NGWAZI DR. H. KAMUZU BANDA
FOUNDING PRESIDENT OF MALAWI
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This month I begin something that is long overdue, an open-ended series of articles recounting many hours of conversation with Dr. Banda beginning in July 1989 and continuing until the year before his November 25, 1997 passing. I am moved to do this at this time because of the numerous communications that I regularly receive, particularly from young Malawians, asking me to please help them understand the highly complex man that was my friend, Ngwazi Dr. H. Kamuzu Banda, Founder and First Head of State of Malawi. Perhaps his own words will bring to young and old alike, a better understanding of this most incredible man.

Dr. H. Kamuzu Banda was my friend and mentor for many years. He was a super-achiever and I have always been in awe of super-achievers; those people who break the bonds of the ordinary, the commonplace and truly fulfill their destiny. Regardless of occupation or discipline, they have always held a great fascination for me. What is it in their unique makeup that enables them to overcome all odds, confront all opposition and circumvent all obstacles to achieve their carefully defined and clearly envisioned objectives? Looking across the relatively limited spectrum of individuals such as Aggrey, Lincoln, Azikiwe, Curie, Kaunda, Gandhi and the like, they all
possessed a complete and abiding belief and faith in themselves and in a mission that, for them, was always in very clear focus. In their unwavering belief, they were prepared to commit themselves totally and unequivocally to fulfill their mission in life, to suffer any abuse; physical, emotional, social or financial to achieve, what to each of them was a crystal clear, realizable dream.

March – April 1898 witnessed the birth of such a person, the first child of humble Chewa parents; Mphonongo and his wife Kupingani near rural Kasungu, British Central Africa. The products of two great Chewa clans, the father's Banda clan and the mother's Phiri clan came together to bring life to a baby, Kamuzu, "little root" signifying the Chewa custom of using certain medicinal roots prescribed by traditional doctors, or Sing'anga, to hasten conception and birth of a child.

With this quiet entry into the world at Mntheba, seven miles east of Kasungu Boma, there ushered in a future new era for the continent and land of his birth. Kamuzu Banda was a child of destiny, later a man for whom no obstacle was too large, no enemy too strong, no setback too formidable. Kamuzu Banda throughout his adult life suffered no fools, decried mediocrity, demanded perfection, honesty and attention to carefully considered detail. He not only advocated the "Four Cornerstones" of Unity, Loyalty, Obedience and Discipline, he used them as the basis of all he did. He honoured intelligence and did everything possible to encourage, coax and nurture the intellect of all he came in touch with at every phase of his life.

Kamuzu Banda was to single-handedly change the fate and face of Southern Africa in general, Nyasaland/Malawi in particular and her colonial master, the United Kingdom. His genius driven achievements were to topple rulers, create nations and lead his people into an era of newly discovered self-esteem, improved quality of life and the respect of nations. From 1989 to 1997, age left its physical marks, but it did not diminish his intellect, his wit, his charm nor his intense interest in the well-being of the fragile people of Malawi.

Dr. Kamuzu Banda earned his place in the ranks of the super-achievers of world history. I consider my long-time friendship with him to be one of the highlights of my life. He taught me the importance of dedication, hard work and relentless pursuit of what you believe in. I will try to tell his story, much of it in his own words. I readily admit to blindness to any faults he may have, because I am completely overwhelmed by his incredible strengths.
If one who knows Kasungu of 2000 could magically travel back in time to the Kasungu of 1898, he or she would be generally familiar with their surroundings. Of course, the tarmac roads were not there, the hum of maize mills did not overpower the gentle sounds of rural Africa, nor did the people dress as they do today.

The high savanna of the central African plateau, with its rich bird life, buzzing insects, its trees blazing in vibrant crimsons and yellows were there in the bright African sun. Women pounded chimanga, men debated matters of consequence and children played at innocent child games. Mysterious termite mounds rose from the rich soil. Here and there traditional smelters produced the iron required for hoes, spears and arrow points, implements necessary to sustain and protect life. The incredible deep blue sky punctuated by towering cumulous clouds provided the canopy over this seemingly peaceful African scene.
But all was not peaceful. Despite the British punitive raids and pacification of the mid to late 1890's, which effectively ended most of the internecine raiding and slave trade, enough fighting and instability remained to cause villagers to flee to the linga or fort at the slightest provocation.

It was during this period that Kamuzu Banda came into the world.

“Wherever I was, I lingered. I took some coaxing to come into this world. The family sent a delegation to Dwangwa to consult a woman doctor; one Chagulana Mwanjiwa. She lived across the Dwangwa River near the village of Sivira, ten or fifteen miles east of the present Kasungu Boma.

The delegation took with them a traditional initial fee, a chicken. After consultation, Dr. Mwanjiwa went into the bush and dug out some special roots from the ground. On her return, she gave careful instructions on how the medicine was to be taken in order to get the best results.

Upon their return home, the delegation gave the medicine to my maternal grandmother Chendawaka with full instructions for its usage, as it was her responsibility for seeing to it that the medicine was prepared properly and taken by Kupingani, my mother-to-be, as it should be taken.

Both Chendawaka and Kupingani apparently followed the instructions properly because in short order, there were definite signs and symptoms that I had decided to come into this world at last. Finally, to the joy and relief of the family, I arrived (laughing).”
Historians have debated ad nauseam, the precise year of his birth. Kamuzu was born at a time when the bonds of Chewa tradition and culture were still very strong; when the family relationships and ties still provided the matrix of obedience and discipline which was to influence Kamuzu and everything he did throughout his life.

“No one knows the hour, the date, the month or the year in which I was born, although I now accept the evidence that you give me; March or April 1898 (laughing). From the anonymity or obscurity of the date of my birth, I suffered neither a sense of humiliation nor disgrace. Many men and women whose names have passed into history, never knew the hour, date, month or year they were born.

I am content to know I exist. No one could ever deny my existence, certainly not Sir Robert Armitage, Sir Roy Welensky, Sir Edgar Whitehead or Mr. Lennox-Boyd (laughing).

My birthday has been a very rich source of guesses and conjecture. I make none myself. I do know that in 1913 or 1914, three of my African teachers at Chilanga argued among themselves about my age. One thought I was born in 1898, another in 1902 and still another, in 1904 or 1906. Now you have proved 1898 (laughing).

When I was in Johannesburg preparing to go to the United States, to Wilberforce Academy, I had to appear before a Magistrate to get my passport. He asked me my date of birth. I replied that I did not know. I said ‘Maybe 1896, 1898, 1900, 1902 or 1904, but I do not know Sir’. He was very annoyed and said ‘You mean 1906, don’t you? You could not have been born in 1896 or 1898, even 1900 or 1902. Not you. You’re far too young, far too young.’ So, he wrote down 1906 on my passport. But I have never worried about the date. I have always been far too busy to waste my time on useless pondering. But now I know (laughing).”

The last statement above is classic Dr. Banda philosophy. . .

“Never waste your time”, advise which he gave to me years ago and which I follow meticulously to this day. . . “Never waste your time with stupid people. They will never change and yet they will do everything they can to change you . . . stupidity loves company (laughing).”

As he grew, he exhibited many signs of extreme intelligence, and innate deduction and reasoning. Despite his small stature, he showed strong leadership tendencies. In 1970, his sister, Agogo Chatinkha Jenner Banda related her numerous childhood
memories of Kamuzu to me.

She told me of his ability to build complex toys out of available materials, how he searched the cooling traditional Chewa iron kilns for pieces of metal, wandered the Linga looking for arrow points that he could fashion into his sophisticated devices. He made string and rope from various plants and while doing that, became interested in their medicinal properties at a very early age, gathering and categorizing them and seeking information from traditional doctors, Sing’anga, all of whom are experts to this day in the curing properties of indigenous plant life.

Other children of his age group were fascinated by his achievements and followed and watched him in awe as he cleverly combined inanimate components into moving articulated playthings which he often sold or traded for family requirements.

At a very early age, he accepted responsibility within the family unit; responsibility which he carried out with the tenacity which was to be his hallmark throughout his scholastic, medical and political careers. Agogo Chatinkha related that one of Kamuzu's self-imposed tasks was to gather the unripened green pods of the chitembe trees which grew near their home. These pods, when wet, would serve as a very effective bar of soap. Kamuzu climbed high in the chitembe trees and gathered pods with a vengeance and quickly became the primary source for the best quality pods in his area. His natural business flair turned what was commonplace to an ordinary person, into a successful business opportunity for an extraordinary person, an opportunity which greatly assisted his family.

His zeal however was not without occasional problems as Agogo Chatinkha related the incident of Kamuzu, late one afternoon, climbing the very highest chitembe tree to reach the very biggest, very greenest pod, only to have night fall, making his descent impossible until daylight. This childhood verve only served to indicate the characteristics for which he was known as an adult; always seek the best, never settle for mediocrity and confront and surmount all obstacles standing in the way of achievement.
At his earliest age, Kamuzu understood and respected the rich Chewa culture of which he was now a part. He had a very special relationship with his maternal Grandfather, Chayamba, who had a reputation far and wide as a storyteller. Agogo Chitinkha recalled Kamuzu, after all of his work was done, sitting at Chayamba's knee, completely absorbed in the folklore and verbal history of his people. He questioned and probed relentlessly until Chayamba, silently laughing at Kamuzu's audacity, but respecting his intelligence, sternly told him to "stop interrupting".

Chayamba and his wife Chendawaka, while not Sing'anga in the formal sense, were amateur practitioners of that art/science, which held an intense fascination for young Kamuzu. On one occasion, Kamuzu watched as his grandmother Chendawaka removed a thorn from the eye of a young hunter. He watched carefully as her skilled hands removed the thorn, cleansed the eye and treated it with certain traditional medicines. The man's healing became a matter of great interest to the youngster, and he watched carefully over several weeks until Chendawaka eventually pronounced him healed. It doesn't require much imagination to project that fascination for the healing process to Kamuzu's future success as a fully qualified and very highly credentialed and skilled medical practitioner.

To Kamuzu's delight, he was to live in the house of his grandparents from about five to ten years of age. He adored his grandparents, their stories, their many talents and they, in turn, showed their apparent respect for their very intelligent young charge.

It was during this five year period that young Kamuzu learned another major lesson that was to strongly influence his presidential years. While his mother and father were very decent subsistence farmers, his grandfather Chayamba was a master farmer, whose yields defied imagination. He worked his fields with great zeal, always preparing the land in a proper and timely manner, instinctively rotating crops at the correct time and saving the very best quality for seed for the next season. He avoided jealousy and the wicked results thereof, by diplomatically helping his neighbors and sharing his bounty. Kamuzu watched this carefully and realized that it was hard and intelligent work, not accident that kept their nkhotwe filled year in and year out. He watched Chayamba share his knowledge and assistance so that neighbors, family and friends would also reap the bounties of their fertile land without the problems of jealousy arising as it so often does in Africa. There is no question that he saw how diplomatically Chayamba passed his wisdom along to benefit others.
There is little doubt that Kamuzu's first-hand observations and experiences with Chayamba's agricultural excellence and his own small plot supervised by Chayamba, strongly influenced the successful agricultural policies that he eventually introduced in Malawi immediately after becoming first Minister of Natural Resources, then Head of Government and finally, Head of State.

In a continent beset by agricultural failure, Malawi, under Kamuzu's leadership, stood alone in agricultural excellence. His policies, echoing Chayamba's enlightened farming practices sixty years earlier of hard work, outstanding and timely preparation, and proper technology, paid off as Malawi overcame the failure of plantation-oriented colonialism and began to fully realize its agricultural potential.

It is hard to imagine but for divine intervention, that the next step in Kamuzu Banda's development might never have occurred. Fortuitously for Kamuzu and ultimately Malawi, missionary sponsored schooling came to an area to the east of Kasungu;
Mtunthama, under the auspices of the Church of Scotland. Though modest by today's educational standards, Mtunthama was to become not only the beginning of Kamuzu's personal education, but the later political symbol of his belief in the latent intellectual capability and capacity of his people. Mtunthama ultimately symbolized not only his educational beginning, but the beginning of a new era of learning for all Malawians.

Ironically, Kamuzu's very first exposure to formal school was unintentional.

"I first came into contact with school, not to learn, but on the back of my brother, in our extended family system. My brother's name was Nashoni Mgawo." Dr. Banda continues, "So when the school was established at Chibophi, Nashoni Mgawo went to attend that school. Mgawo was very fond of me. So, what did he do? He took me to school, carrying me on his back, literally. That was how I first came into contact with school. That was at Chikoko, Mchenga, Chiwengo's village, when I was a baby.

In 1905... a subschool was established at Mtunthama in the village of Chinyama. I began to attend that school, this time, not on my brother's back, but on my own feet. . . I was the youngest pupil in the class, all through".

Kamuzu immediately displayed the excellence that was to mark all of his academic days and beyond. Dr. Banda continues, "I was almost always on top. It was easy for me to master whatever was taught, arithmetic... so too, writing. In those days, you started school by learning the ABCD; then Phatikigo which is Syllables, then Pong'ono Pong'ono, which is Step by Step, then Mnkwere or Monkey; then the Gospel according to St. Matthew. Anyone who mastered the Gospel According to St. Matthew became a teacher, in those days called a monitor".

So Kamuzu takes on his first role as a leader; he continues, 'Because I mastered the Gospel According to St. Matthew, I qualified as a teacher. I must have been seven or eight years of age by then. I was paid two pence a month, later on, three pence. The highest I got when I left was 1s.6d. a month".

Dr. Banda had early evidence of African's who had achieved various levels of academic success and he never hesitated to honour them for their early contributions to education.

Dr. Banda continued at the ceremony opening Kamuzu Academy on 21 November, 1981:
"The first two teachers at Mtunthama were Moses Chibwe and Andreya Songandewu Mwale. The third one was Alifeyo Ndombo Mwale. Alifeyo Ndombo Mwale, when he was sent to Kasungu, was on probation from Livingstonia. He had been to Livingstonia, where the system was that, at the dining table, the language must be English. so, when he came to Mtunthama, Alifeyo Ndombo Mwale wanted to practice English. But how could he practice English, since there was no English class there? So, of necessity, he introduced English himself, that is, the English alphabet, syllables, words, Step by Step and the Infant Reader. I mastered the Infant Reader at Mtunthama. Once I mastered the Infant Reader, I was qualified to go to Chilanga for Standard One.

In those days, the system was this, that, there were two types of schools - ordinary schools in the villages and teachers' school at Chilanga. As a monitor at Mtunthama, who had reached Standard One, I had to go to Chilanga twice a year for six weeks. For four years, I was a monitor or teacher at Mtunthama, but a student myself at Chilanga. And as a student at Chilanga, I reached Standard Three.

At Chilanga, my teachers were Eneya Masimbe, Ernest Matako and my uncle Hanock Msokera Phiri, all of them now dead. But apparently, the Standard Three education at Kasungu was good, because though I learned up to Standard Three, I was able to eventually compete with graduates from Lovedale, while working as a compound clerk at Wit Deep Mine in South Africa."

As a young school-boy, Kamuzu exhibited an extraordinary quest for knowledge. This was to be characteristic of him throughout his life. It all began at Mtunthama.

Agogo Chatinkha stated that her earliest memories of her brother were of an individual consumed with learning. There was no idle moment in his life. If he wasn't working to the families betterment, he was doing sums in the dirt with a stick or trying to figure out why an insect buzzed, or hummed or trying to fashion English words out of his new ABCD's. From her earliest memory of Kamuzu, he was learning... and teaching... always excitedly attempting to share his new found bounty of information with family and friends. This was to cause him problems as older people occasionally took exception to the little fellow's drive to share his newly discovered secrets. Agogo Chatinkha relates that Kamuzu was taken to task on a number of occasions for his teaching zeal and it was finally left to grandfather Chayamba to settle him down to the realization that "force feeding' education to senior people by a child was not correct traditional Chewa behavior.
The drive to learn and to share knowledge was to be emblematic of Kamuzu Banda throughout his days. During a conversation in the 1960's about education, Dr. Banda lamented to me that

"Education has always been by doorway to ignorance. . .
the more I learn, the more I realize I will never know".

But it all began there at Mtunthama, under a kachere tree that stands to this day. Dr. Banda, discussing his earliest formal school days, described the intensity of his craving for information, for knowledge.

"I hung on to every word. I did not want to miss a thing. It was so important to me to be right there where teaching and learning was taking place. I accepted every task offered me and volunteered for those that weren't, just so that I could be right there at the centre of my world of learning. When I was asked to beat the drum and then ring the bell to call students to class, I readily accepted even though (laughing) little Kamuzu could barely reach the bell rope. I was there early, very, very early indeed, and stayed long after the other students had left, in case there was some small thing to learn that I might otherwise miss".

At the same time, Kamuzu was exposed to Christian teaching by the same missionaries of the Church of Scotland. His very earliest response was consistent with his quest for knowledge, but he was soon caught up in the spiritual nature of the gospel message. This was particularly enhanced by his relationship and strong liking for the Reverend Lameck Manda who was an early Nyasa convert to Christianity at Mtuntama.

Kamuzu had enormous respect for the Reverend Manda as, even at that very young age, he felt the need and recognized the benefits of bridging the culture of his birth and the new European knowledge, the rudiments of which, he was now being offered. Reverend Manda's classes offered Kamuzu the best of both of his two worlds.

And so ended the first decade of Kamuzu's life. It was a decade of early discovery, of venturing out into a new world, not only for Kamuzu, but for all Nyasas. It was a new world of often conflicting cultures; of early decisions and directions that were to take the young boy to achievements and heights experienced by few people on this earth, regardless of cultural heritage and background. The foundation built for and by Kamuzu during the first decade of the new century, was to have an extraordinary impact on tens of millions of people, most of whom were yet unborn.
CONVERSATIONS WITH KAMUZU
THE LIFE AND TIMES OF DR. H. KAMUZU BANDA

Part 2 1915 - 1925

By Dr. Donal Brody

If the first seventeen years of Kamuzu Banda's life was a beginning, the very first tentative steps of child and young adulthood, the next ten were to be years of new, exciting discoveries and continuing dramatic life-influencing decisions. They were to be years of monumental cultural diversity and character building events that would shape and prepare the younger to meet and fulfill his destiny. They are also the years, most of which came very vividly to memory in conversation. Long ago events, hunger, foods eaten, even clothing worn, came alive in animated discussion.

After successfully reaching standard three, Kamuzu felt great frustration and dissatisfaction because of the mission school's severe academic limitations. Never intended to be institutions of true extended learning, these schools and their custodians had no facility to cope with Kamuzu's extraordinary intelligence and insatiable quest for knowledge.
“It was during this period that I first encountered a feeling of great frustration, although I did not know what it was or why I was feeling limited or restricted. My memories of this period of my life are vivid. I was trying to understand everything that I saw and heard, but I had very little basis or foundation with which I could achieve that understanding. What I did know beyond a doubt was there was much for me to learn. After all, I was aware that Dr. Laws, Dr. Stewart and Dr. Prentice had an abundance of knowledge and understanding. The South African William Koyi was here teaching. Even Nyasa’s such as Lamack Kasinzi Manda, Mose Chibwe and Lamack Phiri were teaching. Knowing this as I did, motivated me to learn everything that I could possibly learn. If they could achieve understanding and knowledge, then so would I.

It was during this period that I also heard for the first time some things of a political or governmental nature. The elders were discussing or, I might say, arguing about the “Consciousness” movement at the Overtoun Mission. Names arose such as Levi Ziliro Mumba and Adward Boat Manda. I first heard about movements at St. Michael’s’ College on Likoma Island and at the Henry Henderson Institute over there in Blantyre. Some of the elders favored the movement which had at its’ roots the end of British rule or presence in Nyasaland. Although I did not dare express myself, I didn’t want that to happen until I finished school (laughing). But I certainly became very aware during that time, of how volatile or contentious politics could be and I quietly watched and listened to the sometimes very loud debate. It was my first class in basic politics.” (laughing)
Agogo Chatinkha relates that Kamuzu's frustration led to periods of melancholy during which time the young lad increasingly went off into the bush alone. We know now, and Dr. Banda concurred, that this was an exceedingly difficult period of great personal introspection and decision-making which led to major, wrenching actions.

Life for Kamuzu in the early part of this period was still one of responsibility. His serious nature caused him to care deeply about his family and the things that impinged on their life. For example, with his few pence of income received for being a teacher or monitor, Kamuzu undertook the full responsibility of paying Grandfather Chayamba's three shilling per year hut tax. The importance of this cannot be minimized. Without a cash economy, Nyasa’s who could not pay their hut tax were subjected to tenghata or forced unpaid labour, typically work on European estates or in prison road work. It is conceivable that without Kamuzu's very important financial contribution, his beloved Chayamba might have been impressed into forced unpaid service to the Crown.

His "spare" money was always spent on others. Grandmother Chendawaka was always the recipient of new bright cloth, calico or Mirekano as it was called at that time. Sister Chatinkha, half-sister Rebeka and birth-Mother Kupingani and various aunts always received tokens of his caring and hard work. Birth-Father Mphonongo could likewise expect to receive various tokens of his son's esteem.

Kamuzu's desire to teach was limitless. No idle child could fall within his field of vision without being exhorted to learn, to do something of personal benefit and enhancement. Agogo Chatinkha related how Kamuzu would assemble his own little charges and under his own tree would instruct them in their "ABCD's" and sums. Even at that very young age, he was demanding and encouraging clear thinking and disciplined behavior.

Agogo Chatinkha related that "Kamuzu was always either learning, teaching or working. Even at an early age, he was very disciplined. He had no time for nonsense or troublemaking. He was too busy
working to earn a few shillings to give for food or tax. He was always giving a small gift to someone, including me, many, many times.”

At the completion of standard three, at age twelve, Kamuzu perceived his immediate world to have all but closed for him. He had exhausted the educational capability available to him at Mtunthama. He had learned enough to know that there was a world, in fact a universe, beyond his Kasungu horizon. Existing biographical sketches seem to imply that embarking on his journey towards South Africa was a whim but that is clearly not true. Dr. Banda, at every stage of his long and exceedingly productive life, did nothing on a whim.

Kamuzu had not at this point abandoned his Mtunthama teaching and was preparing for an examination, the passing of which would mean increased responsibility and pay.

What happened during that examination was an extraordinary event that was indeed a pivotal point in Kamuzu's life and yet another stepping stone to the ultimate future of Nyasaland and Central Africa. Dr. Banda describes the occurrence.

"In the year 1915 an examination was due for the Teachers in one of the Districts under the Livingstonia Mission in Northern Nyasaland of the then United Free Church of Scotland. Selection of men to go to the training centre for the course leading to full certification was the purpose of the examination and there presented himself a very youthful pupil-teacher, small also in stature. He was not more than thirteen years old, but from the age of about ten he had passed all tests open to him. At the other end of the scale, as it were, was a European who happened to be available for the conduct of the examination, though not attached to the District and therefore not intimate with the teacher personnel. The number of examiners was large, the examination hall--actually the Station Church--was small, but the unlucky small pupil-teacher found himself in a distant seat, too far from the blackboard easily to see the questions thereon written. At one point he stood up in order to see more clearly over the shoulder of the man in front of him. The European misconstrued the action and debarred the boy from further participation in the examination.”

It is fascinating to me that despite the passage of almost eighty years, this crushing event in his life is described by Dr. Banda in the third person as an observer rather than as the victim of an extraordinary miscarriage that was to have far-reaching personal and historical ramifications.

It is the height of ironies that the proctor who ejected young Kamuzu was none other than the Reverend T. Cullen Young, Co-editor with Dr. Banda in 1946 of OUR AFRICAN WAY OF LIFE. It is further, but understandable irony, that Dr. Young
and Dr. Banda eventually forged a lifelong friendship that ended only with Dr. Young's death on 14 June 1955, in London at age seventy-five.

For the record, Dr. Young inscribed a copy of his book NOTES ON THE HISTORY OF THE 'TUMBUKA-KAMANGA PEOPLES to Dr. Banda as follows: “To My Friend and Collaborator Hastings Banda who was great-hearted enough to forgive a great injustice unwittingly inflicted on him nearly forty years ago. Cullen Young. 24th October 1951”

Devastated because of his expulsion from the examination, Kamuzu counseled long and hard with Chayamba and finally decided to do the hitherto unimaginable, to leave his beloved family and the land of his birth and walk to South Africa to seek his intellectual fortune.

In his own words at the 21 November, 1981, opening of Kamuzu Academy: “It was as a boy of Standard Three, at the age of fifteen or seventeen, that I left Kasungu and went to South Africa”. And so with that simple sentence the stage was now set for the dramatic and oft-time awesome events that were to unfold over the next half century.

Once more I ask the reader to imagine Central Africa of 1914-15. The British punitive raids had had their desired effect; the long and tragic Arab and Yao slave trains no longer existed. The internecine wars between Chewa, Ngoni and lakeshore Tonga were effectively ended. John Chilembwe and his followers at Magomero were well along on a course of action that would bring the African desire for independence from Great Britain into very clear and ultimately tragic focus for the first time. It would very sadly result in Chilembwe's execution, the destruction of his Providencia Mission, the dissolution of his movement and more rigid and onerous controls over the Protectorate by the British colonial government. In Dr. Banda’s words:
“John Chilembwe must be given credit historically for his effort to show the British rulers the independent spirit of the people of Nyasaland. I learned several very important things about politics from the tragic events of 1915, January 23rd to be specific. Among other things, to be successful in politics, besides determination and leadership, one must have good planning, complete cooperation and dedication to the plan by others, and good timing. Planning must be perfect down to the last detail and must consider carefully, alternatives or contingencies. Cooperation and dedication is essential between all; no jealousy, no tribalism, no secret cliques. Finally, good timing is essential. There must be a ground-swell of support, complete support of all factions.

