

THE MAKING OF MALAWIAN HISTORY: ALEKE BANDA'S CONTRIBUTION, 1939 – 2004.

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Abstract

Many men and women have made vast contributions to the building of the independent Malawi. This present paper was an attempt by the researcher to report on one man and examine his central role in the history of the Republic of Malawi. It has used Aleke Banda as the case study. To come up with this paper, related literatures have been used. In addition, the study was a historical survey and involved several interviews with politicians, academicians, historian and ordinary men. The study has established that Aleke Banda played a very crucial role in the making of the history of the independent Malawi. His contributions have been vital from the times of the fight for self – rule, during the one party system of government and during the multiparty dispensation. It can be concluded that Aleke Banda is one of the founding fathers of this nation. Denying him this respect is tantamount to distorting history of the nation. Since he is continuing to serve in his capacity as a member of parliament for Nkhata – Bay south, Malawi can count on benefiting from his experience.

1. INTRODUCTION

The study of contributions of political leaders on the world stage has received adequate attention than many historical themes. However, the situation is not the same here in Malawi where it has received very little attention. The first to give us a feel of the role of political leaders in the making of the history of Malawi is Pachai who outlined short histories of some figures like Amon Muhawi Jere, otherwise known as Mtwalo II, Peter Mlelemba, the Muwamba family and the Malinke family¹.

¹ B. Pachai, *Malawi: The History of the Nation* (London, Longman Group Ltd, 1974), pp 268 – 277,

John McCracken also tried to highlight the lives of what Professor Shepperson controversially called ‘marginal men’². These men were Tom Boquito, Donald Malota and Frederick Njilima. Further, a prominent historian, Desmond D Phiri wrote a series of biographical books titled “Malawians to Remember” covering the lives of people like John Chilembwe, George Sangala and Dunduzu Chisiza.

The other person who also highlighted the contributions of some leaders was John Lloyd Lwanda, who wrote about Mama Cecelia Tamanda Kadzamira and his Uncle John Zenus Ungapake Tembo. Further, Muluzi et al, highlighted on contributions of some prominent politicians especially those who tried to resist Dr. Banda’s autocratic style of leadership by resorting to arms in their pursuit to force him out of power. Such political leaders include Henry Masauko Chipembere, Medson Evance Silombera, Attati Mpakati and Yatuta Chisiza³. Further, Muluzi mentioned in passing the roles of political leaders who especially resisted Dr. Banda’s rule and they were either arrested or dismissed. Such prominent leaders include Muwalo Nqumayo, John Msonthi, Aleke Banda and Gwanda Chakuamba⁴. These studies, however, concentrated very much on the role played by political leaders in the fight against the Central African Federation and the resistance of the autocratic leadership of President Dr. H. K Banda. But they failed to mention their contributions on other areas like in the social - economic development of the country.

This present study therefore examines the role political leaders played in the political history of Malawi. It used the case of Aleke Banda. The paper begins by examining the nationalistic struggles of Malawi during the later years of colonialism especially the fight against the Central African Federation focusing on the role played by Aleke Banda. In the second place, the paper examines the role of Aleke Banda under the one party dispensation from 1964 to the time of his arrest in 1980. Attention has been placed on his role during the ‘cabinet crisis’ of 1964, when Dr. Kamuzu Banda

² J. McCracken, *Marginal Men: The Colonial Experience in Malawi*, (1989), A paper presented at a History Seminar in the Learning Resources Centre.

³ B. Muluzi et al, *Democracy with A Price; The History of Malawi since 1900*, (Oxford, Heinemann Educational Publishers, 1999), pp 110 – 119.

⁴ Muluzi et al, *Democracy with A Price; The History of Malawi since 1900*, pp 110 - 119

eliminated the younger, leftist members of the Malawi Congress Party and then concentrated power in his own authoritarian hands⁵. Thirdly, the paper discusses the struggle for political change and the role played by Aleke Banda especially after his release from prison in 1992. On the same, the study highlights the factors that led to his release from prison and indeed the release of many other political detainees. Finally, the study examines Aleke Banda's contributions in the multiparty political history of Malawi under Bakili Muluzi era from 1994 to 2004.

The paper covers the period from 1939 to 2004. This period is important because it covers the whole life of Aleke Banda, from the time of his birth during the late stages of colonialism, through the struggles for self – rule and the one party system of government under the leadership of Kamuzu Banda and to the leadership of Dr. Bakili Muluzi in the politics of pluralism.

The study has drawn heavily on oral, archival and written sources. Oral sources included oral testimonies obtained from Aleke Banda, who was the key informant. The other testimonies were obtained from a highly respected historian, Desmond Dundwa Phiri, who has studied widely on the lives of people like John Chilembwe, Dunduzu Chisiza, Revered William Chidongo Chinula and George Sangala. The other notable people who were interviewed include Robson Chirwa who is one of the longest serving cabinet ministers in the Kamuzu Banda regime and Professor David Mphande, the dean of faculty of education at Mzuzu University.

The archival sources were accessed at the National Archive in Zomba where the researcher, examined newspapers, Government Hansards and files of the history of the country. Further, the researcher consulted written sources especially books from the National and the University Libraries. Other books were also accessed at the National Archive.

⁵ Vaughn, M, "Rural Producers and the State in Malawi and Zambia", p. 182; D et.al (ed) "*History of Central Africa: The Contemporary Years since 1960*", (London, Longman Group Ltd, 1998)

However, the researcher was not able to interview other prominent politicians like the leadership of the Malawi Congress Party and the United Democratic Front because the former was reportedly being away while the former was outside the country at the time planned for the interviews. The researcher was also not able to reach out to many people especially other politicians due to the time factor but more especially due to the financial constraints. There was need for adequate financial resources to meet the travelling expenses.

2. THE UNMAKING OF COLONIAL MALAWI; 1939-1964

Aleke Banda was born on 19th September 1939 in Northern Rhodesia. His father was from Nyasaland and her mother was from Northern Rhodesia. His father had been a clerk in a coalmine in Ndola but just after his birth he left for Southern Rhodesia, Que – Que district where he worked in a mine as a clerk. He was fortunate to hold such a prestigious position because it was not easy to work as a clerk in a much-segregated society. It must be noted that Aleke Banda was born during a political atmosphere characterized by colour bar, segregation based on race and nationalist struggles for self – rule. In addition, it was during the same year that the First World War started as well.

