

Will K.P.U. survive?

The government
has no cause
to fear Oginga Odinga
if it does not fear
the will of Kenya

M. D. ODINGA

THE ABBREVIATED LETTERS in the title stand for the "Kenya People's Union" which is the country's official opposition, led by the Republic's former Vice-President, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga, against President Kenyatta's ruling Kenya African National Union.

Until April 1966, the two parties existed in one with the President of the latter in his present office and the President of the former as his deputy. Disintegration had long been a foregone conclusion but, chiefly to maintain a united front in the nationalist freedom movement, a marriage of convenience was considered, unconsciously or otherwise, to be essential.

There is now a real political confrontation in Kenya. The country learned that, despite apparent unity in the past, Kenya was never one at all. They must learn to accept this lamentable fact of the country's political life.

K.P.U. is here to stay, so Jaramogi Odinga assures us. He insists that the purpose of his party is, when the time comes, to relieve Kanu of the burden of government in Kenya. This is supposed to be a very grim and arduous prospect, which is more of a challenge to those who confront the Government than it is to the latter.

The viewpoint unashamedly prevails in Kenya, however, that when Kanu is ruling, it is Mr. Tom Mboya championing the cause of Western powers who actually exercises authority; and that, should it ever happen that K. P. U. comes to power, it will be Jaramogi Odinga championing the cause of the East who will have taken over. The degree of fact that exists in this view is a matter of opinion. Certainly both Mr. Tom Mboya, Secretary-General of Kanu (now Minister for Economic Planning and Development) and his arch-opponent Jaramogi Oginga Odinga (former Vice-President of both the Republic and Kanu) who is now President of K. P. U. for various reasons, acted as the protagonists of African interests during Mzee Jomo Kenyatta's absence in detention.

The glaring fact is that the outside powers — West and East — did a lot to divide the political ambitions of these gentlemen. For after Mr. Mboya had visited the west, making a name and fortune for himself, the East invited Odinga who also successfully made a name with fortune for himself. Whether this game continues at present, is better known to these gentlemen and their confidants than it is to independent political observers. Be this as it may, their parties now confront each other. How will the outcome be decided?

IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN the innocent view of this writer that the democratic authority to rule a country is the inviolable property of the people. Only they possess the final right to invest or withdraw such authority. This writer, also believes that every loyal and decent citizen, if he has enough supporters, has the right in his own country to come into the open and count the thinking of the masses in a deliberate attempt to snatch that authority from the party holding it. Likewise when nobody has it in his hands the masses can decide just to pass the authority over to his supporters.

This is perhaps the conviction which led Jaramogi Odinga and his supporters to declare, in the formation of the K. P. U., that they were prepared to try and persuade the people to grant them authority to rule in what, they submitted, was a different manner from their ruling adversaries. What is wrong with that?

It is natural that Oginga Odinga's opponents should wish him failure, and so does he wish his opponents. The only danger in this is that one will use the facilities paid for by both to try and defeat the other. This is a mockery of democracy. Good rulers are always those who rule today while accepting that they may be ruled tomorrow. This is where African rule, African democracy and African socialism must not crumble.

The people of Kenya have heard Kanu leaders even when the repetition of their views has become boring. They have a right to hear K. P. U. whose policies need to be listened to, scrutinised and afterwards, accepted or rejected. This is the only way in which the true tenets of democracy can survive in Kenya.

There should be no bitterness in competitive politics. Politicians in Kenya, as elsewhere in the world, should be prepared to exist or perish. God who never receives a bribe, who upholds the rights and ambitions of all, must by now have calculated the intentions of some of the leaders, particularly those who wish to rule, as being shameful and insulting to their own dignity.

Oginga Odinga would win if there were an election tomorrow. But he must not allow the pretensions of his own tribesmen, many of them victims of poor judgement and in unscrupulous pursuit of money, to mar his image as an African leader and lover of democracy. Perhaps his plea for a truer African socialism will keep it pure.

At present "African Socialism" is an enigma. So long as it continues to widen the gap between the "haves" and the "have nots" it must fail. So long as it hesitates to put a ceiling to individual property ownership, it must fail. So it must also, as long as it condones the use of public office or public trust to gratify the individual.

THIS IS WHERE JARAMOGI OGINGA ODINGA must come in vividly. He is, far from being a communist, an acknowledged capitalist. If he professes free things, he is amongst those who will lose when the policy of equitable distribution of wealth is enforced. If his belief is that wealth should be distributed, including his own, of course, then who can stand his challenge?

Oginga Odinga asks why the Africans of Kenya should buy their own land for which they fought and died? He is told: you are looking for free things. He asks: why do our children not get free seven-year education? He is told: you are looking for free things. What about effective African participation in commerce and industry as opposed to the present monopoly of the Asians, the majority of whom are not even Kenya citizens? Again: you want free things.

Then he asks, what about this system of civil servants owning businesses which could be occupied by the landless and jobless Africans? You are wasting your time looking for free things. And when is Kanu fulfilling its pledges to the people? Oh! we are doing it slowly. Then he asks: Could I and my supporters be

allowed to ask them the extent to which they are satisfied? NO.

This is the crux of the matter. No single person or group of persons in Kenya or abroad are qualified to prescribe the destiny of the Kenyan people. The last verdict is with the people. It is they who must decide.

The intimidatory legislation will have its deterrent effect, so will the detentions and deportations. But will the people be allowed to assert their will? If they are not democratically permitted to do so, those who stifle this right must accept, for themselves and their descendents, all the sad consequences.

So long as Oginga Odinga looks forward, he will have growing support in the country, not only of his own tribesmen but also of people of all other tribes and other races, in Kenya and beyond.

K. P. U. has come to stay, so avers Jaramogi Oginga Odinga, not only in its offices or at conferences, but deep in the hearts of men. All he needs is the right to try and stir up dormant sympathy among the people. Let the valiant and democratic government of Kenya see that it has no cause to fear this man, if it does not fear the will of Kenya.

But the will of Kenya must be free. Unfettered and uncorrupted let the people pronounce their verdict on who should be their next ruler. The portents now seem clear that Oginga Odinga has struck a bargain with the masses. Whether he supports East or West, his present policies could safely carry Odinga into State House. Time, the people's will, and his own actions, will tell whether or not they do so.

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The amendments provide for any changes in the names of the Territories and for the subsequent names to appear in alphabetical order in the name and style of the University. After Basutoland and Bechuanaland become independent the University will, therefore, become THE UNIVERSITY OF BOTSWANA, LESOTHO AND SWAZILAND.

Other amendments to the Charter and Statutes, again at the request of the University Council, remove the restriction whereby the University can only award Bachelor degrees and provide for the inclusion of the Principal of the Swaziland Agricultural College and University Centre as an ex officio member of the University Council. This latter step follows and implements the Conspectus of Association between the University and the Swaziland Agricultural College whereby the College as well as providing a centre for University extension work will also offer a Diploma in Agriculture under University auspices.

The University is happy to be able to announce these developments at this juncture just before the Independence of Basutoland and Bechuanaland.

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