follows as the faithful voice of a liberation generation.

Yet my interviewees do not begin to constitute a fully representative sample of Africa's early anti-colonialists. The *N* is much too small, overall, and the interviews, although rich and rewarding in substance, were conducted less systematically than would have been ideal. Nevertheless, among the 50 or so first-generation anti-colonialists whom I interviewed in 1959 and 1960, nearly all came to hold high political office in their chosen Anglophone countries: as cabinet ministers, as vice-presidents, and – in five countries – as heads of state. Thus, the small sample is nevertheless powerful.

As a group, my interviewees were each well educated (for the era and for the region), a number had travelled overseas; they each expressed the kinds of idealistic political objectives that might be expected of persons schooled to the tertiary level. Many were also rabble-rousers. Some were more studious and nominally accommodating, but they could each envisage a future – in the very near term – when indigenous Ugandans, Kenyans, Tanganyikans, Zanzibaris, Zambians, Malawians and Zimbabweans would all rule themselves. All were united in their opposition to colonial rule, which also included opposing settlers holding authority, as in Kenya and the Rhodesias and Nyasaland.

British Central Africa's anti-colonial trajectory differed from East Africa's. Rhodesian white settlers agitated for the creation of a Federation joining white home-ruled Southern Rhodesia to the British Protectorates of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. The settlers succeeded in persuading the British government to establish such a 'partnership' based Federation in 1953, despite the strident opposition of Africans in the two protectorates. Thus, in those two places anti-colonial agitation was perversely stimulated by the drive to federate. In those realms, the generation wanting freedom sought both the ending of the Federation and the culmination of colonial oversight.

Rather than trying to overcome the social scientific limitations of my sample, this 'Briefing' focuses on several sets of individuals in depth, and then tries to incorporate the richness of each interview into an overall framework (even with a weak N). I also focus qualitatively, certainly not quantitatively, on illustrative exemplars of the early generation of anti-colonialists in the Anglophone territories of East and Central Africa. Given those critical caveats, the abbreviated examples (because of space constraints) below may be considered characteristic of the time and region, but not necessarily of Africa overall. They were all key political leaders, and articulated the thoughts of their emerging nationalist cohort.

As readers will see, the members of the liberation generation were nearly all the first in their families to embrace formal education as the means of advancement. Invariably, they progressed through primary school and on to secondary school, reaching as high as their territories then permitted. Many, especially in Uganda and Tanzania, went straight on to Makerere University College, where the best and the brightest were gaining degrees. Others went to Fort Hare University College in South Africa. A few, like future President Julius Nyerere, continued their schooling overseas in Britain, India or the USA. As a group, the liberationists piled up degrees and prepared themselves in the assimilated Western manner for their future roles as rulers of new states. They were all 'stand outs' of their age-group.

Because of the major missionary influence on the provision of schooling for Africans, nearly all of the persons I interviewed were products of Christian-managed education. Four interviewees were sons of Anglican priests. (The absence of Muslims was striking, but see below.) Additionally, as far as I could ascertain, all of the fathers of interviewees, with one exception, were literate. Indeed, about half of the interviewees seemed to come notably from relative affluence and, in several cases, from traditional prominence. There were at least two sons of chiefs and two others of fathers who were advisors to paramount chiefs or monarchs. The cooperative movement nurtured nationalists in Tanzania; training at Makerere University College did the same for a plurality of my interviewees.

Another possible reason for the schooling successes and alacrity for politics among my cohort was their readiness to question the established order. Many were instinctively rebels. Some told me how much they considered themselves independent thinkers. In re-reading the interviews, too, one appreciates how

self-confident these emergent political leaders were. Shrinking violets were few. They knew that they could reshape the colonial world to their liking, even if the path forward was strewn with obstacles.

Given the subsequent salience of ethnicity in African politics and African development, it is striking that my interviewees in the 1950s and early 1960s were of mixed backgrounds. In Uganda the interviewees were of kingdom and non-kingdom heritage; in Kenya they were from the Central Highlands, the Rift Valley, the Lake Victoria littoral and the coast. In Tanzania they stemmed equally from around Lakes Victoria, Tanganyika and Malawi, and from the coast. In Malawi, they were from the north, the centre and the south. Zambians stemmed from the far north, the far west, the east and the south. In no country (at that stage) did a single or a few ethnic identities dominate the anti-colonial struggle. Later, of course, all five countries (bar Tanzania) came to be run by and favourable to persons of singular ethnic backgrounds.

ZAMBIA AND ITS EMERGING LEADERS

I interviewed several dozen founders and followers of the first liberation political movements in Zambia (once Northern Rhodesia) mostly between 1959 and 1962. All, in their various ways, were educational achievers – the first in their families to finish primary school and go on to secondary and sometimes tertiary opportunities. Each told me how some traumatic incidents transformed them from general subjects of discrimination to particular opponents of continued white rule. For Zambians, obviously the imposition of the Federation accelerated that shift from schoolboy or early teacher relative complacency to active antagonism. But individual disappointments also helped to turn them toward politics.

These pivotal points in young lives are – in retrospect – hardly surprising or unusual. But in the context of white domination in the 1950s, it was easier to accept the state of play than it was to break from traditional paths of advancement. The indigenous upwardly mobile society had to be navigated with skill and care.

The selected experiences below are illustrative for Zambia and, as we shall see below, similar to what my interviewing found in Malawi, Tanzania and Uganda.

I interviewed a slim, cheerful but committed Kenneth Kaunda in his hut 280, a modest dwelling that is now a national shrine, in the crowded Chilenje African area of Lusaka in February 1959. The future first president of Zambia was 37 years old, the son of two Tonga Presbyterians from northern Malawi. David Kaunda, his father, had been ordained at the famous Livingstonia mission of the United Free Church of Scotland in 1926, being one of the proud earlier converts and dedicated disciples of the Rev. Robert Laws and the evangelical team that he had assembled at Livingstonia.

Well before his ordination, the Livingstonia mission sent David Kaunda in 1908 to establish an outpost of Livingstonia in the northern districts of what

would become Zambia. He was the sole evangelist until 1915 at what became the thriving Lubwa mission, in a CiBemba speaking region near Chinsali. Kenneth David Kaunda was born there in 1924.

The senior Kaunda died in 1932. Kenneth meanwhile had begun his primary education at Lubwa, completing Standard VI. He also trained to be a teacher at Lubwa before migrating 513 miles south to Lusaka, the nascent capital of what was then Northern Rhodesia, in 1941 to attend the Protectorate's only secondary establishment. At Munal School on the distant outskirts of the city, Kaunda completed Forms I and II (the nominal equivalent of US ninth and tenth grades). Then his formal education stopped, for Northern Rhodesia at that time provided no further schooling possibilities. And possibly because he graduated from Form II at the height of the Second World War, there was little thought of sending the preacher's son to South Africa or Uganda, where Africans were enrolling in tertiary institutions.

