We will never, never sell our freedom for capital or technical aid. We stand for freedom at any cost.

Tom Mboya
‘An Evening with TOM MBOYA’

SPEECHES, LECTURES AND REMARKS FROM PROMINENT PERSONALITIES

AN ADVOCACY AND LOBBYING STRATEGY BY THE KENYA NATIONAL COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS (KNCHR)
An Evening with Tom Mboya

Published by;
Kenya National Commission on Human Rights
P O Box 74359-00200, Nairobi, Kenya

© Kenya National Commission on Human Rights 2006

ISBN - 9666 - 7084 - 1 - 3
Acknowledgments

The Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR) would like to thank the contributors to this compilation of speeches honouring Tom Mboya. The Commission would also like to thank Tom Mboya’s family, Commission staff and the Commissioners, for making this project a success.
QUOTES FROM TOM MBOYA

“Pan Africanism is changing the arbitrary and often illogical boundaries set up by the colonial powers in their mad scramble for Africa. Many students of African Affairs are constantly asking us what sort of societies or governments we hope to set up when our freedom is won...It will not be a blue-print copy of what is commonly referred to as western. What we shall create should be African, conditioned and related to conditions and circumstances of Africa. It shall be enriched by our ability to borrow or take what is good from other systems, creating a synthesis of this with the best of our own systems and cultures.”

“Africa is a continent surging with impatient nationalist movements striving to win freedom and independence. Apart from this struggle, there is the struggle against disease, poverty and ignorance. Unless these three evils are defeated, political freedom would become hollow and meaningless...the motive behind various nationalist movements should always be geared towards the security of all our people, higher standards of living and social advancement.”

*Tom Mboya on July 1st 1958 at Makerere University*

“African states will not tolerate interference from outside by any country – and that means power blocs that have nothing better to do but fight each other – let them do it outside of Africa.”

“We do not intend to be undermined by those who pay lip service to democracy, but have a long way to go in their own countries.”

“We will never, never sell our freedom for capital or technical aid. We stand for freedom at any cost.”

*Tom Mboya on 8th December 1959 as he chaired the All Africa People’s Conference*
# CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Qoutes by Tom Mboya</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreword by Maina Kiai (Kenya National Commission on Human Rights)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech by J. D. Akumu</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech by Jeremiah Nyagah</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech by Harris Mule</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moments in the life of Tom Mboya</td>
<td>26-27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lecture by Hon Prof Peter Anyang’ Nyong’o</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remarks by J. D. Otiende</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prof Ali A. Mazrui</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Attention: Tom Mboya in an interview**
FOREWORD

Tom Mboya remains one of the most prominent personalities in Kenyan history. Born Thomas Joseph Mboya on 15th August 1930, he was to die by an assassin’s bullet at the tender age of 39 on 5th July 1969. It is widely believed that his high profile and illustrious career as a brilliant and charismatic leader, led to his assassination.

A renowned trade unionist, politician and statesman, Tom Mboya joined active politics in 1957 when he successfully contested and won a seat in the Legislative Council. Later in 1958, he founded the Nairobi People’s Congress Party. He was instrumental in forming the Kenya African National Union (Kanu) which formed the government at independence, and became its first Secretary-General. At the time of his assassination, he was the Minister of Economic Planning and Development.

His intelligence and charm earned him worldwide recognition and respect; his performance at both national and continental level was remarkable. In 1958, during the All-Africa People’s Conference convened by Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Mboya was elected the Conference Chairman then aged 28.

It is because of the remarkable qualities of the late Tom Mboya that we proposed this event: “An Evening with Tom Mboya”, not only to celebrate the man, but also to remind us of who he was, what he stood for and why he was assassinated.
Tom Mboya was a Kenyan. Tom Mboya was a Pan-Africanist. Tom Mboya was a true nationalist who reviled ethnic politics and sectarianism. Tom Mboya should be a role model for Kenyans – and especially politicians. If they emulated him, many of the tensions within the political class would probably not be as intense as they are today.

The Kenya National Commission on Human Rights has been working with various civil society stakeholders to advocate for the establishment of a Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission (TJRC) – in pursuance of the recommendations of the Government’s own Task Force, established to look into this matter. The TJRC would conduct investigations into past gross human rights violations, including political assassinations such as that of Tom Mboya, and will make recommendations to the government for appropriate action. The TJRC will be a mechanism for dealing with the past so that similar grave human rights violations and atrocities are never again committed in present or future governments.

It is a fact: A nation that does not know its past, a nation that does not recognize and deal with its past, is a nation without a future. There is little doubt that many of the problems we have faced in this country – from corruption, negative ethnicity and xenophobia, human rights abuses, poverty and inequality – have partly been as a result of the fact that we have not, as a nation, collectively and comprehensively looked at our past, learnt the lessons from it, and made a conscious decision to move away from that past.

“An evening with Tom Mboya” forms part of the advocacy and lobbying strategies of the TJRC and will be followed by similar functions relating to the political assassinations of such prominent personalities as J. M. Kariuki, Pio Gama Pinto, Robert Ouko, Father John Kaiser and others. Other advocacy activities will target the Shifta War, the Kisumu Massacres, the 1982 attempted coup, the Wagalla Massacres, the Mwakenya Movement, the Nyayo House Torture Chambers, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs,) the politically instigated ethnic violence of the 1990s, the Fera movement, political harassment and cases of extra judicial killings. All these constitute grave human rights violations that have been perpetrated by, or with the knowledge of the state.

Our expectations from this event:

(a) We hope that the public will be educated; for the majority of Kenyans below the age of 35 years, and re-educated, for those older than 35, on who Tom Mboya was, and why his assassination must not be forgotten.

(b) We hope that the country will begin to understand the need to push for a TJRC to bring out the truth – or as much of it as possible, regarding the assassination of Tom Mboya and others, as part of the mechanisms of transitional justice in Kenya.
Our Hero: Tom Mboya is carried up high by members of the public. His fight for democracy and other social issues earned him lots of friends and fame.
Tom Mboya and United States President John F. Kennedy at a meeting in the US.
MBOYA: TRADE UNIONIST AND A GREAT SON OF AFRICA

Tom Mboya will always be remembered as a great trade unionist and a great son of Africa. He was a self-made man, he worked hard, was generous to the poor and a strong Pan-Africanist who was committed to the total liberation of Africans in Africa, and Africans in the Diaspora. He presided over the first All African People’s Conference and was in touch with the African leaders in the Diaspora like A. Philip Randolph of USA, and trade unionist Michael Manley of Jamaica.