Chilembwe lacked many of these things. His was a very localized activity, there was multi-factional or tribal jealousy, leadership rivalry. He had no plan and he allowed emotion to run his independence effort. Also, his timing was very bad because the British were still full of the Cecil Rhodes empire-building philosophy and they, therefore, would not accept an uprising in Nyasaland or any place else, to end their colonial goals. Sadly, great tragedy resulted for many people. But I do give John Chilembwe credit for clearly expressing discontent with the increasingly restrictive rule imposed on this country by the colonial power.”

It is important that the reader have a sense of what young Kamuzu faced at this point in time. Southern and Central Africa was undeveloped and relatively unchanged from the preceding years, with the exception of the colonial towns and emerging cities. Endless mile after mile of desolate, bleak savanna country was rendered barren and desiccated by a deadly ten year drought that hovered demonically over the land. Rivers and streams were dry, parched and dusty. Fields in populated areas were bone-arid and cracked, yielding nothing to support a starving populace who had nothing to eat, much less share with strangers.

The wild beasts of the African veldt were there, famished caricatures of their former nobility, searching constantly, but with greatly diminished strength, for food of any kind to sustain their rapidly deteriorating conditions.

It was into this world that Kamuzu Banda, age “fifteen or seventeen”, set forth on foot to pursue his quest for education at the Church of Scotland's Lovedale Missionary Institution on the bank of the Tyumie River and in the shadow of the Winterberg Mountain range of the Union of South Africa’s Cape Colony. Lovedale, the first
institution for the advanced education of the Native peoples of Southern Africa had become Kamuzu’s obsession.

Agogo Chitinka stated most emphatically that “Kamuzu did not simply awaken one morning and on a whim decide to walk a thousand miles. No! No! Not at all! He planned carefully, very carefully indeed, and gathered together the few things that he knew he would need for the journey. He carried with him a small spear made for him by Chayamba, a knobkerry, string that he had made himself, some cloth and a small crude knife that he had used to cut the chitembe pods and some few shillings. He took food for only a few days knowing full well that his survival depended upon his ability to live off the land and the hospitality and generosity of others. He left our home with the full blessings of our Father and Grandfather”.

It is only conjecture regarding Kamuzu’s actual route; however there was a well trodden path already established by Nyasa’s who for years had made their way to the Wankie coal mine in Southern Rhodesia and the relatively new gold and diamond mines of the Union of South Africa to seek employment. But these were adult men not a mere child whose quest was knowledge, not gold.

So we can only surmise that Kamuzu made his way southwest from Kasungu through Kasera, Kalambwe and Chiwoshya to the isolated border crossing south of Fort Manning, now Mchinji. Once in Portuguese East Africa, Kamuzu made his way to the vicinity of Tete where he faced the enormous problem of crossing the crocodile infested, racing, mile wide Zambesi River. But cross it he did and continued on through Changara where he crossed yet another border, this time into Southern Rhodesia.

Through the village of Shamva, Kamuzu traveled north of Salisbury, now Harare.

“I wasn't afraid of wild animals, but as a child, I wasn't ready to go into Cecil Rhodes Capital just yet”. (laughing).

Resources at an end, young Kamuzu arrived at Hartley, now Chegutu, in the Gatooma Hills where an increasingly bad bruise on his foot caused him to search out the local medical facility. Once there, Kamuzu’s innate and irresistible charm and inquisitive nature resulted in an offer of a job as an all-around handyman-cleaner-errand boy.

Dr. Banda retained few vivid memories of his long walking journey to this point.

“I remember being sad for the first few days of the journey. I missed my family, particularly my grandparents and my sister Chatinkha and, of course, others, but I was determined to get an education at any
I was not afraid. Wherever I went, I found kind people, on the paths, in villages, I was always treated kindly. It was the way of our people to be kind to travelers, particularly, it seemed, very small ones. (laughing) I never took without giving. I would ask to work or to help in some way and I, as small as I was, was treated well and with respect.”

The 450 mile, four week long journey had drained Kamuzu physically and economically and he accepted the offer of a job, but his days as a menial servant were few. The clinic's physician, Dr. Merritt Holly, must have marveled at the bright-eyed, slight African youngster who was always underfoot trying to see and understand everything that was going on. In short order Dr. Holly reassigned Kamuzu as a medical orderly or assistant. In this position, Kamuzu was exposed to European medicine and helped, albeit in a menial way, with all forms of treatment. There was no question at all now in his young mind; somehow, some way, he was going to be a fully qualified Medical Doctor.

“Dr. Holly would get somewhat annoyed at me for being a “nosy Parker”, stretching my nose into every aspect of his surgery (laughing), but one day he told me that I reminded him of the way he was as a child, always trying to learn something new. So he understood me and allowed and encouraged me to learn. In fact, he encouraged me in every way possible to understand the true role of a physician, professionally and spiritually.”

Kamuzu worked at Hartley Hospital, communicating by letter with his family in Kasungu and in fact sending them most of his earnings. He dream still lay to the south, the Lovedale Missionary Institution in the Eastern Cape Colony. Finally in early 1917 Uncle Hanock Msokera Phiri called in at Hartley to see his nephew, now a maturing nineteen year old. Uncle Hanock Phiri was on his way to South Africa and Kamuzu needed very little if any urging, to join him. So in the company of his Uncle, Kamuzu journeyed through the bush, 600 miles south, ironically through the Southern Rhodesian town of Gwelo, now Gweru, where forty-two years later, he was to be interned by the Colonial Government as he fought them for dissolution of the hated Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland and for his people’s independence and self rule.

The Union of South Africa was an overpowering experience for the youngster from Kasungu, Nyasaland. It was still a period very much like the "shoot-em-up" American West of the 1800’s. New gold mines were opening and old one's expanding. The great Kimberly hole was yielding the diamonds upon which vast fortunes and empires were made. Into this "wild-west" environment came penniless Kamuzu Banda and his uncle.

“South Africa was overwhelming to me. Everything seemed larger than life, especially since I was still quite,
quite small (laughing). No where was there a friendly face, just scowling and rudeness.”

After a short period of employment at the Maronjeni Colliery in Dundee, Natal, Kamuzu moved on to the rough-and-tumble of Johannesburg. He was horrified by what he called “the soulless Johannesburg”.

"There was no feeling of the Africa I had known all of my life. All of the tradition and culture was gone and in its place was crime and evil. I felt great sadness at how far African people had fallen in Johannesburg.”

Dr. Banda found employment at one of the toughest of the Reef’s gold mines, the Witwatersrand Deep Mine at nearby Boksburg. At the time, this, the largest and deepest of the gold mines, was the epitome of ethnic chaos. Zulu's and Xhosas, Soto and Tswanas fought savagely in the hostels and deep in the mines. The only peace was among the Nyasa workers. Mr. Godwin Phiri from Dowa who worked as a "face boss-boy" remembered Kamuzu as a lad "who did not fit in. He was not a savage who only wanted to fight and kill". In a 1972 interview, then 91 year old Mr. Phiri, recalled for me the impressive youngster who "worked very hard at every assignment given him, led prayers, taught ABCD’s to the ignorant and always sent his money home to Kasungu". Mr. Phiri continued "Even Baas Denker who we all feared greatly, liked him very much and recognizing his intelligence, very soon he was made a clerk who did the sums to figure the pay we had earned. Until the Ngwazi was given that job, every boy before him was arrested for stealing but he (Kamuzu) did his job honestly and carefully”.

The Hartley medical experience had changed him irrevocably and forever. As the years at Witwatersrand Deep rolled by, his goals intensified. The interest in a medical career became an all consuming, burning passion. While continuing to send funds home, he undertook additional income earning work and scrimped and saved for his new goal. The early dream of Lovedale and the realization of the intellectual limitations that that institution would place upon him as an African, turned his mind, heart and soul toward the west and his new dream of an American education.

“I knew that I must eventually turn my back on my Motherland and on Africa for at least a time, so that I could go to America for my formal education. My dreams had every possibility of becoming a reality, but for now, I knew that I faced hard work, complete dedication and, if God was to answer my prayers, the challenges of life in a new and frightening world.”

In the meantime, a series of events were unfolding that was to enable Kamuzu to eventually fulfill his American dream.

“In January of 1922, I learned that my old nemesis, the Reverend T. Cullen Young, had recommended that the Kasugu station, the only ChiNyanja or ChiChewa speaking station of the Livingstonia Mission, be handed
over to the Dutch Reform Church. I knew that this was not in the best interests of the people of Kasungu. I was, at that time, a member of the Dutch Reform Church because it was the only church available for black membership at the mine when I was employed. In protest, I resigned my membership and sought out and joined the new African Methodist Episcopal Church at Boksburg. It was there that I met the pastor, Reverend Henry Butane Make. I wrote a long explanation of my protest to Reverend Make and to Bishop James Yapi Tansi in Johannesburg. I stated a case for them to open an A.M.E. Mission at Kasungu. In response to my plea, Bishop Tansi asked me to begin my studies for ordination in the A.M.E. Church. I wrote back to thank him and to decline, saying the degree that I wanted more than anything was not D.D. but M.D. (laughing). We began a friendship that led to an introduction to the Right Reverend William Tecumseh Vernon who had come from America to preside over the African Church. You remember, you brought his son, also Reverend Vernon, from Los Angeles to visit me in 1968. Well, Bishop Vernon, the father, agreed to send me to Wilberforce Academy in Xenia, Ohio, and to look after me there as a ward of the church.

Fortunately, I had learned the fine art of patience, P – A – T – I – E – N – C – E, (laughing) through long experience, because it took a long time, more than three years and much, much work on the part of many, many people to move little Kamuzu from Johannesburg to Xenia, Ohio. Finally, I left Johannesburg on 6 July, 1925, to begin my formal education.”
On 6 July, 1925, Kamuzu Banda walked eagerly up the boarding ladder of the Union Castle vessel, the S. S. Gaika, docked in Cape Town. The ship was bound for London with a single stop at the island of St. Helena. Sixty years later, Dr. Banda vividly recalls the event...

“\textit{I was consumed with excitement. The sense of adventure was there most assuredly, but I was overwhelmed with a sense of destiny. I was now on my way to get an education, a proper education, on my way to my dream of being a physician and eventually, returning to Nyasaland to help my people. There was no sadness in leaving because I knew that I would return, educated and fully prepared to help improve the health and, therefore, the living standards of my people in Nyasaland. That was my dream.}"

\textit{I was very pleased that the South African lady, Mrs. Charlotte Manye Maxeke, who had assisted me greatly in preparing me to go to Wilberforce, (\textit{NEWSLETTER, VOL. 2, NO.3, MARCH 1998}) arranged for me to travel with the Reverend Dr. J. S. Maklangu, who was Moderator of the Transvaal and Orange Free State South African Native Baptist Association. He was going to New York and Mrs. Maxeke thought I needed a chaperone (laughing). If I knew then that I was already twenty-seven years old, as your research indicates, and I agree (laughing), then I might have felt insulted (laughing). But, I wasn’t then. I was very happy indeed because he was a very kind man.}
I was most excited when the ship arrived in London. I vividly remember, even today, the sounds, sights and smells of that enormous city. I had several days to explore before leaving for the United States. I remember one place in particular very, very well; Westminster Abbey, all of that history. I stood in front of David Livingstone’s resting place and I said aloud, ‘Dr. Livingstone, it is I, Kamuzu Banda from Kasungu, Nyasaland. I will go back to Nyasaland one day to take up your work; I promise.’ People stared at me, but I had to make that promise to him, which I kept.”

On 18 August, 1925, Kamuzu Banda, still in the company of Reverend Maklangu, left from South Hampton aboard the S. S. Majestic.

“Now my excitement was at its highest yet. I started to look west for land, naively hoping to see the U.S.A. almost still within sight of England (laughing). Finally, on 25 August, the great city of New York came into view. My eyes and mind could barely contain what I was seeing. As second class passengers, we had to wait for the higher class to leave the ship, but finally, Reverend Maklangu and I walked down the ladder to United States soil. Actually, I ran down (laughing). Reverend Maklangu walked. I remember the crowd as we slowly made our way through the formalities of immigration and customs. Finally, we were through the dock area and on our way to retrieve our baggage.

At that point, two people arrived in front of me at the same time; one I expected, the second stunned me. The first was Dr. Coit, the Secretary of Foreign Missions for my sponsors, the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Dr. Coit had barely introduced himself when the second man arrived. He was tall and very dignified. He extended his hand to me and said ‘Young man, I saw you running down the ladder and wanted to greet a fellow African. My name is James Kwegyir Aggrey from the Gold Coast’. I was speechless, too stunned to speak. When I regained the faculty of speech, I stammered, ‘but I saw you and heard you speak at the Jules Street Church in Johannesburg just years ago’. Dr. Aggrey laughed and asked, ‘Did I speak well?’ I said that I felt that he was speaking directly to me when he talked about the importance of education, African leadership, honesty and an end to jealousy and tribalism. I told him that I will always remember his admonition about agriculture, that ‘it is the heart of Africa and if the heart is gone, there will be no more Africa’. Also, his words to the African women in the audience, that they ‘were not only the Mothers of Children, they were the Mothers of Africa and that they would someday have great political importance to Africa’. He laughed and embraced me and said that he ‘always wondered if anyone really listened to his talks’ and that he was pleased that I heard him.

He then sighted the person he was waiting for and bade us goodbye. We were both speechless, me somewhat more so because Dr. Aggrey had been one of my idols since seeing him in Johannesburg. Already, my stay in the United States was far beyond my expectations (laughing)”.
Dr. Coit had arranged lodging for Kamuzu with a black American family who delighted in showing him as much of the awesome Manhattan island as they could in the two days that he had before entraining for Ohio and Wilberforce Academy.

“I remembered my first entry into Johannesburg in 1917. It was a mixture of awe and fear. I was now a ‘big city boy’ (laughing) so New York did not frighten me. But awe was yet another thing. There are not words to describe how amazed I was at the majesty and dimensions of the city. I remember the crush of people, the noise from cars and hooters and shouting. One had to shout to be heard over the other noise and, of course, one then added to the noise (laughing). We went from Harlem to the Bowery to Central Park. Buildings, buildings, buildings everywhere. I marveled at the genius of the engineers who could build structures seemingly to the sky. And there I was, Kamuzu Banda from Kasungu, Nyasaland, in the world famous city of New York.”

On 28 August, 1925, Kamuzu bade his hosts goodbye and entrained for Ohio.

“I left New York at midday. I remember feeling very annoyed as darkness fell, depriving me of the sights of America as we sped toward Ohio. When I arrived in Ohio at Wilberforce, I was surprised to find the school empty, or almost empty. It was the school holiday, or vacation as you call it (laughing). However, I was taken under the wing of another African who had no family to vacation with, so he stayed at school. His name was Mr. Andrew Moraka, a moSutho from South Africa. Thanks to him, I began to feel at home at Wilberforce. He even helped arrange some work to keep me busy, for which I received some few dollars. Some days I painted, others I weeded in the garden. Still others, I worked in the laundry. So, I developed many new talents (laughing).”

On 19 September, Bishop Vernon contacted Kamuzu and told him that he was to go to Terre Haute, Indiana, on 24 September, to be a guest of the Indiana AME annual conference.

“It was at that conference that I was to meet members of the Indiana Women’s Mite Missionary Society, many of whom and their children and grandchildren remain great
friends of mine to this day. You’ve met the Dunnigans and their baby (laughing), Inacia Greer. I still call her a baby although she is now a mature woman with grown children, but I will always remember her as a baby, a small child. They were my family. They took me in their home and heart and provided me with the security of a loving and spiritual family. I would not have to remain on any campus during vacation, as you call it (laughing), because I was now part of an American family.”

The Women’s Mite Missionary Society agreed unanimously to adopt and sponsor Kamuzu at Wilberforce.

“I would always have an American family to call my own as long as I was to be in America”.

On 1 October, 1925, Kamuzu’s first classes began at Wilberforce.
“I was very glad that the Principal, Professor Lane, decided that I could enter at the secondary or high school level. He accepted my schooling in Nyasaland and my experiences in South Africa and allowed me to move immediately beyond primary school. I was already twenty-seven years old by your count (laughing). Had I known that I was that old then, I might have been embarrassed to even be in high school, as you call it. But, I wasn’t embarrassed. I was too excited to be in a formal school, a great school, sitting at a proper desk with books and the proper tools of a student; pencils, pens, rubbers, or erasers as you call them, and proper qualified teachers. I thanked God every night of my life in America for the knowledge that I was gaining every minute that I was there.”

The years passed quickly at Wilberforce.

“I worked very hard at Wilberforce and did quite well in my studies. I spent vacations with various families; the Dunnigan's in Kokomo and the Samuel's in Indianapolis. Even on vacations, I studied and read. I could not get enough education. The Samuel’s tried to plan things so that I would leave my books, but books are portable, so they would always accompany Kamuzu where he went (laughing).”

Kamuzu quickly adapted to his new academic life. His intense and vital interest in everything, in concert with his instinctive affinity for people resulted in his immediate popularity on the Wilberforce campus. His demeanor attracted people; students and faculty alike. Everyone had questions about Africa and he had time for all.

Kamuzu Banda excelled in his academic work. He loved Latin and Greek. he was far in advance of his peers in mathematics and, in fact, spent most of that allotted time as a tutor. He reveled in literature, European and Ancient History, Political Geography and Civics. He studied Spanish and quickly recognizing the "romance" language links, moved on to Italian and Portuguese. The study of Civics troubled him.

"What I read about freedom and democracy for everyone in the United States was not what I saw in America. No! Not at all. Negroes were not treated well at all, but interestingly, white people treated me very, very well indeed because I was different in their eyes. I was an African".
Kamuzu excelled at debate which was a very fashionable extra-curricular activity at the time. Recalling once again his attendance at Dr. Aggrey's 1921 Jules Street speech,

"He electrified his audience. His voice rose and fell. He pleaded, he cajoled, he implored, he demanded. He brought people, black and white, to their feet with excitement. He could make them laugh and in the same instance, he could make them cry. So debate and speaking at meetings came easily to me because I enjoyed it so."

This capability and the ease with which he could convey his various messages would serve him very well in the political years which lay before him.

Kamuzu made short work of Wilberforce. By 1928, after just three years of study, he had completed the four year course.

On 28 June, 1928, now thirty year old Kamuzu Banda received his High School diploma with honors from Wilberforce Academy. All of his American families were in the audience to cheer him as he stepped off the platform with the diploma that he had received from Professor Lane. The scene was now set for the challenges of University.

"After graduating from Wilberforce, I was invited by one of my families to vacation with them. So I went to Marion, Indiana, to the home of Dr. and Mrs. Walter Bailey. Dr. Bailey was a very well respected surgeon, respected by both black and white patients. In fact, he told me that he had an equal number of both races as patients. I found that most interesting indeed because this was a period of much discrimination, Jim Crow, they called it in your country; the discrimination that I mentioned to you earlier. Many laws prevented white people and black people from mingling, even meeting. But because Dr. Bailey was so skilled, people of all races flocked to his surgery and consulting room. It was a very good lesson to me to always be the best. The best has no barriers, racial or otherwise.

I had a wonderful time making rounds with Dr. Bailey and Mrs. Weaver, his nurse. He even let newly high school graduated Kamuzu assist in a very small way in minor surgery (laughing). I was resolved to fulfill my long dream of someday being a physician, a doctor, as good as Dr. Bailey."

At the urging of several other sponsors, Mr. Walter Stephenson and Dr. Herald, both of Marion, Indiana, and both graduates of Indiana University, Kamuzu applied for and was accepted to admission at Indiana University as a pre-medical student.

"I entered Indiana University at Bloomington in the fall of 1928. I stayed there for two years but never felt comfortable or challenged intellectually or scholastically. Classes were too easy, too ordinary, and I felt that my fellow students were not serious scholars. I did not want to be effected or to use a medical term, infected (laughing) by them.

Then too, there were deficiencies in the curriculum. I wanted a full education, not only pre-medicine, but also the classics, more Latin, more Greek, more European and Ancient History, Literature and other subjects that would enable me to learn about
the great civilizations and people of the world. In addition, of course, I wanted to have a very comprehensive pre-medical course; the sciences, chemistry, zoology, botany. I did not feel that I could achieve my full academic goal by remaining at Indiana. So, at the risk of annoying my sponsors, I applied for and was accepted at the University of Chicago. This was the teaching home of the great physicist Enrico Fermi, the world renown Thorstein Veblen, philosopher and economist, and the eminent John Dewey, acclaimed psychologist, pedagogist and philosopher, indeed the Founder of the philosophical School of Pragmatism. I had heard stories of the great first President of the University of Chicago, William Rainey Harper, the extraordinary Classics scholar, fluent in Hebrew, Latin, Ancient Greek and an acknowledged expert in Middle Eastern languages. This is what I was seeking, Kamuzu’s education ‘Holy Grail’.

I entered school as a transfer student, a high junior in the fall of 1930. The University of Chicago fulfilled every expectation. I was surrounded by some of the best Professors in the world and some of the smartest students in the world. I wanted intellectual challenge and now I had it. This time I was not entering as an intellectual beggar. I had at least attained a certain level of academic achievement and I was prepared for what awaited me at the University of Chicago.”

Kamuzu Banda’s application for admission to the University, a copy of which is in my archive, is accompanied by a two-page statement of personal history and goals and objectives. Consider the closing paragraph:

“The Missionary influence under which I came in the early days of my youth has created in me a fanatical sense of duty to my people and country. . . I want to receive my education from the best University possible.”

Kamuzu Banda is now firmly on the path to fulfilling his academic and intellectual dreams, dreams which, unknown to even him, were to have far-reaching effects and monumental implications for his Nyasa people and their colonial rulers.
CONVERSATIONS WITH KAMUZU
THE LIFE AND TIMES OF DR. H. KAMUZU BANDA

Part 4 1930 - 1940

By Dr. Donal Brody

PREFACE

The 14th of May will always be very significant for me and for the many Malawian’s who will forever appreciate, love and honor the Ngwazi. Kamuzu Day, 14 May, was a celebration of Dr. Banda’s birthday. It will be celebrated in perpetuity by those of us who acknowledge the greatness of the man who brought Roy Welensky, the Federation and Britain, to their knees, ending a century of colonialism. His unparalleled leadership as the Founding and First Head of State brought thirty years of unprecedented development to the nation and her people.

I receive sad letters from Malawians daily, speaking of the woeful, abject poverty, crime and corruption, that surrounds and suffocates them since Dr. Banda left office in 1994. They wishfully recall thirty years of a crime-free society that still venerated and held dear the rich Malawi culture and traditions that are now fast slipping away. They lament over empty nkhokwes, devastated pot-holed roads, hospitals without medicine, unkept education promises, the evils of drugs, an AIDS devastated society and most of all, the passing of their late and honored, Ngwazi Dr. H. Kamuzu Banda. His wisdom and leadership improved the lives and well-being of all, particularly the ordinary villagers throughout the country for whom he had a special devotion.

Ngwazi, we miss you every day, but particularly on Kamuzu Day. We pray for your peaceful, eternal rest. You will forever be acknowledged as Malawi’s greatest leader and forever. . . Ngwazi.

PART 4 . . . CONVERSATIONS WITH KAMUZU . . .

If the move to Bloomington in 1928 was an awesome experience for the young man from Kasungu, the move to Chicago was simply overwhelming. Chicago, one of the largest cities in the United States, was deep in the throes of the great depression and prohibition. Crime was rampant. Daily newspaper headlines heralded the latest gangland killings; John Dillinger and Al Capone reigned supreme. Racism was in full flower with lynchings taking place in Illinois under the auspices of the Ku Klux Klan. It was a long moment of insanity on the American scene.

Into this milieu stepped Kamuzu Banda in search of his intellectual destiny. Fortunately the University itself, located in the Hyde Park suburb of South Chicago, was remote enough from the insanity of Chicago proper to continue to prosper as an educational sanctuary. It was everything that Kamuzu expected and even more. It was an environment that was home to over five thousand focused scholars.
"There was no fooling around at the University of Chicago. It was demanding, very, very demanding, so everyone worked very hard at their studies. Most had to work too because times were very, very difficult because of the great depression. I too worked all the time at my studies and also at my work to assist Professor Sapir (Prof. Edward M. Sapir, Professor of Linguistics University Of Chicago, 1924-1948) in his study of Bantu languages. Fortunately my years in South Africa provided me with much more than just my own language ChiChewa, so I was a great help to Professor Sapir and also to a young American Negro student, Mark Hanah Watkins, who was a remarkable linguist. He was working towards his Doctorate with a thesis on ChiNyanja, so I was an informant for both Professor Sapir and soon-to-be, Dr. Watkins.

Professor Sapir was my idea of a scholarly man. He was tireless in his determination to understand every aspect of ChiChewa or ChiNyanja as it was called then. I was able to assist both he and Watkins in many ways, including differentiating between the ChiNyanja of my own area, Kasungu, lakeshore ChiNyanja and the ChiNyanja of the Mang'anja people of the Lower Shire. They found the subtlety of our language most interesting indeed. They were both very surprised and pleased to have me unravel our language for them.