Instead, earnest and gentle, Kenneth Kaunda became a teacher of Standard VI, back at Lubwa, from 1943 to 1947. But he left his job, the mission where he had grown up, and the life he had long known in that last year because of a profound disagreement with the Free Church of Scotland over discrimination. Kaunda told me that he long resented the fact that his father and other African preachers had been treated as second-class clerics, not as full partners of the mostly younger white missionaries who had come out from Scotland in the 1920s and early 1930s. The whites drove automobiles belonging to the mission; his father and other African evangelists went everywhere on their official bicycles. Moreover, David Kaunda was only being paid 3 pounds a month at his death, white preachers at Lubwa making much more. 'No missionary has ever treated an African as a partner', Kaunda told me.³

What forced Kaunda to leave Lubwa, he said, were segregated benches in the church. Even in a United Free Church of Scotland establishment during weekly services, whites occupied padded chairs, Africans being consigned to hard benches. Furthermore, although the white children of missionaries were all provided with a free education, Kaunda himself had to labour in order to support his own schooling; he carried bricks and cut the grass around the station. In other words, Kaunda told me very simply, even the most enlightened of the Afrophile Scottish missionaries with whom he had been in close contact were racially conscious and unwilling to embrace the full emancipation of their denominational followers. 'In my days at Lubwa, I had begun to question certain things in the life of the mission which seemed incompatible with the teachings of Christ in the Bible.'⁴

We can probably say, as Kaunda implied in his interview with me, that he became an early nationalist and advocate of liberation when he broke with the missionaries in 1947 and 1948, just about the time that India and Pakistan were becoming independent. But before joining the freedom struggle full-time, Kaunda found employment in Tanzania, and then in Southern Rhodesia. Returning to Zambia as a national Welfare Officer in Chingola and Mululira on the Copperbelt, he also sold clothing on the side. Soon (about

1950) he became president of the Copperbelt branch of the national Zambian teachers' union. Kaunda joined the embryonic Northern Rhodesian African National Congress in about 1949 and established a Chinsali branch.

Kaunda also became a farmer, growing crops at Mokambo near Chinsali and selling the produce in Lusaka and Kasama. But his enduring political engagement had also started: in 1951, ANC members chose Kaunda to lead the Zambian Northern Province branch of the Congress, and in 1953 members of the full Congress elected him secretary. In that capacity, he helped to organise boycotts of shops in Lusaka where Africans routinely were served at the back, through hatches.⁵

Because of his disgust at the way Africans were treated on the missions – even the most liberal ones – and in the growing white-dominated cities, Kaunda by the early 1950s had become an acknowledged anti-colonial leader within Zambia. In 1955, he wrote an anti-colonial tract and was promptly jailed for two months.

As secretary of the Congress in the mid-1950s, Kaunda helped to organise two further boycotts, the success of at least one of which was spoiled by Congress President Harry Nkumbula's reluctance to see it through to a successful conclusion. Nkumbula was also drinking too much, and behaving in an 'undisciplined' manner. Kaunda therefore decided he had to break away from the main Congress and form the Zambia African National Congress to oust British and Federal leaders by mounting a campaign of 'passive resistance'. When I asked if such a campaign would succeed, as it had in India, Kaunda shrugged and smiled. 'The weapons of violence are in the hands of the Imperialists; we will not use them.'⁶

In the next year, after the British declared an 'emergency' in 1959 and imprisoned him in Southern Rhodesia for more than a year, Kaunda became the president of the United National Independence Party (UNIP). He then proceeded to transform Northern Rhodesia into an independent Zambia in 1964.

Kaunda's key role in the liberation of Zambia is well known. What is less familiar is the nature of his early rebellion against British colonial rule and the Federation. By his own testimony, the man who later led Zambia for 27 years as president, created a one-party state, nationalised the country's copper mines and major earners of foreign exchange, and organised the front-line states and their opposition to South African apartheid and Rhodesian segregation, turned from assimilation to militancy because of how he and his father were thoughtlessly mistreated as servants of the Church, and of course how his contemporaries were also being abused. The trigger was pulled by the white church, and reinforced by Kaunda's visit to India in 1958.

I interviewed Simon Mwansa Kapwepwe in mid-1961 after he had been released from detention in Barotseland by Northern Rhodesia's colonial authorities. Kapwepwe, quick to anger, was Zambia's first foreign minister and, for at least a decade after independence in 1964, a very close political associate of Kaunda's. In CiBemba, and sometimes in English, Kapwepwe was by far the more compelling speaker. He peppered his vernacular speeches with

appropriate aphorisms and could rouse political audiences to a fever pitch. He was also far more genuinely Marxist in speech and policy formulation than Kaunda, a difference which stimulated their later personal break and, in part, led to Kapwepwe's decision to leave the ruling party, create his own, and contest an election against UNIP despite having been vice-president of the nation from 1967 to 1970.

Both men knew each other from their teen years. Kapwepwe was two years older, the son of a policeman who had been schooled across the border at Livingstonia. The elder Kapwepwe became a District Messenger at Chinsali and later at Isoka, closer to Tanzania. The young Simon attended a Scottish mission school at Isoka, where he was taught by the Rev. Donald Siwale, a politically active Presbyterian preacher whom I interviewed and with whom I exchanged letters well into the 1960s.

Kapwepwe moved from Isoka to the Lubwa Mission in 1939–41, to complete Standards V and VI. It was there that Kapwepwe and Kaunda first knew each other, although Kaunda was his senior in schooling. After finishing Standard VI, Kapwepwe failed to continue his education in South Africa (Zambia then had no such post-primary institution). He became a truck driver for the Northern Rhodesian department of public works. After two years he returned to Lubwa to finish the same teacher training course that Kaunda had completed. He was the course 'captain'.

Kaunda was then a teacher at Lubwa, so the two young men who were eventually going to liberate Northern Rhodesia became friends. But for two years after overlapping at Lubwa, Kapwepwe taught at schools elsewhere in the Chinsali District.

They must have kept in close touch during those last years because in 1947, after both had resigned their mission school positions, they attempted together to enrol in a secondary school across the border in what then was the Trust Territory of Tanganyika. Rebuffed, they returned home to Zambia and decided together, according to Kapwepwe, to 'dedicate' the whole of their 'remaining lives' to fighting for the freedom of the peoples of Northern Rhodesia. 'We were frustrated', Kapwepwe told me, and objected to the manner in which whites treated Africans. A lack of further educational opportunity also drove both young men into political opposition.⁷

Kaunda remained within Zambia. Kapwepwe, however, obtained a government of India Village Industrial Scholarship and spent the next four years studying pottery and journalism in Bombay (Mumbai). He became fluent in Hindi as well as the several Zambian languages in which he was easily conversant. He told me that his experience in India only deepened his antagonism to Britain and British colonialism. Upon his return home, he was ready to join Nkumbula and Kaunda in the Congress movement, and soon to collaborate with Kaunda and Mainza Chona in separating themselves from the Nkumbula-led political party.

