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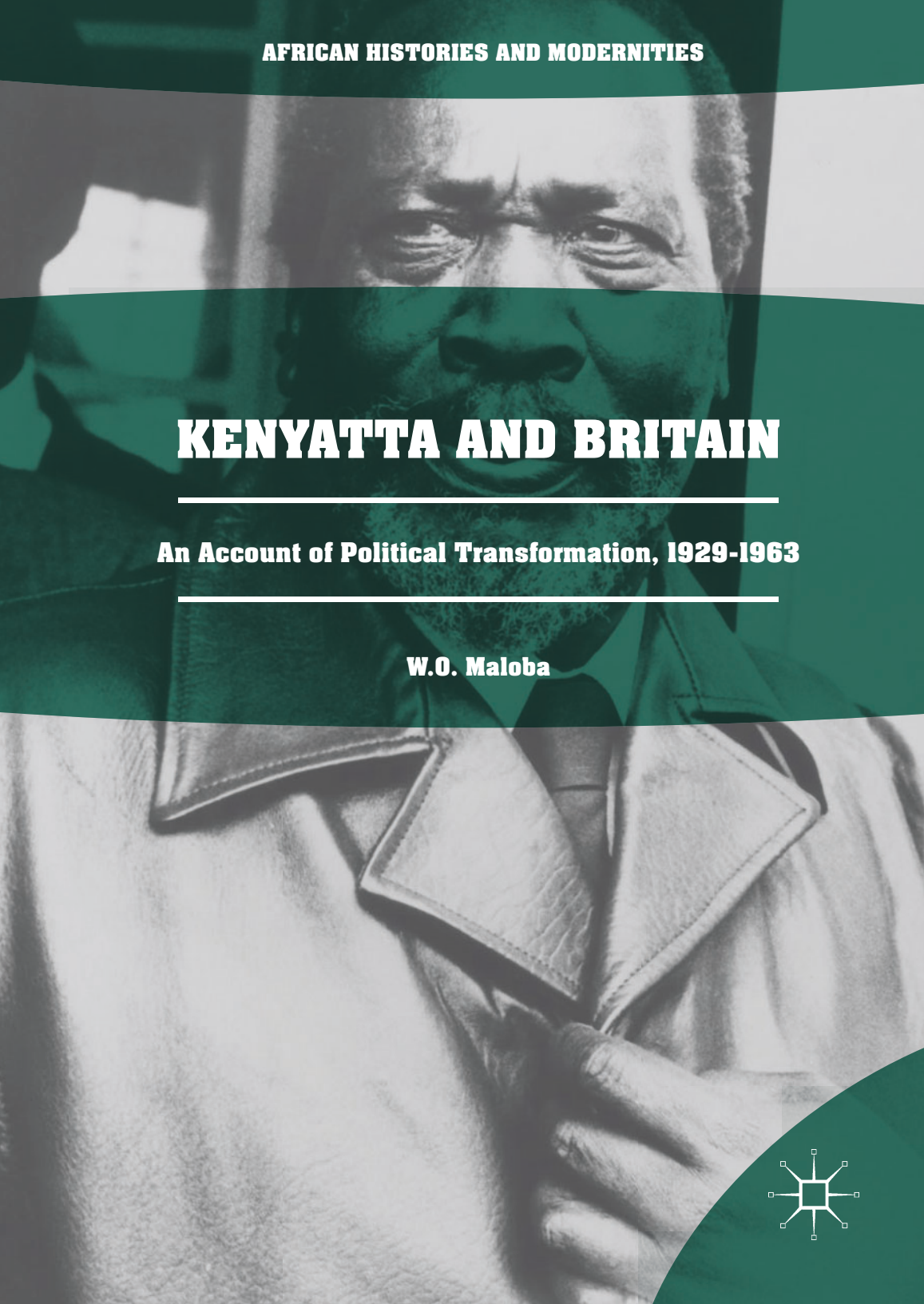

KENYATTA AND BRITAIN

An Account of Political Transformation, 1929-1963

W.O. Maloba

African Histories and Modernities

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An Account of Political Transformation, 1929–1963

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For Carol.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

By all accounts, Jomo Kenyatta was one of the legendary pioneers of modern African nationalism. "In the context of decolonizing Africa," Guy Arnold has written, "Kenyatta's unique claim to fame is that he was the first to arrive: he said things about colonialism that other African nationalists were subsequently to repeat in one form or another ten to 20 years later."[1] A significant contributory factor in the formation of this legend was Kenyatta's extended stay in Britain, first from 1929 to 1930 and then from 1931 to 1946 as an emissary of the Kikuyu Central Association (KCA). He was the first Kenyan African to go to Britain with the express purpose of appealing to the British government on behalf of his people: a political emissary to the center of the empire. These trips to Britain earned Kenyatta a unique status among Africans in Kenya (and elsewhere in the Pan African world). "He was seen as the Kenyan hero who had accepted the people's challenge to go to Britain and confront the colonialist in his own turf. He was admired as the man who spoke the language of the white man to demand the end of colonialism; the man who was brave and bright enough to write letters to the Queen in English."[2] It is necessary to point out that by the 1920s and even 1930s,

[1] Guy Arnold, *Kenyatta and the Politics of Kenya* (London: J.M. Dent and Sons, Ltd. 1974), p. 37.

[2] Duncan Ndegwa, *Walking in Kenyatta's Struggles: My Story* (Nairobi: Kenya Leadership Institute, 2006), p. 254.

W.O. Maloba, *Kenyatta and Britain*, African Histories and Modernities, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-50895-5_1

it was still very rare for colonized Africans to undertake such a trip to Britain. "During these same years," Cedric J. Robinson correctly pointed out, "the British Empire's African and Caribbean subjects were not frequent visitors to the metropole. In actuality, they had much less access to Britain than their Francophone counterparts had to the European continent."[3]

For the white settlers, the colonial government in Kenya and later the Colonial Office, the "name of Jomo Kenyatta aroused anger and fear."[4] This was especially true in the period leading to the Mau Mau peasant revolt in 1952, and then in the period prior to the attainment of political independence in 1963. It is fair to state that "No figure in the whole of British Africa, with the possible exception of Kwame Nkrumah (who had no settler minority to deal with in the Gold Coast) excited among settlers and the colonial authorities alike, so many feelings of anger, denigration and fury as did Kenyatta."[5] This anger and fear led the colonial security agencies, and then the British intelligence services, to spy on Kenyatta throughout his political career. These intelligence services maintained a very detailed account and analysis of Kenyatta's political (and even personal) activities while in Britain, and also in Kenya after he returned to the country in 1946.

Yet, in the period after 1963, Kenyatta emerged as about the most admired post-independent African leader: from the "leader to darkness and death" to the beloved elder statesman hailed in the West. By the end of 1963 the "near unanimous view of the white settlers that he was the Devil was replaced by the equally widespread view that the good old Jomo was the best protector European agriculturalists and businessmen could possibly have." In the past, "the 17 years he had lived in Britain and the fact that he had an English wife had … been held against him." However, in 1963, "when his English wife flew to Nairobi to join him and his two surviving wives at the independence celebrations, everything changed. It was as though he had become every white settler's

[3] Cedric J. Robinson, *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition* (London: Zed Press, 1975), p. 369.

[4] George Delf, *Jomo Kenyatta: Towards the Truth About "The Light of Kenya"* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1975), p. 153.

[5] Arnold, *Kenyatta and the Politics of Kenya*, p. 37.

brother-in law. They saw him as an ugly caterpillar miraculously changed into a butterfly."[6]

It is this political transformation that has puzzled and frustrated Pan Africanist scholars and activists. Equally, scholars of African nationalism have, since 1963, engaged in either outright speculation or incomplete analysis of this transformation. Kenyatta has thus remained one of the most complex political figures in colonial and post-colonial Africa. Within Kenya it is now evident that there is a crucial need for a detailed and informative political biography of Kenyatta. An article entitled "Biographies add rich footnote to our history," which appeared in the Kenyan newspaper *The Standard* (digital news) on October 18, 2014, underscored the critical need for such a study. "But of-course the greatest loss for Kenya and a tremendous disappointment," the article pointed out, "is the lack of a credible memoir on Jomo Kenyatta, our first President. Kenya's history is incomplete without this man, the reverberations of his leadership continue to be felt to date. The fact that we have no first hand record of how the fun loving Londoner named Johnstone converted to be the larger than life Jomo of the 60s is unfortunate. What is the story behind his expansive family that has produced King and Priest and how did it end up owning a significant part of the entity called Kenya? What explains the changed perception of the colonialists who at one point believed he was the 'leader to darkness and death,' but later on became his most voluble supporters? What informed his bitter dispute between him and the erstwhile colleagues including Jaramogi?"[7]

This book, a political biography of Kenyatta, provides answers to many of the questions raised in the article in *The Standard*. Part of the difficulty in writing Kenyatta's political biography lies in combing through the multiple layers of his career. During his reign he published two edited volumes of his speeches: *Harambee: The Prime Minister of Kenya's Speeches, 1963–1964* and *Suffering Without Bitterness: The Founding of the Kenya Nation*.[8] The speeches and writings included in both of these books were selected by senior civil servants to reflect the new image of Kenyatta in post-colonial Kenya. This new image both

[6] Brian Lapping, *End of Empire* (New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 1985), p. 444.

[7] *The Standard* (digital news) October 18, 2014.

[8] Jomo Kenyatta, *Harambee: The Prime Minister of Kenya's Speeches 1963–1964* (Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1964); Jomo Kenyatta, *Suffering Without Bitterness: The Founding of the Kenya Nation* (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1968).

facilitated and relied upon the cult of personality that was cultivated around him from 1963 until his death in 1978. This cult of personality purposefully omitted any linkages that Kenyatta had in the past to radical nationalism and radical Pan Africanism. In both of these edited volumes of his speeches there was hardly any attempt to link Kenyatta to radical Pan Africanism during his days in Britain. He had, at this time, fraternized with radical Pan African activists such as C.L.R. James, George Padmore, and Kwame Nkrumah. Indeed, these volumes contained no articles written by Kenyatta and published in radical periodicals, including the *Negro Worker*. Some of these articles were very critical of British imperialism in Kenya. In 1964, while still Prime Minister, Kenyatta "proclaimed to the people, and all friends" of Kenya, "that the foundation of our future must lie in the theme: *forgive and forget*. There was no point then, and there is no point today," he emphasized, "in dwelling on the past, in stocking fires of revenge, in looking back on the scenes of anguish. Uhuru for Kenya," he concluded, "had to be joyful, not somber; vigorous rather than brooding."[9]

In this retooled image, Kenyatta was portrayed as a man who had always been opposed to radical nationalism and all that it entailed. One of the inescapable consequences of this cult of personality (and retooled image) was to situate Kenyan nationalism (its aims and course) around the political career of Kenyatta. As a result, Kenyan nationalism could not be discussed without privileging his political career. This career was now repackaged with care, to be illustrious, selfless, heroic, and dedicated to the freedom and advancement of all Kenyans. Edited details of this political career came to constitute a large portion of the "revered national political mythology."

This book follows the contours of Kenyatta's complicated political career, from 1929 to 1963. It is a political biography but with a marked difference from similar books. It explores in detail the linkage of both the colonial intelligence services and then the British intelligence services to Kenyatta's political career. As stated, these intelligence services spied on him until his death. His political career was in many ways shaped by this linkage, first as an enemy to be thwarted and derailed, and then as a friend to be protected, supported, and safeguarded. No other leader in colonial and post-colonial Africa was subjected to such close surveillance

[9] Kenyatta, *Suffering Without Bitterness*, p. xv.

over such an extended period by British intelligence services; from aiming to eliminate or at least permanently derail his political career, to becoming his indefectible shield. In large part, this was a major indicator of Kenyatta's political transformation after 1963.

In the period before 1963, Kenyatta's reputation as the "Burning Spear" was, in large measure, based on his political activism in both Kenya and Britain. Activities in Britain included correspondence with the Colonial Office, his writings published in several journals and magazines, and membership of radical political organizations. Here we see the impact of radical Pan African activists on his political reflections (sometimes conclusions) on key issues pertaining to colonialism, and even imperialism.

Spying on Kenyatta had political objectives. To determine the nature of these objectives, this study explored these questions: How extensive and intrusive was this spying? What information was sought and what information was found and recorded? Which colonial and British intelligence agencies sought this information and how was it used? What was the extent of the active cooperation between the colonial and British intelligence services? How did this spying affect Kenya's history? And to what extent did the British get the Kenya they wanted in the end?

In writing this political biography I have been acutely aware of the fact that biographies are indeed part of history. Thus, this book is constructed as a contribution to Kenya's colonial and post-colonial history. Books of biography can, in the current times, be easily accused of advancing the "big man" theory of history at the expense of the common people; that this is writing the history of the rulers and not of the masses. Such criticism therefore sees a complete distinction between so-called new and old history. Yet the complete separation between old and new history has been difficult to maintain in imagination and practice. For indeed, as E.J. Hobsbawm observed, "there is nothing new in choosing to see the world via a microscope rather than a telescope. So long as we accept that we are studying the same cosmos, the choice between microcosm and macrocosm is a matter of selecting appropriate technique. It is significant that more historians find the microscope useful at present, but this does not mean that they reject telescopes as out of date."[10] The value of biography as history is that it offers a window

[10]E.J. Hobsbawm, "The Revival of the Narrative: Some Comments," *Past and Present: A Journal of Historical Studies*, 86, February 1980, p. 7.

through which we can observe and analyze the surrounding historical events. These events had a definite impact on the individual under study. "There is no such a thing as a life lived in isolation. Biography even more than autobiography," Hermione Lee shrewdly observed, "has a duty to the stream as well as to the fish."[11]

The writing of political biography, especially of a major historical figure, poses several challenges. Is there a standard format that must be followed? Should such study "proceed chronologically from cradle to grave"? In her incisive and valuable book on this matter, Lee concluded that indeed there is no standard structure, let alone format, that must be adhered to in the conceptualization and writing of biography. "Biographies can run backwards, can be organized by themes, can choose to dwell on certain key moments in a life, or can inter-cut their narratives with passages from history, literary criticism, description, or autobiography … Total coverage is not an invariable rule."[12]

In very direct and practical ways, biographies do add to a society's historical knowledge. While it is never easy to speculate on the value of historical knowledge to any society, it is still hoped "that it can teach society to make more rational decisions about actions to be taken or policies to be pursued"; that such knowledge can "prove useful in the determination of policy."[13] This is especially true in those situations, as in Kenya, where part (or whole) of this past has been shrouded in secrecy or incomplete knowledge, or has been reworked into mythologies. These mythologies then give rise to social and political beliefs (some decidedly corrosive) that often lead to political decisions being made on the basis of an "imagined past." Here, therefore, the historian or biographer must be rigorous in research and analysis. If not, there is the danger of repeating deliberately carved mythologies as history. "Untruths gather weight by being repeated and can," Lee warned, "congeal into the received version of a life, repeated in biography after biography, until or unless unpicked."[14] The starting point here is that nothing can be more crucial

[11] Hermione Lee, *Biography: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 13.

[12] Lee, *Biography*, p. 8.

[13] Theodore S. Hamerow, *Reflections on History and Historians* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987), p. 209.

[14] Lee, *Biography: A Very Short Introduction*, p. 7.

to the future of any society than knowledge of itself; a willingness to know itself by accounting for its past.

CHAPTER 2

The Two Trips and Petitions to the Center of the Empire

Kenyatta left for London on February 14, 1929. He had been recommended by James Beautah, and chosen by the elders of the Kikuyu Central Association (KCA), "because of his better English," and not due to his burning radicalism at that time. By 1929 "he had been General Secretary of the Kikuyu Central Association for one year."[1] Married with two children, he was cautious and avoided any radical activities or statements that would have led him "to be whisked off into exile like Harry Thuku." Even in his role as editor of the KCA's periodical, *Mwigwithania*, Kenyatta had been very careful in his contributions. "He supported the churches, district commissioners and chiefs; he urged on his fellow Africans the importance of agricultural education and self advancement; and he praised the role of the British Empire."[2]

The trip, as expected, only took place after being authorized by the local colonial government. The Chief Native Commissioner, acting on instructions from the Governor's Office, informed the KCA that

[1] Ann Beck, "Some Observations on Jomo Kenyatta in Britain, 1929–1930," *Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines,* 6, *Cahier*, 22, 1966, p. 309. Beautah was an early and uniquely cosmopolitan Kikuyu nationalist. KCA had initially approached him to travel to London as the Association's emissary. He declined the offer. He "considered his responsibilities towards his family too great," and thus suggested Kenyatta's name. Jeremy Murray-Brown *(Kenyatta,* 1972), states that although "Kenyatta was an affectionate father," he was willing, "unlike Beautah … to sacrifice family to his new calling," p. 110.

[2] Murray-Brown, *Kenyatta* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1972), p. 105.

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the government had "no objection to Mr. Johnstone Kenyatta proceeding to London with a view to placing certain representations before the Secretary of State, who has been informed of this intention."[3]

The immediate impetus for sending Kenyatta to London was the appointment of Sir Edward Grigg as the Governor of Kenya in 1925. He was not only a snob[4] but also ruthlessly pro-settler in his policy formulation. "He quickly fell under the influence of Delamare and his cousin, Lord Francis Scott," and accordingly steered his administration to seek for the "consent of the settlers." At this time, there were also widespread and very worrisome rumors regarding the alleged impending "federation of Britain's three East African territories: Uganda, Kenya, and Tanganyika."[5] To Africans, the federation "was at once suspect." It represented an expansion of settler power with incessant demands on African labor and land, and the enactment of racist laws that stifled and derailed their social and political advancement. The KCA felt very strongly "that the time was ripe for a direct approach to the British officials and members of parliament."[6]

This strategy of sending delegations to the center of the empire would be fervently embraced by many organizations in Africa (and beyond) throughout the colonial period. The adoption of this strategy by many educated Africans was guided by the constant belief that indeed there were two Englands: "the England of the colonies, the settlers and the plantocrats, and the England of Westminister, the anti-slavery societies, and the rebel movements of the Left."[7] Thus, it was important to have a representative at the center of the empire to "put the case" to this other England, seen as more progressive and sympathetic to the plight of the colonized. Further, there was a belief that the quest for major changes in policies in the colonies and especially "pressure for constitutional

[3] London, The National Archives [henceforth TNA], CO 533/395/6, p. 16. This statement is reproduced as part of Kenyatta's Introduction to the pamphlet, *Correspondence between the Kikuyu Central Association and the Colonial Office, 1929–1930.*

[4] Murray-Brown, *Kenyatta*, p. 105.

[5] Murray-Brown, *Kenyatta*, p. 105.

[6] Beck, "Some Observations," p. 11.

[7] Ras Makonnen and Kenneth King, *Pan-Africanism from Within* (Nairobi and New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1973), p. 150.

change could be more effectively exerted at the center than at the colonial periphery."[8]

Kenyatta carried with him two petitions, hoping to present them directly to the Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies. The first was very short and dealt with the limited purpose of appealing for the release of Harry Thuku from imposed "internal exile." Thuku had been in detention, then exile, since 1922. Before this he had been the leader of the East Africa Association (EAA). This was one of the pioneer proto-nationalist movements in Kenya. It was overwhelmingly Kikuyu in composition and leadership. Its initial hope of being able to appeal to "a wider constituency than the Kikuyu" never materialized. The EAA was Nairobi based and concerned itself initially with urban issues, such as reductions in African wages due to depression and poor economic circumstances in the post-World War I period. Its members were the new emerging urban dwellers, mainly in Nairobi, who came to see themselves as best "suited to articulate the grievances of their fellow Africans." This claim to political leadership put the organization on a collision course with both the colonial government and the more conservative Kikuyu Association; an organization formed, led, and dominated by appointed African chiefs in Kikuyuland.

The EAA represented a threat to the supremacy of chiefs in the rural areas. "And so the colonial state chose in its own interest to back the conservative rural society against Thuku and his populist politics. The chiefs and missionaries, whose teaching he criticized, conspired against him and had him arrested and detained."[9] Protests against his detention led to the "worst urban massacre in Kenya at that time." In his absence, still in exile, Thuku was chosen as the leader of the newly formed KCA.

The KCA informed the Colonial Secretary that Harry Thuku, the Association's Chairman, "and a beloved and respected leader of the Kikuyu tribe of this Colony, was deported some years ago by the Government. He is in exile for many years and we beg most earnestly that he may be released and allowed to return to his native land." There were also humanitarian reasons for appealing for his release. He had "an old and blind mother whose only support was her son" now in exile. The blind mother

[8] Makonnen and King, *Pan Africanism From Within*, p. xvii.

[9] W.O. Maloba, *Mau Mau and Kenya: An Analysis of A Peasant Revolt* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1993), p. 47.

had "no means to live and she is waiting to have her son back before she dies."[10] If this request were granted, "all the natives of this Colony will be grateful to His Majesty's Government."

The second petition was really the main one; the reason why Kenyatta had made the trip to Britain. Its historical significance lies in the fact that "it represented in a condensed form the grievances which had been uppermost in the minds of many Kikuyu" for a long time.[11] Further, this petition marked the first time that any group of African nationalists in Kenya had dispatched an emissary to London to make a direct appeal to the British Government for the redress of their grievances against the local colonial government.

What issues were covered in the petition? First and foremost was land. The KCA noted that the "absence of legal title to our lands has exposed some of our people to exploitation and expropriation in favour of non-Natives and it leaves us all without security against further attempts at encroachment on our lands."[12] The Association therefore demanded that, "before anything is done, individual title deeds should be given to every Kikuyu land holder to ensure that no one will take this land away." The KCA proposed that, in future, "no lease should be given to non-Natives inside the kikuyu lands, and that where this has been done in the past, compensation should now be paid to the Githaka-holders who were affected (or to their descendants to-day)."[13] Regarding lands already alienated for European settlement, the KCA proposed that they "should be redeemed if possible and returned to their original owners (or their descendants) who should be paid compensation for the loss they have suffered during the years since the land was taken away." The petition also wanted Africans, specifically the Kikuyu, to be "permitted to plant economic crops like Arabian coffee, etc., on the lands they occupy, without any hindrance."[14]

On African representation in the Legislative and Municipal Councils, the KCA requested that the "Native population should be allowed to elect three Africans and two Europeans as an initial step to represent

[10] TNA, CO 533/395/6, p. 17.
[11] Beck, "Some Observations," p. 313.
[12] TNA, CO 533/395/6, p. 18.
[13] TNA, CO 533/395/6, p. 19.
[14] TNA, CO 533/395/6, p. 19.

Native interests, and that ultimately the number of African representatives in the Legislative Council should predominate."[15] In the meantime, "three African Natives" should be "elected by the Natives to represent their interests in the Municipal Council."

Access to educational institutions had come to be identified as critical to the social advancement of Africans at this time. Thus, the KCA petition recommended that "primary and agricultural domestic education should be made compulsory for native boys and girls." Further, the government should ensure that "sufficient number of Secondary and High Schools" are "established all over Native areas to impart higher education to Native boys who have completed their primary education."[16] To facilitate the pursuit of higher education by Africans, it was crucial that "several Scholarships should be established by the Government for the training of all Natives of ability locally and abroad."[17]

The petition touched on the thorny issue of the *Kipande* system (registration/identity certificate carried by Africans). Such registration, the KCA insisted, restricted "the freedom of movement of the African Native subjects of the Crown and facilitates efforts to keep them in a state of slavery."[18] Still on the labor question, the petition wanted "a guarantee that, provided that Natives pay and produce crops on their own Shambas, they will not be compelled to leave their land and go out to work for Europeans." Also, the petition wanted women to be "exempted from hut and poll-tax."

Specific requests were also made regarding the form and structure of the "Kikuyu Native Administration." In the future the petition wanted the "Kikuyu tribe formed into one compact whole and not divided into separate districts." The KCA requested the establishment of a new position of Paramount Chief for the Kikuyu. This Paramount Chief would be "elected by the Kikuyu people," and would "rule over them in accordance with their tribal customs."[19]

Lastly, the petition touched on what were termed "miscellaneous matters." These included a request "that accused Natives be tried by

[15]TNA, CO 533/395/6, p. 19.
[16]TNA, CO 533/395/6, p. 19.
[17]TNA, CO 533/395/6, p. 19.
[18]TNA, CO 533/395/6, p. 19.
[19]TNA, CO 533/395/6, p. 19.

Native juries." The KCA was also concerned about the repugnant "practice of the non-Natives living openly with the Native women without going through the forms of legal or tribal marriage and thus encouraging immorality among the Natives." The petition wanted this practice "stopped through special legislation against it."

In its conclusion the petition struck a very conciliatory tone affirming loyalty to the Crown and respect for the British Parliament. The destinies of millions of Africans, the petition stated, "are in the hands of His Most Gracious Majesty the King Emperor and in the hands of the British Parliament, both of whom are exercising a sacred trust for the helpless children of this soil, who being unable to stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world, look unto them alone as their protectors."[20]

Kenyatta was not able to meet with the Colonial Secretary. The Governor of Kenya, Sir Edward Grigg, who was also in London at this time, "to try to rescue something of the Closer Union," had sent a telegram to the Colonial Office raising objection to such a meeting. The KCA, according to the Governor, "was not recognized" by the colonial government as the sole representative of the Kikuyu. It was only "one Association among many and it represents only a limited number of persons of one tribe, the Kikuyu." The Governor therefore recommended to the Colonial Office that Kenyatta "should not be received."[21] And he was not. Instead, Kenyatta forwarded the petition to the Colonial Secretary through the Governor, whom he met in London on April 16, 1929. "The petition," writes George Delf, "was not permitted to reach the Colonial Secretary direct from the hands of the colonial, but he eventually saw it by devious means."[22] In spite of this rather "frigid reception," the petition itself received serious consideration at the Colonial Office. It was formally forwarded to the Governor in Kenya to respond to the issues raised in "the Kenyatta memorandum." The "Governor's comments" formed the basis of the official response from the Colonial Secretary communicated to Kenyatta on January 2, 1930.

Regarding the release of Harry Thuku from "internal exile," specifically from "Marsabit to the Kikuyu Reserve," the Colonial Secretary

[20] TNA, CO 533/395/6, p. 20.
[21] TNA, CO 533/422/1, p. 3.
[22] Delf, *Jomo Kenyatta*, p. 66.

noted that, if the "Government of Kenya should find it possible to submit a recommendation in regard to his return, it will receive most careful consideration."[23] As expected, the bulk of the response touched on the issues raised in the KCA's second petition.

On land, the Colonial Secretary stated that "In the Native Lands Trust Bill … not yet passed into law, provision is made for proclaiming in the most formal manner possible that the Native Reserves are set aside for the use and benefit of native tribes forever." Therefore, "no native tribe need have any fear as to the security of the lands now reserved for them, as the Government of Kenya has no desire to take away those lands, nor would His Majesty's Government sanction a reduction in the area reserved, if such a reduction should be proposed."[24] The granting of title deeds to the Kikuyu landowners did not receive favorable consideration. Much would depend on the recommendations of "A Committee … recently appointed by the Governor of Kenya under the chairmanship of the Chief Native Commissioner, for the purpose of enquiring into the principles of Kikuyu customary law of land tenure and formulating rules which can be promulgated under the Native Lands Trust Ordinance, when that measure is enacted."[25] The government appreciated the desire for title deeds, even though the "position is not free from difficulty." The Committee would consider, "among other matters, the possibility of the introduction of documents for recording family or individual holdings."

The Colonial Secretary effectively by-passed the issue of alienated lands, since it was not clear to him "what lands are referred to when it is suggested that Kikuyu lands which have been alienated in freehold should be redeemed and returned to their original holders or descendants, and that compensation should be paid, as also in the case of lands leased in the past to non-natives." He relegated the matter to the future; "enquiries will be made and further consideration will be given to this matter." The Governor had, in his comments to the Colonial Secretary, provided some indication as to why the colonial government was quite reluctant to entertain any discussions over this matter. "Though there is evidence that in the early days of the country considerable areas of land

[23]TNA, CO 533/395/6, p. 20.
[24]TNA, CO 533/395/6, p. 20.
[25]TNA, CO 533/395/6, p. 21.

now claimed by the Kikuyu were alienated to European settlers," the Governor stated, "financial reasons make it impossible in the interests of natives as well as non-natives, to re-open the question of Githaka claims outside the Reserves in the Kiambu-Nairobi area." Alienation of land had taken place a long time ago and, as such, there might arise problems regarding the veracity of the evidence that could be provided seeking for compensation. But, "even if a clear case were made for the restoration of certain areas to the Kikuyu, the compensation to dispossessed persons involved in such a decision would inflict a crushing financial burden on the whole community, native and non-native from which the Kikuyu would suffer as severely as any others."[26]

No specific response was given to the question of the Africans (the Kikuyu), being allowed to grow "valuable crops such as *Arabica* coffee." Instead, the Colonial Secretary referred to a local Commission appointed to investigate this matter and make recommendations on the possibility of "any persons whatever their race" being able to "undertake such cultivation without undue risk of spreading disease." He avoided making any recommendation, "pending the receipt and consideration of the report of the Commission." Likewise, the Colonial Secretary avoided giving any specific response to the question of the representation of Africans in the Legislative and Municipal Councils. "The question of the representation of native interests in the government of Kenya", the Colonial Secretary noted, "is engaging the attention of His Majesty's Government in connection with the report of the Commission on Closer Union in the East African Dependencies."[27]

On the question of African women paying poll tax and hut tax, the Colonial Secretary did not regard this as a major issue since "no women are liable to poll tax." Only a widow who "retains during her life time the control of her late husband's property … might herself have to find money for the tax on the hut in which she lives."[28] However, if the Colonial Secretary were to be notified, "through the proper channel … of cases in which women are paying hut tax … consideration will be given to the question of exemption from the tax, should the absence of means or other circumstances appear to justify this."

[26]TNA, CO 533/395/6, p. 42.
[27]TNA, CO 533/395/6, p. 22.
[28]TNA, CO 533/395/6, p. 22.

A request for the expansion of secondary schools and high schools in the Colony was turned down. The Colonial Secretary felt that "in the present circumstances the establishment of a large number of 'secondary schools' and 'high schools', as contemplated in the petition, would be useless, as there would not be pupils sufficiently qualified for admission to such schools."[29] Makerere College, in Uganda, was equipped to provide advanced training in "arts, medicine, etc.," and it was hoped that promising pupils "would take advantage of the instruction which the college provides." There would be no further increase in the number of scholarships given to Africans for study, since it was "not at present clear that the Kikuyu themselves appreciate the value of such scholarships."

The *Kipande* system was not seen as restricting "the legitimate movement of natives." On the contrary, "the certificates provide a means of identification which are of value to the natives themselves, except those who break the law; and in the case of the latter the certificates are admittedly and designedly a handicap."[30] There was therefore no basis for suggesting that the colonial government intended to keep the Africans "in a state of slavery."

Appointment of a Paramount Chief over the Kikuyu was rejected, as this "would be foreign to the tradition and customs of the Kikuyu." Besides, such an appointment was "in no way calculated to improve their position." The combination of all districts of Kikuyuland "into a single administrative unit is not considered practicable" and thus the existing administrative districts would be maintained.[31]

The establishment of Native juries was also rejected. The Colonial Secretary saw no compelling reason to modify the "practice now obtaining in Kenya," whereby "when a native is brought before a Judge for trial … native assessors" assisted the judge. These assessors gave "valuable advice to the judge as the result of their special experience and their acquaintance with native law and custom and native thought." Thus, "at the present stage of native development in Kenya the substitution of native juries would not make for an improvement in the administration of justice."[32]

[29]TNA, CO 533/395/6, p. 22.
[30]TNA, CO 533/395/6, p. 22.
[31]TNA, CO 533/395/6, p. 22.
[32]TNA, CO 533/395/6, p. 23.

Lastly, in the matter of "non-natives living with native women to whom they are not married," the Colonial Secretary informed Kenyatta that it was "hardly necessary to say that the Government of Kenya and the Secretary of State are in entire agreement with the view that it is desirable to put a stop to immorality of all kinds." Further, the Colonial Secretary knew "that the general opinion of the European community in Kenya is strongly against the practice, and the information at his disposal leads him to believe that happily the practice is comparatively uncommon." Were the practice to become common, the Colonial Secretary "would be compelled to consider whether action could be taken by the Government in the matter." In such matters, however, public opinion (African and European) was seen as being more effective than "the introduction of special legislation, which would inevitably be difficult to enforce."[33]

Kenyatta was expected to send to the KCA "a copy of this reply to their petitions." The Governor of Kenya was also instructed to "arrange for a copy to be communicated to the Headquarters of the Association."

Still in London, Kenyatta responded to the reply from the Colonial Secretary on April 15, 1930. He was gracious and expressed his thanks "for the very full and courteous consideration that has been given to the two petitions submitted by" the KCA. He expressed his gratitude for those requests granted, which were not many, and on the others he provided more information or demonstrated how the Africans would continue to be adversely affected.

As expected, the bulk of Kenyatta's response dealt with the issue of land. There was the problem of the scarcity of land, and then the insecurity felt by Kikuyu landholders due to lack of title deeds to their land holdings. Linked to both issues was the demand for a return of alienated lands and/or adequate compensation. He pointed out to the Colonial Secretary that "there was no single question about which my people are so anxious as their getting title deeds. It is more important and urgent to them than any other question."[34] What measure would make the Kikuyu feel safe at this time on matters pertaining to land? Kenyatta's response suggested a written guarantee from the Crown: "My tribe would feel safe if the external boundaries of their Reserve and the security of the land

[33]TNA, CO 533/395/6, p. 23.

[34]TNA, CO 533/395/6, p. 24.

within those boundaries were guaranteed directly by the King." It was hoped that this guarantee could be locally enforced and supervised by "an independent Protector answerable only to Your Lordship and one whom we could, therefore, trust, and who could get to know us and our language and customs and who could, when our external boundaries are rendered safe, discuss with our tribe new arrangements and the issue of title deeds for lands within our boundaries."[35]

Kenyatta informed the Colonial Secretary that many Kikuyu people had been rendered landless as a direct result of land alienation for European settlement. "There are hundreds of Kikuyu wandering about Kenya to-day, landless and homeless, because of their being evicted from their lands in the past without compensation whatsoever. Some of the land so taken from us is now held on freehold tenure and much of the remainder is on 999 year leases, which is much the same thing from our point of view."[36] What the Kikuyu now demanded was the return of this alienated land "or adequate compensation." On a more hopeful note, Kenyatta felt that his people would be satisfied "to know that the question of the growing of Arabica coffee by any persons, whatever their race (given freedom from risk of spreading disease), is going to receive Your Lordship's consideration."

On education, Kenyatta's response again reaffirmed the value of establishing and then funding several high schools and secondary schools in "the country of the Kikuyu (and other tribes)." The establishment of such schools in Kenya, as opposed to "the existence of a school in a distant protectorate," would arouse the interest of "Kikuyu boys and girls … for advanced education in our own country." Kenyatta also pointed out that Africans in Kenya do not get their "fair share of money for education from the public funds. We provide large amounts from voluntary taxation towards building our own schools."[37]

The current system of choosing representatives of African interests in the Legislative and Executive Councils was patently unfair on several grounds. First, "all Europeans who have so far been selected by the Kenya Government as special representatives of native interests have failed on many occasions to advance or support our interests on issues

[35]TNA, CO 533/395/6, p. 24.
[36]TNA, CO 533/395/6, p. 24.
[37]TNA, CO 533/395/6, p. 25.

when we both needed or expected their support." Second, Africans had "no voice at all in the selection of our representatives." Further, these European representatives did not hold any conferences with Africans "as to what they are to say on our behalf." The remedy to this problem was to allow Africans to at least "suggest a list of the names of representatives whom we would choose to support our interests on the Legislative and Executive Councils."[38]

Labor, and especially the *Kipande* system, remained painfully contentious. "I am afraid," Kenyatta submitted to the Colonial Secretary, "that my people could not be persuaded that the registration system has been applied for any other reason than to oppress them." Therefore, "it need not be hoped that the native tribes of Kenya will ever agree that the taking of all male finger prints, and that the imposition of punishment under the criminal law for failure to carry certificates, are applied by the Kenya Government for their good or their benefit."[39] The KCA wanted "permission to advance valid ground for modification of the system." The current implementation of the system inflicted racial humiliation on the Africans. As a result, "any African is liable to be challenged by the police to produce his certificate if he is outside of his Native Reserve. If he walks out after dark he may always be called on to produce it. If he has not got it on him he is fined before the Courts. This procedure is enforced only against Africans in Kenya, which His Majesty's Government has declared to be primarily an African territory."[40]

[38]TNA, CO 533/395/6, p. 25.

[39]TNA, CO 533/395/6, p. 25.

[40]TNA, CO 533/395/6, p. 25. This is in reference to the *Devonshire White Paper,* issued in 1923. This document stated in part that: "Primarily, Kenya is an African territory, and His Majesty's Government think it necessary definitely to record their considered opinion that the interests of the African natives must be paramount, and that if, and when, those interests and the interests of the immigrant races should conflict, the former should prevail." Nonetheless, the interests of the white settlers and other non-African immigrants were still protected under special dispensations allowed under this document. "Obviously the interests of the other communities, European, Indian or Arab, must severally be safeguarded. Whatever the circumstances in which members of these communities have entered Kenya, there will be no drastic action or reversal of measures already introduced, such as may have been contemplated in some quarters, the result of which might be to destroy or impair the existing interests of those who have already settled in Kenya." The British Government was however uncompromising on one issue. "But in the administration of Kenya His Majesty's Government regard themselves as exercising a trust on behalf of the African population, and they are unable to delegate this trust, the object of which may be defined as the protection and advancement of the native races … This paramount

Kenyatta then posed a provocative rhetorical question. "May I respectfully submit", he stated, "that if such police methods were applied to Englishmen in England they would protest against them as imposing a 'state of slavery'?"

The payment of taxes by African women (mainly widows) was seen by the KCA as a clear case of racial injustice. Kenyatta reminded the Colonial Secretary that European women "do not pay one cent of direct taxation." This appeared to the Africans in Kenya as "entirely unfair and oppressive." The fact that "African widows should have to pay direct taxation, while all other women in the Colony escape, appears to us", Kenyatta emphasized, "to be an unjust piece of discrimination to the detriment of the most helpless section of the combined populations in the Colony."[41] He appealed to the Colonial Secretary to consider "total exemption for widows irrespective of proof of absence of means." Only such exemption will ensure that "African women will no longer be treated more harshly in the matter of direct taxation than are the women of other races in the Colony."

Kenyatta insisted that, contrary to the advice provided by the colonial government, the institution of a "Paramount Chief" was indeed part of the traditions and customs of the Kikuyu. "When I was a young boy," he recalled, "there were two chiefs, paramount among their respective portions of the Kikuyu people between Ngong and Mount Kenya. These were Wangombe and Waiyaki." The KCA still held the position that "it would be a marked advantage to appoint an educated paramount Chief who enjoyed the people's confidence." Before refusing to consider the merits of this matter, it would be useful "to ascertain the general attitude of the Kikuyu tribe to this proposal." Lastly, Kenyatta again appealed for the establishment of the office of "a friend and protector appointed by His Majesty, the King, who could look after our welfare and remain among us sufficiently long to learn our language and customs and who

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duty of trusteeship will continue, as in the past, to be carried out under the Secretary of State for the Colonies by the agents of the Imperial Government, and by them alone." See *The Devonshire White Paper* (Cmd. 1922). For the cited extract, see *Future Policy in Regard to Eastern Africa* (Cmd. 2904), presented by the Secretary of State for the Colonies to Parliament by Command of His Majesty, July, 1927.

[41] TNA, CO 533/395/6, p. 26.

would defend us from injustice and oppression."[42] He reminded the Colonial Secretary that the Kikuyu, and Africans in general, had "for the last 29 years paid great sums in taxes which have been largely spent for the benefit of others without our knowledge or consent."

This was an elaborate, thoughtful, and reasoned response. In many areas it was quite courageous. But this time the reply from the Colonial Office was very brief. A.C.C. Parkinson, writing on behalf of Lord Passfield, the Colonial Secretary, informed Kenyatta that his detailed response had been forwarded to "the Governor of Kenya for his consideration." In future, it was expected that "any further correspondence on these matters should pass through the proper channels in the Colony." After such pointed instruction Kenyatta was, nonetheless, "assured that all reasonable statements of complaints and grievances which are felt by any sections of the Kikuyu will receive careful attention of the Government of Kenya, and that the Secretary of State will be fully informed of the welfare of the Kikuyu, in which he is deeply concerned."[43]

In practical terms, this was as far as Kenyatta could go in securing any form of response or consideration from the Colonial Office. Although not received by the Colonial Secretary, he could find some comfort in the fact that the Governor of Kenya had been required, in essence, to respond to his petitions through "comments and observations" communicated to the Colonial Office. Kenyatta also managed to meet with Dr. Shiels, the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies. Dr. Shiels met with Kenyatta "not officially, but by a pre-arranged accident," on January 23, 1930.[44] He was the highest-ranking official from the Colonial Office that Kenyatta met on his first and second trips to Britain. He was never received in the Colonial Office.

Over tea at the House of Commons, Dr. Shiels gave Kenyatta some advice on the nature of political leadership. "Popularity", he instructed Kenyatta, "is not the most important thing, but doing the best for your people is." Dr. Shiels wanted Kenyatta to remain vigilant in controlling the behavior of younger members of his "Association and tribe." At all costs, they must resist the temptation to resort to violence. "Under all

[42]TNA, CO 533/395/6, p. 26.
[43]TNA, CO 533/395/6, p. 26.
[44]TNA, CO 533/395/6, p. 3.

circumstances, advise them to preserve law and order. Supposing that it were the case at any time that you or your people thought that some high official of Government was not sympathetic enough with your troubles and aspirations, even then you must never allow yourselves to contemplate doing anything violent. You only play into the hands of your enemies by indulging in violence."[45] He reminded Kenyatta that his people (the Kikuyu) had many friends in Britain. The Kikuyu were in turn expected to "show their loyalty to their friends here by discarding violent methods when they are trying to get rid of any of their troubles."

Dr. Shiels noted with approval the nature of the petition submitted to the Colonial Secretary. It "was moderate and quite constitutional, and so would have a great deal more effect with the Secretary of State and the House of Commons than anything violent in writing or action—which could only make it much harder for you to get any reforms you wish to see."[46] There was a brief discussion about female circumcision. Dr. Shiels, being a medical doctor, found this "native custom" troubling from a medical point of view since, "when operations are performed like this one on Kikuyu girls, a lot of scar tissue is the result. It offers resistance to the passage of the baby at child-birth and makes labour slow and difficult." While there was merit in being proud of one's culture, Dr. Shiels told Kenyatta, it was important to ensure that such attachment did not bring discredit either to the culture or to the people identified with it. Dr. Shiels was particularly concerned about reports of young men "breaking up the services" of European-led churches in Kikuyuland as part of the struggle over female circumcision. "In many quarters" in Britain, he informed Kenyatta, "great interest is taken in the work of missionaries in Africa, and if your young men drive the missionaries to take sides against you, because of the disturbance of their services, you will lose much sympathy over here."[47] Dr. Shiels reminded Kenyatta that the British Government "can command great forces if it becomes necessary to deal with any unconstitutional action." For future reference, it was important for Kenyatta to realize that, "Governments never like to appear to be giving reforms because of agitation."

[45]TNA, CO 533/395/6, p. 38.
[46]TNA, CO 533/395/6, p. 40.
[47]TNA, CO 533/395/6, p. 40.

Under separate cover, Dr. Shiels had communicated with the Governor of Kenya about his meeting with Kenyatta. In his response the Governor expressed his displeasure at this meeting. Kenyatta, the Governor stated, was "a harmless individual when left alone," and he had "no influence or importance with his tribe."[48] The Governor regarded Kenyatta as "a tool of men who are not friendly to this or any other form of European government." Further, the Governor did not think that Kenyatta or any member of the KCA was capable of drafting the kind of petition that had been delivered to the Colonial Office. "The petition which he took home was quite evidently drafted by a European. Petitions written by the Kikuyu themselves are very different in character and bear no resemblance at all to the language of the petition which Kenyatta took home."[49] The Governor also asserted, without proof, "that Kenyatta and other members of his Association have been used by European and Indian malcontents here and elsewhere to further their own ends." The Governor regretted that Kenyatta had received much notice in Britain. This was "really … ridiculous."

The explanation for the Governor's dismissal of the importance of Kenyatta and his trip to Britain was rooted in the fear of the colonial government and the settlers toward any stirrings of African nationalist activism. Specifically, the fear of the colonial administration was that this trip to Britain would inevitably propel Kenyatta to a powerful and more influential position in the colony. "I am afraid", the Governor informed Dr. Shiels, "the inevitable result will be that the reply, or some portions of it will be published in the press, that the fact of your interview with Kenyatta will become known, and that he will suddenly leap into a position of importance in the eyes of his people which he has never held before."[50]

It would be harsh, unfounded, and profoundly uncharitable to regard Kenyatta's trip as having been a waste of time and resources. His two petitions had been received and responded to by the Colonial Secretary. This was an unprecedented development in Kenya's colonial history. Kenyatta had also met with Dr. Shiels. To be sure, in both cases he was unable to secure the positive responses that would have brought

[48]TNA, CO 533/395/6, p. 72.
[49]TNA, CO 533/395/6, p. 73.
[50]TNA, CO 533/395/6, p. 75.

satisfaction to him and his Association. Still, he could claim moral and even procedural victory. He had been heard at the center of the empire and the plight of his people was no longer a local secret.

Kenyatta's other assignment in Britain was to seek audience with the leaders of the Church of Scotland based in Edinburgh (the Foreign Mission Council of the Church of Scotland). The main agenda of such a meeting concerned the heightened tensions in Kikuyuland between the Church of Scotland Mission (CSM), based at Kikuyu, and the KCA over the matter of female circumcision. The head of the CSM in Kenya was a long-serving Scottish missionary named Dr. Arthur. Adamant and uncompromising over this issue, Dr. Arthur came to be seen as a symbol of Western cultural arrogance; a champion of cultural (religious) imperialism.

By the time Kenyatta left for London in 1929, there were very "strained relations between the Scottish Church and the KCA," at the center of which were the difficult questions of Africans' adjustment to colonial economics and of Western cultural demands and expectations. Did Africans have to completely repudiate their pre-colonial culture in order to gain entry to Western cultural tradition? In its confrontation with the CSM, the KCA sought two outcomes that, on the surface and at the given period, seemed contradictory. The KCA "strove for the economic and social advancement of the Kikuyu and contributed thereby to the promotion of Western customs." But this fact also "led Kikuyu elders to stress more vigorously the value of the ancient tribal customs … the preservation of the Kikuyu tribal heritage … It is understandable, therefore, that Dr. Arthur's attitude toward circumcision led to the tense relations which prevailed between the KCA and the CSM in 1929."[51]

[51] Beck, "Some Observations," p. 312. Also see Kenyatta's observations on this controversy in his book, *Facing Mount Kenya* (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1962). "In 1929, after several attempts to break down the custom, the Church of Scotland Mission in Gikuyu issued an order demanding that all their followers and those who wish their children to attend schools should pledge themselves that they will not in any way adhere to or support this custom, and that they will not let their children undergo the initiation rite. This raised a great controversy between missionaries and the Gikuyu. The matter was taken up seriously by both educated and uneducated Gikuyu. Children of those who did not denounce the custom were debarred from attending the missionary schools. People petitioned the Government and educational authorities … The ban on children attending the schools was lifted, but the missionaries maintained that teachers must be only those who had denounced the custom, for they hoped that teachers with this qualification would be

The meeting with the Foreign Mission Council of the Church of Scotland was arranged with the help of A.R. Barlow, "a member of the Scottish Mission at Kikuyu" who was also in London at this time. Barlow later wrote a detailed memo to Dr. Arthur in Kenya about his encounter with Kenyatta in London and subsequent meeting with the Foreign Mission Council. Barlow's memo, discussed in detail by Ann Beck, also highlighted Kenyatta's personal adjustment to his new social circumstances in Britain.[52] Kenyatta, according to Barlow, lived in a modest way and conducted himself with integrity. He had impressive mastery of the English language and also had an unassuming attitude with pleasant manners.[53] Barlow also reported on Kenyatta's success in managing to meet Dr. Shiels and other attempts to see powerful officials; "Kenyatta had not wasted his time … he had been pretty busy in England." Among Kenyatta's main contacts and supporters in London, Barlow reported, was McGregor Ross, "former director of Public Works in Kenya who had retired to London" after serious disagreement with powerful settlers in Kenya.

On May 30, 1930 in Edinburgh, Scotland, Kenyatta met with twelve members of the powerful Foreign Mission Council. These members were, at this time, very disturbed by reports indicating that the KCA was behind the heightened tension between the CSM and the Kikuyu over the issue of female circumcision. Kenyatta denied this, saying "that the Kikuyu Central Association was not against the Church since most of their members were Christians." The current crisis was the due to the inflexibility of the CSM over the issue of female circumcision. "The Church was too keen to abolish the custom of female circumcision at once," whereas the KCA advocated for a gradual approach through

able to mould the children in the way favourable to missionary attitude. People were indignant about this decision and at once demanded the right to establish their own schools where they could teach their children without interference with the custom. The cry for schools was raised high, and the result was the foundation of Gikuyu independent schools and Kareng'a schools. These schools are entirely free from missionary influence, both educational and religious," pp. 125–126.

[52] See Beck, "Some Observations," pp. 315–327.

[53] Beck, "Some Observations," p. 317.

education; an approach that would eventually bring an end to this custom which now divided the CSM and the KCA and many Kikuyu people.[54]

This meeting did not resolve the controversial issue of female circumcision. The Foreign Mission Council remained opposed to this "terrible custom" among the Kikuyu. Still, it was hoped that the CSM and the KCA would continue to interact and discuss this, and similar issues, provided the KCA "would not encourage their members to keep up a custom which the Church condemned."

Barlow's overall impression of Kenyatta, forwarded to Dr. Arthur in Kenya, was fairly favorable. His dilemma, to which he freely admitted, was that he was "attracted by Kenyatta while at the same time being afraid of him." In Kenyatta the Kikuyu had found "an able champion who had opened doors through which many might pass in the future."[55]

Barlow was impressed with Kenyatta's ability to "mix on equal terms with Europeans and hold his end up in spite of all of his handicaps." Many of the British people who had come in contact with him, agreed with the view that "Kenyatta will never make a fanatic."[56] Still, many of these British people felt that they had not been able to see his "inner thoughts," that there was a part of him they had been unable to see and, therefore, they could not, with certainty, say that they "knew him." The Foreign Mission Council was "impressed and, perhaps, also perturbed by the encounter with Kenyatta." He represented to the members of the Council, "a new type of young African." Barlow was left wondering whether "it was too late" for the Church "to establish good relations with the Kikuyu political movement through Kenyatta."[57]

The question of Kenyatta's inner thoughts during this trip, and in his subsequent political activism, came to refer to his political ideological orientation. Both Dr. Shiels and the Governor of Kenya (and the local European settlers in Kenya and their supporters) were very concerned about Kenyatta's political beliefs. Much of this concern was, at this time, due to the trip that Kenyatta had made to the Soviet Union in the fall of 1929. According to the Governor, Kenyatta had "attended a Communist

[54] Beck, "Some Observations," p. 321.

[55] Beck, "Some Observations," p. 325.

[56] Beck, "Some Observations," p. 325 (citing Norman Leys).

[57] Beck, "Some Observations," p. 326.

Conference in Paris not very long ago and was afterwards taken, presumably with Communist funds, to Moscow."[58] The Governor pointed out to Dr. Shiels that Kenyatta did not have funds from Kenya "which would have enabled him to make a journey of that kind." In light of this, the Governor strongly disputed McGregor Ross's assertion that "Kenyatta had nothing to do with Communists."