Working with, or I should say, working for Dr. Sapir (laughing), revealed to me the true great importance of language to a people and their nation. I was determined that if I was ever in a position of influence, I would preach the integrity of our language. By integrity, I mean correct usage, proper usage, no slang, no shortcuts, no, no, not at all. You have heard me speak in English at meetings. English, because I want my people, the people of this country, to hear and learn one of the most important world languages; for trade, for knowledge, most, most important. Language skills begin with hearing the language, the music of it. But you have also heard me correct Mr. Msonthi or Mr. Tembo when they make a mistake in translation. ‘aMsonthi iyai! . . . aTembo iyai!’ no mistakes when you translate for Kamuzu (laughing). I insist on perfect or accurate translation so the language is always spoken or written as it is supposed to be spoken or written.

I am quite serious when it comes to proper use of language. . . any language, especially by educated people. If they are speaking ChiChewa, ChiTumbuka or ChiTonga, it should be the best possible ChiChewa, ChiTumbuka or ChiTonga in accordance with their education. You will recall that I have spoken publicly a number of times at Kamuzu Academy, at Chancellor College and other places about correct language usage. Some say ‘Ah, Kamuzu is elitist’. They miss the point completely. Language is communication. Proper and correct communication between people, whether it is diplomacy, business, even marriage, is most important if it is to be successful in communicating feelings, ideas, warnings, gratitude and the many other aspects of life. Language has subtleties that we as Malawians, as a relatively new nation, must learn and master if we are to succeed in this fast moving and changing world. Our diplomats must master the languages of their post so that they are not fooled or worse, ignored in important discussions. In France, they must understand the subtleties of French and so on. Over there in Zomba, in Parliament, a Member must understand each word, each subtlety if he or she is to properly serve his or her constituency. Correct vocabulary, correct grammar and correct usage. This is what I want the people of this country to master and use regularly. This disciplines
the mind and allows for the correct passage of ideas and thoughts with no misunderstanding. Not elitism, no... absolutely not.”

Sapir was to prove a great friend and resource to Kamuzu who, despite a dream of a medical career, was still determined to get the broadest possible education. At the University of Chicago, Kamuzu continued to excel in Latin, Greek, German, ancient and medieval history, political science and modern political history. It was on the latter two that he focused for degree purposes.

“I was determined that I was not going to be a physician who had focused only on the human body, its maladies and treatments. I wanted a broad education in humanities, the classics. I was determined to have a well-rounded education which, of course, included all of the necessary education required of a physician. But I was determined to take full advantage of the magnificent scholarship available to me at the University of Chicago.”

Kamuzu continued to speak to groups in and around Chicago. His presentations to Church groups, Lions, Rotary, Kiwanis, Elks and other organizations were very welcomed and long remembered. He was always eager to talk about Africa, a subject he followed very closely, but also determined to hone his already extraordinary speaking ability.

"I still remembered Dr. Aggrey and his remarkable ability as a speaker. I was determined to work hard to further develop my own ability. I felt that great ability as a speaker would help me even as a physician. To be good at anything, one must be able to speak well, correctly, with authority, to speak convincingly. As a physician, I knew that I must be able to evaluate a patient’s symptoms, diagnose properly, treat properly, and then be able to communicate well with authority, so that they, the patients, would follow my instructions precisely. This is true in any discipline. I did not know then that I was preparing for a political future in which I would use my
speaking ability to motivate people to develop this country. So I am most, most grateful to Dr. Aggrey for motivating me years ago to speak forcefully and with authority."

It was through Dr. Sapir that Kamuzu was introduced to Mrs. Corine Sanders, an African-American woman. . .

"Mrs. Sanders had a very caring personality. She became my American mother, insisting that I study even harder. She was in every way my adopted mother who demanded to see my papers and grades. There were many times that I was so busy that I forgot to eat, but my "mother" never forgot. She insisted that Kamuzu eat (laughing)."

Finally on December 22, 1931, now 33 years of age, Kamuzu Banda walked proudly off the platform at the University of Chicago, carrying his diploma and several awards attesting to his scholastic excellence in Philosophy, History, Language and Political Science.

"A degree from the University of Chicago is not easy to achieve. No! Not easy at all. The University of Chicago is one of the four or five great universities of the English-speaking world . . . Harvard, Yale, Oxford, Cambridge and the University of Chicago . . . all the best, the most demanding, so I was very, very proud to graduate high in my class from the University of Chicago.

But I was not yet finished with my education. I always had the dream of serving my people, the people of Malawi or Nyasaland as the British called it, as a medical practitioner. I could not rest until I accomplished that."

Kamuzu had heard about Meharry Medical College in Nashville, Tennessee, from a friend and neighbor of Mrs. Sanders, Dr. Samuel Poole, who sent letters of reference to the school on Kamuzu's behalf. Dr. Poole's belief in Kamuzu's ability, coupled with his genuine liking and respect for the young man, led to his introduction to wealthy Chicago residents who agreed to finance Kamuzu's medical studies at Meharry.

“I vividly remember to this day, the joy, the happiness that I felt in knowing that I was now on my way to my dream of being a doctor, a medical man. I was flooded with memories of my grandmother Chendawaka, healing injured people, of Dr. Holly at Hartley, and of Dr. Bailey allowing me to assist him in his surgery in Marion, Indiana. For the first time since I left Kasungu so many years ago, tears came to my eyes, but these were tears of happiness at the prospects of someday soon being a physician. I knew that I still faced years of much, much hard work in order to achieve that goal. But Kamuzu was always good at hard work.” (laughing)

The journey from Chicago to the Nashville of the 1930's bridged a racial spectrum that left a life long impression on Kamuzu. While Chicago was generally racially tolerant, Nashville was a boiling, seething, hot bed of Ku Klux Klan activity. Kamuzu succeeded in remaining generally unaffected personally, but his observations were to leave permanent memories and, in fact, scars.
"I could not believe that in the United States, whose Constitution and Bill of Rights promised freedom and liberty for all, that there could be such naked hatred, not only white against black, but also the hatred that certain Negroes had for other Negroes because of differences in skin color.

I did not remember hatred like this in Nyasaland, but I certainly saw much the same thing amongst miners of different tribes in Johannesburg."

The worst incident which Dr. Banda was to relate many times during his political career, was of the unspeakably violent lynching he accidentally witnessed near Nashville in 1934.

"This poor Negro man had been beaten unmercifully and before several hundred raving Ku Klux Klan members, he was hung from a tree. I can never forget seeing that ugly incident, nor forget the revolting anger and fear that I felt and still feel even after all these years."

Once enrolled at Meharry, Kamuzu was finally on the way to realizing his academic and professional dream. He worked with extraordinary zeal, seeking to master each and every facet of medical science. He tolerated nothing less than perfection in himself, driving himself in some instances to near physical collapse.

"I didn't have Mother Sanders there to make sure Kamuzu ate properly, so I would sometimes forget. Anyway, I had to work very, very hard. How would you like to go to a doctor for an appendectomy if you knew he only got 75% in appendectomy in medical school? (laughing) So I had to work all the time, work very, very hard to get
the best knowledge and grades possible. Kamuzu did not want to only get 75% in appendectomy or anything else (laughing.)"

Kamuzu did not get 75% in anything. Graduating on May 20, 1937 at age thirty-nine, Hastings Kamuzu Banda, M.D., finished near the top of his graduating class, with an overall average of close to 90%. He excelled in all areas of basic medicine, and was held in particularly high esteem by professors and colleagues for his surgical dexterity.

I enjoyed surgery very much. It was thrilling to me to repair an organ that was functioning improperly and to know that because of my skill and knowledge, my patient could live pain-free and fully functional. It was what I wanted for so many years, and now I was truly Dr. Banda.”

During his final year at Meharry, Kamuzu began making inquiries through friends and family in Nyasaland, and also directly and formally through various British government departments regarding his desired return to Nyasaland and to a posting in the Protectorate’s medical services. Friends and family encouraged him, overjoyed at the prospect of his return after almost 22 years.

But the British government’s response was not readily forthcoming. After months of waiting, the answer finally came in early 1937. "His Majesty’s Government does not recognize the medical qualifications of the stated American institution and therefore regrets that a position in the medical establishment of the Nyasaland Protectorate is unavailable to you at this time."

Disappointed, but not discouraged, Dr. Banda planned his next, and what was to be, his final academic move, entry into Great Britain's esteemed medical institution, the
University of Edinburgh, to earn the medical qualifications that would enable him to return to Nyasaland as a physician.

August 13, 1937, found Dr. Banda stepping aboard an ocean liner, bound for Scotland and entry into that most "Noble of Universities", Edinburgh, founded in 1583 under strict Presbyterian auspices, and under charter from King James VI who later became King James I of England. The University that had graduated Sir Walter Scott, Thomas Carlyle, Robert Louis Stevenson and countless other people of outstanding human accomplishment, was now home to Hastings Kamuzu Banda, M.D., in quest of his final goal; complete professional recognition and a career in medical service to his people of Nyasaland.

Dr. Banda spent three and a half years in Edinburgh, working diligently at the School of Medicine of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons and successfully towards his British medical credentials.

Scotland offered other advantages. In the best Livingstone tradition, it was home to literally hundreds of returned missionaries back in Scotland from their years of labor in the mission field of Nyasaland. They were quick to befriend the now very sophisticated young Nyasa professional.

"I quickly made friends with many of the former missionaries, many of whom knew my home, my friends and my family. I now had many sources of information there in Scotland, and was developing many other sources inside and outside of Nyasaland.

I became quite active in the Church of Scotland, and made many, many friends, many of whom are my friends to this day."

The scholarly, disciplined mind of Dr. Banda adapted quickly and easily to his studies at Edinburgh.

"I found that I was quite advanced of my colleagues in basic medicine, having worked so hard at Meharry where I had no time for fun (laughing). I enjoyed my advanced medical studies, but still worked very, very hard because I wanted to learn everything."
But at Edinburgh, I had time for something else . . . something of great importance to me . . . politics. . . P-O-L-I-T-I-C-S. I became very absorbed in Britain's relationship to its colonies, particularly to Nyasaland. I read everything available about the subjects . . . material from everyone's viewpoint, white and black. I still have all that material, as you've seen for yourself in my library. I had to know everything that was going on in Whitehall, in Zomba and in Salisbury. The missionaries had one viewpoint, but others in Nyasaland, in Whitehall and in Salisbury provided me with other viewpoints. I was concerned, deeply, deeply concerned with the events unfolding in Central Africa, particularly talk of closer association of my country Nyasaland with Northern and Southern Rhodesia. Yes, that discussion started in Whitehall, Salisbury, Lusaka and Zomba, even then in 1939 and earlier still.

In fact, "association" had been the subject of discussion as far back as the days of Sir Harry Johnston and Cecil Rhodes. It was an "on again-off-again" subject, very much dependent on the vagaries of Whitehall's budgets, mine production and price swings, production and prices of tea, coffee and tobacco and resulting income or loss, and the settler's degrees of ease or unease of the possibility of African unrest. The Hilton Young Commission of 1928, followed in 1931 by the Joint Select Committee on Closer Union in East Africa, added further confusion by tacitly supporting the future union of Nyasaland with the Crown's holdings to the north, Tanganyika, Kenya Colony and Uganda.

In Nyasaland in the meantime, certain British estate owners and businessmen, still mindful of and deeply troubled by the near disastrous 1915 Chilembwe uprising, and subsequent lesser though threatening events, formed the Greater Rhodesian League, seeking amalgamation with, at a minimum, Southern Rhodesia. The 1936 First Victoria Falls settlers meeting sought to further that aim in a three day conclave that witnessed screaming British settlers voicing their fears of an eventual African move towards independence.

The Second Victoria Falls meeting in 1937 demanded action of the British Government to insure "irrevocably and perpetually" the interests of the British subjects in the Rhodesia's and Nyasaland.

In response, the Bledisloe Rhodesia-Nyasaland Commission in June 1938 toured the area charged by the Colonial office with the responsibility of ascertaining whether the interests of all of the residents of the three territories, irrespective of race, lie in amalgamation of any kind, north or south.

Lead by Viscount Bledisloe, the Commission's report was ambiguous, a masterpiece of "fence-sitting", approving amalgamation in principle, but expressing deep concern over the overwhelming rejection of amalgamation of any kind by the indigenous
African population at every level of society, from Chief to peasant farmer. They hastened to add however, that "no leadership exists now or in the foreseeable future among the indigenous population at large to present barriers to any alliance that was deemed in the best interests of His Majesty's Government".

“I had been following all of these settler meetings and Commission investigations very closely. I had copies of all of their discussions, all of their findings. You have seen them in my library, all with my comments noted as I read each document, as I received and studied them.

It was clear that the settler’s in both Rhodesia’s and in Nyasaland were concerned about no one’s interests but their own. The least of their concerns were for the Africans of each territory. We were merely the invisible cheap labor. All of this talk about amalgamation or association, whatever they chose to call it, had only one objective, their continuing comfortable life at the expense of the very African’s that they were supposed to ‘protect’.

Each report, settler or British government, increased my anger and my sense of purpose. I would resist amalgamation, association or federation, whatever they called it, to my last breath. I was not alone, no, not at all. I had, by 1940, a very large number of personal contacts throughout the Rhodesia’s and Nyasaland. There was no African support for amalgamation, association or federation. None at all. Our people may have been poor and neglected, but they were not stupid. We were not prepared to labor, to fight European wars, to make the settlers even richer or more comfortable than they already were after half a century of colonial occupation. So I was determined to be the voice against their devious plan and to do it from the very center of their own empire (laughing).”

Dr. Banda’s political fires had been stoked in New York while awaiting his journey to Scotland, through a chance meeting and renewal of acquaintances with the self-same Dr. Alfred Bitini Xuma (September 1998) of his Johannesburg days.

Dr. Xuma had become an ardent advocate of African political power, in direct response to the despised Hertzog proposals of 1935, which would severely curtail black land ownership and would remove blacks from the common voter's rolls. Because of his vociferous response to Hertzog's proposals, life in the Union became a little too "hot". Dr. Xuma left for the United States and further medical study and was on his way home to resume his medical practice and, although he didn't know it at the time of his chance meeting with Dr. Banda, to become the elected President-General of the African National Congress.

"We talked for a number of hours, first comparing notes as medical men and then we had a long discussion about events in Africa. I could see from this discussion that the future for Africans was dismal in their own countries, that promises and obligations given or made to us over the years, of self-determination of eventual self-rule, were not going to be kept unless we, the Africans, fought hard and with all of our resources for what we believed in and knew to be ours. Bledisloe said we had no leadership and we now had to prove him wrong. I was well along on my way to despising the concept of amalgamation or federation since it clearly was not in the best interests of we, the Africans."
It was at that meeting in New York with Dr. Xuma that my intense interest in the fate of Nyasaland, indeed all of Central Africa, was galvanized into action. I was determined to be the thorn in the side of the British Empire."

Dr. Banda was deeply disturbed by the Bledisloe Commission report, and submitted a lengthy, dramatic and passionate paper to the Colonial Office in response.

"I was very, very upset by the Commission's lack of commitment to we, the Africans of Nyasaland. They knew that we had, time and time again, been promised eventual self-government. It was in the very nature of our Protectorate status that we would at some point in our development, part as friends from our colonial protectors.

But no, these people came to Nyasaland, talked to and listened to everyone black, white, and brown, but they only heard the white settlers.

My paper to the Colonial Office dealt with the facts . . . F-A-C-T-S! I set out, for their review, all of the promises and obligations made and completely refuted the Bledisloe conclusions. We, the Africans of Nyasaland, did not want amalgamation now or ever. We wanted our vision of self determination to be respected by our so-called protectors. I made these points very, very strongly and I think they realized that Kamuzu was very, very serious indeed."

In 1939, Chief Mwase, a powerful Traditional Authority from Kasungu and descendant of the legendary Chief Mwase Kasungu, protagonist of Sir Harry Johnston, arrived in London at the invitation of the London University School of Oriental and African Languages. The University, under contract to the Colonial Office of His Majesty's Government was undertaking a linguistic analysis of all territories occupied by Great Britain in an effort to improve cross-cultural communications. Chief Mwase, a ChiChewa, ChiTumbuka and ChiTonga speaker, was amply qualified to assist in the exercise.

He was also very well suited to another exercise, the briefing and updating of Dr. Banda. Chief Mwase, an active, though cautious political activist, spent long hours informing Dr. Banda of the very latest political, social and economic developments taking place in Nyasaland specifically, and southern and Central Africa generally.

"I was very, very upset to learn about the increasing racial tension in Nyasaland. Mwase, whom I had communicated with for years directly and through my uncle, Reverend Hanock Phiri, confirmed what I had heard about the increasingly harsh treatment of my people, particularly by the European estate owners who were still expanding their already very, very large land holdings at the expense of the ordinary people who were slowly but surely being deprived of their birthright. He advised me of the imposition of very harsh tax default laws designed to impress labor, the worsening and, in fact, deplorable prison conditions and the severe restriction of many, many personal freedoms.

I was furious at these revelations, and could not rest until I personally took some actions. Mwase and I talked for many, many hours and I encouraged him to keep me informed of all events when he returned home. For my part, I knew that to get things
done in Nyasaland, we needed leadership, organization, planning, discipline and money and I vowed to work hard to accomplish this."

Mwase returned to Nyasaland in February 1940 and despite the logistic problems concerned with communications at that time brought about by the war in Europe and greatly restricted communications, the information flow to Dr. Banda improved.

"I was kept informed of the growing importance of the District Native Associations as they were called. I was increasingly upset by the impressment of Nyasa's into military service to fight a European war and of further land confiscation."

Meanwhile, Dr. Banda was immersed in his medical studies which were going extremely well. His Meharry training in combination with his professional dedication led him to very notable scholastic achievement at Edinburgh.

His circle of friends and acquaintances in the Edinburgh area grew, particularly among the many in that city with a Nyasaland background and experience. Many of these individuals, such as the very same Dr. T. Cullen Young who had ejected young Kamuzu from the long ago Livingstonia examination, Dr. George Prentice and Reverend Matthew Faulds, former missionaries in Kasungu shared the feelings of despair with Dr. Banda about Britain's future role in Nyasaland. This circle broadened, particularly among the former missionary community, and emanations from Edinburgh grew increasingly hostile towards Britain's apparent further acquiescence to settler demands.

As Dr. Banda's connection with the returned missionary community grew, so grew his connections to the Church of Scotland, most particularly with the Guthrie Memorial Church which he joined on June 23, 1940, and its moderator, Dr. Hector MacPherson.

I will always remember June 23, 1940, when I was admitted to membership in the Church of Scotland at Guthrie Memorial Church in Edinburgh. I felt as if I was touching the Nyasaland of my youth. I was surrounded by caring and loving people, many of whom had walked the very same paths that I, my sisters, mother, father, grandmother and grandfather walk. I was very homesick for the first time in many years. As Dr. MacPherson read my name aloud, I clearly remember silently renewing my promise to return home to serve my fellow Nyasas."
So this decade of incredible achievement for Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda closed with a clearly designed set of personal objectives, service to mankind through medicine, service to the people of his mother-land Nyasaland and service to God through church membership and activity. It had been a decade of extraordinary accomplishment with promises and dreams of an even more productive future which was to effect the lives of tens of millions of people living and as yet unborn.

“I was determined to complete my medical training now. . . once and for all, and return home. That thought was with me day and night and I knew that was my destiny so, it was only a matter of time before I would see Nyasaland and my family again.”
The effects of the war in Europe were all pervasive throughout the United Kingdom as the new decade began. Parts of England and Scotland were under attack and the harsh threat of a Nazi invasion of Britain was very real. In fact, the Channel Island of Jersey fell to and was occupied by the Germans. The near disaster at Dunkirk was to galvanize the people of Britain into a total dedication to the destruction of Hitler and all he stood for.

In Edinburgh, Dr. Banda devoted himself wholeheartedly to his first priority, British medical qualification; without which he could not accomplish the rest of his life's mission, the return to Nyasaland as a physician.

"I worked very, very hard, studying and performing actual medical work under the supervision of my professors. To me, medicine was a religion, it was God-given inspiration and talent. Healing a person was an act of God and I as a physician was His instrument. I have missed the practice of medicine very much since I entered politics. . . very much indeed."

Austere in his personal life, characteristics were in place that would be symbolic of Dr. Banda throughout his life. Always impeccably groomed and of immaculate demeanor and deportment, he, at all times, symbolized the most cultured of human behavior.

His moral outlook epitomized the very strict church of Scotland missionary teachings of his youth. Years later, in 1970, Malawi's parliament passed a strict dress code
effecting residents and visitors alike. As Malawi’s first Director of Tourism at the
time, I had occasion to plead with Dr. Banda for a relaxation of the code for bona-fide tourists, in order to encourage the development and growth of the still young industry. Dr. Banda responded with a firm and resounding . . .

"No! No! Do you think that this is our dress code? No! It was David Livingstone's dress code and all the church of Scotland’s missionaries dress code. So now it is your dress code and you have to live with it. Now, if you want to negotiate for the lake shore and game parks, I’m willing to listen (laughing)". The ever-pragmatic Dr. Banda listened carefully, questioned intensely and finally, accepted my negotiating points. The lakeshore and game parks received a waiver of the rules.

“But only at the game parks and the lakeshore itself, not in the villages.” But this incident was an exception. Throughout his personal life he was morally inflexible and incorruptible.

It was during this period that certain future political elements that were to be central to his form of leadership developed and were employed in his own personal life. The eventual four cornerstones of the Malawian Congress Party were mainstays of his own life. His Unity of purpose, his Loyalty to the cause of freedom for his people, his Obedience to those in authority at Edinburgh University and Church and his extraordinary personal Discipline in everything he undertook were to result, years later, in the Four Cornerstones of the party.

“The Four Cornerstones of the Malawian Congress Party, Unity, Loyalty, Obedience and Discipline, are not just political words. They are words and actions that influence one’s life. If one is to succeed in life, one must subscribe to a code of personal behavior. Part of it we learn in church, Commandments they are called. These are holy teachings that have guided and protected human society for thousands of years.

The other part we learn through common sense. In my own case, ‘Unity’. By that I mean unity of purpose, focus on my studies, my undivided determination to be an outstanding physician, to learn everything that was available for me to learn.

‘Loyalty’. . . I was loyal to the cause of the people of Nyasaland. They never left my mind: first as a physician to use my skills to heal. Then, as time went on and I became more politically involved, more incensed over British settler behavior and attitude towards the Africans that they were supposed to "protect"; loyal to the cause of their freedom, their self-sufficiency, their independence from colonial rule.

‘Obedience’. . . to learn, to become educated, one must be obedient. I was obedient to my professors, my church leaders and to others in authority, including many others with the knowledge that I required in my life.

Finally, ‘Discipline’. One must exercise discipline in all of his or her undertakings. Disciplined in personal habits, eating, drinking. Disciplined in the use of time. Disciplined in one’s interaction with people.
So you see, the Four Cornerstones of the Malawi Congress Party are there as our credo, C-R-E-D-O, to strengthen the people of this country so that they can personally achieve the knowledge, tools, and resolve that we, as the government, need to build Malawi, to build a better country for future generations.”

In spite of his seeming austerity and no-nonsense demeanor, Dr. Banda always had a keen sense of humor. He enjoyed playing a practical joke and having one played on him as long as the joke was clever and hurt no one. Agogo Chatinka related that young Kamuzu thoroughly enjoyed conundrums, the famous and oft-times humorous African riddles. He enjoyed jokes that were provocative and employed a clever use of words or numbers. He possessed a hearty laugh and sparkling eye.

On the one hand, Dr. Banda, at no time in his long life, suffered fools. He had no patience with stupidity, with shallow thinking from those from whom he expects more. On yet the other hand, he always had the greatest patience with those who were unschooled and untrained in the full use of ones intellect. Agogo Chatinka commented frequently on his extraordinary patience with young boys and girls to whom he was teaching “ABCD’s” as a young man, and his impatience and anger with those older children who resisted learning because of laziness.

Suffice it to say, that by the early 1940's, all of the characteristics, tools and capabilities that were to make Dr. Banda a very successful medical practitioner, freedom-fighter, political leader and Head of State were in place and ready to go into full action.

The final days of Dr. Banda's Edinburgh medical training found him involved in a number of important activities. In addition to sitting final written and oral examinations for his British qualifications, he was, with the full approval of the Edinburgh medical establishment, treating a variety of people in the area, particularly the elderly and needy. He had the reputation that was to exist throughout his medical career of being a sensitive and caring physician. He was truly pledged and dedicated to the letter of the Hippocratic Oath, the Corpus Hippocraticum, which he had sworn to at Meharry. His promise to fulfill all of the obligations of a physician, to administer only beneficial treatment and to live an exemplary personal and professional life, was his personal manifesto, unaltered from the day he raised his hand to swear to it until his passing sixty years later.

“I was very, very pleased that as I neared the end of my formal training at Edinburgh, my professor’s thought enough of my skills to allow me to practice, unsupervised, in a limited manner. I had a small practice, mainly elderly people for whom I had great empathy and indeed, sympathy. They were among the poorest and most underprivileged in Edinburgh, and I felt a great responsibility to care for them.