I met the late Mboya in 1952 when we were both taking part in a debate at the Mbagathi Postal Training Centre. He was then working with the Nairobi City Council as a health inspector.

In 1953, when Mzee Kenyatta and his colleagues were detained by the colonial administration; they invited active student leaders including Mboya, the late W. W. Awori and the late Walter Odede to take over leadership of the Kenya African Union (KAU). We remained in touch until the Kenyan African Union (KAU) was banned and Odede detained in Kwale.

Being an employee of the City Council, Mboya joined the City Council Staff Association and transformed it to a trade union (Kenya Local Government Workers Union, KLGWU). By then, the colonial authorities only allowed African workers to form staff associations. Mayor Reggie Alexander and city authorities refused to recognise the union. Mboya took them to the tribunal- a judicial inquiry formed to look into the relations between the Nairobi City Council and the Nairobi branch of KLGWU, and won the case. One of his colleagues during this local government struggle, the late James Karebe, remained his friend for life.
In 1952, his union joined the Kenya Federation of Registered Trade Unions and he took over as Secretary-General in place of Aggrey Minya. He and his group changed the national union’s name to the Kenya Federation of Labour (KFL). Mboya expanded the international platform, which Minya had started, by continuously attacking colonialism and the state of emergency.

The KFL became the voice of Kenyan Africans during the emergency when all political parties were banned. It is KFL that led the struggle for the release of detainees, and for liberty.

In 1956, while in Europe, Mboya made a speech which attacked detention without trial and the despicable ways in which Africans were treated by the British colonial authorities. This prompted the settlers in the Legislative Council to move a motion seeking to ban the KFL. It took Mr Arthur Ochwada, who was then the Acting Secretary-General of the KFL, to negotiate a compromise that saved the federation.

In his capacity as KFL Secretary-General, Mboya settled the dock workers major strike. He also mobilised the International Plantation Union to support the late Japheth Gaya and Jesse Mwangi Gachago to organize plantation workers in Kenya. As a son of a plantation worker, he was very keen on the unionisation of workers. His father Leonard or ‘Leonardus’ Ndiege, was a sisal cutter in an estate farm belonging to Sir William Northrup McMillan, at Kilimambogo, a few miles east of Thika.

**What is Mboya’s legacy in Kenya?**

Mboya helped to build the present Cotu (K) headquarters. It is from that building that Mzee Kenyatta set off to address his first public rally on 20 October 1961 at City Stadium after his release from detention.

Mboya laid the ground for the present National Social Security Fund which he left in the hands of Ngala Mwendwa. He worked on the Tripartite Agreement, which has been used as a guideline not just in Kenya but in Africa.

In East Africa, Mboya visited Tanzania and helped Hon Rashid Kawawa to form the Tanganyika Federation of Labour; while in Uganda, he worked with others to create the Uganda Trade Union Congress (UTUC).

Mboya was also for a while Africa’s Regional Representative of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. At that level, he was instrumental to the trade union movement throughout the whole of Africa.
In 1958, Mboya sent Gideon Mutiso and I to Accra to attend a preparatory committee of the All African People’s Conference. Later that year (1958) Nkrumah invited Mboya and Dr Julius Gikonyo Kiano to the All African People’s Conference, which brought Pan-Africanism home. Before then all Pan-African meetings had been held outside Africa.

Mboya had a great commitment to Pan-Africanism. It must be remembered that when he was assassinated, he had just returned to Kenya from Addis Ababa, where he had been attending a meeting of the Economic Commission for Africa.

There are many questions still unanswered. Why was he assassinated? Some have claimed that it was because of the succession battle between Mboya and a group of politicians known as the ‘Kiambu Mafia’.

If there had been a free and fair contest, would it have been possible for him to lead Kenya? Many people believe he would have won. Would Kenya have fared better under him? Yes: He hated corruption and was against acquisition of massive individual wealth. He believed in fighting poverty and unemployment. We in the trade union movement have remembered him by building the Tom Mboya Labour College. I am glad the present Cotu (K) Secretary-General, Mr Francis Atwoli, is renovating it in an attempt to elevate it to a worker’s centre for high education.

I am surprised that other Kenyans, including hundreds who benefited from Tom Mboya’s airlifts to America, have not thought of a proper memorial for this great son of Kenya.

Tom and I argued, and at times disagreed ideologically, but we remained friends and we indeed recognised and appreciated each other’s points of view.

I want to thank the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights for arranging this function. I hope you can arrange similar events for other deserving heroes as well.
Standing out for the workers, Tom Mboya giving a speech at CIOSL Conference.
A POLITICIAN IN PRE-INDEPENDENCE AND POST-INDEPENDENCE KENYA

My assignment here today is to describe “Tom Mboya as a Politician in Pre-Independence and Post-Independence Kenya,” particularly the role of Mboya and myself played when Kenyans were demanding the following:

- The right to self-governance
- The termination of all forms of racial discrimination perpetuated by the then ruling Mkoloni/Mwingereza – who referred to our motherland as ‘Kenya Crown Colony and Protectorate’ while discriminating against the Mwafrika in many ways such as segregated residential areas in Nairobi, segregated social places that saw Europeans enjoy the most privileged restaurants, unequal provision of education, health facilities and other sectors such as employment, salaries and promotions.

Let me get to my assignment about my time in politics with Mboya, especially from 1956 to the time he was assassinated along the then Government Road, now Moi Avenue, outside the Chahhni Pharmacy, in broad daylight.

I first met Tom in 1956 during our meetings at the office of the Civil Servants Union in Kariokor/Starehe – near his residence. By then, I was an Assistant Education Officer (A.E.O.) in Kiambu.
and acting secretary for civil servants, Kiambu Branch. Before my Kiambu posting, I had been teaching at the then Government African School and Teacher Training College Embu/Kangaru as Vice-Principal.

I was in Kiambu during the state of emergency arising out of the Mau Mau Rebellion against the Mkoloni’s rule. The Kikuyu, Embu and Meru were the most affected by the restriction rules, which were mostly applied in Central Province and Nairobi.

In 1956, the Mkoloni relaxed the governing system in Kenya and created eight constituencies for Africans. The eight constituencies were filled through a franchised election in 1957. The eight African Members of the Legislative Councils (MLCs) elected in 1957 demanded that Africans, who were the majority inhabitants in Kenya, should have more representation in the Legislative Council (Legco). This was done in 1958 when I and five other Africans were elected, thus increasing the number of Africans in the Legco to 14.