In Nyasaland, Africans had realized that they could not win the freedom without unity. The native associations, which were formed to advance the grievances of the black Africans to the colonial government, were losing support from the people partly due to several factors. The main reason was that the colonial government was reluctant to work with them mainly because they posed a threat to its authority. As such, the associations began to dwindle in importance during the mid – thirties and did not speak with one voice. The desire to speak with one voice in the struggle for self – rule, nationalists leaders were compelled to form one single party known as the Nyasaland African Congress (NAC) which came to existence in May 1944. However the formation of NAC did not bring much change due to few problems it had in its ranks. Such problems included the immediate death of Levi Mumba who was elected

president of the new party⁶ and later on tribalism. Further, the NAC had been limited in its activities due to its resolution that it was going to operate within the legal requirement of the colonial government. As such, it never became a mass party until later on.

However, all this was to change with the imposition of the Federation of Rhodesia and Rhodesia in 1953, which fired up the nationalists of Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia in particular⁷. Many nationalists from Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia vehemently opposed the federation. They feared the fierce extension of colour bar of Southern Rhodesia. This imposition of federation prompted the 14 year old Aleke Banda to become very active in organizing people in the anti- colonial government movements and in the formation of the NAC branch for people of Nyasaland living in the Southern Rhodesia. Despite his youth, at 14, he was elected District secretary for NAC in que-que (kwe-kwe) in Zimbabwe. The aim was mainly to provide a forum for the people from Nyasaland living in Southern Rhodesia to meet and discuss on how to fight the federation. Though they were in Southern Rhodesia and many of them had stayed in Southern Rhodesia for along time, they still had passion for their land and thought duty- bound to fight for its independence⁸.

In 1957, at his school, Inyati secondary school, Aleke Banda organized Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesian students into a political organization disguised as Bwafano Photographic club to keep themselves from being arrested by the authorities since politic organizations among students were not allowed⁹. The term Bwafano is a bemba term which means unity. The main objective of this club was to have students from Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia work together and discuss political developments concerning the imposed federation.

⁶ B, Pachai, *Malawi: The History of the Nation*, p. 232

⁷ R, Rotberg (ed), *Hero of the Nation: Chipembere of Malawi; An Autobiography*, (Blantyre, CLAIM, 2000), p. 21.

⁸ Oral Interview, A.K Banda, Chilimba, Blantyre, 24/03/2004

⁹ *ibid*

In the same year, in 1957, nationalists leaders in Nyasaland had evaluated their struggle against the colonial government and came to a conclusion that they needed a messiah figure – like man to achieve self – rule. This compelled Henry Masauko Chipembere to write Dr. Hastings Banda to return to Nyasaland as soon as possible and lead the people in the struggle against the federation¹⁰. Dr Banda was medical doctor who had left the country about forty years earlier to pursue studies. At this time of his invitation, he had set up a clinic in Ghana.

In preparation for his return, the young educated politicians, in the likes of Chipembere, Kanyama Chiume and Dunduzu Chisiza went around the nation selling Dr. Banda's name before his arrival in 1958. However, the people in the territory had become disillusioned with the struggle and they had lost trust in the NAC. They had thought that NAC was just there to steal their money that the party had been using. What followed was that these young nationalists told the people that Dr. Banda was very rich that he could pay the salaries of the whites and could buy the two big companies in the land in the name of Kandodo and Mandala¹¹

Meanwhile, Aleke Banda continued his keen interest in politics in Southern Rhodesia. In 1958, he and other students formed the Southern Rhodesia African Students Association, an organization that aimed at fighting for the end of the federation, end to the colour bar and equal employment opportunities.

Kamuzu's arrival in 1958 changed the political landscape of Nyasaland and the fight for self – rule got momentum. His coming, which was well prepared by young politicians in advance, was welcomed by thousands of the people. In simple terms, mass movement in the struggle for self – rule came with Dr. Banda. His coming had provided the charisma that had been missing in the NAC. This is clearly demonstrated in the numbers of people who had been attending his meetings. Before he came, a crowd of 2,000 was a great crowd for NAC and the colonial government was even

¹⁰ R, Rotberg (ed), *Hero of the Nation: Chipembere of Malawi*, p. 293

¹¹ Oral Interview: D.D Phiri, Trade Fair, Blantyre, 16/03/2005

shaken. With Kamuzu Banda, the masses were exceeding 20, 000. He was to maintain to be a crowd puller until he left the political scene. He had brought the people in politics¹².

Dr. Banda's arrival opened a new chapter in the rising unrest in the country. Through the hero – worshipping given to him, he managed to put the people behind him and the party. He and other nationalists leaders like Chipembere, Chisiza and Chiume toured the country addressing meetings. He called for a review of the constitution to give the Africans a majority, universal franchise and secession from the federation¹³.

Early in March 1959, after reports of a meeting to plan violence and bloodshed on a big – scale, the government declared a state of emergency and arrested many members of the NAC¹⁴. It should be underlined that in many places, hostile crowds had to be dispersed and on some occasions, the security forces opened fire. For instance, in Nkhata – Bay, where the worst of these incidents occurred, some twenty people were killed and many injured. Considerable damage was done to infrastructures like bridges and roads before the government was able to bring the area under control. What followed was that about 1,346 Africans were detained. About 245 of them were released within few weeks of the arrest and more than half of them by the end of the year¹⁵. It must be noted that the NAC leaders like Dr. Banda, Chipembere, and Chisiza were detained until the following year.

The declaration of the state of emergency in Nyasaland by the governor, Sir Robert Armitage, inspired even other Africans from Nyasaland in other territories. Such people included Aleke Banda, who was the secretary general of the Southern Rhodesia African Students Association. In Southern Rhodesia, these students condemned the state of emergency in Nyasaland and in Southern Rhodesia, and continued their opposition to the imposed federation. The government sensing danger of such activities of the

¹² Oral Interview, D. D Phiri, Chichiri, Blantyre, 16/03/2005

¹³ P. Tindall, *History of Central Africa*, (London, Longman Group Ltd, 1999), p. 319

¹⁴ P. Tindall, *History of Central Africa*, p. 319

¹⁵ *ibid*, 319

students, Aleke Banda and others were arrested on 10th March 1959 and detained at Khami¹⁶.

Following the declaration of the state of emergency, the NAC was disbanded and public meetings were banned. For instance, a meeting of more than three people could warrant an arrest. Otherwise, the struggle for freedom in Nyasaland was temporary dealt with a heavy blow.