There was, of course, another reason that my professors and the local medical establishment allowed me to practice before graduation. The war in Europe had the result of converting many, many physicians from private practice to military practice. So, Kamuzu was at the right place at the right time (laughing). But, I was ready, fully capable to undertake the role of a practicing physician.”
Concurrent with the final months of his Edinburgh University training, Dr. Banda became increasingly active at the Guthrie Memorial Church. On the 23rd of June 1940, the Moderator, Dr. Hector MacPherson, submitted the name of "Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda, of Nyassaland (sic) 1 Lochrin Place, Eden, to the fellowship of the congregation and the Church". Popular with clergy and members alike, Dr. Banda became a faithful member adding much to Sunday School classes.

On the 23rd day of March 1941 . . . Dr. MacPherson proposed that Doctor Hastings Kamuzu Banda - Medical Practitioner, be co-opted as an Elder of Guthrie Memorial Church. Dr. MacPherson spoke of the "sterling qualities" of Dr. Banda, his "suitability to fill the position" and announced that "an edict would be prepared and read from the pulpit on the three coming Sundays". Mr. Adamson Seconded this proposal and it was arranged “that Dr. Banda be inducted on Sunday, the 13 April at Forenoon Services".

The edict, in connection with Dr. Banda's ordination, was read the required three times, and finally, on Sunday, April 13, 1941, the session then proceeded to “the ordination of Dr. Hastings Kusmu (sic) Banda of Tanganyika (sic), a member of the Congregation, at present resident in Edinburgh. Dr. MacPherson addressed Dr. Banda from the pulpit and gave the charge, put the usual questions which Dr. Banda answered at the close of the morning service the newly inducted Elder signed the book and received the Right hand of fellowship from the Minister and elders present."

"The ordination as an Elder there at Guthrie Memorial Church, in Edinburgh, touched me very deeply indeed. As I have said, I was surrounded by many, many friends, friends who knew my family in Kasungu, my sisters, my uncles. Because they were present, I felt that my own family was present for this most touching and humbling experience."

Fellow parishioners thoroughly enjoyed fellowship with the new Elder. These friendships were to endure over the years, a fact best confirmed by the letters of fellow Guthrie Memorial Church members, writing, years later, to refute and rebuke the untrue and slanderous statements being made in Malawi's opposition press. (Guardian Today. July 5, 1993. Letter to the Editor p3. Guardian Today. August 6 - 11, 1993. Letter to the Editor p3.)
Finally in June of 1941, Dr. Banda received the degrees qualifying him to practice medicine in any territory of the British Empire; License of the Royal College Physicians (L.R.C.P. Edin.) License of the Royal College of Surgeons (L.R.C.S. Edin.) and License Royal Fellow of Physicians and Surgeons (L.R.F.P.S. Glasg.). Several months earlier, he had begun writing to various government and church offices concerning an appointment in Nyasaland as a physician. Surprisingly, his request to serve as a medical missionary was met with severe, but carefully couched, bigotry and ultimate rejection. The Nyasaland Government finally offered Dr. Banda a position as a junior medical officer, but with severe social restrictions not imposed on British junior physicians with far lesser qualifications. He rejected this offer as racist, demeaning and hypocritical.

“As the rejections and, finally, the very demeaning offer to serve as a most junior medical officer were made by the Nyasaland establishment, I suddenly realized that the real reason for rejection was so plain, that in my enthusiasm to return home, I had overlooked it. The last thing that the Nyasaland establishment wanted in their midst, was an educated African, most particularly one who was educated in the United States (laughing). Also, the fact that I had already written several quite, quite strong letters to the Colonial Secretary, and spoken on many public platforms expressing my vehement opposition to amalgamation, and condemning the self-interests of the settlers above the interests of the Africans of Nyasaland. This probably had a little to do with why they kept rejecting little Kamuzu (laughing). But, in reality, I did much, much more damage to their plans for Nyasaland from London, the center of their empire, than I ever could have done from over there in Zomba or Limbe (laughing). I’m sure that by 1961, they wished that they had kept me busy as a physician over there in Zomba or Limbe” (laughing).

After due deliberation, Dr. Banda decided to move south to Liverpool to begin the formal practice of medicine and to continue his education in tropical medicine at Liverpool University, a course which he completed in July, 1942. In September, 1941, Dr. Banda let a suite of rooms on St. James Place and by the first of January, 1942, he was attending to his first patients.

“I enjoyed Liverpool and was very, very busy with my work, studies and church, but I was not to stay there long. In late 1942, I decided to move to North Shields where I worked in a small, private practice and at a local hospital as a medical and public health officer and also, furthering my training in public health, tropical medicine and internal medicine. It was here that I first saw the results of the war in Europe; terrible wounds and very, very bad burns. I vowed at that time to always work in favor of peace in whatever I was to do in the future.”
North Shields was far too isolated for me. Rumors had reached me of certain things that the British government were considering in Nyasaland. These rumors made me very, very cross, but I was frustrated because I was so far from London where I could have information and certain people readily available to me. Although I was now a fully qualified medical man, I was more determined than ever to stay involved in the future and fate of Nyasaland in a political sense.

People have said that I am pragmatic. In North Shields, I had to be pragmatic. At the hospital that I was at, the Preston Hospital, I was able to work as a physician and also to complete studies and examinations for additional qualifications in gynaecology, obstetrics and internal medicine. I also received further qualifications for public health and tropical medicine. These qualifications were very necessary because I knew beyond a doubt that I would return someday to Nyasaland, where a physician must be a 'Jack of all trades and master of ALL (laughing). So I was being pragmatic and preparing for my medical future.”

Dr. Banda remained in North Shields until early in 1945. He had made a number of visits to London in the ensuing period and had decided upon the Harlesden suburb of London as the place for his home and surgery. Just four miles from the center of a devastated London, the area around his surgery at 2, Buckingham Road, Harlesden, London, NW. 10, was relatively untouched by Hitler's V-bombs. It was a middle class neighborhood that immediately appeared welcoming and friendly to Dr. Banda, despite the severe rationing and other restrictions of the final days of the war and of the post war reconstruction period.

“I never knew what to expect, but when I walked around Harlesden Green, those people always had a smile and greeting for me despite the fact that life was not good for them because of the war, but they were friendly, friendly people, most friendly indeed, and I decided that my practice should be there.”

Dr. Banda's medical excellence and his unique charm resulted in a thriving practice.

"I treated many, many people who came from miles around to be my patients. I delivered many children and had surgery hours seven days a week. It was wonderful and fulfilling work, most particularly the lifelong friendships that I made and still have with my former patients. You have seen and experienced that for yourself when I sent you there to visit some of them. They are still my dear friends. Working together, patient and doctor, to heal or cure. This is a lifelong bond that is unique to patient and doctor.”

In addition to the practice of medicine, Dr. Banda became more intensely involved in the politics of Nyasaland and Central Africa. The world war had been a pivotal event in the evolution of Nyasaland and indeed, all of Britain's Central African possessions. Many indigenous Africans had fought valiantly in the British army with great distinction in lands far from their home. In the best tradition of the World War I song, "How Ya Gonna Keep Them Down On The Farm After They’ve Seen Paris", soldiers returned home and categorically rejected their demeaned political status, particularly of pre- and post-war Nyasaland. Certain events had taken place that, like dominos, were set in place, ripe for an eventual fall. Noteworthy was the 1941 Permanent Secretariat established in Salisbury consisting of representatives of Northern and
Southern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. Established to "facilitate functional cooperation", it was an obvious first step to a more rigidly and legally established union.

European miners, mine administrators and estate owners, particularly in Northern and Southern Rhodesia, had rebelled against the respective administrations on a number of occasions in a quest for more settler power, less control by Britain more land and more direct control over the African population. Inspired by the European workers, African workers countered and rose up in a series of work stoppages, slowdowns and other unrest that resulted in the formation of a number of militant, anti-British, black trade unions. Continued low wages, inferior working and living conditions, and escalating post-war prices, resulted in spreading riots and property damage throughout the three territories. Returned soldiers added their now military disciplined discontent to the escalating problem.

“I was very aware of what was happening back home. My Uncle, the Reverend Hanock Phiri, and my Chief in Kasungu, Chief Mwase, kept me informed by post. Also, a constant stream of African visitors came to see me at my Aylestone Avenue home to brief me and to keep me informed on what was happening. I even had friends, white British friends, in the Colonial Office who would give me the latest news. They would often give me draft copies and then the final copies of all papers, the blue books and the white papers concerning events in the Rhodesia’s and Nyasaland, and even in East and South Africa. I often had these papers before the Colonial Secretary himself had seen them. You have seen them over there in my library, so you know what I mean. Secret papers, for Kamuzu’s eyes first (laughing).

I also was actively supporting the emerging Congress with funds which I sent to Chief Mwase for use in the Kasungu area and to Mr. Somanje down here in Blantyre to use in the south. In the north to Nkosi ya Makosi, Mbewa number two, that is. All went to the emerging Congress for printing papers, transport and other activities.
I wrote letters constantly to all of them, encouraging recruiting of members to Congress and pledging my continued support in every possible way. Most of all, I urged them to unify, to be loyal to the cause, to be obedient to the leadership of new Congress and to be disciplined in all that they do. So, you see, the Four Cornerstones, once again.”

In 1943, the Nyasaland African Congress was formally organized under the leadership of James Frederick Sangala from Domasi, just north of Zomba. Sangala was a longtime government clerk and participant in the essentially politically ineffective Blantyre Native Association. Sensing that the time was right, Sangala joined forces with Charles Matinga and Sydney Somanje to plan and organize Congress as the vehicle through which the Africans of Nyasaland could forcefully express their many grievances. Sangala took the unprecedented step on October 1, 1943, of issuing a "circular letter to all Africans resident in Nyasaland" through two Nyasaland newspapers, The Nyasaland Times and Nkhani za Nyasaland (Story of Nyasaland) and the South African magazine, Bantu Mirror. The letter stated that "experience has taught that unity is strength . . . the time is ripe now for the Africans in this country to strive for unity so as to obtain the greater development of the peoples and country of Nyasaland." Sangala pleaded and appealed to "all Africans and leaders of this country to give their support so that our race should have a place among the civilized."

Sangala's budding Congress grew under the very watchful and wary eye of the Nyasaland administration in Zomba and the European populace throughout the country, but primarily in the Southern Province. Whitehall found it increasingly difficult to balance the growing differences between the settlers demands and the indigenous population now being organized and agitated by Congress. There were many problems for Sangala and his co-leaders. A severe shortage of money limited their ability to travel. Printing costs were high and often beyond their means.

They were however not without friends. In London, Arthur Creech Jones, former Chairman of the Friends of Africa and Fabian Bureau founder, was now the very influential Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, soon to be Secretary. On the other side of the equation was Dr. Banda, medical practitioner of Harlesden.
"I had established good lines of communication with Sangala, and particularly Sidney Somanje and Creech Jones, so I knew what was going on in both Nyasaland and Whitehall. In October, 1944, I was asked to represent Congress in Britain, which of course, I agreed to do. I wrote to Creech Jones and met with him on a number of occasions. In 1946, I wrote to him once again to clearly set out a number of the issues raised at the Conference held by Congress in Blantyre at the end of 1945, at which Levi Mumba was elected President-General. In the meantime, I increased the funds that I was sending to Blantyre to be used for transport and printing, particularly printing. I also made contact with friends in Britain who could help financially. Together we were able to provide certain resources to enable Congress to work more effectively.

Congress for its part, increased its pressure on the colonial regime over there in Zomba, pressing now for a greatly increased advisory role to government with the near-term objective of direct African participation in the Legislative Council in Zomba. They, the Congress leadership, categorically rejected amalgamation of any kind, and increased demands for improved African pay, employment opportunity and housing, health and educational facilities."

Expecting trouble, authorities in Zomba ordered police surveillance and some interruption of the Congress leadership, their activities and their correspondence.

"I strongly disagreed with this type of Government action. The Congress activities were peaceful and were conducted openly. I advised Creech Jones in person, of my very strong feelings against this harassment and shortly thereafter, I was notified by him that the authorities in Zomba had rescinded the police orders. In the meantime, very, very little was being accomplished to address the demands of Congress despite several meetings that I had in London with the then Governor of Nyasaland, Sir Edmund Richards. It was a waste of time and I was asked by Congress to establish closer ties to Whitehall in hopes that pressure from London would influence Richards and his gang in Zomba.

In addition to working very, very hard as a physician, I devoted all of my spare time, my free time, to developing political friends particularly in the Labor Party. They began to realize that I meant business.

At the same time, other African expatriates who were agitating for the interests of their countries as I was for Nyasaland, came to my home at 8 Aylestone Avenue, in Brontesbury Park, Willesden, not for treatment, no (laughing)! They came to consult with me politically. We met regularly at my home after my patient hours, usually late at night or Sunday after church. Jomo Kenyata, Julius Nyerere, Kwame Nkrumah, Kojo Botsio and many others came to talk about politics, how to raise money and to share the names of contacts in the United Kingdom. I was their political physician (laughing)."
I was also meeting with many, many other people including Roy Welensky who was to become my bitterest political enemy. We weren't enemies then, but we weren't friends either (laughing). Welensky was not the type of individual one could be friends with, particularly if you were an African.

In late 1945, Dr. Banda was approached by his now good friend, the Rev. T. Cullen Young and asked to write the preface to a small book, "Our African Way of Life. In fact, translation from Chichewa to English was also part of the task.

The book was a compilation of three essays "presented under the Prize Scheme of the International African Institute for the period 1943 - 1944." The essays, very well written by Messrs. John Kambalame, E. P. Chidzalo and J. W. M. Chadangalara, explored various aspects of the rich traditional life of Nyasaland and her people.

Dr. Banda was delighted with the essays and very pleased to be asked to contribute to the volume, a contribution which allows us an early glimpse into the knowledge that Dr. Banda possessed about his native land despite years of absence.

The book was published in 1946 by the United Society For Christian Literature, and received critical acclaim for not only the essayists, but also for the Nyasa Physician from Harlesden and Brontesbury Park.

The first half of the 1940's, the war years, clearly revealed Dr. Banda’s amazing physical, emotional and intellectual capacity. He worked unceasingly at everything he undertook. Whether it was his medical practice, activities on behalf of Congress, or church activities, he knew only one speed, high gear.

"I was truly fulfilled for the first time in my life. I had achieved the goal of becoming a physician, not just a physician, but a good physician with confidence that I could really care for those in need of my services. I was confident, but always with humility, that a physician must have in the face of the challenge of trying to heal the sick and infirm, trying to ease pain and to bring comfort to sick patients.

I was exhilarated that I was playing a role, a big role, in what I knew instinctively would eventually bring independence and self-rule to Nyasaland. I did not hate the British, in fact, I admire much of their culture, but I was determined to forcefully remind them that their role in Nyasaland had been that of a Protector. We were a protectorate and it was we, the Africans of Nyasaland, who must be the judges of when we no longer needed their protection. That time was approaching very, very rapidly. The people of Nyasaland knew it. I knew it and it was my job in London, and Congress’ job in Nyasaland, to make certain that Britain and the settlers knew it. I knew and was determined, that they would eventually be sorry that they did not let Kamuzu go back home to practice medicine (laughing)."
By the end of World War II, life for Dr. Banda had settled down to a complex mix of medicine and Nyasaland – Pan African issues. His practice grew as word of his great skill and friendly manner spread throughout North London. It is estimated that Dr. Banda’s patient base during his London years numbered between four thousand and five thousand patients, an estimated sixty percent of whom he treated free of charge because of their poor financial situation. It is interesting to note that Dr. Banda’s clientele included the spectrum of racial London, black, brown and white. He was acclaimed by his friends of the period and his patients, not only as an outstanding physician and surgeon, but as a genuinely fine human being who cared deeply about people.

“I treated everyone who came to the door of my surgery. Payment was never discussed. It was my sacred duty as a physician who had sworn to the Hippocratic oath to treat the sick. I found that people who could pay for treatment did so with no discussion, no argument. Those who could not pay were given the very best treatment that I could give them, along with the same dignity that I offered to the Lords and Earls that came for treatment. Yes, I even treated Lords and Earls and one or two Barons (laughing). Kamuzu wasn’t qualified in the eyes of Her Majesty’s Government to practice in Nyasaland, but that did not appear to stop many in her government to come to little Kamuzu for medical treatment (laughing).”
Dr. Banda never lost his medical touch. On tours in Malawi, I watched him time and time again pick up young children, quickly examine them and pass them along with his diagnosis to his own physician for treatment. On a personal note, I will always remember with great fondness, an incident in 1970 when during a meeting with him at State Lodge, Blantyre, he appeared to study me carefully, then jumped up, secured and shook down a thermometer, took my temperature, performed additional examination, wrote a note of diagnosis (which was one hundred percent accurate) and then ordered his personal driver to take me to Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Blantyre for treatment of a very severe and complicated case of malaria that hospitalized me for several weeks.

In 1948, Dr. Banda purchased a home in Brondesbury Park on the way to Hampstead, the first of his wise property investments in Britain. Commuting to his Harlsden surgery in his black Austin was a pleasant interlude in his otherwise very busy day, an interlude he used to think deeply and carefully about his Nyasaland activities. He drove to and fro seven days a week waving cheerfully to friends along the way, some of whom intentionally turned out at curb-side, aware of Dr. Banda's very precise schedule.

"My income as a physician was never significant as so much of my consultation, treatments and surgery were pro-bono. What little I did earn after income taxes was divided between my work on behalf of Congress and small investments in the depressed post-war London property market and land purchased at home. It was my first venture into investment and fortunately, I was modestly successful in my choices for purchase."

Late Sunday afternoons at home in Brondesbury Park was one of Dr. Banda's great delights. In the European custom of the "Grande salon", Dr. Banda's home was open on Sunday to a wonderful cross-section of British-African controversy. He would delight in precipitating great discussion and argument among Pan-Africanists, British M.P.'s and civil servants, former missionaries, journalists and "anyone else with an intelligent point of view."

"We discussed everything, all of the issues facing Great Britain and their territories around the world. Of course, I was interested in Africa, most specifically Nyasaland, but I was to learn very much indeed about political technique and methods from visitors with political knowledge of India, Northern Ireland, Ceylon, and many, many other parts of the world. After all, I was a medical man and I was still going to political school (laughing). "

The decade played out with a number of noteworthy events. In May 1948, the long awaited visit to London by Congress members Charles Matinga and Andrew Mponda took place. Dr. Banda arranged their London schedule which included successful meetings with Colonial Secretary Arthur Creech Jones. This resulted in a new secondary school for Africans at Dedza, only Nyasaland's second, and the long awaited teacher's training college at Domasi, north of Zomba. Discussions were also held regarding appointment of the first Nyasa members of the Legislative Council, a matter which had been "under advisement" by H.M.G. for several years with no results.
“Arthur Creech Jones was a very decent man with a caring regard for Africa and Africans. He was very interested in the welfare of the ordinary, hardworking men and women. It was a clear reflection of his trade union experience. I, along with Matinga and Mponda, were very comfortable speaking to him. He made us feel very much at home in his presence and we were to reach a number of very important conclusions and decisions with ease when compared to some of the battles with other British officials in years to come.”

Events which enfolded during the balance of 1948 and into the early months of 1949 bode poorly for Congress. Lacking strong leadership in Nyasaland, Congress members were reduced to jealousy and petty bickering. Despite Dr. Banda’s urgent calls for Unity, Congress was reduced to its weakest point since it began.

Coincidentally with this decline in Congress, amalgamation, this time under the guise of Federation, again reared it ugly head. Rabble-rousing Roy Welensky traveled to London from Southern Rhodesia to try to sell the Federal concept to Whitehall. Given some encouragement, Welensky returned home determined to convince Godfrey Huggins, Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia, of the benefits of Federalism.

"I knew that Welensky was talking to Godfrey Huggins, later Lord Malvern, but I knew Godfrey Huggins because he was also a medical man. I knew that whatever he did would not be as a direct result of talks with Welensky. No! He would study the issues carefully before he took decisions that would effect the area. To that extent, I had respect for Huggins. What I did not count on was the level of pressure that Welensky and his gang placed on Huggins"!

Unfortunately, the Welensky forces did mount a concerted campaign on Huggins convincing him that a "partnership" between the three territories would improve chances of achieving self governing dominion status.
Following these discussions, a settlers conference took place on February 16 and 17, 1949, at Victoria Falls. At 3:30 p.m. on the 17th, the conference closed with a unanimous vote approving and, in fact, demanding creation of the Central African Federation. The die was now cast that was to set in motion enormous change in Britain's Central African possessions over the next fifteen years.

“Welensky's ‘secret’ agenda was to ultimately rid the area, consisting of Northern and Southern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, of every semblance of Whitehall control. Southern Rhodesia's white elite had a single despicable agenda, the use of the mineral resources of Northern Rhodesia, namely the territory’s vast copper reserves, and the labour, the muscle of Nyasaland, all focused on building a European paradise in Africa, Southern Rhodesia. The white settlers of Nyasaland who held the weakest bargaining chip could only hope for some few pennies to flow across the border to improve infrastructure.”

Word of these fast-moving events reached Dr. Banda and an urgent meeting was immediately called at the Brondesbury Park residence. In attendance were a number of Central Africans living and studying in London. The group unanimously condemned the proposed "partnership", angrily stating emphatically that "the proposed Federation was not and could never be in the best interests of the indigenous people of Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia".
Dr. Banda, who had taken the leadership of the meeting, was asked by the group to produce with Harry Nkumbula, a policy paper "on behalf of and on authority of Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesian Africans in the United Kingdom". Although both names appeared on the finished paper entitled "Federation in Central Africa", authorship was clearly by Dr. Banda. The original document, completely in Dr. Banda’s hand, is in his Presidential Papers. The finished document was a magnificent statement in defense of the interests of the indigenous people of Central Africa. It logically and categorically decried the proposed Federation of Central Africa and exposed it for what it really was, a shallow attempt, a ruse, on the part of the European settlers of Southern Rhodesia to prevail forever, not only over the Africans of Central Africa, but over the British Crown itself.

Dr. Banda laid a careful and methodical foundation for African rejection of any form of amalgamation, union or federation. He compared policies already in force by Whitehall, Salisbury and Pretoria and showed conclusively how those promulgated and enforced by Salisbury were tipping the scales dramatically towards settler domination of the African and his already meager possessions and landholdings.

"I was not fooling around. I realized with great conviction that what I said in this paper was most, most critical to the future of my people, so I pulled no punches, no punches at all in stating my feelings and those of my people about so called ‘amalgamation’. I knew, as I said, that what they were proposing was only the thin edge of the wedge designed to fool us until they were in power. What Welensky and his gang in Salisbury really wanted was Federal status, Dominion status and full control. I could not sit by in comfort in Brondesbury Park and allow that to happen, so I was determined to make my views known."

Dr. Banda had particular concerns about the historical behavior of the Southern Rhodesian settlers towards the African. He himself had had many humiliating experiences during his Hartley days and knew, beyond a doubt, what life would be like under Southern Rhodesian dominated Federation. He reflected his indignation in the Memorandum, excerpted as follows...

"... of all the Europeans in Central Africa, those in Southern Rhodesia have the worst antipathy towards Africans. They are against giving the Africans any rights whether civil, political, industrial, commercial or cultural. They look upon Africans as inferior beings, with no right to a dignified and refined existence and fit only as hewers of wood and drawers of water for Europeans...

They do not even pretend that they are in Africa to..."
help the Africans, but blatantly declare that they are in Africa to live and to rule . . . Any African who is not demonstrably servile and obsequious is classified as cheeky or impertinent. And he can be kicked or beaten with no hope of receiving justice in the courts of law. Because all magistrates expect dutiful and good Africans to be servile and obsequious before all, and to all, Europeans.

It is these European settlers . . . who will rule and govern the federation . . . From such Europeans and from such a Government, we . . . could never hope to receive the same treatment as we are now receiving under the Government provided for us by the United Kingdom . . . Under the Government provided for us by the United Kingdom the relationship between us and the authorities is one of ward and warden, or trust and trustee. The cardinal principle in administration is guidance or guardianship. But under the government provided by Southern Rhodesia, the relationship between us and the authorities will be one of slaves and masters, and the cardinal principle in administration will be domination.

I had always hoped, in fact wished for, a true partnership of all people in Central Africa. I wanted all of us black and white, and Asian to work together in a true partnership for progress, but I would not tolerate treatment in which we the Africans in our own homeland were treated like kapolo, like slaves. No! I vowed to resist the re-imposition of that great tragedy on my people."

Dr. Banda concluded his history-making memorandum by stating emphatically, his views of the future . . .

"We are not actuated by any unwillingness to enter upon a political union with our fellow Africans in Southern Rhodesia. . . (or) by any feeling of hostility towards Europeans of that colony. . . (But) if we accept federation under present circumstances we will . . . jeopardize our political and social future. . .

We are asked to believe that if federation comes, none of the rights we now possess. . . will be tampered with . . . Unfortunately we are unable to put our trust in any guarantees, given by any European community in Africa, in absolute political control over the Africans. . .

With the bitter experience of our fellow Africans in the Union of South Africa before us, with the equally painful experience of our fellow Africans in Southern Rhodesia, what reasons have we for supposing that we . . . will fare any better? . . .

We are, therefore, unwilling to accept the proposed federation or even to discuss it, guarantees or no guarantees. . .