In his meeting with Kenyatta, Dr. Shiels had probed him for his impressions of Russia (the Soviet Union) after his visit. "How did Kenyatta like being in Russia?" In response, Kenyatta stated that his visit to Russia had "been for a short time." How about the country? "It was interesting," Kenyatta replied, but that the "towns were not as good as in France and Germany and England, and the people in the streets looked poorer."[59]

As expected, Barlow was also very interested in Kenyatta's excursion through Russia (and to a lesser extent, continental Europe). In his report to Dr. Arthur, Barlow stated that he had refrained from seeking too many micro details about the trip from Kenyatta. He did not regard himself, nor wish to be regarded, as a "detective agent." He was, however, very pleased with the fact that Kenyatta "was not a bit reluctant to tell him all he might want to know" about the trip.[60] This seemed to indicate to him that Kenyatta was not, on this point, withholding any pertinent information. As an example, Barlow noted that Kenyatta voluntarily told him that "he had not asked to be supplied with literature from Russia but he feared that upon his return to Kenya, he might receive communication from there." The conclusion arrived at by Barlow was that Kenyatta's trip to Russia "was inspired by non-political motives … he did not support the rumours about Kenyatta's possible Communist connections and tried to avoid this issue in his letter to Dr. Arthur."[61] In London, McGregor Ross was well aware of the political repercussions emanating from this trip to the Soviet Union. He confessed to Barlow that "Kenyatta's travels between August and October 1929 had cost him the support of some of his English supporters."[62]

[58] TNA, CO 533/395/6, p. 73.
[59] TNA, CO 533/395/6, p. 37.
[60] Beck, "Some Observations," p. 318.
[61] Beck, "Some Observations," p. 319.
[62] Beck, "Some Observations," p. 319.

On September 30, 1930, Kenyatta returned to Kenya. He had been away for more than a year, during which time he had "experienced the freedoms in Europe" that were certainly not available to him as a colonized African in Kenya. He had traveled extensively in Europe and even stayed in the Soviet Union at a time when such experiences were not readily available to the vast majority of Europeans.

In his dealings with whites in Britain and other European countries, Kenyatta had been treated with the kind of respect that he would never be accorded in Kenya. Upon his return he realized that he was expected to assume the "obedient native" posture in his dealings with the colonial government, settlers, and even missionaries. This reality, now more than ever, led to much personal pain and frustration at his confining social circumstances. It would be wrong to underestimate the potency of this factor in Kenyatta's calculation to return to Britain only a few months after coming back to Kenya.

Kenyatta was also frustrated in his dealings with Dr. Arthur of the CSM. By 1930 Dr. Arthur "represented African interests in the Legislative Council," but he remained staunchly opposed to female circumcision and looked on the KCA as a key adversary. As a result, he was widely known to be "a fanatical opponent of the KCA." Dr. Arthur wanted Kenyatta, upon his return, to "reconcile himself with the CSM." But this had to be "on Dr. Arthur's terms," which in essence meant denouncing and then renouncing the political positions of the KCA and its support of female circumcision. This did not happen. Kenyatta rejected and resented "Dr. Arthur's paternalism," which continued to treat Africans in a condescending manner.

In Kikuyuland, Kenyatta's "prestige stood high as the one who had been to London and interviewed the greatest in the land—and Kenyatta was not shy in stating what he had done."[63] But even this towering prestige was soon challenged by the return of Harry Thuku from detention in January 1931. Thuku was the hero of the nationalist agitation of the 1920s, and was still "universally recognized as the returning hero." At this time, Thuku was the "real 'king of the Kikuyu'," and his prestige and authority in Kikuyu politics was certainly higher than Kenyatta's. This would change with time, and Thuku would end up being reviled as a collaborator with the colonial government and a resolute opponent

[63] Murray-Brown, *Kenyatta*, p. 149.

of the Mau Mau and radical African nationalism.[64] Yet, in 1931, as Kenyatta surveyed the political landscape he saw his own position diminished by the return of Thuku. It is therefore not surprising that Kenyatta eagerly embraced the opportunity to go back to Britain as an emissary of the KCA. Initially, the KCA had wanted Thuku to go to London as its emissary. The colonial government was, however, unwilling to grant permission to Thuku "to leave Kenya so soon after his release from detention."

What prompted the KCA to once again find it necessary to dispatch a delegation to London were the Association's misgivings about the continuing debates regarding the Closer Union of Britain's colonies in East Africa: Kenya, Uganda, and Tanganyika. Since 1924 there had been discussions, and even debates, within the Colonial Office over the question of drawing these three colonies into a more closely administered political unit due to perceived similarities in their "interests and problems." Indeed, the appointment of Sir Edward Grigg as Governor in 1925 was supposed to signal the start of the implementation of this objective. It was Grigg's understanding that he would be the first Governor-General of East Africa, with the two governors reporting to him. This did not happen. Instead, several Commissions appointed by the Colonial Office reviewed and revisited the matter.

In 1927 the Colonial Office published a policy document entitled, *Future Policy in regard to Eastern Africa*.[65] This document called for another Commission of Enquiry to be sent to East and Central Africa to investigate further the question of the Closer Union of the East African Territories. The result was the Hilton Young Commission, which visited Kenya in 1928 and took evidence from a wide range of African organizations and individuals. Of these many African organizations, the KCA presented the most detailed list of complaints against the colonial

[64] See Maloba, *Mau Mau and Kenya*, pp. 50–51. "When Thuku returned, people noticed that he was different in temperament and commitment to politics of agitation … He continued to look at himself as the pioneer nationalist, the natural leader, and resented opposition from his colleagues." What later became evident is that while in detention, in which he had not suffered extensively, Thuku "had been 'converted' … and became a staunch supporter of the government before and during the Mau Mau revolt. By 1933, however, points of dispute between Thuku and the KCA led to a split in the association and in 1935 Thuku formed Kikuyu Provincial Association (KPA), an exceedingly conservative and pro-government organization."

[65] *Future Policy in Regard to Eastern Africa*. Cmd. 2904 (London: HMSO, 1927).

government. It called for African representation in the Legislative Council, abolition of the *Kipande* system, and an increase in government spending on African education and general welfare.[66] The findings of the Hilton Young Commission did not lead to the desired Closer Union. The Commission's findings again ruled out any possibility of "white supremacy" in the governing of the Colony, and sought to reassert the conclusions of the Devonshire White Paper of 1923. According to the Commission, the most desirable political outcome in all of the East Africa Territories would be "a partnership in government between Africans and settlers." But until such "partnership was achieved, the British Government should remain firmly in control of the situation."[67]

Clearly, the matter had not been resolved when, under Lord Passifield as the Colonial Secretary, a new Joint Committee (of both houses of Parliament in Britain), was appointed in 1930 to revisit the question of the Closer Union. Seated in London, the Joint Committee accepted to hear testimony from the affected persons in the Territories, this included Africans. In Kenya, the colonial government chose prominent chiefs to go to London as representatives of the Africans in the Colony.

The KCA did not agree with the colonial government's selection of mainly chiefs to present the Africans' position to the Joint Committee in London. There was a very strong feeling within the organization that chiefs, who included Chief Koinange, could not possibly be seen as true representatives of the Africans since they were appointees of the colonial government and would most likely adhere to the official position in such an important matter. Kenyatta and Mockerie were selected to present the "genuine African position" to the Joint Committee. Mockerie, a Kikuyu schoolteacher, had been approached by the KCA to accompany Kenyatta to London, and "the offer of a free trip to England, even though it might be a political goose errand, was a tempting prospect for any African."[68] Mockerie was additionally enticed by the prospect of pursuing further education while in Britain. Kenyatta and Mockerie set off for London in April, 1931.

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[66] Robert M. Maxon, "The Years of Revolutionary Advance, 1920–1929," in *A Modern History of Kenya, 1895–1980*, ed. William R. Ochieng (London: Evans Brothers, 1989), p. 100.

[67] Gideon S. Were and Derek A. Wilson, *East Africa through a Thousand Years* (New York, NY: Africana Publishing Company, 1970), p. 231.

[68] Murray-Brown, *Kenyatta*, p. 150.

In Nairobi the Governor doubted the value of the contributions by African delegates. None of the "native witnesses", he wrote to the Colonial Office, "have the remotest conception of the issues with which that Committee is concerned with but all seem to regard the invitation to give evidence as a heaven-sent opportunity to voice particular aspirations or to air local grievances."[69] According to the colonial government, the selection of "three official witnesses" had "aroused a considerable amount of envy, hatred and malice among aspirants who were not chosen and among tribes who were not represented."

Regarding the separate Kenyatta delegation to London, the Governor informed the Colonial Office that this had been undertaken "in spite all advice to the contrary." The KCA had refused to forward its memorandum through the proper channels, insisting on sending a delegation. The KCA emissaries had, nonetheless, been warned that, "if they insisted on going home uninvited it was most improbable that they would be admitted to the Committee and they would simply waste their money." The Governor feared that "some kind person will take pity on them and arrange for them to be interviewed." He strongly recommended that Kenyatta and Mockerie should not be allowed to appear before the Joint Committee.

Why this objection? Ostensibly because "they will not say anything that is of the slightest importance to any one." But beyond this was the impact of such an appearance in Kenya, especially among Africans. The Governor was anxious because, upon their return, Kenyatta and Mockerie "would glory in the fact of having scored off the Government of Kenya by succeeding in their enterprise against Government's advice and they will attribute to their representations any concession or benefit that Government may confer on the Kikuyu for the next 10 years. They will also deride others who have wished to go but who have refrained from doing so in deference to this Government's advice."[70]

The result of this strenuous objection by the Governor was that Kenyatta was not invited to appear before the Joint Committee. The chiefs, and other "native witnesses" on the other hand, were given "latitude to speak practically on any subject they wished" to the Joint Committee. Also "each group of natives" representing different colonies,

[69]TNA, CO 822/33/7, p. 37.

[70]TNA, CO 822/33/7, p. 38.

was received at the Colonial Office by the Colonial Secretary, "so that they might tell him direct of any grievances or desires with which the Committee would obviously not be able to deal. They all greatly appreciated the opportunity."[71] In these meetings, including one with the Colonial Secretary, the Colonial Office relayed to the Governor in Nairobi that Koinange had "spoken up so well that he will have taken the wind out of the sails of the Central Association and that they will be nothing new for Kenyatta and Parmenas to say."[72]

Kenyatta's lengthy memorandum was not even included in the Appendix to the Joint Committee's final report. His separate but similar memorandum, submitted to the Colonial Office, was forwarded to the Governor of Kenya for his "consideration and comments."[73] In this new memorandum, submitted in February 1932, the KCA sought to demonstrate its frustration in dealing with the colonial government in Nairobi. As a result, the Association implored the Colonial Secretary to "speedily take steps to remedy the hardships and injustices under which our people suffer." Kenyatta also requested "a personal interview" with the Colonial Secretary so that he could "explain and amplify the points dealt with in the memorandum," before he returned to Kenya.

The bulk of the memorandum dealt with lack of action on the part of the colonial government on issues contained in the initial KCA petitions of 1929. Although "His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies" had in "his letter to the General Secretary of the Association dated 2nd January, 1930, promised an enquiry into Kikuyu grievances no further

[71] TNA, CO 822/33/7, p. 29.

[72] TNA, CO 822/33/7, p. 32. It is important to note here that S.V. Cooke, a junior white civil servant in the colonial administration in Kenya, with definite views perceived as non-supportive of the colonial enterprise, was allowed permission to "put in a memorandum to the Committee." This was after an equally strong objection from the Governor in Nairobi. The Colonial Office informed the Governor that, "Cooke wrote officially, asking for permission to put in a memorandum to the Committee. The reply was sent to the effect that although the Secretary of State had not contemplated officers now serving under an East African Government offering to submit memoranda, he would not withhold permission if Cooke wished to submit a memorandum, in which case the memorandum should be sent to the Secretary of the Committee, i.e. direct, and not through the Colonial Office. Cooke sent in his memorandum, and it has been circulated to Members of the Committee," p. 33.

[73] For a full text of the memorandum, see TNA, CO 533/422/1.

communication has been received regarding them."[74] The memorandum pointed out that the KCA had followed the advice of forwarding legitimate complaints through the proper channels, that is, the Governor's Office, but had not received any substantial reply or response from the Governor. Following the proper channels had regrettably not yielded the desired results. Since 1930 the KCA had made "several statements of complaints and grievances which are felt by the Kikuyu people, and all have been ignored by the Government of Kenya. When we write to the Governor of Kenya our letters receive only formal acknowledgment."[75]

Beyond the old issues raised in the petitions of 1929, there were now added problems regarding what the KCA claimed were recent land seizures, for example, the "Maragwa-Tana Land," seized for the "purpose of erecting an electric Power Station." Prior to this official seizure, "there were upon it 280 dwelling huts, 335 storage barns and 195 cattle pens belonging to the Kikuyu. These have all been razed to the ground to clear the site for the proposed power station. On the same stretch of the river taken, there was a good ford, where the Kikuyu used to cross to trade with the Wakamba. Now they have to go 20 or 30 miles to another ford where their animals can cross." Further, because of this land seizure, "many Kikuyu have been arrested and fined heavily (from 250 shillings upwards) presumably for trying to use the ford."[76]

The memorandum also argued that the power station "will not be of any advantage to the Africans, whose forced submission has robbed them of the valuable land and water, for the benefit of a purely commercial enterprise." This outcome, unfavorable to Africans, was in large measure due to the fact that, "white settlers have the advantage of being able to influence the Government to bring pressure upon the Africans." The KCA submitted to the Colonial Secretary that it could "conceive of nothing more certain to embitter the relations between the Kikuyu peasants and white immigrants."[77] There was therefore a critical need for "a reconsideration of the policy under which the trading requirements of a European commercial concern, operating for private profit, can enjoy

[74]TNA, CO 533/422/1, p. 56. The KCA memorandum to the Colonial Secretary forwarded by Kenyatta on 24 February, 1932.

[75]TNA, CO 533/422/1, p. 57.

[76]TNA, CO 533/422/1, p. 59.

[77]TNA, CO 533/422/1, p. 59.

the active support of the Kenya Government, under the claim their operations constitute public interest."

The memorandum then provided several examples of recent loss of land by many Kikuyu. Such lands had been seized by the colonial government without compensation. This was contrary to the written undertaking by the Colonial Secretary in January 1930, which stipulated he would not give his approval "to the excision of any land from the Native Reserves unless he were satisfied that it was necessary in the public interest, and also that adequate compensation, including the addition to the Reserve of land equal in area, and as far as possible in value, to that excised, would be provided."[78]

Still on the question of land and the Kikuyu, the KCA mentioned that the recently released "Report of the Committee on Native Land Tenure in the Kikuyu Province, November 1929" had not been widely circulated as initially promised. The colonial government had not discussed this report with the Kikuyu: "the Report has so far been kept away from the Kikuyu; it has not been distributed even amongst chiefs and headmen, nor the native councils." Part of the problem was that there had not been any translation of the Report into the Kikuyu language, and therefore very few people could "read and understand it in its present form." It was very important to make this Report accessible to as many people as possible (in their own language) "before any action is taken" especially on "the registration of the Ithaka."

On education the KCA again requested that, "compulsory education for all African children be introduced. The present system of optional education," the memorandum stated, "has resulted in the evasion, by the Government, of its responsibility to educate all African children whose parents pay taxes." The Association also wanted the colonial government to lift "all restrictions relating to the building of schools by Africans, and their staffing and curriculum." Africans should be allowed to "own and control private schools independently." Beyond this, the KCA called for an end to "racial discrimination in education between different races." The current discriminatory system (biased against Africans), had led to the colonial government "discouraging the teaching of English." The Association therefore requested that "African children should

[78] TNA, CO 533/422/1, p. 60.

be given chances in education in no respect inferior to those given by the Government to European and Asian children."[79]

The question of taxation was now more emphatically linked to representation. The KCA wanted an increase in colonial government general expenditure on the welfare and advancement of Africans. This could be partially achieved by stipulating that "a due proportion of the revenue of Kenya be set apart each year for purely African use." To be effective this fund would need to be administered by Native Councils, "and not as at present controlled by the Legislative Council, on which direct African representation is denied."[80] Regarding African representation in the Legislative Council, the memorandum pointed to the Colonial Secretary that, "taxation without representation is an unsound principle." The KCA therefore strongly protested "against the assumption that African interests are in any way effectively represented by the missionary member or members, as at present in the Legislative and Executive Councils." Since the inception of this practice the missionary representatives had made it very clear that "they are not on the Council to represent the Africans, but to voice their own views of what is best in the Africans' interest."[81]

Africans also wanted to enjoy the "freedom of speech, press and of assembly." As part of this general objective the memorandum requested that "all by-laws and regulations controlling the urban areas, be published in African language, so that all may know the laws of the land to which they must conform, and so that they can realize under what powers legal proceedings are instituted against them." The KCA was keen to point out to the Colonial Secretary that Africans in Kenya regarded the "present regulations," which severely restricted their right to freedom of speech and assembly, as discriminatory. Such discrimination between races was "inconsistent with British justice, under which racial discrimination does not reckon to survive."[82] A repressive policy that forbids or severely restricts "Native gatherings, and forbids the formation of African organisations for political, social and economic improvements" was seen as "fundamentally unsound."

[79]TNA, CO 533/422/1, p. 68.
[80]TNA, CO 533/422/1, p. 68.
[81]TNA, CO 533/422/1, p. 69.
[82]TNA, CO 533/422/1, p. 72.

Once again the KCA called for the abolition of the *Kipande* system and for an end to racial discrimination in employment, thus "African employees of the Government, of all grades, should be given the same treatment and status as immigrants of the same grade, irrespective of race, colour, or creed." The routine employment of child labor, especially by Municipal Councils, needed to end since it was detrimental to the welfare of thousands of young Africans (mostly boys), who are "employed by Municipal authorities in the capacity of scavengers and other blind alley occupations." Whenever such young boys are discharged from their menial occupations, they are unable to "take their place in the community as useful members of the tribe," since many of them are "partially detribalised" and also "accustomed to town ways." It was therefore important to introduce special "continuation schools" for these boys to equip them with marketable skills.

Then there was dancing. The memorandum pointed out to the Colonial Secretary the crucial value of traditional dances to the cultural integrity of the Africans. "These are traditional and are of real meaning and importance in the education and culture of the race; certain valuable lessons and qualities being taught that way." To this end, therefore, the Kikuyu desired the "freedom to continue these dances, particularly the Muthunguci, as it is the only recreation available for elderly men and women. Dancing also forms the chief recreation and exercise for many younger people; it is a healthy and harmless open air pastime which should be encouraged rather than prohibited."

Lastly, the KCA objected to the use of the word "Colony" as it applied to Kenya. The change in the official designation of Kenya from the "East African Protectorate" to "Colony and Protectorate" had been effected without consulting Africans, who objected to this change for several reasons. First, "the use of the word 'Colony' suggests that all inhabitants are immigrants from outside; thus the Natives of the area are expatriated and their lands expropriated, and they are herded by the Government into so-called 'Native Reserves' regardless of the fact that they have inhabited the country from time immemorial and that the land has always been their property." Second, there was the matter of ownership of land and even country. Whose land was it? "Africans strongly object to the word 'Colony', as it implies that they have been supplanted from their ancestral homeland and are regarded as immigrants, in the same way as those who have invaded the country and settled therein.

Africans urge that the word 'Colony' be deleted, as applied to their homeland."[83]

On August 29, 1932, after a delay of 6 months, the Deputy Governor of Kenya forwarded to the Colonial Secretary the official response to Kenyatta's memorandum of February 1932. The colonial government was not apologetic for apparently neglecting to respond to the many "representations made by the Kikuyu Central Association." This Association was one among many such formed by the Kikuyu. Further, it only represented "a limited number of persons of one tribe, the Kikuyu." Under such circumstances, it was not possible, the colonial government submitted, "to regard the Association as being the official mouthpiece of the Kikuyu people."[84] The colonial government insisted that there already existed in the colony an efficient and "recognized channel of communication" that Africans were encouraged to follow in their many petitions "between any individuals or bodies of individuals and Government." As far as possible, this involved going through the "District and Provincial Commissioners; or if it is thought desirable through the Local Native Council." Only petitions filed in the "orthodox manner" merited any response from the relevant colonial official. Outside this established framework, the colonial government wrote, it was impossible for "Government, if by Government Mr. Kenyatta means the Governor or the Colonial Secretary, to attend personally to every communication addressed to Government by private individuals or irresponsible Associations."[85]

On the question of recent "land transactions" mentioned in Kenyatta's memorandum, the colonial government stated that this matter had been referred to, and approved by, "a majority of the Local Native Council and by Local Land Board and by Central Lands Trust Board." Thus, Africans, especially on the Local Native Council, had endorsed this undertaking and any complaints by the KCA were seen as irresponsible and unjustified. All other land complaints were shelved. They would be "submitted to the Morris Carter Commission for consideration."

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[83]TNA, CO 533/422/1, p. 79.

[84]TNA, CO 533/422/1, Confidential Memorandum from the colonial government of Kenya to the Colonial Secretary in response to the 'Kenyatta Memorandum' of February 1932, p. 14.

[85]TNA, CO 533/422/1, p. 14.

Concerning the Kikuyu Land Tenure Report, it was the view of the colonial government that this report had "not been kept away from the Kikuyu." Published in English, the report was available for sale and had been given "for free to those Kikuyu chiefs and witnesses who have asked for them." The colonial government agreed that the report had not been translated into Swahili. But the translation of "a subject so highly technical would be entirely unintelligible to the Kikuyu."[86] The colonial government also disputed the need for African representation on the Morris Carter Commission. "If all the tribes concerned were represented on the Commission the Commission would be quite unwieldy"; the work of the Commission would be hampered by the presence of Africans. In addition, there was the matter of the Africans' ability to comprehend complex technical issues and to rise above selfish sectional interests. "There are few natives," the colonial government wrote, "at present capable of understanding the questions at issue or of appreciating any point of view but their own." Africans were to be afforded the opportunity, "individually or in groups," to make presentations to the Carter Commission, but they would not serve as members of the Commission.

The introduction of compulsory education for Africans, as advocated by the KCA, was dismissed out of hand. The colonial government thought that Kenyatta and the KCA had only thought about this matter as it concerned the Kikuyu. This proposition had "administrative, financial and political implications" that would be difficult to address "in a Colony of mixed races such as Kenya." In general, however, the expansion and growth of African education would, for the foreseeable future, continue to be "limited by the supply of qualified teachers which it is possible to turn out with the indifferent material at our disposal."[87] The control of private schools established by Africans would continue to be in the hands of the colonial government. This would also apply to staffing and curriculum. Any other policy that ceded the control of such schools to Africans "could only result in chaos."

There was to be no translation into Swahili of laws governing the Colony. This was in keeping with a position taken by Sir Edward Grigg as early as 1927, when he argued that "Swahili is not a lingua franca in the Reserves and the number of natives who have a thorough knowledge

[86]TNA, CO 533/422/1, p. 15.

[87]TNA, CO 533/422/1, p. 16.

of that language is comparatively small." But even if these laws were translated into Swahili this would not necessarily be of any help to the Africans. According to the colonial government, "to understand the laws of Kenya a native would not only have to be an expert Swahili scholar but would also have to attain a far clearer understanding of legal definitions and distinctions than is compatible with his present stage of intellectual development." As a result of this intellectual handicap, it was doubtful if "a single native in Kenya would benefit in the slightest by the monumental work of translating the volumes of the Laws of Kenya, and even if this were done there would still be the work of translating every amendment and every rule."[88]

Official restrictions on "freedom of speech and assembly" would not be lifted as they served the purpose of protecting and even preventing "illiterate masses from being" swayed by "violent anti-government propaganda," as had been the case with Harry Thuku. These official restrictions on "freedom of speech and assembly" were seen by the colonial government as being essential, "in protecting the ignorant from being misled by the mischievous." These restrictions were therefore "desirable in the interests of orderly administration."

The colonial government also revisited the matter of the appointment of African chiefs. It strongly objected to the suggestion that, in future, the appointment of such chiefs "should cease to be by Government nomination … and they should be elected by the people of the districts concerned." A chief, it was maintained, is a colonial government employee, "an executive officer of Government. He is responsible for the maintenance of law and order in his location and for many other duties." It was therefore crucial for the colonial government to trust the "integrity, standing and authority" of such an individual. Therefore, as in the past, the "Government should retain a right of veto in their appointment." The general practice, the Colonial Secretary was informed, was that "the people concerned are invariably consulted and normally their choice is accepted." Also "when a vacancy occurs through death or retirement … a member of the Chief's family, usually his heir if he appears to be at all suitable" is appointed to the position.[89]

[88]TNA, CO 533/422/1, p. 18.

[89]TNA, CO 533/422/1, p. 23.

Equal treatment of all government employees irrespective of race had, in theory, "a great deal to be said in favour of this doctrine." However, the colonial government was unwilling to endorse it in practice; in its policy formulation and implementation. This was due to what were seen as inescapable and obvious racial impediments characteristic of Africans. "In practice … there are racial characteristics which it is impossible to ignore and it has to be admitted that as yet Africans as a race have not shown that they have attained a sense of responsibility which ordinarily justifies their being placed in any position of considerable trust."[90] Asians and Africans followed very different educational standards and, as such, it was near impossible to "devise an examination which would be suitable to both." The future did not look very promising for African employees of the colonial government. "It will take a long time before the African (except in a very few isolated cases) will be able to compete with the Asian in examinations for clerical posts."[91]

The colonial government agreed that the employment of child labor demanded some attention. To this end, it would "effect reforms by embodying in an amendment to the Employment of Natives Ordinance provisions to control the employment of child labour." On the other hand, complaints about the poor marketing conditions for Africans' produce were seen as lacking merit. "The problem is not so much, as is suggested by Mr. Kenyatta, that of the provision of additional facilities as it is of making the best use of those facilities." Africans were seen as being quick to complain about lack of opportunities in many areas before fully utilizing the existing ones in their midst. On this specific issue, communications necessary for the marketing of Africans' produce were portrayed as being "reasonably adequate as are also trading centres and markets." The problem lay with the Africans. "The ordinary native producer, however, does not understand the principles of bulk marketing and his ideas of co-operation are rudimentary."

There was "no sympathy whatever" in considering the request to lift the ban on traditional dancing. No unlimited license would be given to the Kikuyu "in the matter of dancing." These dances, far from "being a healthy and harmless open air pastime it is a pastime which commonly

[90]TNA, CO 533/422/1, p. 23.
[91]TNA, CO 533/422/1, p. 24.

leads to all sorts of excesses, drunkenness and immorality."[92] Although some harmless dances were still permitted, it was still crucial to note that, "there is no such thing as a harmless native dance."

How about the word Colony? The colonial government was aware that objection to the use of this word/term was widespread among Africans across the country. While it was impossible to pinpoint the origin of this vehement objection, it seemed "that in some way or other a belief has become current that the change from Protectorate to Colony deprives the native tribes of whatever rights possessed as protected British subjects."[93] This was presumed to be especially true in the case of land ownership. The Africans were also aware of the legal implications of the "Crown Lands Ordinance, 1915, and the Kenya (Annexation) Order-in-Council, 1920, and the Kenya Colony Order-in-Council, 1921" which stated that "land reserved for the use of a native tribe in the Crown, and in consequence all native rights in such reserved land would disappear—natives in occupation thereof became tenants at-will of the Crown."[94] The Governor had tried, unsuccessfully, to reassure Africans that this "change of title in effect made no alteration in their status," and that their land rights were now "guaranteed to them by the Native Lands Trust Ordinance."

These Governor's comments, elaborate yet uncompromising, stayed with the Colonial Office. They were not reworked and reworded as an official reply from the Colonial Secretary and then forwarded to Kenyatta, as had happened in 1930 on his first trip to Britain. Kenyatta's persistent requests for a meeting with the Colonial Secretary or senior officials at the Colonial Office were repeatedly rebuffed. This was the result of an extensive discussion at the Colonial Office on what to do with Kenyatta and his memorandum. These senior officials advised the Colonial Secretary not to meet with Kenyatta, since such a meeting "can hardly be useful," and also it "might conceivably have repercussions in East Africa," since almost all the matters raised in the memorandum were "already receiving the attention of the Kenya Government," there

[92]TNA, CO 533/422/1, p. 28.

[93]TNA, CO 533/422/1, p. 29.

[94]TNA, CO 533/422/1, p. 29. This is a citation of the "judgement of Sir Jacob Barth in Civil Case No. 626 of 1921."

was no reason for the Colonial Secretary to intervene.[95] As in 1930, Kenyatta was not received in the Colonial Office. The position taken during Kenyatta's first trip was still upheld: "from the official point of view, Sir Edward Grigg's objection still holds good." It was also decided that the Colonial Office would no longer provide any official responses to Kenyatta's correspondence.[96] "His memo" of 1932, it was argued at the Colonial Office, "should have come via the Governor, and has never been sent that way."

Neither the rebuff from the Colonial Office, nor the denial to present the KCA's memorandum before the Joint Committee on the Closer Union, led to an abrupt end to Kenyatta's political activism in Britain. He did not immediately sail back to Kenya. Political activism brought with it the scrutiny of his endeavors by the British intelligence services.

[95] TNA, CO 533/422/1, Copy of internal discussions among senior officials at the Colonial Office on Kenyatta, 1932.

[96] See TNA, CO 533/422/1, for details.

CHAPTER 3

Spying on Political Activism

During his prolonged stay in Britain from 1931 to 1946, surveillance on Kenyatta by the British intelligence services centered on three main areas: determining his ideological orientation; monitoring his political activities; and identifying his social and political contacts in Britain and Kenya, both groups and individuals. By 1931 these intelligence services already had a large file on him, "chiefly containing police reports on his activities, contacts, and associates, etc."[1] Part of the rationale for this constant surveillance on Kenyatta was succinctly stated by the Manchester Police in February 1945: "he has a good deal of influence in his own country and for that reason is the subject of permanent interest to the Kenya authorities."[2] He had come to be identified as an "anti-British agitator."

Most of the surveillance on Kenyatta was coordinated by MI5—"the principal service concerned with maintaining British security … answerable to the Prime Minster."[3] Indeed, most reports (and instructions) concerning surveillance on Kenyatta were, until 1940, signed by Major General Sir Vernon Kell, the long-serving founding Director of MI5.

[1] TNA, KV 2/1787, p. 2a.

[2] TNA, KV 2/1788, Manchester Police Report on Kenyatta's visit to the city during which he spoke at a meeting of the Peace Pledge Mission held at the Friends' Meeting House. The report was also forwarded to the Kenya colonial authorities.

[3] John Bulloch, *MI5: The Origin and History of the British Counter-Insurgency Service* (London: Arthur Baker Ltd. 1963), p. 9.

W.O. Maloba, *Kenyatta and Britain*, African Histories and Modernities, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-50895-5_3

Kell had not only founded the MI5 in 1909 but also "more than any one else" was "responsible for the pattern of security in Britain." He relied on other security agencies for some raw data. Thus, for example, "The facts were supplied to him by the Scotland Yard." But "the importance of his work was in collating them and presenting them to the people who mattered, then through the strength of his own personality, ensuring that action was taken."[4]

Surveillance on Kenyatta was within the wide scope of MI5's responsibilities. Its charge from the beginning was to "perform counter-intelligence in the United Kingdom, the possessions and colonial territories."[5] In 1909 the agency's principal task was "tracking down and exposing the German spies." By the 1930s there were "new enemies for Britain": ideological ones, chiefly identified as Communists, and then radical nationalist agitators in the colonies. A combination of these two was deemed to be catastrophic for Britain and therefore absolutely unacceptable.

In 1931, at the start of his second trip to Britain, Kenyatta found it strategically necessary to clarify his political affiliations, specifically his views on Communism. Was he a Communist? Strongly prompted by McGregor Ross, one of his influential white friends in London, Kenyatta agreed to be interviewed by *East Africa,* a "fortnightly organ of the Kenya settlers." He denied ever being a Communist. As for his visit to Moscow in 1929, there was nothing about it to raise any fears since this had been for "sightseeing purposes" only. Many of his white influential and well-placed friends in Britain believed him, and "Kenyatta was too anxious to appear moderate" to them.[6]

Throughout his stay in Britain, Kenyatta had several white liberal and politically moderate friends. These included: Mr. Leys of the Quaker College in Woodbrooke, Birmingham; Lady Cynthia Asquith; many members of the Quaker Council for International Service; and Labour Party leaders, for example, Ramsay MacDonald.[7] Kenyatta soon found

[4] Bulloch, *MI5*, p. 185. Kell's career nonetheless came to an abrupt end in 1940. Churchill sacked him in "May 1940 and he died a broken man at his tiny rented cottage in Buckinghamshire in March 1942."

[5] Jonathan Bloch and Patrick Fitzgerald, *British Intelligence and Covert Action* (London: Junction Books; Dingle, Co. Kerry, Ireland: Brandon Book Publishers, 1983), p. 30.

[6] Murray-Brown, *Kenyatta*, p. 165.

[7] Delf, *Jomo Kenyatta,* p. 86.

that these and similar friendships, well intentioned and probably quite genuine, had their own drawbacks. George Delf's view is that, "owing to a disparity of personal backgrounds, these early friendships had necessarily to remain at finger tip distance."[8] The issue at hand was more than "disparity of social backgrounds." There was also the crucial matter of political activism; radical political activism. For this purpose and engagement, Kenyatta needed a different set of friends with connections to the radical and activist sections of British (and European) politics.

There can be little doubt that Kenyatta's gravitation toward radical activism in Britain was in part prompted by the refusal of the Colonial Office, after 1932, to have any dealings with him. To the Colonial Office, "he no longer had any standing." His requests for interviews with senior officials at the Colonial Office were never granted. "These officials instructed the Kenya Government to deal directly with KCA in Nairobi and so short circuit their man in London."[9]

It became evident that in order to keep his political mission in Britain alive Kenyatta needed to form new political alliances with groups and individuals that embraced political activism and national liberation of the colonized. He needed to expand his political charge to go well beyond what was contained in the two petitions that he had carried on behalf of the KCA to the Colonial Office. To be an effective advocate of his people in the multiplicity of political alliances that he formed, he had to be more than a "tribal spokesman" representing the KCA. And indeed, after 1932, in most of his political activism, Kenyatta was identified as a spokesman/leader of Kenya African nationalism; a credible African critic of British imperialism in Kenya (sometimes, East Africa). His activities and contacts in the radical organizations that he belonged to were closely watched and recorded by MI5 and other British intelligence services. These intelligence services also monitored the nature and purposes of the radical political alliances that he formed during his lengthy stay in Britain.

Most of the political alliances that Kenyatta formed were with Marxist and/or radical Pan Africanist organizations. One such organization was the International African Service Bureau (IASB). This organization was "founded by London based African and West Indian radicals in 1937. It

[8] Delf, *Jomo Kenyatta*, p. 86.

[9] Murray-Brown, *Kenyatta*, p. 175.

operated until 1944 when it merged with other black organizations to form the Pan African Federation."[10] Kenyatta was one of its vice chairs. IASB's other leaders were: "Gorge Padmore, chair; Amy Ashwood Garvey, vice chair; Robert Broadhust, treasurer; T.R. Makonnen, executive and publicity secretary; and Wallace Johnson, general secretary."[11] Under Padmore's guiding hand, IASB's aims "may be summarized as agitational, educational, and administrative." The organization "demanded abolition of onerous pass laws and taxes, insisted upon the right of Africans to organize pressure and interest groups, to receive equal pay for equal work, to publish, assemble and move freely: in short, to possess 'democratic rights, civil liberties and self-determination'."[12] It is important to mention that the IASB was "opposed to Communism," although the intricacies of its ever evolving "political philosophy integrated Marxism and Pan Africanism."

The membership of the IASB "was restricted to Africans and people of African descent." Nonetheless, non-Africans or people not of African descent, with a demonstrable sympathy for the aims of the IASB, could be accorded associate membership. The organization also formed useful political alliances with the "British Left, especially the Labour Party and Independent Labour party." Many of the white leaders of these organizations and movements were incorporated as patrons of the IASB. These included "Arthur Creech-Jones, later Secretary of State for the Colonies; Independent Party Chairman, Fenner Brockway; Sylvia Pankhurst; Nancy Cunard; and Victor Gollancz."[13] In a bid to make some inroads into British society, the IASB pushed for questions concerning colonial issues to be "asked in Parliament."

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[10] Marcus Garvey, Robert A. Hill and Universal Negro Improvement Association, *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers*, Vol. 10: *Africa for the Africans, 1923–1945* (Berkeley, CA; London: University of California Press, 2006), p. 649.

[11] Garvey, Hill and Universal Negro Improvement Association. *Africa for the Africans*, p. 649.

[12] James R. Hooker, *Black Revolutionary: George Padmore's Path From Communism to Pan-Africanism* (New York, NY: Praeger, 1976), p. 50. Also see TNA, MEPO 38/91, for a report on the IASB by the Special Branch of the London Metropolitan Police, February, 1938.

[13] Garvey, Hill, and the Universal Negro Improvement Association, *Africa for the Africans*, p. 649.

IASB's members, especially its leaders, readily accepted invitations to speak at mass rallies or meetings called to debate colonial issues. Sometimes members sought to be invited to speak at such events if invitations were not readily forthcoming. Above all, there were the "weekly rallies in Hyde Park," organized to publicize specific "colonial crimes" and thus educate the "common man in the street" about the consequences of British imperialism on both the colonized and the British working class. The IASB also published pamphlets for mass distribution, and journals, specifically: "the *African Sentinel,* of which only a few issues were published, and *International African Opinion,* published from July 1938 to June 1939."[14] A report by the Special Branch of the Metropolitan Police, later communicated to the Colonial Office, observed that the IASB's office holders "have followed the method adopted by the League Against Imperialism in transforming that organization into a colonial information Bureau."[15]

Kenyatta made several speeches under the auspices of the IASB. MI5 and the Special Branch of the Metropolitan Police filed reports on these speeches to the Colonial Office. One of the first significant speeches reported on was delivered on August 8, 1937. The details of the speech, as filed by MI5, indicate that Kenyatta spoke as part of the IASB's solidarity with workers in Trinidad who were on a general strike.[16] According to the report, Kenyatta "gave a few instances of oppression by white rulers in Kenya." The crucial part of this speech touched on his

[14]Garvey, Hill, and the Universal Negro Improvement Association, *Africa for the Africans*, p. 649.

[15]TNA, KV 2/1787, Special Branch Police Report, July 21, 1937.

[16]For some details about this strike, see Garvey, Hill, and the Universal Negro Improvement Association, *Africa for the Africans*, p. 649, "the most important campaign launched by the IASB was to support workers in Trinidad who had organized a series of strikes and disturbances in the southern oil fields and sugar plantations. The oil industry, along with the agricultural sector on which most Trinidians relied, largely collapsed, obliterating most of the island's export income and severely depressing the standard of living of the island's black and East Indian populations. The crisis in the colonial economy resulted in a general strike in 1937, which began as a peaceful labor boycott but was soon inflamed by the brutal reactions of Trinidad police, which precipitated rioting. The government used massive armed force to put down the disturbances, killing fourteen workers and wounding fifty-nine … In London, the IASB organized numerous demonstrations and publicized conditions in Trinidad and grievances of workers there … [In 1938] the Commission investigating the disturbance issued a report advocating far-reaching reforms."

strong advocacy for activism and agitation, pointing out that in his case this had produced positive results. He "said he had caused questions to be asked in the House concerning certain flagrant cases of injustice to blacks in Kenya and the Colonial Secretary had replied that he had no information on the subject. He said the natives of the colonies received only injustice from British administration."[17]

The language and tone of Kenyatta's speeches had clearly become more strident by the time he addressed the conference/education seminar organized by the Workers Education Association at Albion Hall, Horsham, on "Colour Problems in Africa," in February 1938. The speech was also covered in the *West Sussex Times* on February 11, 1938. According to the newspaper Kenyatta had, in his speech, "maintained that the rule which governed his people was more feared than that of either Italy or Germany, and alleged that Hitler had copied his methods from the British in East Africa, where each year thousands of people were sent to concentration camps." But had colonialism brought any progress to Kenya since 1895? In response, Kenyatta "said that if progress was measured in terms of happiness, then there had been none. 'In 1895 when I was in my own country, I was a man; now I am no longer a man; I am a slave'."[18] And so what did he want? He wanted some Africans in the Legislative Council and the establishment of the freedom of speech to cover Africans. "Give us some measure of justice … Realise we are people and we must live." The Commissioner for Kenya, Northern Rhodesia, Nyasaland, Tanganyika, Uganda and Zanzibar (London), thought that this speech constituted a "libelous statement" and sought for action against Kenyatta and sponsoring organizations. He wrote to the Colonial Office wondering whether "anything could be done in the matter."

On May 8, 1938 Kenyatta addressed a meeting organized by the IASB in Trafalgar Square. He spoke on conditions of workers in Kenya. As reported by the police, Kenyatta stated, "thousands of innocent natives were thrown into concentration camps without a finger raised in their defence." He reminded the audience that while workers in Britain were "fighting fascism directly and indirectly all over the world … they did not realize that it was from methods employed by the British

[17]TNA, KV 2/1787, Police Report, August 16, 1937.

[18]TNA, CO 533/501/11, *West Sussex Times,* February 11, 1938.

Government in her colonies that Hitler and Mussolini had learnt their tyrannical form of dictatorship."[19]

Kenyatta continued to undertake political tasks on behalf of the IASB, especially public speaking on issues deemed crucial for the struggle for freedom of the black people. On June 26, 1938 the IASB organized another rally in Trafalgar Square to draw attention to the poor working conditions of the black workers in the West Indies. Kenyatta acted as chair of this public rally that had been called "to explain to those present the poverty and starvation existing in the West Indies, which state of affairs led up to the recent rioting in those unhappy islands."[20] Other speakers included C.L.R. James, L. Sankoh, and George Padmore. In its report of the proceedings Special Branch noted that Sankoh had stated, "that because of accident of birth caused some to be born black and others white was no reason for keeping the black man under the heel of the white man. All men should be equal and given equality, it would be found that the black man was as loyal and patriotic as the white man."

Surveillance by the British intelligence services on IASB was not confined to meetings and rallies organized by the organization. Information was also sought on its publications, what they stated, and to whom they were distributed. On September 28, 1938 Special Branch obtained cyclostyled circulars issued by the IASB that covered several key issues relevant to the Pan African world at that time: *Manifesto Against the War* and *An Open letter to the workers of the West Indies and British Guiana*. The police report, filed to the Colonial Office, identified officials of the IASB who had signed these documents: George Padmore (Trinidad), T.R. Makonnen (British Guiana), Jomo Kenyatta (Kenya), C.L.R. James (Trinidad), Babalola Wilkey (Nigeria), William Harrison (Jamaica), Chris Jones (Barbados), and Laminah Sankoh (Sierra Leone).[21]

In *Manifesto Against the War* the IASB implored "Africans, people of African descent and colonial peoples all over the world," to resist and then reject aiding imperial war efforts. The IASB urged all colonized people, but especially people of African descent, not to believe what was seen as an imperial propaganda offensive to sell the coming war as a fight

[19]TNA, KV 2/1787, Police Report, May 10, 1938. Also see MEPO 38/91. Special Branch reported that this meeting had also been addressed by George Padmore, C.L.R. James, and Amy Stock.

[20]TNA, MEPO 38/91.

[21]TNA, MEPO 38/91.

in defense of democracy. "Brothers of Africa and of African descent," the IASB wrote, "what democracy, what liberties, what rights have we got in this 'glorious' British Empire that calls upon us to shed our blood in its defence? Our greedy and merciless oppressors have robbed you of your land, broken up your civilisation and substituted instead a regime worse than slavery. They segregate you in your own country, pen you in the reserves and locations like cattle, make you carry passes like common criminals, and then pay you starvation wages of 4d. a day … The conditions under which you live are those of colonial fascism … We denounce the whole gang of European robbers and enslavers of the colonial peoples. German Nazis, Italian Fascists, British, French, Belgian democracies—all are the same, IMPERIAL EXPLOITERS."[22]

The IASB of course knew that the coming war would, as all wars do, lead to death and destruction. Nonetheless, it was important for Africans and people of African descent to seize the moment and realize that "Europe's difficulty is Africa's opportunity"; an opportunity to accelerate the agitation for political independence. Africans were urged not to be "caught by the lying promises the Imperialists will make," but instead to "organise … and be ready to seize the opportunity when it comes."

In this struggle for African freedom, the IASB continued to appeal for the support of European white workers. "Though you have neglected us in the past," the IASB addressed the white workers in Britain, "today in this hour of common crisis, we want you to know that we Blacks bear you no ill-will. The Imperialists are our common enemy, and the present crisis offers us a common opportunity to throw them off our backs. Let us be united against the warmongers and all misleaders of the workers who would send us to be slaughtered under the slogan: 'Defend

[22]TNA, MEPO 38/91, IASB *Manifesto Against the War*. In June 1940 the Kenya colonial government issued *War Propaganda to Natives* in the form of a memo circulated to all provincial and district commissioners in the country. The memo stated in part, "now that Italy has joined forces with Germany and declared war against Great Britain and her Allies the conflict which has been raging in Europe for the last 9 months has come to the threshold of Kenya. The Italians who some years ago seized the country of the Abyssinians are living on our border beyond the Northern Frontier. They are now our enemies." The memo then urged Africans to support the troops; "you must provide food as your custom is for the fighting men." But above all, Africans were instructed to remain obedient; "you must obey all orders given by your officers, Chiefs and Headmen promptly, willingly and cheerfully." See PC/CP/13/3/1, Nairobi: Kenya National Archives, War Propaganda to Natives.

Democracy.' White brothers, do not be misled. Our freedom is a step towards your freedom."[23]

Within IASB discussions continued on the best strategy to adopt in agitating for the strengthening of trade unionism and then political reforms "in the British West Indies." All speakers at the IASB rally in Trafalgar Square in June 1938, called for an end to racial discrimination in wages among workers in the West Indies. C.L.R. James demanded the "same rights and privileges for the coloured workers as were enjoyed by the white people," while George Padmore introduced a "resolution pledging the support and solidarity of the coloured people resident in London with their brethren in the West Indies." In sum, the IASB proposed the "granting of universal adult suffrage, substituting elected representatives for nominated members to the legislative and municipal councils."[24] Political discussions within the IASB would continue to have a definite influence on Kenyatta's growth as a Pan African activist in Britain during this period.

Kenyatta addressed several meetings not organized by the IASB. On November 13, 1932 he spoke at a meeting organized by the Council of Action Against the War. The police described him as an "African negro, aged 30, 5 feet 8 inches in height, slim build, well dressed, clean shaven, two punctures in the top of his right ear." Kenyatta wanted to express his solidarity with the British working class and spoke thus; "Members of the working class, the workers of Kenya colony greet you. We are workers the same as you. The capitalist system chooses to kill you and me in war. Although we look different we all live the same."[25] In World War I African workers in Kenya had gone to war because they "were promised freedom." But at the end of the war they received no freedom. Their living conditions had deteriorated leading them to go on strike in which "over a hundred were shot down with bullets in their chests." In conclusion, Kenyatta again appealed to the solidarity of the working class. "We are all the same and we must stop capitalist war. We get nothing for fighting only big debts to pay for war. Unite workers of the world."[26]

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[23]TNA, MEPO 38/91, IASB's *Manifesto Against the War*.

[24]See Jerome Teelucksingh, "The Immortal Batsman: George Padmore the Revolutionary, Writer and Activist," in *George Padmore: Pan-African Revolutionary* (Kingston; Miami, FL: Ian Randle Publishers, 2009), p. 9.

[25]TNA, KV 2/1787, p. 7A; Report on Council of Action Against War.

[26]TNA, KV 2/1787, p. 7A; Report on Council of Action Against the War.

On December 28, 1935 at Essex Hall, Essex Street, just off the Strand in London, Kenyatta addressed a meeting of the Indian National Congress of Great Britain. The report on his speech, which was supposed to last only 5 minutes, indicated that he had tried to draw a parallel between India's struggle for national liberation and Africa's desire to overthrow colonial rule. "The only way I can see independence being obtained in either of these countries," Kenyatta stressed, "is by the rising of the native peoples, casting aside their chains and driving their common enemy from their land, if need be by use of bombs, machine guns and such things."[27] The Special Branch agents present at this meeting were careful to mention to their superiors that this remark by Kenyatta about bombs and machine guns "was not taken seriously by the audience, who regarded Kenyatta more as a comedian than a serious speaker."

Many established and non-radical organizations continued to invite Kenyatta to address their members on social and moral questions related to Africa. On May 4, 1934 the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene invited him to talk about a sensitive topic: Tribal customs and the position of African women. This Association was very much "concerned with regard to conditions affecting women which are alleged to prevail in conditions, amounting in some places to a state of slavery." It was the Association's understanding that these dreadful conditions were "due to tribal customs, while others appear to be brought about not by the native customs in themselves but by the impact of an industrial system and a money economy upon native peoples almost entirely unprepared for such changes and rapidly becoming detribalized as a result of the new conditions."[28]

The Association lacked "sufficient information or experience in this particular field to enable it to assess the real position" on this question and it is for that reason that Kenyatta had been invited. In its preliminary "considerable enquiry," the Association had found evidence which suggested some very disturbing trends that included: "That there is arising in Africa among native peoples a trade in wives which is not merely the

[27]TNA, KV 2/1787, Police Report, December 28, 1935.

[28]TNA, KV 2/1787, Letter to Kenyatta from the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene, May 4, 1934.

giving of cattle in token of a properly arranged and duly recognized marriage, entailing all mutual responsibilities of such marriage, but it is more akin to slavery or to traffic in women for immoral purposes; that the hiring out by men of their wives to other men is a common practice; that among the native peoples affected by industrial development prostitution is developing and the position of women worsening."[29] At a private meeting, the Association wanted Kenyatta to provide more information on this matter and was prepared to "hear different and perhaps opposing points of view." On May 10, 1934 Col. Sir Vernon Kell, duly reported Kenyatta's participation in this meeting to the Colonial Office.

F.S. Livie-Noble, the Honorary Secretary of the London Group on African Affairs, made a special request to Kenyatta to attend the organization's meeting on June 8, 1934 at "Friends House, Euston Road, NW 1." The matter to be discussed, the Honorary Secretary indicated in the invitation, "might be of great importance." As expected, Kenyatta's attendance at this meeting was noted and reported by MI5 to the Colonial Office.

The League of Coloured Peoples invited Kenyatta to address its members "on East Africa," on July 11, 1934. This organization was formed by Harold A. Moody, a medical doctor from Jamaica in 1931, with these objectives: "To promote and protect the Social, Educational, Economic and political interests of its members; to interest members in the welfare of Coloured Peoples in all parts of the world; to improve relations between races; to cooperate and affiliate with organizations sympathetic to the Coloured People."[30] Moody and the League "tried to solve the race problem through the application of Christian principles." He held on to this position "throughout his life … despite growing evidence" that these principles alone had repeatedly been unable to make the British public "come to love their black brothers."[31] Kenyatta's address to this organization was also reported by MI5 to the Colonial Office.

One of the most important organizations that Kenyatta belonged to during this period was the International African Friends of Abyssinia (IAFA). It was founded by C.L.R. James, the veteran "writer, historian,

[29] TNA, KV 2/1787, Letter to Kenyatta, May 4, 1934.

[30] TNA, KV 2/1787, Objectives listed on the organization's letterhead of the letter of invitation to Kenyatta, July 11, 1934.

[31] Hooker, *Black Revolutionary*, p. 42.

and Pan-African Marxist theorist." The organization was founded "in response to the Italian invasion of Ethiopia." Its specific charge was to "educate British and international opinion to agitate against the imperialist plans for Africa."[32] Kenyatta served as an Honorary Secretary to the organization whose meetings were often held at "a restaurant in London's Oxford Street, run by Mrs. Marcus Garvey." The Ethiopian question was difficult and sensitive for the British Government. Although Emperor Haile Selassie had trusted Britain and France in the period leading to the Italian invasion, neither country was willing to militarily confront Mussolini over Ethiopia. Instead, both countries "preferred to see Ethiopia dismembered than risk a war on her behalf."[33]

The mobilization of international opinion against Mussolini's aggression was, to a large degree, left to several black-led organizations around the world. Besides the IAFA, there was "the Young Peoples Progressive League of Ohio." It sent a letter of protest to the League of Nations in 1934. This was followed by the formation of similar organizations in many parts of the world. It is these organizations that were largely responsible for provoking "a wave of universal sympathy and solidarity toward Ethiopia."

Why was the Ethiopian question so important to black people? The invasion itself, coupled with details of horrific brutality, including massacres of Ethiopians, aroused a strong emotional and nationalist response in the black world. "Ethiopia's destruction symbolized the 'final victory' of the White man over the Black. Haile Selassie seemed to be defending Negro self-respect everywhere."[34] Ethiopia was universally seen in the Pan African world as the "last symbol of African independence and black achievement." It is therefore not surprising that the fascist invasion "shocked and outraged not only politically conscious Africans at home and in Europe but also black people throughout the whole world and especially in the United States and the West Indies."[35]

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[32] C.L.R. James. *Nkrumah and the Ghana Revolution* (Westport, CT: Lawrence Hill & Co. Ltd., 1977), p. 64.

[33] Murray-Brown, *Kenyatta*, p. 197.