The distribution of the seats was as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>1957</th>
<th>1958</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nairobi</td>
<td>Tom Mboya</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>Bernard Mate</td>
<td>Dr. Gikonyo Kiano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coast</td>
<td>Ronald Ngala</td>
<td>Jeremiah Nyaga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rift Valley</td>
<td>Daniel Toroitich arap Moi</td>
<td>Dr. Taita Towett Justus Kander Ole Tipis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western</td>
<td>Masinde Muliro</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nyanza</td>
<td>Oginga Odinga Ajuma</td>
<td>Oguda Lawrence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukambani</td>
<td>Muimi Mulira</td>
<td>Ng’ati</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We worked in unity as MLCs within our group, the African Elected Members Organisation (AEMO) with Oginga as the chairman and Mboya the secretary. We started rather well as AEMO, but somewhere down the line, there were differences in opinions among individual MLCs, which interfered with our team work. Despite the minor differences, God was with us and we were successful to a certain point and worked progressively on our Lancaster gains.
During all this time, Mboya was one strong man in all the struggles we had and played a major role in the following areas until Kenya got its independence in 1963:

- The revocation of the state of emergency,
- The release of Jomo Kenyatta and his fellow detainees,
- The removal of restrictions and the end of *villagisation* in Central Province and Nairobi, movement (*kipande*) permits and the removal of racial discrimination in all forms,
- The end of colonial rule and for *Mwafrika* to be free to govern his country.

Mboya was particularly active in making arrangements for the elimination of racial discrimination against Africans and the support for African demands. For example, we visited Lokitaung where five freedom fighters (Jomo Kenyatta, Paul Ngei, Bildad Kaggia, Ochieng Oneko and Kungu Karumba) were incarcerated. Further, he arranged for African students to study in friendly foreign countries such as USA, India, and some European countries.

Tom did his best!
He deserves more recognition than he has been accorded.
We should have a statue of Tom in the City of Nairobi.
We should know and live up to the aims and objectives of our national fighters/founders (the Mau Mau freedom fighters and detainees).

Time does not allow me to tell you the role Tom played to command support from friendly European, Asian and African countries such as Tanzania through Mwalimu Nyerere, Uganda through Obote, Gold Coast (Ghana) through Kwame Nkrumah and Nigeria.

People like the late Joseph Murumbi and Pio Gama Pinto should also not be forgotten. Kenyan lawyers such as Fitz de Souza and Argwings Kodhek. People who supported Kenyans during the fight for Uhuru should be accorded due recognition regardless of race or colour.

*We Kenyans must remember the valuable advice of our freedom fighters:*

*We wanted self-rule to govern ourselves*
*We should do this through Love, Peace and Unity*
*Assassinations are not what we fought for*
*Tribalism is not in accordance with Peace and Unity*
*Uhuru na kazi is our goal, not the present factionality and political infighting*
*God is in command if we follow and practice our prayerful National Anthem*
“Ee Mungu nguvu yetu
Ilete baraka kwetu
Haki iwe ngao na mlinzi
Natukae na undugu, amani na uhuru
Raha tupate na ustawi”

NB: One of Tom’s valuable contributions was in connection with the design of Kenya’s National Flag, whose colours represented the Kenya African Democratic Union (Kadu) and the Kenya African National Union (Kanu) party colours, and wananchi’s shield and spears for defence.

There is a book titled “Tom Mboya, the Man Kenya Wanted to Forget.” Perhaps it should be renamed “Tom Mboya, the Man Kenyans Want to Remember.”
Tom Mboya shares a moment with the representatives of the National Legislative Council, including Jaramogi Oginga Odinga and the former president Daniel Arap Moi.
Deep in conversation, Tom Mboya listens attentively to Mr Willy Brandt (German Chancellor, 1968) at a function.
Thank you Mr Chairman.

Mr Chairman, Mrs Pamela Mboya and family, relatives, and friends, Honourable Ministers, Fellow Panellists, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am truly honoured to be among this distinguished panel of speakers in honour of one of the greatest sons of Africa and one of the foremost architects of modern Kenya. At a young age of 39, Tom Mboya had accomplished more than most human beings ever hope to attain in a lifetime. He had built one of the most effective trade union movements in Africa and had effectively used the movement as a tool for independence. In his mid-twenties, he was the youngest Member of Parliament (Legislative Council) representing a multi-ethnic constituency. He was an eloquent spokesman of the interests of the downtrodden. In an eulogy by President Jomo Kenyatta at Mboya’s requiem mass, “Kenya’s independence would have been seriously compromised were it not for the courage and steadfastness of Tom Mboya.”

To Tom Mboya, independence was not an end in itself. Unlike Kwame Nkrumah, who exhorted his followers to “seek the political kingdom first, and all the other things will be added to them,” Mboya viewed independence as a means of creating a modern, sovereign state, giving Kenyans a sense of nationhood, and of engendering prosperity with equity to fight the ignorance, poverty, and disease. This comes out very clearly in his book, Freedom and After. As the Minister for Labour, Minister for Justice and Constitutional Affairs, and most notably, Minister for Economic Planning and Development, Tom Mboya strove tirelessly, selflessly, and courageously to achieve this dream.
It is in the above context that we should look at Tom Mboya as Minister. And in so doing, we should look at his multiple roles as a man with a vision for Kenya, a policy maker, an institution builder, and a manager.

Tom Mboya was a man with a vision for Kenya. I have already alluded to his conviction that independence was a means to other ends. His vision is best captured in the Sessional Paper No. 10 of 1965, on African Socialism and its Application to Planning in Kenya. This paper visualised Kenya as a nation with a growing economy and citizens enjoying higher and growing per capita income equitably distributed. It was the vision of a nation of healthy and educated individuals productively employed to better their lot and those of their families and the nation as a whole. It envisaged the emergence of modern and vibrant nation firmly rooted in the best of the traditions and cultures of African society. It saw a nation at peace with itself and its neighbours.