In 1928, the Hilton Young Commission stated. . . that until the Africans were able to take part in representative form of government, and until the Europeans were willing to accept them as full partners in such a system, the imperial government must retain the right to intervene in all business of government in East and Central Africa. We are in complete agreement. . .

When that time comes, we . . . shall be willing to enter upon a federal union with Southern Rhodesia, providing the constitution of any such federal union guarantees. . .
the Africans; universal suffrage, on the basis of common citizenship and common representation . . . (and) the right of secession by any of the federated territories . . .

We reject the notion, and shall reject it . . . in the future, that because of the supposed backwardness and ignorance of our people, any group of self-appointed aristocrats, benevolent or malevolent, has any right to deny us a voice in the affairs of the country we call our own and our home.

Promoters of the federation speak of partnership between Africans and Europeans . . . We too desire partnership . . . but this partnership must be a real partnership, and not a facade, which conceals domination . . . We, too, must be on the board of directors and in the inner councils of the affairs of the firm."

"I did not believe that my paper would end Welensky's scheming, but I knew that it would have an effect on others who would read it. For the first time, a document written by an African and approved by Africans clearly established our position with enough resolve to show that we, the Africans, were prepared to fight for our rights".

The memorandum indeed resulted in a number of very positive factors. It became a rallying point for liberal thinking Britons and for the expatriate London Central African community. In addition, and most importantly, it had a galvanizing effect on the almost dormant Nyasaland African Congress weakened because of jealousy, indecisive leadership and the generous though relatively limited funding provided by Dr. Banda.

In Nyasaland, an emergency meeting of Congress was called to voice complete and unequivocal support for Dr. Banda's paper. Congress also issued a firm statement recounting the increasing indignities to which they were being subjected by Zomba and by the estate owners. Reverting to remembered Protectorate promises, the emergency meeting ended with the misguided cry "Long live the Colonial Office". It would not be too long before the Africans of Nyasaland realized just how misguided that cry was.

"You ask me a very good and interesting question. What single thing or document stiffened my resolve against Federation or amalgamation of any kind? My unequivocal answer is the Devonshire Declaration of 1923. This most important document stated without reservation that the interests of the African Natives must be paramount, and that if and when those interests and the interests of the Immigrant races conflict, the former shall prevail. You see, it is such an important statement that I can recite it by rote. The Devonshire Declaration, which you will find on my library shelves, clearly affirms our rights, the rights of the Africans of this country, to prevail over the wants of the settlers. Their 'wants' could not prevail over our 'rights' as long as I was around to fight for my people."
The end of 1940's found Dr. Banda involved in a number of efforts on behalf of Nyasaland. In addition to furthering the aims and ideals of Congress through increased agitation with sympathetic Members of Parliament and journalists, he had purchased significant land holdings in the Kasungu area of his birth with a view toward establishing a model farm, trading and transport concern.

"I started these businesses as showcase enterprises, first to provide continued income to Congress and also to show the Europeans in Nyasaland that Africans can start and run very, very successful business indeed. I spent much, much money developing these ventures, buying land, machines and buildings, including good houses for staff.

So what you see today in Press Holdings is not new, no no, not new at all. It goes back to the 1940's when I started it from London."

And so the 1940's ended. It was a cataclysmic decade that saw massive war-time devastation which eventually brought about major cultural and societal changes throughout the world including all parts of Africa. The people of the world had turned their back on the past and as they faced the future, they did so with new ideas, new desires and new demands all of which would effect Dr. Banda and his fellow countrymen in Nyasaland.
“When the 1940’s ended and the 1950’s began, I knew instinctively that this decade would result in a showdown with Welensky and the settler government on the one hand and the British Government on the other. We, the African of Nyasaland, along with our African brothers and sisters over there in Northern and Southern Rhodesia, Kenneth Kaunda in the north and Joshua Nkomo in the south were resolved to do everything that we could possibly do to oppose amalgamation or federation as they were now calling it.”

Dr. Banda took his official title of Nyasaland African Congress Overseas Representative very seriously indeed. During the Dr. Banda financed, 1948 London visit of Andrew Myonda and Charles Matinga, Congress Secretary General, Matinga conferred that title on Dr. Banda who had, up until then, been acting in an unofficial capacity. As 1950 opened, Dr. Banda moved into high gear.
“I had been waiting and watching closely to see the results of a number of meetings and conferences, namely the February 1948 Empire Parliamentary Conference, the September, 1948, London African Conference and the February, 1949, Second Victoria Falls Conference. Other insidious events such as Sir Harold Cartmel-Robinson’s Special Committee on Facilities For African Higher Education in Central Africa were authorized to begin operation. This was a farce, a ruse! It was bait, B – A – I – T, if you, the Africans, accept ‘closer union’ they called it, look what we will build for you. The final straw was the June, 1950, issuance of The Baxter Report. This was the prima facia evidence that the collusion between all of the white parties was now complete. The report stated unequivocally that... (Dr. Banda retired to his library and returned shortly with the well thumbed report... ) ‘There is compelling case for establishing an effective form of closer association between the territories. The need for this is urgent.’ The report urged a federal system for what they, the settlers, were again calling “British Central Africa” with the hypocritical statement that ‘laws would be in effect to protect African interests’.

Here we were years later in His Excellency’s Sanjika office and his sense of outrage over events that, years before, lead up to Federation, was palpable. His disdain, nay loathing, for hypocrisy in any form had always been a guiding principal of his life and would continue until his final breath.

“I knew as we entered the 1950’s, that time was definitely running out for us. Attitudes about so called “partnership”, in reality Federation, were stiffening. People like Sir Godfrey Huggins who had been “fence sitting” were now saying things that gave every indication of their feelings toward Federation and away from our eventual self-determination. I therefore resolved to work even harder to further the true interests of my people.”
"In late 1950 or early 1951, my friend Creech Jones, a man that I could talk to, was replaced as Colonial Secretary by James Griffith. Almost immediately Griffith called, if not called, approved a conference to discuss "closer association" as they were now calling it. I was furious. It was backstabbing of the worst kind! Hypocrisy! I printed five hundred more copies in booklet form, of the paper I had written in 1949 and sent them to everyone to try to warn them of what was happening. I even rewrote some of it to urge them to stand up to this new threat bravely and boldly."

From the Memorandum. . .

"Both in Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia, Congress leaders must embark on an extensive and intensive campaign of organizing our people, politically . . . In approaching chiefs, Congress leaders must show them their due respect. And they must explain to chiefs that . . . they are there to help them to understand the new way of life, and not to take away their power of influence. . . Congress is not only for the educated people, but for all the people, educated and uneducated, chiefs and commoners.

In our fight against federation, we must expect strong opposition from European settlers . . . They will call us agitators, extremists, troublemakers and even worse. We must not be daunted by all that . . .

In the fight against federation we must all forget that we belong to this or that tribe, this or that district, this or that province. We must forget they we belong to Nyasaland or Northern Rhodesia. We must all unite . . . and . . . fight federation with one strong voice."

Despite the vehement protests by Africans of all persuasions, the conference debated and found merits and benefits to "closer association" which, as the conference neared completion, was increasingly called "Federation". Conferees deemed Federation "good for all concerned" and claimed that "those few dissenter in London and in the area of Central Africa concerned, were troublemakers who did not represent the views of the vast majority of Africans who clearly recognized the benefits of closer association, indeed Federation".

It was the view now of those at Whitehall that the few remaining problems were very easily remedied. To uphold the African interests it was "simply a matter of indirect election of a few Africans to the now proposed unicameral federal parliament in Salisbury and the appointment of a British Minister of African Affairs."

Dr. Banda spoke out forcefully in London from every platform available to him.
"It was apparent to me that the ordinary person in Britain, the ordinary man and woman were either sympathetic to our cause or just did not care. They were still coping with the food shortages and rebuilding of their homes and businesses caused by the World War destruction. They did not care about Nyasaland, No! It was the politicians at Westminster and civil servants at Whitehall who allowed themselves to be influenced by the settlers in Southern Rhodesia. I stated our case as clearly as I could to all who would listen . . . "the proposed Federation of Central Africa would not be in the best interests of Africans in Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia, because: (a) it would deprive the Africans of direct political and cultural ties with the United Kingdom and would mean discontinuation of the policy of deliberate tutelage for Africans, now pursued by the Government of the United Kingdom in these two territories; (b) it would mean domination by Southern Rhodesia instead of guardianship by the United Kingdom, since, by virtue of her much larger European population, the Native policy of the Federation would chiefly be determined by the attitude of the European settlers of that colony, which cannot be said to be favorable to full African political, cultural and social development; (c) it would extend to Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia the policy of segregation and discrimination under which our fellow-Africans in Southern Rhodesia now legally suffer social indignities and civil and political disabilities; (d) it would, in fact, be only a thin edge of the wedge of amalgamation, since the Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia . . . has had recourse to the federal idea only on realization that his fond scheme of amalgamation was incapable of acceptance by the Africans, and therefore impossible of sanction by the Government of the United Kingdom; (e) it would enable the European settlers of Southern Rhodesia to eventually attain the status of a Dominion, which would give them an imperium on the destiny of Africans of Central Africa, much in the same way as the status of a dominion gave the European settlers of the Union of South Africa an imperium over the destiny of the Africans of the Cape of Good Hope, Natal and Zululand, the Transvaal and the Orange Free State."

Juggling his now very large medical practice and his increasing political responsibilities was getting very difficult. The expanded practice required a larger surgery so in early 1951 it was removed to spacious quarters at 2 Buckingham Rd. NW 10, London. From a political standpoint, his first Brondesbury Park home was no longer large enough to accommodate the increasing number of meetings and strategy sessions, so another, larger home was purchased at nearby 8 Aylestone Avenue, NW 6, London.

Events were "snowballing" in favour of Federation. Despite African protests of "sellout", the British government, now in lock-step with Salisbury, steadfastly pursued their now mutual goals in Central Africa.
In October 1951, the British Labour party gave way to a Conservative government. Despite heavy lobbying by Dr. Banda, the new Colonial Secretary, Oliver Lytellton, announced on November 21, that His Majesty's Government would proceed on a course of action to "develop a scheme of federation between the three British territories of Central Africa; the Rhodesias and Nyasaland."

Dr. Banda was furious.

"I could not believe that almost one hundred years of promises of eventual self-determination were broken by a cabal of selfish individuals seeking to exploit the very Africans they had, almost a century ago, pledged to protect. I would not take this lying down. I spoke to influential people and groups all over Britain, but the tide had indeed turned against us. That is not to say that I gave up. No! Not at all. I continued to press the government in every forum I had available to me. I was determined to be the thorn in the side of the British in London and in the side of the settler government in Salisbury.

I urged Congress to wake up, to take a stronger stand, in fact a very, very strong stand, against this miscarriage of justice for us, the people of Nyasaland. I was advised that some few Congress delegates were invited to meetings and conferences about Federation. I said, No, No, we must not attend anything that implies that we support in any way the concept of Federation or any other name they apply to it.

I was branded an "agitator" by Welensky and his gang in Lusaka and Salisbury and before long even his friends took up the cry in London. But I was not to be deterred and I kept speaking out, agitating they called it, against their malicious actions against us."

"In Nyasaland, in the meantime, a little known or talked about event or occurrence took place that infuriated everyone in Nyasaland. The British Minister of State for Colonial Affairs, Henry
Hopkins, visited Nyasaland for discussions in August, 1952. At a meeting in Zomba, in the Secretariat, he rudely told a delegation of Chiefs and Congress members that the British government had never promised or pledged eventual self-determination to the people of Nyasaland. He said that Britain would take whatever action now or in the future that they deemed in the best interest of all people in the territories. He left no room for discussion, no room at all. Hopkins became quite ill while in Zomba and was taken to hospital. They even blamed a sing’anga over there in Thondwe or Namadzi (laughing).

In one sense however, I have always thanked Hopkinson, later Lord Colyton, for waking everyone in Nyasaland up to the reality of the situation. He made them very, very angry and for that, I have always been most, most grateful to him. . . and perhaps, even to the sing’anga. (laughing heartily)

His action, his rude and flippant speeches, led to outbreaks of civil disobedience which I encouraged as long as it did not get out of control. I did not want people hurt. We had to show the people in Zomba, Salisbury and London that we, the people of Nyasaland, rejected any form of government that would take away from us the right to eventual self-determination."

In January 1953, the British Government held a conference on Federation in London. In order to appease Congress, Britain agreed, against vigorous protests from Salisbury, to include an African component with the Nyasaland delegation. This included three chiefs and two members of Congress. After much discussion and persuasion, the British Government acquiesced and Dr. Banda, who financed the Chiefs’ trip and accommodations, was allowed to join the delegation. In fact, Dr. Banda, in collaboration with the Chiefs, prepared a Petition Against Central African Federation for presentation to Her Majesty, the Queen. It is of utmost interest and is produced in its entirety as an addendum to this month’s CONVERSATIONS, along with certain relevant information of importance.

This conference was mere "window dressing" on the part of the British Government; the die was cast. The Conference overwhelmingly endorsed the formation of a Federation to be assembled from the two Rhodesias and Nyasaland. The Chiefs’ Petition never reached Her Majesty or, in fact, anyone in her government. This is the very first time it is reproduce in full.
For Dr. Banda, this was the ultimate blow. He accused Britain of a "cold, calculated, callous and cynical betrayal of a trusting, loyal people." In a blistering statement at a London meeting, he said "It is not I, the agitator in London, who is opposing federation. It is my people at home. You cannot bring to Central Africa, partnership by force. Partnership between the Europeans and the Africans can only come from their hearts and minds. We, the Africans of Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia, are people, human beings. Some of the clauses of the Atlantic Charter which Mr. Roosevelt and your Mr. Churchill signed guaranteed territorial integrity and the right of any people to choose the form of government under which they would live. We, the Africans of Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia, are people under the provisions of the charter and this clause guarantees the rights of the people to choose their own form of government."

The bricks in the wall of federation were now rapidly being laid in place. In Southern Rhodesia, 99.9% of the white electorate voted in virtual unanimity in favor of federation. The Northern Rhodesian and Nyasaland Legislative Councils followed just days later with unanimous votes for federation.

Civil disobedience was rampant for a time. Taxes went unpaid and government regulations were ignored.

"The government in Zomba came down very, very hard on everyone. Police were dispatched throughout the country and in a shocking and brutal display of force against innocent people they ended the protest. The handwriting was clearly on the wall now. Federation was inevitable. Already, some of the Southern Rhodesian whites, seeing success on the horizon, launched the Crusade for White Supremacy. They announced the aim of 'keeping the black man out of our white parliament and our white Rhodesian Council.' Patrick Fletcher, the Southern Rhodesian Minister of Native Affairs said in Parliament over there in Salisbury that 'Native opinion doesn't count in this country'.

**THE 1951 CRUSADE.**

If you believe in White Supremacy: If you believe in keeping the black man out of our White Parliament: If you believe that white men and women should be the artisans and the typists and clerks: If you believe that the natives ought to be retained as the peasants to grow food for the rest: If you believe in keeping hordes of natives out of the white towns and stopping them from overwhelming the Europeans, then support the policy of the White Rhodesia Council, Box 787 Salisbury.

Do your bit for the cause by copying this note and posting it to six or more white Rhodesians.

LET THE WHITE MAN REMEMBER THE WHITE MAN ------- ALWAYS.

The 1951 Crusade
Welensky made an inflammatory speech in Nodola that was an undisguised insult to every black man and woman”. Again Dr. Banda went off to his library, returning several minutes later with a document. On July 23, 1952, Welensky had the audacity to say “The African is only capable of being a junior partner in Central Africa. We don’t want to dominate, but if there is going to be domination, it is my own race that will dominate. The African at this stage is unfit to be a full partner. It is a tragedy that he is allowed to sit in the legislature before he understands the workings of the village Council”.

“If we needed evidence of the future of the African under a settler dominated government, here it was for all to see. But, at this point, no one cared. The die was cast. But what the British Government and the settlers did not count on, was that I would not rest until I had destroyed their stupid Federation, even if it meant giving my life for my people.”

The Central African Federation became a legislatively approved entity on August 1, 1953, and on August 25, 1953, Dr. Banda left Britain to take up residence in Kwame Nkrumah’s Gold Coast.

“I could not in good conscience continue to live and practice medicine in a country that could turn its’ back on the very people that they had pledged to protect. I therefore, accepted my friend Kwame’s (Nkrumah) invitation to live in Ghana, practice medicine and continue my fight against Federation and for the eventual independence of my homeland, Nyasaland.”

Addendum to Part 7
Our Trust in Central Africa

The Background to Federation

An Analysis of the Federal Scheme

Memorial to the Prime Minister

First Aim Pamphlet No. 51

Published by the
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OUR TRUST IN CENTRAL AFRICA

Part 1

The Background to Federation

At Lusambo in Northern Rhodesia, the Federation, as we now see it, does not in substance differ from its original conception in 1908. It shows the proposed federal union to be a scheme of a much higher order of efficiency than the federation of the British dominions in South Africa, where the British dominions of the Cape, Natal, Orange Free State, Transvaal, and South Africa were all united by the same central government. In the case of the federation of the British dominions in South Africa, there was a stronger sentiment of nationality and a more common language, and the same race and the same religion in the various provinces. In the case of the federation of the British dominions in Central Africa, there is no such commonality of language or of race or of religion. The federation is a political union of countries with different races and different languages, and the same religion. The federation is a political union of countries with different races and different languages, and the same religion.

The federal scheme was drawn up by the British Government, and it was presented to the African peoples of the British dominions in South Africa, with the view of securing their consent to the federation. The scheme was presented to the African peoples of the British dominions in South Africa, with the view of securing their consent to the federation. The scheme was presented to the African peoples of the British dominions in South Africa, with the view of securing their consent to the federation. The scheme was presented to the African peoples of the British dominions in South Africa, with the view of securing their consent to the federation. The scheme was presented to the African peoples of the British dominions in South Africa, with the view of securing their consent to the federation.

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"As I stood at the railing of the S.S. Apapa and watched Liverpool fade to nothing in the distance, I felt great despair. Not for me personally, No, not at all. A duly licensed physician can practice anywhere. I was licensed in a number of states in the United States and, of course, in the United Kingdom and her territories. No, I was in despair about my country Nyasaland and my fellow country men and women. I was in despair at the hypocrisy of certain people that I felt would understand our position. For example, Sir Godfrey Huggins, a medical man, was responsible for some of the most demeaning, outrageous and insensitive public statements about the same African people that he, as Prime Minister, was proposing to lead in a Central African Federation. To this very day, I remember his exact words when he spoke at Gwelo in September of 1952. ‘We have a chance of rescuing this part of Africa for the Empire. I have always been an imperialist. Our government will not be black if the voters do not elect a set of idiots to the first federal parliament. Africans will not swamp the voter rolls, as a European parliament will at any time, alter the law to prevent it.’ He also claimed that Europeans would now, under federation, reap many financial advantages, including ‘lower cost whisky and cigarettes’. These despicable words came from the mouth of a man that I had trusted to use good judgement and certainly more appropriate language in matters concerning the federation of the three territories. So I was also in despair about how wrong I was about certain people. But I still had the conviction that for me, when I was settled and rested from the journey and disruption of my practice of medicine, the fight would continue and, in fact, was just beginning, only my residence would change."
Dr. Banda arrived in the Gold Coast at a time that the British Crown Colony/protectorate was in the very final throes of its battle for its own independence and self-determination. Dr. Kwame Nkrumah had fought the long hard fight against colonialism, had served the obligatory prison sentence for his "agitation" which included his part in the "Positive Action" civil resistance campaign of January 1950, and for promoting and leading "illegal strikes". Finally, released in 1951, Dr. Nkrumah was summoned to the office of the Governor, Sir Charles Noble Arden-Clarke and asked to form the first Government of African Ministers in Ghana. There followed a period of disruption and political dissension until peace descended on the Gold Coast as a firm date for its independence, March 6, 1957, was finally agreed to by the British Government.

It was into this tense, but exciting, pre-independence environment that Dr. Banda disembarked at the port of Takoradi-Sekondi on 28 August, 1953.

"The dock, or pier, was crowded with many, many people awaiting friends and relatives. As the ship got closer, I saw my old friend, Kojo Botsio, who was to become a senior minister in Ghana’s first government. He had been a frequent visitor to my Sunday political surgery (laughing) in London. We saw each other at the same time and waved. After I endured the lengthy task of leaving the ship and completing the landing formalities, Kojo greeted me very warmly and drove me to Accra for dinner with Kwame Nkrumah.

Hon. Kojo Botsio

Kwame, too, greeted me most warmly and graciously. We talked for hour upon hour and in fact, until the sun came up on the 29th of August. He told me of the events to come, leading to Independence Day and of his vision for Gold Coast or Ghana as it was to be called. He was a passionate and dedicated man when it came to his beloved Ghana and to the entire African continent. I was not at all surprised that he was very well informed on all matters concerning Nyasaland and the federation, not at all surprised.

I told him of my bitter disappointment over the events in the three territories. He knew me very well after the many years of our friendship. He knew that I would not rest until I destroyed the stupid Federation that was imposed upon us against our will,
the will of all of the indigenous people of the three territories. I made it abundantly clear to him that I came to Ghana to practice medicine. I promised him that when I was again ready to begin political activities, I would not surreptitiously engage in politics. I would do nothing to embarrass him or harm him politically. I also told him that I would keep him personally informed of my political activities before they occurred, to avoid his possible embarrassment. I did so always as the years went by.

Kwame offered me a number of profession posts, senior medical posts in his government. I told him that I did not want to be near the center of politics, that I wanted to open a private practice and get back to my real profession, medicine. I chose Kumasi, about 200 kilometers north of Accra, as the place for my surgery for a number of reasons. Historically it was very, very old and most important as the capital of the Ashanti kings. In addition to being rich in history, it had an excellent new college or school of Science and Technology and most importantly for me as a medical man, a doctor, Kumasi had an outstanding Central Hospital, one of the biggest and best in Africa at that time. He, Kwame, understood my longing and need to return to private practice but asked if I would assist him if he felt I could contribute to the nation’s health matters. I, of course, thanked him for the honor and readily agreed."

Dr. Banda settled down once again to the practice of medicine and before long, built another thriving practice based upon his outstanding medical expertise and his innate patient charm and friendliness. He soon earned the same reputation for the deep caring for his patients that he had in London. His affinity for languages and his great respect for Ashanti customs and traditions soon earned him a most favored and indeed beloved reputation amongst the residents of Kumasi.

From an interview with Mr. Annan Asiama Amponsah, the son of a former patient of Dr. Banda’s in Kumasi:

"Dr. Banda honored us by quickly adapting to our language and to our customs. When we entered his surgery at Old Tajo, Kumasi, for any reason, we were always offered a seat and bresno (drink) and then delivered the proper welcome, even to me as a child. It was obvious to all of us from the first time we met him that he was a man of great respect and dignity as well as a fine doctor."

The next several years were active professional ones for Dr. Banda. He took part in the social life of Kumasi, but for the most part, he devoted himself with his usual intensity to medicine. Stories still exist and are fondly remembered about his earnest, devoted efforts to heal and cure. Cases that others might have dismissed as futile were challenges to Dr. Banda that were met with his usual tenacity and dedication. For example, a story is told and is now Old Tojo legend, about a five year old boy with dreadful cooking oil burns over 75% of his body. Near death, and given up by the medical authorities, the young lad had only two champions, Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda and Almighty God who guided Dr. Banda’s healing hands and mind. After three days of Dr. Banda’s constant twenty-four hour bedside attendance and care, the young boy turned the corner and Dr. Banda finally went home to well deserved sleep. The young boy is today a highly respected headmaster and teacher in Ejisu, near
Kumasi, leading a productive life and grateful to the man whose skills made it possible.

“I worked very hard to serve the people as well as I possibly could. After a time, I opened three additional, small clinics, one at Efiduasi, thirty-five km. north of Kumasi and another at Bibiani, sixty-five km. to the west, and yet another on the way to Kade, about twenty km southeast of Kumasi. They were very necessary to serve my many patients out in the rural or bush areas. Each bush clinic was staffed full time by young Ghanaian medical assistants that I myself trained very well. I had office hours at each, once each week, or more if necessary.

I loved medicine. I reveled in my Kumasi and bush practice, but I longed for home, for Nyasaland. Medicine is a spiritual science, a spiritual calling and profession. To heal the sick or give comfort to a dying person is a gift from God, not only for that person, but also for the physician. I never performed surgery that I did not feel God's influence. That is why I was so emphatic about Malawi having first its own nursing school and then medical school. It is a holy profession. I was determined that when I returned home, I would continue to practice medicine.”

A little known fact of Dr. Banda’s life in Ghana immersed during our conversation.

“You know of my love for agriculture, but you probably don’t know that I farmed in Ghana. After I had settled down in Kumasi and established my Kumasi surgery and bush clinics, I found myself thinking about agriculture and farming. I was back in Africa where I and my family had always had fields to tend and I found that I was very nostalgic and missed the opportunity to grow things as I did as a youth in Kasungu.

At about this time, a certain very elderly patient of mine, a Mr. Ofori Atta, lamented to me that he could no longer tend his twelve hectares of cocoa trees. Impulsively I asked if he would consider selling his farm. He replied yes and named a very high price. He caught me at the height of my nostalgia and I accepted (laughing). I did not even know where it was or how I would tend it or have it tended, but I knew that a part of me must return to the land. I already had several farms in Nyasaland, purchased from London and tended for me by my uncle, the Reverend Hanock M. Phiri, back there in Kasungu, three or four thousand miles away. Those farms, that land, was my dream for the future. These twelve hectares were my reality for now, for my days in Ghana.”