In prison at Khami, Aleke Banda was the youngest in - mate at the age of 19. His education had been disrupted as he was expected to write Cambridge School Certificate Examinations. After a few days, Aleke Banda asked the prison authorities if he could be allowed to study whilst there. He was allowed and got assistance from many nationalists from Malawi like Dr Dossani, Dr. Bwanausi and David Rubadiri amongst others¹⁷.

Due to his youth, Aleke Banda was amongst the first detainees to be considered for release. However, the authorities were still very much uncomfortable with him staying in Southern Rhodesia. Afraid of his revolutionary ideas, they deported him to Nyasaland on 7th May 1959 and dumped him at Limbe police station. Aleke Banda did not know anybody in the territory, as he had been to Nyasaland only when he was a toddler. While in Southern Rhodesia, he had studied very much about Blantyre mission and he remembered the name of a white man who was interested in African affairs such that he represented them in the legislative council. He approached the man at the Blantyre mission who gave him accommodation at a resthouse and arranged for him a temporary accommodation at Blantyre school¹⁸.

It must be noted that at this time, most people in Nyasaland had been terrorized by the state brutality and most people had resorted to inactiveness to avoid being in trouble. After getting oriented to the Blantyre town, Aleke Banda met the workers union leaders

¹⁶ Oral Interview, A.K Banda, Chirimba, Blantyre, 24/03/2005

¹⁷ Oral Interview, A.K Banda, Chirimba, Blantyre, 24/03/2005

¹⁸ *ibid*

to discuss the way forward on the struggle for freedom. The leaders were reluctant to organize meetings as meetings were banned and would warrant arrest. Upon discussions, the leaders agreed that Banda could start a trade union paper where issues concerning workers would be raised and the call for the release of Dr. Banda would be raised, because freedom could not be won without him. As such, in the same month of May 1959, the first issue came out and was titled “Mtendere Pa Ntchito”. The paper carried out different grievances that the workers were facing. Further, it also carried out an article in the middle of the paper, which called for the immediate release of Dr. Banda. Many people were motivated with this Mtendere Pa Ntchito issue so much that they started to call for Dr. Banda’s release and the formation of a new party to replace the banned NAC¹⁹.

The calls for the formation of a new party increased with the release of Orton Chirwa in August 1959. Orton Chirwa was the first black lawyer to practice in the country. As such, he and Aleke Banda formed the Malawi Congress Party on 30th September 1959 in Blantyre. During the elections, Orton Chirwa was elected interim party chairman and Aleke Banda was elected temporary secretary general of the party despite his youth. He had just turned 20 that month²⁰.

Whatever hopes the colonial government might have that Chirwa would be a moderate, were quickly dashed. The new party made it plain that it regarded itself as a caretaker organization whose principle tasks was to agitate for the lifting of the state of emergency and the release of the old congress leadership from detention. Under the administration of its secretary – general, Aleke Banda who had a flair for organization, the MCP flourished. Banda took the Mtendere Pa Ntchito as the party’s unofficial mouthpiece. The leaders started selling off the new party in all the districts in the country and many people welcomed the party. The party membership rose from 8,000 in October to 250,000 in Jan 1960²¹. On the same, the Mtendere Pa Ntchito was

¹⁹ Oral Interview, D. D Phiri, Trade Fair, Blantyre, 16/03/2005

²⁰ *ibid.*

²¹ *ibid.*

replaced by an official paper, the fortnightly (Later weekly), Malawi News on 19th December.

In December 1959, the NAC sent their interim Chairperson Orton Chirwa to United Kingdom to demand for self-government and source money for the new party. In the absence of Orton Chirwa, the young Aleke Banda was the most senior man in the party as the secretary – general. At the same time in the United Kingdom, a commission was set up by the British government led by Lord Monckton to investigate whether the federation should continue or not. When the NAC were presented with this development, they sat down to discuss the issue. Aleke Banda advised other NEC members that it was good to boycott the Monckton commission because if they co-operated, it would give an impression that the people in Nyasaland could do without Dr Banda. As such, a memo was drafted and sent to all the districts up to the north urging the people to boycott the commission unless Kamuzu was released. The people did not co-operate with the commission and the message was clear; the people wanted Kamuzu Banda out of prison²².

In January 1960, Ian Macleod, the British colonial secretary, was visiting the country on constitutional programme for Nyasaland. Aleke Banda and Orton Chirwa asked the people in the country to demonstrate against his visit. Macleod was quickly made aware that there could be no meaningful talks about constitutional advance until Banda was released from Gwelo. Earlier on, Orton Chirwa, at a meeting in London in November, had made it clear that the party would not enter into negotiations expect with Banda as its head²³.

In January, with Orton Chirwa, Aleke Banda negotiated with British Premier Harold Macmillan in Zomba for the lifting of the State of Emergency, release of political prisoners from detention and the abolition of Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

²² Oral Interview: A. K Banda, Chirimba, Blantyre, 24/03/2005

²³ *ibid*

Faced with mounting Nyasaland unrest, Macleod and Macmillan decided that Banda should be freed. It was arranged that once his release was accomplished, Armitage, who had expressed unwillingness to remain Governor with Banda at large, should proceed on leave. He was to be succeeded by Sir Glyn Jones, the secretary for African Affairs in Northern Rhodesia. Dr. Banda was released on 1st April 1960. Upon his release from prison, Banda assumed the leadership of the party but Aleke Banda remained secretary – general until Dunduzu Chisiza was released. Kamuzu Banda saw the young Aleke Banda as an able man. He was amazed by his organization skills and intelligence²⁴.

In July 1960, Dr Banda was invited to London to the Lancaster House Constitutional Conference where Malawian first constitution was negotiated. Aleke Banda was amongst the delegation as the secretary. Among the other delegates were Kanyama Chiume and Chipembere. In December of the same year, Aleke Banda as the secretary of Malawi Congress Party was among the delegation led by Banda to Marlborough House Conference that reviewed the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. These talks paved way for a possibility of the break of the federation²⁵.

Back home, the party leaders continued working hard to establish the party even further. As Secretary – General of the party, he tried his best to unite the party and see to it that all arms of the party (Women’s League and Youth League) were all disciplined. In the elections that took place in 1961, the Malawi Congress Party won most seats.