To achieve that vision, policies had to be put in place in relation to ideology, international relations, economic structure, ownership of property, and systems of economic sanctions and rewards. The hottest debate then was on ideology. The world was raven by-“isms”: capitalism, communism, scientific socialism, Fabian socialism, African socialism, and many other-“isms”. Tom Mboya pushed for a variant of African socialism, which advocated for a mixed economy—a mixed ownership of productive assets, an economy open to international trade and capital, and an economy guided by principles of efficiency, equity, and fairness. By sheer force of personality, persuasiveness, and political astuteness, Tom Mboya carried the day. And this document has served Kenya well. It was, and still remains, a masterpiece of ideological architecture. It provided flexible guidelines in charting the economic future of the country, and spared the country the ideological turbulence which has been the fate of many countries in Africa and beyond during the last 15 years.

Tom Mboya was a policy maker per excellence. Policy making is about making choices. And the choices are always difficult. To many policy makers, it is tempting to opt for short-term political gain at the expense of long term national benefits. Tom Mboya always opted for policies which would confer long-term benefits to the greatest number of Kenyans, and to the nation as a whole. A few examples will illustrate this point:

In formulating the first National Development plan, 1964 – 1970, hard choices had to be made between public consumption by way of free education, free health, and housing or public investment in agriculture, infrastructure, and the enterprise sector. Although clearly desirable at that time, the economy could not afford free social services. Tom Mboya, therefore, pushed for free education at tertiary level, both Forms V and VI and at university. This was not only affordable
but it also met the immediate manpower needs for the budding economy. Public investment was
directed towards the productive sectors.

The results were impressive. Kenya’s Gross Domestic Product grew at more than 7 per cent
annually in real terms and more than 10 per cent in nominal terms. Government revenues grew
by more than 20 per cent annually in nominal terms. With a growing economy and government
revenues, the government and households could afford to pay for education and other social
services and by early 1970s, primary school enrolment was nearly 100 per cent.

A second example was on housing. Tom Mboya represented Kamukunji Constituency, which then
had the biggest slums in Kenya. He was under pressure to demolish the slums and replace them
with modern high-rise apartments. This was politically appealing but financially unaffordable. The
urban housing problem is first and foremost an income problem. There is no point in building
good houses if the poor cannot afford to own, rent, or maintain them. Instead of pushing for
unaffordable houses, Tom Mboya opted for a site and service scheme, which provided the poor
with serviced plots and encouraged them to build decent houses for themselves.

Perhaps the biggest policy challenge to Tom Mboya was on family planning. Kenya’s population
was growing at 3.2 per cent annually in 1960s. It was clear that the economy could not provide a
decent standard of living with that rate of population growth. But as a practising Catholic, family
planning posed an ethical dilemma to Tom Mboya. He asked the economists in the Ministry to
prepare a concept paper on family planning outlining clearly its rationale, and its pros and cons. He
pondered over it, was convinced of its merits, and discussed it with Cardinal Maurice Otunga. His
intention was not to persuade the Cardinal to accept family planning, but rather for the Cardinal to
at least understand the reasons why Tom Mboya would be pushing for family planning. Despite his
faith, Tom Mboya was one of the few voices promoting family planning in 1960s.

The examples, enumerated are illustrative of Tom Mboya’s approach to policy making, an approach
informed by political courage, rationality, analysis, and long-term well being of the majority.

Tom Mboya was equally aware that policies do not operate in a vacuum. Policies are formulated and
implemented within an institutional framework. He was, therefore, an institution builder. As the
Minister for Labour, Tom Mboya fashioned industrial relations institutions, including Cotu and the
Industrial Court, which have served this country well. As the Minister for Justice and Constitutional
Affairs, he domesticated the Lancaster Conference Constitution, which, despite its subsequent
amputations, has served this country for more than 40 years. And as the Minister for Economic Planning
and Development, he created a vibrant institution which has stood the test of time as evidenced by the presence of the Minister for Planning and National Development with us here today.

Finally, Tom Mboya was the ultimate economic manager. He brought to bear all his intellectual brilliance, capacity for hard work, political skills and clout in translating policy decisions into action. He was accessible to his staff, no matter how lowly. I recollect that in mid 1960s, I was a mere economist, which in civil service hierarchy, is seven grades below a minister. In a normal bureaucracy, it is rare for such a junior officer to have access to a Permanent Secretary, let alone a minister. But with Tom Mboya, we all had free access to him as long as we had something useful to say.

He was a good listener. He read all the memos, briefs, and policy documents very carefully, asked searching questions, internalised the information, and acted on it. He took a maximum of three days to react to any memo from any officer. But one had to do his homework. Tom Mboya did not tolerate mediocrity. If one did not perform, he had no place in Tom Mboya’s team.

Despite his pro-active management style, Tom Mboya respected separation of civil service from politics. The job of a civil servant was to provide accurate and timely information and professional advice. It was up to him to assess its political feasibility. And if the advice was professionally sound, technically feasible, and economically viable, Tom Mboya invariably accepted it and ensured that it was implemented. For a young professional, this was an exhilarating experience. There is nothing more satisfying to anyone than seeing his ideas translated into national development agenda.

Tom Mboya rewarded merit and hard work. One of the major shortcomings of Kenya’s civil service is its tendency to under-reward professionals. This was still the case in the 1960s. In order to motivate his professional staff, the first thing Tom Mboya did as a Minister for Economic Planning and Development was to ensure that an attractive scheme of service for economists and statisticians was put in place. He also ensured that those among his staff who were competent and dedicated were rewarded with accelerated promotions. By the same token, the lazy and incompetent were weeded out.

And as we celebrate this ‘Evening with Tom Mboya,’ let us recollect a few highlights of his life as a minister. Let us remember his commitment to nation-building and his passion for promoting the dignity of the African and improving the well-being of all Kenyans. Let us remember his many talents and his willingness to put them to the service of his country, his political courage and willingness to take hard economic choices in the face of opposition by vested interests, and his capacity for hard work.
To Tom Mboya, development was nothing other than intelligent and efficient application of effort. In his eulogy during Tom Mboya’s requiem mass, Samuel Ayodo extolled Tom Mboya’s capacity for hard work. That is a befitting legacy of Tom Mboya to all of us today.

Tom Mboya would have been 75 today had his life not been cut short so cruelly in 1969. Those responsible for that dastardly act were cowards. They were incapable of competing with Mboya in the political arena. Had he lived, he would have contributed enormously to this country. But even in the short span of seven years that he served as a minister, his contribution to Kenya, then and now, is unequalled. As a nation, we are still living off the legacy of policies and institutions that Tom Mboya bequeathed us. For that we should be grateful.

*Thank you.*
Moments in the Life of Tom Mboya

Tom Mboya and his wife Pamela receive blessings from Pope John XXIII in Italy in 1962.