Meanwhile across Zambia, in the far western Barotseland kingdom, Sikota Wina, much later Deputy Speaker of the Zambian parliament and the head

of various ministries over at least 50 years in political office, grew up in Mongu, on the Zambezi River. His father, an aristocrat in Lozi terms, was the kingdom's representative first to the northern Luvale and Lunda peoples who were nominally still part of the kingdom and then to the kingdom's Ila subjects on the Kafue River. The younger Wina, whom I interviewed when he was detained in October 1959 at Luwingu for opposing British rule, said that his father had been deputed to cede sovereignty around the town of Livingstone to the colonial rulers. 'I've never forgiven him for that', Sikota Wina told me. (His father subsequently became ngambela, or prime minister, of the Barotse [Lozi] kingdom.)⁸

The younger Wina attended school in Barotseland through Standard VI, and in 1948, when he was 17, travelled to Lusaka to complete his formal education at Munali Secondary School. By then the school had been upgraded, so Wina spent four years at Munali, completing Forms I–IV, and passing the Cambridge School Senior Certificate examination.

At Munali, Wina was viewed as a 'troublemaker' who – until his final year – was not as dedicated a student as his elder brother Arthur, who was two years ahead, and much more academically accomplished. From Munali, Arthur went to Makerere University College (later Makerere University) in Uganda, then to the University of California at Los Angeles, and finally to become Zambia's first minister of finance.

In 1953, during his last year at Munali, Sikota Wina began to think politically and nationalistically. 'I gathered together a small group of fourth formers in order to create a National Youth League to support the [Northern Rhodesia] African National Congress.' He chaired the new Youth League and led a deputation to see Nkumbula, the ANC's president. 'I tried to persuade him that it was important to get the youth involved ...'⁹

But his real awakening in terms of race relations, Wina said, occurred in the next year, when he was on his way to study at Fort Hare University College in South Africa. He tried to purchase cigarettes when the train stopped in South Rhodesia. But the white proprietor would not serve him. On re-boarding his train going south, a white guard pushed Wina off the train and onto the tracks. 'That's when I really started hating Europeans.' (He had also been reading Alan Paton's *Cry the Beloved Country*, learning of the iniquities of apartheid.)

Sikota Wina, among the top seven students at Munali in his final year, went to Fort Hare instead of Makerere because the authorities in Northern Rhodesia, recently forced into the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, had concluded that students trained at Makerere became too self-assured and insufficiently subservient. At Fort Hare they would better understand their future roles, especially since apartheid had dramatically altered higher education in that country. They would 'learn to fit in better and become more acclimatised'.

At Fort Hare, then South Africa's premier training place for the country's black elite (although a few Africans attended the Universities of Cape Town and the Witwatersrand), Wina at first studied for a general BA, intending (as

he was obliged to do by the nature of his government scholarship) to teach afterwards in Northern Rhodesia. But in his third and final year at Fort Hare, Wina decided that he wanted to go to the University of Cape Town to complete a law degree. This shift in direction caused Northern Rhodesia to withdraw his scholarship.

At the same time, in 1955, the South African government introduced its Bantu Education Act, which was intended to prevent Africans from matriculating in 'open' universities such as Cape Town. Wina, as secretary of the Students' Representative Council and also secretary of the South African ANC youth organisation on campus, joined others to protest against the bill. They decided to strike, i.e. to stop attending classes. Police arrived and shut down Fort Hare even though the student protest had been peaceful and passive. Of Wina, Masauko Chipembere (see below) who was also at Fort Hare, wrote: 'Wina was always a politician and a radical nationalist from the start. He was an effective orator and debater, highly argumentative in class, challenging the professors at every turn.'¹⁰

Wina was expelled, with seven months left to finish his degree. Back home in Northern Rhodesia, with difficulty he finally found a job in the Ministry of Information, writing vernacular newsletters, despite a lack of any prior journalistic experience. After two badly paid years he obtained a position helping to edit the *Nchanga Drum*, a magazine for employees of the local copper mine. A year later he won a Commonwealth Scholarship to spend three months in Britain observing the workings of modern journalism.

When Wina had returned home from South Africa he refused to join the local ANC, still run by Nkumbula, because 'frankly I was quite disillusioned by it'. It had 'no timetable for freedom and for action'. Under Nkumbula 'it was impossible for us to get anywhere'.¹¹

In 1958, Wina became editor of a new newspaper in Ndola called *African Life*. At about the same time Kaunda and Kapwepwe were splitting with Nkumbula and forming the Zambia African National Congress (ZANC). *African Life* became its major promoter and Wina its 'publicity chief'. 'My *African Life* was the only newspaper in the country to carry stories about Kaunda and Kapwepwe, and about the new Congress.'

From that point on, and well into early 1959, Wina became heavily involved in the Kaunda-Kapwepwe-ZANC planning for an attack on the Northern Rhodesian government that was averted only by the government's declaration of an emergency and the rounding up of all nationalist leaders of the ZANC.¹²

Wina was sleeping in the pantry of Arthur's flat in Ndola when the police took Sikota into custody, bundling him off to an isolated corner of the Luwingu District in the Northern Province. There the inhabitants spoke CiBemba, not Silozi, and little English. This enforced rustication was the final making of Sikota Wina – the political activist and liberation fighter.

Other Lozi from western Zambia had experiences growing up that echoed those of Sikota Wina. Nalumino Mundia, for example, born in 1927 in Barotseland, went to school there until he entered the Munali Secondary

School. At Munali he wrote stinging articles in the school newspaper against colonial rule and the Federation. As chair of the debating committee he fostered a number of events critical of the then government of the Protectorate. After completing Form IV, he taught for two years (through 1951) at Katima Mulilo, a Zambian outpost on the edge of the then Caprivi Strip, now the Zambezi Region of Namibia. He spent the next five years in India, attaining a BCom. degree at the University of New Delhi. While in Delhi he copied Gandhian methods and protested a movie 'blaspheming' Africans by fasting. Apparently, according to Mundia, Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru took notice and helped end the movie's screening. (When Zambia gained independence, Mundia became Minister of Local Government, Minister of Finance, Prime Minister, and later Zambia's ambassador to Washington and a clutch of South American nations.)