In 1962, upon the death of Dunduzu Chisiza, he became the secretary – General. Dunduzu Chisiza died in a very suspicious car accident. In the same year, 1962, in February, Aleke Banda was also part of the delegation to Constitutional Conference at

²⁴ Oral Interview, D .D Phiri, Trade Fair, Blantyre, 16/03/2005

²⁵ Oral Interview, A .K Banda, Chirimba, Blantyre, 24/03/2005

Marlborough House, which led to self – government for Nyasaland, and later secession of Nyasaland from the federation²⁶.

Upon attaining internal-self-rule in 1963, Aleke Banda was named the Director of the Malawi Broadcasting Corporations and was still the Secretary General of the Malawi Congress Party. At the same time, Aleke Banda was appointed commander of the Malawi Young Pioneers (MYP)²⁷.

The MYP was formed to spearhead development. The origins of MYP can be traced back to 1958 with the coming of Kamuzu Banda to Malawi. Kamuzu had wanted the youth to take a very important role in the fight against federation and the attainment of self-rule. As such, the Youth league was formed and become a very important part of the Malawi Congress Party. With the attainment of self-rule in 1963, it meant that their goal was met and therefore many youth had nothing to do. As such, he thought of finding something for the youth that would involve them in development of the nation. He remembered of an organization that was set up by President Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, where the youth were trained in different occupation²⁸. So he sent a ten-man group of people to study the organization of that country. Aleke Banda led the group as the government official and three members came from each region. Some of the members include Walter Chibambo, Mr. Mphande and Mary Kadzamira. Kamuzu had indicated that he was looking for young energetic people who were loyal to him, the government, the Malawi Congress Party and were keen to help him develop the country. Aleke was made commander of the MYP ad Kamuzu himself was Commander-In-Chief of the Malawi Young Pioneers.

The first base was set up at Nasawa in Zomba which people from all the three regions were picked. Young people were trained in carpentry, civil and mechanical engineering, special farming and security²⁹. Kamuzu Banda summarized his reason of

²⁶ *ibid*

²⁷ Oral Interview, R. Chirwa, Chimaliro, Mzuzu, 23/04/2005

²⁸ Oral Interview, W. Chibambo, Ekwendeni, Mzimba, 24/04/2004

²⁹ MNA, PAM 985, *Malawi Young Pioneers: Spearhead for Progress*, p. 1

establishing the MYP when he said “I set up with MYP to create jobs and turn the energies of these young people into productive use. They grew a lot of crops and we achieved food security. They helped in maintaining law and order and ensuring that our cultural heritage was preserved, I was proud of the pioneers”³⁰.

In the General Elections of 1964, Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda led the Malawi Congress Party to an unprecedented victory. The party won all the 50 seats. On July 6, 1964, Nyasaland became independent and adopted the name Malawi. Two years after independence, on July 6, 1966, Malawi became a Republic within the commonwealth and Ngwazi Dr Banda was made the first president.

3. ALEKE BANDA IN DR. H.K BANDA’S REGIME: 1964 – 1994

With attaining of independence, the Malawi leadership had a duty of making the country self – reliance. However, there were so many things taking place on the international scene that had a direct impact on independent countries. For instance, in Africa, there was a general feeling in the just achieved independent countries to assist fellow blacks to do the same. Such issues proved to be very divisive in the once united cabinet of Malawi. Some of these things proved vital when they led to the much-talked about cabinet crisis in July of 1964. What followed then was that the cabinet was sharply divided such that Dr. Kamuzu Banda dismissed the so called ‘rebel ministers’. The main cause of the crisis had been ideological differences on what principles to adopt. These differences can best be understood if they are divided into two; domestic and foreign affairs issues.

To begin with domestic issues, the young ministers like Kanyama Chiume, Harry Bwanausi, Willie Chokani, Henry Chipembere and Rose Chibambo were not happy that the president preferred to refer to them as boys in public³¹. This could be as a result of the differences in age; Kamuzu Banda was almost twice their age. This explains why

³⁰ A. Sande in “*Malawi Today*,” Friday July 10 – Monday July 13, 1998, Vol. 2 No. 1, p. 1

³¹ Amadi, “*Malawi Today*,” Friday July 10 – Monday July 13, 1998, Vol. 2 No. 1, p. 6

he regarded them as his children instead of looking at them as colleagues. This was coupled with threats to sack them in public. The ministers had complained to him about this to him and he had promised to change³².

The other domestic cause of the 1964 cabinet crisis was that the ministers were also not happy on the slow pace of africanisation. It must be admitted that there were some educated young Malawians who could take over from the expatriates but Dr. Banda was reluctant to trust fellow blacks for such senior positions as the permanent secretaries. This angered many ministers who felt Dr. Banda's attitude was retrogressive and the independence of Malawi was becoming meaningless³³.

The other cause of the cabinet crisis of 1964 was the issue of free medical services and free education. The ministers felt that both free medical and free education were essential for the development of the country. There had been some donors ready to fund these projects but Dr. Banda rejected the idea. The idea had an element of the communist system of government to which he vehemently opposed. The ministers believed that free medical services would assist in eradicating diseases and consolidating the people's faith in new government and free education would assist in reducing illiteracy therefore assisting in development³⁴.

On foreign affairs issues, the young ministers had wanted the country's leadership to follow the international resolution of isolating Mozambique, Southern Rhodesia and South Africa because they had white minority leadership over the majority blacks.

Dr. Banda tried to convince his colleagues that as a land locked country and a poor economy there was need for co-operation with Portuguese East Africa and South Africa. It must be clarified that the Portuguese controlled the sea routes while South Africa had the richest economy in this part of Africa³⁵. The president had argued that co – operation with the two would assist in Malawi's development endeavours.

³² Oral Interview: D .D Phiri, Trade Fair, Blantyre, 16/03/2005

³³ Amadi, " Malawi Today", p. 6

³⁴ Oral Interview, R. Chirwa, Chimaliro, Mzuzu, 23/04/2005

³⁵ Oral Interview, A. K Banda, Chirimba, Blantyre, 24/03/2005

But then there were liberation movements in all the countries in southern Africa. Mondlane had formed the FRELIMO in Mozambique, ZANU-PF and ZAPU-PF was fighting the whites in Rhodesia and Mandela had just been arrested in South Africa but the ANC and other movements were engaged in liberation wars. The ministers argued that with international community like the UN and OAU backing the liberation movements, there were indications that these countries would attain their independence, and Malawi risked being isolated. As a result, they quarreled amongst themselves and the result was that Kamuzu dismissed six of ministers. Some of the dismissed ministers included Attati Mpakati, Kanyama Chiume, Rose Chibambo, Harry Bwanausi, Willie Chokani and Orton Chirwa. Henry Masauko Chipembere was in Canada on a foreign visit. Upon his return, he resigned and made a passionate speech in the National Assembly in Zomba where he said “ I have resigned in sympathy with my friends because I believe that I have a duty to lodge a humble and loyal protest to show the world that I humbly refuse to agree that dismissal was the solution to the problem that he was facing in this situation³⁶.