Tom Mboya shares a moment with the former President of Tanzania, Julius Kabarage Nyerere and a fellow Pan Africanist.
A EVENI N W I T H T O M M BO Y A

Tom Mboya poses with Indian Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru.

Tom Mboya and his bride at their wedding reception in 1962.

Tom Mboya shares a moment with friends.

Tom Mboya (right) in a press debate in 1969.

Tom Mboya is rushed to hospital after being shot on Government Road in 1969.
Tom Mboya and Kenya’s First President Mzee Jomo Kenyatta share light moment with friends.
THOMAS JOSEPH MBOYA AND POLITICS AS A VOCATION

Chairman, Distinguished Guests, Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen:

The last public position that Thomas Joseph Mboya held was that of the Minister for Economic Planning and Development of the Republic of Kenya. As the current holder of that portfolio in the last 23 months, I stand in awe at the accomplishments of the founding father of my ministry. I am sure that I speak on behalf of all the officers in my ministry when I state that he set a standard of professional excellence that remains a challenge to all of us in Kenya to this day.

Tom Mboya distinguished himself as a leading thinker of development planning both in Africa and the rest of the developing world. He published articles and books on development problems facing Africa that are still relevant today. He defended the development policies that Kenya adopted after independence with intellectual logic and an eloquence that is hard to match. His was always going to be a difficult act to follow. I, therefore, feel at once humbled and greatly honoured to have been asked to speak at this occasion to commemorate the life of one of the most respected statesmen in the history of independent Africa, Thomas Joseph Mboya.

When the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights invited me to speak at this historic occasion, they suggested as the title for my lecture “Tom Mboya: The Ultimate Politician and Role Model for Today’s Politicians.” I accepted the invitation to speak on that title.
But upon reflection, I thought the term “ultimate politician” as opposed to the “ultimate statesman” had the ring of a hard-driven political self-interest that was alien to Tom Mboya’s career as an African nationalist and Kenyan statesman. Ultimate politicians just have only one drive; political power. To them politics is an end in itself. I, therefore, chose the title “Tom J. Mboya and Politics as a Vocation” in the sense that Max Weber uses vocation in a famous essay entitled “Politics as a Vocation”. In this context, vocation refers to a personal calling to serve a cause, a greater cause than oneself; a call that is driven less by what we normally call politics, but by a noble social goal.

This is what I see in the public life of Tom Mboya. A person with a sense of vocation, which motivated him to serve a cause because it was the right thing to do, irrespective of the personal risks involved. This sense of public service on the basis of moral principle is now sadly alien to a large section of Kenya’s political class. It is sad for our country that we now have a young generation for whom this idea is foreign, to whom public service without personal profit sounds outlandish, even cynical.

Mboya had the calling to do everything he could to restore African dignity at a time when colonialists, racists and imperialists – for that is what he called them – had doubts about an African’s entitlement to full human dignity, to the political rights that were enshrined in the constitutions of our colonial rulers, and that Africans knew before colonial rule. Before and after independence, Mboya told us that tribalism stood in the way of this mission. For that, he paid with his life. That is the ultimate price for any leader who believes in a vocation. Abraham Lincoln paid that same ultimate price. So did Mboya’s close friends, the late President John F. Kennedy of the US, and the late Dr Martin Luther King.

**Tom Mboya in the World Stage**

In ‘Julius Caesar’, the conspirators who would assassinate Caesar express their envy of him, and their frustration, in the following words:

> Why, Man, He doth bestride the narrow world like a Colossus  
> And we petty men walk under his huge legs and peep about  
> To find ourselves dishonoured graves

In their personal insecurities, petty men and underlings think that eliminating a political colossus will solve their problems by elevating their stature on the world stage. It never works that way. Brutus was not to rule Rome. He perished in desolation, in a dishonoured grave, hounded by the ghost of the Roman emperor he had murdered.
But to describe Tom Mboya as an African colossus, a statesman who stands above his peers in African history would be just another cliché and would do a great injustice to the finer details of his legacy, which we celebrate this day.

When the world looks at the history of post-independence Africa, it will pay tribute to Tom Mboya for the role he played in making that history. Tom Mboya was the most polished and most articulate spokesman of African nationalism to the rest of the world in the 1950s and 1960s. He explained to the sceptical and the cynical in the West, that the dramatic events unfolding in colonial Kenya under the emergency, the Algerian war of independence, and the struggle against apartheid were one of a kind. Colonial oppression based on white supremacy had pushed Africans to a corner, he said. When African voices were silenced and racial oppression increased, any violent resistance, which arose, should be attributed to the oppressor not the oppressed. By and by the world came to rely on his clarity of thought in interpreting the new Africa. All this before he was thirty years old!

Take the victims of torture in the Mau Mau detention camps here in Kenya. From about 1956 onwards, Mboya used his position as a member of the Legislative Council to forward evidence from detainees to sympathetic Labour MPs like Barbara Castle and William Bottomley. A bond based on trust developed between his activism for nationalism in Kenya, the Labour Party and the anti-colonial movement in the United Kingdom. The colonial authorities in Kenya privately complained that the opposition “Labour Party in Britain will say nothing in Kenya unless they have consulted Tom Mboya”. So they tried as best as they could to destroy his personal integrity and standing with the Labour Party. But they failed.

It was not only colonial brutality in Kenya that concerned him. When the Sharpeville Massacre of 1961 took place, Tom Mboya was among the first African leaders to call for the immediate expulsion of apartheid South Africa from the Commonwealth. He and other African leaders prevailed. South Africa was expelled from the Commonwealth that year.

In considering Tom Mboya’s performance at the international scene in the cause of African nationalism, nothing stands out in those early days as much as his election as chairman of the All-Africa People’s Conference in Accra, Ghana, at the age of only 28. This conference had been called by the first president of independent Ghana, the late Osagyefo, Dr Kwame Nkrumah, to adopt a strategy to accelerate decolonisation in Africa, and to chart the way towards the unity of the new independent African states. This meeting was the precursor to the Organisation of African Unity, which was born five years later in Addis Ababa. It was attended by the “who is who” in African nationalism at the time – Frantz Fanon representing FLN from Senegal, Gamal Abdel Nasser from Egypt, Joshua Nkomo from the then Southern Rhodesia, Patrice Lumumba who was to become
the first prime-minister of independent Congo, Holden Roberto of Angola, and many others. At a very young age, Tom Mboya was already presiding over African nationalist history in the making. Books are still being written on what that conference meant for Africa.