After this victory in Delhi, Mundia completed an MBA at Trenton State University in New Jersey and, promised a good job by Roan Selection Trust, the major Zambian copper mining corporation, went back to Northern Rhodesia's Copperbelt in 1958. But when he returned home, there was no job, thanks to the opposition of the then dominant European Mineworkers Union. So he obtained temporary employment as a salesman for a food corporation in Bulawayo, Southern Rhodesia. There he joined that colony's African National Congress, and was soon arrested for agitating. He was deported back north across the Zambezi River.

There the leadership of the new Zambia Congress had all been jailed or detained in rural holding areas. So, radicalised by this time as a result of his own treatment and the incarceration of leading nationalists throughout the Federation, Mundia camped himself in mid-1959 outside the Zambian State House in Lusaka – the residence of the governor. He protested and fasted for four days before finally being charged with trespass and removed from the property.

Mundia immediately joined Mainza Chona to lead a breakaway movement from Nkumbula's ANC; with Chona he established what became the United National Independence Party, the eventual victor of the country's first free election in late 1963.

THE MALAWIAN FACTOR

There were many young Malawian political campaigners whom I knew well from the early days of their battles against the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. In particular, I interviewed and interacted closely with almost two dozen of those future political leaders during the period from 1959 to 1961. Foremost in this group of mostly youthful liberationists were Henry Masauko Chipembere and Dunduzu Kaluli Chisiza. They brought Dr Hastings Kamuzu Banda back from Britain and Ghana to lead Malawi to independence, so both took responsibility for the great error of judgement that foisted an autocrat on their country.¹³ (Banda was almost 60 years old when he returned to Malawi; his was a very

different generation from all other liberation leaders. Chipembere and Chisiza had met Banda in London and ignored forewarnings of his authoritarian tendencies.¹⁴ See below.) Both were also key ministers in Malawi's first cabinet, together with Augustine Bwanausi (see below) and such luminaries as M. William Kanyama Chiume, who attended Makerere University College and overlapped in Tabora with Oscar Kambona (see below) and was briefly a member of the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU).

Chipembere, open-faced and mild seeming until he mounted a political platform and became fiery and compelling, began his formal schooling in south-western Tanzania, on Lake Malawi, together with Kambona (see below). Their fathers were both beginning Anglican priests in the Universities' Mission to Central Africa diocese and the young Chipembere was schooled wherever his father was seconded by the mission.

First that was at Liuli in Tanzania and later at Lungwena along the south-eastern shores of Lake Malawi. Eventually the family settled on Likoma Island, near the eastern shores of the giant lake where the elder Chipembere is remembered as a revered archdeacon.

Chipembere first went to Tanganyikan schools that taught in Swahili. Thereafter he attended Malawian schools in English, especially the Anglican Malosa senior primary boarding school north of Zomba, the Protectorate's capital. There he did well, and continued his education in 1947 by enrolling in the Blantyre Secondary School, a Church of Scotland institution run by a tight-fisted, racist, headmaster who believed in belittling his pupils as well as teaching them rigorously. Uniforms were mandatory, even in the coldest weather, and shoes were forbidden.

In the winter of 1949, Malawi was in famine, and water was short. Students in the Blantyre School, which was already run parsimoniously, suffered more than their peers. Chipembere led an effective boycott of meals when he and his fellow students correctly suspected that their provisions were being misappropriated and sold to benefit one of the headmaster's employees. However, the school was otherwise not yet politicised. Nyasaland had not yet been packaged into the Central African Federation; the existing Nyasa National Congress was still rather tentative in its anti-colonial deliberations.

After two years at Blantyre, Chipembere and a handful of other high-performing students were transferred to Goromanzi Secondary School in Zimbabwe to continue their studies from Form III. (Chipembere had scored highest of all students in Malawi in the Cambridge Junior School Certificate examinations.) It was at Goromanzi, Chipembere recalled, that he 'acquired my real political consciousness'. 'It dawned on me that Africans could one day achieve self-government.'¹⁵ In many ways, Goromanzi, run by a liberal white headmaster who tolerated vivid dissent, was a hotbed of political discussion. Chipembere learned the meaning of the word 'exploitation' from other students there. An African teacher also exposed some of the students to the realities of segregation in the colony and gave Chipembere the writings of South African Marxists. Chipembere was also active in the school's debating society, where he honed

his rhetorical skills and learned from fellow Zimbabwean students about how their families had been pushed off ancestral lands by white farmers.

In 1951, Kwame Nkrumah was released from prison in the Gold Coast and given responsibility for forming a black government; that distant event emboldened Chipembere and helped to broaden his political horizon. In vacation visits to his sister in Gatooma (now Kadoma), he also came to appreciate how cruelly the white government of Southern Rhodesia treated its segregated subjects. But when a white man walking along a road near the school slashed Chipembere with a stick for failing to take off his hat in deference, the young man's blood began to boil. For all of these reasons, as a maturing schoolboy, Chipembere became a staunch liberationist in the making.

Politically awakened, and conscious of his leadership potential, Chipembere next enrolled in 1952 at Fort Hare University College, together with Sikota Wina and several of the other men and women who became early and vigorous political actors in Zambia, Zimbabwe, Lesotho and his own Malawi. The ANC's Defiance Campaign, led by Nelson Mandela and others, was underway that year in South Africa. 'By the time I entered Fort Hare', Chipembere recounted, 'I had already decided that I was going to enter politics ... [and] play an active part against colonial rule ...'¹⁶ Within a year of his return to Malawi and employment as a junior district administrator, Chipembere was indeed plunged into the thick of the struggle against the Federation.

So was Dunduzu Kaluli Chisiza from the moment of his expulsion from Zimbabwe as a 'political troublemaker' in 1956. A Tumbuka from northern Nyasaland, he too did his primary schooling at the Livingstonia mission, finishing Standard VI in 1948. He failed, however, to obtain a Nyasa government scholarship to Makerere University College as had so many other successful future political contemporaries. Instead, he enrolled in the Aggrey Memorial College in Kampala, Uganda, and entered politics through the Nyasa Students Association at nearby Makerere University College.

Chisiza also read voraciously, being greatly influenced by the likes and life examples, and the anti-colonial writings, of James Kwegyir Aggrey (of Ghana), Negley Farson (of the USA), Jomo Kenyatta (of Kenya) and Eridadi Mulira (of Uganda). Their words turned Chisiza against 'hypocritical' missionaries and toward the struggle for African home rule in Malawi.

Returning south, he found employment with the Indian High Commission in Salisbury (Harare) editing its official propaganda bulletin. But he also devoted much of his time to establishing the City Youth League, later the African Youth League, an organisation in Harare subsequently folded into the Southern Rhodesian African National Congress. He helped the Youth League mount a boycott of buses in Salisbury, his first brush with colonial authority before being deported. He believed that multiracialism would never help accomplish the goals of African independence.

