

Defectors cheating wananchi

DEFECTORS to Kanu are trying to fool wananchi whenever they say their actions are geared for development, which is not true.

To speak the truth, they defect for their sake because of the monetary benefits they get from the other side.

Only in the opposition are there people who mind the welfare of wananchi. I would like to tell the defectors that, when we elected them, our aim was to remove the Kanu government as development would follow naturally because we were sure that with them in power no development in Kenya would be achieved.

Since they consider themselves to be wiser than their electors, I ask them to tell the wananchi whether their idea of development is the way our doctors and lecturers are being treated.

They have devised a new chorus for soliciting for money from wananchi which is education. But question here is: where will students go after completing Form Four? Where will those who will qualify as doctors practise?

Well done for the Kanu to employ foreign doctors, but they should be taught our mother tongues or we their mother tongues because they cannot communicate with the rural majority.

Sammy Davis, Murang'a.

Mungai's claims in bad taste

AS a genuine Ford Asili member, I have been monitoring the utterances of Mr Njenga Mungai against the person of Mr Kenneth Matiba accusing him of issuing ultimatums he cannot fulfil.

The Kenyan people cannot be hoodwinked by those who are out to malign and assassinate the character of Mr Matiba.

Mr Mungai is well aware that before Mr Matiba was detained, he had a very healthy life and was doing things a mountain climber could mean feat.

Mr Mungai and Mr Matiba's other critics know very well that Mr Matiba's stay in England is due to the hospitalisation of Mrs Matiba, yet he has the audacity to tell the public that he cannot wait for the recuperation of Mr Matiba before he carries out his rejuvenation of Ford Asili.

Mr Mungai's statement of September 19, attacking the chairman, was meant to please his accomplices and had nothing to do with the party's rejuvenation.

Mr Mungai knows he cannot match the chairman at any forum and should therefore hold his tongue.

Those who fear the political popularity of Mr Matiba are inclined to tell the public that he does not like the unity of the opposition, although they know that there cannot be a short cut for the unity unless the other party leaders accept a ballot box decision which they seem to avoid and instead continue their incessant attacks on Mr Matiba. S. N. Kirera, Nairobi.

Compensate Nandis who were robbed of land

WHEN European colonisers came to our country and subsequently occupied our land evicting people from their arable farms to create space for the large scale farms, the natives were pushed to unproductive rocky steep areas where it was even difficult to put up a good house without leveling out and rolling away rocks and boulders.

This forced the locals to work in the farms in all sorts of cadres and a long process of dependence ensued. These people lived in a perpetual hunger and starvation with little money spared to educate the squatters' children. The children were unable to go beyond primary school, due to lack of school fees.

Given these conditions, they

ended up in tea farms as co-labourers with their fathers, always receiving rations in a land endowed with plentiful of resources. The demanding responsibilities drained the resources and in no time the workers were expecting another round of pay. The agricultural productivity of the area was only a nightmare to this populace. Those parents that wanted their children to further education had to resort to other unorthodox means of generating money, for example engaging in brewing and sale of the illicit brews.

This caused continued conflict with the administration and constant arrest. What could this people do after being consigned to the barren grounds and rel-

egated to squatters in their land of nativity?

In Nandi Hills and Tinderet divisions, 30,000 plus acres are under tea bushes. This represents 95 percent of the total arable land. The remaining 5 percent is under trees used in these tea estate's factories. This effectively means that in this region of Nandi, the natives were robbed of their fertile land.

The question is, of what benefit are the tea farms to the native Nandi? They are 99 percent foreign-owned, foreign in the sense that they are either owned by white farmers or non-Nandis.

It is in this light that we suggest that for the tea farms to have any meaningful contribu-

tion to the development of these squatters - who squat on grabbed farms each tea estate/company should provide to its squatters:

- Clean piped water.
- That each squatter should have unconditional access to health facilities unlike the present situation where only labourers in the tea estates are treated.
- At least one of the squatters' children be educated by each estate and if possible provide a job upon completion of studies. It is said that whereas 30,000 people work in these tea farms, only one tea estate has a secondary school to its credit. The others should follow suit.
- The squatters of each tea estate should be provided with electricity.

Each tea estate should maintain rural access roads in the squatter areas.

It is not logical, surely, for a tea farm to make profits of over Shs 40 million a year when the surrounding is occupied by people living in squalor and abject poverty.

The local people should be given priority in any future sale of tea farms. Read the signs.

Seronei arap Chelulet - chairman, Nandi District University Association (Egerton University), Philip Kosgei, Tony Kirwa, Kiprop Chepkwony, Wilson Muli, Kipketer arap Meli, Paul Barchumba Kemei (Chepterwai Ward).

Mwangaza bold step in the right direction

MINE are views on the recently launched pressure group "Mwangaza Trust".

Much has been said about it, about the personalities behind it, and as is typical of the Kenyan media little attention has been given to its stated agenda.

It's not my intention to comment on Mwangaza's clout, nor of the political actors behind it. My humble view is that we should endeavour to be more issue-oriented in political thought. What I wish to dwell on is the purported agenda of the "Mwangaza".

At the time of its inception, Mute and his colleagues told Kenyans that they had launched the body ostensibly to campaign for a new constitution order devoid of constitutional, legal or cultural barriers to the democratisation process. While I cannot absolve Mute and company from the political intrigues and chicaneries that bedevil our political arena, such a noble objective cannot go without praise.

Diagnosis of a problem is the first step towards solving it. Mwangaza's stated objective to work for solutions is an impor-



Mr Mute: Leader of Mwangaza

tant political development and needs the support of all Kenyans. But only in so far as the trust commits itself to working selflessly for a new constitutional order.