Colin Legum, the dean of the African Press corps at the time, made acquaintance with Mboya and respected his opinions for all time. Mboya had come to the notice of the world. It was after this event that one of Africa’s premier journalists in Britain, Alan Rake, wrote his short biography of Mboya entitled, *Tom Mboya: Young Man of Africa*. Notice that fame came to him. He did not go out to publicise himself, or to demand adoration from sycophants and praise-singers which later became the norm here in Kenya.

Every subject that concerned African peoples whether in Africa, or the diaspora, became an issue of personal concern to him. He made contacts with the late Dr Martin Luther King when he was waging his campaign to register African-Americans to vote in Montgomery Alabama in the late 1950s. He was close to the African-American trade unionist A. Philip Randolph and Jackie Robinson, the first black American to play for a national baseball club in that country. He was a friend of Harry Belafonte and dozens of others. All of them played a major role in the Kenya Student Airlift Programme starting in 1958. In laying the foundation of the trade union movement in Kenya as we know it today, he linked it to the world’s labour movement in the International Confederation of Trade Unions (ICFTU) in Brussels and the AFL-CIO in the United States.

To the ire of the colonialists in Kenya, Mboya exposed their shenanigans to the international press. He wrote for *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*, and also gave interviews to countless regional newspapers in the United States of America. In the political arena, his debating skills in the colonial Legislative Council and in the Parliament of Independent Kenya were widely acknowledged as among the world’s best – even by his opponents. He had a rare intellect - as a writer on Kenyan and African nationhood, African socialism, the problems of economic development and poverty, non-alignment and the international economic relations between ex-colonial territories like Kenya, and the developed world. He was at home in the quietness of his family, nation-building in Kenya, the politics of Africa, or as the first African guest on American television in the NBC programme, “Meet the Press”. As Cicero would have it, he was neither a Kenyan Luo nor an African politician, but a citizen of the world.

All the activities Tom was involved with at the international level were for a cause he believed in, not for money. Again this comes as a big surprise to a generation of Africans who have witnessed politicians fighting the most vicious wars to make money on the backs of poor Africans, at times even stealing money intended for starving refugees. Such people have missed their vocation. And Africa is the poorer for it. What a contrast to the vision Tom Mboya fought for in the 1950s and 1960s.
The Genesis of Personal Commitment

After his studies at Mangu High School, Mboya went in 1948 to study for the job of a Sanitary Inspector at the then Jeans School, now Kenya Institute of Administration (KIA). He had no problems completing and passing the course and was awarded a certificate by the Royal Sanitary Institute.

But there is a story in his autobiography *Freedom and After* which, I believe, explains his life-long commitment to fight for African freedom and human dignity. At one point, as Mboya tells it, he was left by his European boss at the counter to inspect milk from the farms coming into Nairobi. Seeing a black man in charge of the station, a white woman asked in anger “Is there nobody here?” meaning that he was nobody, the European boss was somebody. Fanon once wrote that in colonial societies, whites colonialists looked at Africans as hard as they could but, could not see a human being in them. Here is some evidence of this.

With such humiliation should we be surprised that Mboya took it upon himself to organise the first City Council of Nairobi African Staff Association? In later years, his enemies were to accuse him of accepting western support. If anything, he was offering his time and money free. Here and in later life, nobody paid him to unionise African workers. It came from an inner passion that abhorred colonial indignities African workers suffered in colonial Kenya.

This is the difference between him and your regular power-seeking politician, which I spoke about earlier.

The same applies to his personal sacrifice in founding the Kenya Local Government Workers Union (which caused him to be fired by the City Council), and the Kenya Federation of Labour.

Into Nationalist Politics

If we understand why Africans were pained by the “Is there nobody here” colonial attitudes, then we can understand why in the case of Tom Mboya, politics of unionisation led to politics of liberation from colonial rule. Again in *Freedom and After*, he narrates how during Operation Anvil in April 1954, he and other Africans were required to squat on the street (Victoria Street then), their hands above their heads for hours, while the police picked up Kikuyus for detention. I have already mentioned his work for the sake of those detainees. Giving the Mau Mau Emergency as an excuse, the colonial government did not allow the formation of African political parties until 1955. Even then these were restricted to districts rather than national level.
Upon returning from a year at Ruskin College, Oxford in 1956, Mboya went flat out to organise the Nairobi Peoples Convention Party. Notice that its title echoed that of Nkrumah’s Convention Peoples Party. From the start, it was strategically organised on a national basis, to make it easier to form a nationalist party when the right time came. In the following year, Mboya won the Nairobi African seat for the Legislative Council.

As we reflect on the political achievements of Tom Mboya, tonight, let us recall two significant observations that have never received as much public attention as I have always thought it should.

First, throughout his political life, Tom Mboya was elected to our national legislature by voters who did not come from his ethnic group – the Luo. Secondly, he worked hardest not for his social class which was the new African middle-class that arose after the Second World War, but rather for those less privileged than he was – the working class and those who, for some reason or other, were unable to complete high school or university education. This is the sense of vocation I spoke about at the start of this lecture. Again, there was no money for him in any of these thankless tasks. **No “kitu kidogo”** that was to corrupt our country later. How many of our leaders today can boast of a record of public service like this?

Tom had that rare trait in Kenya politics today – the capacity to appeal to all Kenyans regardless of ethnicity or race. On the eve of our independence from Britain in 1963, Kanu (which was a very different party from what it is today) decided to field Tom for the Nairobi Central seat – as it was then. This was to be the last constituency he represented in Parliament.

Why did Kanu leaders – Kenyatta, Odinga, Gichuru and Mwainga Chokwe – want Mboya to represent a constituency in Nairobi Central? It is because, as they judged rightly, he was the only African politician who could appeal to the Kenya Asian voters. As it turned out, they were right. He won the seat by a wide margin.

Mboya’s capacity to win the confidence of voters from racial and ethnic groups other than his own was already evident in the 1957 and 1961 elections when he won the Nairobi East seat (as it was known then) even though the voters were predominantly Kikuyu. In 1960, Kenyan nationalists brought from Lancaster House, the MacLeod Constitution. It provided for the first election, which brought Kenya an African majority parliament the following year. His opponents in Nairobi East tried to use tribalism to campaign against him. It backfired. Campaigning with the symbol of “Ndege” to symbolise his achievements in sending Kenyan students abroad through airlifts, he won the election with a landslide – 29,000 votes against his opponents 3,000. This landslide
came from those Kikuyu ex-detainees he had defended in the 1950s, and the “mama mbogas” of Eastlands, the Luo, Kamba, Luhya and Mijikenda labourers who knew the record of his work from the days of the Local Government Workers Union, and the KFL.