Chisiza told me that he had brought George Nyandoro and James Chikerema into the Youth League, together with Edson Sithole – all politically conscious young Zimbabweans.¹⁷ This incipient leadership of the movement that Joshua

Nkomo was soon to lead was so locally successful and the bus boycott so threatening that Prime Minister Garfield Todd's government of Southern Rhodesia took umbrage and shipped Chisiza back home to Malawi.

But Malawi was a waystation to further higher education at Fircroft College in Birmingham, England, where he studied labour economics and sociology, met Dr Kamuzu Banda and plotted with Banda and with Chipembere (who had travelled to Britain) to end the hated Federation.

Chipembere and Chisiza wanted their independence movement to be led by someone older, with gravitas. They turned, fatefully, as it transpired, to Banda, an American- and Scottish-trained physician who opposed the Federation and seemed an ideal, much more mature, leader for their liberation efforts.

Upon returning home once more, Chisiza was arrested in Karonga in the northern reaches of his own country. Then he helped Banda and Chipembere mount protests against the Federation throughout Nyasaland in the last months of 1958 and the first month of 1959. They were all arrested, along with other Nyasa stalwarts and imprisoned in Southern Rhodesia. Upon their release, Chisiza became a tireless political organiser until his tragic and premature death in 1962.¹⁸

Unlike Chisiza, whose father was a farmer of rice and cotton, Augustine Bwanausi's father was an accounts clerk and a Yao from the southern part of the Protectorate. The family lived in Blantyre, Malawi's commercial capital. Bwanausi attended a Church of Scotland primary school and then followed Chipembere to Blantyre Secondary School, where he spent five years from 1947, completing Form IV and passing the Cambridge Senior Certificate examination.

Then Bwanausi was off to Makerere University College to study mathematics and chemistry; he wanted to be a rocket engineer. With Mau Mau underway in neighbouring Kenya, he was soon ready to enter anti-colonial politics himself. When he returned to Nyasaland in 1954 to teach at Blantyre Secondary School, he was quickly coopted by Chipembere and Chisiza into the Nyasa Congress' central executive. His political future was assured.¹⁹ However, the Nyasaland government soon gave him a scholarship to compete a diploma in education at the University of Bristol, in Britain, so he was out of the country for two years before becoming the Protectorate's first African education officer. The experience in Bristol, Bwanausi told me, dramatically broadened his horizons and, when the government refused to promote him in 1958, Bwanausi joined the burgeoning political movement members who were about to be detained in Zimbabwe for subversion. Bwanausi, like the others mentioned in this section, became a cabinet minister in President Banda's first government in 1964. But they all fell out with Banda shortly thereafter.²⁰

John Msonthi, a little older than the others, was another son of an Anglican priest who converted to Roman Catholicism. Msonthi's political awakening arose when Britain began contemplating placing Nyasaland under a white-run Federal government. As early as 1949, Msonthi understood that 'we were not free' and were being treated as 'second-rate' citizens subject to an invidious

colour bar – even in Nyasaland. He joined local branches of the Congress. Earlier he had also attended the Malosa Senior Primary School and then a Roman Catholic secondary school in Zomba before becoming a teacher for five years. In 1953 he won an Indian government scholarship to study at the University of Bombay (now Mumbai), overlapping with Kapwepwe. Upon his return in 1958, he immediately plunged back into local politics, helping to edit what became the *Malawi News*, the organ of the Malawi Congress Party during the country's easy run up to independence.

In controlling the young Malawian government, Banda micromanaged for 29 years. None of the young liberationists mentioned here played any role in it and their replacements were told exactly what to do and how to behave as Banda became more and more corrupt and more and more intolerant of dissent.²¹

THE TANZANIANS

Just as the young Zambian and Malawian political leaders whom I interviewed represented diverse ethnic groups and religious persuasions, so the Tanzanians in my sample came from different regions across the Trust Territory (as it then was) and from a variety of professional and religious backgrounds. However, none in my sample was Muslim despite the high proportion of Muslims within the Tanganyikan population. This disparity reflects the importance of Christian missionary education and the absence of comparable facilities in Muslim coastal areas. (Zanzibar was not then joined with Tanganyika.)

Of my sample interviewees, each was mission-schooled and several had studied overseas. Eventually future President Julius Nyerere, whom I also interviewed on several occasions, brought each of them into the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) so that they could help to transform that British dependency into a modern country. They were the best and the brightest of their generation; they were each ambitious for change. They lived in a more thoroughly 'African' country than the Malawians and Zambians and thus had little invidious contact with the kinds of whites who enforced a colour bar farther south. Their paths to local political prominence consequently were more easily traversed; no one asked any of these young people to doff their caps or forced them to purchase supplies through hatches at the back of dukas (rural trading stores). But even though they were not accustomed to being with or harassed by white settlers, they focused on the slights given by administrators of the Territory, and wanted it to devolve authority quickly.

Rashidi Kawawa, slight of build and somewhat rougher in appearance than his compatriots, became Tanzania's second president.²² When I interviewed him in Dar es Salaam, he was a minister without portfolio. Of Ngoni parentage, and from the Songea district in south-western Tanganyika where his father was a farmer and professional hunter, the young Kawawa attended primary schools in his home areas before attending a junior secondary school in Dar es Salaam and a senior secondary school in Tabora through Form Six (or standard XII in the local nomenclature), graduating in 1949 when he was 20 years old.

After initial employment keeping accounts for the Tanganyikan Public Works Department, Kawawa spent several years making movies (and becoming a film star) for the Department of Social Development. These movie ventures were less for entertainment than they were attempts to socialise rural Tanganyikans and to prepare them for self-government.

Subsequently Kawawa was placed in charge within the same department of resettlement camps for Mau Mau adherents who had been captured in Kenya and transferred to Tanganyika for safekeeping. This experience, Kawawa told me, constituted his political awakening. The mostly Kikuyu detainees voiced their grievances through Kawawa, as the representative of the Department of Social Development. Kawawa became 'their spokesman', he told me. He organised adult education courses for them.

Equally formative, as early as 1949 Kawawa became a member of the Tanganyikan Government Servants Association, a union-type body. Two years later he was its assistant general secretary, in 1954 its president. A year later, he was the first general secretary of the Tanganyikan Federation of Labour. 'This was the beginning of my public life', Kawawa told me. He joined TANU in 1956, soon became a member of the party's executive and left government service in 1956 to devote himself to strengthening the labour movement within the territory, rapidly organising craft and industrial unions throughout the territory, but mostly in Dar es Salaam among the dock workers and farther inland among sisal plantation employees. He fomented a general strike for higher pay for domestic workers in 1956 that lasted four months and ended with a doubling of the minimum monthly wage from £2 to £4.

