

CHAPTER 9

RETURN FROM CAPTIVITY

9.1 The Release of Paulo Kiyingi

It was Government practice for people in detention to have their cases reviewed periodically. So it came to pass, after nearly two years, that the government felt it safe enough to start reviewing the cases against those political prisoners. It started releasing a few prisoners at a time, in groups of four every three months. Following the first group of four prisoners to be released, the second lot comprised Paulo Kiyingi, Daudi Mukubira, Semyoni Njuki and Temusewo Sserwadda. It was a big relief for PK to learn of the news of his impending release to return to motherland Buganda.

Predictably PK was very excited by the overall result for several reasons. First and foremost, although the issues that lead to his and his colleagues' arrest and deportation were never properly spelt out, for they were never tried, the land law which was passed by the Buganda Lukiiko at Mengo was never put into practice. Secondly, Buganda and Uganda's land, especially the land of the people at Makeerere was never expropriated. Thirdly, the Church of Uganda Makeerere parish church was never moved; it still occupies the top of the hill up to today. Makeerere University was never moved from Uganda, as some prophets of doom had feared; it still remains the most prestigious university in Uganda and the whole of East Africa. So PK had reasons to celebrate, that their struggle with the British colonialists had not been in vain. He was excited to be returning to motherland Buganda, except that his return was on condition that he was not allowed to return to his own home at Makeerere in the suburbs of Kampala. He had to resettle in a rural area away from Kampala, outside a radius of 40 miles from the city centre!! That was the only major blow to his excitement. But it never stopped him. He planned to go and settle in a place called Ziroobwe, where he owned a piece of land he had previously purchased. He and his family of three children (Douglas Nkongwe, Kaggulire and Bbosa) left Moroto around mid-June 1947 and passed through Soroti in Teso, Mbale in Bugisu, Tororo in Bukedi and Jjinja in Busoga on their way back to Buganda.

9.2 The Deportation of PK and Colleagues Revisited

It was the practice of the colonial administrators to arrest and deport from the land anybody they highly suspected of being a dissident or who challenged the status quo. In Uganda that practice started way back in 1899 when the colonialists, working through Baganda informers and puppet chiefs arrested *Kabaka* Mwanga of Buganda and *Omukama* Kabaleega of Bunyoro-Kitara and deported them to the Seychelles Islands, ostensibly for bad governance, failing to carry out the wishes of the European invaders, campaigning to evict them and actively waging war against them. New puppet leaders were installed on the thrones in those two kingdoms. Similarly, *Kabaka* Edward Muteesa II, the 36th King of Buganda, was also deposed and banished into exile in Britain in 1953 for resisting the inclusion of Buganda and Uganda in a planned East African Federation, a move that was aimed at further diluting the sovereignty of Buganda, if not totally annihilating the kingdom.

In the years preceding 1945 the workers or local civil servants within the protectorate government, the farmers and commoners (working outside the Kabaka's government at Mengo) were unhappy. They

had several grievances with the protectorate government, especially regarding the distribution of land contained in the 1900 Agreement as well as the conduct of trade. The workers were disputing the low wages and salaries. The farmers disputed the low prices paid them for their crops. All were unhappy with the local trade sector, largely dominated by the Asians to the total exclusion of the Africans. The Asians, mostly from India, owned most if not all local shops and stores in Buganda, traded in coffee and cotton in the rural areas and owned most if not all ginneries for cotton and coffee. Such grievances precipitated a number of strikes, boycotts and disturbances in Buganda. The most famous ones were the revolution of 1945 and its aftermaths in which several people including PK and his colleagues were deported, and the revolution of 1949 in which several other groups of people were also deported. Several historians in the past, especially those who wrote their accounts during the colonial days, branded all such people like PK and his colleagues as dissidents, agitators, rebels and destabilisers who never wished prosperity for their country Buganda. But in reality they were neither rebels nor destabilisers. They were patriots. They were martyrs and heroes who fought very hard to prevent their kingdom Buganda and country Uganda from being overrun and completely taken over by the British colonialists, as was the case in Kenya, Southern Rhodesia, South Africa and other countries outside Africa like Australia, New Zealand, Canada and America. All those people starting with the two kings Mwanga and Kabalega in 1899, the 1945 deportees - Paulo Kiyingi and his colleagues, the deportees of 1949, as well as several others who at different times protested against British occupation or rule and were deported or punished in one form or other, up to the late Kabaka Edward Muteesa II, who was deposed and deported in 1953, were true **political prisoners** or **prisoners of conscience** who were never tried or convicted of any crime by the colonial administration. Unfortunately they were never known as such at the time, simply because our history has usually been told and written by the British colonialists or their puppets.

9.3 The Names “Banadda” and “Bulituuka”

At the time of their release Paulo Kiyingi had nicknamed himself “Banadda” (lit. “they will return”). He gave himself this name from a Luganda saying, “*Abawanganguse banadda*” (the deportees will return). He also had a favourite rooster among his chickens, which he had named “Bulituuka” (lit. time will come). He did that as a psychic exercise to sharpen his determination to continue fighting for his eventual return to motherland Buganda. Unfortunately for PK, on their way back to Buganda from Karamojja, when they got to the swamps of River Apapi, between Teso and Karamojja, the rooster accidentally fell out of the vehicle into the river and was never seen again. PK was very disappointed at the loss for he had all along planned to slaughter and eat it after their safe return to Buganda from captivity.

Because they left Moroto a bit late in the day, they were forced to overnight in Soroti, Teso. The chief of the area was very happy to meet them and gave them accommodation for the night. The following morning they left for Jjinja, passing through Mbale in Bugisu for a brief stopover. They overnights in Jjinja town, where they spent the night at the Bugembe inn. On the third day they got to Kampala and straightaway reported to the office of the Resident Buganda.

The four were then each allocated a vehicle to take them to the destinations they had chosen, more than 40 miles outside Kampala. They were allowed a very brief stopover at their homes that day, but not to overnight. So PK called briefly at his home at Makeerere to pick up his wife ENK on their way to Zirowe in Bulemeezi county. ENK had by then given birth to a baby boy who they had named Samuel

Kigwira Lutalo, once again very significant names with meanings as follows: Kigwira from a Luganda saying, “*Ekigwira omusajja, akimala*” (A real man will overcome whatever hurdles he encounters) and Lutalo, which means “war” - presumably an allusion to the war Paulo Kiyingi was fighting against the British at that time. They got to Zirobwe late that evening and reported to the Gombolola (sub-county) chief, who accommodated them for the night.

9.4 Paulo Kiyingi Banadda Leaves Zirobwe for Bukatira

Paulo Kiyingi was a bit disappointed with the Zirobwe reception. He did not take to it as much as he had anticipated and it is not clear why, since he already possessed a piece of land he had previously purchased there. He therefore decided to leave Zirobwe to go and live with his nephew Samuel Kaggulire (the son of his brother Daniel Kiguli Kijojje) at Bukatira, Namasinda in Bulemeezi. He sought and was granted permission for the relocation. So within three days of his arrival in Zirobwe, he was once again on the move. Another vehicle arrived to take him, his family and all his belongings to Bukatira. He and his family received a tumultuous warm welcome at Bukatira by the so many people who had gathered: family, friends and all the villagers who had been eagerly awaiting their arrival.