In view of the ugly tribal conflicts that arose after his assassination in 1969, it is worth remembering that ordinary wananchi in Kariakor, Majengo, Hamza, Bahati, Ofafa Kunguni, Mbotela and Kariobangi had no problem at all voting for him. As always, we see that tribalism was a disease that started from the top of the political leadership. It still is. As we try to rebuild our country from the ashes of decades of dictatorship and tribal conflict, we should never forget this. We as leaders have the capability to unite or divide our people – be they Africans, Asians or Whites, Christian, Hindu or Muslim. Tom chose unity and he showed us the way in word and deed.

Having found it impossible to continue into university education after Mangu, Tom was determined to do as much as he could to ensure that those in similar social circumstances did not suffer his fate. Not that he stopped his education when he left school. After Jeans School and Oxford he read prodigiously. He could hold his own in debates with the best of scholars. His withering on-stage demolition of the anti-Africanisation report by 18 economists at the University College, Nairobi, in 1968 is still remembered as one of finest intellectual debates in Kenyan academic history.

He did not have the insecurity that some politicians have of people better educated than they are. He was not part of the PhD (i.e. Pull Him Down) brigade – that is, those who treat their intellectual betters with fear and who always try to pull them down to the lowest common factor.

That is why he went to great lengths to ensure that Kenyans who lacked university education at home could get it abroad, and especially in the US where he had friends like the Kennedy Foundation and African-American Association. Today, Kenyans seem to respect anyone with money no matter how he or she earned it. Let us never forget that under our best nationalist leaders like Tom Mboya, what you knew mattered more than what you owned. Knowledge, not money, is what pushes a country forward. The sooner we retrace our steps to what Tom taught us the better for Kenya.
By Way of Conclusion

I do not want to leave you with the impression that as a politician, Mboya had no faults. All great statesmen do. For all his greatness, Churchill was compulsive and he meddled unnecessarily with the armed forces. A saint that he was, Gandhi would not hear of partition in India even when it was a reality. Mboya had very little patience with ill-informed, ill-read politicians who loved empty slogans with no substance behind them. He was such a sharp debater that he often left his opponents licking their wounds and made no apologies for it. Yet in spite of all that he served his country well.

That is why this evening we are commemorating one of the saddest moments in the history of post-independence Kenya and indeed of Africa – his death in the hands of an assassin in 1969, at the tender age of 39. For when he was shot, the sound rang around the world. Radio stations in the US broke the news with shock and disbelief. He had just returned from a tour of the US. In the following morning, his assassination was front page news in *The New York Times, The Times of London, Washington Post, Le Monde and the Times of India* - to mention but a few. Television stations around the world extensively covered it. The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) lead item in its international news that day was the following: “One of Africa’s youngest and most brilliant politicians, Mr Tom Mboya of Kenya has been assassinated.” And the BBC has never been accused of hyperbole.

The world mourned his passing. And all those who loved him wept with his young family.

Upholding the dignity of Africans in the world.
Nationalism and nation-building.
Public service without discrimination.
Fighting tribalism and racism at once.
Cultivating one’s intellect as a virtue in its own right.
African development and African socialism.
The benefits of a mixed economy, as he called it.

These were the watchwords of a world statesman who took politics as a calling, not as a business.

“Here was a man take him all in all”
We shall not behold the likes of him again”

–*Hamlet.*
REMARKS

Honourable Ministers, Members of the Diplomatic Corps, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen:

First, let me thank the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights and the family of the late Hon Tom Mboya for organising this historic event that seeks to shed some light on the person of the late Tom Mboya, who was assassinated more than 35 years ago. I am greatly honoured to have been invited to this event, to speak on the trial of Nahashon Njenga, who was convicted for the murder of Tom Mboya.

Ladies and Gentlemen,  
To set the record straight, a few pertinent issues need to be pointed out first:

1. This trial was conducted before the High Court of Kenya, sitting in Nairobi and records can be found to prove that the case was heard.
2. Mr Charles Njonjo was the Attorney-General at the time while the Deputy Director of Public Prosecution was Mr James Karugu.
3. I was the Minister for Health until December of 1969, and had met with the late Mr Mboya that same morning of his assassination on July 5, 1969. I can confidently state that I was one of his closest Cabinet colleagues at the time.
4. The key to the defence by Mr Nahashon Njenga was that he was sent by a “Big Man” to kill Mr Mboya and it was the “Big Man” who should have been called to account, rather than Mr Njenga alone.
5. This ‘Big Man’ may not have been alone but could represent an organisation in Kenya which planned the assassination of Tom Mboya.
6. There have been arguments advanced that Mr Mboya may have been a victim of international rivalry just like Pio Gama Pinto before him. However, most Kenyans believed then, and still do, that his death had more to do with perceived rivalry for the Kenyatta succession, and was an effort to eliminate Mr Mboya from contention.

7. It is noteworthy that Mr Njenga was sentenced to death, despite his defence that a “Big Man” was involved.

8. The issue of the “Big Man” has never been resolved and it is shocking that no efforts seem to have been made by the Attorney-General then, who was in charge of police investigations. This has led to speculation and rumours on the identity of the “Big Man” and questions on whether the sentence was never carried out as the “price” for not revealing the name of the “Big Man”.

**General Comment**

On the questions of political assassinations, starting with Pio Gama Pinto through to Tom Mboya, J. M. Kariuki, Robert Ouko, Bishop Muge and others, I would like to urge the present government to form a Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission in line with the recommendations of the Government’s own task force, to look into all unresolved killings of prominent Kenyans.

I would like to challenge the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights and civil society actors to develop literature addressing these issues for distribution to the masses. There is great need for mass awakening that will result in demands for a TJRC in Kenya, similar to what has been witnessed in Argentina, Chile and other countries around the world.

There are probably more cases that have linkages to assassinations than we know presently, and we can only find out the whole truth through an open inquiry such as would happen with a TJRC.

My last observation is that there is something wrong with our Kenyan society that allows people to get away with assassinations so easily and so blatantly. Assassination is a sign of a malady; a malady which does not tolerate dissent and open competition for power. The time to start thinking of a cure for this terrible psychological disease is now – when there is more political space than ever before.