[34] Alberto Sbacchi, *Legacy of Bitterness: Ethiopia and Fascist Italy, 1935–1941* (Lawrenceville, NJ: Red Sea Press, 1997), p. 14.

[35] A. Adu Boahen, *African Perspectives on Colonialism* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), p. 91. Adu Boahen has also forcefully argued that the Italian invasion of Ethiopia effectively "ended any faith that moderate African leaders had in the progressive aspects of colonialism and convinced them of the need to overthrow the system. It seems evident from the mood of the blacks throughout the world and that of

This solidarity cut across ideological lines. Many black Marxists spoke and organized on Ethiopia's behalf. James W. Ford, the "most prominent African American member of the U.S. Communist Party" spoke at a mass protest meeting in New York in March 1935, and urged "all men and women of African descent and all allies of the freedom of Abyssinia to stand together for the defense of the Ethiopian people. The imperialists are determined to destroy Abyssinia. I, as representative of the Communist party," he continued, "am expressing opinion of our Party when I say that the watchword and the keynote of this gathering tonight should be united action against the enemies of the Negro people, that is, the imperialists, who everywhere grind the Negroes under their heels."[36]

The notable exception to this wave of support for Ethiopia was Marcus Garvey, the veteran black nationalist, who had relocated to London in 1935 and established a new publication, *The Black Man: A Monthly Magazine of Negro Thought and Opinion*. Garvey's sensibilities were thoroughly offended when, upon his arrival in London, Emperor Haile Selassie apparently "made it known that he wanted nothing to do with Negroes."[37] Haile Selassie did not agree to meet with Garvey's

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educated West Africans and especially people such as Wallace Johnson, Nnamdi Azikiwe, Jomo Kenyatta, and Kwame Nkrumah that but for the outbreak of the Second World War, the revolution for independence would have been launched in the late thirties than in the late forties," p. 92.

[36] James W. Ford, "For the Defence of Ethiopia," in *The Negro Worker* (A Comintern Publication), 5, 5, May 1935, pp. 5–7. James W. Ford was also the Vice Presidential Candidate (on the Communist ticket) of the United States in the national general elections of 1932. See *Negro Anthology* (1931–1933), ed. Nancy Cunard (New York, NY: Negro Universities Press, 1969). Also see James W. Ford, *The Negro and the Democratic Front* (New York, NY: International Publishers, 1938), pp. 159–166. It is important to mention here that the Italian invasion of Ethiopia caused some problems for the US Communist Party in its attempt to appeal to African Americans. The announcement in the USA in 1936 that the Soviet Union was still delivering "oil shipments—some directly to Italian troops in Africa—had a disastrous effect on Negro membership in the American Communist Party and led to condemnations of Soviet policy in the Negro press." See Roger E. Kanet, "The Soviet Union and the Colonial Question, 1917–1953," in *The Soviet Union and the Developing Nations*, ed. Roger E. Kanet (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), pp. 14–15.

[37] Sbacchi, *Legacy of Bitterness,* p. 25. According to Alberto Sbacchi, the explanation for Haile Selassie's position toward Garvey lies elsewhere. "The Italo-Ethiopian war and Garvey's own political decline led to Haile Selassie's refusal to have anything to do with Garvey and his movement," p. 1.

delegation. In *The Black Man,* Garvey ridiculed and poured scorn on the Emperor. "It is a pity," he wrote, "that a man of the limited intellectual calibre and weak political character like Haile Selassie became Emperor of Abyssinia at so crucial a time in the political history of the world. Every Negro who is proud of his race must be ashamed of the way in which Haile Selassie surrendered himself to the white wolves of Europe."[38]

The IAFA was, however, strongly represented at Waterloo station to greet the Emperor when he arrived in London in June 1936. Kenyatta was part of this delegation. Dispensing with protocol, Kenyatta reportedly "broke through the polite cordon of officials" and embraced Haile Selassie; "man to man, African to fellow African."[39] Many years later, according to Ras Makonnen, who had been part of the IAFA delegation at Waterloo, Haile Selassie "was to record during a visit to Kenyatta in Kenya that he had been extremely touched by the welcome he had felt from Africans and other groups in the London of that day."[40]

All of Kenyatta's activities on behalf of the IAFA were closely monitored and relayed to the Colonial Office. This included speeches that he gave to organizations with aims similar to those of the IAFA. On November 19, 1935 Kenyatta gave a speech at "a meeting held under the auspices of the Union of Democratic Control at the Livingstone Hall, Westminister." The object of the meeting was to "protest against the treachery of the present National Government in its betrayal of Abyssinia." In his remarks, as reported, Kenyatta stated that "the Abyssinians were quite able to look after themselves and did not want any interference from outside countries."[41]

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[38] Marcus Garvey, *The Black Man: A Monthly Magazine of Negro Thought and Opinion,* 2, 6, March–April 1937, p. 8. Marcus Garvey eventually accused Haile Selassie of being "a great coward who had fled his country" where "Black men were chained and flogged," while he "lived in cowardly exile in Britain." See Sbacchi, *Legacy of Bitterness*, p. 25.

[39] Murray-Brown, *Kenyatta*, p. 198.

[40] Makonnen and King, *Pan Africanism From Within,* p. 115. Makonnen adds that the IAFA was at Waterloo station "in full strength, but we had to push our way forward … We were determined, not to be kept away by these imperialists who were pretending to be in sympathy, shedding their crocodile tears," p. 116.

[41] TNA, KV 2/1787, Police Report, December 20, 1935.

Kenyatta's education, broadly defined, was also of special interest to the intelligence services. His entry point to British higher education was at Woodbrooke College, Birmingham, where he enrolled to "brush-up on his primary and secondary education in order to prepare himself for higher courses" at universities.[42] Later, from 1933–1936, he was employed "in the department of African Phonetics on a study of the tones and phonetics of the Kikuyu language."[43] Through this work, he "was able to make a small income."

The most important part of his intellectual growth in Britain was, without doubt, studying anthropology under Professor Malinowski at the London School of Economics (LSE). Malinowski was, at the time, "the most sought-after anthropologist in Europe, perhaps in the western world." Kenyatta's successful enrollment in this 3-year diploma program was a testament to his considerable intellectual abilities. During this period, Kenyatta spent a lot of time at the British Museum library. MI5 agents noted that he read almost exclusively "books dealing with the problems of the coloured races." Kenyatta attained two valuable things from LSE; a University of London Diploma and the writing of a manuscript that would later be published as *Facing Mt. Kenya: The Tribal Life of the Gikuyu* (1938). He had been able to interact, argue, and share ideas with some of the best minds in anthropology and he was now a published author. In the "Introduction," Malinowski praised the book's originality, depth of thought, and sound analysis. He concluded that the book would "rank as a pioneering achievement of outstanding merit."

These accomplishments were noted in both London and Nairobi. "A paragraph on native affairs in the Kenya Intelligence Report" of May 7, 1938 stated that, "Johnstone Kenyatta, the Kikuyu tribesman at present in England, is reported to be publishing a book on Kikuyu religion, its title being: *Facing Mount Kenya*."[44] Kenyatta himself was able to relay news of his academic and intellectual achievements to his old KCA comrades. On August 4, 1938 the Kenya Police Intelligence Report noted that, "A leaflet dated 18th June 1938, containing the reproduction of a letter from Johnstone Kenyatta, now in England, and another by

[42] R. Mugo Gatheru, *Kenya: From Colonization to Independence, 1888–1970* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2005), p. 52.

[43] Delf, *Jomo Kenyatta*, p. 94.

[44] TNA, KV 2/1787, Kenya Police Intelligence Report, May 7, 1938.

George K. Ndegwa, the Acting General Secretary, has been published by the KCA." In the letter, Kenyatta assured members of the KCA, "he was still working for his country," and that he had recently forwarded "complaints from Wakamba tribesmen in Kenya regarding compulsory seizure and sale of their cattle," and the matter was "receiving attention."[45] In this leaflet, Kenyatta proudly informed the KCA members of the publication of his book, and urged them to purchase it. These accomplishments served to enhance his status in Kenya during this period, which in turn increased the fear and nervousness of the colonial government and its security forces about him.

Scarcity of financial resources haunted Kenyatta throughout his stay in Britain. Jeremy Murray-Brown has provided some vivid details of the indignities that Kenyatta suffered during this period. "There were occasions when he had to lie up in his room for days, shivering from cold and waiting for the mail from Kenya. By selling the stamps he could then buy himself a penny bun. He had to walk to save bus fares, allow girlfriends to pay for an evening's outing, and stay in his room while his one shirt dried on the radiator. Sometimes his down-at-heel appearance shamed his friends and they were forced to replace his tatty garments."[46]

These financial difficulties were well known to both the intelligence services and the Colonial Office. On September 8, 1936 the Colonial Office wrote to The Secretariat in Nairobi to inquire about Kenyatta's finances and the possibility of the KCA providing funds for his return to Kenya. Kenyatta's landlord, "A certain Mr. S. Hosken, of 95, Cambridge Street, Victoria, S.W.1," had gone to the Colonial Office complaining about prolonged non-payment of rent. Due to this delinquency on the payment the landlord had moved Kenyatta "from the first floor to the attic and gets no meals."[47] The landlord also reported that Kenyatta was "still well dressed and well fed and goes abroad at times." Perhaps he had a secret source of funds! In response, A. de V. Wade from The Secretariat, informed the Colonial Office that, after making enquires, it had been determined that "the Kikuyu Central Association is in

[45]TNA, KV 2/1787, Kenya Police Intelligence Report, August 4, 1938.

[46]Murray-Brown, *Kenyatta,* p. 183.

[47]TNA, KV 2/1787, Letter from the Colonial Office to The Secretariat in Nairobi, September 8, 1936. Also see a letter from Col. Sir Vernon Kell to the Colonial Office on August 13, 1932, which alleges that Kenyatta received payment from the International Committee on Negro Workers, via George Padmore (KV 2/1787).

fact endeavouring to collect £400 for the purpose of returning him to Kenya, and it is believed that about £325 had been contributed by the Association and relatives of Kenyatta."[48] The Secretariat also knew that Kenyatta had received a salary of £10 a month for "helping to demonstrate phonetics" at the School of Oriental Studies (SOAS), although "this may only have been a temporary job."

There were occasions when MI5 blocked Kenyatta from holding specific positions of employment in Britain. The most notable of these concerns Kenyatta's hire by the Gramophone Company. On February 28, 1940 the Secretary of SOAS wrote to Kenyatta regarding a job offer by the Gramophone Company. During World War II the School had "been approached by several companies to give them assistance in vetting records as free from propaganda." The Secretary had forwarded Kenyatta's name as a member of staff of the School. He was to work on vetting records in Kikuyu, and was to be paid "at the rate of 10 Shillings per hour for the time taken up listening to records, preparing reports," MI5 immediately knew of this offer through "a rather delicate source" and sprang into action.[49]

In a letter to the Colonial Office MI5 sought to demonstrate that Kenyatta was not the appropriate person for this position. "Kenyatta so far from being a satisfactory Censor of gramophone records is likely to be the author of seditious propaganda in Kikuyu." MI5 wanted the Colonial Office to discuss this matter with SOAS. In the future MI5 now wanted SOAS to submit to it "any further candidates for this type of Censorship before actually putting their name forward for employment."[50] In the meantime Kenyatta had started working for the Gramophone Company. On March 21, 1940 the Company expanded his charge to include records in "Jaluo and Luganda" languages. In the end, Kenyatta lost the position. The Gramophone Company complied with the government's request, and pledged that it would be "happy as an additional check in case of obscure dialects, to send samples of the first pressings for censorship purposes to whatever Government official in

[48]TNA, KV 2/1787, Letter from The Secretariat, Nairobi, to the Colonial Office, November 5, 1936.

[49]TNA, KV 2/1787, Letter from the Secretary of the School of Oriental and African Studies to Kenyatta, February 28, 1940.

[50]TNA, KV 2/1787, Letter from MI5/Special Branch to the Colonial Office on Kenyatta's employment by the Gramophone Company.

the Colony may be nominated by you."[51] On April 19, 1940, Malcolm MacDonald of the Colonial Office provided the last word on this matter; "the services of Mr. Kenyatta have … been dispensed with and it is understood that the Company will in future employ Mr. Eliud Mathu, a student at Balliol College, Oxford."[52]

The intelligence services also followed, with keen interest, Kenyatta's social contacts, especially with white women. The matter of interracial coupling, while not illegal in England, still aroused resistance in many quarters in the general population. It was still problematic. In his memoirs, Ras Makonnen provided us with a glimpse into this world of relationships between white women and non-white men. "Sometimes if you were walking down Piccadilly with a white girl, some drunk would shout 'white bastard' at her. Some people also would immediately identify this white woman who was walking with you as someone loose, because no outstanding woman would be seen with a nigger."[53] Quite often, when in public, black men with white women took what Makonnen calls "a defensive attitude," by letting "the woman be a little in front of you—the excuse being that Piccadilly was full of people!"

In Kenyatta's case, the interest of the intelligence services was triggered not just by this residual racism, but more especially by the political (ideological) nature of these relationships. On December 12, 1933, Col. Sir Vernon Kell wrote to the Colonial Office about Kenyatta's relationship with Nancy Cunard. He noted that she had "recently been associating, apparently with considerable satisfaction to herself, with Johnstone Kenyatta."[54] Nancy Cunard was, of course, well known to the intelligence services on account of her radical politics, estrangement from her famous family, and then the publication of her massive edited volume, *Negro Anthology* (1934), in which Kenyatta's article, "Kenya," appeared.[55]

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[51] TNA, KV 2/1787, Letter from the Gramophone Company in response to objections raised concerning Kenyatta's employment, April 6, 1940.

[52] TNA, KV 2/1787, Letter from Malcolm MacDonald, Colonial Office, April 19, 1940.

[53] Makonnen and King, *Pan Africanism From Within,* p. 132.

[54] TNA, KV 2/1787, Col. Sir Vernon Kell's letter, 12 December, 1933.

[55] For a more recent detailed account and analysis of Nancy Cunard's life as a political activist, see Maroula Joannou, "Nancy Cunard's English Journey," *Feminist Review,* 78, 2004. pp. 141–163. Joannou's commendable essay notes that as "a prolific writer, publisher and political activist, Cunard presented a white readership with documentation which

In June 1938 Kenyatta had several meetings with Mrs. Hilda Rijaudias-Weiss, described by the intelligence services as "formerly a Communist in Germany and now a prominent member of the Seine group of the French Socialist Party." While in London, she "had dined with Johnstone Kenyatta with whom she discussed recent events in Jamaica." She planned to shortly "visit Cincinnati, America, and hopes in the course of the trip to investigate conditions of the coloured workers in the West Indies, especially in Jamaica, Barbados, and to forward information on the coloured races to Kenyatta."[56]

It is, however, Kenyatta's relationship with Dinah Stock that would dwarf all others and loom large in his life in both Britain and Kenya. He met her at a rally in Trafalgar Square, in May 1937. A graduate of Oxford University, she was by this time a veteran activist in left-wing politics, serving among other things as Secretary of the British Center Against Imperialism. Makonnen described her as a "specialist in English Literature," although by this time she worked as a "WEA lecturer." According to her biographer, "about August 1937, Kenyatta moved into Dinah's Camden Town flat."[57] They formed a very close relationship, which contributed favorably to Kenyatta's intellectual/political and emotional needs. Dinah Stock's biographer found it necessary to add that this unique and very close relationship "was a working, not a romantic relationship." Whether or not this was also a romantic relationship, there is no doubt that it provided Kenyatta with agreeable intellectual/political and emotional rejuvenation. Dinah Stock, according to Jeremy Murray-Brown, "made no emotional demands on him but was a loyal and diligent collaborator." Much later, after returning to Kenya, Kenyatta was accused of masterminding and then leading the Mau Mau

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prompted them to question their own prejudice and rendered problematic the imaging of black people as fixed embodiments of a Eurocentric sense of reality … Nancy Cunard was personally involved in events which were turning points in 20th century history, and is identified with issues which still shape our thinking about black history and politics today." On her personal style, Jannou writes that Cunard was "stylish, flamboyant and a fashionable figure." Abstract.

[56]TNA, KV 2/1787, Police report of private meeting between Kenyatta and Mrs. Hilda Rigaudas-Weiss, June 13, 1938.

[57]Basil Clarke, *Taking What Comes: A Biography of A.G. Stock (Dinah)*, ed. Surjit Hans (Chandigarth, India: Punjab University Publication Bureau, 1999), p. 83.

peasant revolt. Dinah Stock was convinced that this could not have been true; for after all, "she thought she knew Jomo better than any other European did, and he trusted her more, and not entirely as his instrument…'I don't find it remotely possible that he could have been organizing Mau Mau'."[58]

Dinah Stock's first impact on Kenyatta's life was to edit his book manuscript, apparently in "about three weeks." When the book, *Facing Mt. Kenya,* was published in 1938, Kenyatta received "a sum larger than anything he had ever received for work since he left Kenya."[59] The Special Branch took note of the publication of the book and also of Kenyatta's new address: "15 Cranleigh House, Cranleigh Street, London, N.W.1. Also residing at the same address is Miss Amy Geraldine Stock, known to the Special Branch as a Labour Party speaker, in whose company Kenyatta is frequently to be seen."[60]

Beyond the book, Kenyatta also published articles in newspapers and periodicals throughout his stay in Britain. Each contribution was noted by the intelligence services. In the case of publications in newspapers, clippings of the article were attached to reports in the many files maintained on his activities. In March 1930, on his first trip, Kenyatta wrote a letter to *The Times,* in which he reiterated many of the major points contained in the petition he had brought to the Colonial Office.[61]

On May 1, 1934 his letter to the editor was published in the *Manchester Guardian*. Kenyatta wrote the article to protest against the "appointment of two nominated unofficial members to represent native interests in the Legislature in Kenya instead of one." Of particular concern to him was the fact that the "appointment seems limited to Europeans, of whom one is likely to be a missionary." This development

[58] Basil Clarke, *Taking What Comes*, p. 185. Dinah Stock was so sure about Kenyatta because "He is first and foremost, a leader of his people. He can be unscrupulous in his private affairs, but he would never let them distort his political sense regarding his people; he is objective and clear-headed; if he didn't believe in the efficacy of a terrorist policy, he wouldn't descend to it to keep his ascendancy. Nor would he need to; at the same time, he regards, non-violence as a sane policy, not religion, and fundamentally believes that the African case is right, the settlers wrong. Thus he would denounce Mau Mau to the Africans but wouldn't denounce the Africans to the government," p. 185.

[59] Makonnen and King, *Pan Africanism From Within,* p. 162.

[60] TNA, KV 2/1787, Police Report, March 3, 1938.

[61] Delf, *Jomo Kenyatta*, p. 69.

was clearly unsatisfactory on many levels. "No one can better represent our interests," Kenyatta wrote, "than one of our race. We have demanded not representation by white men but the right to be represented in the Council by Africans. Until this representation of Africans is justly settled, there can be no peace or prosperity in Africa."[62] In this article he also touched on questions of social justice and representation. "Obedience to laws," he pointed out, "can only be justly enforced when those who are called upon to obey them have had either personally or through their representatives, an opportunity to enact, amend, or repeal them." Africans were expected to obey laws in which they had no role at all in their formulation. Europeans, whatever their profession may be, are ill qualified to represent Africans, for after all they are not "subjected to the same laws and regulations as those under which Africans suffer" and they "do not know the home conditions under which the Africans are forced to live." At best, such Europeans only "know Africans superficially" and should not therefore speak on their behalf.

Kenyatta's most radical publications appeared in periodicals and book anthologies. The intelligence services knew of each of them. His article, "Kenya," appeared in Nancy Cunard's voluminous *Negro Anthology*. In this article he touched on the familiar theme of Africans having been "robbed of their best land" and were now "reduced to the status of serfs." British imperialism in Kenya was "parasitic." This ensured that "the wealth which the Kenya Africans produce goes to the coffers and stomachs of these British imperialists and the white landlord settlers, instead of being used for the development of the people which provides it. This is the kind of parasitism which prevails in Kenya!"[63] Kenyatta also saw the apparent disunity of Africans in Kenya as the result of a deliberate imperial strategy. "It will be remembered that the policy of the imperialists is 'divide and rule', thus they have been able to create hatred between various tribes, and thereby they have been able to rob and oppress us separately. Therefore, let us unite and demand our birthright," he concluded.[64]

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[62] TNA, KV 2/1787, Jomo Kenyatta, "The Legislature in Kenya: African representation," in the *Manchester Guardian*, May 1, 1934.

[63] Kenyatta, "Kenya," in *Negro Anthology*, ed. Nancy Cunard, p. 804.

[64] Kenyatta, "Kenya," p. 807.

Between 1931 and 1937 Kenyatta published several articles in *Negro Worker*. The intelligence services kept a very close eye on him and his associates, especially George Padmore, during this time. The *Negro Worker* was without any doubt one of the most radical publications anywhere dealing with black issues during this period. In this respect, it can legitimately be compared to the *Crusader*, edited by Cyril V. Briggs.[65] The *Negro Worker*, edited by George Padmore, was the "official organ of the International Trade Union Committee of the Negro workers," which in itself was part of the Red International of Labour Unions (Profintern). The Profintern, according to George Padmore, was "the only international which conducts a consistent and permanent struggle against white chauvinism, for equal rights for the labour movement in the colonial and semi-colonial countries, for the correct solution of the national-race problem."[66] The Profintern, as is now well known, was a "Comintern organization established in 1926 to compete against social-democratic trade union movements, such as the International Federation of Trade Unions."[67]

George Padmore occupied a unique position within the Profintern, and even the Comintern. Both James Ford of the US Communist Party and Padmore "played leading roles in the formation of the International Trade Union Committee of Negro Workers, which became the most important formal agency for promoting revolution among Negro populations around the world."[68] Before the age of 30, Padmore's "ascent in world

[65] For a complete set of *Crusader* articles see Robert A. Hill (ed.), *The Crusader,* Vols. 1–6 (New York, NY: Garland Publishing, 1987). For an incisive analysis of Briggs' radicalism and ideological complexity, see Mark Solomon, *The Cry Was Unity: Communists and African Americans, 1917–1936* (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 1998), pp. 3–13. "Cyril Briggs did not come to communism from the Socialist Party. He took pride in his refusal to affiliate with a movement that failed to come to grips with the Negro question. Briggs considered himself a 'race man' … Cyril Briggs had begun his journey on an uncharted road. Unlike other negro radicals, he merged black nationalism with revolutionary socialism and introduced twentieth century global revolutionary tide to black America … Increasingly, Briggs sought to fuse his own sense of African identity and national culture with Leninist internationalism."

[66] George Padmore, *The Life and Struggles of the Negro Toilers* (London: R.I.L.U. Magazine/International Trade Union Committee of Negro Workers, 1931), p. 122.

[67] Garvey, Hill and Universal Negro Improvement Association, *Africa for the Africans*, p. 650.

[68] Allison Blakely, *Russia and the Negro: Blacks in Russian History and Thought* (Washington, DC: Howard University Press, 1986), p. 125.

communist circles was nearly dizzying: arbitration of internal factional conflicts in the Chinese Communist Party, election to the Moscow Soviet, carrying funds to overseas parties," all while also actively involved in the *Negro Worker* and the International Trade Committee of Negro Workers.[69] Later, as is now well known, Padmore broke with the Comintern in 1933 "probably triggered by cutbacks in clandestine funding and perhaps also cuts in arming colonial unions and leftist organizations." For many years after this break with the Comintern, Padmore held on to the position that the reasons for his "involuntary departure from the party" were due to his "insistent emphasis on the struggle against colonialism" at this time.[70]

The starting point for many of the articles in the *Negro Worker* was that "The Negro workers, however, exploited and oppressed by the imperialists, have not received the necessary support of the organized labour movement. The white worker, in many cases even today, still

[69] Solomon, *The Cry Was Unity*, p. 180.

[70] Blakely, *Russia and the Negro*, p. 127. For Padmore's later political orientation, see George Padmore (ed.), *Pan Africanism or Communism* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1971). This question of inconsistencies in the Soviet Union's support for the liberation movements of the colonized peoples has been covered extensively in the West. The central point in the majority of these publications has been to show that Soviet policy on the colonial question "was based on expediency" and lacked genuine commitment to the liberation struggles. This is clearly not accurate. Such an analysis provides a deliberately over-simplified reading of what was evidently a complex matter dealing with the contending needs necessary for the viability of the Soviet state (especially in the periods up to 1945) and its avowed and principled support for national and class struggles against imperialism. For a different perspective see Mark Solomon, "The long term viability of the movement against colonialism faced the greatest threat from fascism. Drawing the Western states into anti-fascist collaboration would strengthen the democratic, anti-colonial forces in those societies; the hold of those societies over their colonies would be weakened and riven by contradictions as their struggle against fascism went forward," p. 180. Geoffrey Barraclough, *An Introduction to Contemporary History* (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1967), provides an eloquent analysis of the seemingly contradictory and contentious claims on communism "as a universal ideology and its role as the official doctrine of the Russian state." These varying claims were never "easily adjusted. On the contrary, it is a matter of historical record that at many critical moments they were a source of tension and even incompatibility. Hostile commentators have made much of the fact; but in the nature of the case it could hardly have been otherwise. For a generation after 1917 the dissolution of the Soviet state would have spelled the end of communism as an established political force. How, then, could it be denied that the immediate tactical necessity of maintaining the position of the Soviet Union must, in case of conflict, take precedence over the long term interests of international communism?" p. 207.

regards the Negro as a pariah, and scornfully refuses to stretch out a helping hand to his black brother. Even in the ranks of the revolutionary workers numerous examples of white chauvinism can be recorded."[71] Therefore, one of the major aims of the *Negro Worker* was "to discuss and analyze the day to day problems of the Negro toilers and connect these up with the international struggles and problems of the workers."[72] It was hoped that at critical points "the most conscious section of the white workers show, by action, that they are fighting with Negroes against all racial discrimination and persecution." By August/September 1933, Kenyatta was named as a member of the editorial board of this radical publication, with responsibility for East Africa.

In his article, "The Situation in Kenya," Kenyatta outlined some of the details of British oppression in Kenya, observing that "in no part of the Empire, with the possible exception of South Africa do we find such outrageous manifestations of imperialist oppression, as in Kenya."[73] In another article, "An African Looks at British Imperialism," Kenyatta dismissed the value of several Imperial Commissions appointed to deal with the land question in Kenya. "We have seen Commission after Commission appointed to deal with the land questions, etc., but with all the reports of the Committees and Commissions, the robbery of the African lands and exploitation have not been stopped. What Africans want now is not Commissions but restitution of their land."[74]

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[71] Padmore, *The Life and Struggles of the Negro Toilers,* p. 122.

[72] International Trade Union Committee of Negro Workers, *The Negro Worker Organ of the International Trade Union Committee of Negro Workers*, 1, 1, January 1931, p. 3. The "Negro question" remained one of the most difficult problems that confronted the Comintern in general, and the US Communist Party in particular. The theoretical breakthrough on this question by the US Communist Party was to link struggles for racial justice with labor. See Solomon, *The Cry Was Unity,* "Inherent in Communist position on the Negro question, in general, was the strategic concept of a Negro-labor alliance as the cornerstone of progress. Despite periodic strains and ruptures, that informal alliance has been a major element of left-of-center union activity and politics since the 1930s. Starting from early unimaginable ideological rigidity in the sectarian Third Period of the late 1920s and early 1930s, the Communists nevertheless contributed to sensitizing trade unions and broader segments of the society to the depths of discrimination and the pressing need to struggle for racial justice in the interest of the majority," p. xix.

[73] Jomo Kenyatta, "The Situation in Kenya," *Negro Worker*, 2, 8. August 1932, p. 11.

[74] Jomo Kenyatta, "An African Looks at British Imperialism," *Negro Worker,* 3, 1. January 1933. p. 20. Irina Filatova states that Kenyatta published this article "while he was in the Soviet Union," in her article "Indoctrination or Scholarship? Education of Africans at the Communist University of the Toilers of the East in the Soviet Union, 1923–1937," *Pedagogica Historica,* 35, 1, 1999, p. 59.

At a "Negro" Conference held in London in 1934, Kenyatta gave a speech entitled, "British Slave Rule in Kenya." This speech was later published as an article in the *Negro Worker*. He chose to emphasize the degrading and dehumanizing nature of the *Kipande* identity cards. What was a *Kipande* card and why did Africans regard it as a badge of humiliation? It is "a piece of tin about three inches long and two inches wide. The names and particulars are taken together with the finger prints of the African, and the African has to carry this tied with a string around his neck … I sometimes marvel," he continued, "when I hear some of our English patronizing friends say that there is no slavery under the Union Jack—when every African is forced to wear that dog collar around his neck, and the law says he must produce it to any policeman, or any employer of labour; and if he fails to do so, he is liable to be arrested and be charged as a criminal."[75]

The appearance of these articles in very radical publications fueled the seemingly permanent interest in, and speculation about, Kenyatta's linkage to Communism. He was also enrolled for study in the Soviet Union from 1932–1933. These two factors provided ammunition to his colonial detractors, who were eager to believe their own speculative conclusion, that Kenyatta was in fact a trained Communist saboteur and revolutionary; a committed and dedicated Communist. But was he? What do we know about his studies in Moscow?

Recent scholarship has revealed that Kenyatta, who also attended the Lenin School, "enrolled at KUTV in autumn of 1932, having first visited Moscow in August 1929, possibly in the company of George Padmore."[76] KUTV was the Communist University of the Workers of the East.[77] This institution has also been referred to as "Stalin's Communist University of the Toilers of the East (KUTV)." The KUTV was part of a series of educational institutions founded and funded by

[75] Kenyatta, "An African Looks at British Imperialism," p. 12.

[76] Woodford McClellan, "Africans and Black Americans in the Comintern Schools, 1925–1934," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies,* 26, 2, 1993, p. 378.

[77] D. I. Suchkov, "Dzhomo Keniata V Moskve," *Vostok*, 4, 1993. Abstract.

"the Communist International, an international communist organization which united and directed activities of the overwhelming majority of communist parties throughout the world from 1919 until 1943."[78] It was expected that students selected to enroll would be "fully literate in their native language or in any one of the European languages."

There were students already affiliated with Communist parties in their home countries, while some had no such affiliation, "particularly those who came from countries where there were no communist parties." There does not seem to have been any fixed duration of stay for all students at KUTV. "'The normal course' lasted for 20 months which consisted of 16 months of studies (in some cases including 3 months of internship at factories), 1.5 months of military camps and 2.5 months of rest and excursion. The 'short course' lasted 10 to 12 months which included 8 to 9 months of studies, 1.5 months of military camps, and 1 month of rest and excursions."[79]

The curriculum followed at the KUTV included: political economy, history of the Union (Communist International), Leninism, historical materialism, party building, military science, current politics, English language.[80] This curriculum underwent several changes over the years. Indeed, the curriculum that was followed by the time Kenyatta enrolled "excluded … a course on underground work," and emphasized these subjects: Introductory course, language, Arithmetic, Geography, Natural Science, Political Economy, History of the Revolutionary Movement and of the Communist International, Leninism, Party and Trade Union building, Problems of the Native Country, Current Events, VII Congress of the Communist International.[81]

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[78] Filatova, "Indoctrination or Scholarship?", Summary page. Also see Pierre Brocheux, *Ho Chi Minh,* trans. Claire Duiker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007). "It is widely believed that Nguyen Ai Quoc (Ho Chi Minh), studied at the University of the East (KUTV), or the Stalin School, which functioned from 1921 to 1938," p. 25.

[79] Filatova, "Indoctrination or Scholarship?", p. 47.

[80] McClellan, "Africans and Black Americans in Comintern Schools," p. 375.

[81] Filatova, "Indoctrination or Scholarship?" p. 54. A Chinese student (Peng Shuzhi) who was enrolled at the KUTV in its initial years recalled that the curriculum at the institution included: "political economics, dialectical materialism, revolution and development of the workers' movement in the West, social movements in Russia since the early 19th century, and the history of Russian communism from the creation of the Social Democratic Party to the October Revolution." See Brocheux, *Ho Chi Minh,* p. 26.

Kenyatta was one of the black students enrolled at KUTV, a group that also included African Americans (from the USA) and blacks from the Caribbean islands. The number of African students at KUTV remained very low "compared to the numbers of students from Europe, Asia and the Americas." The majority of the African students and "West Indian blacks," who studied at KUTV and the International Lenin School "in 1925–1938, had graduated from secondary school and coped satisfactorily with the Moscow curriculum."[82]

What attracted Africans and African Americans to the Comintern schools in the Soviet Union at this time? These reasons can safely be summed up as "the quest for dignity and opportunity."[83] To be sure, the Soviets had their own underlying ideological agenda for recruiting and offering education to these students from all over the world. "The political leadership intended to train fresh cadres in the struggle against colonialism and imperial domination."[84] Still, most of these students were attracted by the unprecedented free educational opportunities and also a chance to live, work, and study in a society where they were treated with dignity. "What has most impressed Negroes about Russian society," Allison Blakely has written, is "the absence of institutionalized racism. There may be racist individuals; but if detected these persons are subject to crushing public opprobrium."[85] These black students were quick to notice that within the Comintern schools in the Soviet Union, "racial problems almost always involved foreign whites, especially Americans, Canadians, and Britons, who not infrequently verbally abused black students and sometimes lashed out at them physically."[86]

What was so evident was that the Soviet government and the ruling Communist Party "unequivocally condemned racism and racial discrimination." For these students, this was a new, pleasant experience of living in a society, a white society, whose leadership, institutions, and ideology condemned racial discrimination. They were studying in a country in which, in spite of its many problems, they did not have to suffer and

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[82] McClellan, "Africans and Black Americans in the Comintern Schools," p. 375.

[83] Joy Gleason Carew, *Blacks, Reds and Russians: Sojourners in Search of the Soviet Promise* (New Brunswick, NJ and London: Rutgers University Press, 2008), p. 3.

[84] Gleason Carew, *Blacks, Reds and Russians,* p. 1.

[85] Blakely, *Russia and the Negro,* p. 166.

[86] McClellan, "Africans and Black Americans in the Comintern Schools," p. 377.

painfully endure "discrimination and humiliation because of their skin color." This kind of treatment did not exist anywhere for black students at this time. Thus, "so far as the Comintern schools were concerned, the atmosphere for blacks, if far from ideal, ranked as the best anywhere in the world from both the educational and personal standpoint. No other country then offered blacks such opportunities."[87]

The education offered at the KUTV was also of superior quality, certainly "more advanced than in many other educational institutions, particularly those few institutions which were accessible at that time for Africans from British territories."[88] It is worth pointing out that the curriculum followed at KUTV pioneered several fields of study that would later be incorporated into related curriculums of Western and African institutions. These included courses/fields such as: "Introduction into the Study of Problems of Negro Countries in Africa," which introduced concepts including "covert and overt forms of forced labour," and covered "slavery, contract labour and the emergence of an African proletariat … living conditions of workers, women, child labour, food, housing and even 'labour aristicracy'."[89] The educational (and political) needs of the curriculum at the KUTV led to several pioneering efforts in the study of history, especially colonial history. It is at KUTV, Irina Filatova concludes, that "the study of some of the most important problems of contemporary history originated. Colonialism and anti-colonialism, a class approach to pre-colonial history, history of labour movement and left political parties."[90]

As for Kenyatta's tenure at KUTV, there is no evidence that he joined the Communist Party.[91] Even his training seems to have excluded

[87] McClellan, "Africans and Black Americans in the Comintern Schools," p. 387. McClellan adds, "Like their Western counterparts, Soviet communist and state universities occupied the same moral ground—with all its hypocrisies—as the societies they served. The special communist institutions of higher education provided no paradise, but they did admit, educate, and generally coddle small numbers of blacks. For all their own shortcomings, and despite the perverse agenda of the regime which controlled them, those schools played a generally positive role in the growing worldwide assault on racism and colonialism," p. 388.

[88] Filatova, "Indoctrination or Scholarship?" p. 56.

[89] Filatova, "Indoctrination or Scholarship?" p. 56.

[90] Filatova, "Indoctrination or Scholarship?", p. 57.

[91] McClellan,, "Africans and Black Americans in the Comintern Schools," p. 380.

conspiratorial work. "Because he was simply too well known—and too independent—for underground work, he evidently received very little conspiratorial training."[92] He apparently "rejected very close cooperation with the Comintern."[93] One of his classmates at KUTV later described him as "the biggest reactionary I have ever met."[94] Kenyatta seems to have "made use of the Soviet Communists" and once he had "achieved his purposes he left their care" and "had nothing more to do with them." A large part of the explanation for this outcome is that he remained a "bourgeoisie nationalist to the core." Later, in London, Kenyatta would become known "at least among friends" for being "rather stridently anti-communist."[95]

Another explanation is linked to the reaction of the Colonial Office and the colonial government in Kenya to his first trip to Moscow in 1929. At that time, he was forced to write to Dr. Shiels of the Colonial Office asking him to intercede on his behalf with the colonial government in Kenya. "There are rumours in Kenya that the police may try and find some excuse for putting me in prison or deporting me. It is true, as I have told you," Kenyatta wrote to Dr. Shiels, "that I visited Russia without any bad intentions and perhaps the people there may write to me although I have made no arrangements of any kind with them to do so. This might be used," he continued, "as a reason for getting me into trouble, but I am quite willing to let the Kenya Government see anything from Russia if anything is sent. I should be very grateful to you if you will do anything you can to see that I am allowed to reach my home and family and to resume my work among my people without being molested."[96] It was evident to Kenyatta that since he intended to return

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[92] McClellan, "Africans and Black Americans in the Comintern Schools," p. 379.

[93] Andrei Mikhailovich Pegushev, "Neizvestnyi Keniata: Kominter, 'Nigro Uorker'." ["The Unknown Kenyatta: Moscow, Comintern, 'Negro Worker'."] *Vostok* 4, 1997, pp. 37–49.

[94] Cited in McClellan, "Africans and Black Americans in the Comintern Schools," p. 380. On Kenyatta's inclination and even ability to use people for his own ends, Jeremy Murray-Brown in *Kenyatta*, observed that, "there was always something devious about him … And the deviousness showed itself in his use of other people, about which Kenyatta could be quite unscrupulous, even brutal," p. 215.

[95] Hooker, *Black Revolutionary,* p. 16, asserts that Kenyatta had been recruited to Moscow (and the KUTV) by George Padmore.

[96] TNA, CO 533/395/6, Kenyatta's letter to Dr. Shiels, March 18, 1930.

to Kenya and play a leading role in the nationalist movement, he had to avoid being labeled Communist. He could be radical without being Communist. As his letter to Dr. Shiels indicates, Kenyatta was aware of the "stigma attached to his Moscow trip."[97] In the unforgiving eyes of the British intelligence services and the colonial government in Kenya, "Kenyatta's tenure at KUTV and the Lenin School marked him with the indelible sign of the Comintern."[98]

MI5 closely followed Kenyatta's stay and study in Moscow. On May 10, 1933 Col. Sir Vernon Kell informed the Colonial Office that, "Johnstone Kenyatta is now in Moscow, presumably studying at the Lenin School. It is said he will shortly be going back to Kenya."[99] In Kenya, the colonial security forces were quite worried about Kenyatta's presence in Moscow. What were the practical implications for the colonial settler colony? It is therefore not surprising that these colonial security forces were in constant communication with MI5 over Kenyatta. On January 18, 1934 Kell wrote to the Commissioner of Police in Nairobi about Kenyatta's stay and activities in Moscow. "We heard in May," Kell stated, "that he was in Moscow 'studying' and it was presumed that this meant working at the Lenin School." Kell also relayed to the police authorities in Nairobi that Padmore had now "fallen out of favour with Moscow."

Unable to get any of the desired precise information on Kenyatta as a direct political threat at this time, the British intelligence services resorted, quite frequently, to speculation. This was especially true regarding Kenyatta's alleged instructions from Moscow toward the establishment of revolutionary organizations in Kenya. On February 28, 1934 Kell wrote to the Colonial Office on Kenyatta's possible future plans in Kenya. "There have been a bare indication," Kell stated, "that Johnstone Kenyatta may shortly be returning to Kenya with instructions for work, presumably among Trade Unions and similar organizations." However, since the information was imprecise Kell recommended to the Colonial Office that, "perhaps no definite action had better be taken on it at

[97] Beck, "Some Observations," p. 318.

[98] McClellan, "Africans and Black Americans in the Comintern Schools," p. 379.

[99] TNA, KV 2/1787, Letter of Col. Sir Vernon Kell to D.C.J. McSweeney of the Colonial Office.

present, particularly as it comes to us from a specially secret source."[100] He would nonetheless "endeavour to look out for anything further" on this matter and relay it to the Colonial Office.

Relying on the recollections of a Special Branch informant who apparently had had access to Kenyatta, Kell outlined to the Kenya police what he called Kenyatta's instructions from Moscow. These "instructions were to work to get the various colored organizations under one control, and to cause to be removed from office any white man who may have interested himself in such organizations and so obtained an official position. Kenyatta stated that his greatest barrier to success in this lay in the number of religious coloured societies."[101] Kell also speculated that "Kenyatta may have it in mind to succeed the functions of George Padmore on the Negro Workers Committee" as the "International Comrade." There was however, "no actual proof … that Kenyatta has succeeded him." What was certain, according to Kell, was that Kenyatta was in touch with "African Natives Association in London, the League Against Imperialism and, through Miss Nancy Cunard, a number of Anglo-American Societies, some Communist, for the rehabilitation of Negroes."

MI5, in order to closely monitor all of Kenyatta's activities and under the direction of Kell, ordered the "Postmaster-General and all others whom it may concern … to obtain, open and produce for my inspection all postal packets and telegrams addressed to Johnstone Kenyatta, 95 Cambridge Street, London … or to any name at that or any other address if there is reasonable ground to believe that they are intended for the said Johnstone Kenyatta."[102] As a result of this order, almost all of Kenyatta's mail from the fall of 1933 was intercepted and read by MI5.

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[100]TNA, KV 2/1787, Letter from Col. Sir Vernon Kell to the Colonial Office, February 28, 1934. For the Special Branch informant's report, see KV 2/1787, Special Branch Report to MI5, December 6, 1933.

[101]TNA, KV 2/1787, Letter from Col. Sir Vernon Kell to the Commissioner of Police, Nairobi, January 18, 1934.

[102]TNA, KV 2/1787, Letter to Postmaster-General from MI5 (January 1934) ordering access to Kenyatta's mail. This marked the start of MI5 reading Kenyatta's mail, which would continue until he left Britain in 1946. Part of the justification for this extraordinary step was because MI5 believed that Kenyatta was "succeeding George Padmore as principal Soviet agent for the British colonies. He is in touch with Garan Kouyate who occupies a similar position in regard to French Colonies and is in communication with various societies for the rehabilitation of Negroes."

Between November 29, 1933 and December 12, 1933 alone, MI5 read more than 30 letters addressed to Kenyatta. For each letter MI5 noted the sender and the letter's origin/postmark.

The security forces in Kenya remained almost obsessed with Kenyatta's political intentions. Was he coming back, if so, when? What were his political plans upon returning to the colony? How about his local political contacts? Partly to answer some of these enduring concerns, the Kenya Police formerly asked Kell in August 1939, to "secretly intercept such correspondence in London with a view to keeping a check on his activities and informing this office of any matters which might be considered of public interest to us."[103] In response, Kell assured the Kenya police that he had "arranged for a check to be kept on Kenyatta's correspondence and will let you have any interesting information that I obtain." In February 1940 Kell again reassured the Kenya police that Kenyatta's activities in Britain were under constant surveillance.[104]

As early as 1933, Kenyatta was aware that he was under surveillance by the British intelligence services and, more specifically, that they were intercepting his mail. It is also evident that these intelligence services were also intercepting George Padmore's mail. This can be seen in an extract from an intercepted letter from Padmore in Paris to Arnold Ward in London in May 1933 in which Padmore writes about Kenyatta. "About Kenya: we have the names and addresses of many people there, but never get replies. Kenyatta says that all letters from Germany are opened only those from London are safe, so you should at least register one in order to see if it will be delivered. Send us some more news of this new organization in Kenya. As you know K is in M. studying. This is to be kept secret. He will soon be going back."[105] In another note, the intelligence services provided a summary of Padmore's intercepted letter to Nancy Cunard. Padmore wanted Cunard to "give his letter to Kenyatta, who knows has all his mail opened." This letter to Cunard also talked about "Padmore's expulsion from the Communist Party on account of his Trotskyist tendencies."[106]

[103]TNA, KV 2/1787, Correspondence between Col. Sir Vernon Kell and Kenya Police, August 1939.

[104]TNA, KV 2/1787, Correspondence between Col. Sir Vernon Kell and Kenya Police, February 1940.

[105]TNA, KV 2/1787, Cross-Reference (Kenyatta), May 1933.

[106]TNA, KV 2/1787, Cross-Reference (Kenyatta), January 1934.

The British intelligence services also spied on the political activities of the IASB, of which they had an intimate knowledge, for example they knew of the IASB's internal squabbling over finances. On March 8, 1939 MI5 wrote to F.G. Lee at the Colonial Office about IASB's financial and administrative problems. "You may like to know," the note stated, "that there have been further squabbles about money among the organisers, as a result of which the Nigerian Edward Sigismund alias Babalola Wilkey has started an office of his own at 41 Grafton Way, W.1., known as the Negro Cultural Association. Wilkey is little more than a rather ineffective crook, but his organisation is affiliated to the National Council for Civil Liberties and is therefore of some interest."[107] In this note, MI5 also pointed out to the Colonial Office that the IASB was now "accommodated at 35 St. Bride Street, E.C.," which was the "headquarters of the Independent Labour Party." Further, the intelligence services confirmed that, Padmore "was in command, assisted by Kenyatta and Chris Braithwaite alias Jones." MI5's conclusion was that "Padmore had been drawing closer to the ILP during the last few months and is now virtually in charge of their Negro activity."

This elaborate and sustained surveillance of Kenyatta provided evidence of the fear, sometimes panic, that Communism as an ideology continued to arouse among the ruling elite in many Western countries. The rise of Communism, and its later direct association with Leninism and the Soviet Union, "threw down an open challenge to the existing social order and attacked liberal democracy root and branch, not merely exposing its shortcomings and pressing for them to be remedied, but rejecting its fundamental principles and ideals."[108] Perhaps even more alarming for the Western imperial countries, was the realization that communism also appealed to the colonized people. Some of

[107] TNA, CO 323/1690.

[108] Barraclough, *An Introduction*, p. 206. Also see Harold Shukman's "Foreword," in Louise Grace Shaw, *The British Elite and the Soviet Union,* 1937–1939 (London: Frank Cass, 2003), "Communists, fellow-travellers, large sections of the trade union movement and a significant number of left-leaning and liberal intellectuals saw the Soviet regime as the first attempt to administer a country and manage an economy in the interests of the workers, rather than for the profits of bankers and industrialists. Believing that the Soviet state was committed to building an equal and just society, and comparing what they believed to be its achievements compared with the West, which was mired in depression, reeling from the triumph of Fascism in Spain, and fearing the worst from Hitler, the Left's preference was a more readily understood option at the time than might seem today."

these colonized people started exploring the possibility of embracing Communism as a guide to their national liberation and the reformulation of their exploited and oppressed societies. Internally, within the imperial countries, Communism appealed not only to the working class but also to minority groups historically exploited and discriminated against on account of "their skin color" or gender. The appeal of Communism to groups and classes traditionally oppressed, exploited, and discriminated against was in part due to its deep "ethical concern for social justice, for equality between man and man in the sense of non-discrimination on the grounds of sex, race, colour and class."[109]

These complexities have, for the most part, been either neglected or given flippant attention in the dominant narrative in Western scholarship about the Soviet Union. This narrative has, for a long time, and even more so since 1991, concentrated on "Joseph Stalin's purges and draconic measures to compel his nation's growth and development." This emphasis has served a definite ideological agenda. What has been lost in this streamlined, and therefore predictable, narrative is the complexity of the appeal that the Soviet experiment had on minority populations in Western countries; specifically, African Americans in the USA, and then the colonized peoples under Western imperial rule. "Little known," Jay Gleason Carew has recently observed, "are the special international relations in the 1920s and 1930s that brought the Soviets and blacks together. Frustrated with the limitations of a racist United States and escaping their own arenas of terror, a number of blacks went to Russia in search of the Soviet promise of a better society. These sojourners were intellectuals, writers, and outstanding figures in the arts and entertainment; they were also farmers and engineers and people with other skills. In the Soviet Union, they discovered a country that welcomed them and their talents when the United States did not."[110]

Thus, not all blacks, especially African Americans, who went to the Soviet Union in the 1920s and the 1930s were students at KUTV. There were a significant number of African Americans who lived and worked in the Soviet Union during this period on account of their needed and valued expertise. "They came from the industrial centers in the North and the agricultural regions of the South; they were artists and recent

[109] Barraclough, *An Introduction*, p. 206.

[110] Gleason Carew, *Blacks, Reds and Russians,* p. 1.

college graduates. Although a certain segment went for political reasons, particularly in the 1920s, most went in the 1930s for economic opportunities and a chance for personal fulfillment. In the process, many lent their talents to the development of Soviet industrial and agricultural innovations."[111]

Africans and African Americans also benefited in the long run from the Soviet Union's consistent and forthright advocacy for racial justice and national liberation. Allison Blakely, in his highly regarded book, forcefully observed thus: "the fact remains that, regardless of Soviet motives, their championing of Negro rights and those of colonized peoples on the international level as well as at home has brought benefits to the Negro. A good example of this is the pressure this placed on the United States government to show better progress in making Negroes full citizens."[112] This factor, as is well known, also applies to the decolonization struggle, especially after World War II, in Africa.

The enduring suspicion about Kenyatta's political beliefs, and especially his alleged allegiance to the Comintern, have to be seen against the backdrop of the power of the appeal of Communist ideology in Western Europe during the 1920s, and even the 1930s. Certainly, a colonized person who had studied at KUTV, was a leader of a nationalist movement, published radical articles critical of settler colonialism, and actively associated with established radical activists in Europe, was seen as being doubly dangerous. There was a deep-seated fear within the British intelligence services, the Colonial Office, the colonial government, and settlers in Kenya that maybe Kenyatta had been recruited by the Comintern to establish a Communist state in Kenya (and maybe elsewhere in Africa). This all-consuming fear was unfounded since no such secret mission ever existed.

Kenyatta's travels in several European countries, enrollment at KUTV in the Soviet Union (the "forbidden land"), participation in radical Pan African activism, successful enrollment at LSE, all exposed him to intellectual, political, and social experiences that few white settlers in Kenya, and even colonial government officials, were competent to comprehend at this time. He had, through these varied and fascinating experiences,

[111] Gleason Carew, *Blacks, Reds and Russians,* p. 3.

[112] Blakely, *Russia and the Negro,* p. 164.

become a "new man"; an African who knew more of Europe, European politics, not to mention nationalist movements, than the vast majority of the white settlers and colonial administrators in Kenya. In brief, "he was in a class by himself." This distinction aroused fear and anxiety about him in both London and Nairobi.

CHAPTER 4

Pan Africanism: Discussions on Strategy for Liberation, Marriage, and Surveillance

In 1939 the outbreak of World War II in Europe marked the beginning of the last phase of Kenyatta's stay in Britain. For safety, he moved out of London with Dinah Stock to West Sussex. Together they rented a house in Storrington from Roy Armstrong, Dinah Stock's longtime friend. This was rural and agricultural England. Dinah Stock was rarely at Storrington, visiting only "during her holidays from a teachers' training college in Yorkshire." After a short period of time, Kenyatta managed to establish a vegetable garden and kept some chickens in the backyard.

He worked as a farm laborer during the war years, thereby avoiding the possibility of being drafted into the British army. In "1940, he took a job as a nursery worker at A.G. Linfield's Chesswood nurseries in the neighboring village of Thakeham. He was initially put to work in the tomato glasshouses, although he also worked in many other areas."[1] A.G. Linfield was a family owned business in this area. The production of tomatoes was seen as a priority by the Government during the war in a bid to "produce as much home grown food as possible." On the farms, Kenyatta easily established a reputation as a hard worker, jovial and reliable. "He even boiled beetroot before it was sold."

For relaxation after a day's work on the tomato farms Kenyatta drank beer at the local pubs, mingling easily with the local residents. The white residents of rural Storrington retained fond memories of him and

[1] Malcolm Linfield, "Jomo Kenyatta," *Longshot,* 5, p. 3.