The farm was fortunately near Kade on the Kano to Accra road, not too far from one of his bush clinics. Dr. Banda quickly learned the difficulty of acquiring cocoa farms in tradition-bound Ghana.

“I had to appear before many government boards, to state my reasons for wanting to own the land. That completed, I then had to meet with various clan chiefs, then a division chief called Omanhene. I thought at that point that I was done, that I would be allowed to acquire the land, but shortly after that meeting, I was called to see the Asantehene who was the King, in fact the Supreme Chief of the Ashanti. The reason became clear when I was asked where I was from and I responded, Nyasaland. This caused great concern and warranted much further discussion, but I was told that I
must await yet another day as the Asantehene was ill. Well, I think you can imagine what happened next. When I informed his counsellors that I was a practicing physician and produced my medical bag, I successfully treated the Asantehene (laughing) and was granted ownership (laughing). My Ghanaian friends later told me that if the treatment had not taken place or had been unsuccessful (laughing), Kamuzu never would have had a cocoa farm in Ghana (laughing). The problem was about ownership, as inheritance of cocoa property in Ghana is very, very strict and steeped in their culture and traditions. I solved the inheritance and ownership problems by eventually giving the farm to a small group of my loyal Ghanaian medical staff when I returned home in 1958.

When I asked Dr. Banda how he could manage this now enormous workload, he laughed.

“Planning, planning, planning. I trained good people and supervised them, all of them, medical and agricultural. Every hour of every day, except for church on Sunday, was used effectively. I had no time or desire to sit and rest or go to parties or to put my feet up somewhere. No, there was always much, much to do. My patients always came first, always before cocoa (laughing)”.

Dr. Banda remained in Kumasi for more than four years, generally aloof from politics, but still keeping informed about events in Nyasaland and the federation. He still seethed over the now established Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. Now fully operational, Dr. Banda knew that decisive action must be taken soon if the people of Nyasaland could ever have a chance to assume control of their own destiny, free from colonial bondage by any name. His vow to "break their stupid Federation" though temporarily dormant, was still very much alive.

At home in Nyasaland, confusion reigned, not only within Congress but also within the Legislative Council. Bickering intensified as individuals contested for power in the leadership vacuum that affected both entities. Demands made by Congress for Nyasaland's exclusion from Federation were met with resounding rejection from Salisbury and London.

In early March, 1957, an event took place in Kumasi that was to set the stage for the next major event in Dr. Banda's life and in the history of Nyasaland. Representing the African population of Nyasaland for the March 6th celebration of Ghana's independence, was Mr. T. D. T. Banda, President-General of the Nyasaland African Congress. On March 4th, late in the afternoon as Dr. Banda was preparing to leave Kumasi for Accra to attend the celebrations as a guest of Prime Minister Nkrumah, his preparation was interrupted by a visitor, Mr. T. D. T. Banda, who had arrived in Accra that morning.

"I was very, very surprised to see him, but even more surprised by his reason for coming to Kumasi to my surgery. He carried a message in writing from Congress leadership asking me to come home as soon as possible to take over. It is there in my papers. You have seen it. He said that this request was unanimous, that there was no
one in Congress who had the necessary talents or maturity to really look after and protect the interests of the people of Nyasaland. At that time, I had no intention of immediately returning to politics. I was enjoying my professional life and my cocoa farm in Kumasi and was looking forward to Kwame taking over the reigns as Ghana's Head of State. But I promised him, T. D. T. Banda, that I would think carefully about it and that he could so advise Congress leadership when he returned home. The pressure did not stop there. No! I began receiving many, many letters, some from Congress leaders, but others from ordinary people and even some Nyasaland Europeans, tobacco farmers, who themselves were being short changed, as you American say, by the auction floor over there in Salisbury (laughing), pleading with me to come home to fight the stupid Federation which was now imposing great hardship and confusion on my people.

You have read the letters from T. D. T. Banda himself, from Wellington Chirwa, Gomani in Ntcheu, Kuntaja and Kasisi in the south, Mwase in the center, Mbelwa in the north, Msusa in Nkhota Khota, Makanjila over there on the lake and from ordinary people, many, many ordinary people. Ahh. . . come home, help us destroy federation. Many! Many letters from all over Nyasaland.”

The Federal Government in Salisbury made the next move that was to greatly influence Dr. Banda's decision to return home. In April, 1958, a Whitehall-Salisbury meeting took place in London which resulted in a Joint Declaration announcing that a conference would be convened in early 1960 to plan for the Federation's full membership in the British Commonwealth, fulfilling Dr. Banda's 1949 prophecy of just such an insidious move which in his opinion "would be catastrophic for my people".
"I knew that that was going to happen eventually. They were, even in 1957 at Ghana's Independence, portraying The Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland as a full commonwealth member. When I saw how they were listed in the official programme, how and where they were seated, who met them at the airport, I knew clearly what their game was at that point.

I registered my complaint to Kwame and Kojo, but as the government was in transition, the British were still running the show. They both promised that their government would never again allow this sort of mis-representation. They never did so again. I knew, beyond a doubt, that my duty to my people would require that I return home very soon and take up the leadership of Congress.”

Much has been rumored concerning Dr. Banda's alleged removal from the medical rolls of Ghana as the reason for his eventual decision to leave Ghana in disgrace. It is clearly time to expose that incident for the lies that unscrupulous people have made of it. On December 7, 1957, the Ghanaian Registrar of Medical Practitioners and Dentists did indeed suspend Dr. Banda from medical practice along with twenty-two other medical practitioners and several dentists, for alleged failure to file an annual facilities report and drugs inventory with the Ministry of Health. Upon presentation of a copy of the report, in Dr. Banda's hand, which had indeed been filed, complete and on time with the Ministry, the suspension order was immediately rescinded and his practice resumed the same day. Four weeks later, a letter of apology was sent to Dr. Banda, which remains in his personal papers. Eventually, his reinstatement was posted in the Government Gazette. This was but the first of the numerous political lies and distortions that Dr. Banda would face as he took on the mantle of leadership of Congress and eventually an independent Malawi.

So in fulfillment of the prophecy made by John Chilembwe before his death . . . "There will arise in this country a greater man than myself over whom the forces of African treachery and colonial arms will not prevail. Some day this man will come", that man did indeed come home. Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda returned to the land of his birth.
CONVERSATIONS WITH KAMUZU
THE LIFE AND TIMES OF DR. H. KAMUZU BANDA

Part 9 6 July 1958

By Dr. Donal Brody

Introduction: Many hours of conversation with Dr. Banda concerned the events beginning with his return to Nyasaland on 6 July, 1958, through his arrest in “Operation Sunrise” on 3 March, 1959.

I would be remiss and, in fact, would be “short-changing” readers, and indeed, history, if I did not report this important period as fully as possible. I have conferred with Malawian scholars to make certain that I would not cause readers to scream. . . “Will 1958 never end?” I am assured that this will not happen and that I should report this period fully. The consensus is that these months were the “foundation” of Malawi’s future and Dr. Banda’s view of them must be preserved for posterity.

So, to those who may feel it is too much, all I can say is “Pepani”. History wins.

Dr. Donal Brody
On Sunday, 6 July, 1958, a tiny speck in the western sky grew as it made its approach to Nyasaland's only tarmaced, single runway airport, Chileka, nine miles west of Blantyre. As the now recognizable Vickers Viscount made its final turn, lining up for a north-south landing, the excitement of the enormous crowd engulfing the small car park, terminal and access roads, was palpable. It was a cold blustery day in the middle of the southern African winter, yet this did not deter thousands upon thousands of Nyasas from walking miles to Chileka to see John Chilembwe's prophecy of forty-three years earlier, fulfilled by the arrival of Dr. Banda, their political savior.

“I had great apprehension as we flew into Nyasaland airspace. I had asked the pilot of the airplane to tell me when we crossed the border from Northern Rhodesia into Nyasaland. He sent word to me as we passed over at a point just south of Mchinji, Fort Manning they called it then, and I realized as I looked out of the window, that I was now looking at and flying over the very same place through which I, as a child, passed on foot many, many years before, on my way to South Africa. Medical people are by training not emotional people, but my eyes filled with tears as I realized I would very shortly set foot once again in my Motherland.

The journey back home was certainly different than the journey that I undertook many, many years before, when I left home to get an education. I was a barefoot young boy at that time, walking through the bush, ultimately to South Africa.

This was my first trip in an airplane. I was not afraid, no not at all. My mind was too busy contemplating the enormous task that lay before me and the people of Nyasaland. I knew that we faced a great struggle. I also knew that a struggle without a plan is no struggle at all. As we flew onward over the African continent, part of the trip in daylight, part in darkness, I did not read, eat or talk to my neighbor. I was consumed with the plans that I had been making while in Ghana. I had to arrive ready at the instant to begin the work of freeing Nyasaland from the hundred year old colonial grip. We, the leadership of Congress, had to begin immediately to discuss and finalize our plans, to organize our resources and activities carefully to make every shot count. I knew that we had limited funds, limited transport, limited resources in general, so planning was most, most important indeed. I was ready to begin this new and most important chapter of my life and the life of my Motherland.

As the aircraft taxied towards the small terminal, Dr. Banda looked out toward the sea of faces with a sense of awe and determination.
“The first face that I recognized was that of Mr. T. D. T. Banda, then Chief Kuntaja whom I had met in London, and my uncle, the Reverend Hanock Phiri. I saw many, many police throughout the crowd, as if expecting trouble. Everywhere there were people, people, little children and many, many older people, both men and women. I walked out on the top step to cheers and songs of this crowd who moved in closer to see me.

I stood, gripped by a feeling which I cannot now describe. But all of a sudden, without even a warning to myself, I found myself inevitably forced by what, I do not know, swinging my right hand and arm and shouting ‘Kwa. . . . Cha. . . . ’, so that ‘Kwa’ starts at the left shoulder and ‘Cha’ comes suddenly at the end of the swing of the hand and arm, well beyond the right shoulder. The crowd responded in a chorus, the din of which drowned anything else at the airport, ‘Kwa. . . Cha’.

All was commotion at the airport. I descended from the plane. As I was descending, Congress leaders, led by Mr. Matthew Phiri, the acting President-General, came towards the plane. Immediately behind Mr. Phiri were Reverend Hanock M. Phiri, my uncle, and the widow of the late Chief Gomani of Ncheu. Reverend Phiri handed me a shield, a spear and a club. Chief Gomani’s widow put a leopard skin over my shoulder.

In one of the rooms of the airport building, a swarm of journalists was waiting for me. The airport manager led me into this room. Many questions were put to me by the journalists and I did my best to answer them.

Having finished with the journalists, or the journalists having finished with me (laughing), Congress leaders drove me into the town of Blantyre. The road from the airport to town was lined by Nyasa’s of all ages and sexes. They shouted ‘Kwacha’. . . ‘Freedom, Freedom’, and waved their hands to me as I passed. As I looked at them all, tears of emotion ran down my cheeks. I never expected such a wild and enthusiastic welcome.

The car made its way into Blantyre, where rooms had been prepared for me so that I might have a short rest and a meal before going to my first meeting, scheduled for later that same day. I found that I could not rest or eat. The adrenal glands were functioning at full capacity (laughing) and I could not wait to get started.

The meeting was held not very far away from the Congress offices over there in Soche. As the car in which I was riding appeared on the main road, people, thousands of people, turned out, running with the car and shouting ‘Kwacha’. . . ‘Freedom’. Mr. Phiri had put the leopard skin on me before we left the house. He told me that Congress leaders had decided that it was to be the President’s regalia. Apparently, it never occurred to anyone that my nomination might not be confirmed. For I was not, at that point, President of the Congress, but only President-Designate. The annual conference, which was to be held at Nkhata Bay a month later, had yet to confirm or reject my nomination to the Office of President of the Nyasaland African Congress.
Though most people took the confirmation by the annual conference for granted, it was still possible that the conference might decide otherwise. But those in charge of Congress affairs at the time, took everything in this respect, for granted. They had already invested me with my regalia of leopard skin at the airport. Now I had to appear in it at my first public meeting in Nyasaland and had to make my public speech in it. This made it very easy for the people to identify me wherever the car came or went as we left my small house.

All along the road, the car taking me to the meeting overtook and passed people speeding towards Soche. They were on their way to the meeting. As the car in which I was riding approached or passed them, their hands went up into the air, waving and shouting 'Kwacha... Freedom, Freedom, Freedom'. As the car reached Blantyre, especially the area known as the Clock Tower, the old clock tower, it had to reduce its speed to almost a standstill. Most of the motorists, pedestrians and cyclists were on their way to the meeting. For the Nyasa in Blantyre, if not in Nyasaland, this was a great day. It was their day, and very few in Blantyre wanted to miss it or miss the meeting.

Arriving in Soche, the car in which I was traveling had to thread its way slowly and carefully through the huge crowd. We made our way through the cheering people to a raised area with seats, and Mr. Matthew Phiri opened the meeting in his capacity as Acting President-General. Gathered in the thousands were Nyasa's of every station in life, villagers, Headmen, Chiefs, Congress leaders and civil servants, old and young, men and women.

I was disappointed as I looked around, that Mr. Wellington Manoah Chirwa and Mr. T. D. T. Banda were absent from that meeting. Mr. Wellington Manoah Chirwa had been expelled from Congress in 1957. Mr. T. D. T. Banda had been suspended from the Presidency of the Congress earlier on in the year. Impatient from waiting for the decision of the annual conference in August, he had formed his own party in April, 1957, the Congress Liberation Party. The two men became opposed to my return to take over the leadership of the Congress. I had hoped though that we would have unity as far as they were concerned and that they would have been at that first meeting. But, no. Foremost among the Congress leaders present were Mr. Matthew Phiri, Acting President-General, Mr. Kanchhiputu, then Secretary-General, Mr. Bradford Phiri, then Treasurer-General, Mr. J. Chinyama, Mr. Kanyama Chiume and Mr. Henry Chipembere.

Among the Chiefs present were Chief Kuntaja, Chief Kapeni and others, all of the Blantyre area. Chiefs from other districts, such as Mbelwa in the north and Mwase in the center, sent representatives. Matthew Phiri called the meeting to order. Then a prayer for our peaceful success was offered by the Reverend Hanock M. Phiri. An address of welcome was made on behalf of Congress, followed by another address of welcome on behalf of Chiefs of the country. In their addresses, both Congress leaders and the Chiefs, spoke of two things; secession from the federation and self-government for Nyasaland, as being reasons for which I had been recalled from Ghana.
One of the things that I will always remember, was being given chibweyo, a traditional broom with orders 'to sweep away Federation' (laughing). (Dr. Banda arose and left the room, returning several minutes later with... his chibweyo... the gift of thirty years ago.) That is what I came home to do. . . sweep away Welensky's stupid Federation”.

As Dr. Banda described this very exciting period of his life, it was apparent that his emotions still ran very high over the anticipated fight for the independence of his people. The years seemed to disappear as he vividly described the events that unfolded during his first day home.

“As at the airport, so too at the meeting at Soche, I was overcome with emotion. As each gift was given to me, my mind went back to my boyhood at Kasungu. A reed mat... as a boy, I had slept on one just like it with no mattress, no sheet, just the mat on the bare floor. Axes and hoes... I had used those in Kasungu in my own small maize garden. The broom or chibwayo, the very kind that my mother and grandmother regularly swept their huts with. Shields, spears and clubs... these I had seen among the Ngoni to the north of us, the very objects that my parents had told me all about many, many years ago. Bows and arrows... with bows and arrows, I had hunted rabbits in my boyhood.

Only two things were missing at that meeting on 6th of July, 1958, to take me back full cycle to my childhood at Kasungu. These were the faces and voices of my mother and my grandmother and the faces and voices of my father and grandfather. They were not there, nor would they ever be. I recall even now, the sense of grief and sorrow that I felt there in Soche as I recalled my dear parents and grandparents. Out of that grief and sorrow though, grew a surge of patriotism and nationalism. Grief and sorrow were replaced by renewed determination to free their land from the strangle hold of colonialism.”

Dr. Banda’s eyes filled as he related this strong emotional experience as he now stood before the excited crowd at the Soche meeting ground and waited for Mr. Phiri to complete his introduction.

As I sat there in front of my people, many, many thoughts went through my mind. I knew that if we were to succeed in our struggle, that we must be united, one nation, one people; no Chewa, no Yao, no Tumbuka, no Lomwe or Sena. No. We must be Nyasas. We must owe allegiance to our homeland, not to our tribe. Our nation and our national spirit must override everything else. Everything else!

Eventually the speeches ended and the gift-giving was over. Dr. Banda recalls the following events.

“Mr. Phiri ended his introduction of me by saying... (Once again Dr. Banda rose and left the room, returning in a few minutes with a diary. He turned to a marked page and read aloud what he later explained to me were notes that he made late on the night
of 6 July, 1958, and much later verified by and supplemented with police recordings, of Mr. Phiri’s introduction.)

‘Chiefs, Ladies and Gentlemen, I know you are all anxious to hear Dr. Banda. I will not keep you waiting any longer, because I know you are anxious to hear from him. I know you did not believe me when I said Congress was bringing Dr. Banda back home. Most of you did not believe Dr. Banda would ever come back, because you heard that he was a rich man who lived like Europeans or rich men in England and in Ghana. It is true that he was a rich man in England, because I saw it for myself. He owned a big house in which he lived and another big house with a separate surgery when I went to England. But he has left all that wealth and big house and surgery to come home to work and suffer with us in the struggle against federation and for self-government. So now, Chiefs, Ladies and Gentlemen, here is Dr. Banda, the man you have heard so much about and the man we have all been waiting for so long’. Turning towards me, Mr. Phiri said, ‘Now, Dr. Banda, here are your people. They are anxious to hear from you’. As he said this, Mr. Phiri sat down.

I stood and looked out over the vast audience. Very emotionally, I cried “Kwa . . . Cha; Kwa . . . Cha; Kwa . . . Cha. Freedom. Freedom. Freedom.” As I shouted these words, the audience responded in a chorus that drowned everything else. This had the effect of stilling and settling the crowd. Almost everything became still and motionless in the audience. Then, after pausing again, I began to speak. I had prepared no speech and spoke as thoughts and words came to me there and then. Many years later, I was grateful to the police who recorded all of the events and speeches (laughing), because I was able to add them to my diaries much later on.

Referring again to the diary, Dr. Banda paused and looked up at me, smiling. . . Please excuse me for referring to notes. I didn’t need them at Soche, but I’m a few years older now (laughing).

“Mr. Chairman, Chiefs, Ladies and Gentlemen. I do not know how to tell you how happy I am to be with you here this afternoon, to see you gathered here to welcome me back home in such large numbers as you have come. But before going any further, I must apologize for speaking in English, when I should be speaking in my own Chichewa or Chinyanja. As you all know, I am a Chewa from Kasungu. But I left Kasungu a very long time ago. And all this time, I have been away in America and in Britain. In America and Britain, the people do not speak Chichewa or Chinyanja. They speak English. So, I had to speak English. Though I still remember my Chichewa, I cannot express myself in it fluently. So, please, give me time to regain my fluency in my own Chichewa once more.” As I said that, the crowd listened with attention that could be seen from the faces and eyes, all of which were turned towards the platform. Except for loud cheers and clapping of hands, which went up almost with every point I made, all was silence and silence that was tense. As I recall now, I think it was Mr. Mbekeani who translated for me. As he translated my words into Chichewa, the music of it, the sound of it, flooded back into my mind and soul. I even caught him in some minor errors of translation, (laughing) but nothing serious (laughing).

“Ten years ago”, I went on, “I led the fight against federation from London. When I did this, the settlers in this country, government officials in this country, some
government officials and some of the members of the Conservative Party in London, said I was an agitator, an extremist and a troublemaker. They said I alone, in London, thousands of miles away from Nyasaland, was opposed to federation. They said I was artificially manufacturing opposition to federation in London and exporting it here to you in Nyasaland. They said you were not against federation. You know nothing about federation and cared less (about the federation) whether you lived under federation or not”. As I said these words and these sentences, loud cries of ‘bodza, bodza, bodza’ (lies, lies, lies) went up from the audience. “Yes”, I echoed back to the crowd, “Lies, Lies and Lies”. I knew even then, in London, these were lies. I knew that those people who were saying that you were not opposed to federation were telling lies. And yet, they called themselves Christians. But now, I am even more convinced that these people, though calling themselves Christians, were telling lies. Your presence here this afternoon, in such large numbers, convinces me that the settlers in this country, the government officials in this country, some government officials and the Tory Party in London, were not telling the truth when they said you, my people in this country, Chiefs and common people, were not opposed to federation”.

As I said these words, a din of clapping hands in applause came up from the audience. What I said seemed to strike a chord or ring a bell in the hearts and minds of the people in the crowd. All was interest and enthusiasm. Everyone seemed to be listening to me with keen interest and wild enthusiasm.

“I know now, for certain, that though thousands of miles away from you in London, when I opposed federation beginning in 1948, I did and was doing what you would have told me to do, if I had been home here with you. Your presence here now in such large numbers tells me that. For here you are, men and women, young and old, boys and girls, from every tribe, from every district and from every province. Some of you have traveled miles and miles to come and see me. You are here from the Northern Province, from the Central Province and from the Southern Province. To most of you, I am but a name. You do not know me. I am totally unknown to you, except as a name. Why have you come here? Why are you here now? Why have you traveled miles and miles to come here to see me?

You have come here because you have been told that I am the man who, beginning ten years ago, away in London, led the fight against the federation. That is why you are here this afternoon in such large and impressive numbers. That is why you have traveled miles and miles, from the Northern Province, from the Central Province and from all parts of the Southern Province. And you are here because you have been told and you know, that of all the leaders, I am the only one who is opposed to federation now as strongly as I was opposed to it beginning in 1948. Because you know that of all the top leaders, I am opposed to federation without compromise and without equivocation, without evasion. That is why you have come here. That is why you are here now”. More and more wild and enthusiastic applause went up from the audience as I uttered these words.

“Now”, I went on, “I am convinced, and convinced beyond all doubts, that when I opposed federation in London, I was doing the right thing. When I said in London, ‘My people do not want federation’, I was speaking the truth and nothing but the truth. Your presence here this afternoon tells me that. I know now for sure that when I
spoke against federation all over Britain, I was expressing what you thought, what you felt and what you feared, but which I, alone, at that time, could express in a way and language that could be understood by those in power in Nyasaland and by the people and leadership in Britain”. Again voices and clapping of hands went up from the crowd in enthusiastic applause.

“But now”, I said, “I am back. I am back home among you, my people, my own people. This time I mean to lead you in the fight against federation and for self-government in Nyasaland, not from thousands of miles away in London, but from here, right here”. As I cried, “from here, right here”, the crowd stamped the ground with their feet and went delirious with applause.

Picking up where I had left off, I told the audience that there was nothing much or new I could tell them about the federation. They all knew that federation was imposed. And I was only glad to know that they and I were of one mind on the question and that they wanted Nyasaland out of it and I wanted Nyasaland out of it. For this, I said, I was very glad. Because their opposition or continued opposition vindicated my stand on federation beginning in 1948.

Then closing on the subject of federation I said, “I promise you I will never let you down. I will never sell you and the country for £1300 a year or a glass of wine or whisky or a pat on my back by a European. We must get out of their federation. Nyasaland must come out of the federation. On this I will never compromise, even if it means imprisonment for me. On that I am determined. We must secede from the federation and have a government of our own in our Motherland, dear Nyasaland, dear Malawi”. More applause went up.

I used the name Malawi on purpose. In the early 1940’s, I had seen the name ‘Lac de Maravi’ on an old, old, French map, that is there in my library. I had even then written in pencil in the margin ‘Maravi, the name of our new nation’. So I decided then and there to use the name Malawi. You can see the map for yourself over there on the shelves.

Then I paused to let the din of applause subside. As soon as the din of applause subsided, I began again.

“I come now”, I said, “to the question of self-government in this country. On this question of self-government, I want to state right away that I have not brought self-government in my medical bag. You and I have to fight for it together and win it together. We have to work hard for it. That is the only way we can have self-government in this country”.

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MAP OF MALAWI

Maravi - New name of Nyasaland after independence 7-7-43 HKB
Pausing a little, I began again. “As you all know, the present government of this country is not your government or my government. It is not a government of the African people of this country and their Chiefs. It is a government of British civil servants. There is in Zomba a Legislative Council of twenty-three Members and an Executive Council of nine. Of the twenty-three Members of the Legislative Council, only five are Africans. Eighteen are Europeans. Of the eighteen Europeans, six are sent to Zomba by, and represent, the European settlers, such as the tea planters in Mulanje and Thyolo, the tobacco growers in Lilongwe, Dowa, Kasungu and Fort Manning, and the traders, such as Mandala (African Lakes Corporation Limited) and Kandodo (The London and Blantyre Supply Company Limited) and others. Twelve are civil servants. They are the Directors of Education, Agriculture and Public Works, the Commissioner of Labour and Police, the Conservator of Forests, the Secretary for African Affairs, the Deputy Chief Secretary, the Financial Secretary and the Governor himself. It is of course true that the Governor represents the Queen. Of the nine members of the Executive Council, not even one is an African. They are all Europeans. Two are European settlers, nominated to the Executive Council by the Governor. The rest, seven of them, are all government officials, all civil servants. The Deputy Chief Secretary, the Secretary for African Affairs and the Director of Agriculture as nominated members and the rest as ex-officio members or as members by virtue of the offices they hold”.