The work for the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights as far as past injustices and assassinations go, is set out clearly. Unless these matters are resolved, our vision of developing a truly democratic society that is truly transparent and accountable will never be attained.
I thank the KNCHR for its efforts to jumpstart these processes against immense and difficult odds and I urge them not to give up, no matter the obstacles placed in their path to this end. Kenyans are keenly watching, and Kenyans are with you on these and other matters as you speak the truth as the voice of the voiceless.

THANK YOU AND GOD BLESS KENYA
Tom Mboya addresses a conference to free Africa from colonisation
ON HEROES AND UHURU-WORSHIP:  
TOM MBOYA IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

Perhaps the most honoured black man after his death is Dr Martin Luther King, Jr. One of the least honoured black heroes of the twentieth century is Tom Mboya. In spite of all the racism inherent in American society, the United States has risen to salute its fallen son, King. In spite of Kenya’s appreciation of the fruits of independence and freedom, we have not risen to salute our most brilliant campaigner for uhuru – Mboya.

Let me first reminisce about Mboya and King before I focus upon Africa’s short memory of heroism.

In my own memory, our late Tom Mboya and the late Martin Luther King, Jr. have been inextricably linked. I first met Tom Mboya when I was an undergraduate student in England in the 1950s. I first met Martin Luther King when I was a graduate student in the United States in the 1960s. In my young and imaginative years, I thought of Martin King as the nearest thing to a black President of the United States. If America had been a less racist society, King would have stood a chance of becoming President – just as the Rev Jesse Jackson later attempted.

I also thought of Tom Mboya as a possible future President of post-colonial Kenya. Impediments in Tom Mboya’s way were; first, the British – who still colonised Kenya. In those early years, I also thought of Jomo Kenyatta as a probable future rival to Tom Mboya.
Tom Mboya’s skills helped to remove the British impediments to Kenya’s independence. On the international and diplomatic front of Kenya’s struggle for uhuru, Tom Mboya played a bigger role than Mzee Kenyatta. Jomo Kenyatta was, after all, behind bars during most of the final decade of British colonial rule. Tom Mboya fought hard for Kenyatta’s release, as well as for Kenya’s independence.

Contrary to my youthful expectation that Mboya and Kenyatta would become adversaries for the office of President or Prime Minister after independence, the two leaders became partners rather than rivals. The real divisive issue was the prospect of political succession after Kenyatta’s death or retirement. Tom Mboya was killed partly because he was going to be a truly outstanding candidate for the presidency when the time was ripe.

Coincidentally, the main topic which Martin Luther King raised in 1961, when he was told I was a Kenyan, was the topic of Tom Mboya as a leader. Dr King personally knew Tom Mboya and the two leaders seemed to admire each other as comrades-in-arms in the struggle for black dignity. Their success was thus seen as a threat to others. They subsequently paid the supreme price. They were assassinated within a couple of years of each other. King was killed in 1968, while Mboya was shot in 1969.

But a major difference occurred after their respective deaths. Dr Martin Luther King, Jr. was seen as a martyr, and he rose higher and higher in the esteem of his fellow Americans. A museum in his honour was established in Memphis, where he was killed. Congress passed a law declaring his birthday a federal national holiday every year in perpetuity. Every January his famous speech “I have a dream” is repeated on television, radio and at ceremonies to mark his achievements. Many Americans who might have resented or hated Dr King at the time he gave his speech became King’s admirers after his death.

Martin Luther King did not become President of the United States, but he has been honoured much more than most Presidents of that country. Apart from Abraham Lincoln, no former President has been honoured with a separate national public holiday in America. Dr King also won the Nobel Prize for Peace.

What a difference between King’s posthumous rise to prominence and Mboya’s descent to oblivion. King’s country knew how to thank him after death. Mboya’s country drifted into amnesia.

Three Kenyans were crucial in the struggle for uhuru. Jomo Kenyatta as a martyr in prison, Dedan Kimathi as a warrior in the forest and Tom Mboya as the eloquent voice of freedom and
as a political organiser. We honoured Kenyatta for more than a decade as our President after independence, and continue to honour his image on our currency and as our founding father.

We never talked much about Dedan Kimathi for the first 50 years after his death, but we are beginning to recall his contribution. The memory of Tom Mboya has been allowed to sink into oblivion.

It is time we honoured both Tom Mboya and Dedan Kimathi with their images on our currency and on our postage stamps. Perhaps we should have the face of Mboya on our twenty-shilling note and of Dedan Kimathi on our fifty-shilling note – or vice-versa. The United States has the face of George Washington on the one-dollar bill – a particularly great honour since it is the most widely used bill. We could also choose an appropriate note for the face of our founding President, Mzee Jomo Kenyatta.

In addition to having the faces of Mboya, Kimathi and Kenyatta on Kenya’s currency and postage stamps, there should be a whole section of the National Museum of Kenya devoted to Kenya’s struggle for independence. In this section of the museum there should be special emphasis on Mboya and Kimathi, as well as Kenyatta. The voices of Mboya and Kenyatta should constantly be played on tape, alongside any suitable videos of these three heroes.

John Drinkwater once wrote a play entitled Abraham Lincoln. Drinkwater reminded us that appreciation of greatness in others may be a sign of some kind of greatness in ourselves:

“When the high heart we magnify,
And the sure vision celebrate,
And worship greatness passing by,
Ourselves are great.”

Like Tom Mboya and Martin Luther King, Jr., Abraham Lincoln was also assassinated. Dedan Kimathi was executed. Such martyrs now belong to the ages. Let us learn how to salute them.
Vice chancellor of the University of Nairobi, Dr Porter and his wife, visit Tom Mboya and his brother Alphonse at the family home in Lavington.
“An Evening with Tom Mboya” forms part of the advocacy and lobbying strategies on the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission (TJRC) and will be followed by similar functions relating to the political assassinations of such prominent personalities as J. M. Kariuki, Pio Gama Pinto, Robert Ouko, Father Kaiser and others.

Other advocacy activities will target the Shifta War, Kisumu massacres, the 1982 attempted coup, Wagalla Massacres, Mwakenya Movement and the Nyayo house Torture Chamber, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and the clashes, Fera movement, political harassments and cases of extra judicial killings which constitute grave human rights violations and have been perpetrated by or with the knowledge of the state.