It must be underlined that the cabinet crisis brought confusion in the country. The dismissed ministers returned to their respective homes to tell their people what had happened. Many people believed and sympathized with them. In addition, many civil servants who were frustrated with the slow pace of africanisation also supported the dismissed ministers. The ministers who did not rebel include minister of finance, John Tembo and Hon. Kumtumanji from Zomba districts.

It is important to note the role played by Aleke Banda at this critical moment in history of Malawi. As the director of MBC, Aleke Banda prevented the ex – ministers from using the public media to justify themselves and therefore reach out to many people. As

³⁶ MNA, Hansards: *Malawi Government Proceedings of Parliament*, Fifth session; 1967 – 1968, (Zomba, Government Printer, 1968), 5th July, 1964.

such the ex – ministers complained bitterly about Aleke Banda. Hon Kumtumanji, who was leader of the house at that time stood in parliament to comment on the accusation leveled on Aleke Banda “ in my opinion, the main trouble here is that they would like to control the whole government, such as newspapers, radio Malawi, music so that they can use them for their own power. That’s why some of them talk against Aleke Banda. As long as Aleke Banda controls these things, they cannot reach them, and therefore cannot use them³⁷. The media was a very powerful element that could change people’s attitude at a short time. By preventing them from reaching out to the masses, Aleke prevented them from convincing many people.

In addition, Aleke Banda who was the MYP commander of the Malawi Young Pioneers used his organization skills to support Kamuzu Banda. He organized the youth especially in Zomba to demonstrate in town to show support for Dr. Banda and demonstrate that the youth were behind him³⁸. Eventually, the ministers saw that support for Kamuzu was growing, as such; they fled for their life into neighbouring countries especially Zambia and Tanzania. Their seeking of refuge in the neighbouring countries was to become one of the causes of tension between Malawi and them.

It must be highlighted that during the Butler and Banda constitutional talks held in London in September 1963, it was agreed that there would be general elections to take place in April of 1964. On 6th July 1964, Nyasaland would become the independent state of Malawi³⁹. This was an indication that there was a multiparty system put in place and that by 1964, the territory had embraced multiparty politics. When the elections were held in April 1964, all the candidates of the MCP were returned unopposed. These results clearly displayed that the people wanted only one party such that this was to be reflected in the constitutional amendments, which was to take place.

This constitutional review was prepared by the National Convention of the Malawi Congress Party, which was held in Lilongwe in October of 1965. The National

³⁷ *ibid*

³⁸ Oral Interview: R. Chirwa, Chimaliro, Mzuzu, 23/04/2005

³⁹ B. Pachai, *Malawi: the History of the Nation*, (London, Longman Group Ltd, 1974), p. 244

Convention comprised 394 delegates drawn from all sections of the Malawi Congress Party organization. These arms included the Party's Central Executive, the League of Malawi women, the league of Malawi Youth as well as members of parliament and chiefs. Leading this ever constitutional talks to be conducted by Malawians was the party's secretary – general, Mr. Aleke Banda. The amendments were endorsed by the convention and later on approved by parliament. Under the leadership of Hon. Aleke Banda, the 1970 Mzuzu convention resolved unanimously that Ngwazi Dr. Kamuzu Banda was the people's choice for the office of president and demanded that Kamuzu be president for his lifetime⁴⁰. This was approved by parliament in December 1970 and the life president was sworn on 6th July 1971 at the Kamuzu stadium.

From the above, it must be underlined that Kamuzu was able to achieve his desire for president for life due to the talents of Aleke Banda. As such, it is not surprising that Aleke Banda was the most loved by Dr Banda than any other minister. The result of that love between the two Bandas was that several positions were heaped on Aleke Banda. At no time did he hold only one position until he fell out of grace with Dr. Banda in 1972⁴¹. These numerous positions that he was holding won him many enemies amongst the other cabinet ministers who were themselves senior in age and well educated than Aleke Banda.

Because of his love for Aleke Banda, he gave him a lot of responsibilities. Kamuzu gave him these numerous positions ranging from ministerial positions to heading important organizations because of his royalty to the president and his devotion to work in that he would not leave a job undone since he believed that anything can be done⁴². Some of the ministerial position he held include Finance, Information and Tourism, Trade and Industry, Works and Supplies, Economic Affairs and Development and Planning. He also headed the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation.

⁴⁰ B. Pachai, *Malawi: the History of the Nation*, (London, Longman Group Ltd, 1974), p. 245

⁴¹ Oral Interview, D. Mvula, Mangochi

⁴² Oral Interview, D. Mvula, Mangochi

In foreign affairs, the republic of Malawi was at loggerheads with many countries because of his abandoning of the Pan – Africanism once Malawi got independence. This abandonment was confirmed with Kamuzu’s dealings with minority white governments of Southern Rhodesia, Portuguese East Africa and South Africa. For instance, in 1966, Kamuzu Banda sent a delegation of three ministers to South Africa which included Minister of Development and Planning and Minister in – Charge of Information Honourable Aleke Banda and Minister of Natural Resources Hon. Kumtumanji. The main aim of this delegation was to foster co – operation between the two states⁴³. All this was happening at the time when African countries in the OAU and at the UN were calling on boycotting countries that were ruled by minority whites in Africa. Aleke Banda defended Malawi’s position on the matter when he spoke in the National Assembly in 1966, explaining on why Malawi cannot join other countries on boycotting South Africa, Southern Rhodesia and Mozambique when he argued that “if a country like Malawi tried to boycott South Africa, it would not be South Africa which would suffer but it would be our own country⁴⁴”.