W.O. Maloba, *Kenyatta and Britain*, African Histories and Modernities, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-50895-5_4

apparently continued to think very positively of him many years later, even after he had been accused of leading the Mau Mau peasant revolt.[2] Given the obvious rarity of black residents in Storrington at this time, Kenyatta "was something of a novelty" in the community. To the residents he seemed "flamboyant and gregarious, a showman who delighted in mimicry and whose powers of imagination would hold an audience spell bound as he pretended to stalk and kill a lion."[3]

Of course MI5 knew that Kenyatta had moved to the village of Storrington. In April 1940 Kell wrote to the Chief Constable of West Sussex requesting assistance in the surveillance on Kenyatta. As part of the background information, Kell informed the Chief Constable that Kenyatta "was once a communist but has now quarreled with the Orthodox Party and joined with the Trotskyist group." It was Kell's view that although Kenyatta was an established "anti-British agitator" he was unlikely to "engage in any local activity in Storrington" since a lot of his work was now "being conducted by correspondence with native agitators in Kenya."[4] However, MI5 was interested in any information regarding Kenyatta's relationship with his landlords, especially their inclination to participate in his political agenda.

In response the Chief Constable provided some details about Armstrong. He was 35-years-old, "5 feet 11 inches tall, well built, swarthy complexion, dark hair, untidy, never wears a hat."[5] He was well-educated and traveled across Britain lecturing at universities, although the Chief Constable was "unable to ascertain the exact nature of his lectures"; they were most probably linked with the Workers Education Movement. Further, Armstrong "had means of his own and his wife, Sheila Massie," had "the benefit of certain trusts which are dealt with by her bank. She is the owner of the High Over and another house, Longridge which is in the same locality." How about political views? Armstrong had "definite Communist views and until four years ago small meetings were held at his house. He does not appear to be engaged

[2] Delf, *Jomo Kenyatta*, pp. 114–115.

[3] Linfield,, "Jomo Kenyatta," p. 3.

[4] TNA, KV 2/1788, Letter from Maj. Gen. Sir Vernon Kell to Chief Constable of West Sussex, April 23, 1940.

[5] TNA, KV 2/1788, Letter from Chief Constable to Maj. Gen. Sir Vernon Kell, May 3, 1940.

locally in any Communist activities."[6] On June 17, 1940 MI5 forwarded to the Chief Constable copies of Kenyatta's correspondence from Nairobi.

On January 2, 1941 the Chief Constable filed another report on Kenyatta with MI5. "This man [Kenyatta] does not seem to be active locally." However, "he appears to receive quite a lot of correspondence, most of which is in foolscap size envelopes marked OHMS and addressed to J. Kenyatta, Gen. Secretary, KCA."[7]

While in Storrington, Kenyatta was "in much demand as a lecturer. Not only did he lecture to British troops under the Forces Educational Scheme, but he also lectured for the Workers Educational Association (WEA), usually about colonial issues."[8] On February 25, 1941 the Chief Constable filed a report to MI5 about one such lecture on "Introduction to Social Anthropology" at Wilborough Green, organized by London school teachers who had been evacuated there. Kenyatta lectured "for just over an hour on Anthropology, during which he dealt solely with the subject without the slightest suggestion of any political views. Questions put to him at intervals by the audience were also entirely on the subject of his lecture and showed no signs or any attempt to further the aims of any political party whether subversive or otherwise."[9] When, in a memo on February 4, 1941, the police in Nairobi expressed concern because they had been "unable to trace the arrival of any letters from Jomo Kenyatta in this country since May 1940," they were reassured by MI5 that Kenyatta was under surveillance, even in Storrington. Thus, for example, the Special Branch of the Metropolitan Police filed a report to MI5 in November 1941 on Kenyatta noting that he "had not been seen at the British Museum Reading Room since 1938," but he was still registered "with the School of Oriental and African Studies as a teacher of Swahili and kindred languages."[10]

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[6] TNA, KV 2/1788, Letter from Chief Constable to Maj. Gen. Sir Vernon Kell, May 3, 1940.

[7] TNA, KV 2/1788, Memo from Chief Constable to MI5, January 2, 1941.

[8] Linfield, "Jomo Kenyatta," p. 3.

[9] TNA, KV 2/1788, Report from the Chief Constable to MI5 on Kenyatta, February 25, 1941.

[10] TNA, KV 2/1788, Report on Kenyatta by the Special Branch of the Metropolitan Police on November 12, 1941, to the MI5.

From February 1942 Kenyatta was also employed by the British army as "a lecturer to troops countersigned to South Eastern Command." He lectured on social anthropology and Africa. On January 21, 1941, the British Ministry of Information extended an invitation to him to go to London for the screening of "short documentary and actuality films for circulation in the UK and foreign countries."[11] These were essentially propaganda films made to advance the war effort in Britain and its colonies overseas. The Ministry hoped that he would attend, "if and when you find it convenient" on the dates stipulated in the invitation.

On a personal level, the most notable change in Kenyatta's life during the war was his marriage in May 1942 to Edna Grace Clark, a white woman and a teacher, whom he met in Storrington in May 1941. Edna was quite moved by Kenyatta's kindness when her parents "had been killed in an air raid" in Yarmouth, where her father had worked as a marine engineer. Their son, Peter Magana, was born in August 1943. Although he indicated on his marriage certificate that he was a bachelor, it is clear that he was still legally married to his first wife, Grace Wahu, who remained in Kenya with his two children. Jeremy Murray-Brown has written that Kenyatta thought that, "monogamy of the West was an interesting anthropological phenomenon, no more."

This marriage to a white woman would, in the years ahead, be the source of much controversy in Kenyatta's personal and political life. To the white settlers in Kenya this marriage became an unpalatable irritation. They saw it as an act of deliberate provocation on Kenyatta's part, which provided an added reason, steeped in emotions, to resent Kenyatta; an African who, it seemed, had consistently refused to "know his place" in colonial society.

Marriage, family, and employment in an assortment of odd jobs in Storrington were not enough to divert Kenyatta's attention from his political ambitions in Kenya. There was a real fear on his part that maybe "his destiny might be slipping away" and his long-cherished goal of assuming a leadership position in Kenya might, after all, elude him. There is no doubt that his lengthy stay in Britain was full of "numerous setbacks," frustration, and even disappointment at "trying to put the

[11] TNA, KV 2/1788, Invitation to Kenyatta from British Ministry of Information, January 21, 1941.

case of his people to a largely unreceptive governing class."[12] The war had essentially marooned him in the English countryside, away from the center of political activity. The British intelligence services were quick to note that he had been politically inactive from about 1939 to 1944.[13]

World War II marked a major turning point in the development and assertion of nationalism across the British Empire. There was frustration and anxiety, but also excitement, at new prospects for freedom in the colonies made possible by the war. It had become increasingly evident, even to many supporters of imperial glory, that the destructive fury of this war would have a historic impact, not only on the position of Britain as a world power, but also on the fate of its sprawling empire. The war had resulted in "the weakening of the grip of the European powers" on their colonies, "largely as a consequence of their own discords and rivalries and the wastage of resources in which their wars resulted."[14] It was time for the Pan Africanists to assemble and deliberate on how to take advantage of these new unfolding opportunities for nationalist agitation.

In 1944 George Padmore, with Peter M. Milliard, a physician from Guyana, and Ras Makonnen spearheaded the formation of the Pan African Federation (PAF), composed of several black organizations with representation in Britain at this time. Among them were the IASB, African Union, the KCA represented by Kenyatta, West Africa Students Union (WASU), and so on. Although each constituent organization was allowed to "retain its own autonomy," all organizations were nonetheless expected to adhere to PAF's new thrust and to focus on the attainment of political independence for African peoples.[15] It was PAF that took the initiative to organize the Pan African Conference in Manchester in October 1945.[16]

Why Manchester? The city was chosen by the PAF as a venue for the Pan African Conference of 1945 largely on account of the available

[12] Linfield, "Jomo Kenyatta," p. 3.

[13] TNA, KV 2/1788, Appendix 'A', Jomo Kenyatta (Summary report).

[14] Barraclough, *An Introduction*, p. 154.

[15] P. Olisanwuche Esedebe, *Pan Africanism: The Idea and Movement, 1776–1991,* 2nd edn, (Washington, DC: Howard University Press, 1994), p. 127.

[16] There is considerable divergence of opinion in scholarship regarding the individual, or individuals, responsible for making the initial and decisive proposal for the Pan African Conference of 1945. See, for example, Hooker, *Black Revolutionary*; Murray-Brown, *Kenyatta*; Esedebe, *Pan Africanism.*

resources and facilities. The driving force behind the logistics in organizing the conference, and then providing the essential financial resources, was Ras Makonnen. Although later he was not as celebrated or as famous as other Pan Africanists, for example, Nkrumah and Padmore, there is no doubt that Makonnen and his resources in Manchester were the main reasons for holding the conference in the city. "There was no question where this should be held. We had all the conveniences in Manchester. Fortunately for my people," Makonnen would later observe, "I had succeeded in establishing myself as a businessman at this place … I knew the Lord Mayor" and was also a member of the Labour Party and he knew the party's local secretary. "All this made it relatively easy to get halls booked for the congress, and simplified the question of hotel accommodation … I had a number of houses where people could be put up." And the delegates were fed in the many restaurants owned and operated by Makonnen in Manchester.[17] C.L.R. James acknowledged the centrality of Makonnen to the Pan African movement, but especially to the success of the 1945 conference. Makonnen, C.L.R. James wrote, was "a man of fantastic energy and organizational gifts who found the money, found the premises, kept them in order not only as an office but as a sort of free hostel for Africans and people of African descent and their friends who were in any way connected with the Bureau (IASB) or needed assistance … during the war he was able to run a successful restaurant business in Manchester" and he "devoted most of the money he made into furthering the interests of the work and helping finance the fifth Pan African Conference."[18]

The PAF took advantage of the presence in London of many black trade unionists from Africa and the Caribbean attending a conference of the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) in February 1945. Neither the British officials nor the British trade unionists were particularly pleased with the proceedings. Delegates from the colonies articulated in an uncompromising manner "a few basic points: colour bar, forced labour, pass laws, wage differentials. All this had to come to an end. They urged the British government to accept its responsibilities in the colonies … Colonialism was just as objectionable as fascism."[19] The black delegates

[17] Makonnen and King, *Pan Africanism from Within*, p. 163.

[18] James, *Nkrumah and the Ghana Revolution*, p. 76.

[19] Hooker, *Black Revolutionary*, p. 86.

to the trade union conference were invited to meet with the PAF officials in Manchester, where almost all endorsed the idea of a Pan African conference. The actual timing of the 1945 conference was deliberately chosen to "coincide with the second conference of the WFTU" that was held "in Paris from September 25 to 9 October, 1945; and it duly took place between 15 and 19 October, 1945."[20] The presence of so many delegates at the WFTU conference, Makonnen noted, saved the PAF "a great deal of money in that some of the delegates were in Europe already." Kenyatta played a significant role at this conference as an Assistant Secretary and also made a presentation on East Africa, covering "Kenya, Somaliland, Uganda, Tanganyika, Nyasaland, and the Rhodesias."

The majority of the resolutions arrived at by delegates at this historic conference reaffirmed in direct and forthright language the "right of all peoples to govern themselves and control their own destiny." These delegates were also quick to recognize that, in the fast- changing international political landscape, it had become very difficult for imperial powers to defend "the merits of colonialism." Both the USA and the USSR, the new superpowers, were opposed to colonialism: "USA … because it wished to take over the position of the older colonial powers and the USSR" because it was "ideologically and politically opposed to colonial rule."[21]In response to these international challenges and then local

[20]George Shepperson and St. Clare Drake, "The Fifth Pan African Conference, 1945 and the All African People's Congress, 1958," *Contributions in Black Studies,* 8, 5, 1986, p. 4.

[21]Hakim Adi, "George Padmore and the 1945 Manchester Pan African Congress," in *George Padmore: Pan African Revolutionary,* eds Fitzroy Baptiste and Rupert Lewis (Kingston, Jamaica; Miami, FL: Ian Randle Publishers, 2009), p. 87. Arthur Creech-Jones, as Colonial Secretary, voiced Britain's irritation at criticisms of its colonial policy from both the Soviet Union and the USA, in a speech to the annual meeting of the Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society in London, in October 1946. "We are still the butt of a good deal of fierce criticism, because we have not paraded before the world the constructive purposes of our administration. Consequently, there is still a great feeling that we adhere to the old ideas of privilege and domination and that the nature of British Imperialism has not changed. Every night you hear from Moscow some criticism as to how we carry our responsibilities. But this comes also from the United States … There you have an emotional undercurrent which seems deep in American life and which no amount of rational argument appears able to eradicate. Recently responsible men in American public life have characterized Britain as an Imperial Power pursuing her own Imperial ends and little actuated by the purpose of winning freedom and building up the social life of the peoples of the territories. Unfortunately this view is shared too by those of Negro descent in the United States. We must face this fact, which tends to imperil relations between the great nations and poison good will." This speech was published in *East Africa and Rhodesia,* October 31, 1946.

stirrings of nationalism in the colonies, Churchill had famously grumbled that he had not "become His Majesty's Prime Minister to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire."

The delegates assembled in Manchester saw a linkage between the attainment of their freedom and the liquidation of European empires. Consequently, they strongly believed that the provisions contained in the Atlantic Charter of 1941 also applied to them, the colonized peoples outside Europe. This famous document "signed on 12 August 1941 between President Roosevelt of America and the British premier, Winston Churchill," stipulated, in part, that "all people have the right 'to choose the form of government under which they will live' and to determine their political destiny. Whatever were the intentions of the signatories, this principle implied a repudiation of colonialism."[22]

The 1945 Manchester conference was pointedly ignored by the major British and European newspapers. "Almost without exception, the white press ignored this conference" and thus "one of the significant events in the postwar world went unremarked to its conclusion."[23] In the few British newspapers in which it was covered, the conference received a very brief mention, usually in a small caption hidden in the middle of the paper. *The Daily Herald*, for example, reported on the conference on October 17, 1945 in a small caption under the title, "Slavery in Africa." The brief report covered part of the speech at the conference given by Magnus Williams, from Nigeria. "The Colonial Office, dominated by imperialists," Williams stated, "is an instrument of oppression and we must abolish it."[24] In the same article Peter Abrahams was reported to have stated that the "world's first concentration camps were in the British Empire, used by British imperialism to protect its interests in South Africa." The *Manchester Guardian* did not pay any more attention to the conference than other British newspapers. On October 15, 1945 the newspaper published a very brief mention: "About 200 delegates representing the whole coloured world", the article pointed out,

[22] Esedebe, *Pan Africanism*, p. 120.

[23] Hooker, *Black Revolutionary*, p. 98.

[24] TNA, CO 968/164/5, Colonial Policy—Pan African Congress.

"will attend the Pan African Congress which opens in Chorlton Town Hall, Manchester, today. Though it is not the first PAC which has been held", the article concluded, "its four predecessors were not of a truly representative character."[25]

On October 20, 1945 Peter Abrahams' brief article on the conference was published in *The New Leader* (a publication of the Independent Labour Party). "The banner against imperialism, against man's political and territorial domination by other men, that has long been trailing miserably in the dust", Abrahams wrote confidently, "will be raised again. It will be raised and held high by representatives of the colonial masses." He dismissed the centrality of the European Left in the struggle against imperialism. The European Left "by its behaviour … with rare exception, has forfeited its right to the leadership of the struggle against imperialism. This Pan African Congress marks an end of that leadership."[26]

Padmore's preexisting personal and professional connections in the Pan African world ensured the coverage of the Manchester conference in those far-flung lands. This was especially true in the African American press in the USA. Padmore served as a correspondent for many black newspapers, including the *Chicago Defender.* On October 6, 1945 Padmore's article announced preparations for the convening of the Pan African Congress with delegates "representing the world-wide Negro labor and progressive organizations."[27] This was followed by another article on October 27, 1945, which provided a summary of some of the speeches at the conference. The delegates were determined to be free and had thus demanded "the immediate smashing of all forms of racial discrimination and the colony system." The delegates had responded warmly to a speech by John McNair, Secretary of the Independent Labor Party, who urged them to "win the battle for complete independence." McNair urged the delegates "to return to their respective countries and inform the colored peoples that British Imperialists will never voluntarily leave Africa and the colonies." To achieve self-government it was vital for the delegates to stop "trusting the hypocrisy of the British Imperialist class. You know perfectly well that British Imperialists have often asserted

[25]TNA, CO 968/164/5, Caption from the *Manchester Guardian*, October 15, 1945.

[26]TNA, CO 968/164/5, Peter Abrahams' article published in *The New Leader,* October 20, 1945.

[27]George Padmore, "Pan African Conference Opens October 15 in London," *Chicago Defender.* October 6, 1945, p. 1.

that they went to Africa to bring the natives Christianity and civilisation. But the truth is that they went to rob and exploit the blacks. Imperialists of Britain, headed by the Tories, are as short minded and short sighted as they are ignorant."[28]

Even W.E.B. DuBois sought to provide more publicity for the Manchester conference. In London, shortly after end of the Congress meeting, DuBois addressed a press conference attended by representatives of Reuters, Tass (the Soviet news agency), United Press of India, and "the leading British, French, and Scandinavian newspapers." He informed the assembled media that, "Colonies and the Colonial system make the Colonial peoples in a sense the slums of the world, disenfranchised and held in poverty and disease. Colonies", DuBois went on, "are today the places of the greatest concentration of poverty, disease and ignorance of what the human mind has come to know. They are centers of helplessness, of discouragement of initiative, of forced labor, and of legal suppression of all activities or thoughts which the master country fears or dislikes."[29] DuBois also outlined the political aims of the Pan African movement: Africa for the Africans, and "complete independence and equality of status for all subject peoples and racial minorities."

In a separate article on this press conference published in the *Chicago Defender,* DuBois stated that he had faced "twenty-two newspaper men and women and talked of Africa and peoples of African descent." One of the questions asked at this press conference was whether he thought it "possible for the colored peoples of the world to gain freedom without fighting the whites?" In response DuBois reaffirmed non-violence as the preferred method of struggle. "I replied", he stated, "that the first reliance of the pan African movement was upon wide publicity on the exact nature of the grievances of colonies and groups of oppressed peoples. I pointed out how American Negroes used to be slandered and their complaints cavalierly dismissed, until we gathered a body of unanswerable facts that the nation began to realize our condition and what it meant."[30]

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[28]George Padmore, "Determined to be Free; Hint of Force," *Chicago Defender*. October 27, 1945, p. 1.

[29]George Padmore, "DuBois Demands Colonial Liberty at Press Conference," *Chicago Defender*, November 17, 1945, p. 13.

[30]W.E.B. DuBois, "The Winds of Time," *Chicago Defender*, December 22, 1945, p. 13.

Since "publicity to the conference was so slight," leading to meager coverage in the British press, the PAF sought to correct by organizing post-conference demonstrations and meetings in London to highlight the main resolutions, especially the quest for self-determination of the colonized peoples of African descent. On December 9, 1945, a particularly cold day, the PAF held a public rally in Trafalgar Square, London, to inform the British public about the conference and its essential resolutions. Special Branch noted that the crowd "increased to nearly 500 but the majority were sight-seers … of this number, no more than 75 were colored people."[31] Speakers at this meeting, chaired by Padmore, "were mildly critical of the Labour Government's attitude toward colored people."

The PAF strategy of holding demonstrations against specific colonial issues had, by 1946, brought a key victory regarding the treatment of African troops in the British army. In June 1946 Britain "begrudgingly abandoned its medieval practice of flogging African soldiers, but sidestepped queries concerning the law upholding similar treatment of native workers in Trinidad, British West Indies." The Colonial Secretary had essentially bowed to the relentless pressure of constant demonstrations organized by the PAF, under Padmore's leadership. "The half way decision was announced to the House of Commons by the Colonial Secretary of State, George Hall, under pressure from militant Pan African Federation and progressives of the Labor government."[32]

Two years after the Manchester conference Padmore published a pamphlet containing the main resolutions arrived at during the meeting. This pamphlet, issued for circulation throughout the Pan African world, provided further publicity for the Manchester conference.[33] The pamphlet contained a "memorandum to the UNO," which called "for adequate representation of the colored peoples of the world within the United Nations Organization." This specific memorandum had initially been delivered to the UNO Secretariat by DuBois in his capacity as the "International President of the Pan African Congress."

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[31] TNA, MEPO 38/91, Report by the Special Branch of the Metropolitan Police, December 9, 1945.

[32] *Chicago Defender*, June 8, 1946, p. 13.

[33] George Padmore (ed.), *History of the Pan African Congress* (London: Hammersmith Bookshop, 1947).

Unlike the press the British intelligence services dutifully reported on the conference and its proceedings. Both Special Branch and MI5 were represented; MI5, for example, gained access to all the papers delivered at the conference by the assembled delegates. These were compiled and forwarded to the Colonial Office.[34] On November 8, 1945 Special Branch submitted its official report on the conference. This Congress, Special Branch noted, "was the first fully representative conference by the Pan African Federation." They pointed out that about 200 delegates had attended and that "members of the Independent Labour Party were present at the gathering." All the sponsoring organizations were mentioned.[35]

The Special Branch report was meticulous and detailed. It covered both the substance of the conference proceedings and the implications of the speeches. The Pan African Federation (PAF) , for example, was correctly described as "the unifying body of other movements—each constituent assembly retains its autonomy." As for the aims of the PAF, these were identified as: "To demand the self-determination and independence of African peoples and other subject races from the domination of Powers claiming sovereignty and trusteeship over them; to demand equality of civil rights for African peoples and the abolition of all forms of racial discrimination; to promote the well-being and unity of African peoples and peoples of African descent throughout the world; and to strive for co-operation between African peoples and other peoples who share their aspirations."[36] The PAF had plans to establish African institutes "for the study and propagation of African people's languages, history, arts, crafts and culture" and the publication of "books by and about Africans," and a monthly journal. These, and similar details about the IASB, show that the British intelligence services had managed, by this

[34]See TNA, CO 968/164/5, Pan African Congress.

[35]These organizations were: Pan African Federation; IASB; Negro Welfare Centre; Negro Association; KCA; African Progressive Association, London; Coloured Workers' Association; Sierra Leone Section, African Youth League; Friends of Africa Freedom Society; Coloured Peoples Association, Edinburgh; United Committee of Coloured and Colonial Peoples Association; African Union, Glasgow University; Association of Students of African Descent, Dublin; and West African Students Union of Great Britain and Ireland.

[36]TNA, MEPO 38/91, Report by the Special Branch of the Metropolitan Police, November 8, 1945.

period, to gain access to intimate details about the structure, aims, and future plans of these Pan African organizations.

The Special Branch report identified Ras Makonnen, Secretary of the PAF, resident at 58, Oxford Road, Manchester, as "chief organizer of the congress." Makonnen had settled on Manchester as the venue because "it was felt that there would be less hostility to the coloured delegates in that town than in any other." Dr. W.E.B. DuBois (leader of the American Negro Association) "presided over the conference." The report identified some of the key speakers–Padmore, Abrahams, Wallace Johnson, Jomo Kenyatta— as the "well known negro extremists."[37] Decorations in the hall were also noted as indicating the ideological inclination of the conference, including: "Oppressed peoples of the earth—unite"; "Freedom of all subject peoples"; "Africa Speaks"; "Africa Arise"; "Down with Imperialism"; "Down with Trusteeship"; "Down with colour bar"; "Down with lynching"; "Ethiopia wants exit to the sea"; and "Freedom of the press in the colonies."

What did the delegates want? What was their central objective? Freedom. Special Branch cited from the conference's resolutions on self-determination of the colonized people: "We are determined to be Free. We want education, the right to earn a decent living … we demand for Black Africa autonomy and independence … we are unwilling any longer to starve while doing the world's drudgery in order to support, by our poverty and ignorance, a false aristocracy and a discredited Imperialism … we condemn monopoly of capital and rule of private wealth and industry for private profit alone. We welcome Economic Democracy as the only real democracy."[38] Special Branch was careful to note the tone adopted by each individual speaker. There were those identified as fiery and others as moderate. Padmore's speech received close scrutiny, not only because it was evidently fiery, but also for having "virulently protested against the Smuts regime in South Africa" and also for having "declared that the Jew who lived in Berlin during the Hitler regime had a better life than a negro living in South Africa today." In this speech Padmore had also maintained "that a negro's skin was a

[37]TNA, MEPO 38/91, Report by the Special Branch of the Metropolitan Police, November 8, 1945.

[38]TNA, MEPO 38/91, Report by the Special Branch of the Metropolitan Police, November 8, 1945.

passport to oppression, 'we don't need yellow armbands in Africa—just the black skins'."[39]

In its report on the 1945 conference to the Colonial Office MI5 touched on two interrelated matters: the ideological orientation of the participants; and outside influence/support in the organization of the conference. A few individuals, Padmore, Makonnen, and Kenyatta (key officials of the IASB) were identified as having taken "leading roles in the Manchester Conference." MI5 was, however, unable to detect any viable evidence of external support and influence at the conference. "There is no reason to think", the report concluded, "that any outside influences were at work around this gathering. It appears to have been a perfectly open and spontaneous demonstration of opinion and not in any way subject to political pressure." Although "a number of left-wing political groups were interested in the proceedings, including the ILP, Common Wealth and the Anarchists, they had no responsibility for what took place."[40]

The British Communist Party had played no role at all in the organization of the conference and does not seem to have had any substantial influence on the delegates. The MI5 attributed this lack of influence to the British Communist Party's initial dismissal of the conference as tainted "with Trotskyism (they use this term to denote any kind of extreme left wing opinion with which they disagree)." As a result, the British Communist Party, according to MI5, was "in difficulties about what attitudes to adopt" toward the conference. And so, after much discussion, "eventually it was decided at Party Headquarters that it could not be boycotted because it did express the legitimate aspirations of the colonial peoples—hence the message of greeting sent by Pat Devine, the Party's Lancashire organizer."[41] Did the organizations represented at the conference present an immediate security risk? "So far as the organizations who sent delegates are concerned, none is known to us in a specifically security connection." The majority of these organizations represented what MI5 called "various shades of progressive and extreme

[39]TNA, MEPO 38/91, Report by the Special Branch of the Metropolitan Police, November 8, 1945.

[40]TNA, CO 986/164/5, Pan African Congress.

[41]TNA, CO 986/164/5, Pan African Congress.

left opinion." This also applied to "the individuals who attended" the conference.

Reports by the British intelligence agencies placed a lot of emphasis on the delegates who attended the conference, especially their radicalism and general ideological disposition. Thus, for example, the intelligence services noted in detail the contents of Kenyatta's speech.[42]

These delegates were, as expected, dismissed as agitators and extremists, most probably Communist inspired. This was done without being able to see or appreciate the shift that had occurred in the recommended strategy for liberation in the colonies. And indeed, to these intelligence services and their masters, any strategy of resistance against the empire was dangerous and therefore intolerable.

The shift in the recommended and preferred strategy for liberation had taken place over a period of time in discussions within the IASB, whose officers remained the main driving force behind the convening of the 1945 conference. It is important to briefly consider this issue since it had a direct bearing on Kenyatta and his complex linkage to Kenyan nationalism in the period after 1946. After the formation of the IASB the prevailing and dominant viewpoint regarding the strategy for national liberation was largely fashioned by C.L.R. James. Basing himself on examples of resistance in "Ethiopia, Spain and the Caribbean," James concluded that ordinary peasants and workers could, with proper leadership, be transformed into a formidable liberation force, through armed struggle.[43] He became convinced that "successful armed rebellion among Black peoples was possible."

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[42] See TNA, KV 2/1788, Jomo Kenyatta; Appendix 'A' (Summary report), "he attended the fifth Pan-African Congress in October, 1945. He made a speech in which he alleged that lands had been taken away from Africans in Kenya and the Kipande system introduced, while many Africans were away fighting in the 1914–18 war. Allegations of cheating over wages by employers, of forced labour and lack of educational facilities were made. As a result of this speech a resolution was passed calling upon the Secretary of State to put into practice at once the principles of the Four Freedoms and the Atlantic Charter, to abolish racial and other discriminatory laws, particularly Kipande, and the system of equal citizenship to be introduced forthwith, to introduce freedom of speech, press, association and assembly, to introduce compulsory free education, state medical service, health and welfare services, to grant Africans the right to elect and to be elected to Legislative Council, Municipal and other Councils, and to abolish forced labour and to introduce the principle of equal pay for equal work."

[43] Robinson, *Black Marxism*, p. 383.

Thus, armed struggle as the path to liberation remained the position of the IASB up to 1945 when the Pan African Conference was convened in Manchester. It was then abandoned. Several factors precipitated this change. C.L.R. James, "first among equals" among IASB's revolutionary theorists and chief theorist behind the strategy of armed struggle, had been away in the USA on a lecture tour since 1938 and would remain there for another 15 years. In his absence the theory of armed struggle failed to generate enthusiastic support in the group. Kenyatta, it needs to be stated, had always been a very reluctant supporter of James's position on this matter. The other contributory factors were developments in Europe, which seemed, at least to the IASB, to dim the prospects for a successful armed struggle in the colonies. "To stake independence upon armed rebellion", C.L.R. James observed many years later, "was … to have as a precondition the collapse or military paralysis of the metropolitan government. It was, in other words, to place the initiative for armed struggle upon the European proletariat."[44] IASB noted, with regret, that by 1945 the European proletariat in the imperial countries had not expressed any significant solidarity with the colonized non-white peoples in their struggle for liberation; "the proletariat of Britain and France had not spoken." There were also no discernible signs of the European proletariat (in the imperial countries) being engaged in revolutionary uprising aimed at installing socialist governments that were ideologically committed to the immediate dissolution of the empire. This reality forced the IASB to see the need for "a radical transformation in theory" and, as a result, "the perspective of armed rebellion was abandoned (though held in reserve) and non-violent mass action was substituted."[45] It is this position that the IASB advocated at the Pan African Conference in

[44] James, *Nkrumah and the Ghana Revolution*, p. 71. A clear inference to be drawn from reading James' classic text, *Black Jacobins,* is that "The San Domingo revolution had been inspired by the French revolution, had developed side by side with it, and had enormous influence upon the course of that revolution. The book therefore constantly implied that the African revolution would be similarly contingent upon the socialist revolution in Europe. It did not envisage an independent movement of Africans as being able to succeed in face of the enormous military power that a stable imperialist government would be able to bring to bear. This has been contradicted by the experience of the Ghana revolution, but conversely reinforced during the same period by the experience of the revolt in Kenya," pp. 68–69.

[45] James, Nkrumah and the Ghana Revolution, p. 71.

Manchester. It would be reflected in many of the resolutions taken at the conference on effective strategies for liberation.[46]

In a shift in emphasis and strategy, the Pan African Conference in Manchester set aside "the old belief that the struggle for freedom could be fought and won in Europe … henceforward, the struggle must be conducted in the homelands" in Africa, "as the Indians were doing" in India.[47] To achieve this freedom, it was important to form strong, disciplined, and coherent political movements, supported by the masses. The time for mass political movements had arrived. At every stage mass support was seen as the most critical variable. It was envisaged that the workers, whose invincible weapon was the strike and boycott, would be in the forefront of this new offensive against imperialism.[48] There were also responsibilities and inescapable obligations for African intellectuals in this struggle, who had to remember that unless they "awoke to their own responsibilities, the masses would not realize their strength."[49] The new strategy of energetic mass action, expressed as "strikes in industry, political demonstrations, etc.," had to be constitutional. The nationalist movement at the helm of mass action had to be well organized, focused, determined, and resolute. "In theory at least," such expressions of energized and controlled mass nationalism, "could be carried out with a fair chance of being able to avoid reprisals."[50]

The use of the general strike in nationalist struggles presented both opportunities and challenges. It was therefore crucial for nationalist leaders to be aware of both the inescapable power and the limitation of this

[46] One of the resolutions on strategy stated, "The delegates of the Fifth Pan African Congress believe in peace … Yet if the Western world is still determined to rule mankind by force, then Africans, as a last resort, may have to appeal to force in order to achieve Freedom, even if force destroys them and the world."

[47] Esedebe, *Pan Africanism*, p. 145.

[48] Esedebe, *Pan Africanism*, p. 144.

[49] Hooker, *Black Revolutionary*, p. 97. Also see Padmore, *History of the Pan African Congress*. pp. 6–7. "We also call upon the intellectuals and professional classes of the Colonies to awaken to their responsibilities. By fighting for trade union rights, the right to form co-operatives, freedom of the press, assembly, demonstrations and strike, freedom to print and read the literature which is necessary for the education of the masses, you will be using the only means by which your liberties will be won and maintained. Today there is only one road to effective action—the organization of the masses. And in that organization the educated Colonials must join."

[50] James, *Nkrumah and the Ghana Revolution*, p. 150.

strategy. C.L.R. James noted that both "the advocates of armed rebellion and of militant non-violence" embraced the general strike at some point in their strategic calculation. A Marxist revolutionary and a militant advocate of non-violence both use "grievances, demonstrations, mass rallies, and unceasing attack upon government, exposure and denunciation of the timid or reactionary elements in the mass movements whose vacillations might weaken the will and sense of solidarity of the masses; and ultimately when the movement is ripe and the occasion presents itself calls the population out on a general strike and faces the government with the unified opposition of the people."[51] What happens next?

Confrontation with the colonial government could only be undertaken at the height of mass nationalism, "when the masses were organized." At all costs, the nationalist movement had to resist being provoked by a colonial government eager to use force to repress nationalism. The calculation had to be that "colonial governments had neither the forces nor the experience to deal with," for example, "a general strike of the body of people who refused to be provoked,"[52] but equally refused to submit.

Thus, there should be no resort to the general strike before making adequate preparations regarding the strategy to be followed to sustain the nationalist struggle, in the event of the general strike being brutally suppressed. The alternatives for the nationalist movement were very clear: "either you go on, and that means taking power from them by force, or you retreat." All of this again pointed to the vital need for a coherent and disciplined mass nationalist movement. Only such a movement could deal effectively with the expected colonial government's "counterattack with all the armed force at their disposal," aimed at crushing and then demoralizing the nationalist movement.

For a brief period in 1945 most of the delegates to the Manchester conference seemed optimistic regarding the resolution of the colonial question in years ahead. This was especially true due to the assumption of power in post-war Britain by the Labour Party. The PAF, on behalf of the Manchester conference, addressed a letter to the new Labour Prime Minister. Special Branch took note of this letter, which welcomed "Labour's great victory, for which we, as colonials, have hoped

[51] James, *Nkrumah and the Ghana Revolution*, p. 71.

[52] James, *Nkrumah and the Ghana Revolution*, p. 72.

and worked alongside Britain's workers." This victory, the letter continued, made it possible to inaugurate "the century of the common man. Courage, vision, planning and fearless work can turn this possibility into reality. The dark-skinned workers, no less than the pale-skinned, want freedom from war, want and fear. The victory of the common man here is the victory of the common man in Africa, Asia, and other colonial lands. To consolidate this great victory, however, courage is needed. The courage to face squarely the fact that Imperialism is one of the major causes of war. The courage to admit that any high-sounding blue-prints that beg the question of man's territorial and political domination by other men, whether their skins are white, yellow, or black, is only staving off the day when the evils of war, with their ghastly new scientific twists, will again be unleashed on humanity. It is the challenge of our time that you, Comrade Attlee, and your Government should give the socialist answer to the Tory Imperialism of Mr. Churchill's 'What we have, we hold'. What will your answer be?"[53]

The PAF's letter to Attlee challenged the Labour Party to be consistent in its condemnation of imperialism and external domination of some countries by others. To this end, "to condemn Imperialism of Germany, Japan and Italy while condoning that of Britain would be more than dishonest; it would be a betrayal of the sacrifices and sufferings and the toil and sweat of the common people of this country. The Pan African-Federation", the letter concluded, "demands for the colonial peoples the immediate right to self-determination." This would be "an effective step in the process of banishing wars."

But the Labour Party, it turned out, was not in any hurry to dissolve the empire. The party's post-war colonial policy pronouncements reinforced this position. The Labour government adopted what came to be seen as a "stalling strategy," which disappointed many radical and even moderate Pan Africanists. "The Labour Government", Fitzroy Baptiste wrote, "spoke with a forked tongue on the decolonization issue. Whilst stating its support for the principles in the Atlantic Charter and in the Manchester 'Challenge' document, Labour embarked on a series of policies and strategies to blunt those principles and to stretch out the time

[53]See TNA, MEPO 38/91, Report by the Metropolitan Police Special Branch, November 8, 1945. Also see Hakim Adi, "Pan Africanism in Britain: Background to the 1945 Manchester Congress," in *The 1945 Manchester Pan African Congress Revisited*, eds. Hakim Adi and Marika Sherwood (London; Port of Spain: New Beacon Books, 1995).

table for British disengagement from Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean for fifteen years or more after 1947."[54]

This "stalling strategy" was apparent in the policy speech delivered by Arthur Skeffington (MP), on behalf of the Labour Party's National Executive Committee to the Party's Annual Conference in 1954. Skeffington was quick to remind the delegates that his speech on "The British Labour Party's Colonial Policy" marked the "first time that a special session has been set aside at a Labour Party conference for a full discussion on colonial policy initiated by the National Executive. Previously, colonial problems, when mentioned at all, have been included in the debate on international affairs."[55] The bulk of the speech covered what the Executive Committee regarded as the Labour Party's colonial achievements: "It is the Party that created Colonial Development Corporation; made long term bulk buying contracts, so valuable in providing economic stability without which economic progress is impossible; established university colleges in the West indies, Malaya, the Gold Coast and Uganda; increased the number of colonial students engaged in higher education in Britain from 300 (under the Tory flag-waggers) to 4,000 in 1951."[56]

The speech also touched on the matter of self-government for the colonies. The Party was committed to "the principle and practice of developing democratic self-governing nations out of the present colonial states." The colonized peoples were unlikely to arrive at this goal without the assistance of Britain as the colonizing power, especially in the area of economic development on "which their political structure can rest." Skeffington's speech seemed to regret the exploitative nature of the relationship between the "metropolitan country" and the colonies. In future, the speech continued without providing any details, the Labour Party will "insist that the development of the colonies is for the benefit of colonial inhabitants themselves instead, as in the past, so often in the interest of the metropolitan country."

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[54]Fitzroy Baptiste, "The African Conference of Governors and Indigenous Collaborators, 1947–1948: Strategy to Blunt the 1945 Manchester Pan African Congress," in *George Padmore: Pan African Revolutionary*, eds. Fitzroy Baptiste and Rupert Lewis (Kingston, Jamaica; Miami, FL: Ian Randle Publishers, 2009), p. 38.

[55]Arthur Skeffington, "The British Labour Party's Colonial Policy," *Socialist International Information*, 4, 42, 1954, p. 747.

[56]Skeffington, "The British Labour Party's Colonial Policy," p. 748.

As socialists the Party was "appalled at the conditions under which the vast majority of our colonial peoples are living." Therefore, it was "the prime responsibility of Britain, and in particular of British Socialists, to aid in every way possible a rapid increase in the standard of living of our dependent peoples." Still, there was need for caution in dealing with the development of the colonized peoples. There was a very strong need to "recognize … the grave social dangers which accompany the sudden impact of modern Western technology on primitive societies, and it is our responsibility, in conjunction with the colonial people themselves, to see that this transition is as smooth as possible and is accompanied with the least psychological disturbance. Our experience in Kenya as well as in other under-developed territories should teach us the need for constant vigilance in this respect."[57] Skeffington concluded by making the improbable suggestion that even in the era of colonial imperialism, the colonized peoples and their colonial masters were, after all, comrades. "In all our consideration of the relationship between the British working-class movement and the peoples of the colonies, we must continually remember that they are our brothers and comrades."[58]

In a supplementary publication on colonial policy issued in September 1954, the Labour Party reaffirmed its intent to enable the colonies to "achieve democratic self-government under conditions which ensure for their peoples both a fair standard of living and freedom from oppression from any quarter."[59] The ultimate aim was for the colonies to achieve "responsible self-government within the Commonwealth as a free association of peoples of different races on a footing of complete equality." The Labour Party would, therefore, endeavor to "stimulate the growth of institutions for self-government at all levels," and that as "soon as the development of each territory makes it practicable, arrangements should be made between the Government and responsible leaders of each territory to fix a date for the transfer of power."

Poverty of the majority of the people in the colonies caused some minor discomfort to the Labour Party. On one hand the Party was convinced that this massive poverty of the colonized "springs primarily

[57] Arthur Skeffington, "The British Labour Party's Colonial Policy," p. 750.

[58] Skeffington, "The British Labour Party's Colonial Policy," p. 751.

[59] "British Labour Party's Policy on Colonial Affairs." *Socialist International Information,* 4, 37. September 1954, p. 660.

from natural causes, particularly in the tropics." On the other hand, the Party reluctantly acknowledged that, "Britain has drawn great wealth from these territories."[60] The Party hoped that if, in future, it helped "the colonial peoples to overcome poverty" and also recognized "their right to equality of treatment, irrespective of race and colour," it would be able to work "with them to achieve democratic self-government." If these steps were taken, the Party believed it would be able to win the cooperation of the colonized "in the great task of transforming the world's largest empire into a Commonwealth of free and equal peoples."[61]

A significant explanation for the "stalling strategy" adopted by the Labour Government, and effectively sustained by the Conservatives, lies in Britain's post-World War II economic dependency on her empire. "A powerful factor in the stalling tactics of the Labour Government on decolonization in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean was the parlous economic and financial weakness of Britain at the end of the war in 1945."[62] The war had severely depleted Britain's gold and dollar reserves, and left the country with a substantial trade deficit. Under these circumstances of diminishing international political and economic power, Britain now "looked to her Dominions and her colonial Empire for help in her post-war program of economic recovery."

Africa's minerals and cash crops had been central to Britain's war effort. These included: "rubber, sisal, hides, bauxite, cobalt, industrial diamonds, pyrethrum, radium, uranium, vanadium, and wolfram." Col. Oliver Stanley, the Secretary of State for the Colonies acknowledged this fact on his visit to East Africa during the war in 1943. "East African sisal, pyrethrum and rubber were quite vital to Great Britain and the allies; East Africa was in fact, now practically the only source of sisal and pyrethrum."[63] In Nakuru, Kenya, Col. Stanley told the white settlers that Britain's war effort was deeply indebted to their agricultural production. "We in Britain recognize that without some materials you are producing

[60] "British Labour Party's Policy on Colonial Affairs," p. 660.

[61] "British Labour Party's Policy on Colonial Affairs," p. 663.

[62] Baptiste, "The African Conference of Governors," p. 38.

[63] *East Africa and Rhodesia,* October 21, 1943, p. 117.

in Kenya, it would have been impossible to carry on the war on anything like the 100% scale we are now doing."[64]

In the post-war years Britain's economic needs and consumer demands dashed any hopes of immediate and effortless decolonization. To this must be added the "Cold War imperatives" which emerged in 1945 and ended up having a decisive influence on the texture of the *Uhuru* won by African countries in the 1960s.

In a desperate bid to undermine and then derail the momentum for national independence that was evident in most of her African colonies after the war, Britain sought the assistance of local governors, especially those African conservative prominent men in her colonies. Britain's objective, aimed at stabilizing and then sustaining the imperial mission, was "to find local collaborators to help her blunt the demand for immediate decolonization that was contained in the Atlantic Charter and the Manchester document."[65]

African representatives to the conference of collaborators—which took place at Lancaster House, London, between September 19 and October 9, 1948—had been chosen with care by the local colonial governments. Many were African representatives in the "Legislative Councils of the colonies and protectorates in Africa." These were men deemed to be "more 'conservative', 'more responsible', 'men of property' and 'chiefs'," people who would not be readily inclined to support a radical nationalist agenda, including immediate decolonization. The list conspicuously excluded all nationalists suspected of being too radical, or of possibly having links to Communist organizations, or of having embraced the Manchester document. Those African nationalists who had participated in the 1945 Manchester Conference were, as expected, excluded. Thus, Kenyatta was not invited. This conference of collaborators in 1948 had been called to blunt, or if possible supplant, the influence of the "Manchester men" in the colonies.

A number of the African delegates to this conference came to play significant roles in their country's post-war nationalist history. These included Usuman Nagago, Emir of Katsina; Sulemanu, Emir of Abuja; Mallam Abubakar Tafawa Balewa (from Nigeria); Dr. J.B. Danguah (from Ghana); and Eliud Mathu (from Kenya).

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[64] *East Africa and Rhodesia,* October 21, 1943, p. 117.

[65] Baptiste, "The African Conference of Governors," p. 41.

Arthur Creech-Jones, the new Colonial Secretary, served as chair of the conference. He knew many of the "Manchester men" through his earlier association with the IASB. Now, as Colonial Secretary, Creech-Jones called for stability in the colonies; a stability that avoided, if not repudiated, radical nationalism, which seemed to portray the colonizing powers as exploiters and oppressors. Britain and the colonies were, in fact, mutually dependent. "The colonial territories", Creech-Jones stated, "need our help and cannot get on without us; the metropolitan country must be economically healthy to give that aid; it is common advantage therefore to secure a closer relation between African economies and our own."[66]

The concept of "mutual benefit" as outlined by Creech-Jones was, on many points, a restatement of the old "Dual Mandate" of Lord Lugard.[67] This time, though, Creech-Jones added another reason for the colonies to help save Britain, that of safeguarding the "ways of life and values of civilized Europe … so that Western Europe does not fall back into chaos," thereby opening the door to the objectionable values

[66] Arthur Creech-Jones, cited in Baptiste, "The African Conference of Governors," p. 46.

[67] Lord Lugard, *The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa* (Edinburgh; London: William Blackwood, 1929), p. 617. Elsewhere in the book, Lugard affirmed the economic imperative behind colonial conquest. "The partition of Africa was, as we all recognize, due primarily to the economic necessity of increasing supplies of the raw materials and food to meet the needs of the industrialized nations of Europe." p. 613. What did Africans get out of the colonial enterprise? "In all these cases," Lugard stated, "a higher civilisation was brought into contact with barbarism, with the inevitable result, as history teaches, that boundaries were enlarged in the effort to protect the weak from tyranny of the strong, to extend the rule of justice and liberty, to protect traders, settlers, missions, and to check anarchy and bloodshed on our frontiers, even though territorial expansion was not desired … Nor must we ignore the very real desire of the people of this country to assist in the suppression of slavery and barbarous practices." p. 613. And how was exploitation of Africa's resources part of the "dual mandate"? Why should this be seen as a service to humanity and civilisation? Principally due to the fact, "these products lay wasted and ungarnered in Africa because the natives did not know their use and value. Millions of tons of oil nuts, for instance, grew wild without labour of man, and lay rotting in the forests. Who can deny the right of the hungry people of Europe to utilize the wasted bounties of nature, or that the task of developing these areas was, as Mr. Chamberlain expressed it, a 'trust for civilisation' and for the benefit of mankind? Europe benefited by the wonderful increase in the amenities of life for the mass of her people which followed the opening up of Africa in the nineteenth century. Africa benefited by the influx of manufactured goods, and by the substitution of law and order for the methods of barbarism," p. 615.

of Eastern Europe, namely Communism. It was therefore in the interest of the world, including Britain's colonies, to ensure that the "ways of life and values of Western Europe" were upheld. In this way, the economic contributions of the empire to Britain's economic and social recovery could not be seen as exploitation but as a contribution toward the rejuvenation of a civilization that was now threatened by Communism and its most objectionable values.

At the conference Creech-Jones voiced in very elemental terms the central objections of the Western rulers of empires against Communism. With little variation, these Western objections quickly became standard and routine: "Communism is a way of life, and it is a way of life which is alien to all principles and values which are important to Western civilisation, and to the civilisations which have grown up in the East as well. Its method is violent revolution, it believes in the dictatorship of a class. Its purpose is to destroy social democracy altogether; and therefore it tries to rule by force and the suppression of individual liberty by continual purging of the community of the heterodox radical opinion; and it imposes itself with all the power of the State by trying to get all men in a common pattern, by living and thinking in a particular way, suppressing individual liberty, destroying all those ideals and values which are important in democracies which we are seeking to create in various parts of the world. Now its method is repression; purging; the use of the camp and the destruction of life if that life seeks to have any volition, any willpower, any separate expression from the expression of the community as a whole."[68]

This monologue by Creech-Jones was indeed a crash course on "why you should hate and deplore communism" offered by the Colonial Secretary to an attentive and captive audience of conservative prominent Africans. Almost all the objections raised in this speech against Communism, were, with minor variations, equally applicable to imperial rule in the colonies. What was relevant here was that Britain was looking for local allies in the colonies in its struggle against Communism. And, by implication if not fact, Britain was unlikely to grant independence to nationalists who embraced Communism as their guiding ideology. The concept of "mutual benefit" had now been expanded to include ideological struggle against Communism. This was a struggle in which the

[68] Creech-Jones, cited in Baptiste, "The African Conference of Governors," p. 52.

colonized were expected to follow Britain's lead. Conservative and prominent Africans provided ideal candidates for this new and urgent imperial purpose.

Without any commitment to immediate decolonization by Britain, attainment of political independence would have to be the result of concerted agitation and activism in the colonies. Carried on through massive protest movements, this activism and agitation would have to be on a scale "which could not be contained even by force," as outlined in the resolutions of the 1945 Manchester conference.

How did Kenyatta react to the 1945 conference? There was a realization on his part that his "usefulness in England as a spokesman for his people had obviously come to an end."[69] At the end of the historic conference in Manchester Kenyatta resolved to return to Kenya to guide the revitalization of the nationalist movement. Waiting for him in Kenya were the colonial security forces, eager to decipher his intentions, scrutinize his actions, and interpret his pronouncements. On July 10, 1946, on the eve of Kenyatta's departure from Britain, the Director of Intelligence in Kenya alerted London that, "if Kenyatta returns to Kenya, then a most careful watch on him will be necessary. At present", he continued, "there is no evidence to suggest the existence of organized communism amongst Africans, but Kenyatta may well find followers among political malcontents and ex-detainees."[70]

After fifteen eventful years in Britain Kenyatta left for Kenya on September 5, 1946. Ras Makonnen accompanied him from Manchester to Storrington and then on to Plymouth, where he boarded the ship to Kenya. Edna was pregnant with their second child and was therefore unable to escort him to Plymouth. She later lost the child and, according to Jeremy Murray-Brown, did not expect to see Kenyatta again.[71] Ras Makonnen recalls that seeing Kenyatta off "was a difficult moment realizing that we would now be separated after fifteen years. We looked at each other unable to speak, but walked toward the ship."[72] Uprooting himself from Britain was, without any doubt, difficult and even painful.

[69] Delf, *Jomo Kenyatta*, p. 121.

[70] TNA, KV 2/1788, Memo from Director of Intelligence, Kenya, July 10, 1946.

[71] Murray-Brown, *Kenyatta*, p. 220.

[72] Makonnen and King, *Pan Africanism from Within*, p. 169.

He had family and friends in Britain, not to mention social and political contacts, and a respectable history of Pan African activism.

Culturally, and even politically, this prolonged stay in Britain affected Kenyatta much more profoundly than may have been readily apparent, "for in their way the British are the subtlest of brainwashers." Some of these values included what Guy Arnold calls the British approach to politics: "pragmatism, only dealing with problems when they become crises, tolerance so long as the other side is talking, and the sense, despite everything that might be wrong, of living in a fundamentally settled society."[73] It could be argued that, at least on cultural matters, the absorption of British values ironically brought Kenyatta closer to the settlers and the colonial officials, "although they always imagined the opposite was the case."[74] The hostility of the white settlers toward Kenyatta would become a major factor in determining his political future in Kenya.

[73] Arnold. *Kenyatta and the Politics of Kenya*, p. 32. Some of these British values, were covered in great detail in the article, "What, in Essence, Is the British Empire?" by L.S. Amery (former Colonial Secretary), published in *East Africa and Rhodesia,* November 18, 1943, pp. 194–197.

[74] nnArnold, *Kenyatta and the Politics of Kenya*, p. 32.

CHAPTER 5

Back Home: Politics of Nationalism, Mau Mau, Prison, and Surveillance

Kenyatta received a jubilant hero's welcome when he arrived in Nairobi on September 19, 1946. He had traveled by train from Mombasa. The train station in Nairobi was filled with a throng of Africans, "until it looked from a distance," in Jeremy Murray-Brown's colorful phraseology, "as though a dark mass had been poured over the platform … Kenyatta was deeply moved by this reception."[1] Yet, on some level, Kenyatta expected this rousing and celebratory welcome. He knew, while in Britain, that "his name had been kept alive in Kikuyuland" and that no other individual had arisen in his long absence to challenge his position as the undisputed leader of Kenyan African nationalism. He had become "a living legend" and now Africans of many ethnic groups, other than the Kikuyu, expected him to focus on their endemic problems of poverty and oppression under colonial rule.