As I said these words, all faces and eyes were intently fixed on me. The people listened to me with genuine interest. Everything I was saying seemed to be sinking in everyone’s mind.

Then I paused again. After pausing for a few seconds, surveying the audience, I resumed.

“I say here and now, that the time has now come, when this kind of government, government of civil servants and by civil servants, must be replaced by a government of elected representatives of the people, freely chosen, freely elected by the people themselves”. Wild clapping of hands, exclamatory voices in wild and enthusiastic applause drowned the rest of my sentences on this topic. It seemed what I said really touched the people’s hearts. Everyone, man and woman, young and old, seemed to be clapping hands or to be doing or saying something in evident approval of what I said. I had to pause for some seconds to let the din of applause subside enough, before I could continue and say a few more sentences on this subject.

The din of applause having subsided, I continued my speech. “I say the time has now come, when the Africans in this country and their Chiefs, must choose or elect their own representatives to the Legislative Council. The time has now come when you, my people, men and women, young and old, must elect your own representatives to the Legislative Council”. More applause. “And as a beginning, a very beginning, all the present nominated members must be dropped out of the Legislative Council and their places taken over by the Africans”. As I said these words, wild applause again went up from the audience. “These are”, I said, “the Directors of Agriculture, Education, Public Works, the Commissioners of Police and Labour, the Conservator of Forests, the Secretary for African Affairs and the Deputy Chief Secretary. The only civil servants that must remain in the Legislative Council are the chief Secretary, the Attorney-General and the Financial Secretary. And of course, the Governor, who
represents the Queen, the Crown. The rest must get out and get out now, this moment. Not tomorrow or the day after, but now, this very moment. Their places must be taken over by the Africans now, this very moment”.

“But in saying all this, I have nothing against these men, personally. I have nothing against European civil servants. All I want, all I say, is that things must be done here in Nyasaland as they are done in Britain. In Britain, civil servants are not in the government. They are not in parliament. They are not in the House of Commons. And they are not in the House of Lords. They are confined to their offices in Whitehall or other administrative quarters all over Britain.

They do not make laws, but carry out and administer laws and regulations made by British politicians, the elected representatives of the British people. I say here too, it must be like that. Civil servants must not be in the Legislative Council. Civil servants must not be in the Executive Council. They must not make laws or regulations. They must be confined to their offices and their files. Their places in the Legislative council and in the Executive Council must be taken over by the elected representatives of the Africans of this country. It must be these elected representatives who must make the laws and regulations under which we live. The civil servants must only administer and carry out these laws and these regulations, as is done in Britain. That is all I want. That is all I am saying. And if that is sedition, if that is subversion, if that is treason, let the policemen who are standing there now, some recording this speech and taking photographs, come and arrest me. I am ready to go to prison. But I know that every European here knows that what I am saying here is the truth”.

As I said all these words and sentences, I was continually interrupted by wild and enthusiastic clapping of hands and voices of vigorous applause.

“Similarly”, I went on, “when I say we must rule or govern ourselves in Nyasaland, I do not mean that Europeans must get out of Nyasaland. Not at all. I have nothing against Europeans as such. I do not hate Europeans. How could I hate Europeans? I have lived among them the greatest part of my life. As I am speaking here now, I have many friends among Europeans, both in America and in Britain. In fact, many of my best friends now are Europeans, British and Americans. No, I do not hate Europeans. I have nothing against them. I have come to bridge the gap of disunity between the races, between the Europeans and the Indians on the one hand, and the Africans on the other, and not to widen it. We do not have to hate Europeans to win self-government. We have to work for it. But what I want Europeans to realise is that Nyasaland is our country and we are in the majority. There are seven thousand or eight thousand Europeans and there are three million Africans. Nyasaland being our country and we being in the majority, we must rule ourselves, just as the British people rule themselves. We must have a majority, both in the Legislative Council and in the Executive Council. That is all I want. That is all I am saying. And if this sedition, if this is subversion, if this is treason, again, I say, I am ready for prison. Let the policemen over there making recordings and taking photographs for evidence, come and arrest me now”.

As I said these words, again a din of clapping of hands and voices went up to applaud what I said. I again paused to allow the commotion of applause to die down. As soon
as all was quiet again, I resumed speaking. I thanked all present for the great and enthusiastic welcome they had given me. I thanked Congress leaders for arranging the whole reception and welcome ceremony for me and the people for responding and coming to welcome me in such large numbers. Then I sat down. As I sat down, again wild clapping of hands and shouts of approval issued forth from the audience. Mr. Matthew Phiri then introduced some chiefs present and Congress leaders. Then what passed for the Nation Anthem, ‘Mbuye Dalistsani Africa’ was sung, after which a prayer was said by one of the ministers present and the meeting was closed.

It was a great day. To the people of Blantyre, if not Nyasaland, it was certainly a great day. They enjoyed every minute of it, from the ceremony at the airport to the end of the meeting at Soche.

But if it was a great day for the people of Blantyre or Nyasaland as a whole, it was a greater day to and for me. From the reception given me at the airport to the end of the meeting at Soche, all through, I was gripped by a feeling which I cannot adequately describe. Throughout the day, especially during the meeting at Soche, I felt the way the prodigal son must have felt when he returned home. I felt I was back home among my own, my own people to whom my return really mattered. Throughout my speech, as I cried against federation and demanded self-government and saw all faces and eyes turned and fixed on me as if by some invisible power, I saw in the eyes of the women of my mother’s age, when I left home, the face and eyes of my own mother. I saw in the faces of the boys and girls of my own age or a little older or younger when I left, the faces of my brothers and sisters and the faces of my cousins of both sexes of all grades. And in their silent faces and eyes, I could read the words and from their still and silent lips I could hear the voices and words ‘Yes, Yes, we do not want their federation. Can’t you do something about it, Kamuzu? We do not want to be ruled by others. We want to rule ourselves. Can’t you do something about it, Kamuzu?’ And I seemed to be hearing myself saying ‘Yes, Mother, I will do something about it. And if I do not succeed, I will go to prison or die, trying to do something about it, Mother.’ That is how I felt when I left the meeting place at Soche on that afternoon, the 6th day of July, 1958. I felt more than ever determined to do something definite about federation and self-government for Nyasaland.

As Dr. Banda related the events of the day, his first Nyasaland speech (printed for the first time), which he described as transcribed into his diary from the original police recording made at Chileka and Soche, his words and his still passionate demeanor had the effect of transporting me, if not physically, certainly emotionally, back to Nyasaland on 6 July, 1958. Back to Chileka airport, Blantyre and Soche. As he read aloud from his diary, he was once again a vigorous sixty years old, full of will and determination to take on Welensky and the federation and their sponsor, the British government. The words and gestures poured forth in his Sanjika office as they had on the dusty Soche field thirty years before. He was Kamuzu Banda. . . Ngwazi!
“Despite all of the activities of the day, I did not sleep a wink on the night of July the sixth. My mind was a whirlwind. I was focused on two major events yet to come, my first country-wide tour to meet people in every district and province, men, women and children, chiefs, village head men, ordinary people, Congress members and also Europeans and Asians; and, verification of my registration to practice medicine in Nyasaland. When I was considering the decision in 1957 to come home, I took the step of applying to the Nyasaland authorities for license to practice medicine. They never responded to my completed application, so I was determined to find out if my application had been or was accepted.”

As daylight came on the morning of the 7th, I pulled the curtain back from the window in the lounge and was shocked to see the crowd already assembled to see me. People, people, people peering in the window, all very quiet and respectful. As the day progressed, more gathered, but as the sun rose, whenever they saw me come into the lounge or pass by the doorway, they all shouted ‘Kwacha, Kwacha, Freedom’. This was to go on every day at every house I was to stay in, whether in Blantyre of Limbe or whilst on tour throughout the country.

Whenever Dr. Banda left his small house, crowds followed his car from place to place. The joint cities of Blantyre-Limbe were electric as word spread, ‘Dr. Banda is coming’. Dr. Banda is very near. ‘I’m rushing to see the Doctor’. Dr. Banda’s convoy moved from meeting to meeting through clogged streets as plans were made for a nation-wide tour.

“As July the tenth, I paid a courtesy call on Mr. Peter Youens, later Sir Peter
Youens, who was then the Acting Chief Secretary and Mr. John Ingham, the Secretary for African Affairs, over there in Zomba at the Secretariat. As I walked from the car park to the stairs, Nyasas came running from all directions, shouting ‘Kwacha. . . Freedom’. As I made my way up the stairs, Nyasa messengers and clerks appeared at the top of the stairs and on the balcony, quietly saying ‘Kwacha, Kwacha, Kwacha’. I remember particularly one elderly, gray-haired messenger who was choking back tears as he chanted ‘Kwacha, Kwacha. . . Freedom, Freedom’ to encourage me. The crowded balcony did not sit well with the European civil servants who quickly arrived on the scene to suppress what they thought was a riot.

I was pleased that Peter Youens did not keep me waiting and was ready promptly for our appointment. It indicated to me that he was respectful of me as an African and as a representative of the Nyasaland African Congress. We met for about an hour and had tea and a most pleasant discussion. He expressed his concern that all undertakings by Congress remain peaceful. I stated that I was equally determined to wage our struggle in a peaceful manner. I reiterated my statement about continued European and Asian presence in Nyasaland. He welcomed my position that they would always be welcome in this country as long as they respected the African majority. I clearly stated my objectives in returning to Nyasaland; one, to practice my profession of medicine and two, to lead my people to independence and self-government. He extended his good wishes on the former and laughingly said ‘Only time will tell on the latter’. I too laughed and said ‘Not time, Mr. Youens, my people and Congress will tell’. We parted as he called for Mr. Ingham to come to take me to his office for further discussions.

I liked Peter Youens. He appeared to be a very level-headed, realistic fellow who clearly understood the handwriting on the wall. I was not naïve enough to think that in him I had an ally. No, not at all. As a civil servant, he danced to Whitehall’s tune and through Whitehall, to Salisbury’s tune. I would get no favors from Youens, but I felt that he would be evenhanded in our future dealings and relationship.

Ingham was another matter or case, entirely. As soon as we were alone in his office, he began a harangue that he and his government would tolerate no illegal acts, no disturbances. I tried to respond, but he was focused on showing me who was boss. Of course, that is the wrong way to do business with me. I expect respectful discussion, focused on reaching accords and I could very quickly see that Ingham was not so disposed. I controlled myself and when I was finally able to speak, I stated the same position that I stated to Youens, one of peaceful pressure. Where Youen’s responded amicably, Ingham responded by saying ‘See that you do’. I let him have the last word then because I knew that I would inevitably have the final word.

I left the Secretariat to the same crowds of Nyasas and the same cheer of ‘Kwacha, Kwacha’. All down the road from the Secretariat to the main Blantyre road, people, people, people. . . running and cheering. All through Thondwe, Namadzi, Njuli; through Limbe and finally, Blantyre. . . people, people, people, running and cheering.

I had decided to make Blantyre in the Southern Province my residence for professional and political reasons. Naturally, Congress leaders in the Southern Province wanted me to make a tour of their province at once. I had to leave it to Provincial Congress leaders to arrange it among themselves as to where I should go.
first. But the District of Kasungu in the Central Province was my home. It was only natural that the people in that province should want me to tour their province before any other. But during my wanderings abroad, I had lived with and among Nyasas of the Southern, Central and Northern Provinces in South Africa. Among them there were men of my own age and older who had known me in South Africa. They were anxious to see me in their provinces at once. For political and personal reasons, the Northern Province was very important as the Annual Conference of the Party was to be held at Nkhata Bay from the 1st to the 5th of August. But, everybody wanted me to speak in his or her province before the Conference.

A kind of gentlemen’s agreement was reached among Congress leaders. It was agreed among them that before the Annual Conference, during the month of July, I should speak in some of the important centers in the Southern and Central Provinces and that after the Conference, I should tour the entire country. So, in addition to Soche, Blantyre, on the 6th of July, I spoke at Lilongwe on the 11th, at Zomba on the 13th, at Mponela, Buwa and Kasungu on the 20th of July. At all these places, large crowds of people came to see and hear me. The crowd at Lilongwe seemed as big as that at Soche in Blantyre. But, at Zomba and Kasungu, especially at Kasungu, they seemed even larger.

At Lilongwe, the meeting was held on the football ground. The entire football ground was packed with people. And there were people outside the football ground who could not find room within. A number of chiefs attended the meeting. Many Asians and a few Europeans also attended the meeting at Lilongwe on 11th of July, including, of course, the ever present police and Special Branch with cameras and recording machines. I repeated at Lilongwe what I had said at Blantyre five days before. After the meeting at the football ground, there was a reception at the Indian Country Club. It was a very cosmopolitan reception; Africans, Asians and Europeans mingling together. Among the Europeans at the reception, were a number of government officials and men in business and agriculture. For example, Mr. Gundy, the District Commissioner, the manager of the Standard Bank of South Africa and some important European farmers were there. Similarly, at Zomba, the meeting was held at the football ground in front of the African Welfare Center.
Lilongwe and Soche in Blantyre. It was as though, realizing the growing hostility of the government of Nyasaland towards Congress, both Europeans and Asians were saying, there in Zomba at least, the very seat of government, ‘Discretion was the best part of valor’. They would not want to antagonize the powers that were, by appearing at the meeting of an organization which the authorities thought a thorn in their flesh.

But the absence of the Europeans and Asians detracted nothing from the success of the meeting. As at Lilongwe two days before, at Soche a week before, the enthusiasm with which the crowd received me at the meeting in Zomba on the 13th of July, made me feel glad to be back home in Nyasaland.

Late in the day of the 13th, I returned to Blantyre to prepare for the Party Conference at Nkhata Bay from the 1st to the 5th of August. But before preparation for the Conference, I had several tasks or jobs to complete before travel began again.”

Anticipating of much more road travel, Dr. Banda visited Halls Garage in Blantyre and on July 18, 1958, completed purchase of the now famous Landrover, license number BA 816, in which he was to tour the length and breadth of the country.

“I needed a strong car to travel to the north and to the south. The roads in this country were not as they are now (1989), as I quickly found out on my short trip to the Central Province. They were very bad, particularly during the rains and a strong Landrover was, therefore, the answer. My banking transfers were finally complete. . . transfers from London, Accra and Kumasi. So, I purchased the Landrover that you can still see over there at Chichiri (laughing). I still remember the shocked European faces when I, an African, produced cash to buy the Landrover (laughing). We were all expected to be poor houseboys (laughing). Upon completion of the transaction, I immediately drove in my new Landrover to see the licensing authorities concerning my medical license. I was kept waiting a long, long time, but I was determined that they would not discourage me. Finally, late in the afternoon, a European clerk begrudgingly informed me that my application had been approved and I was duly licensed to practice medicine in Nyasaland.
On the 19th of July, I awoke very early and left for the Central Province again, in readiness for the meetings at Kasungu, Buwa and Mponela on the 20th. I stayed with Dr. Baine, an Asian who was practicing medicine and trading in Lilongwe. The meetings at Mponela and Buwa were supposed to be minor ones. They were arranged and held in deference to the desire of the people at these two rural centers to see and welcome me on my way to Kasungu that day. Yet, at each of these, at least two thousand, if not more, gathered to see and hear me speak. As it was Sunday, many churchgoers missed services to come to welcome me. Practically all of them traveled or walked miles to come to the meeting, for the resident population of both Mponela and Buwa was scarcely over a hundred souls each. As at Soche in Blantyre, Lilongwe and Zomba, to see so many people gathered to welcome me early on Sunday, made me feel very happy to be back in Nyasaland. The meetings at Mponela and Buwa were held respectively at nine and eleven in the morning or were scheduled to be held at these hours. I was told that people began to gather at both places two hours earlier than the time of the meeting. At Mponela, Chief Vidzumo Phiri, of ancient lineage among the Chewas, was there to welcome me in person, despite his estimated age of 110 years at that time.

Most of those attending the meeting walked miles to come; few of them cycled and fewer still, motored. I was touched very deeply by such a genuine display of affection and respect as that, which compelled men and women to leave their homes and comfort of sleep so early in the morning to welcome me and to hear me speak. Not only was I deeply touched, but as at Soche, Lilongwe and Zomba, I was overwhelmed by emotion. For here at Mponela and Buwa, the audiences were essentially those of poor, unpretentious rural people. How I wished the so called journalists for all the European papers in Central Africa who persist in thinking and saying that Congress was a social club of sophisticated Africans, were there that morning! The people were simple, country folk, who left their warm sleep that early Sunday morning to come to see and welcome a man they had never seen and who had left the country long before most of them were born. I had to keep my handkerchief in my hand to avoid the spectacle of a middle-aged man, an old man by African standards, being seen constantly shedding tears so profusely in public. This experience on my part was to be repeated throughout my tour of the whole country.

The meetings at Mponela and Buwa considerably delayed me for the main meeting at Kasungu. Kasungu, in the Central Province of Nyasaland, is, as you know, my native district, my native home. It was only natural that people should gather in great numbers to come to welcome me. But even so, the number of the people that came to welcome me on the 20th of July was staggering. According to government report, 1958, Kasungu had a population of 68,000 and more than 20,000 of those came to the meeting. As everywhere else, the people awoke early that morning to come to the meeting. The meeting was scheduled to take place at eleven o’clock in the morning. Apparently, there had been no proper liaison between Chief Mwase, who arranged...
the meeting at Kasungu, and Congress leaders, who arranged meetings at Mponela and Buwa. The result was that long before eleven o’clock, people had gathered at the meeting place at Kasungu, while I was still away in Lilongwe or Mponela. When finally I arrived at one of two o’clock, some of the people had been waiting for me for five hours or more. As time passed, Chief Mwase became a little anxious, wondering what might have happened on the way. But he was soon assured that everything was all right by messengers who had hurried from Buwa to tell the crowd at Kasungu that I was coming.

Five miles away from the meeting place, my party was met by a group of singers from the School for the Blind. Though already late, we stopped to listen to several beautiful choral renditions from the singers from the School for Blind. I could not be so heartless as to spurn the respect and affection or good intention of these wonderful people. After listening to two or three pieces, we had to tear ourselves from the blind singers, explaining that we were already too late for the meeting at Kasungu.

Finally, at about one or two o’clock, we arrived at the meeting place at Kasungu. As my Landrover approached the meeting place, Chief Mwase came towards it. I alighted. As I alighted, Chief Mwase and I embraced one another in tears of emotion which could not be controlled, with the crowd looking at us. According to our expanded family system, the Chief and I were brothers. Our great-great-grandmothers were sisters. The last time he and I had seen each other had been in January, 1940, when the Chief came to Edinburgh to see me and to then go on to visit Scotland.

As elsewhere, the meeting was held in the open ground at the recruit center of the Witwatersrand Native Recruiting Association. There was as yet no hall in Nyasaland to hold a crowd that came to any major meeting I addressed. A wooden platform had been raised with chairs set up upon it. Immediately below and in front of the platform were some few seats and benches for others who could not be accommodated on the speaker’s platform. Over the platform flew a large Congress flag. Above the rest of the entire meeting place, there hung smaller Congress flags and other forms of decoration in Congress colors, red, black and green. From my new Landrover, parked some distance away from the meeting place, Chief Mwase led me to a guard of honor, formed from his court messengers. Most of Chief Mwase’s messengers were ex-servicemen who fought in the ranks of the Kings African rifles in the 1939 – 1945 war. They all looked very smart at attention in their khaki uniforms. As the Chief and I approached, the leader ordered his men to salute. Rather clumsily, I went into a motion of taking the salute. Not having been in the army, I was a confirmed civilian who did not know the ritual of saluting or taking salutes. I do not know what the people thought of my taking the salute in so clumsy a manner. I have a good idea of what the men at attention who flawlessly saluted the Chief and me, must have thought. They cannot have failed to notice how awkward I was at receiving the salute that they so faultlessly presented.

Chief Mwase then led me to the speaker’s chair. Most of the people in the vast area were standing when I arrived at the meeting place. The Chief led me up to the dais and to my seat. I started to sit. But, before I was able to sit, a woman was lead over to greet me. Something deep in my mind told me immediately who it was; my dear sister whom I had not seen for over forty years. She was a little girl of five or six
when I left home and now she was a lovely, middle-aged woman with children and
grand-children. Once again, tears welled in my eyes and for an instant, she and I
were the only people there at the crowded Wenela center. The emotion of seeing my
dear sister at that moment is with me still to this day. We wanted to embrace, but our
custom doesn’t look kindly on that in a public setting. She kneeled before me and I
touched her beautiful face, so like my dear mother. It was a moment that I will never
forget.

As I sat down and looked towards the vast sea of faces in front of me, the experience
at Soche, Lilongwe, Zomba, Mponela and Buwa was repeated all over again with
even greater force. I was overcome by emotions of joy which expressed itself in
streams of silent tears coursing down my cheeks. Constantly, my handkerchief had to
be kept moving up and down both cheeks to prevent them from being soaked in tears.
For here, apart from the vast gathering in front of me, the sight of immediate
members of my family on the platform, Kasungu mountain to the left of me, Kasungu
Chipata in front and, in the distance, Nguru ya Nawambe to the right, peeping over
the heads of the audience, all combined to bring back to me the memories of my
childhood with great intensity and vividness.

I cannot now remember the name of the chairman. As I was late in arriving, he, the
chairman, lost no time in calling the meeting to order. The chairman called on Chief
Mwase to introduce me to the audience. I should say at this point that the meeting at
Kasungu was not a Congress meeting. It was a reception by the people of Kasungu,
led by Chief Mwase, to welcome me back home. In fact, it was Chief Mwase himself
who organized the meeting. Congress helped him with details. In a few fitting and
proper words, Chief Mwase introduced me with an address of welcome. In the
address, it became evident to me that though the meeting was not a Congress meeting,
it was not just a social gathering to welcome back an exile. There was in it
expressions of joy at my return and expressions of sorrow for those who had died in
my absence.

I did my best to control my emotions. Naturally, when it was my turn to speak, I
replied to those parts in the address of welcome, which expressed joy at my safe
return home and sorrow at the absence from the meeting of so many that had left
through death. Many of the names listed among the dead were well known to me.
When I left home, only a few of them were even middle-aged. Most of them were not
yet in the prime of their lives. Not a few were even in their adolescence.

But, I had come home to Nyasaland not to mourn the dead or to lament the falling
years of my own age, but to work. And for me, the job or work at hand was secession
from the Federation and self-government for Nyasaland. For me, there was no time
to waste, no time at all.

So, after due response to the expression of joy for my safe return and sorrow over
those who had departed this life while I was abroad, in the address of welcome, I
reverted to my main theme, the twin aims of the Congress, secession from the
federation and self-government for Nyasaland. I told the audience that, if they were
happy to see me back home, they had to thank Congress for my return as Chief
Mwase had said in his introductory remarks. But I went further. I told the audience
that Congress had brought me back home for two specific reasons, secession and self-
government. Perhaps in deference to the District Commissioner on the platform, or because the meeting was not a Congress meeting, political subjects had not even been mentioned in the address. I told the vast audience that in addition to the sorrow we all felt for those who were no longer with us in this world, there was a sorrow, a far greater sorrow, which overhung the entire country like a dark cloud. This was the sorrow occasioned by the imposition of federation. While many of them may have come to welcome me because I was a Chewa, most of them had come because of what they knew to be my stand on the question of federation. These words drew wild applause. I went on to tell the audience that for years, I had led in the fight against federation from London. Now I was back home to lead the fight from the soil of Nyasaland itself. I was even more opposed to federation now. I concluded my remarks on federation by saying that if other leaders before me, for money, for personal prestige or for glory, had let them down, I would not. I would fight federation to the bitterest end. I saw, out of the corner of my eyes, policemen, some in civilian clothes taking photographs and fooling with their recording apparatus.

I then moved to the subject of self-government for Nyasaland. I told the now somber crowd that the present government of Nyasaland was not our government, it was not a government of the Africans of Nyasaland and their Chiefs; it was a government of foreign civil servants. I stated without equivocation, that the time had now come when this kind of government had to be replaced by a government of elected representatives of the people. The people applauded wildly and enthusiastically, despite the fact that the District Commissioner and his wife and other civil servants, were there.

It was a habit of European settlers and government officials in Nyasaland and Salisbury, and the Conservative Party in Britain, to say that only a handful of Africans opposed federation or wanted self-government. That day, the 20th of July, 1958, as the crowd applauded my remarks on federation and self-government, I wished, as I had wished at all my meetings, that more European settlers and government officials, as well as members of the Conservative Party in Britain, were in the audience. As in all my speeches, I told the audience that in saying that the present government of civil servants must be replaced by one of elected representatives of the people, I had nothing against civil servants. I pointed out that even when self-government is achieved, we would temporarily need European civil servants and cited the example of Ghana, where they still had European civil servants. There were, as I said, a number of policemen in the audience; several Europeans that I could see, and a number of their African subordinates, both uniformed and plain clothed. I repeated what I had said elsewhere at meetings. I said those who came to the meeting to spy on me were wasting their time. As at the meeting in Zomba, I had said that those such as Mr. Thompson, Chief of the Special Branch, who were spying on me were wasting their time. There was nothing I was saying that day or would say anywhere else, on any other day, that I had not already said in London or in Britain. So, I told them to take photographs and record my speeches. I wanted secession from the federation and self-government for Nyasaland and their foolishness would not stop or deter me. This, I said, I had stated repeatedly in Britain to important politicians and others. I repeated all of this at the meeting at Kasungu.