It must be noted that Malawi is a land locked country with nearest ports in Mozambique. Boycotting Mozambique would mean to develop the Northern corridor through Tanzania, which seemed at that time to be very expensive. Further, Malawi could not also afford to do away with Southern Rhodesia and South Africa because these two countries had thousands of Malawians who were working in the mines and farms. It is rumoured that Malawi was told that if it joined the boycott called upon by the Pan – Africanist states the two countries would repatriate the Malawians back to Malawi. At this time, Malawi’s economy was benefiting quite a lot with the money that

⁴³ Hansards, MNA, Hansards: *Malawi Government Proceedings of Parliament*, Fifth session; 1967 – 1968, (Zomba, Government Printer), 1968, p . 309

⁴⁴ MNA, Hansards: *Malawi Government Proceedings of Parliament*, Fifth session; 1967 – 1968, (Zomba, Government Printer, 1968), P. 309

the men working outside were sending back home⁴⁵. As such, it was only a matter of logic to see that the political leadership of Malawi was clever. Since Kamuzu Banda was busy with state affairs, most foreign affairs issues like signing agreements with other countries were being done by Aleke Banda. Aleke Banda can be proudly be commended for his part in economic development talks with South Africa in which South Africa promised to help Malawi in the building of the capital city in Lilongwe.

By 1972, Aleke Banda had become somehow a very powerful person in the country at a very tender age of 33. He held the most powerful position of the Malawi Congress Party Secretary - General, second only to the president. At the same time, he was the National Chairman of the League of Malawi Youth and Commander of the Malawi Young Pioneers and at the same time, he was the Minister of Finance. This fuelled speculations that Kamuzu was preparing him to be the successor. Their fears came close to a confirmation when Kamuzu influenced the change of age requirement for candidacy of the presidency from 45 to 40 years⁴⁶. It must be clear that the other ministers had thought since Kamuzu was old, this constitutional amendment was only put in place to benefit Aleke Banda. These ministers became very jealousy mainly because of two main reasons: Aleke Banda was younger than most of them and at the same time, he was not a graduate while the others were graduates.

Those who had dreamt of getting rid of Banda had their chance in 1973. In March 1973, Aleke Banda was sent by Dr Banda to represent him in the opening of a Trade Fair in Zambia. Aleke Banda had talked to journalists and whatever he had said, the Zambian newspapers wrote purporting him as the number two man in Malawi⁴⁷. The president did not like the people who were ambitious. He dismissed Aleke Banda from the cabinet and banished into internal exile. At the same time, he lost his position in the party for breaching the four cornerstones of the party which were royalty, discipline, obedience and unity and was replaced by a powerful upcoming politician by the name of Qumayo Muwalo, who was the administrative secretary..

⁴⁵ Oral Interview, D. D Phiri, Trade Fair, Blantyre, 16/03/2005

⁴⁶ *ibid*

⁴⁷ Oral Interview, Chirwa, Chimaliro, Mzuzu

In 1974, after making a public apology, Aleke Banda was brought back now as the Managing Director of the Press Trust, a company he and Kamuzu Banda held shares on behalf of the Party. As Managing Director of the Press Group of Companies, the company grew rapidly and claimed the status of Multinational Corporation class. At its height, the Press Holdings and his subsidiaries employed 10 percent of Malawi's modern working sector and accounted for a third of Malawi's GDP. It dealt in tobacco, ranching, recording industry, engineering, baking, furniture making, fashions, trade, transport, manufacturing, fuel oils, pharmaceuticals, insurance and air freighting⁴⁸.

However, Kamuzu Banda had a tendency of siphoning off funds from Press Holdings to finance various projects and activities. It must be elaborated though that some of the money was put into good use like the building of the Great Hall at Chancellor College and the building of the Kamuzu Academy.

In the late 1970s, the economy of Malawi went into a recession just like the economies of many countries in the world due to oil price increase. As such, huge withdrawals of the money by the president in the conglomerate's accounts threatened the existence of the company that would be disastrous to the country's economy. What was crystal clear was that the collapse of the Press Group of companies would result into the collapse of the two major commercial Banks of Malawi which were the National Bank of Malawi and the then Commercial Bank of Malawi now STANBIC BANK as well. This concerned the MD of the Press Corporation very much who, courage being his virtue, thought of advising the president against the practice. As such, Banda arranged a meeting with the Reserve Bank Governor, John Tembo and the Minister of Finance, then Edward Bwanali to discuss the economic situation of the country. The three men agreed that there was a need to advise the president and they drafted a memo to advise him against the practice. However, the other two men refused to sign may be because of fear of Hastings Banda's reaction. Aleke Banda, took the courage of advising the

⁴⁸ Lwanda, J, *Kamuzu Banda of Malawi: A study in Promise, Power and Paralysis*;

president and signed the memo. When the president got the memo, he called the Reserve Bank Governor, Minister of Finance and the MD of the Press together since these people were ones directly involved with the economy. Dr Banda asked the two gentlemen if the things raised on the memo were true to which they refused saying that the economy could not collapse because of that⁴⁹. Since Aleke Banda had an interest in the Group, Kamuzu thought that Aleke Banda wanted to cheat him. He was dismissed in January 1980 and 10 days later, he was arrested for breaching party rules. He was to be released about 12 years later.

4. CONSOLIDATION OF DEMOCRACY: 1990 – 1994

The process of democratization in Malawi started at a slow pace way back to the 1990s. This started especially by donor countries who put pressure on the government to observe human rights and the release of political detainees as a prerequisite to aid. This pressure on the government had some effect. It led to the release of some political detainees in the first half of 1991. It was not a coincidence that soon after these releases, there was a spate of anti – government leaflet being spread in towns as well as vocal but underground pressure on the clergy, lawyers, civil servants, the police, the army and others in authority to ‘do something’ about the state of the country⁵⁰.

In 1991, almost two underground groups were formed, the other one popularly known as the Phwezi group and the other called United Democratic Party (UDP). Bakili Muluzi was elected the chairperson of the UDP to campaign for political change towards upholding human rights, economic and social betterment in Malawi noted to have been greatly abused under Dr Banda’s single MCP rule⁵¹.

⁴⁹ Oral Interview, A. K Banda, Chirimba, Blantyre, 24/03/2005

⁵⁰ J, Lwanda, *Kamuzu Banda of Malawi: A study in Promise, Power and Paralysis*;

Malawi Under Dr. Banda; 1961 – 1993, p. 194.

⁵¹ Oral Interview, G. Tomoka, Luwanga, Mzuzu.