In the next few years Kawawa organised sisal plantation workers despite fierce opposition from the growers and became known as the territory's most effective labour leader. Kawawa motivated, he told me, as many as 40 strikes on individual plantations. Riots and violence followed in 1958 with police harassment of Kawawa and others. Also in 1958, he led a large and successful strike for higher wages and greater African employment against the beer industry. In 1960, employees struck the railways and the postal service for 86 days. These labour actions helped to precipitate the British Colonial Office's decision to transfer power to Nyerere and TANU much earlier than he and other liberationists had anticipated.²³ With the independence of Tanganyika in 1961, Kawawa, like Kambona and Bomani (below), became cabinet ministers.

Kambona, like Chipembere, was the son of an Anglican priest trained by the Universities' Mission to Central Africa. Indeed, his father was of Nyanja heritage and thus closely associated with the majority population of what became Malawi. But the Kambona family was from the Tanzanian side of northern Lake Malawi, and young Kambona first attended primary school there through Standard IV. The outbreak of the Second World War prevented his completing Standard V; instead, from 1942–45 he became a teacher of the vernacular (CiNyanja and CiSwahili) in the school (run by his father) that he spent so many years attending.

In 1945, the Church Missionary Society opened the Alliance Secondary School in Dodoma, in central Tanzania. After failing to raise money to pay the (modest) fees himself, he learned that the Bishop of Nyasaland had decided to advance those tuition expenses. After completing his training there and completing his high school education at the state-run Tabora Secondary School, he taught at Alliance from 1951 to 1953, and also joined the very young TANU in 1951 despite his feeling that it was accomplishing too little. (Later, on the eve of independence, Kambona studied at the London School of Economics and began a legal apprenticeship at the Middle Temple of the Inns of Court.)

It was while attending secondary school that Kambona began thinking imaginatively about how he could enter politics and liberate Tanzania. 'Every Sunday', Kambona told me, he and William Kanyama Chiume, an aspiring politician from Malawi who had attended Makerere University College and was teaching in Dodoma, went into a nearby forested area to give political speeches to each other, so that they would become better 'crowd pleasers and rabble rousers'.²⁴ Kambona also put himself forward as secretary-general of the party, a position to which he ascended quickly. (Kambona was minister of education, minister of home affairs, minister of external affairs, and minister of defence before breaking with Nyerere and being accused of treason.)

Another of these early TANU followers of Nyerere was Paul Bomani, a Sukuma from the Musoma district on the eastern side of Lake Victoria.²⁵ His father was also a preacher, in this case in the Seventh-day Adventist mission church. (Nyerere was born nearby, but was Jesuit trained.) Bomani, born in 1925, was a contemporary of Kaunda and six years older than Sikota Wina.

Bomani (and his brother Mark, also a member of the first Tanzanian ministerial cabinet) went to primary school in Musoma on Lake Victoria through Standard VIII. For four years afterwards he trained at the same mission to be a teacher. His first instructional position was on the Williamson Mine, in 1945. Two years later he joined the burgeoning cooperative movement in the north-western part of his country, and within another four years had become the manager both of the Mwanza Cooperative Society and the Lake Province Cotton Producers Society. Soon he was president of the Sukuma Union, notionally the political head of Tanganyika's most populous ethnic group. The Tanganyika African Association absorbed it as the precursor of the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU).

Because of his standing among the Sukuma and his cooperative leadership, the governor of Tanganyika appointed Bomani to the territory's Legislative Council in 1954, being one of the very first Africans to join that body. He subsequently headed an official commission that recommended universal suffrage for all citizens of the country. Meanwhile, he spent 18 months gaining certificates in economics and cooperative law in Britain at Loughborough College in Leicester.²⁶

All of the years when Bomani was learning about cooperatives and developing his considerable negotiating and human engagement skills, he was a member of

the Tanganyika African Association and the chairman of its Lake Province branch as early as 1952. He began agitating for self-government from about this time; as a cooperative manager he understood that tight government regulations were inhibiting agricultural entrepreneurial activities. He fought against cattle destocking directives. Even before independence, Bomani was a cabinet minister, initially in charge of natural resources and cooperatives, then finance, development planning, commerce, and after an 11-year ambassadorship to Washington, in further ministerial positions.

Across the southern reaches of Lake Victoria, on its western side, lies Bukoba, the largest town in what was Tanganyika's Lake Province. Bomani's younger colleague, Clement George Kahama, also Sukuma, and the son of a coffee farmer, spent 12 years in schools in Bukoba, and then in 1949 transferred to Tabora Secondary School, where he met Kambona and Kawawa.²⁷

Afterwards, he also joined the cooperative movement, becoming manager of the Bukoba Union. He was a member of TANU from 1955. Kahama told me that from the early 1950s he became increasingly critical of Britain for not readying Tanganyika for independence as a Trust Territory. But he also realised that the British empire was dissolving and the East African states were – despite or because of Mau Mau – on a glide path to freedom.

Another cooperative union leader whom I interviewed at about the same time was Nsilo Swai, a Chagga from Moshi, born in 1925 to another coffee farmer. The young Swai walked five miles every day to attend primary school and then attended Moshi Secondary School through Standard X.²⁸ He went on to Makerere University College, where he met Nyerere, to obtain a diploma in science teaching. He spent the four following years, through 1958, in India, gaining an economics degree. Upon his return he managed the Meru Cooperative Union before joining the ruling party and becoming a cabinet minister.

THE UGANDANS

The dozen or so up-and-coming Ugandans of the liberation generation whom I interviewed included leaders of competing political parties and ambitious nationalists from the kingdoms as well as other ethnicities of the Protectorate. Although the father of one was illiterate, each of the persons interviewed was highly educated in a formal sense. Each was a member of an emerging elite. All were youthful, although by the time I interviewed him, one of the Ugandans was an outlier in the sample at age 42.

When I found Apollo Milton Obote, born in 1925, in his cramped office in Kampala, he was reasonably well poised to become Uganda's first president after having returned in 1957 from two years as a stock clerk for the Standard-Vacuum Oil Company in Nairobi. But he had long before (1952) joined the then brand-new Uganda National Congress (UNC) after having been schooled by Anglicans in Lira and Gulu in his Lango region before attending Busoga College in Jinja to complete his secondary school education and to

sit the examinations for a Cambridge Senior Certificate. He continued to Makerere University College, like so many other East Africans in my sample, graduating with a BA degree in 1950.