From his arrival up until his detention in 1952, the colonial security forces subjected Kenyatta to a very close and persistent surveillance, which concentrated on two areas: personal/social matters; and political activities and engagements.

The Kenya police wanted an immediate clarification and/or confirmation of Kenyatta's marriage to Edna. On October 1, 1946 the police wrote to London for confirmation on this matter deemed critical in the colony. The confirmation came on October 3, 1946, stating that indeed

[1] Murray-Brown, *Kenyatta,* p. 228.

W.O. Maloba, *Kenyatta and Britain*, African Histories and Modernities, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-50895-5_5

"Kenyatta married Edna Grace Kenyatta presently resident at 'Highover' Heath Common, Storrington, Sussex."[2] After this confirmation of the marriage, the worry now shifted to the possibility of Edna choosing to join her husband in Kenya. To forestall what was seen as an ill-advised action, or at least plan for it, the colonial security forces sought the assistance of the Passport Office, via the Colonial Office. In May 1947, Lt. Col. P. Perfect, Security Liaison Officer, East Africa, wrote to the Colonial Office about Edna Kenyatta and her possible travel plans. "I should be grateful," he implored, "if arrangements could be made through the PCD for this office to be notified by cable in the event of [Edna Kenyatta] applying for a passport and entry permit to this colony. Since it is possible she may elect not to travel to Kenya direct," he continued, "it would also be of interest, in these circumstances, to know for which countries she may request her passport to be validated."[3] In June 1947 the Director General of Passports (UK) responded to this request, pledging his support and cooperation. The Department's records "covering the last ten years show no trace of a passport having been issued to Edna Grace Kenyatta." However, "her name is now included in the Stop List and should she apply for passport facilities, the application will be immediately brought to our notice; we shall pass the information to you."[4]

The other personal matter of immediate interest to the colonial security forces concerned Kenyatta's educational attainments. Did he really study at the LSE? On November 25, 1946 an urgent telegram was sent to the Colonial Office by the Intelligence Office in Nairobi seeking to know whether Kenyatta had attained a "B.A. of London University where he is supposed to have studied Anthropology and whether he was a student at LSE."[5] The Colonial Office provided a quick

[2]TNA, KV 2/1788, Correspondence with Kenya police on Kenyatta's marriage to Edna. There were several memos exchanged between London and Nairobi on this matter in the period immediately after Kenyatta's return to Kenya in 1946. In the end, it was confirmed that Kenyatta had married Edna legally.

[3]TNA, KV 2/1788, Memo from Lt. Col. P. Perfect to Sir Percy Sillitoe, Colonial Office, on Edna Grace Kenyatta.

[4]TNA, KV 2/1788, Correspondence between Lt. Col. P. Perfect and the Colonial Office and Passport Office (UK) on Edna Kenyatta's travel plans.

[5]TNA, KV 2/1788, Urgent secret telegram from Intelligence Office, Nairobi, to the Colonial Office on Kenyatta's education and qualification from LSE.

preliminary response on November 27, 1946, stating, "Kenyatta studied Anthropology at LSE and gave lectures on the subject. He also studied at London University but have not yet been able to establish whether he achieved a B.A." On December 20, 1946 the Colonial Office supplied the final authoritative statement on this matter: "Have now established that Kenyatta did not repeat did not achieve a degree and has no title to it but was given a Diploma."[6]

On the political front, Kenyatta came back home at a particularly difficult time. There were immense economic problems affecting the welfare of almost all Africans across the country, but especially in Nairobi, Central Province and many urban centers. There was punishing inflation, widespread unemployment, lack of housing, crime and insecurity, landlessness, eviction of squatters from the White Highlands, and then a settler community determined to hold on to power indefinitely. The Kenya that he "found in 1946 was an unhappy place, despite its superficial air of gaiety, and racial tension was increasing."[7]

In the urban areas, especially in Nairobi, African residents were afflicted with chronic poverty or absolute lack of housing. The colonial and municipal governments had for a long time functioned under the illusion that urban areas were not for Africans—contradicted continually by the swelling migration of Africans to the towns—and did not envisage that "Africans would become permanent residents of the urban areas." The inevitable outcome of this colonial neglect was that the many Africans who continued to migrate to urban areas had no access to decent housing, social services, and increasingly, no personal safety. Unplanned residential locations sprang up around Nairobi, especially in the period after World War II. These included, Dagoretti, Ngata Rongai, and Quarry. Municipal authorities rarely, if ever, supervised these sprawling residential locations. There was also very limited police supervision or control. These locations were "plagued by poverty and discontent" and would, by the early 1950s, provide the foot soldiers of radical nationalism that gave rise to the Mau Mau peasant revolt.

Inflation and unemployment contributed to the "increased hardship for the employed African worker," since any such worker "now found

[6]TNA, KV 2/1788, Correspondence between the Colonial Office and Kenya Intelligence Office on Kenyatta's educational attainments in Britain.

[7]Delf, *Jomo Kenyatta*, p. 125.

it impossible to provide for his kinsmen who had come to Nairobi and sought refuge with him. Tolerance and kinship ties were put to a severe test."[8] Lack of housing, unemployment, and inflation emerged, after 1945, as emotive issues around which "political and trade union activists rallied African workers' support against the colonial state and its policies."

In the rural areas of Central Province all the social, political, and economic problems revolved around the scarcity of land. This was well known to the colonial government. Since the 1920s, when the KCA had dispatched Kenyatta to London to present its case to the British Government, land scarcity had persisted as the key political and economic problem in Kikuyuland. Although the colonial government was aware of this problem, it never saw it as an urgent matter, meriting an immediate solution. Instead, the 1951 annual report of Central Province, on the eve of the Mau Mau revolt, stated that the "African must learn like all other races of the world that he can no longer expect by right of birth to have the world provide him with a farm, whatever the circumstances of his father; the surface of this planet", the report continued, "cannot expand, whatever the universe may be doing; and the addition of adjacent lands would only be a palliative for a few years to this problem."[9]

Part of the solution offered by the colonial government involved landless Africans accepting work as manual laborers. While reluctantly acknowledging that the "attraction of urban life continued to draw large numbers of Africans to the towns," the colonial government nonetheless concluded that "there was a shortage of men prepared to earn their living by manual labour, which was the only form of work for which most of those who drifted to the towns were qualified."[10] The young men who refused to accept positions in manual labor formed, according to the colonial government, "gangs of criminals operating in and around the outskirts of Nairobi, alternating with brief periods of casual employment." Although their numbers were not large, "when compared with

[8] Maloba, *Mau Mau and Kenya*, p. 37.

[9] Nairobi, Kenya National Archives, PC/Coast/2/1/80, p. 325. This report, written on the eve of the Mau Mau revolt, still held on to the unrealistic claim that there was no current danger of starvation for Africans, "since employment is not difficult to get for any man of reasonable intelligence who is honest and prepared to work."

[10] Kenya Annual Report, 1949 (London: HMSO, 1950), p. 4.

the settled residents of the Reserves" they were still "noisy and obvious, and form the core of all the African political meetings responding readily (and naturally) to the popular slogan of 'more land'. The modern world calls them 'spivs'; the fourteenth century used to call them 'sturdy beggars'; and they are a major social problem of the Nairobi-Thika area and the two adjoining districts of Kiambu and Fort Hall."[11]

It is useful to remember that in the period up to the end of World War II Africans did not have any genuine political outlet. The majority of African political organizations and associations had been banned by the colonial government at the start of the war.

In a partial response to this obvious political problem the colonial government had, in 1944, sanctioned the formation of what became the Kenya African Union (KAU). The leadership of this first attempt at territorial nationalism was "mainly Nairobi-based elite, many of whom were employees of the government." This factor would, in the years ahead, serve to seriously constrain the political risks many of these Africans were willing to take in the advancement of nationalist activism.

The KAU enabled the African elite to get to know each other and functioned, at least initially, as a sort of club for this small distinct group. At the time of its formation the KAU was clearly not a party of the people. The operating strategy was to politely petition the government for redress on a specific issue, which was, in practical terms, a continuation of the unsuccessful route of "politics of moderate petitions" to the government, which had yet to produce any significant victory to alleviate the economic and political problems affecting the Africans in the country.

Opposition by white settlers to African social and political advancement was intense and unyielding. White settlers were well funded, organized, and had powerful friends in Britain, including in both Houses of Parliament. There were few governors, if any, who dared to challenge the settlers' social, political, and economic supremacy in the colony. In the immediate post-war period the settlers' positions and viewpoints were fully supported by the Governor, Sir Philip Mitchell. He took pride in what he regarded as his expertise on Africans and their problems; early in his career he had served as Secretary for Native Affairs in Tanganyika under Sir Donald Cameron.

[11] Nairobi, Kenya National Archives, PC/Coast/2/1/80, p. 325.

In a speech to the Rotary Club in Nairobi in 1947 Sir Philip Mitchell provided the basic outline of imperial policy in Kenya. It was "the establishment of a civilized state in which the values and standards are to be the values and standards of Britain … For the truth is that the only way in which the multitude of East African tribes can hope to enjoy benefits of civilized government, both central and local, now and for generations to come, before they become themselves civilized, is under the forms of colonial government … administered by a strong and enlightened power,"[12] namely, Britain. This was the solemn responsibility of the agents of the Crown in Kenya and hence Mitchell did not have any room in it for African nationalists.

Indeed, when soon after his arrival in the country Kenyatta went to see Sir Philip Mitchell to express his desire to play a constructive role in public affairs, the Governor was neither impressed nor moved. Mitchell would later write, "I suggested he should begin by seeking election to the Local Native Council and, I think his own ideas ran into immediate nomination to the Colony's Legislative Council."[13] Mitchell thought that, "it would not have been right or proper to start him that way." However, if Kenyatta had been patient "and devoted his undoubted talents and considerable influence to local government there is little doubt that he would not have taken long to secure a seat in the Legislature, especially because he talks English as well as I do." Through this suggestion, Mitchell sought to demonstrate his personal, as well as the colonial government's, contempt for Kenyatta and what was regarded as his pretensions to greatness as a result of his travels and studies in Britain and Europe. Clearly, Mitchell did not recognize the urgent or even "dominating factor" of the rising tide of African nationalism.

Kenyatta turned down Mitchell's suggestion. There was the question of age; he "was a man well into middle age by this time." Therefore, he very well knew that "time was not on his side. He needed instant recognition both of himself and of his people." But he also wanted to be taken more seriously by the colonial government than Mitchell's suggestion implied. His education, travels, and political activism in Europe, made him "acutely aware not only of the strength but of the

[12] Sir Philip Mitchell, *African Afterthoughts* (London: Hutchinson Publishers, 1954), p. 276.

[13] Mitchell, *African Afterthoughts,* p. 259.

weakness in Western civilization and saw straight through the element of sham in colonial pretensions. He had already had some experience of his capacity as a leader, and was fired with the postwar surge of optimism and ambition among coloured people … To be offered a place on the local African District Council, under the chairmanship of an English District Commissioner whose main preoccupations were roads, accounts, and minor law cases, was like proposing to sail the *Queen Mary* in a duck pond."[14]

From 1950 until his retirement in June 1952 Mitchell avoided being concerned with irksome details of administration. By early 1952, for example, District Commissioners were informed by his Private Secretary that, "the Governor … no longer required his copy of the monthly secret intelligence reports from District Commissioners to be sent to him." Mitchell wanted to retire on a high note. He wanted to retire from a happy colony, free from social strife and discord of any kind. There was the reported possibility of being given a life peerage and then an appointment to the House of Lords, in recognition of his services to the Empire. He was therefore not concerned with reports from intelligence officers that mentioned increasing discontent and unrest among Africans. Mitchell dismissed such reports as alarmist. Reports of Africans, especially the Kikuyu, engaging in oathing were equally dismissed as just "another *dini* (religious sect) like the many he had seen in different parts of East Africa." On the Kikuyu, Mitchell provided an added explanation as to why they would be attracted to oaths, murder, and magic; they are "a forest and mountain dwelling people … particularly given to black and foul mysteries, to ritual murder, to ordeals by oath and poison and cults of terror, in which murder is the central feature."[15]

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[14] Delf, *Jomo Kenyatta*, p. 134.

[15] Mitchell, *African Afterthoughts*, p. 253. After the outbreak of the Mau Mau revolt Mitchell refused to accept any responsibility for it. His book *African Afterthoughts* (1954) was written in part to provide details of his career, which he continued to see as very distinguished, and in part to show that, indeed, there was no discord or trouble in Kenya on the eve of his retirement. "I have no intention whatsoever of offering any explanation or defence of myself or my government for what we did or did not do; if it gives any one any satisfaction to believe that what has happened since I retired is all my fault, he is welcome to do so." p. 252. Mitchell's friend, Lord Hailey, wrote a Foreword to the book. He supported Mitchell's position and stated that, "it is the more regrettable therefore that the success which seemed by general consent to have attended Sir Philip's long tenure of office as Governor should have been overclouded by the events of the Mau Mau outbreak which occurred not long after his retirement." Lord Hailey went on to argue that the outbreak

This sense of false confidence, evident in Mitchell's disposition, extended to the colonial administrators and settlers who held on to the mistaken belief that they "knew Africans." What did this mean? The prevailing view of the colonial government, including provincial and district administrators and then settlers, was that "the ordinary masses were meek, law abiding citizens, even if lazy, who were likely to be aroused into uncontrollable fury against the Crown by African politicians."[16] The colonial government and the settlers conveniently "refused to acknowledge the presence of overwhelming economic and social frustrations in the country that had given rise to restiveness and the need for Africans to organize into political parties."

Deep-rooted racism within this settler colony, "precluded any possibility of meaningful contact between Africans and whites," and any claim that settlers or colonial administrators "knew Africans" was, in reality, "based largely on imagination, lies, and self-serving prejudices." It is to this volatile, rigid, yet increasingly fluid colonial society that Kenyatta returned in 1946.

Kenyatta's reception in Kikuyuland was of supreme interest to the colonial security forces. It provided, in their estimation, a measure of his popularity. In a report to the Colonial Office on November 19, 1946, the Intelligence Office in Nairobi noted that "Jomo Kenyatta has been entertained on many occasions by his fellow tribes-men in the Reserve,

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of Mau Mau and the violence associated with it is not, and cannot, be taken to be a "sign of widespread conspiracy." Outbreaks of violence in different parts of the British Empire show that it is "misleading to read signs of widespread conspiracy in outrages committed in the first instance by a small criminal group, but which have subsequently taken a wider and more dangerous range owing to the connivance of others who have either been in general sympathy with it or have been terrorized into joining its activities," p. xv.

[16] Maloba, *Mau Mau and Kenya,* p. 54. In the annual report for Central Province (1947) the colonial government restated this position: "The events of 1947 in the Central Province conformed to a pattern—most marked in Nairobi and the Kikuyu districts but discernible in different degrees elsewhere. The pattern which can also be traced in other parts of the Colonial Empire and the world is one of political unrest fomented by unscrupulous agitators working often consciously against the common good and thriving financially on the troubles created … At the beginning of 1947 the stage had been reached where a handful of African agitators backed by a virulent vernacular press were extending an undesirable influence over the thoughts and feelings of a large portion of the Kikuyu tribe." Nairobi, Kenya National Archives, PC/CP/4/3/2, p. 374.

and considerable numbers of Africans have attended these functions."[17] But, what was he saying at these rallies? The colonial security forces were, by 1947, feeling frustrated because they had so far been unable to detect any incriminating statements in Kenyatta's speeches. On January 14, 1947 the Intelligence Office in Nairobi informed the Colonial Office that "Kenyatta has visited various parts of the Kikuyu Reserve; his public utterances have, however, been guarded. It is reliably stated that his spies report the presence of strangers at meetings and difficulty has been experienced in obtaining information about him."[18]

Surveillance on Kenyatta intensified after his election as President of KAU in June 1947. This was a high-profile position in African politics at this time. Kenyatta hoped to use this position as a launching pad for building a disciplined and energetic inter-ethnic mass nationalist movement. There were many in KAU who hoped that his towering reputation and stature would facilitate the expansion and then consolidation of mass nationalism in the country. As events later showed, this was not to be. The accumulated frustrations of the Africans, the rise of divergent centers and avenues of resistance, and the refusal of the colonial government to grant any meaningful reforms doomed the strategy of mass action. Success for any form of vigorous but non-violent resistance was dependent on the flexibility of response from the colonial government. This response needed to include the granting of many of the petitioned-for reforms. No such reforms were forthcoming in the crucial years after 1946. "Seen from the perspective of today," Michael Blundell observed many years later, the colonial government "had two courses of action open to them. Either contain him, or to incorporate his energies and the political support which he enjoyed into the actual act of Government. This meant political advance for the African people at a pace which was not acceptable to the colonial government of the day and to the European opinion in Kenya at the time."[19]

Mass meetings called in KAU's name were spied on and a summary of events was forwarded to the Colonial Office. On August 22, 1947, the

[17] TNA, KV 2/1788, Kenya Colony Intelligence Summary report to the Colonial Office, November 19, 1946.

[18] TNA, KV 2/1788, Kenya Intelligence Office memo to the Colonial Office, January 14, 1947.

[19] Michael Blundell, *A Love Affair with The Sun: A Memoir of Seventy Years in Kenya* (Nairobi: Kenway Publishers, 1994), p. 103.

Intelligence Office filed a report to London on the "second large meeting of KAU … held at Fort hall and attended by Jomo Kenyatta, the Hon. B.A. Ohanga, MLC, James Beautah, Joseph Katihi, Jesse kariuki, Henry Muoria, and Chief Parmenas Githendu. The Indian lawyer, Nene, who acts for the Union, also attended."[20]

The colonial security forces became very interested in the internal affairs of KAU. How united was it behind Kenyatta? What were the association's obvious weaknesses that could be exploited? On August 22, 1947, the Intelligence Office filed a report to London sensing a division in KAU over finances. "The differences arising from the deficit in the funds of the KAU appear to have been shelved for the present … owing to the insistence of Kenyatta that the washing of dirty linen in public would be detrimental to the Union's prestige."[21] In November 1947 Lt. Col. Perfect filed a report to the Director General, Intelligence Services, London, on Kenyatta and, more specifically, on divisions in KAU. "In the past few months," he stated, "we have seen a tendency to resuscitate the KCA and at the same time signs of a rift in the body of the KAU which may lead to the resignation of the Vice President, W.W.W. Awori, in order that he may take over the African Workers Federation following the deportation of Chege Kibachia." Lt. Col. Perfect had obtained some information (obviously through spies planted in the KAU), which suggested to him that Awori "himself considers that the fortunes of the KAU are declining and its interests are being sacrificed to those of the KCA."[22] It is clear that for quite some time the colonial security forces were quite informed of the activities and reflections on strategy within the KAU.

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[20]TNA, KV 2/1788, Report from the Intelligence Office, to the Colonial Office, August 22, 1947. The report covered the KAU's mass rally held at Fort Hall on April 20, 1947.

[21]TNA, KV 2/1788, Report from the Intelligence Office on financial irregularities in KAU, August 2, 1947.

[22]TNA, KV 2/1788, Memo from Lt. Col. Peter Perfect to Director General, Intelligence Services, November 11, 1947. The Annual Report (1947) for Central Province also sought to demonstrate that KAU was no longer a national organization. "The Kenya African Union started the year with a fairly general support from leaders of all tribes, but later was racked with internal dissension which resulted in quarrels in public and resignations; but by the end of the year it was little more than an association of Kikuyu." Nairobi, Kenya National Archives, PC/CP/4/3/2, p. 376.

Then there was the matter of nationalism and tribalism. The colonial security forces had a special interest in exploiting the divisions within the KAU that could be attributed to tribalism. And so, any charge that the KAU's macro interests were being subordinated to what were described as narrow Kikuyu interests proved particularly attractive to the colonial security forces. Kenyatta sensed the inherent danger to mass nationalist activism that was contained in this charge, which he believed was an imperial plot aimed at derailing the foundation of organized African resistance to colonial rule. In November 1947 he called a special meeting of the KAU to address this issue. In its report of this meeting filed to the Colonial Office, the Intelligence Office noted that Kenyatta "referred to criticism which had been leveled at him lately and to the fact that some persons had set themselves out to undermine the Union. As he had returned from England to assist his people, he expected more cooperation and less obstruction."[23]

In July 1948 Kenyatta was reelected as President of the KAU. His speech, relayed to the Colonial office by the colonial security forces, contained what must be regarded as KAU's basic aims at this time. He stated that "Africans wanted freedom to govern themselves; idleness must be eschewed and hard work and the intelligent farming of the land and improvement of living standards must be the order of the day. He denounced thieves and robbers who were giving the African race a bad name and declared that Union members should not associate with them but should report them to authority."[24]

This was language of moderation seeking to gradually build a strong nationalist movement. No radical demands were made nor any dire threats issued to the colonial government. At this stage, and for a long time afterwards, Kenyatta sought to steer the nationalist movement away from confrontation with the colonial government or even the settlers. Accordingly, Kenyatta increasingly came to rely on invoking the principles of the recently signed Atlantic Charter. He clearly understood the Charter's effectiveness as an international symbol of freedom and self-determination. On its part, "The Kenya Government would not respond

[23]TNA, KV 2/1788, Report from the Intelligence Office, January 7, 1948. The report referred to the KAU meeting called in November 1947.

[24]TNA, KV 2/1788, Reports from Intelligence Office, on KAU's general meeting held in Nairobi, July 4, 1948.

to the principles of the Atlantic Charter, but being British they could not condemn them." Kenyatta used the Charter as a weapon in his armory, specifically, "the language of democracy which aroused Africans to fever pitch while the Government shook its head helplessly."

But, as tension mounted and violence and insecurity became common in the country, the white settlers and the colonial government found it convenient to lay blame at the feet of Kenyatta. Colonial administrators now routinely blamed him for any and all unrest and tension in the country. He had become a most convenient scapegoat. No colonial official or policy was to blame for the escalation in general unrest in the country. It was all Kenyatta's fault. "What worse African was there than Jomo Kenyatta? It was he who had been graciously 'given' a Western education, and all the thanks he returned was to bite the hand of the myth which fed him. Jomo Kenyatta was almost unanimously chosen to fulfil the role of Devil."[25] Yet this settler anger and fury was, in reality, quickly proving to be counterproductive, for "the more Europeans hated him and had his name maligned in the settler press including *East Africa and Rhodesia,* the more popular he became."[26]

Newspapers and periodicals in Britain sought out Kenyatta for interview. Vitriolic condemnation by the white settlers and then the colonial government had an unintended outcome of making Kenyatta a very compelling person, worthy of a long story in a mass publication. Was he the leader of the Mau Mau? Was Mau Mau accurately portrayed as a vicious anti-European secret society? How could he hate Europeans so much having lived with them in Britain for so long? After all, wasn't he married to a British woman, the mother of his son? What did he want? On September 2, 1952, the *Daily Express* (UK) published an interview with Kenyatta. The newspaper described him as, "champion of self-government, no colour-bar, more land, more education." He was "a hero to thousands of Africans" and was also "one of the exclusive band of Africans who have been to Russia." In this interview Kenyatta repeated the basic aims of the KAU and African nationalism: "We Africans are in the majority, and we should have self-government. That does not mean we should not take account of whites, provided we hold the key position. We want to be friendly with whites. We don't want to be dominated by

[25] Delf, *Jomo Kenyatta*, p. 176.

[26] Ndegwa, *Walking in Kenyatta's Struggles*, p. 255.

them."[27] Was there any connection between the KAU and Mau Mau? Kenyatta's answer: "Our Union has nothing to do with Mau Mau, or thieves, or any wrong doers."

The colonial government, on the other hand, saw no distinction between the KAU and Mau Mau. The KAU, under Kenyatta's leadership, was suspected, without proof, of being under the influence of foreign agents, possibly Communist. Its activities, especially in Central Province, aroused bitter resentment from the colonial government. The annual report for Central Province in 1951 dismissed the organization as "a Kikuyu body, with a few members from other tribes who give colour to its wider claims … Reading through the list of programme points put over at its public meetings throughout the year," the report continued, "it is impossible not to notice that they are all destructive … Nowhere does one find an appeal to Africans to help themselves (save in the form of subscribing money to the Kenya African Union) by hard work and self-reliance to a newer and better standard of living. It is apparently enough for a project to be put forward by Government for it to be condemned, and their criticism, being indiscriminate, has become valueless."[28]

Between 1950 and 1952, when there was immense tension in Central Province, the colonial government chose to highlight what it saw as resistance to extremism in the province. Evident political tension was deliberately underplayed. Thus, the District Commissioner of Nyeri wrote in 1951 that, "broadly speaking the majority of the people are now convinced of the good intentions of the Government, and are cooperating fully in the plans for the economic development of the District." This majority of loyal supporters of the colonial government's economic initiatives were opposed and threatened by what were termed "a hard core of political agitators." These agitators, "sullen, subversive, anti-Government, and anti-European," were a minority and did not necessarily pose an immediate security threat. In Central Province the colonial government was heartened by what it saw as lack of interest in Mau Mau among the Embu, Meru, and Kamba. By 1951 the colonial government believed that the Kamba, "the most martial of the tribes of the

[27] *Daily Express*, September 2, 1952 (contained in KV 2/1788).

[28] Nairobi, Kenya National Archives, PC/Coast/2/1/80, Annual Report, Central Province, 1951, p. 328.

province" had shown no interest in Mau Mau. The same was true for the Meru, who had shown "little interest in this type of political society." As for the Embu, the colonial government noted with satisfaction that the President and Secretary of the KAU in the district, "are among the most respected members of the African District Council, and work for the benefit of the people and not for their own aggrandizement."[29]

These self-serving and even delusional conclusions could not hide the fact that political tensions were, by 1951, and especially by 1952, serious enough to warrant a declaration of a State of Emergency. Both unable and unwilling to respond to Africans' economic and political demands, the colonial government and the settlers blamed Kenyatta for this state of affairs. But, at the same time, they asked him to help to diffuse the tensions through an officially sanctioned process of rigorous condemnation of radicalism and armed revolt.

The reality was that Kenyatta could not control the pace of activity of the militants who had, by 1951, opted to significantly expand the oathing campaign, principally among the Kikuyu. The militants had formed a body called *Muhimu* to coordinate this expansion of the oathing campaign and undertake preliminary preparations for a possible armed struggle. These preparations included the acquisition of weapons, especially guns. It needs to be pointed out that in colonial Kenya Africans were forbidden from owning or handling guns (unless they were part of the security forces). The *Muhimu* therefore set out to acquire guns through illicit purchase. But "this was costly and there was the risk of the trader revealing the transaction to the police." A more effective and less risky method involved the Mau Mau insurgents ambushing "the lone police on patrol," killing him and then acquiring his weapon. A large portion of the guns "possessed by the Mau Mau guerillas at the start of the armed revolt, were the product" of these lethal ambushes. These efforts to acquire guns prior to October 1952 were under the direction of Stanley Mathenge. The Mau Mau War Council later appointed Mathenge as the "Chairman (Commander) of the guerillas being assembled in the Nyandarua forest." But these preparations for an armed struggle were far from complete by October 1952 when the colonial government declared

[29] Nairobi, Kenya National Archives, PC/Coast/2/1/80, Annual Report, Central Province, 1951, p. 330.

a State of Emergency and proceeded to use brutal force to suppress mounting radical nationalist activism.

The *Muhimu* nonetheless produced important leaders whose names and contributions to the country's attainment of *Uhuru* would become prominent in Kenya's complex post-colonial history. Other than Stanley Mathenge (Commander of the guerillas assembled in the Nyandarua forest), there was Dedan Kimathi, appointed by the Mau Mau War Council as General Secretary (serving under Stanley Mathenge in Nyandarua forest), later the best-known Mau Mau leader in the forest, and Waruhiu Itote (General China) as Commander of the Mau Mau guerillas operating around Mt. Kenya.

As the oathing campaign spread all over Kikuyuland, the KAU meetings in Central Province became "more emotional and were well attended by people who appeared defiant to the colonial authorities." Beyond these areas, however, "the KAU remained inactive and moribund." It was evident that the radical militants, whose leaders included Bildad Kaggia and Fred Kubai, "were bent on provoking a showdown" with the colonial government.

Kenyatta had multiple demands on him at this time; from the colonial government, the militants, the KAU, the KCA (underground), and the fears for his safety expressed by his family and friends. The colonial government wanted him to help in the denunciation of the Mau Mau, which he did through a series of officially sanctioned mammoth meetings in 1952. "These were government sanctioned gatherings, and Kenyatta was under pressure and instructions from the government to denounce Mau Mau and violence … He addressed large rallies at Kiambu in April 1952, at Naivasha in June, at Nyeri in July, and at Kiambu again in August … The largest of these meetings was at Nyeri on 26 July 1952."[30] But this was not enough. Settlers and many colonial administrators still held him responsible for the increasingly uncontrollable upsurge in violence and unrest in the country.

The militants administered the oaths in Kenyatta's name even if he did not control them or have any input in determining their strategic initiatives. They still needed the "overall umbrella of respectability and legitimacy that the KAU leadership, especially Kenyatta, immediately accorded African nationalism." Still, the militants took great exception

[30] Maloba, *Mau Mau and Kenya*, p. 70.

to Kenyatta's forceful denunciations of their infant movement at the government sanctioned mass rallies. The *Muhimu* forcefully instructed him to stop the denunciations and also "not to address the meetings scheduled to take place in Murang'a, Nyeri, Embu and Meru. They extracted compliance from Kenyatta through sheer intimidation."[31]

The oathing campaign represented the most militant expression of resistance to colonial rule, but it was largely exclusive to the Kikuyu. And even here, there were several divisions, old and new, that fueled violence and counter-violence. There were still "bitter divisions … as a result of the female circumcision controversy and the antagonisms of the twenties between Thuku's followers and the government appointed chiefs."[32] The African educated elite among the Kikuyu, as in other ethnic groups, had not shown any ready inclination to support radical African nationalism by 1952. Many of them saw their future social mobility linked to the fortunes and performance of the colonial government. They were therefore unwilling to jeopardize their future by supporting a nationalist movement whose success they saw as being very much in doubt. Kenyatta had, from the moment of his return, hoped to facilitate the healing of old wounds and the creation of unity. This had not happened by 1952, when he was arrested and detained.

Outside Kikuyuland Kenyatta had to deal with the KAU's claim to being a national party. Clearly, this was not effectively true by 1952. To all practical purposes "Kenyatta's appeal did not extend outside Kikuyuland." This question of the frailty of territorial nationalism at this time does not seem to have featured prominently in the political and military calculations that came to characterize the activities of the radical militants, including the *Muhimu*. For all their bravery, courage, agility, and willingness to defy the agents of the colonial government, the radical militants do not appear to have seriously considered the immediate and long-term implications of their actions on the still very fragile and tentative steps toward the forging of territorial nationalism.

At a personal level this was an intensely frustrating period for Kenyatta. Politically he had been unable to build a disciplined, vibrant, mass nationalist movement. His prominent position in African nationalist activism nonetheless left him "without authority over the multitudinous

[31] Maloba, *Mau Mau and Kenya*, p. 70.

[32] Murray-Brown, *Kenyatta,* p. 235.

oathing ceremonies spread out in Central Province and beyond and shut off from the secretive activities of Muhimu. Kenyatta's supremacy in African politics by 1952 appears to have been general rather than specific. He was the prominent symbol of African nationalism, but he had no power over the militants who now had a firm grip on most of the population of Central Province, even if this grip was uncoordinated and therefore essentially fractious."[33]

The bustling political scene, marriage, children, administration of the Independent Teachers' College at Githunguri, all failed to cure Kenyatta's intense personal loneliness. Peter Abrahams, the South African writer, then based in London, visited Kenyatta in 1952 and noticed this seemingly inescapable loneliness. They were old friends, having met in Britain and shared numerous discussions on Pan Africanism and the manifestations of Western imperialism in Africa. Now back in Kenya, Kenyatta was frustrated and lonely. "He had no friends. There was no one in the tribe who could give him the intellectual companionship that had become so important to him in his years in Europe. The things that were important to him—consequential conversation, the drink that represented a social activity rather than the intention to get drunk, the concept of individualism, the inviolability of privacy—all these were alien to the tribesmen in whose midst he lived. So Kenyatta, the Western man," Abrahams observed in sympathy, "was driven in on himself and was forced to assert himself in tribal terms. Only thus would the tribesmen follow him and so give him his position of power and importance as a leader."[34]

In Abrahams' opinion the cultural and political rejection that Kenyatta had mercilessly suffered at the hands of the settlers and the colonial government had "forced him back into the tribalism which he had so painfully freed himself over the years." Now, in 1952, he "was a lonely man with hardly any books and no one to talk to on the old London University level." Proud and self-assured, he "was too much of a man to be prepared to accept the friendship of Whites on terms other than that of complete equality." Abrahams feared that Kenyatta's "fine

[33] Maloba, *Mau Mau and Kenya,* p. 77.

[34] Peter Abrahams, "The Blacks," in *The World of Mankind*. Edited by Ted Patrick (New York, NY: Golden Press, 1947–1962), p. 166. For added analysis of Abrahams' encounter with Kenyatta in Kenya see Carol Polsgrove, *Ending British Rule in Africa: Writers In a Common Cause* (Manchester and New York, NY: Manchester University Press, 2009).

scholarly brain," which he had "respected so much in Europe had gone mouldy."[35] And hostility from the white settlers made any positive or forward movement in the political arena impossible. By 1952 there were reports of Kenyatta drinking heavily.[36] Certainly during Abrahams' visit they had imbibed together until they were "both miserably, depressingly drunk." Still, Kenyatta's general dominance in African politics remained virtually unchallenged at this time. "By the time of his arrest in 1952," Duncan Ndegwa wrote, "Kenyatta had become the law. If he cast aspersions on you, you got into trouble."[37]

The colonial security forces had followed and documented almost all of the changes occurring in the African nationalist agitation. These security forces, forever suspicious of Kenyatta's intentions, nonetheless seemed to think that his approach to the political issues was "more realistic" than the radicals. In September 1952, on the eve of the declaration of the State of Emergency, the Intelligence Office in Nairobi notified the Colonial Office that "Kenyatta's approach is probably more realistic and there is some slight evidence that he is perturbed at the way he has lost control of events particularly with regard to the increase in crime. It is unlikely he wants more than a state of tension at the present time. His recent speeches, therefore, have been deliberately moderate. One reason for this is that any disturbances would result in the KAU meetings being banned." The report also speculated on Kenyatta's intentions. "It is therefore reasonable to suppose that Kenyatta and his followers in the KAU will try to present overtly constitutionally correct attitudes, at the same time secretly encouraging Mau Mau, and being able to point to it as an example of the 'uncontrollable' disaffection felt by the Kikuyu."[38]

Several administrative and strategic factors hampered the colonial government's response to the escalating military and political unrest in

[35] Peter Abrahams, *Return to Goli* (London: Faber and Faber Ltd. 1953), p. 206. In the article, "The Blacks" in, *The World of Mankind,* Abrahams also observed that Kenyatta was "the victim both of tribalism and of Westernism gone sick. His heart and mind and body were the battlefield of the ugly violence known as the Mau Mau revolt long before it broke out in that beautiful land. The tragedy is that he was so rarely gifted, that he could have made such a magnificent contribution in other circumstances," p. 166.

[36] See Murray-Brown, *Kenyatta,* p. 243.

[37] Ndegwa, *Walking in Kenyatta's Struggles*, p. 255.

[38] TNA, KV 2/1788, Memo from the Kenya Intelligence Office on the deteriorating security and political situation in Kenya, September 11, 1952.

the country. First, there were the numerous positive reports filed to the Colonial Office up to June 1952 "about the progress and tranquility of Kenya." As a result, officials in Nairobi were very reluctant to file security reports that, in essence, contradicted their earlier positive assessments. It was not until August 1952 that the Colonial Office was "officially informed for the first time by the government in Nairobi of 'a serious deterioration of law and order in the colony'." Second, there had been no governor since June 1952, when Mitchell had retired. The implication of this void was that there was hardly an official in Nairobi willing to undertake any action that could prove to be a "professional risk," thereby jeopardizing their chances of promotion. And so, the unrest spread and spiraled out of control without any coordinated response from the colonial government. There was what amounted to an administrative and political paralysis on the part of the colonial government. In April 1952 Sir Evelyn Baring was appointed as the new Governor of Kenya. He did not arrive until September 1952.

Sir Evelyn Baring (later Lord Howick of Glendale) was sworn in as the new Governor in September 1952. The heightened state of political tension and reports of a possible armed uprising in the country had not even been hinted at in the confidential handing-over reports from Sir Philip Mitchell.[39] And so, although the colonial government was, by September 1952, "increasingly perturbed by the growing lawlessness it was with the greatest reluctance that it admitted anything was wrong."[40]

Baring made a brief tour of Central Province very soon after his arrival in Nairobi. He chose to confer with "chiefs, provincial white administrators, African clergy and of course white settlers," for an appraisal of

[39] See Durham, UK, University of Durham Archives, GRE/1/18/4-5, Baring Papers. The report entitled "Current Kenya Politics" did not touch on political unrest in the country nor the KAU. There was no discussion of the political and economic grievances driving the African political agitation. Sir Evelyn Baring was the son of Lord Cromer, "whose name was firmly identified with the British occupation of Egypt. In the days when Cairo and Calcutta represented the twin poles of the British power in Asia and Africa, Cromer's commanding presence and Curzon's brilliance, seemed to radiate the essential spirit of imperial rule … The real ruler of the country [Egypt] for almost a quarter of a century, 1883–1907, he stands four-square across the period as someone British writers have come to terms with and the man most Egyptians have been taught to love to hate." See Roger Owen, *Lord Cromer: Victorian Imperialist, Edwardian Proconsul* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2004), Preface.

[40] George Delf, *Jomo Kenyatta*, p. 171.

the security issues in the province, and even in Nairobi. As expected, "all of these groups were uniform in their condemnation of Mau Mau and African nationalists. They singled out Jomo Kenyatta and the KAU as being largely behind the violence and the formation of the Mau Mau."[41] Baring did not confer with Kenyatta or any other key nationalists in the KAU. He chose to believe that Kenyatta was behind the spiraling unrest in the country and that his detention was necessary for the restoration of law and order.

On October 20, 1952 Baring sought and received permission from London to declare a State of Emergency. Kenyatta was arrested, together with other nationalist leaders: Kaggia, Kubai, Karumba, Oneko, and Ngei. This was followed by a feverish attempt by the colonial government to demonstrate "to the world" that indeed Kenyatta was the leader of the Mau Mau, and that he had conspired with others under his "magic spell" to drive Europeans out of Kenya. The search for "overwhelming evidence" against Kenyatta (and the other nationalist leaders) proved to be very frustrating; factual verifiable information remained stubbornly elusive. One month before his arrest, the colonial government had "no proof that Kenyatta was the organizer of Mau Mau." On the night of Kenyatta's arrest, "a ton and a half of documents, books, and papers had been removed" from his house in Gatundu.[42] After combing through these captured documents with care, the "senior police officer … detailed to go through these and prepare the case against him" was unable to find any incriminating evidence. "It is fair to say he found nothing."[43]

It is worth noting here that since 1946 the colonial security forces had kept a very close watch on Kenyatta; bribing his neighbors for information, having local police informers shadow him everywhere he went, and continuing to intercept his mail. The settlers, eager to "have something on him," continually passed any bit of information on Kenyatta to the colonial government. This was mostly in the form of unverifiable rumors. And in the charged times prior to the declaration of the State of Emergency, rumor became fact.

[41] Maloba, *Mau Mau and Kenya,* p. 76.

[42] Murray-Brown, *Kenyatta,* p. 258.

[43] Murray-Brown, *Kenyatta,* p. 258.

At Kenyatta's trial, which began in December 1952 and concluded in April 1953, the colonial government recruited and coached witnesses against him, bribed with public funds. Baring informed the Colonial Office and the Colonial Secretary of this concerted effort against Kenyatta. "Every effort has been made," Baring wrote to the Colonial Secretary, "to offer them rewards and to protect them."[44] The Attorney General, the official directly concerned with enforcement of law and order in the colony, authorized this extensive bribing of potential African witnesses against Kenyatta. Among them was Rawson Macharia, the star witness, who alleged that Kenyatta had personally administered the Mau Mau oath to many people in his presence. For these efforts Macharia was promised and "offered a package that involved two years' study at a British university and then subsistence for himself and his family plus promise of protection and a government job upon his return to Kenya."[45]

The trial judge, R.S. Thacker, had been chosen with care on the clear understanding that he would convict Kenyatta and his colleagues. Thacker was a local settler whose sympathies were, as expected, with the colonial government and his fellow settlers. In a desperate attempt to secure conviction, the Governor had authorized Thacker to be given "an ex-gratia payment" of £20,000 as a bribe.[46] On April 8, 1953 Thacker, as expected, found Kenyatta guilty of all charges and sentenced him to 7 years' imprisonment "with hard labour" for managing Mau Mau, and another three years, also "with hard labour," for "being a member of that society." The sentences were to "run concurrently." Even more controversial was Thacker's recommendation that at the end of his prison sentence, Kenyatta should be permanently "restricted."[47] The spectacle of Kenyatta's trial was not a glorious moment in British judicial practice. It was a rigged political trial with a predetermined outcome.

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[44] Charles Douglas-Home, *Evelyn Baring* (London: Collins, 1978), p. 246.

[45] Maloba, *Mau Mau and Kenya,* p. 99. Also see Douglas-Home, *Evelyn Baring,* p. 8.

[46] Maloba, *Mau Mau and Kenya,* p. 99. Also see Douglas-Home, *Evelyn Baring,* p. 247.

[47] This referred to Kenyatta living in permanent exile in some remote section of Kenya far from Central Province or any other heavily populated area. It was envisaged that any area chosen for Kenyatta's internal exile would be not only remote but also inaccessible. As for Thacker, after delivering the expected sentence, he "was immediately flown out of the country."

During the trial it became evident that no charge associated with Communism had been proferred against Kenyatta. In spite of widespread rumors and allegations linking Kenyatta to the "red menace," the colonial government was unable to make those claims an integral part of its case or of the charges against him. The anti-Mau Mau and anti-Kenyatta propaganda offensive that had alleged or implied a linkage between the revolt in Kenya and Communism became a stubborn roadblock to future political developments in the country. These rumors never died. Subsequently, and especially after 1960, rumors of Communist influence would be resurrected with vigor and attached to versions of African nationalism that appeared to the settlers, and their supporters, to be intolerably radical.

After 1951 several departments of the British Government found it necessary to restate that, indeed, there was no verifiable linkage between Kenyatta and Communism or between the Mau Mau peasant revolt and Communism. On August 21, 1951 the Office of the Director General of Intelligence, UK, in response to a question from the South African Intelligence Office on Kenyatta and Communism, stated that, "although Kenyatta was educated in Moscow in the early 1930s, there is nothing to show that of recent years he has been an 'active and ardent communist.' At the most he should be described as a racially prejudiced African nationalist."[48]

In October 1952 Oliver Lyttelton, the Colonial Secretary, made a series of statements in London aimed at defining and clarifying for the British public, what Mau Mau was. Lyttelton stated, "Mau Mau is a secret society confined almost exclusively to the Kikuyu tribe. It is an off- shoot of the Kikuyu Central Association, which was proscribed for subversive activities in 1940. It encourages racial hatred and is violently anti-Christian. It pursues its aims by forcing secret oaths upon men, women and children and by intimidating witnesses and law-abiding

[48]TNA, KV 2/1788, Response to a question from the South African Intelligence Office on Kenyatta, August 21, 1951.

Africans. It resorts to murder and other brutal and inhuman methods."[49] There was no mention of Mau Mau being linked to Communism.

The Parliamentary Delegation to Kenya appointed to investigate the causes of the Mau Mau revolt, presented its report to the Colonial Secretary in January 1954. This delegation pointed out that the Mau Mau revolt had taken the "Government of Kenya by surprise." This observation would later constitute a point of endless dispute among the colonial officials in Kenya and in London.[50] Nonetheless, the delegation's definition of the Mau Mau quickly became the standard point of reference for the colonial government and even the Colonial Office. "What is Mau Mau? Mau Mau is a conspiracy, designed to dominate first the Kikuyu and then all other Africans and finally to exterminate or drive out all other races from Kenya. It is a social and political conspiracy, a secret society which uses terrorism to secure obedience where it cannot command willing support or compliance. Mau Mau intentionally and deliberately seeks to lead the Africans of Kenya back to the bush and

[49]TNA, Cmnd. 9081, Report to the Secretary of State for the Colonies by the Parliamentary Delegation to Kenya, January 1954, p. 4. In his memoirs Oliver Lyttelton restated his views on the Mau Mau and Kenyatta. Mau Mau oath was "the most bestial, filthy and nauseating incantation which perverted minds can ever have brewed." As a result, he could not recall any instance when he had felt the forces of evil "to be so near and so strong as in Mau Mau … As I wrote memoranda or instructions, I would suddenly see a shadow fall across the page—the horned shadow of Devil himself." As for Kenyatta, Lyttelton maintained that he was "a daemonic figure with extreme left wing views." See Oliver Lyttelton, *The Memoirs of Lord Chandos* (New York, NY: New American Library, 1963), pp. 379–380.

[50]The Foreign Office, for example, issued a corrective statement, TNA, DOS 35/5352, to "certain of Her Majesty's Representatives," in March 1954. The Foreign Office sought to reassure foreign governments that "despite the Emergency, Kenya has continued to make progress with its plans for economic and social development." The official policy in Kenya was, among other things, "to prosecute the fight against terrorism with the utmost vigour and to ensure the maintenance of law and order in Kenya; to build within the British Commonwealth a strong and prosperous Kenya owing loyalty to the British Crown; to promote racial harmony and friendliness and to develop opportunities for all subjects, irrespective of race or religion, to advance in accordance with character and ability."

savagery, not forward into progress."[51] The Parliamentary Delegation did not find any linkage between the Mau Mau revolt and Communism.

These statements and pronouncements had, by 1954 and beyond, failed to debunk the suspicion, deeply held by the settlers in Kenya and many colonial administrators, that the Soviet Union was behind the Mau Mau revolt. The center of this Communist plot was suspected to be the Soviet Embassy in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.[52] In response to these charges and suspicions, D.L. Busk of the British Embassy in Addis Ababa, wrote a long explanatory memo to the Africa Department, Foreign Office, London, on December 19, 1952. Busk had been "plagued by the story of the 400 Russians who inhabit the Soviet Legation and go around the place armed to the teeth distributing pamphlets and, what is worse, leaving this country in large bands for subversive activities in the neighbouring regions."[53] Busk denied the existence of any such plot or Communist conspiracy based at the Soviet Embassy in Addis Ababa. He, however, understood that there was an urgent need among the settlers in Kenya to place blame for the outbreak of the Mau Mau. "Of course," Busk wrote, "at places like the bar of the Muthaiga Club in Nairobi, no man could possibly admit that it is his fault and, therefore, a scapegoat must be found."

The British Embassy in Addis Ababa was quite aware of the rumor in Nairobi that "a Russian influence was behind Mau Mau and that the

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[51] Cmnd. 9081, London: HMSO, 1954. Report to the Secretary of State for the Colonies by the Parliamentary Delegation, January 1954, p. 4. This delegation pointed out that indeed (by 1954), the influence of the Mau Mau "in the Kikuyu area, except in certain localities, has not declined; it has on the contrary, increased; in this respect the situation has deteriorated and the danger of infection outside the Kikuyu area is now greater; not less, than it was at the beginning of the State of Emergency … The Government of Kenya has not succeeded sufficiently in rallying the mass of the Kikuyu to the side of law and order. This is due in some part, we believe, to the feeling among these people that adequate protection will not be forthcoming if they openly oppose Mau Mau, fight and inform against Mau Mau gangsters, refuse food, shelter and succour, and generally play a defensive energetic role on the side of law and order. To deal with this situation African leadership will certainly be required and means of developing this are, we believe, indispensable," pp. 5–6.

[52] In *The Memoirs of Lord Chandos* Oliver Lyttelton, former Colonial Secretary, insisted on advancing the mistaken and discredited view that the Mau Mau guerillas had received financial and logistical support from the Soviet Embassy in Addis Ababa, p. 384.

[53] TNA, FO 371/96745, Memo from the British Embassy, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to the Africa Department, Foreign Office, London, on "Ethiopia, Soviets and Mau Mau," December 19, 1952.

emissaries were leaving here in a constant stream." The Embassy had investigated and found no basis for the rumor or suspicion. Ethiopia, according to Busk, was ill-suited to serve as a staging center for Soviet subversive activities in Africa. For one thing, Ethiopia's, including Addis Ababa's, communications, "are vile, and local inhabitants have nothing in common with those in neighbouring countries and would, therefore, be quite hopeless as agents."[54] Busk was disturbed by the fact that the Soviets in Addis Ababa, were "acquiring a reputation for devilry without, in fact, doing anything about it." The Soviets were being allowed to enjoy a public relations victory on a crucial matter while, in fact, they had done nothing to deserve it. "It seems to me ill-advised", Busk wrote to London, "to allow the impression to grow that the Russian Legation and hospital here is so clever that it can run Mau Mau and other activities at a distance of 1000 miles." Such an impression made the British appear incompetent and ill-informed. This was not desirable, or helpful to the imperial mission in the region. It was "entirely ridiculous to over-estimate the strength of our enemy in this way." Busk therefore recommended that the contents of his memo be made available to "Public Relations Officers in Nairobi and elsewhere" with a view to knocking down this rumor which "was giving some admirable publicity to the Russians" in Addis Ababa and elsewhere.

This was done by the Foreign Office on January 26, 1953. The memo's aim was to debunk the rumor which had given rise "to a widespread belief that Soviet agents are clever enough to control Mau Mau at a distance of a thousand miles, that the Ethiopian Government are unaware that they are doing so, and that Her Majesty's Government are powerless to stop them."[55] Emphasis was placed on the following: the

[54]TNA, FO 371/96745, Memo from the British Embassy, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to the Africa Department, Foreign Office, London, on "Ethiopia, Soviets and Mau Mau," December 19, 1952. Busk added that he had very close personal contact with "the Ethiopian Vice Minister of the Interior and we meet frequently to discuss these matters. He can be relied on to ensure that all their activities are as closely watched as possible. We shall continue to do our best in this direction."

[55]TNA, FO 371/96745, Confidential Telegram from the Foreign Office, London, to Africa Department, Middle East Secretariat, Regional Advisers, Information Policy Department, and Information Research Department. In this memo, the Foreign Office pointed out that there were rumors and reports seeking to link the Soviet Embassy in Ethiopia and the Mau Mau revolt. Such reports had, for example, appeared in the *Daily Mail*, December 1, 1952, and *Time*. December 8, 1952.

Soviet Embassy and delegation in Ethiopia did not have enough personnel for undertaking subversive activities on a large scale; Ethiopia was too backward to provide a fertile ground for Communist activities; the country had very poor communication infrastructure and was also isolated culturally and linguistically from the rest of Africa.[56] The Foreign Office memo was also careful to mention that the British Embassy in Addis Ababa was "next door to the Russian compound" and it was "inconceivable that widespread activities of a subversive nature could be carried out without the Embassy staff knowing something about them." All rumors linking the Mau Mau revolt with Communism or Soviet subversive activities based in Addis Ababa were therefore dismissed as "nonsense" by both the Foreign Office in London and the British Embassy in Addis Ababa. This information was also communicated to the Colonial Office, which ultimately rendered its opinion on whether the Mau Mau revolt was Communist inspired in July 1953.

For the Mau Mau to be considered as Communist inspired, there needed to be conclusive evidence of its leaders having "followed the doctrine and practice of any Communist Party." Also, there should be some evidence indicating that the "movement was supported or sustained by Soviet or satellite organizers and arms."[57] The Colonial Office, and by extension the colonial government in Kenya, had been unable to find "evidence for any of these beliefs." Mau Mau, the Colonial Office concluded, had been "set in a purely African idiom." Its actions, and especially the nature and administration of its oaths, had drawn it "further and further away from known Kikuyu practice." But this deviation had been in "the direction of savagery, not of Marxism."[58]

From 1953 until 1954 Kenyatta's lawyers sought to have the sentence set aside due to legal irregularities and because the colonial government had not proved its central case: that Kenyatta was the leader of the Mau Mau revolt. The colonial security forces were, as expected, opposed to the legal appeal process mounted by Kenyatta's lawyers. The fear was

[56]TNA, FO 371/96745, Confidential Telegram from the Foreign Office, London, to Africa Department, Middle East Secretariat, Regional Advisers, Information Policy Department, And Information Research Department.