Similarly, I told the audience, as I had done at previous meetings, that I had nothing against Europeans. I did not hate Europeans, I had lived among them the greater
part of my life and had many friends among them. To secede from the federation or to demand self-government, it was not necessary to hate Europeans.

After my speech, the Chairman asked Chief Mwase to introduce the rest of the people on the platform. As was usual at receptions and welcome meetings for me, many token and symbolic gifts were presented to me at Kasungu. They are still there in my library, including the beautiful carved ivory from Chief Mwase. After these introductions and announcements, the national Anthem was sung and the meeting was closed.

It had been announced that there was to be a reception at 4:30 that afternoon. This intrigued me greatly. Receptions, or tea parties as some people called them, were unknown among Africans in my boyhood in Nyasaland. At 4:30, Chief Mwase came for me. The people had gathered at the reception or tea party. They were waiting for us. Together, the two of us hurried to the same platform from where I had spoken earlier on in the day. The flags and other decorations were still there. Only the shade overhead, which had been put there in the morning to protect some of us from the direct sun, had been removed. Chief Mwase led me on to the platform as he had done earlier on in the day. I mounted the platform and sat down in the chair which the Chief pointed out to me. As I mounted the platform and sat down, it was a surprise to me to discover that not only had the many years rolled by, but also customs and habits of the people had dramatically changed. The arrangements on the platform were now different from what they had been in the morning. In the morning, all seats on the platform had been arranged in lines which faced towards the audience. Now they were arranged in a circle which faced the center of the platform. In the center of the platform was a table, which had been the speaker’s table at the meeting, still draped with a large Congress flag. The chair, which Chief Mwase pointed out to me to sit upon, was pulled from underneath this table. I sat facing this table. Standing in front of me on the table was a huge mountain of fruit cake, ingeniously and cleverly decorated with icing, cream, chocolate and vanilla, which delicately exhibited a play of colors. The cake looked very beautiful, very imposing and very graceful. As soon as all guests present had been introduced to me and seated, Chief Mwase asked me to cut the cake. I did so, giving everyone a piece to eat. Then I cut my own and sat down to eat. As I was cutting it, I could not help thinking of the change in all of us. While I was away, studying for examinations for certificates, diplomas and degrees in America and Britain, back home in Kasungu, my people too were changing, undergoing dramatic cultural and traditional changes. The cake had not been ordered from Lyons or Harrod’s food halls in London. It had been baked by a Chewa woman, a cousin to the Chief and to me, who kept a wayside inn not far from where it was being eaten. Even the best bakers at Lyons or Harrods’s food halls in London would have been very proud. As much as I and everyone else enjoyed the cake and appreciated the work and artistry of its maker, it also reminded me of how important it was and still is to respect and preserve our own rich heritage, culture and tradition.

Dusk came and the tea party came to an end. Many people present had come from miles away, most on foot. They wanted to return home before too late in the night. Though lions, leopards and hyena are now rare at Kasungu, in 1958, they still were a danger at night. Even now, hyena still make Kasungu mountain their home, and can be heard howling frequently at night. So, about half past seven in the evening, the
guests began to take their leave. Finally, Chief Mwase and I left for his home where I was to spend the night.

While I was still at the reception or tea party, a crowd of people, including members of my family, had gathered outside Chief Mwase’s home. So there was no rest for me that night until well into the early hours of the next morning. But I certainly did not mind it.

During the next day, I went to my farm twenty-five miles east of the Kasungu township, on the Nkhotakota-Kasungu Road. It was surprising to see how wild Kasungu had grown during the forty odd years that I had been away. During my boyhood, trees were scarcely seen within five to ten miles of Linga or the Mission Station at Chilanga. People had to travel miles to find firewood. In June and July, maize stalks and shelled maize cobs were the only firewood with which many had to be contented. In summer at least, when the bushes were burnt, one could see miles and miles of rolling country scenery on the horizon. The entire Kasungu area was a prairie. From Chibophi, about ten miles away, Dr. Prentice Mission house was visible. It was not so anymore. Trees were to be seen everywhere. The people did not have to go very far for firewood. The only bit of prairie left was that to be seen from the township to Linga, Chief Mwase’s headquarters and up to Chankhanza stream to the west or north-west. Elsewhere, throughout Kasungu, were trees, trees, trees, towering over the grass under and below them.

At my farm, I found a few huts, which were the houses of the grown members of my family, and a few cleared acres where they grew their food. But, there was nothing else to show for all the money I had poured into the farm from London, hundreds and even thousands of pounds. It was all very depressing and discouraging, but understandable. One cannot be an absentee farmer. Therefore, I did not allow regret, discouragement and depression to detract from my purpose. It was not time to weep over spilled milk, but to focus on the future. It was enough that the farm was there and with soil good enough for maize and tobacco, the staple food and cash crop of the country.

From my farm, I returned to Chief Mwase’s home for lunch. Once again, there were many people waiting for me. I received some of them before lunch and again, after lunch, I received others. With only breaks for tea at five o’clock and supper at eight, I received people from two o’clock in the afternoon until midnight on Monday, the 21st of July. For both personal and political reasons, people, including my family members, were anxious to see and talk to me. Men of my own age, who knew me and with whom I played and hunted rabbits as a boy, wanted to reminisce with me. I tried to find time for everyone.

Most of the people came to discuss politics with me. These included many women as well as men. I will tell you more about women in politics in Nyasaland later. For now, I will only say it was a most pleasant surprise to me to discover that, once one had explained to them what politics really was, and how it affected their lives, women became far more politically conscious than men. My experience at Kasungu that week proved the rule, and not the exception, throughout the whole country.
Three o’clock in the morning of July 22nd, 1958, my party left Kasungu for Blantyre. There was much personal and Congress business to attend to in Blantyre before I left in just five days time for the Annual Conference in Nkhata Bay.

I end this month’s CONVERSATIONS WITH KAMUZU with a Memorial Tribute to this great man who passed away on 25 November, 1997. He was my friend and I will always be extremely proud of that. I am humbled that in me, he found enough of substance to satisfy his extraordinary intellect, determination and vision for his people and his Motherland, Malawi.

Paula and I join his many friends and mourners to remember him during this third anniversary of his passing. Rest in eternal peace Ngwazi.

Dr. Donal Brody, O.L.M.
The five day period from 23 July to 27 July, 1958, was a blaze of twenty-four hour-a-day activity for Dr. Banda and the small group of young men and women that he now referred to as his “Lieutenants”. In addition to intensive planning for the forthcoming Nkhata Bay Conference, Dr. Banda made the rounds of available properties to house his planned medical surgery and interviewed prospective staff members.

“I was not about to let politics interfere with my plans to begin my medical practice. Nyasaland had a dearth, D-E-A-R-T-H of medical practitioners, very, very few indeed. I was determined to establish my practice and to train good competent people as I did in Ghana, particularly in my “bush” clinics. I was very pleased when I found the proper building over there in Limbe. A good strong building that was clearly visible so that sick people would not have to hunt through back
streets to find the doctor. I had been anxious, if not concerned, about finding a facility before I again left for the north and now I could go to Nkhata Bay with my political hat on and not worry about finding a surgery. I also made very good progress in selecting the small group of people that had the characteristics and qualities that I wanted and needed for the staff of my practice. Some of those people, at least one of them you know very well” (laughing).

Very early on Sunday morning, 28 July, 1958, Dr. Banda and his entourage left Blantyre for the north to begin one of the longest and most arduous tours of his entire political career. He was very aware of the momentum that Congress had achieved because of his homecoming and he was determined to fully maximize the political impact of his renewed presence in Nyasaland.

“I had been making an effort to celebrate the Lord’s day, Sunday, by going to church and calming my mind and soul by reading the Good Book, praying and engaging in the good fellowship one finds in church. This had been my Sunday activity for many years, but I found the work that I had undertaken in Nyasaland to be almost overwhelming. But since I was sure that it was the Lord’s work to bring an end to the unjust settler and civil servant rule of my people, or to treat their maladies or injuries, I could engage in political or medical activities on Sunday with a clear conscience.

So, very early on Sunday, while it was still dark, my party and I were again on our way northward. The Blantyre Europeans said in the newspaper that I left town like ‘a thief in the night’ (laughing). I laughed even then because I knew that what they were afraid of was that what I would take away or “steal” from them was their luxurious life enjoyed at the expense of the people of Nyasaland. We retraced our steps, first of all up to Kasungu. Chief Mwase had insisted that I stay for at least a few days on my way to Nkhata Bay. In deference to the Chief and his people, I spent three days meeting people, renewing old acquaintances, visiting family and making speeches before thousands upon thousands of people.”

Dr. Banda’s description of this visit to Kasungu was very touching and emotional. The three days had given him enough time to meet many of his remaining boyhood friends, now ‘quite elderly’. He was very wistful as he recounted the meetings and the shared memories. It was interesting to me that, at age sixty, he spoke of his
boyhood chums as ‘quite elderly’. I questioned him about this and he laughingly responded.

“In July, 1958, I was very, very young at heart. I was just beginning the work that I was born to do. Chronological age has never meant a thing to me. No, not a thing. As long as there is challenge, I feel young and fully up to the task. Even after you convinced me of my age. (laughing).

So, after three days, I took my leave of Chief Mwase and the people of Kasungu, my friends and family, and traveled on the 30th of July to Nkhata Bay.

Delegates to the Annual Conference had begun to gather at Nkhata Bay as early as the 26th of July. They came from every branch, in every District and in every Province in Nyasaland and the Rhodesias, even from Fort Hare down there in the Cape Province. People were there in great numbers, much larger than the allotted number for the delegation from each branch. From Kasungu alone, there came thirty-eight people to the Conference. Similarly, large numbers of people came from Lilongwe, Blantyre and other places. My party arrived at Chikwina, Nkhata Bay, on the 30th of July, 1958. For some time before my arrival, the local Congress leaders were concerned about accommodation for me. When I arrived on the 30th, the problem was quickly solved. I had to speak at Chikwina, twenty-eight miles west of Nkhata Bay immediately upon arrival in the area. It did not matter that the people of Chikwina would be attending meetings at the conference where I would also be speaking. Local pride demanded that I speak to the people of Chikwina in their own area, even before the conference opened. Chikwina was Mr. Kanyama Chiume’s home. Mr. Chiume, as you know, was the African Member for Northern Province in the Legislative Council. The residents of Chikwina, therefore, took immense pride in him. Not only was Mr. Kanyama Chiume their local son and the African representative for the whole of the Northern Province, but they knew that he and Mr. Henry Chipembere, as well as others, had a hand in my return to Nyasaland at the time I did. Therefore, they had a proprietary interest in me as well. So their own Kanyama Chiume arranged a meeting in Chikwina for me to meet and address the people of the area on my way to the site of the meeting. Chikwina was, therefore, the first meeting to be addressed by me in the Northern Province.

I remember vividly that about half a mile or so away from the meeting ground, we were met by a group of Malipenga dancers who drummed and danced us to the meeting.

Though Chikwina is a rural area, there were at least three thousand people there. As we were late, the meeting started immediately upon our arrival. The Chairman opened the meeting, telling the audience how glad they were to see me and thanking Mr. Chiume for bringing me to Chikwina to address the meeting. An address of welcome to me was given by the Chairman.

Nkhata Bay District had the reputation of being the most politically conscious in Nyasaland. It was no surprise therefore, to hear that throughout the address of welcome, the theme was immediate secession from the Federation and self-
government for Nyasaland. After expressing joy at my safe return to Nyasaland and my presence at Chikwina, the speaker boldly stated that the people of the area were against Federation and wanted immediate secession. They were tired of being governed by foreigners from other countries, and wanted to govern themselves at the earliest possible moment. After my introduction and invitation to speak, I told the audience that Congress had brought me back home from Ghana for those twin aims, secession from Federation and self-government. It made me most happy to find the people in complete agreement with Congress.

After the meeting, Mr. Chiume took me to his home, high up on the hill. I was impressed with his obvious interest in agriculture. He was a farmer and a good one with beautiful coffee trees. After refreshments, Mrs. Chiume, noting my interest in the farm, took me on a tour while her husband went to the meeting place to let the people know of my arrival in the District. With great pride, Mrs. Chiule showed me around the farm of beautiful coffee trees.

The Annual Conference of the Nyasaland African Congress opened its first session on Friday, the 1st August, 1958. It was decided that all preliminaries on the agenda should be cleared up before I was asked to appear before the conference. It was not, therefore, until the afternoon session of Saturday, the 2nd of August, 1958, about three o’clock, that I was brought to the Conference Hall by Mr. Chiume. When people had gathered for the afternoon session, Mr. Chiume came for me at Chikwina. Together, we started for Nkhata Bay, twenty-eight miles south-east of Chikwina. Everything for that day had been dealt with. The remaining time of the afternoon session had been set aside for my introduction to the assembled delegates to welcome me and to hear the report of the congress delegation.

The Conference was held in the District Council Hall. Long before the announced time for the afternoon session, the hall was full to its’ capacity with a much larger crowd outside. All of the hall’s windows were crowded with people outside seeking a view of the interior. Although the session was supposed to be for delegates only, many people who were not delegates, were there in even larger numbers than the delegates themselves. The announcement that I had arrived and was attending the Conference, brought larger crowds of people to the Conference Hall every day in the hope that they might see and hear me speak. The scene at the conference was most impressive. Congress flags and colors were in evidence inside and outside the conference Hall. A very large Congress flag covered the desk in front of the chair set aside for me. A smaller one appropriately adorned the speaker’s pulpit.

Throughout the conference, Mr. Matthews Phiri, the Acting President-General, presided over the session. Mr. Kanchunjulu, the General-Secretary, recorded the proceedings at most of the sessions.
The Annual Conference had yet to officially confirm me in my office as President of the Nyasaland African Congress. Apparently, the majority of the delegates had taken the confirmation for granted. From the very beginning, they treated me with the deference due to a person already in office. As I alighted from my Landrover, there was excitement everywhere, in and outside the Conference Hall. As I entered the hall, I was announced, not by name, but as the President of the Nyasaland African Congress. Everyone in the hall was up on his feet.

Mr. Matthews Phiri called the meeting to order. In his address of welcome, he told the assembled delegates of his and the Congress’ joy at my presence at the Conference. He reminded the delegates of the annual Conference a year before, when the resolution had been passed to recall me from Ghana. He stated that when that resolution was passed on the 5th of August, 1957, few people took it seriously. Most people did not think it would achieve the aim for which it was passed. They did not think I would give up life as a physician in Ghana for the life of a politician in Nyasaland. But, as everybody in the hall could see for himself, the resolution they had passed a year before had not failed. There I was, now sitting amongst them. He felt sure that he was not only expressing his own feelings and those of the delegates to the Conference, but also, of the whole country, when he said it was a great day for the Congress and country, that I was back in Nyasaland with and amongst them. Mr. Phiri told the audience why Congress recalled me. It was to lead in the battle for secession from the Federation and for self-government for Nyasaland. He was wildly applauded when he said that. He then went on to tell the delegates about the kind of life I had left behind in Ghana and Britain to return to Nyasaland. He repeated what he had said at Soche in Blantyre, my stand on Federation. He related my record in the struggle against Federation from the early 1940’s to 1953, how I helped the Congress and Chiefs’ delegations when they came to London and how I gave financial support to everything related to Congress. He assured me, as he had done at Soche a month before, that the people wanted secession from the Federation and self-government for Nyasaland. Concluding his speech, he welcomed me to the Conference in the name of the delegates. Before sitting down, he asked me to stand. Whereupon, he presented me to the conference and asked me to speak. As I rose and Mr. Phiri presented me, the hall was in a state of great commotion. The audience rose to its feet in acknowledgment of my presence, in wild enthusiastic applause. It was some time before the din of applause died down.

As the applause died down and quiet descended, I began to speak. As I had done before, it was with deep and sincere emotions that I spoke.

I thanked Mr. Phiri for his speech of welcome and I thanked the delegates for receiving and welcoming me so heartily to the Conference. I told the delegates that if they were happy to see me with and amongst them back home in Nyasaland, I was even happier. My only regret was that I had not returned home earlier. However, I was happy to be back home now among them, among my own people. I told them what I had seen and heard during the first month I had been in Nyasaland. Everywhere I had been since my arrival, I told the delegates, people had received me and my message with genuine enthusiasm. The people assured me they want secession from the Federation and self-government for Nyasaland at the earliest possible moment. This made me very happy because it made my return home worth any suffering that I may have faced or may face, in the struggle to fulfill our
objectives. As for the difficult task for which Congress brought me back home, I informed them that I was taking it on fully and unequivocally. I told delegates that my opposition to Federation was stronger now than ever before. It had been strengthened by the knowledge that my people in Nyasaland were as opposed to Federation as I was. As everyone in the audience knew, I had led the fight against Federation in the heart of the British empire for many years. For this, I had been called an extremist, an agitator and a trouble-maker. The European settlers and Government officials in Nyasaland and both the Rhodesias, members of the Conservative Party and some Government Officials at the Colonial and Commonwealth Office in Britain, had all joined in the chorus against me. They told everyone in Nyasaland and in Britain that, but for me, there would have been no trouble, no trouble at all. They said that I was the one who was artificially manufacturing opposition from London and exporting it to Nyasaland thousands of miles away. The promoters of Federation in Salisbury, Lusaka, Nyasaland and in Britain had been busy telling people that Nyasa’s, in particular Nyasa’s, knew nothing about Federation, therefore they accepted it. They said that all Nyasa’s needed to be content was a full stomach and perhaps a bicycle and maybe shoes.”

As Dr. Banda related this part of his Nkhata Bay speech, the thirty plus year old sense of outrage returned. He stopped several times and said.

“Racists. They were clearly revealed as racists, intent upon suppressing Africans who they considered less than human. Just beasts of burden there to serve the masters”.

It was several minutes before he was able to suppress his recalled indignation and continue.

“As at Soche on the 6th of July, my remarks were greeted by loud, wild, enthusiastic and sustained applause. There were loud cries of ‘bodza, bodza, bodza’, (lies, lies, lies), when I told them what was said of me and of them by those intent on enslaving them once again. When voices from every corner in the audience cried, ‘bodza, bodza, bodza’, I could not restrain myself echoing their voice as I had done at Soche. Yes, I knew it was lies, nothing but lies, lies, and still more lies, I caught myself saying, as if in a trance, unable to resist the urge to echo the audience’s cry of ‘bodza, bodza, bodza’. I told the members that I knew they were opposed to Federation. Our people were opposed to Amalgamation in 1938. All that the Federation was, was the reverse side of the coin of the Amalgamation proposal of 1938. Federation was camouflage for Amalgamation. I knew it was all lies when those so-called “honorables” in Salisbury, Lusaka, Blantyre, Zomba and London, demanded Federation to further enslave Nyasas. Free labor; free labor for mines in Northern Rhodesia and Southern Rhodesia. Free labor . . . free black Nyasa muscle . . . Never! Never! Never!

Once again, the memories of the outrages of the past, of the injustices of federal laws such as thangata and malimidwe and others, took over. Dr. Banda paused and once again, allowed the passions of yesteryear to ebb.

“As I uttered those words, I remember that there was voluminous applause and shouting in the hall. ‘Inde, inde, inde’, came from all sides of the hall. Most delegates could not control themselves. They were on their feet, ‘Kamuzu Banda.
Wabwela. Fumu Ya a Nyasa. Wabwela lero. Eya wabwela lero mtsogoleri’, singing one of the many songs that had, suddenly and mysteriously, come into being, almost from nowhere. Their enthusiasm infected the entire audience. Everyone was now on their feet, singing and dancing in the hall. When Mr. Phiri tried to restrain them, I asked him to let them have their way and express their feelings in song and dance. I stood for some minutes to allow the intense spirit of nationalism to subside, so that I could continue. The entire scene was most moving. At least it was to a man like myself, blessed with an African heart and an African mind.

When the singing and dancing had died down and the delegates had settled back in their seats, I completed my remarks by pledging all of my efforts to bring the people of Nyasaland self-government. I sat down to the chants of “Kwacha, Kwacha, Freedom, Freedom’ from the enthusiastic delegates to the conference.

Mr. Phiri, on behalf of the delegates, expressed thanks for my speech. At that point, some of the final business of the conference was completed, including my unanimous acceptance by the delegates as the President of the Nyasaland African Congress. Soon after, Mr. Phiri concluded his remarks. I left the hall, leaving behind cheering delegates, hopefully inspired sufficiently to undertake the difficult struggle that we, the Africans of Nyasaland, faced.”

Dr. Banda continued. . .

“You have told me on a number of occasions that you want me to comment on various difficult times, or periods, during my years of leadership of the Party and of the Nation. I have told you to be patient, but I forget that you are an American and Americans are never patient (laughing). The reason that I have told you to be patient, is that there were no visible, V-I-S-I-B-L-E difficulties or problems during my first month home, July, 1958. On the surface, everyone in the Congress leadership appeared pleased that I was back in Nyasaland to assume the top leadership role or position in order to begin the intensive fight for our freedom.

Now, as the conference was over and the real work was to begin, I began to detect or, rather, I became sensitive to subtleties that had been simmering below the surface since I arrived at Chileka on 6 July. I was in a state of euphoria during that first month. I was very emotional as I traveled throughout the country and realized that I was actually home. I was surrounded and immersed in the euphoria of the ordinary people when I spoke of seeking their freedom and independence. All of this emotion blunted, B-L-U-N-T-E-D my sense of real observation of what was simmering just below the surface. It was the disease that infects all of Africa and has destroyed more people, chieftdoms, governments, even families, than all of Africa’s maladies; malaria, schistosomiasis, leprosy, cholera, even AIDS, all of them combined. I am talking about jealousy. Jealousy infects African society at every level. Frankly, I had been away from home for so many years, that I had forgotten how damaging, how toxic this African disease, jealousy, really is, sadly even now.

Also, jealousy goes hand-in-hand with backbiting. So, between the two, jealousy and backbiting, a course is set for failure if not destruction of any cause. At that time, I admit to being an idealist. I expected everyone to be an idealist focused on our dual objectives of the end of Federation and self-government. . . independence for
Nyasaland and her people. I expected an undivided team. After all, as a physician, a surgeon, I always had an undivided team in the theater. Jealousy, bickering, backbiting and such, if it existed at all between the people in theater, was left outside the door. Only one objective was dealt with in theater... the well being of the patient. In July, 1958, our patient was Nyasaland and I expected one hundred percent dedication to the causes and treatment effecting that patient.

As you know, at that time, there was a group of brilliant young men within Congress that I called my ‘lieutenants’. They were young men and women who were, on the surface, passionate supporters of Congress and our stated objectives. I have already mentioned Mr. Kanyama Chiume and Mr. Masauko Chipembere. There was also Mr. Orton Chirwa, the Chiziza’s, Rose Chibambo, Chokani and others, but they were the central figures, all brilliant with an equally brilliant political future. But they and others were infected with the African disease of jealousy and backbiting. I should also mention that these are contagious diseases. As the top people exhibit the symptoms, these diseases spread through families, organizations, churches and anyplace else where the virus is unleashed.

So, this is what I became aware of; the tentacles of jealousy and backbiting silently and destructively beginning to make its way through Congress.

I am not a silent observer when I detect problems. No! Not at all! I do not sit at my desk sucking a pipe as they do at Whitehall. No! I told them all forcefully and emphatically, individually and together, that I came home to do a difficult job and I expected to complete the tasks to be completely successful and then spend the rest of my life practicing medicine. They all said ‘Yes Doctor’, ‘Inde Atate’, ‘Of course, Doctor’. I told them that I was elected to run the show, not to be a ‘front man’ to be run by young people no matter how brilliant they were. I said that we would work together as a unified team, no jealousy, no backbiting, no bickering or I would go to my surgery immediately, sad that I could not deliver the goods that I had promised the people of Nyasaland for a month, but satisfied that I could at least spend the rest of my life treating and healing their bodies.

In some cases, the disease was, sadly for the nation, not curable. These people, as brilliant as they were and, in some cases, still are, could not leave the diseases of jealousy and backbiting “outside the door to the theater”... so they had to eventually go. I had to turn to other people that were prepared to work together as a team, to
achieve our objectives. I will tell you more later... at times appropriate to different events. So, be patient! (laughing).

MORE OF CONVERSATIONS WITH KAMUZU AS SOON AS POSSIBLE...

A PERSONAL NOTE: I must take a hiatus from writing the GREAT EPIC’S NEWSLETTER for three to four months to have glaucoma surgery. So, four years of unbroken monthly GREAT EPIC’S NEWSLETTERS comes to a brief pause. I am particularly sorry that this delay comes at a point when the real “action” starts. Rest assured that CONVERSATIONS WITH KAMUZU will return with Dr. Banda describing events such as the 1959 emergency, “Operation Sunrise”, detention and all of the other nation-shaping events that took place up to and including his departure from office in 1994.

In the meantime, a Happy Holiday season to all. May the God of us all bring peace to this tortured planet in the new millennium.

Until we meet again,

Don Brody