In the first week of March 1992, Catholic Bishops distributed a pastoral letter “Living our Faith” to their priests. The Lenten was read in all catholic churches on 8th March 1992 and it came as a bombshell to the government and party because on 4th March 1992, the president had an audience with the bishops who never hinted anything. The Lenten had expressed many grievances that the people had but emphasized on human rights and called for political change⁵².

In 1992, April 6th, Chakufwa Chihana, secretary – general of the southern Africa Trade Union Co Ordinating Council flew from Zambia declaring himself ready to lead Malawians into a democracy. He was arrested at the Airport. All these put pressure on the government.

Due to increasing pressure on the government from the donor community to release political detainees, the other group of political detainees was released. These included Gwanda Chakuamba, Aleke Banda and Vera Chirwa in 1992. After their release, the pressure groups plus the MCP scrambled in order to bag them into their parties. Aleke Banda was expected and approached by both the MCP and AFORD so that he could join them. Banda refused to join AFORD because they had put emphasis on regional politics and wanted a group that was advocating national politics. He chose to join the UDP. As for Chakaumba, he had joined the UDF but it must be understood that he was made secretary - general of the group. However, when MCP approached him, he left and joined the MCP, a party responsible for his arrest. Some people have argued that with the presence of Bakili Muluzi in the southern region he had known that he was going to play second fiddle to him. That is why he thought of joining the MCP where he was the only big wit from the region and was offered the vice presidency⁵³.

Due to all the pressure put on the Malawi leadership by donors, the church and political pressure groups, the president announced in October that there would be a referendum on 14th June, 1993 where people would have a say on what sort of the government they

⁵² *ibid.*

⁵³ Oral Interview, Tomoka, Luwingu, Mzuzu.

wanted to have. At the same time, all the Malawian pressure groups became legal political parties in the country. The UDP changed and became to be known as the United Democratic Front (UDF). The UDF made Aleke Banda as its first campaign committee chairman where he was able to display his organizational skills and campaigned vigorously among the masses through out Malawi on the merits of multipartyism and demerits of the single partyism. The results in the national referendum favoured the introduction of plural politics in Malawi⁵⁴.

After the victory in the National referendum, the parties' focus was now on the general elections. At the same time, the country held several constitutional reviews to allow the way for such an election. In December of 1993, the UDF held their first National Convention in Lilongwe at the Natural Resources College. The Convention saw the election of Bakili Muluzi as the president of the party, with Aleke Banda as the first Vice-president and Justin Malewezi as the second vice president.

In parliamentary and general elections that followed on 17th May 1994, president Muluzi and the UDF party swept into Malawi's political power with him becoming the country's first multiparty state president. Many people had thought that Muluzi was going to choose Aleke Banda to be vice – president of the country. However, the nation was stunned to hear that Muluzi had chosen Justin Malewezi to be vice – president⁵⁵. Many had thought Aleke was going to leave the party but he did not.

On parliamentary elections in 1994, Aleke Banda contested on a UDF ticket against Sam Kandodo Banda who stood on an AFORD ticket. Aleke Banda lost in the election despite holding such a high position of vice – president in his party. His loss can be explained in two ways; first, he contested in a party that was based on southern region. The results of the election on a national scale confirmed this allegation and showed the extent of regionalism in the country's politics. Secondly, some people had accused him

⁵⁴ Oral Interview, A. K Banda, Chirimba, Blantyre, 24/03/2005

⁵⁵ Oral Interview, D. Mphande, Mzuzu University

of not helping the Nkhata – Bay south when he was close to the former president Dr Banda. They had wondered what would prompt him to help them this time.

The people wanted him to join the AFORD party because it represented the interest of northerners. When he joined the UDF, he was taken as a traitor. The people from the north had seen so many bad things and wanted northerners to rule. One outstanding discrimination against them was when all the teachers from the region teaching in the other two regions were sent back home in 1989⁵⁶.

5. CONSOLIDATION OF DEMOCRACY: THE BAKILI MULUZI REGIME; 1994 – 2004

The victory of the UDF brought jubilation to most people who had waited for change for many years. However, the results had shown that Malawians had voted largely on regional lines, with Banda's MCP still dominating the central region, the UDF won mainly in the South and AFORD in the north⁵⁷.

Malawi's only second president Bakili Muluzi was sworn in on 21st May, 1994 as the state president of Malawi's second republic. Muluzi had a tough job before him. The economy was dilapidated after most donors had freezed aid, most government institutions needed to be reform to suit a multiparty system. As such, he had a tough job of picking the strongest possible cabinet to assist him. On 24th May 1994, the president appointed his first cabinet. Aleke Banda was appointed the Minister of Finance, later the ministry included the aspect of Economic Planning and Development to which he was wholly appointed⁵⁸.

The first term of the Muluzi administration must be credited for many economic, political and social developments. Such developments included the launching of MASAF projects, which was aimed at developing the rural areas. MASAF programmes

⁵⁶ Oral Interview, R. Chirwa, Chimaliro, Mzuzu

⁵⁷ M, Vaughn, *History of Central Africa: The Contemporary Years since 1960*, p. 200

⁵⁸ Oral Interview, D. D Phiri

enabled rural people to take charge of developing social and infrastructure needs in their areas like school blocks, bridges and rural clinics.

During Dr Banda's regime the economy was centralised, characterized by market regulations, foreign exchange controls and imports restrictions. Commodity prices were set by government whereby farmers sold their produce at prices below cost of production. The government then liberalized the market and started privatization of state – owned companies, in order to have the private sector control the economy. As time went by, the economic situation began to improve such that the general inflation started to drop to lower levels⁵⁹.

The 1999 general elections, proved tough for the ruling party. At this time, the party had many things to worry about. Some government officials had been accused of being corrupt at a time when the elections were around the corner, a thing which the opposition centered their campaign. Further, the two main opposition parties; AFORD and MCP merged with Chakuamba as president and Chakufwa Chihana as the running mate with aim of ousting the UDF government. This was a major force to reckon with.

The other problem for the ruling party was more complicated. Bakili Muluzi, who is a Muslim, was accused of trying to islamise the country, by the church especially the Nkhoma synod. To this effect, the church had long way been trying to block his re – election. It took moderates in the government who were Christians to dispel the rumours. Aleke Banda and Justin Malewezi, both Christians, went to convince the electorates that such stories were untrue. Banda campaigned massively throughout the country for Muluzi's second term.