[57]TNA, CO 822/461, p. 21.

[58]The Colonial Office "also determined that although Kenyatta had visited Moscow in the 1930 s, there was nothing since then 'to suggest any link with communist theory'." See Maloba, *Mau Mau and Kenya,* p. 112.

that the lengthy appeal process was having the unintended outcome of enhancing, even more than before, Kenyatta's stature among the Kikuyu. "The ponderous processes of the Western legal system which are inseparable from enlightened and democratic Government," the Kenya Intelligence Committee report stated, "have no moral significance for the unenlightened and undemocratic Kikuyu tribesmen. In their view, the appeals and counter-appeals, indicate only that their leader is winning his struggle, and in this faith they are willing to endure increasing misery, believing that his victory and the acquisition of the coveted lands developed to prosperity by the European settler, are just around the corner."[59]

The colonial security forces argued that endless legal appeals by Kenyatta's lawyers were having a decidedly injurious impact on the prosecution of the war against the Mau Mau guerillas. "As long as the fate of Kenyatta hovers uncertainly in the scales of justice, it will be impossible to convince the Kikuyu that they cannot achieve their objectives by the violent methods which he indubitably initiated. If, after fourteen months, the British Government as represented by British justice has not yet finally found Kenyatta guilty, what reason is there for the Kikuyu to despair or to abandon faith in the righteousness of his cause?"[60]

The appeal process ended in 1954 when the Privy Council in London affirmed Thacker's decision. Even in the Privy Council, "political considerations had counted for more than legal arguments." With all legal options now exhausted, Kenyatta and the other political leaders were set to serve their prison sentence. They were jailed in the remote outpost called Lokitaung, in the very dry and hot northern part of the country, close to Sudan and Ethiopia.

In Lokitaung the political leaders, now jailed prisoners, were housed in a newly constructed "special compound … It measured 100 yards by 100 yards and was surrounded by a 20-foot high barbed wire fence.

[59]TNA, KV 2/1789, Kenya Intelligence Committee Appreciation, January 26, 1954. Charles Chenevix Trench, in his book, *Men Who Ruled Kenya: The Kenya Administration, 1892–1963* (London and New York, NY: The Radcliffe Press, 1993), observed that during Kenyatta's trial, the "settlers favoured hanging him from the nearest tree or, failing that, he should be detained indefinitely without trial; the worst possible outcome was that he should be brought to trial and acquitted," p. 234.

[60]TNA, KV 2/1789, Kenya Intelligence Committee Appreciation, January 26, 1954.

Barbed wire separated the compound into two sections, one for prisoners, the other for the guards."[61]

The choice of Lokitaung was deliberate. The colonial government chose a location that was largely inaccessible and also far away from the center of activity. The political leaders were hence cut off from any contact with their supporters and the outside world. They were expected to concentrate on the hard labor imposed by Thacker. This included, "breaking stones, digging holes and then filling them" in the hot sun; punishing, exhausting, and tedious manual work. Kenyatta, due to his relative old age compared with the other prisoners, was exempt from this labor in the sun. He did, however, have the daily assignment of cooking breakfast, lunch, and dinner for the group.

The removal of Kenyatta from the political arena symbolized victory for the settlers and many colonial officials who had come to identify him as the singular threat to their welfare and prosperity. As soon as the prison sentence was imposed on Kenyatta, and before the Privy Council ruled in its favor, the colonial government, to the delight of the settlers, undertook several measures aimed at writing him "out of history … The British decided to pretend that Kenyatta never existed. They tried to make him an 'un-person'; every trace of him was eliminated."[62] Specifically, the colonial government did not allow his name to be used or mentioned in any political discourse in the country, unless such mention denigrated and condemned him. Kenyatta's personal property was seized and disposed of: "his college at Githunguri had been destroyed, his home at Gatundu pulled down and his farm given over to an agricultural college," and his young wife and children had been ordered out of Gatundu.[63] All this was meant to convey to the Africans that Kenyatta was not coming back and therefore he could be disobeyed and even defamed with impunity. He no longer had power and influence.

Undisputed power and authority now rested with the settlers, the colonial government, and, to a minimal degree, with the loyalists. These, and related measures, were still informed by the mistaken belief that "there was nothing wrong in the colony except for the disruptive

[61] Murray-Brown, *Kenyatta,* p. 280.

[62] Bloch and Fitzgerald, *British Intelligence and Covert Action*, p. 81.

[63] Murray-Brown, *Kenyatta,* pp. 287–295.

influence of Kenyatta, a communist, who had dominated and directed activities of the Mau Mau through the KAU."

Thus, there was a comforting inclination to look at Mau Mau through the traditional colonial view of Africa and Africans: a primitive society in disarray due to a hurried encounter with sophisticated and modern Western civilization. To this end Mitchell's administration had, in the period leading up to the revolt, authorized the hire of Akamba and Kikuyu witchdoctors to conduct cleansing ceremonies throughout the affected areas so that "those who had taken the Mau Mau oaths could be released from the vows they had given to the society."

The hire of witch doctors, the imprisonment of Kenyatta, the declaration of the State of Emergency, and the subsequent detention of hundreds of thousands of Africans, failed to quell the unrest and stamp out the violence. It is therefore accurate to argue that the general widespread revolt commenced after the declaration of the State of Emergency and the arrest and detention of the nationalist leaders. All of this happened far from Kenyatta, who had to endure seven painful years in prison with no prospect of attaining freedom.

Imprisonment was supposed to mentally and physically break Kenyatta. It was also meant to considerably diminish his stature and, of course, humiliate him. In prison, he had severe and potentially fatal health setbacks. Specific ailments included advanced high blood pressure, and then "various boils and eczema on his legs." Poor diet and the sudden and humiliating change in his status occurring at a relatively advanced age did little to improve his physical health. "Prison life," Duncan Ndegwa has correctly observed, "dehumanizes. One's normal best is taken away; food, drinks, and clothing."[64]

While in prison Kenyatta's access to the outside world (including to his own family) was tightly controlled and monitored. Most of the correspondence with his family was with his daughter, Margaret. He trusted her most, and was closest to her. From outside Kenya he came to value most the correspondence with Dinah Stock. Through carefully phrased letters, Kenyatta was happy to learn that his old friends in Britain had not forgotten him. Through Dinah Stock, he also learned that Edna "had remained loyal to him" even as she was hounded by the press as "the wife of the man every one assumed was behind Mau Mau." Kenyatta

[64] Ndegwa, *Walking in Kenyatta's Struggles,* p. 255.

missed intellectual engagement and the excitement generated by the discussion of ideas. He needed some reading material that was not suspect; material that could not be seen as political, or revolutionary, or seditious. He settled on religious books and asked Dinah Stock to kindly send him some books on, "Buddhism, Hinduism, Confucianism, and the Koran." Was he becoming very spiritual? Did he see his, and Kenya's, future, now in spiritual terms?

At Lokitaung there was unfortunately no unity among the jailed nationalists. The tensions among them reflected to some degree the divisions within the nationalist movement. It should also be noted that, in a very real sense, many of these leaders were political strangers to each other. Kaggia and Kubai were old comrades as leaders of the *Muhimu* and, with Ngei, had also been leaders of the Nairobi branch of the KAU in the immediate period before the Emergency was declared. Although these nationalist leaders were, to some degree, political allies of Kenyatta, they did not belong to his political generation. They were younger than him. Then there was the obvious fact that none of them could rival Kenyatta in national stature and reputation. There were also differences related to the appropriate strategy for liberation in the tense period up to 1952. Kaggia and Kubai (as leaders of *Muhimu)* had opted for armed confrontation; they had embarked on making preparations for an armed revolt. Kenyatta had counseled against this strategy and on several occasions, at the colonial government's request, had denunciated Mau Mau. *Muhimu* had responded by warning him to "cease and desist" from denouncing their movement otherwise he would face severe personal consequences. Some of these preexisting tensions were reproduced in prison, where Kenyatta narrowly escaped two assassination attempts by fellow jailed nationalist leaders at Lokitaung. On the last attempt, in 1958, Kenyatta's life was saved by Gen. China, who managed to shield him from the assassin. Throughout the rest of his political life, Kenyatta would remain indebted to Gen. China.

The cumulative effect of these tensions, plots, and assassination attempts was that Lokitaung never became the "university" of Kenya nationalism. The jailed leaders did not, in unity of purpose, reflect on the country's struggle for liberation; where the struggle had been, where it was, obstacles encountered, and the envisaged future of Kenya. Indeed, in 1957, while still in prison, Kaggia and Kubai formed a new party which they called the National Democratic Party with these office holders: Kaggia, President; Kubai, Secretary; Kariuki Chotara, Treasurer;

Kungu Karumba, Vice President; and Paul Ngei, Assistant Secretary. Kenyatta and Gen. China did not join this new grouping. In these circumstances it is not surprising that Kenyatta spent most of the time alone reading his religious books or, later, teaching English and an abbreviated version of nationalist politics to Gen. China.

An unlikely friendship developed, over time, between Kenyatta and Leslie Whitehouse, who was the DC (District Commissioner) for Turkana District all the time Kenyatta was in prison at Lokitaung.[65] As DC, Whitehouse paid a monthly visit to Lokitaung prison during which time he talked to "Kenyatta, lent him books" and also ensured that he was "treated with scrupulous fairness within the prison rules and maintained in as good health as possible in the circumstances." Whitehouse, according to Charles Chenevix Trench, also "prevented other Mau Mau prisoners, who blamed Kenyatta for their plight, from persecuting him." The end result was "a rapport approaching friendship … between the DC and his important prisoner, which lasted until Mzee's death. After Independence Whitehouse was employed for many years as Resident Magistrate for Turkana and Kitale, appointed to boundary commissions and awarded a high Kenya decoration."[66]

The visit of Bishop Obadiah Kariuki, a prominent Kikuyu religious leader, to Lokitaung prison in 1957 to "pray with the nationalist leaders" would turn out to be an important marker on Kenyatta's turbulent road toward political rehabilitation. Bishop Kariuki impressed on Kenyatta the need for social and political reconciliation within Kikuyuland.[67] Many similar requests would follow, especially after 1959 when Kenyatta's name again became central to all discussions about the future of the country. For now, he was still in prison. It would take a concerted effort by many divergent groups and individuals to win his freedom from detention. In the interim, he had started to reflect in a very general way about the future. It is fair to say that Kenyatta's absorption in religious texts, his age, attempts on his life, his lingering health problems, and

[65] Trench, *Men Who Ruled Kenya*, p. 291.

[66] Charles Chenevix Trench adds, "It is widely surmised that Kenyatta's change of heart was due to Leslie Whitehouse"; that Kenyatta's later inclination to be accommodating to British and settlers' interests in Kenya can be traced to this unique friendship with the DC while still in prison at Lokitaung. p. 291.

[67] Murray-Brown, *Kenyatta,* p. 292.

then his lifelong ambition to be the leader of Kenyan nationalism (and then ruler), all had some bearing on his eventual political options.

In July 1958 the Governor, Sir Evelyn Baring, wrote to the Colonial Secretary about Kenyatta's future. He was scheduled for release from prison in 1959. Then what? Where was he going at the end of his prison term? "I have been urged by African Loyalists, the Chief Secretary, European elected members of the Legislative Council (Legco) and African specially elected members of the Legco," the Governor stated, "to repeat the statement made in 1954 about the future of Kenyatta. In that year I said, with concurrence of the Secretary of State, that on the recommendation of Justice Thacker, who had tried his case, Kenyatta would on the expiry of his sentence be restricted for his residence to a specified place in the Northern Province."[68] In its quick response the Colonial Office supported the Governor's proposition, stating, "The Secretary of State has agreed to your reaffirming publicly at some convenient time of your choosing, the declaration which you made in September 1954, that Jomo Kenyatta would be released but that he would be restricted for his residence to a specified place in the Northern Province on the expiry of his current prison sentence."[69] The Restriction Orders, soon signed by the Governor, also applied initially to Kubai, Kaggia, Ngei, and Karumba, "who were sentenced at the same time as Kenyatta for assisting him in management of Mau Mau society."

On April 14, 1959 Kenyatta was released from Lokitaung prison with the other nationalists. They were immediately driven to Lodwar, south of Lokitaung, to officially begin their detention. The Ministry of Defence, Nairobi, notified the Colonial Office of this release and transfer of the detainees.

For accommodation, the colonial government built what it termed "excellent new houses at Lodwar." They comprised of "two rooms, each 10' × 12', and an open fronted kitchen of the same dimensions. Each house has a verandah 6' × 30'. Drainage problems," according to the Ministry of Defence, prevented the colonial government, "from giving each house its own privy, so a communal block of 5 W.C.s and

[68]TNA, CO 822/1247, Memo to the Colonial Secretary from Sir Evelyn Baring, July 2, 1958.

[69]TNA, CO 822/1247, Reply from the Colonial Secretary to Sir Evelyn Baring's request regarding Kenyatta, July 16, 1958. The Governor was supposed to notify the Colonial Office before making the announcement.

ablutions have been constructed centrally." As for furniture and utensils, the detainees were "allowed to take to Lodwar the various bits and pieces which they have managed to acquire during their imprisonment at Lokitaung. They were also "given a free issue of blankets, a mosquito net, knives, forks, spoons, cooking pots, etc."[70]

Each detainee's immediate family could join him at Lodwar "at Government expense." Also, each detainee was to be "paid a monthly subsistence allowance of Shs. 120/= each and, if their families join them at Lodwar, an additional allowance of Shs, 80/= a month for a wife, and Shs. 40/= a month for children. These rates," the colonial government felt compelled to point out, "have regard to the cost of living and to the allowances paid to other restrictees in the Northern Province. A restrictee with a wife and two children living at Lodwar will qualify for an allowance of Shs. 280/= per month which, with free housing, water and fuel for cooking, will compare very favourably with the salaries paid, for example, to the senior N.C.O.s of Police and Tribal Police serving in Lodwar."[71]

The colonial government felt that it had provided these detainees with very generous living conditions and cash allowance. Still, the detainees were encouraged to "cultivate small gardens on the Lodwar irrigation scheme … to augment their income."

[70]TNA, CO 822/1247, Letter from Ministry of Defence, Nairobi, to the Colonial Office, April 15, 1959.

[71]TNA, CO 822/1247, Letter from Ministry of Defence, Nairobi, to the Colonial Office, April 15, 1959.

CHAPTER 6

"Let Jomo Go": Defining and Framing a Symbol

Kenyatta's detention in Lodwar was tightly controlled through a series of administrative decrees and stipulations. His movement was restricted to "the central administrative area of Lodwar." He was free to visit the other detainees but "could not stay overnight," and he was expected to only "live in the house provided for him by the Government and was under curfew from 7pm to 6am." On a daily basis, Kenyatta was expected to report to the local District Commissioner (DC). All "local visitors" had to be "approved by the DC." Regarding correspondence, "all his mail and parcels" were "to be opened and censored." He could have a radio "only of a type approved by the DC, that is one which will pick up Nairobi only and not" what the colonial government regarded as "Nasser's anti-British propaganda from Cairo or Radio Moscow." Lastly, for the duration of his detention, Kenyatta was not allowed to "address or join a political party."[1]

[1] *Daily Express*, (UK), April 15, 1959; contained in TNA, CO 822/1247. The restrictions were numerous. It should be mentioned here that these stifling restrictions applied equally to all detainees in Lodwar. An example of the tight control can be gleaned from restrictions on mail correspondence to Kenyatta and other detainees, such as a detainee "shall submit all letters, telegrams and postal or other packets and all other messages and communications which he wishes to despatch, to the District Commissioner, unsealed, and the District Commissioner shall transmit them to the Minister for censorship, and the Minister or his deputy may, on receipt thereof, despatch or refuse to despatch any letter, telegram, packet, message or communication and shall have power to restrict the volume of such correspondence if in his opinion it is necessary so to do." Regarding incoming

W.O. Maloba, *Kenyatta and Britain*, African Histories and Modernities, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-50895-5_6

The announcement of Kenyatta's detention in Lodwar created one of the most difficult problems to confront the British Government between 1959 and 1961. Kenyatta's future was discussed and debated at most senior levels of the British Government; with the Prime Minister, in the Cabinet, the Colonial Office, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and the security agencies. Kenyatta and his future in Kenya was also the subject of several spirited debates in both the House of Commons and the House of Lords during this period. In Kenya, no single issue since the declaration of the State of Emergency created as much tension, produced more emotional utterances, or symbolized both hope and despair as the discussion about the future of Kenyatta.

On the international scene there were many organizations and political parties in Africa and beyond, who came to regard the continued detention of Kenyatta as evidence of the cruelty of British imperialism. This was not an image that Britain wanted to project to the world, especially in the post-World War II and Cold War period. The result was a dogged and sustained public relations campaign by several departments of the British Government with the singular purpose of offsetting Kenyatta's image as a symbol of freedom and justice against brutal colonial rule and racial oppression.

In reaction to the Governor's statement announcing that Kenyatta would be indefinitely detained at the end of his prison sentence, the Foreign Delegation of the Cameroons Democratic Youth (CDY) in Khartoum, Sudan, sent memos to both the Colonial Secretary and the Prime Minister appealing for his immediate release. The CDY issued "a vehement protest against arbitrary measures which have hit these great African leaders," Kenyatta and the other nationalist leaders still detained in Lodwar. The CDY regretted that "such barbarous manifestations

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mail: "all incoming letters, telegrams, packets, books, newspapers, magazines, periodicals, literature, or messages intended for the [detainee] shall be addressed to P.O. Box 20041, Nairobi and delivered to the Minister and censored by him or his deputy, and may be withheld in whole or in part and dealt with as the Minister may direct, or may be transmitted to the [detainee] through the District Commissioner obliterated in whole or in part or un-obliterated, and the [detainee] shall not receive or accept any such articles otherwise than from the District Commissioner or his officers." Detainees were also prohibited from "sending oral messages to, or intended for, any person outside the boundary of Lodwar Administrative Station." See TNA, CO 822/1247.

of colonialism are still existing right in the middle of the 20th century under the authority of Her Majesty's Government."[2] Further, the CDY called for the "abolition of the emergency imposed on the country" and also immediate closure of the "concentration camps where patriots undergo a slow death." Lastly, the CDY wanted "immediate recognition of Kenya's independence" by Britain. The Kenya Foreign Delegation in Sudan wrote a memo to the Colonial Secretary on October 17, 1958 protesting Kenyatta's impending detention. Signed by James Ochwata, George Sedda, and John Kamwithi, the memo listed all the crimes committed by the British in Kenya during the Mau Mau revolt and then urged the British armed forces to be withdrawn from the country since these forces were now "regarded by the natives of Kenya as an armed occupying force as it does not carry the interests of the majority groups of the natives."[3]

The Permanent Secretariat of the Afro-Asian Peoples joined the protest movement on behalf of Kenyatta by sending a strongly worded telegram to the British Prime Minister on September 26, 1959. "Afro-Asian peoples," the telegram stated, "gravely concerned continuance arbitrary exile of Jomo Kenyatta symbol of struggling Africa—in light revelations Rawson Macharia concerning corruption Kenyatta's trial. Secretariat reaffirms illegality Kenyatta's exile and firmly demands release in name of justice human rights and peace Kenya."[4] This telegram was also sent to the Colonial Secretary.

The People's Republic of China (PRC), through its New China News Agency, issued a strong statement that condemned Kenyatta's continued detention and denounced British colonial rule in Kenya. "The Chinese Committee for Afro-Asian Solidarity," the statement elaborated, "resolutely supports the just struggle of the Kenyan people against British

[2]TNA, CO 822/1247, Memo from CDY, September 18, 1958.

[3]TNA, CO 822/1247, Memo from Kenya Delegation. The crimes listed in the memo included: "The death of 150,000 of parentless children whose fathers and mothers have died in recent Mau Mau shooting war which is 25 per day … the maltreatment of 800,000 Mau Mau prisoners of war under the existing exterminational order against the extreme politicians of hard core Mau Mau of whom Jomo Kenyatta with other political prisoners say, Paul Ngei, Bildad Kaggia, Achieng Oneko, Kungu Karumba … are included, (the 800,000 include the reserve concentration camps where chiefs are the chief warders)."

[4]TNA, CO 822/ 1247, Memo from Permanent Secretariat of the Afro-Asian Peoples, September 26, 1959.

colonial rule and for national independence." The PRC's statement pointed out that the "British people have long since enslaved and plundered the people of Kenya and adopted terroristic measures to cruelly suppress the Kenya national independence movement." For these reasons the PRC condemned the "criminal acts of British colonial rule" and called for the "immediate and unconditional release of Jomo Kenyatta and other patriotic leaders." The statement concluded by affirming that "The Chinese people will always stand together with the people of Kenya and Africa in their struggle against colonialism and imperialism and in promoting Afro-Asian solidarity and world peace."[5]

In Chicago, Balm L. Leavell, Editor and Publisher of the *New Crusader*, an African American newspaper, sent a telegram to Harold Macmillan regarding the paper's invitation to Kenyatta as an honored guest. "We have extended an invitation to Jomo Kenyatta through Sir Patrick Renison, Governor General of Kenya," Leavell wrote, "to be Guest of Honor at the Afro-American Progress Exhibition May 19, to 22 all expenses paid. Mr. Prime Minister" the telegram continued, "I request that you intercede for the release of Mr. Kenyatta so that he may attend our exhibition as a guest of honor."[6]

Kenya Police Special Branch monitored Cairo Radio's programs beamed to Kenya. A daily report of these broadcasts was compiled and forwarded to the headquarters of the Kenya Police for distribution to the various branches of the colonial security forces. In its report on September 29, 1959, Special Branch mentioned a broadcast that urged Kenyans to continue in their resistance against colonialism and agitation for the release of Kenyatta from detention. "Please wake up", the broadcast urged Kenyans, "and demand your legitimate rights now—the freedom of Kenya, freedom for the whole of Africa, freedom for all Africans. Your Asian brothers in Asia, who at one time underwent the same difficulties which we are experiencing now have consented and joined hands with us in our struggle and cause of freedom."[7] The same broadcast restated Kenyatta's unrivaled position as the leader of Kenyan

[5]TNA, CO 822/1247, Memo of Solidarity from New China News Agency, September 25, 1959.

[6]TNA, CO 822/1247, Telegram from the *New Crusader* (Balm L. Leavell) to Harold Macmillan, the Prime Minister, January 13, 1960.

[7]TNA, CO 822/1247, Daily Report on the Programmes of Cairo Radio monitored by the Special Branch, Coast Province, Kenya, September 29, 1959.

nationalism. "Come back Jomo Kenyatta! Come back our rock Kenyatta! Come and lead us all!"

Closer to Kenya, the Pan African Movement for East and Central Africa (PAFMECA) expressed its disappointment at Kenyatta's detention. The PAFMECA was an influential Pan African body "formed at Mwanza in Tanganyika in 1958." This organization was "an extremely loose grouping of political parties in Tanganyika, Kenya, Uganda, Northern and Southern Rhodesia, Nyasaland and Zanzibar." Julius Nyerere (Tanganyika) and Tom Mboya (Kenya) were its prominent leaders. Since its inception PAFMECA had "always recognized Mr. Jomo Kenyatta as its natural leader, even when he was in detention."[8] In its meeting in September 1959 PAFMECA called for the release of Kenyatta and stated that it was "thoroughly disgusted with the blatant indifference of the Kenya Government to its resolution passed at the Zanzibar Conference calling for the immediate release of Jomo Kenyatta and his associates."[9]

Representations for the release of Kenyatta by Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana and Alhaji The Hon. Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, Prime Minister of Nigeria, were particularly challenging for the British Government. The All-Africa Peoples Conference held in Accra, Ghana, in 1958, called for the release of Kenyatta from detention. In July 1958 Ghana's High Commissioner to Britain met with the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations to seek for Kenyatta's release "possibly on grounds of health, or whether he could be released on parole. If so Ghana would be willing to give him asylum." This matter was referred to the Colonial Secretary who promptly rejected the request from Ghana. The basis of his response was that, "in Kenya, as in other colonial territories, the prerogative of mercy, including remission of sentence, has been delegated by Her Majesty The Queen, to the Governor and I do not intervene." Further, Kenyatta was in good health and "there can be question of Kenyatta's release on parole."[10] Nkrumah later raised this matter at a private meeting with the British Prime Minister, who referred

[8] Colin Legum, *Pan Africanism: A Short Political Guide* (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1962), pp. 72–73.

[9] TNA, CO 822/1247, Memo from PAFMECA.

[10] TNA, CO 822/1247, Record of Conversation between the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations and the High Commissioner of Ghana, and Response to the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations from the Colonial Secretary.

the whole issue to the Colonial Secretary. Again, the Colonial Secretary promptly rejected the request for Kenyatta's release.

In September 1959 George Padmore died in London, where he had gone for urgent medical treatment from Ghana.[11] The funeral service of this veteran Pan Africanist revolutionary "was held at the Golders Green Crematorium on Monday, September 28, and the ashes were flown to Ghana at the Prime Minister's request," where they were to be buried.[12] Nkrumah wanted Kenyatta to attend the official ceremony on account of his long and close relationship with Padmore. To this end Nkrumah's government sent an official request to the Governor of Kenya pleading for Kenyatta's release. Another request was forwarded to the Colonial Secretary through Fenner Brockway, the radical Labour Party MP, who had had a long association with both Padmore and Kenyatta. "I have had a cable from the Authorities of Ghana" Brockway wrote to the Colonial Secretary, "asking whether, in view of his long association with George Padmore, Jomo Kenyatta might be allowed to attend the burial of the ashes, and pay his last respects." Brockway told the Colonial Secretary that the gesture of allowing Kenyatta to attend this ceremony, obviously "under necessary escort and pledges … would be tremendously appreciated in Ghana."[13]

In Kenya the Governor wrote to the Colonial Secretary informing him that Kenyatta had been denied permission to travel to Ghana. "In view of Kenyatta's restriction order, and the fact that he would be hailed as a political martyr in Accra and en route, the Kenya Government refused permission."[14] However, the Governor was worried since the local press had "got wind of the invitation" and were "asking for a statement." On October 2, 1959 the Governor issued a public statement about this invitation. It read: "Jomo Kenyatta received invitation from Ghana to attend funeral of George Padmore, which is to take place in Accra on October 4th. The Kenya Government has informed Kenyatta

[11] See Hooker, *Black Revolutionary*, p. 139. "There was severe liver deterioration. Padmore had a history of hepatitis."

[12] Hooker, *Black Revolutionary*, p. 139.

[13] TNA, CO 822/1247, Letter to Alan Lennox-Boyd, Colonial Secretary, from Fenner Brockway, September 29, 1959.

[14] TNA, CO 822/1247, Letter from the Governor of Kenya to the Colonial Secretary on Ghana's invitation to Kenyatta to attend burial ceremony of Padmore's ashes, September 30, 1959.

that permission for him to leave Lodwar, where he is restricted, cannot be granted." Kenyatta was allowed, at his own expense, to send a reply to Nkrumah. The reply, vetted by the colonial government, stated, "Heard with deep sorrow of death of beloved brother George Padmore. By this death we have lost one of our bravest fighters for freedom. I am sorry I was not allowed to come to pay my last respects. Send heartfelt sympathy to his relatives, and all other friends I send my warmest greetings."[15] Nkrumah would, in the months and years ahead, continue to raise the matter of Kenyatta's detention with British Government officials.[16]

Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa's embrace of the Kenyatta issue was certainly most unexpected. Abubakar was a devout Muslim, a religious and political figure from Northern Nigeria who had no previous personal or even political attachment to Kenyatta. Also, his earlier statements before becoming Prime Minister had not supported Mau Mau. Abubakar's involvement in the complex international politics surrounding Kenyatta's detention and petitions for his release, was due to a bold and direct request from Tom Mboya, who proposed to him that, "Kenyatta's case can be raised at the United Nations." Mboya wanted Nigeria's support in this objective. In discussions with the Colonial Secretary in early November 1960 Abubakar suggested that he wanted to speak directly to Harold Macmillan since, in his view, "this was not a matter for the United Nations but only for the United Kingdom."[17]

[15]TNA, CO 822/1247, Memo from Governor of Kenya to the Colonial Secretary on approved text of public statement and Kenyatta's approved reply to invitation. In a "Secret Memo," the British embassy in Accra sought to clarify the nature of this invitation, downplaying possible diplomatic fallout from denying Kenyatta permission to travel to attend the ceremony. The Governor's message had been delivered to "Adu, Secretary to Prime Minister." Adu explained "that invitation to Kenyatta did not go from his office or in the name of Ghana Government. It originated from Dr. Nkrumah's Parliamentary Private Secretary in his capacity as member of Joint Governmental and Parliamentary Committee which is in charge of burial ceremonies. Adu said that this invitation was one of number sent to prominent Africans abroad. Nobody expected that Kenyatta would be able to accept but Committee wanted him to know about ceremonies." See TNA, CO 822/1247, Memo on October 2, 1959.

[16]See TNA, CO 822/1911.

[17]TNA, CO 822/1247, Memo to the Governor of Kenya from the Colonial Secretary, November 3, 1960. In this memo Abubakar is reported to have said he "realised that Kenyatta had been guilty of terrible crimes but added, 'God will punish him'." This question of Kenyatta's alleged crimes was not a strong enough reason to keep him in indefinite detention, hence the push to see Macmillan.

By November 8 Macmillan was aware of Abubakar's interest in the matter. By November 11 the Acting British High Commissioner to Nigeria was instructed by the Commonwealth Relations Office to do all he could to dissuade Abubakar from undertaking the trip to London, since Macmillan thought that discussing Kenyatta's release was a very bad idea. "When you see Abubakar," the High Commissioner was instructed, "you should, therefore, say that you have been thinking over his suggestion but feel that it would be open to difficulty and hope he will not pursue it … you would no doubt stress embarrassment which would be caused to H.M.G. if it became known that it was Abubakar's intention to call upon Prime Minister to discuss this vexed problem."[18] Abubakar had suggested a two- or three-day visit. The Commonwealth Relations Office felt that this "would surely be excessive for the purpose in view."

The High Commissioner failed to dissuade Abubakar from undertaking the trip to London to see and discuss with Macmillan the Kenyatta issue. He reported to his bosses in London that Abubakar "regarded it as part of his Commonwealth duty to give advice when he thought he could help. He was not doing this for personal advantage or for the honor of Nigeria." The visit, therefore, went forward and Abubakar met with Macmillan, the Colonial Secretary and the Commonwealth Secretary in London on November 28, 1960.

According to Abubakar there were several reasons justifying the release of Kenyatta from detention. He "was no longer young and he had served his sentence. Would it not be better for relations with the United Kingdom to let him move around now? Kenya in 1960 has changed a lot since the days of Mau Mau. If Kenyatta was allowed out and he broke the law then he could be rearrested. Also, while he was in prison no-one could tell what his thoughts and plans were, whereas if he was released people would soon find out what he was thinking."[19]

[18]TNA, CO 822/1247, Memo from Commonwealth Relations Office to Acting High Commissioner to Nigeria, November 11, 1960.

[19]TNA, CO 822/1910, Record of Conversation at Admiralty House between Prime Minister Macmillan and Alhaji The Hon. Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, November 28, 1960. There was never any hint in the press that Abubakar had come to London to discuss the Kenyatta issue. The press was informed that Abubakar had "come to London to discuss matters of mutual concern," between the two countries. No details were given after the visit. In this way, the British Government was, on this occasion, saved from public embarrassment.

In response, the Colonial Secretary agreed that indeed the Kenyatta issue "was one of the most difficult in Africa." Why so? "It was not only the Europeans but also the loyal Kikuyu and Asians and other African tribes who disliked the idea of Kenyatta being at large." Further, the Colonial Secretary's "own feeling was that the release of Kenyatta would inevitably provoke bloodshed in Kenya." And then there was a legal matter by which "Kenyatta's sentence of imprisonment and his sentence of restriction had been passed by the same court at the same time." Abubakar's advice was that "H.M.G. should try to get into relations with Kenyatta so as to achieve the peaceful settlement everyone wanted." Macmillan felt that "this was clearly a difficult question of timing."[20] While Abubakar did not succeed in securing Kenyatta's release, there is no doubt that his forthright interest in this matter put more pressure on the British Government to seek an agreeable solution to this "vexed problem." He had told Macmillan that his interest in this matter was in part due to the realization that "what happened in Kenya would affect the whole African continent. If relations at the time of independence were good then all would go well, but there was always the example of Guinea, where the French had played their hands badly, to serve as a warning."

In April 1960 M. Slim, the Tunisian Ambassador to Britain, met with John Profumo, Minister in the Foreign Office, to formally request that Kenyatta should be released from detention. He told Profumo that such a step "would affect opinion all over Africa." The Ambassador had been authorized to state that if Britain "could agree to Kenyatta's release the Tunisian Government would be prepared to accept him in Tunisia for such a period as [Britain] thought was inevitable before he could go back to his own country."[21] In response the Colonial Office provided

[20]TNA, CO 822/1910, Record of Conversation at Admiralty House between Prime Minister Macmillan and Alhaji The Hon. Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, November 28, 1960. At this meeting, Abubakar also "suggested that if Kenyatta was released no-one would be able to make his release part of their political platform and the result might be that no African party secured a large majority. This might be a good thing."

[21]See TNA, CO 822/1247, Memo from John Profumo, Foreign Office, to the Colonial Office regarding meeting with Ambassador of Tunisia on Kenyatta's detention, April 7, 1960. John Profumo later served as Secretary of State for War, from 1960 until 1963, when he was forced to resign in connection with a sex scandal; the "Scandal of the Century." This scandal "helped bring down the Conservative government" of Harold Macmillan. See *New York Times*. March 11, 2006.

Profumo with details that needed to be conveyed to the Tunisian Ambassador. These were: "that Kenyatta is restricted on the recommendation of the court which convicted him of managing Mau Mau; that his restriction is reviewed at regular intervals; that a decision to release him is a matter for the Governor; that Her Majesty's Government support the view of the Kenya Government that Kenyatta cannot be released so long as he is a danger to public safety."[22]

Julius Nyerere and Kamuzu Banda of Nyasaland (Malawi after 1964) put more pressure on the British Government in a joint detailed letter of appeal on behalf of Kenyatta to the Colonial Secretary in May 1960. They were appealing to Iain Macleod "not merely as Secretary of State for the Colonies, but also as a friend and a person both of us have learnt to respect." Both knew that the key justification for Kenyatta's continued detention was that if released "he would be a danger to law and order in Kenya." They did not believe this to be true. But, "even if we believed that a free Jomo would start a rebellion in Kenya—a position we do not accept—we, his colleagues, would not be without influence on him. But we know," the letter continued, "that Jomo Kenyatta is as interested in maintaining law and order in Kenya as we are; it will be his responsibility and the responsibility of his colleagues." As a demonstration of how earnest they were over this issue, Nyerere and Banda informed Macleod that they were staking their "reputations on the results of Kenyatta's release, fully confident that the fears which are entertained about it are groundless."[23]

In his response, Macleod regretted that he could not agree with them on this Kenyatta issue. "Both the Governor of Kenya and I are convinced that Kenyatta's release would do untold harm to Kenya and to the African cause in particular."[24]It is important to mention that during this period Nyerere was highly respected and held in high esteem by the British Government. On a personal level Macleod regarded Nyerere as "an intellectual and a man of great charm and sensitivity, with a particularly English sense of humor." He liked Nyerere. As a result of these

[22]TNA, CO 822/1247, Response from the Colonial Office, April 13, 1960.

[23]TNA, CO 822/1909, Letter from Nyerere and Banda to the Colonial Secretary, May 10, 1960. Also see Nyerere's further plea for the release of Kenyatta from detention in *The Times* (London) June 24, 1961. p. 6.

[24]TNA, CO 822/1909, Reply of the Colonial Secretary to Nyerere and Banda on Kenyatta's detention, May 19, 1960.

political and personal factors, the Colonial Secretary, and the Colonial Office in general, were troubled by having flatly turned down Nyerere on the Kenyatta issue; an issue that seemed very important to him.

International and local outrage over Kenyatta's continued detention reached new heights following the shrill announcement on March 31, 1960 by the Governor, Sir Patrick Renison, that Kenyatta would remain in detention for an indefinite period. Renison was under the very strong influence of settler politicians, some represented in his cabinet, who were vehemently opposed to the release of Kenyatta. It is useful to remember that, from the beginning, "settlers favoured hanging him from the nearest tree or, failing that, he should be detained indefinitely without trial; the worst possible outcome was that he should be brought to trial and acquitted."[25]

Also opposed to the release were several senior white civil servants, Kikuyu loyalists, and some of the new crop of African politicians who had come to prominence in the post-Emergency era. Renison came to believe that the "Kenyatta issue had been … artificially inflated." At the most basic and therefore crucial level, "The issue was basically one of confidence in the Government. If Kenyatta were released," Renison continued, "all European confidence would be forfeit, with much wider global repercussions affecting investments and the whole economy of the country, as well as the quality of its administration."[26] He understood that if Kenyatta were not released, "African public opinion could be increasingly worked up in opposition to the Government, including the African members of the Government, and civil disobedience and violence might result." Still, the Governor went ahead and delivered a provocative speech on Kenyatta.

Renison characterized Mau Mau as "a rebellion of fearful oaths and fearful deeds whose terrorism, savagery and bestiality shocked the world." Jomo Kenyatta, according to Renison, "was the recognized and implacable leader of the non-cooperation movement which organized Mau Mau." Further, "with his Communist and anthropological training, he knew his people and was directly responsible." The sum total of Kenyatta was therefore simple and direct: "Here was the African leader

[25] Trench, *Men Who Ruled Kenya*, p. 234.

[26] TNA, CO 822/1909, Minutes of the Kenya Council of Ministers, April 27, 1960.

to darkness and death."[27] To release Kenyatta from detention would be to "glorify Mau Mau … and promote a return to political violence." Renison reminded local and international supporters of Kenyatta's release that anyone seeking to resurrect Mau Mau's "antagonisms, or its intimidation and violence is an enemy of Kenya, a confederate of the old terroristic Africa of darkness and death." This speech caused much anguish among the majority of the Africans and jubilation among the white settlers and their supporters.

The settler periodical *East Africa and Rhodesia* applauded the action taken by Renison since "any straight-thinking person must recognize that this is no case for clemency or compromise. For moral, political, administrative and economic reasons Kenyatta ought not to be freed."[28] In Southern Rhodesia the *Sunday Mail*, in its editorial of March 6, 1961, supported the actions taken by Renison. Kenyatta, according to the *Sunday Mail*, was responsible for the "most debased and degraded illegal society that has ever marred record of mankind." As a result, "Kenyatta should be kept out of society for the rest of his life and it is ridiculous to suppose that he would not again become force of evil," especially because he shared "with Hitler reputation of being the most evil man of century."[29]

Given the international dimension of this story, and especially Renison's unflattering characterization of Kenyatta as "African leader to darkness and death," the British Government launched a spirited public relations campaign to counter the uncoordinated, yet expanding, efforts agitating for the release of Kenyatta. This was especially true in the Commonwealth countries. On May 7, 1960 the Commonwealth Relations Office in London sent out a memo to British embassies in Accra, Ottawa, Canberra, Wellington, Cape Town, Delhi, Karachi, Colombo, Kuala Lumpur, and Salisbury, on the continued detention of Kenyatta. The memo provided talking points to be used in responding to questions about Kenyatta. In essence, this was a summary of Renison's speech. The points covered included: "there is a difference between vigorous but non-violent opposition to government, and violence. One is

[27] TNA, CO 822/1909, Statement by H.E. The Governor, 31, March 1960.

[28] *East Africa and Rhodesia*, April 20, 1961. Vol. 37, no. 1906, p. 893.

[29] See TNA, CO 822/1911, Editorial Comment in *Sunday Mail*, Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia, March 6, 1961, on Kenyatta's release.

path of light for African nationalism and the other of darkness; Kenyatta was convicted of organizing Mau Mau violence and so is completely identified with path of darkness; there is an open road to independence, with African predominance, through cooperation and law abiding responsibility demanded by the Lancaster House agreement; Kenyatta is identified with divisions among Kikuyu, between Kikuyu and other tribes, and between Africans and other races. Without unity there is no road forward. Mau Mau was a blind-alley, which held back African progress; Kenyatta's return would now glorify the Mau Mau and outbreaks of violence would be inevitable. This would affect political advance. The antagonisms created by Mau Mau must disappear, and it must be recognized as the disgrace it was, before it is finally dead; present Kenyatta cult is inflaming old antagonisms and so increasing the security reasons for continued restriction."[30]

Of immediate worry to the British Government was the realization that what it called the "Kenyatta cult," was clearly growing in the non-white Commonwealth countries. Reports from British embassies in the non-white countries of the Commonwealth indicated not only a swelling of support for Kenyatta but also an increased agitation for his release from detention. His continued detention by the Kenya colonial government was not enhancing Britain's image in these countries. On March 6, 1961 the British embassy in Pakistan sent a telegram to the Commonwealth Relations Office summarizing editorial comments in "the two main Karachi and Lahore English-language newspapers." Both papers had been very "critical of the Governor's refusal to release Kenyatta." The *Pakistan Times* of Lahore wrote that "Kenyatta is the only man who can speak for 'a national Kenya' and that there is now no opposition to his release or even to his assumption of power 'except from the die-hards of the Civil Service'."[31]

By 1961 Nehru, Prime Minister of India, and an influential voice in both the Commonwealth and the Non-Aligned Movement, urged the British Government to release Kenyatta from detention. Nehru had been receiving "constant letters, complaints and messages from Kenya" about

[30]TNA, CO 822/1909, Outward Telegram from Commonwealth Relations Office, May 7, 1960.

[31]TNA, CO 822/1911, Inward Telegram, March 6, 1961. A copy of this telegram was sent to the Director of Intelligence, the Colonial Secretary, and the Prime Minister's Office in London.

Kenyatta's detention. As Nehru saw it, any delay "in taking a step which would one day have to be taken would simply act" to the disadvantage of the British Government.[32]

From Kuala Lumpur the British embassy forwarded to the Commonwealth Relations Office editorials in two of the country's most influential newspapers urging for Kenyatta's release from detention. On March 7, 1961 *Utusan Melayu*, a Malay language newspaper, saw the release of Kenyatta as the only way to avoid a crisis in Kenya. "The British Government has to choose—either to set Kenyatta free in line with wishes of Kenyan people or to stick to recommendations of its Governor, result of which will be the greater crisis. We believe that the Government is fully aware of influence and popularity of Kenyatta: he is the symbol of Kenyan's unity for independence." According to *Tamil Nesan*, ("the oldest Tamil newspaper in the country"), "if the colonial officials had listened to" Kenyatta's "call for removal of racial discrimination in 1947 there would not have been any necessity for Mau Mau or for suppressive measures that resulted." The paper concluded by paying its "respects to Kenya's—nay East Africa's future Prime Minister."[33]

In Nigeria Abubakar continued to raise the Kenyatta issue with the British Government, forcefully but out of public notice. As far as possible, actions that could publicly embarrass the British Government on this issue were avoided by Abubakar's administration. Thus, Kenyatta was not invited to Nnamdi Azikiwe's inauguration as Nigeria's Governor-General in December 1960. By 1961, however, some key political parties in Nigeria were publicly urging the British Government to release Kenyatta from detention. The NCNC (National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons), the party of Azikiwe, issued a public statement in March 1961, in support of the newly formed "Kenya African National Union [KANU] in its attitude towards the Governor's unwillingness to release Kenyatta."[34] This statement also called upon "the Federal Prime Minister and the Prime Ministers of India and Malaya to speak up for Kenyatta at the Prime Ministers [of the Commonwealth]

[32]TNA, CO 822/1911, Nehru urges for release of Kenyatta, April 27, 1961.

[33]TNA, CO 822/1911, Inward Telegram from Kuala Lumpur, March 7, 1961.

[34]The NCNC was formed in 1944 by Nnamdi Azikiwe and Herbert Macaulay. It was the first party in Nigeria to "take a concerted effort to create a nationalist party." It functioned from 1944 to 1966.

conference in the interest of maintaining the multiracial nature of the Commonwealth."[35]

Back in Kenya the settlers and the colonial government were baffled and even dismayed by the fact that Kenyatta continued to capture the political imagination of the Africans, especially the Kikuyu, while still in prison then detention. The British Government, in response to the Mau Mau revolt, promulgated a series of political reforms aimed at "calming the waters" and at creating a new generation of African political leaders with no allegiance to Kenyatta and the KAU. The Mau Mau revolt had, in stark form, demonstrated that the whole enterprise of "settler colonialism in Kenya had been a failure." The settlers "demanded massive extra help from London to survive. But for how long? After the military phase of the conflict, which started in earnest in 1953, the settlers found that the answer to this question would be determined in London, not in Nairobi."[36]

This change was evident in Oliver Lyttelton's message to the settlers. He was a decidedly pro-settler Colonial Secretary. But he still "told the settlers bluntly that Britain would not pay for an army to protect them against a revival of Mau Mau. The only protection available to them was African consent, and that meant starting to share power at once."[37] And so in 1954 there was the Lyttelton Constitution. This allowed for an African in the Governor's Cabinet and six Africans in the Legislative Council (Legco). In 1957 there were elections in which Africans voted for the first time for the limited number of seats in the Legco. Those elected were: Oginga Odinga, Tom Mboya, Ronald Ngala, Masinde Muliro, and Daniel Arap Moi. In 1958 the Lennox-Boyd Constitution allowed for six more elected seats for Africans.

Almost all the newly elected members, including those from the Kikuyu, Embu, and Meru areas, were eager to distance themselves from Kenyatta. Many saw themselves as the new leaders not beholden to Kenyatta's memory. But they were careful not to denounce the Mau Mau revolt openly. Most utterances about the Mau Mau condemned the violence while acknowledging the political and economic frustrations

[35] TNA, CO 822/1911, Inward Telegram to Commonwealth Relations Office, March 7, 1961.

[36] Maloba, *Mau Mau and Kenya*, p. 78.

[37] Lapping, *End of Empire*, p. 430.

that produced it. "There can be no doubt", Mboya wrote in 1956, "but that Mau Mau is the direct consequence of accumulated frustrations and grievances. Psychologists may offer reasons why the Mau Mau ceremonies were primitive and barbaric, but these explain the form of the revolt and not the causes of it." Therefore, he concluded: "It is absurd to represent Mau Mau as merely the result of too rapid a transition from primitive life to a modern complex society, or a reversion from Christianity to barbarism."[38]

This balancing act was cut short by Oginga Odinga's explosive declaration in Parliament in June 1958 that "Africans still regarded Kenyatta as their political leader." Many of the new African politicians initially distanced themselves from Odinga's statement, but as it became obvious that, indeed, the masses still held Kenyatta in very high regard and were still loyal to him and his memory, there was an abrupt change. Now, there was what can only be described as the "scramble for Kenyatta"; a fierce and strategic effort for self-promotion while still professing loyalty to Kenyatta and vowing to agitate for his immediate release from detention.

Those Africans who had accepted ministerial appointments in Renison's colonial government remained conflicted over the Kenyatta issue. Could they justify serving in a colonial government that ruled out the possibility of ever releasing Kenyatta from detention? Kiano and Muimi, who were Ministers in this colonial cabinet, were particularly troubled. They were from Central Province, the epic center of the Mau Mau revolt. They felt strongly that Kenyatta was "the biggest issue in Kenya … for the African masses he was the crux of the whole situation," so much so that "even many Kikuyu Loyalists now supported" his release. Kiano and Muimi further wanted it known that "even before their acceptance of the ministerial office, they had advocated for Kenyatta's release and they would now be made to appear they have abandoned him. Their positions would become intolerable, for any nonentity who called for Kenyatta's release obtained easy popularity and fame with the African community … it would be political suicide for them to stand against it."[39] Another factor worth considering

[38]Tom Mboya, *The Kenya Question: An African Answer* (London: Fabian Colonial Bureau, 1956), p. 17.

[39]TNA, CO 822/1909, Minutes of Kenya Council of Ministers (special meeting), April 27, 1960.

was that many "Africans believed either that Kenyatta had not been associated with Mau Mau, or that alternately Mau Mau was a respectable freedom movement." As Kiano and Muimi saw it, "the longer Kenyatta was restricted, the greater became the myth, and the more his supporters would excuse atrocities and horrors of Mau Mau. If he were allowed out", Kiano and Muimi conjectured, "he might well prove an extinct volcano, but until he was released there could be no political stability."

Kiano and Muimi thus pleaded with Renison not to "slam the door" on Kenyatta's "eventual release." If Renison went ahead and "pronounced that Kenyatta would 'never' be released they would be almost forced to resign or go under, but if the Governor held out some hope for Kenyatta's progress towards release, or perhaps his voluntary acceptance of exile, it would be of great assistance to them."[40]

Amalemba, the other African in Renison's cabinet, did not support the position that Kenyatta was "the biggest issue in Kenya." On the contrary, "those Africans like Dr. Kiano who were sincerely working towards a new understanding would agree that Kenyatta in himself was relatively unimportant, but how were the masses to be educated?"[41] According to Amalemba, "the supporters of Kenyatta comprised for the most part ignorant and credulous men who were victims of a few unscrupulous agitators." There was, he feared, "a definite thug element supporting Kenyatta, who were only too ready to put the clock back." As evidence of the rowdy and thuggish behavior among Kenyatta's supporters, Amalemba pointed out that, "his own wife had come close to being assaulted in Nakuru because he was believed to oppose Kenyatta's release." It is useful to mention here that Amalemba had been outspoken in his opposition to the Mau Mau revolt, especially after joining Renison's cabinet. In a tour of several cities in the USA in October 1960, in his capacity as Minister for Housing, Amalemba vigorously denounced the Mau Mau revolt. A summary of his speeches

[40]TNA, CO 822/1909, Minutes of Kenya Council of Ministers (special meeting), April 27, 1960.

[41]TNA, CO 822/1909, Minutes of Kenya Council of Ministers (special meeting), April 7, 1960. Amalemba added that, "He knew of people in the worst hit Mau Mau areas who openly said that they would kill Kenyatta on sight and then give themselves up to the police." Kenyatta should only be released when he "satisfied the criteria applied to other detainees before they were released, that they had renounced Mau Mau and violence, and were acceptable to the Loyalists of their own districts … but not before."

was published in the *Daily Nation* (Nairobi) on October 26, 1960. "There was nothing 'glorious' about Mau Mau," Amalemba informed Americans, "as some African politicians had dared to claim; it had set back the clock of progress by 20 years … How could there be anything glorious or nationalistic in a movement which set out to destroy what little civilization had been established as the result of '60 years of our contact with Western countries'?"[42]

The settler ministers in Renison's cabinet were, as expected, quite opposed to the release of Kenyatta from detention. Harris did not share Kiano's or Muimi's discomfort in being part of a government that pursued policies to which they were either opposed or ambivalent. After all, when "several European Elected Ministers … had first accepted ministerial office," they had to "adopt Government policies that they had previously opposed." Regarding the future of Kenya and Kenyatta, Harris emphasized the oft-cited argument by settlers that "the economic development of the country depended on overseas investment, and if Kenyatta were released there would be a total loss of European confidence and the flow of overseas investment would dry up, with disastrous results." The explanation was simple: "Kenyatta, to the outside world, was a symbol of the disgusting Mau Mau blasphemy; he had cost thousands of lives, and could do so again, for the spirit of Mau Mau was ominously alive in Central Province."[43] Havelock, another settler in cabinet, insisted that emotions over Kenyatta in the country "had been built" to such an extent that were he to be released "an explosion was inevitable." Further, Havelock believed Kenyatta was still "in full command of all of his dangerous ability to hypnotize the Kikuyu." Thus Kenyatta, "with a proven predilection for violence," remained as "dangerous as when he was arrested in 1952."

To Bruce McKenzie, also a settler cabinet member, the release of Kenyatta "would force Europeans into a bloc." McKenzie also feared that "agricultural services throughout the African areas would collapse, racial cooperation would break down and outside investment would cease." He concluded on an ominous note stating that if Kenyatta was released, "it should be remembered that it might not only be Africans

[42]The *Daily Nation*, Nairobi, October 26, 1960, p. 3.

[43]TNA, CO 822/1909, Minutes of Kenya Council of Ministers (special meeting), April 27, 1960.

who wanted him dead."[44] Coutts, the Chief Secretary, had "personally known Kenyatta" when DC in Central Province. He had therefore seen "at first hand just what terrible damage he could do." He was unshakeable in his position that Kenyatta "was hardly human in his evilness." This very strong position would later be reflected in Coutts' unrelenting efforts, using the powers of his office, to keep Kenyatta in permanent restriction.