Obote then hoped to continue studying law at Boston University in the USA, at Gordon College in Khartoum, or in Britain. But, apparently because Obote had already been active in encouraging the Lango to oppose British rule, the administrators of Uganda refused to provide the funds or any encouragement to follow the legal training path that Obote had chosen. Those rebuffs forced Obote to go to work as a cashier for commercial firms and to become much more engaged with the UNC. Indeed, after returning from Kenya, Obote told me that he took it upon himself singlehandedly to promote the cause of the UNC among the Lango.²⁹ There had been riots the previous year in Lira, and many Lango political activists were in detention. In the late 1950s, therefore, Obote roamed throughout the Lango county, preaching against colonial rule. In 1958 he was elected president of the UNC, and maintained his control of the main wing of the UNC even after it endured several schisms and the formation of new competing political parties.

One of those who supported Obote throughout the last years of the 1950s, when the UNC was regularly defenestrated from within, was Abubaker Mayanja, the only Muslim in my sample, although I did interview other Muslims in Zanzibar (Sheikh Ali Muhsin and Abdulrahman Mohamed Babu) and the Sudan.³⁰ Although he was born and brought up in Buganda, the oldest, largest and most literate of the kingdoms of Uganda, Mayanja only started school when he was 11 years of age, in 1940. His family had been too poor before then to afford school fees. He attended Church Missionary Society (Anglican) primary schools before matriculating at the CMS' famed King's College Budo, near Kampala, from 1945–49, as a 'scholarship' pupil.

Mayanja told me that his political awakening came at Budo when he saw how much better wealthier Bugandans were fed, clothed and treated than those from much more deprived backgrounds, like himself. Food was scarce in those years, he recalled, but the wealthier students had easy access to cups of coffee, especially with sugar, neither of which he could afford. 'My circumstances conditioned me to think badly of people who had 'things.'" He also participated in the anti-colonial, anti-Bugandan chiefs, anti-cotton regulations riots in 1949 that were fomented and led by the preachings of Ignatius K. Musaazi, who mentored Mayanja.³¹

At Budo, Mayanja remembered learning about representative government and how such institutions operated, especially within the British empire. These academic interests persisted when he completed a BA at Makerere University College between 1950 and 1953, when the Mau Mau emergency was beginning to embroil neighbouring Kenya and its repression to influence Mayanja's political awakening.

It was while working in the Makerere long vacation for the Uganda Farmers' Union under Musaazi that he joined those who were creating the UNC, partially in opposition to Ugandan government legislation that would have prohibited

agricultural cooperatives and imposed changes to the boundaries of Queen Elizabeth Park in Bunyoro.

Mayanja soon became the organising secretary of the Congress. In that capacity he led a youthful delegation to state house to demand (from Governor Andrew B. Cohen, the famed Fabian) direct elections of Africans to the territory's Legislative Council. He was also active in organising a strike for better food at Makerere in 1952. The strike was also a protest against having to wear school uniforms and to protest the college's treatment of undergraduates (many of whom were in their twenties) as school children. For being so critical, Makerere consequently expelled Mayanja, and propelled him into Protectorate-wide prominence.

Cuthbert Obwangor was another member of the UNC from 1952. Also (he told me) he was one of the founders of the Kenya African Union in 1948, when he was in Nairobi, having apprenticed himself to a law firm as a clerk. Obwangor, born in 1920, was an elder in my sample. Like Obote, he was also born and raised outside the kingdoms, being a Teso from north of Soroti, and the son of a chief. Roman Catholic schools gave him primary school training, following which he enrolled in a Catholic seminary for five years. 'I was too argumentative', he told me, 'for a seminary'. Instead, he completed his secondary education at Nalumango College, near Kampala, and refused to enrol at Makerere to become a teacher. 'I was too independent for that', he told me.³² Instead he migrated to Britain and studied for three years to become an accountant, returning to Nalumango afterwards to write the Cambridge Senior Certificate examination.

George Magezi was from Hoima in the Bunyoro kingdom, where his father was a chief. After attending Anglican primary schools, he went to Mbarara High School, and then to the Bishop Tucker Teacher Training School through 1949. Afterwards, he taught for three years and then joined the government of Bunyoro as secretary to the Katikkiro (prime minister). From 1947, he began writing articles for local newspapers in Kampala, arguing for self-government. But British officials prevented many of the articles from appearing.

From 1954, he was a member of the UNC, but he left that political party (one of its earlier schisms) and founded the Uganda People's Union in 1957. The UNC, Magezi told me, 'was corrupt'. Moreover, it was a Kampala organisation, neglecting the hinterland. But he took his party back into the UNC in 1959 to provide sufficient strength to 'oust the colonials', he said.³³

Another young Ugandan, Basil Bataringaya, was from Ankole where his father was a chief for 24 years and stemmed from one of the kingdom's more important clans. Before attending Kisubi College, where Bataringaya intended to become a Roman Catholic lay brother, he had attended Roman Catholic primary schools in Ankole and a junior secondary school in Mbarara. He abandoned his vocation when he realised that he was 'too original in my thinking'.³⁴ He completed his secondary education at St Leo's College in the Toro district and spent a year in a teacher training college in Nakasulo. It was the first time he was among non-Catholics. He taught afterwards, finally making it (he

had failed to enter earlier) into Makerere University College in 1953 to study and receive a diploma (not a degree) in education.

From 1957, Bataringaya began teaching at a government secondary school in Ankole, and subsequently became an advisor to the Omugabe (monarch) of Ankole. But soon he caused consternation in his royally connected family by campaigning for more democracy within the Ankole government. At that point, he was opposed to the UNC because it had no 'real programme' and to the Democratic Party because it was 'too Catholic'. Yet he finally became a leading member of the latter party in 1960 at the same time that he was employed as a school inspector in Ankole, giving him an opportunity to proselytise politically throughout the kingdom and, in 1961, to become Uganda's minister of local government.

CONCLUSION

The liberation generation of East and Central Africa was driven by a desire to regain birthrights that had been pushed aside by British colonial domination. The freeing of India and Ghana had demonstrated what was possible, and the Mau Mau emergency helped to weaken British resolve. The imposition of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland accelerated indigenous agitation for an end to decolonisation and the ouster of white settler domination.

Such propositions have long been known. But what has often been overlooked is how thoroughly the liberation generation in East and Central Africa stood out from its peers. Its proponents originally were more democratic and incrementally focused than succeeding generations. Few were Marxist-inclined, although several subsequently embraced the tenets of Afro-Socialism. Some later broke with their national leaders because of retreats from founding values; others stayed in power and, like President Kaunda and President Nyerere, created single-party states.

There is no doubt that ambition for change drove nearly all of the young men in my illustrative sample. Nearly all could recall a specific racist-inspired setback or a personal rebuff by a white administrator that drove each to become a militant anti-colonial. The overall atmosphere of racism, and colour bars in the southern territories, propelled them into politics. Each could remember almost exactly when they became determined to oust British Imperial rule.