Once again, Banda contested in Nkhata – Bay south constituency. In this election, he narrowly lost to AFORD's Sam Kandodo Banda. His loss for the second time can be well tributed to two things. Firstly, the people in the constituency had not yet forgiven him for his refusal to join the northern party, AFORD. They thought that he had

⁵⁹ B, Muluzi, *Mau Anga*, p. 17

betrayed the region because the southerners just wanted to use him for their own benefits. The other reason for his loss in 1999 was due to his conflict with Katenga Kaunda, the former secretary – general of the UDF party. The main problem was that Aleke Banda had insisted that the boundary remain intact as determined by Kapesya river against the wishes of Katenga Kaunda who wanted the boundary to change so that his house and some relatives fall in the constituency he was to contest in. When this happened, a cold war erupted between the two big people in the party - Aleke Banda and Katenga Kaunda. Their disagreements even forced Muluzi to intervene when he sent Uladi Mussa and other religious leaders to try to bring peace between the two men. Though there was a thaw between them, Kaunda went around in Banda constituency campaigning for Banda's opponent. The result was Banda's loss with a narrow margin⁶⁰.

In the second term, Aleke Banda continued his hardworking spirit as a minister. Aleke Banda had served as the Minister of Finance, Health and Agriculture before he was dropped from the cabinet. When he was a minister, he displayed his enormous hardworking spirit and organization skills that transformed every ministry he had gone⁶¹. Some people had complained that Aleke Banda overworked those who had worked for him like drivers and personal assistants. However, his staff never complained of overworking because they shared their boss's desire for good outcome that brought satisfaction to them as well⁶². Simply put, Banda's drive for hardwork was based mostly in his philosophy that stipulates that every problem has a solution and his belief of leaving no task undone.

Probably, his success in every ministry he went was basically hidden in his ability to grasp things quickly enough. Once in a ministry, he would study the objectives of that particular ministry and in no time he was able to know the workings of the ministry in

⁶⁰ Oral Interview, Dr. D Mphande, Mzuzu University.

⁶¹ Oral Interview, A. Mfukiza, Mzuzu University.

⁶² Telephone Interview, Mrs. Mapata from Blantyre.

question. This ability helped him to know where there was need for improvement in the ministry⁶³.

However, halfway the second term, things changed. Muluzi had backtracked on supporting Aleke Banda for the presidential candidacy and opted to push for his own third term and then open term bills. However, the parliament rejected the proposed bill and Muluzi was prevented from getting through his wishes. However, Muluzi opted for an economist Dr. Bingu WA Mthali to be UDF's candidate and Cassim Chilumpha as his running mate in the 2004 elections. It was rumoured that Muluzi had told Aleke Banda that it seemed Malawi was not yet ready for a person from the north to be president that is why he chose Bingu. Further, it is speculated that Muluzi had argued that it was important to have Cassim Chilumpha because he was a Muslim and Islam was an important religion and therefore it could not be left out⁶⁴. Aleke Banda was devastated with this development. He had been loyal to President Kamuzu Banda and was rewarded with a 12 year untried detention. He had campaigned massively for President Muluzi especially during his re – election campaign and served diligently as a minister and Muluzi once again did not pay back his efforts⁶⁵.

Upon leaving the UDF, many people had thought that he was going to join the opposition MCP. However, he joined Peoples' Progressive Movement, which was regarded to be a very small party for him. During the convention, he was elected its president. As the election of 2004 was close, many people of goodwill thought that it was time that the UDF be kicked out from power because of massive corruption allegations against top government officials and many other social ills. This desire, drove even faith groups to be involved in trying to convince opposition parties to come together and feature one candidate against UDF's Bingu. However, such efforts failed to bring the main opposition MCP and Brown Mpanganjira's National Democratic Alliance. As such, other small parties came together and nominated Chakuamba as president and Aleke Banda as the running mate. When the elections took place on 20th

⁶³ Oral Interview, D. D Phiri.

⁶⁴ *ibid*

⁶⁵ Oral Interview, Dr . D. Mphande, Mzuzu University

May 2004, Bingu won the elections and the opposition coalition came a distant third. However the coalition party lost but Aleke won massively in the parliamentary elections⁶⁶.

Aleke Banda's victory in the elections has been attributed to two reasons. First, Aleke Banda had started getting support among the people in Nkhata-bay south mainly because of continued support to the area despite losing elections. Some analysts still think that Aleke Banda was going to win the election even on the UDF ticket.

Probably, the most significant reason that made him won the 2004 parliamentary elections was his decision to leave the UDF and join P.P.M, which the people viewed as being more neutral in that it was not associated with any other region. It is important to note that, at this time, AFORD as the party of the north had become very weak thereby losing its grip of the region. This happened because of its political marriages with MCP at one time and then with the UDF until the elections. As a result, its influence had been loosened. Further, the UDF had been weakened very much in Nkhata – Bay following his departure from the party. In addition, the Kaunda's death reduced antagonism in the area. Pressure from Mgode's Sam Kandodo was not grave because as a Member of Parliament, he had done very little for the people. Aleke Banda won the elections with more than 7,000 votes than any other candidate⁶⁷.

6. CONCLUSION

The above account has attempted to examine the history of modern Malawi using the historical profile of Aleke Banda's life between 1939 and 2004. Three conclusions can be drawn from the study. First, that Aleke Banda played a very important role in bringing down the colonial government. His role in the co – founding of the Malawi Congress Party, his participation in the constitution talks that led to the end of

⁶⁶ Oral Interview, D. D Phiri

⁶⁷ Oral Interview, Dr. D Mphande, Mzuzu University

federation and then his role in the early years of self – rule makes him one of the founding fathers of the nation.

Secondly, the study has established that Aleke Banda is a courageous person. His courage is clearly seen by his joining the struggle against colonialism at a very tender age of 14. Further, his decision to advise the president against siphoning money from the Press Group of Companies demonstrates his courage. Very few people would have done that knowing full well the consequences of such an action.

Thirdly, the study has also established the grip of regionalism in the Malawian politics. This is clearly seen in that the two times Aleke Banda has contested on a UDF ticket, a party largely viewed as a southern region based, he has lost. The moment he contested on a somehow neutral party, he was able to win. On the same, the results of the General Elections have shown that people largely voted on region lines.

The paper has failed to discuss factors that helped Aleke Banda to survive the political ups and downs, which many of his fellow politicians despite being alive have failed to survive. This was mainly because the study wanted to focus on his role in the making of modern Malawian history, not particularly his detailed life story.

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