However, going by Kanu's petulant nature, fulfilling these objectives is onerous. To "Mwangaza Trust" and indeed to all Kenyans, I wish to invoke the words of Mr Thomas Paine, a democratic journalist, who said:



Prof Nyong'o: Second in command

"Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph." Do not balk out because of the task ahead of you. Take heart and fight on. As the Chinese adage goes, "a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step in the right direction."

Thomas Wambugu, Ol-Jororok.

PAUL Kibugi Mute is a man with strange ideas. He also comes with strange high sounding rhetoric: "I shall be the chairman of Ford Kenya once Jaramogi dies... the only important thing is that this man (President Moi) goes. I will pardon Moi if he surrenders power at the height of tribal clashes..."

Mr Mute quits before being thrown out of the vice-chairmanship of Ford Kenya. Now it is on to Mwangaza where his friends in Ford Asili are neck deep. He talks of co-operation with Kanu and the people are confused.

And that is not all. Insiders know that he is a freemason which he, of course, denies. How many in Mwangaza are devil worshippers?

Mr Mute, the Kikuyu prince is rumoured to have met the President either at State House or at Muthaiga in a godfather's house. Why not come clean Mr Mute?

Mute holds a bursary harambee together with Mr ole Kikua the Kikuyu District Officer yet children have been failing to sit their exams for lack of money. The lucky ones are his former campaign agents who are rich. I speak as a very close insider.

After the election, Mr Mute bought a Shs 30 million piece of land. He has preached GEMA. He is preaching South African politics without understanding it.

Mr Mute is a creation of the media. The real Mute is a selfish, arrogant and power hungry individual who thinks he has a small monopoly of knowledge.

Where do we in Ford-K go? Where are your promises? Kamau Kaniaru, Kikuyu.

The Editor welcomes brief letters on local subjects from readers. They should carry the writer's name, signature and address for publication, but as a sign of good faith, the editor reserves the right to shorten them. Write to: The Editor, The People, PO Box 4444, Nairobi.

Leaders driving down their countries

AFRICAN leaders have little regard for freedom and dignity of their subjects and, like their counterparts in history who abetted slavery by swooping for ornaments - human cargo - destined for degrading conditions in the Western world, are edging their countries back to primitive and dictatorial conditions.

Here in Kenya, the economic domination by the Kanu-favoured Asian community and the continued discouragement and sabotage of up-and-coming African entrepreneurs, especially those deemed to be in the opposition, are in cases.

The bias is further demonstrated by the government's willingness to bring in expatriate doctors at great cost to the country, instead of negotiating with our striking doctors whose only crimes are the requests to form a union, to have decent working conditions and higher salaries. (It is worth pointing out that some bank messengers earn more than government doctors who work under extremely tough conditions, especially in the rural

areas where there are inadequate facilities.)

Surprisingly, the same leaders who have always sang about patriotism are the ones overseeing the destruction of all institutions. The welfare of black Kenyans does not matter to them, and when it does it is only when collecting taxes, or why else are taxpayers' children dying in government hospitals? The same children can barely attend the university; their representatives (opposition leaders) are treated like criminals.

As the Kanu government spearheads the campaign to turn majority Kenyans into economic degenerates, the opposition led by confused and former influential players in Kanu's political games, have run short of ideas. They now are mere noise makers and are making no effort to reconcile those among their ranks or implement their respective manifestos, hence resorting to actions which only confuse the already disillusioned majority. Dubious pressure groups, tribal alliances and infightings further

weaken the opposition.

A leadership that uses national resources to intimidate sections of its people or unfairly patronise aliens is not only unpatriotic but satanic. The same goes for those who cannot sit with striking lecturers or doctors for the sake of the suffering majority.

Freedom to express views, associate and communicate with others, and availability of medical and educational facilities, as well as economic emancipation, are the basic ingredients of human rights and democracy.

Leaders, both in the opposition and in Kanu, must be told in no uncertain terms that a leader is a tolerant and wise person, one with a vision. Tolerant and wise. He transforms a volatile situation into a peaceful one and acts according to the wishes and aspirations of his people in their fight against deprivation, disease and ignorance. Do we have such leaders in Kenya? G. K. Wachira, Nairobi.

Africans destined for sure disaster

WHAT ails Africa? It is unsurpassed in the number of successful and abortive coups d'état. Civil wars characterise a number of countries. Most recently Rwanda set the record for the worst humanitarian disaster in history.

The African economies are in shambles. Many who have lived to compare independent African states and the former colonies do confess that in real terms, the standards of living have declined with successive African regimes.

Infrastructure is in a state of disrepair, institutions exist only as buildings, health centres have no drugs.

As the 20th Century draws to a close, clean water is still a mirage, revisited only for sloganeering purposes during campaigns for elections.

Above all, parastatals exclusively in the hands of Africans have been run down and only exist for patronage purposes and as havens for plunder.

Asian and Latin American countries which for a long time structurally and economically were parallels only to Africa are now giving the Western world a run for their money as they slowly and surely join the ranks of newly industrialised countries.

African nations including those which previously seemed poised for greater heights including Kenya continue sinking desperately deeper into the abyss of misery.

African scholars have failed to rise to the occasion. I do acknowledge we have produced illustrious scholars reputed the world over but they have not done much for their motherland? Many will cite the many instances of persecution of scholars. What have those in good books done? Why should they vegetate as policies to revive their economies are drawn up in Western capitals? Can we hold them culpable for intellectual negligence?

Will Africa ever produce leaders with an international appeal, pragmatists who will have things done right and not persons behaving like demigods? When will African leaders refrain from scapegoating and instead look for solutions to the many problems Africans grapple with?

Africa appears entangled in an intricate and unbreakable vicious circle of problems that will never cease to amaze. Joseph Mwaura Muigai, Lower Kabete.