Hardly any of my interviewees – all later successful politicians – began as a revolutionary. They were rebels against authority, but they sought transfers of power largely by less than violent means. They wanted to gain authority in their separate dependencies in order to develop and improve their future nations economically and socially. As Seretse Khama said when he decolonised Botswana, his goal was to 'do good'.³⁵ But, during the liberation phase of power reversal, hardly anyone contemplated giving full control to the people. Nor, at the beginning, did these young elites contemplate, or foresee, that many of their governments would create autocracies, deny voice to citizens, censor the media, become autocratic and kleptocratic, and – in some cases – end freedoms to

form trade unions, to strike, to assemble peacefully and to express dissent. Instead, the liberation generation entered the political arena with genuinely liberal and tolerant views and a programme to make their countries models of modernity. ‘Non-alignment’, single-partyisms, presidencies ‘for life’, curbing of essential freedoms, and other such restrictions all came later.

Africa’s liberation generation embodied African nationalism and compelled the British raj to leave East and Central Africa just as it had exited India and Pakistan. Driven by idealism more than ideology, nurtured by church and secular educators, and popularly supported, this was the generation that regenerated Africa for Africans.

NOTES

1. These matters are all discussed at length in Rotberg, *Things Come Together: Africans achieving greatness in the twenty-first century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020), and need not be developed afresh in this essay.
2. For a representative set of these prejudices, see the caustic quotations from American legislators in James H. Meriwether, *Tears, Fire, and Blood: the United States and the decolonization of Africa* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2021, 150–1).
3. Interview with Kenneth Kaunda, 20 February 1959.
4. Kenneth Kaunda, *Zambia Shall be Free* (New York: Praeger, 1962, 146).
5. For a description of the colour bar in Northern Rhodesia, see Rotberg, *The Rise of Nationalism in Central Africa: the making of Malawi and Zambia, 1873–1964* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1965, 201–2, 254–72).
6. Quoted in Rotberg, ‘Gandhi’s tactics pushed in Africa’, *New York Times*, 24 February 1959.
7. Interview with Kapwepwe, 16 November 1962, Lusaka.
8. Max Gluckman, *The Judicial Process among the Barotse of Northern Rhodesia* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1955, 9–10, 14).
9. Transcription of taped interview between Rotberg and Wina, 14 December 1967.
10. Quoted in H. Masauko Chipembere (ed. R.I. Rotberg), *Hero of the Nation: Chipembere of Malawi, an autobiography* (Blantyre: Christian Literature Association Malawi, 2001, 148).
11. For the Northern Rhodesian African National Congress, and its internal battles, see Rotberg, *The Rise of Nationalism in Central Africa*, 289–91.
12. For details of the conclave of nationalists that led to the official declaration of an emergency throughout the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland in February 1959, see Rotberg, *Overcoming the Oppressors: White and Black in Southern Africa* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2022, forthcoming).
13. I spoke with Kamuzu Banda on a number of occasions, in Cambridge, MA, and in Limbe and Lilongwe in Malawi. But he was hardly youthful during the liberation struggle, so I include nothing from my interviews here.
14. For details of Banda’s subversion of democracy and of the cabinet crisis that plunged Malawi into combat, see Rotberg, *The Rise of Nationalism in Central Africa*, 317–21.
15. Chipembere, *Hero of the Nation*, 96. Chipembere and I conversed often in Zomba, Dar es Salaam, Cambridge, MA, and Chocorua, NH. He wrote his biography in longhand, often after those discussions. I therefore draw on his autobiography, not specifically on separate interviews. Ericka Albaugh managed with great skill to turn his handwritten manuscript into a publishable text (which I edited and introduced).
16. Chipembere, *Hero of the Nation*, 119.
17. Interview with Chisiza, 8 August 1962, in Zomba.
18. For more about Chisiza, see Rotberg, *Overcoming the Oppressors*, forthcoming.
19. Interview with Bwanausi, 3 July 1962, in Zomba.
20. The story of the disintegration of Malawi’s first government is contained in the postscript to Rotberg, *The Rise of Nationalism in Central Africa*, 317–21.
21. The full story is too detailed for this article, but it can be found in Rotberg, *Overcoming the Oppressors*, forthcoming.
22. Interview with Kawawa, 23 August 1961, in his office in Dar es Salaam. For more on Kawawa, see Raymond F. Hopkins, *Political Roles in a New State: Tanzania’s First Decade* (New Haven: Yale University

Press, 1971, 22, 27, 29); Cranford Pratt, *The Critical Phase in Tanzania 1945–1968: Nyerere and the Emergence of a Socialist Strategy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976, 121–6).

23. When he and I talked in January 1960 on the verandah of the old New Africa Hotel in Dar es Salaam, he anticipated independence for Tanganyika only 'sometime within the decade'. He was in charge a little more than a year later.

24. Interview with Kambona, 26 August 1961, in his office in Dar es Salaam. For more on Kambona and his relations with Nyerere, see George Roberts, *Revolutionary State-Making in Dar es Salaam: African Liberation and the Global Cold War, 1961–1974* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021, 72–7, 93–7, 242–5). See also Pratt, *The Critical Phase in Tanzania 1945–1968*, 104–5, 145, 187, 203.

25. Interview with Paul Bomani, Aug 25, 1961, in Dar es Salaam. See also Roberts, *Revolutionary State-Making in Dar es Salaam*, 71, 264; G. Andrew Maguire, *Toward 'Uhuru' in Tanzania: the Politics of Participation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969, 84–99, 183–6).

26. On the cooperatives movement, see Joel Samoff, *Tanzania: Local Politics and the Structure of Power* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1974, 179–207).

27. Interview with Kawawa, 23 August 1961, in Dar es Salaam. Pratt, *Critical Phase*, 51–2.

28. Interview with Swai, 14 August 1961, in Dar es Salaam. See also Roberts, *State-Making*, 71.

29. Interview with Obote, 8 September 1961, in his office in Kampala; See also Donald Anthony Low, *Buganda in Modern History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971, 236–9).

30. Interview with Mayanja, 29 December 1962, in Kampala.

31. See Kenneth Ingham, *The Making of Modern Uganda* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1958, 245–50). Ingham taught Mayanja; Low, *Buganda in Modern History*, 149–51; David E. Apter, *The Political Kingdom in Uganda: A Study of Bureaucratic Nationalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961, 256–61).

32. Interview with Obangwor, 22 December 1962, in Kampala.

33. Interview with Magezi, 20 December 1962, in Entebbe. See also Apter, *The Political Kingdom in Uganda*, 408–9.

34. Interview with Bataringaya, 21 December 1962, in Kampala.

35. Seretse Khama, later president of Botswana, echoed Thomas Paine, consciously. Quoted in Thomas Tlou, Neil Parsons, and Willie Henderson, *Seretse Khama, 1921–1980* (Gaborone: Botswana Society, 1950, 61).