Madan, an Asian in Renison's cabinet, urged forward movement on this Kenyatta issue. "If the Government did not take some positive constructive action," he warned the cabinet, "they would destroy the African Ministers." Madan also pointed out that the history of the British Empire was full of examples in which "in the past, the British had often compromised with former enemies and restored them to their people without disastrous results." There was, thus, good reason to employ this past precedent in Kenya. In Kenyatta's case Madan felt that "his release might not lead to a blood bath, but to a new hope."[45] There was also the possibility that Kenyatta "might have lost his effectiveness" and may not constitute a formidable political force in the "changed political atmosphere and new era." To avoid sacrificing the African Ministers, Madan urged that Kenyatta should be released from detention, "thereby depriving the opponents of the new regime of their main weapon."

By the end of 1959 all discussions about the release of Kenyatta from detention were heavily affected by two developments. First, Rawson Macharia "towards the end of 1958 signed an affidavit swearing that his evidence against Kenyatta was false."[46] The colonial government's star witness had, in essence, fundamentally undermined the legal basis of the case against Kenyatta. It was a marked embarrassment for the colonial government. This news received wide local and international publicity. But, in typical fashion, the colonial government remained indifferent to inconvenient factual information. Macharia was blamed for this fiasco, for what was now seen as his greed and perpetual efforts to blackmail the colonial government. "While it is unfortunate that the affair has come at

[44]TNA, CO 822/1909, Minutes of Kenya Council of Ministers (special meeting), April 27, 1960. In the years ahead, McKenzie was to emerge as perhaps Kenyatta's most crucial minister and confidante.

[45]TNA, CO 822/1909, Minutes of Kenya Council of Ministers (special meeting), April 27, 1960.

[46]Murray-Brown, *Kenyatta*, p. 263.

this time, it was almost inevitable that it would happen sooner or later as Rawson Macharia is a thoroughly disgruntled person, who since the trial, has always thought his evidence merited his living at Government expense."[47] The Macharia incident, however, provided legal unassailable ammunition to local and international groups and individuals agitating for Kenyatta's freedom from detention.

Then there was the matter of Kenyatta's health. On October 19, 1959 Cairo Radio announced that it had seriously deteriorated while in detention, and that he was dying.[48] This explosive news was also circulated by the Kenya Office in Cairo. As the colonial government scrambled to trace the source of this alarming rumor, it was beset with a public relations disaster. The Colonial Office wanted answers. Statements were issued reassuring local and international audiences that Kenyatta was in good health, and that senior officials in the Department of Medical Services closely monitored his health, diet, and so on. Still, Renison dispatched Havelock, Minister of Health, to Lodwar for on the spot observations of Kenyatta and his health. The widely publicized official report on this visit only mentioned that Havelock had been in Lodwar as part of "a routine visit to medical establishments in the Northern Province." The report noted that, "in view of rumours circulating concerning the health of Jomo Kenyatta, the opportunity was taken by the Director of Medical Services," who had accompanied Havelock, "to satisfy himself that Jomo Kenyatta's health and living conditions were satisfactory." Havelock and the DC for Turkana District were also "present at the interview" which only covered "matters of health, diet and housing."[49] This visit and the subsequent news release failed to quell the rumors concerning Kenyatta's health. Renison's government was ill-prepared for dealing with questions surrounding Kenyatta's health, for example, what

[47]TNA, CO 822/1247, Kenya Intelligence Committee Appreciation.

[48]TNA, CO 822/1247, Kenyatta's health/Cairo Radio.

[49]TNA, CO 822/1247, Kenya News, release on April 21, 1960. In December 1960, the colonial government issued an official statement on Kenyatta's health restating that: "the latest report states that Kenyatta continues to be in good health, has put on 5 lbs. in weight during the month and that his blood pressure is within normal limits. The Acting Director of Medical Services, Dr. E. P. Rigby, who studies each monthly report on Kenyatta, stated today (Saturday 10th December, 1960) that Kenyatta's general health remains good, that his blood pressure is at a level normally found in a much younger man." No actual blood pressure readings were given though. See *Kenya News* (Press Handout), No. 928, December 10, 1960.

would happen if Kenyatta died in detention? This question provided another reason to accelerate discussions on the future of Kenyatta.

At the Colonial Office, the Kenyatta question was the subject of intense internal review. There were many officials opposed to Kenyatta's release, but there were also several who supported an early, if not immediate, release. An internal memo to the Colonial Secretary on December 29, 1960 in support of Kenyatta's release rekindled the issue of the "state of Kenyatta's mind" after many years in prison and detention. "What makes the problem peculiarly difficult is that we know so little about Kenyatta's attitude." It was, however, "tempting to hope that he may have learnt his lesson, may have confidence in Her Majesty's present Ministers, and especially yourself, and may be prepared to cooperate with us in bringing Kenya to independence under reasonable conditions."[50] Given Kenyatta's history and reputation, the memo speculated, it may be "too much to hope for Nyerere to emerge from Lodwar." Still, the decision to release Kenyatta should not be based on the assumption that the Colonial Secretary "can work easily" with him. If this turned out to be the case, it would constitute "an immediate advantage" but the "decision must be taken without any reliance that it will be so."

This memo touched on what were seen as the risks in releasing Kenyatta from detention. He might come back as "a violently anti-European nationalist ready to raise the whirlwind and sweep out the Europeans violently." Also, he may be bitter at the British for having imprisoned him. Such an attitude could tragically mislead him into taking actions having "no regard to the consequences for the welfare of Kenya." If this were to sadly come true, the result of Kenyatta having learned nothing, there was a ready "insurance policy" to ensure that there would still be positive outcomes: "there are now many Africans, who although no ordinary standard moderate, would be a restraining influence, especially if they had already been entrusted with the responsibility of government."[51] Many African Ministers in Kenyatta's government and other politicians could be relied on to exercise a "restraining influence" on him. There were therefore several good political and

[50]TNA, CO 822/1247, Colonial Office Discussion on the "Future of Kenyatta," December 29, 1960.

[51]TNA, CO 822/1247, Colonial Office Internal Discussion on the "Future of Kenyatta," December 29, 1960.

strategic reasons for facilitating the "release of the man, although not equally acceptable to all, is unquestionably the national leader." Looking to the future, the memo pointed out that only such a national leader could "claim to speak broadly for the people of Kenya and could secure acceptance by them of any agreements he reached with us."[52]

It is therefore not surprising that there was evident frustration with Renison at the Colonial Office, regarding his "inflexibility over Kenyatta." According to Nigel Fisher, Macleod was irritated with Renison, whom he thought was "'lacking in imagination and unsuitable for Kenya at this time'." Macleod nonetheless felt restrained by political considerations from immediately appointing a new Governor.[53] By the end of 1960 even Renison's supporters at the Colonial Office were increasingly irritated by his "practice of wrestling with his conscience in public in these matters," by making frequent and polarizing statements and pronouncements.

In April 1960 Renison wrote to the Colonial Secretary giving him an outline of a speech he was due to make, restating that, "Kenyatta would continue to be restricted." The African Ministers had again strongly indicated that they might be forced to resign from his cabinet if the speech "shut the door altogether and there was no ray of hope" for releasing Kenyatta. Politically they were in a very difficult position. But Renison did not want them to resign since this would have undermined the path to political progress supported by the Colonial Office. So the speech strained "not to shut the door altogether" on Kenyatta while not offending the settlers and their supporters. "It is the Government's hope and desire", Renison wrote, "that eventually, however long it takes, all the few hundreds of those connected with Mau Mau who are still in detention or under restriction will be adjudged no longer a danger to security (corrupt group) follow the tens of thousands who have returned to normal life." But Kenyatta raised a different set of problems since he "was convicted in a court of law as guilty of managing the Mau Mau movement." He was therefore "a graver security risk" and in "a category of his own." While not shutting the door on Kenyatta, Renison indicated

[52]TNA, CO 822/1247, Colonial Office Internal Discussion on the "Future of Kenyatta," December 29, 1960.

[53]Nigel Fisher, *Iain Macleod* (London: Andre Deutsch, 1973), p. 150. Also see Clyde Sanger, *Malcolm MacDonald* (Montreal; Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995), p. 391. "Sir Patrick Renison … clearly unimaginative, if not downright insensitive."

that that there would be no speedy release for him. Instead, Renison would rely on advice from his Council of Ministers (dominated by anti-Kenyatta settlers and senior civil servants) as to whether and when it was appropriate to release him. This was as good as keeping Kenyatta in indefinite detention since it was unlikely that the Council of Ministers, without critical external intervention, would ever support Kenyatta's release.

Renison delivered the speech in May 1960, and in June 1960 the Director of Intelligence produced a confidential comprehensive survey of reactions to the speech. This was an intelligence survey of different population groups in Kenya aimed at determining their feelings and opinions on Kenyatta. More to the point: how popular was Kenyatta with different population groups and communities in Kenya at this time? And what did these different groups think of Renison's position on Kenyatta? According to this intelligence survey, Europeans in Kenya (mainly settlers), welcomed Renison's statement, "and their morale received a temporary fillip," although many were "skeptical of Government's good faith and feel Kenyatta will be released in the not too distant future purely as a matter of political expediency." Thus, there was a growing realization, even among many settlers, that Kenyatta's release was inevitable. The timing was a different matter. The survey found that the "Asian community—when it has thought about it at all—has approved of Government's stand, but there are a few, particularly among the smaller traders, who feel that Kenyatta's release would bring relief, if not an end, to violent attacks on members of their community."[54]

Africans in Nairobi expected this disappointing announcement by Renison. This was "not regarded as differing materially from Government's known stand." All Kikuyu in Nairobi, "except loyalists and the very few genuine moderates, are emotionally involved and are strongly in favour of Kenyatta's immediate release." The intelligence survey nonetheless noted that these Kikuyu supporters did "not seem to be prepared to resort to extreme measures in order to ensure it." In Central Province the intelligence survey found an "obvious cleavage line … the loyalists and non-loyalist factions." Generally, the loyalists were "visibly

[54]TNA, CO 822/1909, Confidential Report from Director of Intelligence on "The Continued Restriction of Jomo Kenyatta," June 21, 1960, p. 1. Renison had gone ahead with the speech discounting the importance of the more than "a million signatures" submitted to him pleading for Kenyatta's release.

heartened by the news that Kenyatta was not to be released upon them," although in Kiambu some loyalists felt that the "Governor's statement gives fresh cause for resentment against them by that section of the population which did not actively support the Government during the Emergency."[55]

How about Central Province's intelligentsia? They "considered that Governor's decision was based on sound argument, but they were inclined to doubt its validity in the context of current politics." Further, they knew that at some point Kenyatta would return, especially "once independence has been won." Kenyatta continued to enjoy solid and loyal support among the "semi-educated and illiterate of the population" in Central Province. The intelligence survey found that this majority group denied that "Kenyatta would be a menace to security, many of them claiming that he is a graver danger in restriction." This group was determined to see Kenyatta released from detention. "It is considered", the intelligence survey concluded "that a call for civil disobedience on this issue would be widely supported in Kiambu, Nyeri, and Fort Hall." This was clearly a worrisome development for the colonial government and even the Colonial Office.

Renison's speech received an "immediate, and in the main, unfavourable" reaction in Mombasa. The intelligence survey determined that the educated Africans in Mombasa did not believe that Kenyatta was a threat to law and order in the country. Some of them wanted the Africans in Renison's cabinet to resign in protest. "The illiterate and less-well educated classes," the intelligence survey concluded, now endorsed "a civil disobedience campaign." Outside Mombasa, the intelligence survey noted that supporters of the Kenya African People's Party (Masinde Muliro's party), "agreed with the Governor's decision that Kenyatta shall continue to be restricted. They allege that Kenyatta and the Kikuyu did not consult other tribes before implementing the policy which led to the Emergency, which in turn affected every one by slowing up economic and political progress. They believe, too, that Kenyatta is far too steeped in tribalism, and that he and the Kikuyu are liable to plunge the colony into chaos once again." Of comfort to the colonial government was the news that this group, in Coast Province, claimed that "Kenyatta is only

[55]TNA, CO 822/1909, Confidential Report from Director of Intelligence on "The Continued Restriction of Jomo Kenyatta," June 21, 1960, p. 2.

a leader of the Kikuyu and means nothing to other tribes; as evidence of this, they point to his domination and misuse of the Kenya African Union." Therefore, "while they do not oppose his release as an individual, they most certainly would not welcome it if he were to return to the political arena."[56]

Africans in Nyanza Province, the intelligence survey found, were on the whole "strongly opposed to the continued restriction of Kenyatta." African politicians in the province, had been "the most vocal in demanding his release," while the middle and lower classes had now come to believe that Kenyatta's release was "vital to their interests." The middle and lower classes also believed that the "Governor had been prevailed upon to take this particular course by the Chief Secretary speaking on behalf of the settler community." Thus, Coutts was to blame. This group also held the view that Renison had chosen to believe the erroneous analysis and conclusions about the Mau Mau contained in the recently published *Corfield Report*. As a result, this group was considered to be quite "susceptible to proposals for a civil disobedience and positive campaign." The exception to this massive rejection of Renison's speech in the province were "Government servants and the more intelligent Kalenjin tribes men," who continued to think that "Kenyatta's release might very easily lead, through mass hysteria, to a situation where candidates sponsored by him could dominate the forthcoming elections to the advantage of the Kikuyu and the detriment of others—particularly the Kalenjin."[57]

In the Rift Valley Province, the center of the settlers, the intelligence survey found that the vast majority of Africans "condemned the Governor's statement and consider that he has dealt a bitter blow to the African cause. It is here, more than anywhere else in the colony", the intelligence survey noted, "that African opinion has shown signs of unanimity." As an example, the African politicians in Nakuru "believe that the refusal to release Kenyatta is tantamount to a denial of African political influence." The exception, again, was in the Kalenjin districts, where there were "signs of support for the Governor's decision."

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[56]TNA, CO 822/1909, Confidential Report from the Director of Intelligence on "The Continued Restriction of Kenyatta," June 21, 1960, p. 3.

[57]TNA, CO 822/1909, Confidential Report from the Director of Intelligence on "The Continued Restriction of Kenyatta," June 21, 1960, p. 3.

Lastly, in Southern Province, the intelligence survey found that the majority of the Akamba had not "given particular thought to the Governor's statement … and are generally indifferent to Kenyatta's fate." On the other hand, the loyalists in this province were quite pleased to hear that Kenyatta would "continue to be restricted." They regarded the Governor's decision as a "vindication of their own efforts to oppose the spread of Mau Mau during the Emergency, and a definite contribution to the preservation of law and order." Only the politically conscious Africans in the province had taken "exception to the announcement and would like to see Kenyatta freed." The Maasai were, according to the intelligence survey, "wholly indifferent to the question of Kenyatta's release, indeed, most of them are unaware of the issue." Only those of "mixed Kikuyu/Masai origin" supported Kenyatta's release.

Among the African politicians, especially the newly elected members of the Legco, the intelligence survey found it difficult "to assess the degree of sincerity with which" these politicians desired Kenyatta's release. All of them were now "swept up in the emotional fervour generated by the Kenyatta cult." Only Oginga Odinga was considered by this intelligence survey to be sincerely committed to Kenyatta's release. "It is considered that only Oginga Odinga is fervent in his belief of Kenyatta's political omniscience, a view that is supported by the fact that he can be considered as the originator of the cult in 1958, since when he has served it unswervingly in the capacity of high priest."[58] It is only Oginga Odinga who had issued a statement of "extreme incense" in reaction to the Governor's announcement regarding the continued detention of Kenyatta.

Mboya, the intelligence survey observed, had been a "little slower in appreciating the cult's popular appeal, and his espousal of the cause was more likely to his seeing its propaganda value in his efforts to attract Kikuyu support." What did he think of Kenyatta at this time? According to the intelligence survey, Mboya was "privately of the opinion that Kenyatta is a political 'has been,' that his release would reveal him in his true light and the public would soon realize that better leaders were now available." Another alternative, also suggested by the intelligence survey, was that "Mboya thinks that Kenyatta, if released, would, in view

[58]TNA, CO 822/1909, Confidential Report from the Director of Intelligence on "The Continued Restriction of Kenyatta," June 21, 1960, p. 5.

of his age, be content to assume the role figure-head to the nationalist movement and leave the generalship to Mboya as his lieutenant."[59] Due to this and related reasons, Mboya's opposition to the Governor's announcement was expected. The intelligence survey still concluded that Mboya had "been driven to the more flamboyant gestures in order to maintain his position."

Muliro had publicly continued to appeal for Kenyatta's release. He had also stated that if Kenyatta were released he "would offer him the leadership of the Kenya African People's Party (KAPP), but if he refused it in favour of KANU or Nairobi People's Convention (NPC), he (Muliro) would lead the KAPP in opposition to him." Such statements, the intelligence survey concluded, did "not lend themselves to the principle of Kenyatta's political infallibility." Ayodo also condemned Kenyatta's continued restriction. His condemnation, the intelligence survey reported, needed some qualification since he "was without a single original thought in his head and" was "motivated solely by virulent anti-Europeanism." Thus, his condemnation had to be seen as a reflection of "the opinions of his patron, Mboya."

What about Kenyatta? What did the colonial intelligence services know about him and his views at this time while still in detention? First, there was the obvious fact that none of the new generation of African politicians in the country could "claim close association with Kenyatta at the height of his power in the days of the Kenya African Union." Only Gichuru could claim this direct linkage. Second, Kenyatta was apparently informed of the political developments in the country even as he remained in detention. For example, he knew of Renison's statement confining him to continued detention and had reacted "with equanimity." On a more substantial level Kenyatta deplored incidents of lawlessness, which seemed widespread in the country. On his freedom, Kenyatta confidently expected "the agitation for his release to increase and to culminate in success after the forthcoming elections" in the country. The intelligence survey also mentioned that Kenyatta is "alleged to have stated that extremists of whatever party are dangerous to the peaceful development of the Colony, and that he would be prepared publicly to

[59]TNA, CO 822/1909, Confidential Report from Director of Intelligence on "The Continued Restriction of Kenyatta," June 21, 1960, p. 5.

condemn their activities," even if this view were seen in some quarters as unpalatable.[60]

The intelligence survey was also able to determine some of Kenyatta's positions on questions of critical importance to the settlers. He opposed the "expropriation of land and the continuance of what he terms 'privileged title'." It was not clear to the colonial intelligence services what this phrase meant, although they speculated that it "might be no more than a convenient euphemism to cover his attitude to the White Highlands, and as such, represents no change in the policy which was one of the driving forces of the Kikuyu Central Association." Still on the White Highlands, the intelligence survey pointed out that Kenyatta favored the "fullest utilization of Crown Land through the medium of well-considered schemes and the setting up of a Land Bank. This he claims to have discussed with Sir Philip Mitchell in 1946, but added that H.M. Government was too slow in taking advantage of the opportunity." On the settlers, Kenyatta thought that they were not "yet conditioned to the inevitable changes and are not evincing sufficient willingness to compromise." The intelligence survey concluded by acknowledging that some of the information gathered on Kenyatta may be contradictory. Part of the problem lay in the selective access to Kenyatta that was granted to only a few groups. Therefore, "a more accurate assessment would be available if a less selective policy were adopted with regard to his contacts with the outside world." There needed to be more access to Kenyatta in order to accurately determine his current views on key questions confronting the country.

In December 1960, before more access to Kenyatta was granted, the Special Branch of the colonial intelligence services presented a comprehensive and lengthy research paper on Kenyatta to the colonial government. It was the most detailed survey and analysis yet of Kenyatta's popularity among Africans in the country and dealt with the question of Kenyatta as a national leader. Was he acceptable to the many and diverse African communities and groups in the country? Thus, through this comprehensive survey entitled, "**The Kenyatta Cult: Its Impact on the African Masses**," the Special Branch sought to "assess, in view of the ceaseless references to him by African politicians, what Kenyatta means

[60]TNA, CO 822/1909, Confiential Report from Director of Intelligence on "The Continued Restriction of Kenyatta," June 21, 1960, p. 7.

to the various tribes of Kenya, and how deeply they feel about his release and his future status in the political life of the country."[61]

In this survey Special Branch determined that "there is no African public opinion on what Kenyatta's future international alignment will be." In many respects, this was expected at this time. There had never been an opportunity, or even necessity, to reflect in earnest on the complexities of international alliances. Kenya was still a colony. Certainly, the ideological duel that characterized the Cold War had never been a matter of public discussion, except for the usual condemnation of Communism by settlers and the colonial government, especially during and after the Mau Mau revolt. International relations were not the primary concern of the African masses at this time. All matters of great and urgent importance dealt with internal affairs where the key issues were: land, education, employment, housing, poverty, and the end of racial discrimination. The survey covered all the ethnic groups and provinces, including Nairobi.

The African masses in Nairobi, according to this survey, saw Kenyatta as a legend and "the man who will get things done." The Kikuyu in Nairobi saw him "as a tribal and national leader," while "the other tribes" saw him as "an apostle of freedom." All Africans in Nairobi wanted him released from detention. Civil disobedience in pursuit of Kenyatta's release would be successful and would also "increase tension and feeling against Government." His release would "certainly spark off amongst all tribes a feeling of jubilation."

The Kikuyu in Nairobi and Central Province saw Kenyatta as "the legendary 'old man' of nationalism who will get the good things of life for the Kikuyu; they saw him occupying the dual roles of a tribal and national leader." These roles were not incompatible and, according to the survey, the Kikuyu "envisage him in both roles to their own advantage." For this reason the Kikuyu felt very strongly that "the African leader must be a Kikuyu and that Kenyatta while fighting for other tribes will ensure Kikuyu hegemony …. There is a genuine desire for his release and a positive action campaign would be widely supported," but that there was no desire among the Kikuyu "for a return to civil war."[62] In

[61]TNA, CO 822/1910, The Kenyatta Cult: Its Impact on the African Masses, December, 1960, Preface.

[62]TNA, CO 822/1910, The Kenyatta Cult: Its Impact on the Masses, December, 1960, p. 7.

Central Province Kenyatta's release would lead to jubilation and would be interpreted as the "final surrender of Government" and may be followed with "disregard and disrespect for Chiefs and headmen." The limited resistance to Kenyatta's release might come from a "few remaining committed loyalists … in Nyeri and Fort Hall where they have not really faced up to the inevitability of Kenyatta's release," although many had come to realize that it would "occur before independence." What was the main fear of the loyalists in Central Province at this time? It was "economic discrimination rather than physical violence in the future."

The loyalists in Kiambu "did not appear to view Kenyatta as being responsible for Mau Mau and therefore did not bear him any personal animosity." Together with the chiefs, these loyalists nonetheless supported the immediate release of Kenyatta when there was still "sufficient time before independence to prick the legend of Kenyatta's infallibility, and to produce a reaction against him." These loyalists wanted Kenyatta's actions "observed and controlled while the British were still in charge." The survey noted that, upon his release, Kenyatta would have "a mass blind following, especially from women who were his most fanatical supporters" throughout Central Province. The wealthy and well-educated Kikuyu remained, at this time, uncommitted. They had "their private doubts even now about Kenyatta."

In Embu at this time, the morale of the loyalists was "at rock bottom" and many had come to accept that Kenyatta "would come out with independence." Although the Embu were "less committed to the cult than the Kikuyu and are not really prepared to do anything about Kenyatta's release … they would support him afterwards." Kenyatta would enjoy a "blind following in Embu" since Nyagah, the local politician, was "too moderate for the general liking and there is at present no" other "local politician capable of opposing Kenyatta."[63] Further, there was no organized group among the Embu "hostile to Kenyatta." The Meru were seen as "not really interested in national politics." Still, they "would like to see Kenyatta out" of detention and would "support him afterwards."

[63]TNA, CO 822/1910, The Kenyatta Cult: Its Impact on the Masses, December, 1960. p. 16. This survey concluded that "as far as the Kenyatta cult is concerned, the Embu are a paler reflection of the Kikuyu" and that "the actual arrival of Kenyatta in the district would arouse great interest, but the mere fact of his release would have little impact on the Embu, although there would be criticism of Government's continued existence." No law and order problem was anticipated in the district.

It was unlikely, however, that the Meru would "indulge in any positive action on Kenyatta's behalf." Here, any call for positive action "would have little effect." The survey pointed out that the Meru had "genuine affection and respect for Kenyatta" and many considered his detention to be unjustified. The Meru loyalists were "more numerous in relation to the ex-detainees than elsewhere in Central Province" and not isolated from the community. As such, they did not have the same "apprehensions of discrimination as have the Kikuyu loyalists." Kenyatta would have a strong following among the Meru who expected him "to ensure that K.E.M (Kikuyu, Embu, Meru) interests come first, and to support Gichuru and KANU for this reason."

How about the Kamba? "Their outlook," the survey stated, was "fundamentally parochial." They supported Kenyatta's release and would "follow him thereafter (though with no great enthusiasm) because they live in a political vacuum." Although there was no major desire for violence, they might, at least in Machakos, "support positive action as being a crack against the Government rather than being for Kenyatta." No positive action was envisaged among "the remoter Kitui Kamba" who "are altogether less interested in politics." There was political support for Kenyatta among the Kamba. However, if the Kamba felt that Kenyatta was "steering a dangerous course," they would withdraw this support, "despite any urgings of local politicians." Of more fundamental importance was the survey's observation that the Kamba "may well modify their enthusiasm" for Kenyatta "especially in the unlikely eventuality of a major Kamba political figure appearing."[64]

Support for Kenyatta in Coast Province, according to the survey, was not easy to quantify. The city of Mombasa was "almost completely divided between KANU and KADU"; KANU supporters tended to be from up-country and enthusiastic in their support for Kenyatta's release, while KADU supporters only paid lip-service to this campaign. Also, in Mombasa Kenyatta was regarded as a "'a grand old man' of nationalism than as the future leader" and the level of support for him would "depend largely upon the allegiance of local politicians." Ngala was a key politician with a considerable following and was likely to remain that way

[64]TNA, CO 822/1910, The Kenyatta Cult: Its Impact on the Masses, December, 1960, p. 24. The survey anticipated the rise of Ngei as a political figure, at least in Machakos, at this time.

"even in the face of Kenyatta's opposition." Kenyatta's main asset was that he "is thought to represent a unifying force in African politics."

Outside Mombasa the Kenyatta Cult had made "little real impact amongst the Coast tribes, who view him as a figure head of nationalism than as future leader." As a result, his release would have little impact, and clearly any call for positive action would not succeed. General political support for Kenyatta on the north coast "after release would depend upon Ngala's attitude and it is felt Ngala could retain his following even in the face of Kenyatta."[65] Even on the south coast Kenyatta did not have overwhelming support. The survey therefore concluded that "so long as Kenyatta acted as a truly national leader there would not be any trouble from the coast. However, should he show partiality towards the Kikuyu, and awaken the latent Coast antipathy, KADU would be likely to form the nucleus of the opposition group which would comprise most of the Province apart from Teita where the tribesmen are much more akin to and friendly with the Kikuyu than the rest."

Special attention was paid to the opinions of the Luo, largely because the two principal African politicians in the country at this time, Odinga and Mboya, were Luo, and because of the colonial government's declared hostility toward Odinga. Odinga was seen not only as the effective leader of the Luo, but also as Kenyatta's principal supporter among the new crop of African politicians. The Luo were characterized as "the clerical element par excellence throughout the colony." They also rivaled the Kikuyu in the "number of major politicians they have produced."

As for their allegiance to the Kenyatta cult, Special Branch divided them into Central and South Nyanza. In Central Nyanza the "Luo adhere to the Kenyatta cult because Oginga tells them to do so. In South Nyanza they are less keen because Mboya has been less vociferous." In both areas, however, "positive action would certainly meet with response." And the future? "Kenyatta could only retain a Luo following if he retained the allegiance of the local leaders, Oginga in Central and Mboya in South Nyanza. Tribal suspicions", the survey observed, "are such that he would not be able to retain a mass following if he broke with them." Also, the Luo did not want Nyanza to "come under Kikuyu hegemony, even though at present they form part of the KANU

[65]TNA, CO 822/1910, The Kenyatta Cult: Its Impact on the Masses, December, 1960, p. 31.

axis."[66] The conclusion of Special Branch was that the Luo would support "in principle a Government controlled by Kenyatta provided that it did not clash with them over any issues such as land, or break with Oginga in the case of Central Nyanza, or Mboya in the case of South Nyanza." Kenyatta would most certainly lose Luo support if he were suspected of harboring and promoting Kikuyu tribal ambitions. Under such circumstances, "even Oginga would be hard put to keep the Luo behind Kenyatta."

Abaluhya support for Kenyatta was not easy to categorize since "they are a confederation of some fourteen tribes." In general, the survey found that the Abaluhya "were accepting that" Kenyatta "will be the future leader." This was especially true among the KANU supporters, "while others regard him as a figure-head." There was strong support for Kenyatta's release from detention and a general recognition of him "as the first African nationalist and inevitable head of state." Still, the Abaluhya did not have "any clear idea (especially in Elgon Nyanza) as to his exact function after independence." There were many who viewed him as a Kikuyu leader, or as "one who even if trying to act impartially, would be susceptible to pressure from his Kikuyu comrades." Kenyatta's main appeal was as a "unifying force" in the country. A prominent exception to this position was the Abaluhya politician, Amalemba, "who in the past … made it clear that he does not subscribe to the Kenyatta cult."

A Kenyatta controlled government would be supported by the Abaluhya, although he was "unlikely to obtain a large blind following … as tribalism is still very strong and the tendency would be to follow the local politicians, especially in Elgon Nyanza," where Muliro was "still predominant." The worry of the Abaluhya, the survey observed, was about "being left out of the Luo/Kikuyu axis." Any visible attempt at "Kikuyu hegemony or any feeling that Kenyatta was promoting inter-tribal strife" would be resisted.[67]

The findings of this survey showed that the Kenyatta cult faced most resistance among the Kalenjin. As a minority group the Kalenjin realized that they "may have to accept Kenyatta as a national leader, although

[66]TNA, CO 822/1910, The Kenyatta Cult: Its Impact on the Masses, December 1960, p. 32.

[67]TNA, CO 822/1910, The Kenyatta Cult: Its Impact on the Masses, December 1960, p. 39.

they view Ngala as a possible and preferable alternative." The Kalenjin, according to this survey, suspected Kenyatta "as being a tribalist who would scheme for Kikuyu control of the land as the Kikuyu have no spare land." Consequently the Kalenjin were "fundamentally not concerned with the Kenyatta cult." Any call for positive action among the Kalenjin would not succeed. On the other hand, "the only real response to any positive action call would be if it was made by the Kipsigis or other Kalenjin leaders."

In general, the Kalenjin were described as having a defensive attitude "in that they are not interested in taking over the Central Government, which feat they realize is beyond their capabilities." If they were left alone "within their 'sphere of influence' they would not be worried as to who constituted the Government after independence."[68] Thus, Kenyatta had no political support among them. The survey determined that, "in general the Kalenjin follow the KPA (Kalenjin Political Alliance) not KADU, and Kenyatta would make no headway except with the support of the KPA."

There were brief observations on the smaller ethnic groups. The Kisii, described by the survey as "intensely parochial, and relatively wealthy," were also not interested in "national politics, although they are KANU supporters." They were not, for the most part, "concerned about the Kenyatta cult." Regarding future political alliances, the survey stated that it was possible for Kenyatta to "wean them away from their attachment to the Luo in political matters." The only complication here was that the Kisii still recalled "Kikuyu penetration in the Kisii highlands before the Emergency."

The Maasai's attitude to Kenyatta and land was found to be similar to that of the Kalenjin. "Having ample lands themselves their attitude is basically defensive." What the Maasai wanted, the survey concluded, was to ensure "that they can continue to live in semi-autonomy with their present lands." They were not concerned about the Kenyatta cult, remaining "basically indifferent" to it and to "Kenya politics in general." They would, however, be aroused to violent resistance if they "felt that the Kikuyu, through Kenyatta and the Central Government were

[68]TNA, CO 822/1910, The Kenyatta Cult: Its Impact on the Masses, December 1960, p. 46.

threatening them" and their lands.[69] They supported KADU through the MUF (Maasai United Front). They were strongly opposed to any encroachment on their land by outsiders.

In Northern Province—land of the Boran, Somali, and Turkana—the survey found no interest in the Kenyatta cult. There was no evident interest in national politics or in Kenyatta's release from detention. However, among the Somali the only way that Kenyatta himself would "impinge on them after his release" would be "if he made a policy statement contrary to their interests in general, or which showed that he was determined to thwart Somali ambitions to secede in particular."

All Africans in the White Highlands (settled areas), according to the survey, looked on Kenyatta as the "father of African nationalism" and thus accepted him "as the future leader of Kenya Africans." Even KADU supporters in this part of the country, on the whole, supported him "by virtue of the last few years' political propaganda." Kenyatta was seen as the inevitable candidate for the post of national leader, although, according to the survey, the "non-Kikuyu in Rift Valley Province expect him to act primarily as a Kikuyu tribalist."[70] No spontaneous reaction was envisaged upon Kenyatta's release in the White Highlands, except for the urban areas with heavy Kikuyu concentration. However, a "call for positive action by KANU, if supported by Nairobi leaders," would receive support. Such a call would not succeed if it became a Kikuyu-only political undertaking. The KADU had considerable support in the White Highlands, especially among the Kalenjin and some Abaluhya. Still, the survey concluded that, upon his release, Kenyatta "would have a completely blind following amongst the majority of settled African labourers coming as they do in general from the 'have-nots', particularly the Kikuyu."[71]

In its conclusions Special Branch stated that the current version of the Kenyatta cult could be easily traced to Oginga Odinga's statement in 1958 in the Legco that "Kenyatta was the true leader of the African people." Since then, Kenyatta was no longer seen as "a figure

[69]TNA, CO 822/1910, The Kenyatta Cult: Its Impact on the Masses, December 1960, p. 47.

[70]TNA, CO 822/1910, The Kenyatta Cult: Its Impact on the Masses, December 1960, p. 52.

[71]TNA, CO 822/1910, The Kenyatta Cult: Its Impact on the Masses, December 1960, p. 54.

of the past who had brought tribulation upon the country." Among the Kikuyu Kenyatta was now seen as "the person who will get things done for them, while most other tribes have been persuaded that he is the only person to be the head of an independent Kenya."[72]

Whereas there was indifference to the Kenyatta cult among the "Nilo-Hamitic tribes (Kalenjin and Masai groups)," the majority of all Africans in Kenya were seen as supportive of Kenyatta's release from detention and as the national leader. The only worthwhile qualification to this general support was the category of educated and wealthy Africans in all ethnic groups, including the Kikuyu, who were "less enthusiastic than the average about Kenyatta." They tended to view him as "a figure of the past who, although he may be a national figure-head, will leave the future control of the country" to a new "generation of politicians."

Most ethnic groups also exhibited what was described as "a vague fear of future Kikuyu ambitions." This survey indicated that most Africans were not clear as to Kenyatta's future policies; most had "not thought beyond his release." Still, he had nationwide support as an undisputed national hero. His place in the "nationalist mythology was such that most African politicians (especially those of KANU) cannot afford, even if they wished, quietly to drop the subject of his release and future status."[73] African politicians who did not support Kenyatta's release "would be branded as renegades by their rivals in Kenya, and by many other African nationalists outside Kenya." The survey therefore concluded that African politicians were seen as "riding a tiger they would now like to dismount but dare not."

Africans, the survey noted, would see the release of Kenyatta from detention as a "victory over Government." This impact could nonetheless be "minimized by Government propaganda" before and after the release. This propaganda would need to emphasize that the colonial government had not been forced into releasing Kenyatta, but had in fact done so according to schedule. After release the maintenance of peace in the country would depend very heavily on Kenyatta's attitude. "Unless he advocated for moderation, there would be the likelihood of an open

[72]TNA, CO 822/1910, The Kenyatta Cult: Its Impact on The Masses, December 1960, p. 56.

[73]TNA, CO 822/1910, The Kenyatta Cult: Its Impact on the African Masses, December 1960, p. 58.

and major clash with Government in Nairobi and Kikuyu areas; as for instance if he decided to disobey an order restricting him to Githunguri, and marched at the head of a procession into Nairobi."[74] The survey also expressed doubt that Kenyatta could be the "unifying force in African politics" or "heal these current tribal suspicions." Special Branch thought that part of the problem lay in the current Kikuyu disposition: "the current swollen-headedness of the Kikuyu has done nothing" to convince other groups that "a Kenya governed by Kenyatta would be a suitable place for them."

It was not possible, Special Branch concluded, to overcome or undermine this overwhelming support for Kenyatta, "until the legend has been exploded and the shortcomings of the man exposed." Only then, would the "necessary disillusionment … set in."[75] It was thus important for the colonial government to realize that, as disagreeable as it might be, the reality was that "the Kenyatta legend is a hurdle which has to be surmounted before Kenya can take the final steps to independence with any chance of success." Undermining the Kenyatta cult remained a key preoccupation of Renison's administration.

This popularity of Kenyatta was again confirmed in a public opinion poll commissioned by the colonial government in March 1961.[76] Part of the aim of this poll, conducted by Marco Survey, was to "determine whether public opinion supported the Governor in his stand" on Kenyatta. The poll found that whites in the country stood "alone on the issue of the continued restriction of Jomo Kenyatta." An overwhelming majority of Africans, about "82% … had the opinion that no Government should be formed until the unconditional release of Jomo Kenyatta."[77] On the question, "If Kenyatta is released and there is a recurrence of violence, who should be held responsible?" the poll found that only twelve per cent of Africans "would hold Her Majesty's Government responsible for a recurrence of violence." Africans, it

[74]TNA, CO 822/1910, The Kenyatta Cult: Its Impact on the Masses, December 1960, p. 60.

[75]TNA, CO 822/1910, The Kenyatta Cult: Its Impact on The Masses, December 1960, p. 61.

[76]TNA, CO 822/1913, Public Opinion Poll on Kenya's Kenyatta Issue (Poll No. 6), March 1961.

[77]TNA, CO 822/1913, Public Opinion Poll on Kenya's Kenyatta Issue (Poll No. 6), March 1961, p. 12.

seemed, were "prepared to accept the responsibility of political stability if Jomo Kenyatta is released unconditionally." This was not true among whites, who favored the continued restriction of Kenyatta "and consequently 56% expressed the opinion that Her Majesty's Government should be held responsible."[78]

Regarding the future, the poll found that Africans were "overwhelmingly confident about the economic and political future of Kenya," while the majority of whites were not. About "one half of the Asians were confident," although a high percentage of them and whites "did not know, or would not state, or … offered some alternative suggestion, or otherwise qualified their answers."

What had become evident was that Renison's stand on the Kenyatta question could no longer be sustained. Political, strategic, and economic imperatives called for a quick resolution. The colonial intelligence services had confirmed Kenyatta's popularity across the country and, to the horror of Renison and the settlers, that Kenyatta was acceptable to almost all African ethnic groups (admittedly with qualification in some areas) as the future leader of the country.

At the beginning of 1961 the emphasis on the Kenyatta question, in both Nairobi and London, now focused on allowing a variety of individuals, political parties, and the media, access to him. The aim was to let Kenyatta articulate his views on the future of Kenya. Renison had mentioned this possibility to the Colonial Secretary in April 1960. He revealed that Kiano had suggested to him that Kenyatta "might be restricted in a more accessible place where the world press, etc., might question him." Renison endorsed this idea and indicated that it deserved "further consideration." Kiano had also suggested "rather hesitatingly" that the colonial government might also wish to explore the possibility of Kenyatta's "restriction to the United Kingdom or elsewhere outside Kenya". Muimi "too, without prompting, asked whether Kenyatta could not be restricted outside Kenya."[79] This idea was never endorsed, or even seriously explored, by the Colonial Office. On the other hand, the Colonial Office supported the idea of facilitating access to Kenyatta by the media, interested political parties, and religious groups. Macleod,

[78]TNA, CO 822/1913, Public Opinion Poll on Kenya's Kenyatta Issue (Poll No. 6), March 1961, p. 14.

[79]TNA, CO 822/1909, Renison's memo to the Colonial Secretary, April 24, 1960.

the Colonial Secretary, had decided by the end of 1960, "to deal with the release of Kenyatta in two stages. The first was to move him from complete isolation inaccessibility to a place where people could see and consult him. If this was successful, his final phase would follow, but there was no rigid time table."[80] The colonial government was thus granted permission to move Kenyatta from Lodwar to Maralal.

In making the announcement in Nairobi, Renison strenuously sought to show that there had "never been the slightest difference in thinking between me and Her Majesty's Ministers in Great Britain, through whom, with determination to help Kenya, I serve the Queen." He portrayed himself as a loyal executor of policies taken by the Colonial Office on Kenyatta, which was not entirely accurate. Renison still disliked Kenyatta viewing him essentially as "a person aiming at Kikuyu domination and prepared to see violence used if it will help his ends." He had, nonetheless, authorized that Kenyatta be moved from Lodwar to Maralal. The intention was to "allow him many visitors." First on the list were to be representatives of the Council of Ministers, then "representatives of the world press to interview him," plus "Ministers of the Christian Church."[81]

What did Renison hope to achieve through this effort? In a top-secret memo to the Colonial Secretary in Decemeber 1960, Renison saw Kenyatta as "the enemy … A Kikuyu with educated knowledge in the 1930s and 1940s of the Western and Communist worlds … political campaign has built him into a legend as a national leader and apostle of freedom."[82] The memo touched on Kenyatta's health, which was deemed "better than normal for a man of his age," although he had hypertension and high blood pressure. Kenyatta had "given up alcohol since imprisonment in 1952, put on weight and was well informed on Kenya politics and world affairs," but was unlikely to "publish his views while in restriction." Kenyatta had, the memo stated, "still a very strong personality, some say hypnotic powers; likely to dominate all Kenya politicians." He was also "arrogant and unrepentant," with doubtful ability as a "constructive and political leader." Renison was laying

[80]Fisher, *Iain Macleod*, p. 150.

[81]TNA, CO 822/1910, Renison's Top Secret and Confidential memo to the Colonial Secretary, December 1960.

[82]TNA, CO 822/1910, Renison's Top Secret and Confidential memo to the Colonial Secretary, December 1960.

the foundation for the unacceptability of Kenyatta as a national leader of Kenya. He blamed the press for "keeping the Kenyatta excitement at high pitch" by pressing for his release.

The intention of the colonial government, according to Renison, was simple and direct: "to prevent Jomo Kenyatta from ever becoming a danger to law and order or to orderly constitutional advance; to build up a constitutional structure which not even Kenyatta can sweep away and into which he must fit even after independence, if he remains in public life; to lower the pressures of the Kenyatta campaign inside and outside Kenya."[83]

To achieve these aims, Renison (and his anti-Kenyatta advisers) arrived at rather revealing conclusions that guided the colonial government's posture toward Kenyatta at this crucial period. First, Kenyatta was to be released from detention "while the British are still in-charge" and, at all costs, he must "not come straight from detention in triumph to lead a self-governing or independent African Government." Second, the period of Kenyatta's stay in Maralal had to be effectively used to "debunk the legend." Kenyatta's political hold on the Africans, especially the Kikuyu, who regarded him "less as a human leader than as a Messiah whose occult power is unshakeable," had to be broken. He had to be made to look ordinary, weak, ill-informed, and unsuitable to lead. This period was to be used to expose his failings, inabilities, and incompetencies as a national leader. Perhaps exposure of his "ultra-radicalism" would repel his local and international supporters. Access to Kenyatta was therefore granted not to enhance his status and credentials, but to expose his failings and weaknesses as a possible national leader. Exposure to the world press and to a multitude of contradictory parties and groups would make him stumble; he was sure to trip up and "show his cards," thereby disqualifying himself as a national leader. To this end Renison argued strongly that, before his release, Kenyatta had to be "forced to state his intentions."

Kenyatta was moved to Maralal in April 1961. The following four months, before his final release from detention in August 1961, were filled with intrigue, planning, and scheming for a way out among settlers, the colonial government, the Colonial Office, and then the increasingly

[83]TNA, CO 822/1910, Renison's Top Secret and Confidential memo to the Colonial Secretary, December 1960.

divided nationalist movement. The starting point for all the visits to Maralal was that Kenyatta "should reveal himself." Throughout his political career Kenyatta had acquired a reputation for maintaining "a degree of devious secretiveness"; he shared his deepest thoughts with very few people.

In his first major press conference, given at Maralal in April 1961, Kenyatta succeeded in portraying himself as a misunderstood moderate nationalist. He reminded the assembled press that he had "spent many years in England" and harbored no personal enmity toward Europeans. Besides, he had many friends in different nations.[84] How about his stay in Russia? Kenyatta gave his answer, standard since the 1930s, that it had been for "educational purposes only." There were questions about his views on Communism in Africa. He stated that he had never been a Communist, and then he declared to the assembled world press that Communism "had no place in an African society."[85] And the White Highlands? Kenyatta stated that he "had never advocated for the eviction of Europeans from the Highlands," nor did he condone the forcible expropriation of lands owned by white settlers. Did he condone political violence and, specifically, did he support Mau Mau? No. He was a peace-loving man who had repeatedly condemned Mau Mau prior to imprisonment and still condemned it.[86] He urged for national unity among the nationalist parties.

Kenyatta was very much aware that he was not yet free and that the colonial government could delay his release to the point where he would not be "at the table" when *Uhuru* arrived, which he wanted to avoid. His power lay in his continued hold on the masses and the mystery over his intentions—a mystery that lured an ever-expanding list of visitors to Maralal.

By July 1961 Kenyatta had received delegations from religious organizations: the Moral Rearmament Group; Church of Christ in Kenya; Friends Service Council; Christian Council of Kenya; Catholic priests representing their Archibishop; and Archdeacon Hurd, local Church of England Missionary at Maralal. From several political organizations: KANU and KADU (separately and jointly on a number of occasions);

[84] Kenyatta, *Suffering Without Bitterness*, p. 122.

[85] Kenyatta, *Suffering Without Bitterness*, p. 122.

[86] See Maloba, *Mau Mau and Kenya*, chapter 8.

Baluhya Political Union; Naivasha KANU Branch; Kenya Freedom Party; Kenya Indian Congress; Kenya Muslim League; Independent Members of Legco; and leading African women. There were also individuals who sought audience with Kenyatta (many of them were part of the new crop of African politicians): Areman; Kiano; Marrian; Ochwada; Ruruban; and Njoroge Mungai. Many white settler politicians also came to Maralal: Blundell; Erskine; and McKenzie. Then there were delegations from what the colonial government described as "Miscellaneous groups": National Secretarial Service, Nyeri; Kenya African Chamber of Commerce; Kenya African National Union of Teachers; African Muslim League, Nyanza; Njuri Ncheke (Meru traditional Elders); Consular Corps; and a panel of four African doctors. Also included in the miscellaneous category were several individuals: Ambubhai Patel (personal friend); Lord Lambton; D.S. Sagoo (portrait painter); Kapila and Wariithi (lawyers); Mr. and Mrs. Moss (feature photographers); Col. Howell and Mrs. Haggie (experts in American type constitutions); Mr. and Mrs. Njiri and leaders of the American Operation Crossroads; Dr. and Mrs. Robinson; and Dr. Bryan and Miss Fuller.[87]

There were loyalists who came to Maralal to seek reassurances that if Kenyatta came to power he would not seek revenge on them—and they were reassured. White settlers came seeking reassurances about ownership of their land in the White Highlands—they too were reassured. All these representatives from "different political parties, of Christian denominations and other religions, of racial communities and of world powers, lawyers, photographers, doctors, foreign visitors, friends, relatives, priests, all came to see Kenyatta at Maralal and retuned able to reassure their friends that, after all, he was the man to safeguard their rights in an independent Kenya."[88]

The visit of Lord Lambton to Maralal represented one of the most visible efforts by a member of the British political establishment to reassess Kenyatta, to endeavor to reach his core beliefs, especially on ideology and settler-owned land in the White Highlands. Lord Lambton was a Member of Parliament in London. Sir Evelyn Baring (in retirement in the UK) wrote to Renison and Michael Blundell, political leader of the Kenya settlers, alerting them to this visit and of its importance. Lambton

[87] TNA, CO 822/1912, Visitors to Jomo Kenyatta, July 21, 1961.

[88] Murray-Brown, *Kenyatta*, pp. 305–306.

was Baring's local MP "in the north of Northumberland." Although he was, according to Baring, "not on very good terms" with Macmillan's government, it was "well worth taking some trouble with him since he writes for the Beaverbrook papers," and his views "get very wide publicity."[89] He "went to see Kenyatta in his little house at Maralal" and then filed a "very private" report on this meeting to the Colonial Office and exchanged correspondence with Macleod on the visit and the observations he had made.

Kenyatta provided Lambton with reassurances on land held by white settlers stating that "it had never been his policy to drive the Europeans out, and that he realized their value to the economy." Lambton also wanted to know if Kenyatta had ever been a Communist, "and he replied 'never'. I asked him if he had not had sympathies with the Communist Party, and he said 'I have never had so'."[90]

In a curious exchange Lambton told Kenyatta he "thought it would have been much wiser if, many years ago, we had killed him and that as we had not there was now no alternative except bringing him back to the government and hoping for the best. I said I thought it was a very pleasant aspect of British rule how we were often able to deal with those we had imprisoned, and I hoped that he felt no bitterness."[91] Kenyatta's response was reassuring to Lambton. "He replied that he felt none, and he always thought himself that from our point of view it would have been much more sensible had we killed him."

How about the well-publicized "magic power" of Kenyatta's personality? Lambton confessed to have come, at least momentarily, under Kenyatta's spell! "He is without doubt an amazingly compelling personality. His eyes", Lambton wrote, "are extraordinarily interesting. The left one is larger than the right and the pupil appears to be surrounded by phospherous. The right one is smaller and more acute. Twice while I was talking to him I found myself becoming very slightly mesmerized and forgetting the next question that I was going to ask. I had on each occasion to look away and pause for a moment. In the end I found it easier to talk to him looking only at his left eye which, without doubt, is

[89] GRE/1/40/1-107, Baring Papers. Durham: University of Durham Archives, Baring's letter on visit of Viscount Lambton to Kenya, February 19, 1960.

[90] TNA, CO 822/1912, Lord Lambton's report to the Colonial Office, July 10, 1961.

[91] TNA, CO 822/1912, Lord Lambton's report to the Colonial Office, July 10, 1961.

not as powerful as his right, despite its appearance." Lambton had only included this physical description "to show that the personal magnetism which he always was credited with is in all likelihood still with him and in undiminished strength."

Still, Lambton concluded that Kenyatta had not revealed himself during this interview. "At no stage of the conversation … did I believe he was sincere." But he was willing to give Kenyatta the benefit of the doubt on some of the answers to the questions since it may be "just possible that he is now more practical than he was and realizes that there is comparatively little time for him, and that a recurrence of violence might occasion another acute period of unrest, which he would not survive."[92]

The formula authorized by Macleod in April 1961 for the release of Kenyatta from detention, had two crucial provisions: the building of a house for Kenyatta; and that this would be an unconditional release. There now remained the matter of finding appropriate accommodation for Kenyatta since the colonial government had dismantled his house at Gatundu in its campaign to make him a non-person. By May 1961 the colonial government authorized "the building of a house for Kenyatta at an estimated cost of £2,800. The house will be a Class V A house—a two-bedroom European style house. This authority covers the building of a house only and does not include provision of an access road or water supply."[93] The quality of this new house was seen as an improvement over Kenyatta's old house (destroyed by the colonial government), which although large had been "constructed by a local contractor and it was never fully completed." It had "a cement floor, stone walls and a temporary roof. The walls on the inside were unplastered and there was no ceiling. The roof consisted of an old ex-army tarpaulin thrown over some very rough timber." Renison estimated that the cost of construction of this old house "at 1952 prices" did not exceed £700.

Where was the new house going to be built, since Kenyatta had lost all his land upon imprisonment and detention? The colonial government was forced to revise its position on this matter, and "allow Kenyatta the use of 8.44 acres of plot 'C' at present taken by the experimental farm … it has been decided to build the proposed house as required upon this

[92]TNA, CO 822/1912, Lord Lambton's report to the Colonial Office, July 10, 1961.

[93]TNA, CO 822/ 1912, Memo from Renison to the Colonial Secretary on Kenyatta's house, June 1961.

plot."[94] By 1961 no decision had been "taken to return to Kenyatta" any of his remaining land, although Renison, characteristically, thought that this would be "difficult and probably impossible, particularly since, under consolidation processes, most of the land has been reallocated both to private persons and for public purposes."

In early July 1961, with the house nearly completed, Renison wrote and received approval from the Colonial Secretary regarding the final preparations for Kenyatta's release from detention. The Colonial Secretary in turn notified the Prime Minister that Renison contemplated "Kenyatta's removal, in accordance with our pre-arranged plan, to Kiambu about third or fourth week in August, and his release from restriction a few days thereafter."[95] The Colonial Secretary recommended that Renison's announcement should be published as a White Paper. In his quick response the Prime Minister agreed: "I agree to the course of action you propose and the timing." Also notified of this major development was the Cabinet Colonial Policy Committee. In his memo to this committee the Colonial Secretary argued that it was "essential to face this issue" of Kenyatta's release from detention from a position of strength. Now, was the time to release him "when there is wide acceptance both in Kenya and the UK that Kenyatta's early release is inevitable."[96]

On August 1, 1961 the Colonial Secretary made an official statement in the House of Commons announcing the imminent release of Kenyatta from detention. "The Governor of Kenya has sent a dispatch to me," the Colonial Secretary stated, "in which he has informed me that he has decided that if there is no deterioration in the security position,

[94]TNA, CO 822/1912, Memo from Renison to the Colonial Secretary on Kenyatta's house, June 1961. In September 1961, soon after his release from detention, Kenyatta notified the colonial government that he wanted some renovations done on his new house at Gatundu. Specifically, he wanted "extensions to the verandah, the installation of a new bath, improvements to guttering, rain water storage, storm water drainage," at an estimated cost of £500. The Council of Ministers rejected this application and instead wanted Kenyatta to be notified that "no further expenditure on the house by Government should be incurred" at this time. See TNA, CO 822/1913, Minutes of Council of Ministers Meeting on Kenyatta's house at Gatundu, September 15, 1961.

[95]TNA, CO 822/1917, Minute to Prime Minister from The Secretary of State for Colonies, July 11, 1961.

[96]TNA, CO 822/1917, Memo to Cabinet Colonial Policy Committee from The Secretary of State for Colonies, July 14, 1961.

Jomo Kenyatta should be moved to Kiambu about the middle of August and that his restriction order should be revoked a few days thereafter. I have informed the Governor that his decision has the full support of Her Majesty's Government."[97]This decision, though difficult, the Colonial Secretary noted, was "in the best interests of all peoples of Kenya." In the debate that followed the announcement most members of parliament supported the decision, while some still insisted that Kenyatta was a danger to security. Lieut. Commander Maydon, for example, asked the Colonial Secretary if he was aware that "his statement will cause grave concern among Africans and Europeans in Kenya and in other territories in Africa and among a great many people in this country as well?" In his answer the Colonial Secretary pointed out that the decision to release Kenyatta had been endorsed by the "Central Province Advisory Council, which consists of the leading chiefs of the Kikuyu loyalists." He also assured the House of Commons that adequate measures had been taken to ensure the maintenance of law and order upon Kenyatta's release from detention.

The Minister of State for Colonial Affairs made the same announcement in the House of Lords on the same day. The Colonial Office later forwarded to Renison a summary of the debate on this issue in the House of Lords. In this debate "The Earl of Albermarle recognized that large numbers of people in Kenya supported Kenyatta's release, but thought that it might have unfavourable effect on British Civil Service and loyal Kikuyu and other tribes. He was particularly concerned at the prospect that Kenyatta might secure important office and that, apart from the effects in Kenya, this might have repercussions in Uganda and Tanganyika and unfavourably affect the future relationship with Kenya."[98] Lord Ogmore supported this action "while the British were still in control." He did not favor handing over this problem "to new African Government." Other members of the House of Lords remained opposed to the idea of Kenyatta playing a prominent role in government or, worse, becoming the leader of an independent Kenya. Questions were raised regarding the impact of this action on the economic future of the country. The Earl of Swinton, for example, while agreeing that

[97]TNA, CO 822/1913, House of Commons Extract, August 1, 1961.

[98]TNA, CO 822/1913, Summary of House of Lords Debate on Kenyatta from the Colonial Office to the Governor of Kenya, July 28, 1961.

"release was a matter which must depend primarily on security … added that security did not mean only maintenance of law and order but was a matter of the country being viable, prosperous and able to pay its way. If in Kenya a situation arose where people were uncertain of the whole of their future then security, in the sense of the economic security of the country, would be jeopardized."[99]

Some of the concerns raised in the debate in the House of Lords had been partially addressed by Renison in his memo to the Colonial Secretary in December 1960. Regarding the reaction of the white settlers Renison wrote that, to them, Kenyatta remained the symbol of Mau Mau and that many of their fears had been "revived by the Congo" crisis. The white settlers would criticize the colonial government for "yielding to African pressures." The Kikuyu loyalists, especially chiefs, were still "apprehensive of future if Kenyatta gains political power." Many of them were, however, "compromising unhappily with anti-government Kikuyu, ex-terrorists and detainees, etc."[100] Regarding the white civil servants serving in Kenya, Renison thought that, "most would stomach Kenyatta's release and 'wait and see' particularly if he took no part for the present in Government politics, and was not a member of the Council of Ministers." The senior civil servants, those who "had personal knowledge of him in Central Province in 1946–52, or the results of his teaching in Central Province during the Emergency," would most certainly resign, especially if he "were invited to accept a portofolio in Council of Ministers."

In Nairobi Renison issued the official announcement of Kenyatta's release from detention on August 1, 1961, the same day as the announcements in London. Renison's announcement made no mention of the local and worldwide campaign for Kenyatta's release. This action, Renison insisted, had been prompted by changes observed in Kenyatta's attitudes and positions. Although originally considered as one of the "irreconcilables," and therefore subject to permanent restriction, Kenyatta had shown remarkable change in attitude since moving to Maralal. "Since his move to Maralal Kenyatta has given every indication

[99]TNA, CO 822/1913, Summary of House of Lords Debate on Kenyatta from the Colonial Office to the Governor of Kenya, July 28, 1961.

[100]TNA, CO 822/1910, Renison's Top Secret and Confidential memo to the Colonial Secretary, December 1960.

that he is now in no way irreconcilable to the maintenance of law and order and to the association of all the peoples of Kenya with its progress to independence in an East African setting based on sound economy."[101] Renison also assured the Colonial Secretary that the colonial security forces (in liaison with the Army and the Royal Air Force) were prepared and ready to deal with any security concerns that might arise from Kenyatta's release from detention. Also, even those people who still felt "anxieties about the possible consequences of his release," had come to the realization that, in the "changed political circumstances in Kenya," it was much better to release Kenyatta when the British were still in charge. Continued restriction of Kenyatta, Renison now wrote, had become "an impediment to good relations and orderly progress."

The political reality, which Renison refused to acknowledge, was that his administration had acted too late in the day to take credit for the release of Kenyatta. "Sir Patrick and his official advisers," the *Economist* correctly observed, "can claim little credit for wisdom. All that may be conceded to KADU should have been offered willingly seven weeks ago if the Administration had been thinking positively about Kenya's progress toward independence."[102]

On August 10, 1961, on the eve of his release from detention, Kenyatta, at the request of the colonial government, recorded a radio message to the country. Aimed mainly at the Africans, the message was recorded in Kikuyu and Swahili and broadcast by the Kenya Broadcasting Service (KBS). There were translations in other languages served by the KBS. Kenyatta talked of his impending release and then called for calm and restrained celebration. "As you have already heard," Kenyatta's voice stated on the radio, "I shall be soon returning to my home in Gatundu. With this in mind I want to assure you that I am very grateful for what you have done and are still doing for me." He then informed his listeners, especially in Central Province and Nairobi, that, "in a very short time after my arrival home, I expect to have ample opportunity to arrange a number of public meetings in various places where I shall come round and speak to you all in your particular areas. In the interest of our dear country," he concluded, "I trust that wherever you are you will

[101] TNA, CO 822/1913, The Kenya Gazette: Release of Jomo Kenyatta, August 1, 1961.

[102] *Economist*, April 21, 1961, contained in TNA, CO 822/1911.

conduct yourself in an orderly and dignified manner for the sake of peace and unity of all our people."[103]

Early in the morning on August 14, 1961 Kenyatta, accompanied by his pregnant wife Ngina (later to be known as Mama Ngina), was flown "in secrecy from Maralal to airstrip near Gatundu." Waiting to greet him were Ngala, Muliro, Gichuru, and Odinga. He then traveled in a convoy of private cars and colonial government vehicles to Gatundu. At his new house he was greeted by members of his family, political figures from KANU and KADU, and tens of thousands of local well-wishers who had learned of his homecoming through "their own system of communication." This moment, this event, was covered across the world.[104] In the years since his arrest, imprisonment, then detention, Kenyatta had emerged as an admired symbol of African struggle for freedom *(Uhuru)*; the champion of anti-imperialist struggle. The concerted efforts by the colonial government and the British Government to demonize him had, in fact, produced the unintended effect of sustaining and then expanding his political mythology.

After one week's confinement to his home "to enable the authorities to deal with the public excitement" arising from his release, Kenyatta had his first meeting with Renison. This was mainly a symbolic meeting. No constitutional or political breakthrough was expected, and none came. It was after this meeting, held at "the DC's office at Kiambu," on August 22, 1961 that Kenyatta was officially free from previous restrictions. He could now travel in and out of the country. Each visit by Kenyatta to an individual's home, or a public place, was closely monitored by the colonial security forces, still intent on "debunking the legend" and exposing his alleged shortcomings as a leader.

The Colonial security forces also continued to monitor Kenyatta's contact with external supporters and/or long-standing friends, including old friends from Britain. Also monitored were goodwill messages sent to Kenyatta upon his release from detention. On August 18, 1961 the British High Commissioner in Sierra Leone notified the Commonwealth Relations Office in London that Sir Milton Margai had sent Kenyatta a

[103]TNA, CO 822/1913, Kenyatta's Broadcast from Maralal, August 10, 1961.

[104]For a sample of the hundreds of newspaper clippings of the worldwide coverage of the release of Kenyatta, see *Kenya Calling* (Kenya Newsletter, No. 262), Public Relations Office, Kenya House, London, August 17, 1961.

telegram of congratulations. It read: "On behalf of the Government and people of Sierra Leone I send you congratulations and greetings on your final release which we hope will mark the beginning of peaceful and final phase of Kenya's march towards full independence." The Foreign Office in London was also notified by the British embassy in Leopoldville, Congo, that "M. Bomboko, the Congolese Minister for Foreign Affairs" had sent a "telegram of congratulations to Jomo Kenyatta on the occasion of his release." The Minister wanted Kenyatta to know that "the Congolese people rejoiced in his release which represented an important stage in African emancipation."[105]

Of special interest to the colonial government were Kenyatta's overseas travel plans. It had been expected that he would travel immediately to Britain, Egypt, India, Tanganyika, and Ethiopia to meet and thank his supporters for their agitation on his behalf. Consequently, British embassies in these countries were alerted to this possibility.

In October 1961 Kenyatta traveled to Tanganyika at Nyerere's invitation. The trip enabled Kenyatta to meet and interact with nationalist leaders from East and Central Africa; members of PAFMECA. Also invited from Kenya were Tom Mboya, Paul Ngei, and Oginga Odinga. Gichuru did not attend the meeting. From Zanzibar came Abeid Karume, while Hastings Banda, Kanyama Chiume, Kenneth Kaunda, and Joshua Nkomo came from what was then called the Central African Federation.[106] In the minutes of the meeting, obtained by the Colonial Office, the leaders had taken "the opportunity afforded by the visit of Mzee Jomo Kenyatta to Tanganyika to discuss matters of common interest." The leaders rejoiced at "the successful outcome of the Uganda Constitutional Talks in London" and hoped that "Independence dates based on popular governments should also be fixed for Kenya, Nyasaland, Northern Rhodesia and Southern Rhodesia." Lastly, the assembled leaders pledged "to work together, and with all other African leaders, in our relentless struggle against imperialism."

Renison reported to the Colonial Office in detail on Kenyatta's trip to Tanganyika. Banda, who also attended this meeting, in an independent

[105]TNA, CO 822/1913, Copies of memos of congratulation to Kenyatta on his release (Foreign and Commonwealth Realations Office), August 18 and 22, 1961.

[106]TNA, CO 822/1913, Nationalist leaders invited to the PAFMECA meeting by Nyerere, October 1961.

and confidential communication passed on information to the Governor of Nyasaland for "his private information only." The Governor, in turn, confidentially alerted the Governors of Kenya, Tanganyika, Northern Rhodesia, and the Colonial Secretary, and sent copies to the Prime Minister's Office in London.[107]

By far the most spectacular external trip undertaken by Kenyatta after his release was to Ethiopia in November 1961. He was invited to visit by Emperor Haile Selassie. The British Ambassador to Ethiopia wrote a memo to the Foreign Office providing details of the trip, and especially the nature of the reception given by the Emperor and the Ethiopian people in Kenyatta's honor. "Mr. Kenyatta evoked more interest and a greater emotional response than any other visitor since I have been here, and his reception", the Ambassador added, "was almost on the scale normally accorded to visiting Heads of State."[108] He was met at the airport by Ethiopia's Prime Minister, ministers, diplomats, and other dignitaries. Britain was represented at the airport by the embassy's Second Secretary. The Ambassador's memo was keen to point out that "a group of the wilder East African students, dressed in a 'uniform' of Colobus monkey skins, performed an 'Uhuru' dance," at the airport in Kenyatta's honor.

After Ethiopia several trips planned to other countries were canceled or postponed. This was not the opportune time for a global "victory lap." Kenyatta quickly came to realize that he needed to pay more attention to the fast-moving and continually changing political landscape in Kenya. There was a Governor who still disliked him intensely and two newly formed African political parties, KADU and KANU, both seeking his crucial endorsement and involvement. To be leader of the soon to be independent Kenya, Kenyatta had to take part in the current politics of *Uhuru*, reintroduce himself to the country, and find an accommodation with the new crop of African politicians.

[107]TNA, CO 822/1913, Secret Telegram from the Governor of Nyasaland to the Colonial Secretary on Kenyatta's impending visit to Tanganyika, September 28, 1961.

[108]TNA, CO 822/1913, Memo from British Ambassador in Ethiopia to the Foreign Office on Kenyatta's visit to Ethiopia, November 20, 1961.

CHAPTER 7

The Search for Alternatives

The consuming fear among white settlers and the colonial government was that Kenyatta could assume political power in Kenya through shrewd exploitation and domination of nationalist politics. This fear of Kenyatta as the leader of an independent Kenya extended to the Colonial Office. Most of these white settlers had, for personal and economic reasons, been slow to adapt to the fast-changing political scene in the country. "Ostrich-like, they continued to hide themselves from the realities of world politics long after the Mau Mau danger had passed." And so, "they still played polo on their farms, grew asparagus for London restaurants, and flew around East Africa in their private aeroplanes."[1] Thus, by early 1961, there were still many settlers who fervently believed that Kenyatta would never be released from detention. This belief was in large measure based on what they saw as "solemn pledges to which the widest circulation was given", stating that "irreconcilables would not be allowed to return." To release Kenyatta would be to break these solemn pledges given to them by successive British Governments.[2]

Yet "as the Mau Mau threat receded" the Conservative governments in Britain (from 1951 to 1964) had to come to terms with the rising force of African nationalism not only in Kenya, but also across Africa.

[1] Murray-Brown, *Kenyatta*, p. 299.

[2] See "Kenyatta Issue in Perspective," in *East Africa and Rhodesia* (April 20, 1961), pp. 893–898.

W.O. Maloba, *Kenyatta and Britain*, African Histories and Modernities, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-50895-5_7

These Conservative governments inherited and adopted the post-World War II Labour policy of seeking to control the advancement toward self-government by the colonies. It was expected that this policy would be "carefully prepared by the British government itself. The idea was to lead colonies as rapidly as possible towards this goal, but this was not expected to be fast, and it would have to be underpinned by the necessary economic progress and with such political guidance as would ensure the newly independent territories remained in the Commonwealth … The colonial officials certainly believed themselves to be engaged on something important."[3] To be sure, there were some diehard imperialists within the Conservative Party who "actively opposed British withdrawal from Africa at any stage in the process." Many Conservatives, however, while "instinctively opposed to any loosening of Britain's colonial ties with Africa," came to be "deeply disturbed by the prospect of those ties being maintained by resort to force."[4]

In the settler colonies in Africa the option most preferred by the British Government for the control and advancement of nationalism was multiracialism and multiracial parties. To this end, "the British government was eager to nurture the growth of 'multiracial' parties which, although European dominated, might be able to attract support from a gradually expanding African electorate. The Conservative party was encouraged to provide them with advice and assistance."[5]

This preference for multiracialism was based on a deliberate desire to outmaneuver, sidestep, and then hobble radical African nationalists and their unsettling policies. In the aftermath of the Mau Mau it had become clear to the British Government that settler political dominance could not be "preserved in in its existing form without risking continual arrest." To avert the unthinkable and most unpalatable option of having to transfer power to "radical nationalist movements" it was vital to create and nurture "an alternative set of political partners … capable of delivering the support of a majority or a large minority of their territory's

[3] Ronald Hyam, *Britain's Declining Empire: The Road to Decolonisation, 1918–1968* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 143.

[4] Philip Murphy, *Party Politics and Decolonization: The Conservative Party and British Colonial Policy in Tropical Africa, 1951–1964* (Oxford: Clarendon Press; New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 11.

[5] Murphy, *Party Politics and Decolonization,* p. 60.

electorate under a gradually expanding franchise."[6] Multiracial parties, therefore, came to be seen as the most appropriate vehicle both for controlling the pace and content of African nationalism and for disavowing the hurtful past of discrimination and racial prejudice. Part of the appeal of these multiracial parties to the Conservatives in London was that, although they would be dominated by Europeans (white settler politicians), they could conceivably be attractive to non-whites by remaining "notionally committed to the eradication of racial discrimination and the participation of members of all races in the political process on the basis of individual merit."[7]

In Kenya the goal of multiracialism was pursued through the New Kenya Group (NKG), a party formed and dominated by Michael Blundell, the settler politician. The decision to form NKG in March 1959 provided evidence of the active involvement of the British Government in trying to determine the shape and content of African nationalism. The initial plan of the Lyttelton Constitution, promulgated in 1954, had been to usher in controlled multiracial politics in Kenya. This plan never materialized as originally intended. Mboya and his trade union movement "vehemently opposed its provisions" and pointed to the lack of African representation in the Legco (Legislative Council). The election of the first Africans to the Legco in 1957 failed to appease the Africans and their determined drive toward *Uhuru*.

Elected Africans, for a period organized by Mboya through the African Elected Members Organization (AEMO), refused to take up any ministerial appointments, thereby dealing a decisive blow to the strategy of multiracial government (and gradualism), as envisaged under the Lyttelton Constitution. Perhaps more alarming to the colonial government, and even the Colonial Office, was the tone and content of the political speeches given by many of these newly elected members at several public rallies and in the parliament. "Eagerly exploiting their parliamentary immunity, these representatives, until recently, hardly known outside their districts, spoke with determination against colonialism, racial discrimination, and the pain of emergency regulations."[8]

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[6] Murphy, *Party Politics and Decolonization,* p. 230.

[7] Murphy, *Party Politics and Decolonization,* p. 230.

[8] Maloba, *Mau Mau and Kenya,* p. 153.

Blundell acknowledged that these uncompromising speeches, which constituted verbal radicalism, provided a crucial impetus to the formation of the NKG. "For nearly a year," after "autumn of 1958 … Europeans and Asians were forced to listen patiently each week to violently racial tirades against them from week-end political platforms." He collected "pages and pages of extracts from these speeches" and concluded, "Not one of them has a single constructive thought for the advancement of Kenya."[9] The NKG was therefore supposed to erode the basis of radicalism from the Africans while reassuring whites of their position (of relative privilege) in the new Kenya being fashioned by nationalism. Blundell and the NKG were to "guide European opinion on liberal lines and to provide some sort of leadership for the majority of the electorate."

The political platform of the NKG, published in April 1959, was supposed to be perceived as "a revolutionary document." The NKG advocated for an end to "racial barriers, even for the opening of the European Highlands to land holding by other races."[10] As Blundell saw it, whites in Kenya could not indefinitely avoid "the African majority." In the new political circumstances it was the duty of the NKG to mold, shape, and direct this eventual majority rule. "Our policies," Blundell informed fellow settlers, "should be simply and clearly designed to see that this great mass of people was as educated and mature as possible, by the removal of barriers and discriminations between us, while we still had the protection of British colonial rule in which to achieve all this."[11]

The formation of the NKG, later known as New Kenya Party (NKP) outside the Legco, was actively endorsed and supported by both the colonial government and the Colonial Office. Before resigning his position as Minister of Agriculture in the colonial government, Blundell discussed the matter with the Governor, Sir Evelyn Baring, who "agreed that it was the right step to take." Blundell also "wrote privately to the Colonial Secretary, Alan Lennox-Boyd", who also endorsed the idea. Subsequently, Blundell and the NKP enjoyed unprecedented access to the highest officials in both the Conservative Party and the British

[9] Sir Michael Blundell, *So Rough A Wind: The Kenya Memoirs* (London: Weidenfield and Nicolson, 1964), p. 244.

[10] George Bennett and Carl G. Rosberg, *The Kenyatta Election: Kenya, 1960–61* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961), p. 16.

[11] Blundell, *So Rough A Wind,* p. 244.

Government. "Blundell was quickly identified by the Conservatives as a moderate who might make the government's 'multiracial' approach a reality."[12] He was also able to carefully exploit his closeness to Rhoddy Macleod, a settler in Kenya, and "the brother of Iain Macleod who served as the Colonial Secretary from 1959 to 1961" as an added "channel of communication with the government even at the second Lancaster House Conference in 1962 when Macleod was no longer responsible for colonial affairs."[13]

The NKP received most of its funding from external sources, specifically from Britain. Influential members of the Conservative Party "were even prepared to assist in fund raising for Blundell and his allies. The NKP received much of its financial support from commerce and industry. Donations came from Ind Coope, the Ottoman Bank Ltd, Carltex Cement Ltd, and the British Standard Portland Cement Company."[14] The NKP also received political advice and help in the areas of public relations and strategy from experienced political functionaries in Britain. These advisers, always "close to the party leadership" in London, included "R.E. Simms, who had talks with Blundell about public relations during his visit to London in November 1961."[15]

Blundell's multiracial politics faced three insurmountable obstacles. The first was the unrelenting opposition from the right wing of the settler community in Kenya, led by Group Captain Briggs. This right-wing group of settlers was "not very interested in reaching any accommodation with African opinion." Briggs later formed the United Party (UP), whose policy "was proclaimed as being the ending of the Legislative Council and the developing of independent local councils."[16] The second obstacle was the lingering and deep-rooted racism of the white members of the NKP. This racism was evident, for example, in the party's restrictive conditions attached to the opening up of the White Highlands, and in "qualified entry of all races into all schools." There were also restrictions attached to the right to vote; "a common roll on a selective franchise, upon which the first steps forward to building a

[12] Murphy, *Party Politics and Decolonization*, p. 62.

[13] Murphy, *Party Politics and Decolonization*, p. 63.

[14] See Murphy, *Party Politics and Decolonization*, p. 63.

[15] Murphy, *Party Politics and Decolonization*, p. 64.

[16] Bennett and Rosberg, *The Kenyatta Election*, p. 16.

nation could be made." There was still very strong resistance within the white community toward any lifting of racial restrictions in hotels and restaurants in the country. Michael Blundell later recalled the resistance of Block Hotels to the removal of the color bar in its hotels. "The removal of the bar", the Block Hotels representatives told Blundell, "would mean that the toilets, bedrooms and bathrooms would be shamefully and dirtily misused."[17] In other words, the lifting of the color bar would allow entry to Africans who did not know how to use modern bathrooms or how to conduct themselves in such surroundings, thus lowering the standards of the hotels. "In due course the restrictions were lifted … and in a very short time economics dictated" that only the elite Africans had the means to enjoy these expensive hotels.

Blundell later acknowledged that these restrictions, added to the party platform at the insistence of the "ten Elected Members," drastically weakened the NKP's appeal to Africans. There was also the factor of whites leading and Africans following, which went counter to the concept of racial equality; a concept that the NKP in its original formulation neither endorsed nor fundamentally subscribed to.

Blundell's own views on this confirmed a definite hesitation to accept Africans as equals. On efficiency in post-colonial Africa, for example, he thought that "efficiency means little to men in a continent which has never generated its own resources, and neither training nor experience in the higher levels of management have been available to them under the old colonial regime." How about planning? Well, "planning is in many respects alien to Africa, which likes its ideas, like its children, to spring up haphazardly here and there like seeds of a bean pod which has burst and scattered in the sun."[18] He regarded the African nationalist to have "a pronounced sense of inferiority complex which makes him over sensitive about such matters as 'human dignity'." As for the governance of the new states, Blundell's view was that "Africans are ill equipped as yet by inclination and knowledge to support good government in [the European] sense of the word, and they are well aware of this, but the vital thing to them is that it will be their own government, and this amply compensates them for any deficiencies in skill, knowledge or

[17] Blundell, *A Love Affair With The Sun*, p. 144.

[18] Blundell, *So Rough A Wind*, p. 224.

administrative efficiency."[19] Much later, almost thirty years after *Uhuru,* Michael Blundell still held very strong views on the benefits bestowed on Africa by colonialism. He regretted that it had become "fashionable to denigrate the colonial regime" in Kenya, but that it was this colonial regime that had brought progress to the country. "Roads and communications were made instead of winding paths through the bush; an economy and viable agriculture established where only a few beans, millet and maize were battered by the roadside; law and order established in place of the marauding spear; education and health services replaced oral tradition and the cowpat as the healing ointment."[20]

The last and most stubborn obstacle faced by the NKP was timing. The political strategy of multiculturalism, which envisaged whites carefully guiding the evolution of African nationalism, could no longer be sustained. It lacked legitimacy and would seem to have arrived twenty years late on the political stage. Blundell would, in retrospect, observe that, "multiculturalism might have been possible for a brief period if some of the European members had been more generous; non-racialism was an ideal and a practice of living together which needed more time than Africa was prepared to give."[21] In their drive for *Uhuru* leading African nationalists scoffed at this strategy, dismissing it as a belated imperial trick to delay, or maybe even derail, the march toward African liberation. Its real focus was not on African liberation (by Africans) and racial equality, but on the preservation of white privilege and the advancement of an imperial agenda. The fortunes of the NKP did not improve, even after the "Kenya Government issued a Sessional paper in October 1959, declaring the objective of the removal of all racial barriers, including those in education and entry into land in the Highlands."[22]

Both the Elected African Members and the NKP were faced with new opportunities and challenges as a result of the political tempo on decolonization set by Iain Macleod, appointed as Colonial Secretary by Harold Macmillan in 1959. Macleod clearly wanted the pace of decolonization accelerated, including in Kenya with its intractable problems

[19] Blundell, *So Rough A Wind*, p. 235.

[20] Blundell, *A Love Affair With The Sun*, p. 125.

[21] Blundell, *So Rough A Wind*, p. 312.

[22] Bennett and Rosberg, *The Kenyatta Election*, p. 17.

of white settlers and the Kenyatta factor. Like other pragmatists in the Conservative Party, Macleod had arrived at the conclusion that "continuation of colonial rule was not actually feasible in the face of determined nationalist protest, since resources did not exist to put down serious disturbances."[23] For East and Central Africa (home of the white settlers) Macleod quickly concluded that, "independence could not be withheld simply on the grounds that a white settler community had become established there. He took the view that the transfer of power must come swiftly in East Africa and steadily in Central Africa."[24] He regretted that "this privileged, anachronistic European society" had been unable or unwilling to recognize the power of the "nationalist wind, which was beginning to sweep across the African continent."

In January 1960 Macleod "summoned the entire Legislative Council to London for a constitutional conference." The outcomes of this conference had a decisive impact on the course of African nationalism and on the future of Blundell and his brand of multiculturalism in Kenya. Elected African Members had temporarily agreed on the need for unity at the conference by joining together in one delegation "headed by Ngala as chairman and Mboya as secretary." This conference gave Africans "a majority of elected representatives for the first time" in a new Legco of 65 members; "thirty three would be elected from open seats, the first in Kenya's history, and the franchise would be so wide as to ensure the electorate would be overwhelmingly African."[25] Ten seats were reserved for whites, "eight for Asians and two for Arabs." In spite of the insurmountable obstacles that lay before *Uhuru,* Macleod's Constitution had essentially affirmed that, "primarily, Kenya is an African territory."

Decisions taken at this conference effectively brought to an end the NKP as a credible political force in the country. It was now clear that "multiracialism was an idea with no political future among Africans." This did not, by any means, spell the end of Blundell's influence on the complicated story of Kenya's decolonization process from 1960 to 1963. He would exercise this considerable influence to achieve these goals: reassure white settlers of their welfare and security; work through

[23] Hyam, *Britain's Declining Empire,* p. 407.

[24] Fisher, *Iain Macleod,* p. 143.

[25] Bennett and Rosberg, *The Kenyatta Election,* p. 21.

African-led parties, specifically KADU, to advance an effective campaign against radical nationalism, its policies and some of its leaders; continue to exploit his contacts in the British Government to ensure that KADU and its agenda received consideration far disproportionate to its actual numerical political support on the ground. Blundell and the NKP supported the Macleod Constitution, a decision that made him unpopular among some settlers and that was based on the realization that Britain could not, once again, militarily intervene in Kenya to protect the settlers. As a result of a private meeting with Macmillan in 1959 Blundell knew that Britain would not "shoot Africans to protect the *status quo* for Europeans."[26]

For Elected African Members, "the functional unity forged for the Lancaster House constitutional conference collapsed at its end, when it was realized that independence would be achieved in a shorter time than was previously speculated."[27] In quick succession two national African-led political parties were formed: The Kenya African National Union (KANU) in May 1960; and the Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU) in June 1960. This split in African nationalism, complicated by personality clashes and contrasting policies on land, would have a long-lasting impact on post-independence Kenya. From the beginning KANU had wanted to create a united African nationalist movement, despite the incessant struggle for power and influence within the ranks of its leadership, so at its inception Ngala and Moi (later leaders of the KADU) were, in absentia, appointed treasurer and deputy treasurer respectively. They resolutely declined to accept these positions.

In the eyes of the colonial government, the Colonial Office, and the white settlers especially, the KANU represented an unacceptable radicalism and was seen as a credible threat to British (and Western) interests in the country. It was viewed as a party dominated by the Kikuyu and the Luo peoples. At this time the Kikuyu were seen by the settlers and the colonial government through the lens of the Mau Mau revolt, which did not recommend them for possible political leadership in Kenya. The white settlers were especially alarmed by the fact that the KANU was

[26] Blundell, *So Rough A Wind,* p. 263. Regarding the impact of the 1960 Constitutional conference on the NKP, Blundell observed that, "The decisions of Macleod completely destroyed much of what we were trying to do within the policies of the New Kenya Group," p. 274.

[27] Maloba, *Mau Mau and Kenya,* p. 158.

the party preferred by ex-detainees. There was widespread panic among white settlers that some of these ex-detainees, in spite of going through the rehabilitation process, might seek to resurrect the Mau Mau revolt and its goals. The KANU was also the party of ex-squatters and many landless peasants who seemed open to supporting radical land policies that could conceivably threaten the sanctity of the White Highlands. It was also the party of Oginga Odinga who, by this time, had come to be identified in both London and Nairobi, as a dangerous radical and a friend of Communists. His leadership role in the KANU was used to brand the party as being either Communist oriented or in the hands of Communists. Either way, the KANU would, for some time, be deemed as unacceptable for assuming power in Kenya.

An added complication was Kenyatta's membership of the KANU. He had been elected in absentia (he was still in detention) as president of the KANU when the party was formed. "But the Government refused to register the party so long as Kenyatta was even its titular head." And so, "in his place the Governing Council elected James Gichuru, who had stepped down from the presidency of KAU for Kenyatta in 1947."[28] Although it was evident that Kenyatta's name was still "invested with mystique and was invariably linked with the cry for freedom at political meetings," the colonial government remained opposed, with unwavering determination, to the idea of him assuming power in Kenya. Kenyatta was, at this time, "the African leader most feared and detested by Europeans."[29]

The rationale for the formation of the KADU was that it would serve to protect the interests of the "smaller tribes" from looming domination by the Kikuyu and the Luo in the KANU. The party became a functional amalgam of the "Kalenjin Political Alliance led by Daniel Arap Moi, the Maasai United Front, the Coast Political organizations under Ronald Ngala; and Muliro's Kenya African People's Party."[30] It was clearly evident that the "Kalenjin and Masai were the backbone of KADU." Ngala was elected president of the party, with Muliro as vice president and Moi as party chairman.

[28] Bennett and Rosberg, *The Kenyatta Election*, p. 37.

[29] Bennett and Rosberg, *The Kenyatta Election*, p. 18.

[30] Maloba, *Mau Mau and Kenya*, p. 159.

From the beginning the KADU was intimately linked to Blundell's NKP. Indeed, it is fair to argue that the NKP "played a decisive role in its formation," subsequent funding, and projection on the international scene. The bulk of the KADU funding flowed to it through Blundell's NKP. The British brewery company, Ind Coope, "which has a large interest in Kenya," provided the KADU with substantial funding, having been urged to do so by "Blundell and Lord Howick (formerly Sir Evelyn Baring, Governor of Kenya) … and most of these funds were funneled through the foundation which was eventually set up—The Progress Foundation for Economic Development in Eastern Africa."[31] Other "overseas business backers," funneled funding for the KADU through this Foundation.

The KADU was also heavily supported and favored by Renison's colonial government. The most vivid example of this support came in the elections of February 1961 under the provisions of the 1960 Constitutional Conference. These provisions clearly favored the KADU and so, although the the KANU had an overwhelming superiority in total aggregate number of supporters and voters—"64.4% of all the votes cast could be credited to it"—it received only nineteen seats in the Legco compared to the KADU's sixteen seats with only "16.4% of the votes cast." This was the result of constituencies being "massively weighted" in the KADU's favor; for example, "7,700 Masai were allowed to return two members while 82,000 Kikuyu around Nyeri were represented by only one."[32] In the elections of February 1961 the colonial government "gave as much backing as it reasonably could to KADU without appearing to favour it."[33] Nonetheless, the election results were very well-received at the Colonial Office. In London Macleod gave a "reception for the KADU delegation at which the Prime Minister Macmillan was present giving the newspapers the impression of Britain's wholehearted support for the KADU government."[34] The KADU delegation, led by

[31] Bloch and Fitzgerald, *British Intelligence and Covert Action,* p. 147.

[32] *The Economist,* April 21, 1961, contained in TNA, CO 822/1911.

[33] Bloch and Fitzgerald, *British Intelligence and Covert Action,* p. 149.

[34] Bloch and Fitzgerald, *British Intelligence and Covert Action,* p. 149. The KADU delegation led by Ngala had gone to London directly from Cairo, where they were attending the All African People's Conference. Ngala wanted some concessions made on the Kenyatta question. "He submitted to the Colonial Secretary a new memorandum setting out a case for immediate release," but "after several days of protracted discussions with Macleod, Ngala had to admit that his aim of securing a promise of immediate release would not

Ngala, had gone to London to consult with Macleod on the possibility of forming a transitional government. The clear hope for the KADU and its British and settler supporters was that it would use this opportunity to enhance its standing among the African electorate.

When the new KADU-led government was formed in April 1961, Ngala assumed the title of Leader of Government Business and not Chief Minister, as would have been expected. Macleod had initially wanted to appoint Ngala as the Chief Minister, but Renison had withheld his support stating that "Ngala is not, I fear, of the necessary stature for such a post."[35] This minority government was, on some level, multiracial and was energetically supported by the NKP. Blundell and Havelock were appointed as ministers. In the Legco, the KADU-led government, "lacking a working majority … could only be maintained by the governor's appointing eleven nominees to the Government benches."[36] This was politically clumsy and obviously not a satisfactory solution to the struggle for *Uhuru* by the Africans in Kenya. But it served a useful strategic purpose, "it created a crisis for KANU," while in the Colonial Office the new KADU-led multiracial government was seen as a "necessary transition and a temperate grouping which helped to allay European anxieties."[37]

There was a sad realization for the KANU that it would not form the "first government under the Lancaster House constitution." Linked to which was the real fear that some of its elected members might switch sides and join the KADU and its minority government. There had always been a problem of unity and coherence within the KANU. It remained a "loosely knit organization, vigorously resisting any suggestion that any one man could impose leadership," with the exception of Kenyatta. Now, more than ever, the KANU invoked Kenyatta's name as the

be forthcoming. Macleod, however, urged Ngala to see the Governor upon his return to Kenya, for he had sent to the Governor a formula which could cause a revision of attitude on the Kenyatta issue. Immediately following Ngala's return from London, discussions were held between KADU leaders and the Governor which culminated in an announcement on 18th April 1961 that KADU would participate in the formation of a government." See Bennett and Rosberg, *The Kenyatta Election*, p. 194..

[35] See Keith Kyle, *The Politics of the Independence of Kenya*, p. 133.

[36] Bennett and Rosberg, *The Kenyatta Election,* p. 200.

[37] Fisher, *Iain Macleod,* p. 151.

symbol of unity and *Uhuru*. Yet the more the party invoked Kenyatta's name, the more the white settlers, the Governor, the NKP, and even the Colonial Office feverishly sought an alternative to any government dominated by the KANU.

The colonial government expended a considerable amount of effort on trying to break up KANU, especially after the elections of 1961. The objective was to lure moderate KANU leaders and offer them incentives to join the KADU, thereby forming a government of moderate African nationalists that would stand opposed to the unsettling radicalism of the KANU. The leader most targeted by the colonial government was Mboya. Through Griffith Jones, the Deputy Governor, the colonial government repeatedly approached Mboya to cross the floor and join the KADU, and emerge eventually "as a national leader." The colonial government hoped that Mboya would bring with him the "westward looking part of KANU" and that the resultant coalition with the KADU would have stature, prestige, and widespread appeal to constitute the basis of a credible and stable independent government. But "Mboya was naturally cautious and preferred Kenyatta to be made leader and use his prestige to isolate Odinga, then invite KADU to support his government."[38] This strategy was bound to fail at this time for it "hugely underestimated the extent to which Mboya was detested by leading members of KADU, notably Ngala and Muliro. For them", Keith Kyle wrote, "the dictatorship which they repudiated was pre-eminently the dictatorship of Mboya, though to be sure they also had in mind the idea of a collective dictatorship of the Kikuyu tribe."[39]

Later on Blundell would blame Mboya for the collapse of discussions aimed at forming a coalition government comprising "KADU, the NKG and some members of KANU." Mboya had thrown "his influence decisively on the side of those in KANU, led by Oginga Odinga, who wished to stick to their original stand on the release of Kenyatta."[40] This frustrated Blundell and clearly made it even more difficult to devise a political majority that would sidestep Kenyatta and the KANU. "I have always considered", Blundell would later write of Mboya's decision not to support the formation of a coalition government, "that in this decision he

[38] Bloch and Fitzgerald, *British Intelligence and Covert Action*, p. 150.

[39] Kyle, *The Politics of the Independence of Kenya*, p. 148.

[40] Blundell, *So Rough A Wind*, p. 293.

threw away a wonderful opportunity of emerging as the probable leader of Kenya, supported by a national party with unquestioned majority."[41]

Lastly, the KANU quickly came to realize that there were limits on how vigorously the party could attack the KADU-led government "outside the Legislative Council." Its unwieldy branches and constituents, not to mention leaders, were not prepared to support another "massive resistance in the country."

The KADU-led government was, from the start, faced with many daunting challenges. It needed to expand its appeal beyond its established areas of support. And it had to do this in a hurry, given the fast-paced tempo of nationalist politics. Ngala and his party had also to dispel the suspicion that they were a front party for white interests in the country; that they were working under the direction of settler politicians. Then there was the critical issue of Kenyatta's continued detention. Could the KADU-led government effect his speedy release from detention? How about the country's economic problems, including unemployment, which seemed to deteriorate every single day?

On each of these problems the colonial government, with active support from the Colonial Office, provided the KADU-led government with as much support as possible, even as it faced formidable political challenges from the KANU. In May 1961, for example, Gichuru on behalf of the KANU, challenged Ngala to order Kenyatta's release from detention. "House and car ready now for Kenyatta through Kanu. We give you 48 h to release Kenyatta unconditionally if you really are the Government."[42] Renison had hoped that "the announcement that a house would be built for Kenyatta in the Kiambu area" would have given "the new Government fair wind."[43] In this way Ngala and his party could claim to have facilitated the quick release of Kenyatta from detention and thereby reap some political benefit from this development. But this never happened and there is no evidence that the KADU was able to considerably expand its appeal while in office.

On economic issues there was an announcement by the "civil service Finance Minister" that Kenya would receive increased financial aid from

[41] Blundell, *So Rough A Wind,* p. 294.

[42] TNA, CO 822/1911, Memo from Gichuru (on behalf of KANU) to Ngala and the Governor, also copied to the Secretary of State for Colonies, May 3, 1961.

[43] Kyle, *The Politics of the Independence of Kenya,* p. 132.

Britain.[44] The £18.5 million "in grants and loans" that constituted the bulk of this economic aid was surely not sufficient to make any appreciable dent in the country's economic problems. It was a political gesture meant to boost the standing of the KADU-led government, to show that it had the confidence of the British Government and therefore deserved local political support.

When Kenyatta formally joined the KANU in October 1961, it became evident in both London and Nairobi that were this party to form the government of independent Kenya, it would be impossible to exclude him from it. He was the leader of the party with an overwhelming majority of the voters and elected representatives. Its share of elected representatives was destined to increase under any fair constitution, unlike the situation in 1960. What to do? In a decisive constitutional conference that ran from February to April 1962, the KADU, NKP, colonial government, and the Colonial Office addressed this question. The formula for limiting and diluting Kenyatta's influence, and thereby undercutting the KANU's radical policies, was *Majimbo* (regional government).

This policy, which would forever be identified with the KADU, was in fact "drawn up with the assistance of the leading figures in Blundell's New Kenya Party and they represented a radical departure both from the style of government Kenya had known so far and from the Westminister model towards which it had hitherto been heading."[45] It was Blundell who actively lobbied the Conservative Party, the Prime Minister, and then the Colonial Office to endorse and support *Majimbo* as the acceptable constitutional formula for an independent Kenya. Initially, senior officials at the Colonial Office had been skeptical, even reluctant, to endorse this formula, which seemed too American for their comfort. So Blundell "bypassed the Colonial Office and lobbied other members of

[44] Bennett and Rosberg, *The Kenyatta Election*, p. 202.

[45] Kyle, *The Politics of the Independence of Kenya*, p. 137. On this question Odinga is correct in observing that, "It was no secret that the authors of KADU's plan for regionalism were Havelock, Blundell, Alexander, and their associates, long practiced in the art of political survival. We were convinced that the Governor had a hand in the development of the policy of *majimbo* and this scheme was a continuation of settler politics to use KADU to block the formation of strong African government." See Oginga Odinga, *Not Yet Uhuru: The Autobiography of Oginga Odinga* (New York, NY: Hill and Wang, 1967), p. 226.

the Cabinet and the Conservative Party directly." "In November 1961, Blundell had a private meeting with Kilmuir (Lord Chancellor) and Macmillan in the House of Lords at which he apparently argued for a regional constitution."[46] Blundell only approached the Colonial Office "once a wide range of opinion within the Conservative party had been canvassed."

To justify the urgent advocacy for *Majimbo,* Blundell and the KADU of necessity portrayed the KANU and its leaders as extremists closely linked to Communists. Working against the backdrop of the Cold War, this argument, however lacking in factual details, made a strong impression in London. Blundell's summary of events, later conveyed to London to sound the alarm, was that "the members of KANU were in a dictatorial mood; they seemed obsessed with the fact that they were the majority party and arbitrary demands were the order of the day. As a result KADU turned their minds to a federal type of constitution, with the object of limiting the power of the central government and of the Kikuyu over the remainder of Kenya."[47] The KANU was hence seen as a party that would comfortably support "authoritarian rule and personality cults." These developments, according to the KADU and Blundell, had emerged in other newly independent African countries, specifically in Ghana. The KADU, therefore, wanted to be seen as a champion of political democracy and individual freedom.

By February 1962, when the Constitutional Conference was convened in London, Maudling, the Colonial Secretary, saw Odinga and Kenyatta as "representatives of the extreme wing of the KANU party." They were "essentially tribal in character" and their ascent to power in Kenya, especially under Kenyatta, would lead to "Kikuyu domination under Kenyatta's leadership throughout Kenya."[48] He very much regretted that, given the political realities in Kenya, "Kenyatta will become the Prime Minister." Maudling's preference, like Blundell's and the colonial government's, was to have Mboya in a leadership position. Not only was Mboya seen as a prominent pro-Western nationalist, he also had an added attribute of being "essentially national in character and genuinely anxious to build a strong modern nation." This position had

[46] Murphy, *Party Politics and Decolonization,* p. 66.

[47] Blundell, *So Rough A Wind,* p. 298.

[48] See Kyle, *The Politics of the Independence of Kenya,* p. 144.

also been forcefully conveyed to Macmillan by his advisers, who viewed Kenyatta and Odinga as "dangerous and unreliable," and would have very much preferred for the British "to work with a government of the centre under Mboya."[49] It is useful to note that Maudling, like his predecessor, was "under no illusions that he could get away with promoting Ngala as Prime Minister." Faced with dwindling options Maudling now embraced the strategy of causing a split in the KANU. Such a split would most certainly serve British interests, "especially if it resulted in a coalition between KADU and the Mboya element in KANU."[50] The Constitutional Conference of 1962 was supposed to attempt to "bring about such a split."

In January 1962 KADU officials in Nairobi provided the preliminary outline of the party's policy of *Majimbo*. The centerpiece was "six regional governments and a two-Chamber legislature." This policy document proposed that, "land, local government and education up to secondary level will be the exclusive concern of the regions." It also proposed that "each region shall have its own public service commission for regional personnel."[51] The only major issues that "were left open for further discussion" were: "police powers, health issues and control over revenue." An advance team of the party comprising Muliro, Moi, Konchellah, Havelock, Cleasby, Jamidar, and Alexander was dispatched to London to "contact M.P.s and other influential persons to familiarize public opinion with KADU's plans."[52]

The KADU plan vehemently rejected the concept of a unitary state. Also rejected was the office of an executive head of state or government, instead the plan envisaged that the Federal Council of Ministers "would elect a chairman who would also be Head of State, for one year only; he could be reelected but not immediately."[53] There was to be a Bill of Rights inserted in the Constitution, the KADU plan permitted dual citizenship, and, more importantly, it allowed non-citizens to own land in Kenya.[54] Odinga thought that the major political aim of the KADU plan

[49] See Kyle, *The Politics of the Independence of Kenya,* p. 144.
[50] See Kyle, *The Politics of the Independence of Kenya,* p. 144.
[51] *East African Standard* (Nairobi), January 13, 1962. p. 1.
[52] *East African Standard* (Nairobi), January 13, 1962. p. 1.
[53] Kyle, *The Politics of the Independence of Kenya,* p. 146.
[54] Kyle, *The Politics of the Independence of Kenya,* p. 147.

was "to divide Kenya into autonomous regions." This would "ensure that Kenyatta would never be Prime Minister for there would be no head of state or prime minister, but a loose system of regional councils with rotating chairmen."[55]

This announcement gave the KADU the major political initiative in the period leading up to the Constitutional Conference. Its leaders, aided by the colonial government, elaborated on the meaning of *Majimbo* and its value to the future of democracy, freedom, development, and equality in Kenya. Some of the KADU's leaders, eager to solidify the party's support among its chief constituents at this critical period, were prone to making incendiary speeches at public rallies. In what must surely have been an act of political bravado, W.C. Murgor, Member for Elgeyo-Suk in the Legco, and Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Internal Security, flatly stated that, "civil war would result if Kadu's policy of regionalism was not adopted." Speaking in Eldoret, then part of the White Highlands, Murgor said, "If the British Government rejects our regionalism policy at the London constitutional conference I will sound a whistle to my people declaring war and that will be the beginning of civil war."[56] Speaking at the same meeting, J.M. Shikuku, General Secretary of the KADU, also talked of civil war unless *Majimbo* were adopted. "If regionalism were not adopted at the London conference the Baluhya, Kalenjin, Masai and Coast people would have to declare their independence. If anyone opposed that move," he continued, "or if people were found in those regions who opposed regionalism, it would mean war."[57] On these specific statements, the KANU responded through Mboya who urged the KADU to repudiate Murgor's "wild words … or stand accused of incitement and of threatening Kenya's peace and stability."[58] Murgor later resigned from the government following widespread criticism of his speech in Eldoret. Yet, in his letter of resignation, Murgor did not allude to his "wild words" or even distance himself from their implications. Instead, he stated that he was

[55] Odinga, *Not Yet Uhuru,* p. 227.

[56] *East African Standard,* January 15, 1962. p. 1.

[57] *East African Standard,* January 15, 1962. p. 1.

[58] *East African Standard,* January 17, 1962. p. 5.

resigning from his position because he "needed more time and freedom to attend to the needs and wishes of my followers in Western Kenya."[59]

Throughout the month of January prior to the Constitutional conference, KADU leaders continued to issue threats of civil war unless *Majimbo* were accepted. At a rally in Nairobi on January 28 J.M. Shikuku again stated that "if regionalism is not accepted the Kadu tribes will declare their independence." The KADU view, repeatedly stated at rallies during this charged period, was that regionalism was only opposed "by the land hungry tribes." At this same rally, Ngala, angry at attacks on the KADU by the KANU and Kenyatta, upped the ante by challenging Kenyatta "to pay back the money KADU had spent on his house and land within a week or be evicted."[60]

As these debates on land raged across the country, Kenyatta restated his position at a public rally in Nairobi. A summary of the speech carried by the *East African Standard*, seemed to suggest that Kenyatta had said "Africans in Kenya should not buy land from Europeans for, after independence, they will get it free."[61] This was clearly a worrisome development for both Kenyatta and the colonial government, especially on the eve of the conference. Kenyatta issued an immediate and emphatic denial stating that he "had repeated and re-emphasised the known KANU policy that well developed land will in no way whatsoever be tampered with;" that "such land as is undeveloped will have to be brought to full utilization. It will be used for the resettlement of African peasant farmers." Regarding resettlement schemes Kenyatta had said, "That in the allocation of land to the new peasant farmers we shall bear in mind that our first duty will be to help those poor and landless people who today have no means of livelihood. But I did not say that such peasant farmers will get land free. On the contrary, I went into great pains to explain that the way our Government would help such peasant farmers would be by giving them loans on easy terms—such loans were to be repaid by the farmers by instalments over a period of time."[62]

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[59] *East African Standard*, January 18, 1962. p. 1.

[60] *East African Standard*, January 29, 1962. p. 5.

[61] *East African Standard*, January 22, 1962. p. 5, contained in TNA, CO 822/1911..

[62] *East African Standard*, January 23, 1962. p. 5. In this same statement, Kenyatta argued against an African land-owning aristocracy. "KANU, I emphasized, would never allow the mere substitution of a new black land owning aristocracy for the present white aristocracy. We are particularly opposed to those speculators who are planning to buy huge tracks of land in the hope of selling at a higher price later." And on the question of

The colonial security forces present at this meeting filed a report to Renison, who then relayed it to the Colonial Office. Kenyatta, according to this official report, had said, "Farms which are lying idle should be given to the landless; it is African land and must be returned to us. This land has been bought by Europeans from the British Government so it is the job of the British Government to pay back to the settlers their money. Those Africans without land will be given land and also loans to develop it. By this I don't mean that Africans should go and take land by force. When we get *Uhuru* first thing is to help the poor landless African to get land and loans for it, not like KADU who are getting land for the rich people … I don't want to replace European settlers with black settlers."[63] Kenyatta went back to this issue of land for Africans at a public rally a few days later in Taita district. "Africans could not be given land free after independence but would be given" loans to buy on easy terms over "periods ranging up to 20 or 30 years."[64]

The KANU's constitutional proposals were officially presented to the nation by Kenyatta.[65] The KANU wanted Kenya to be "an independent, democratic republic within the Commonwealth." Regarding the emotional issue of land, the document stated that the KANU "does not envisage any Government of independent Kenya expropriating or taking away any person's land (whether developed, underdeveloped or undeveloped) without fair compensation."[66] Contained in the document were "Freedom Rights, Fundamental Rights, Judiciary, Head of State, Executive, Civil Service, Legislature, and citizenship." There

compensation, he "repeated the declared KANU policy that the British Government which in the first instance encouraged and even financially aided the European Settlement in Kenya, has a clear moral responsibility to help pay for such compensation as has to be paid. For it is, in any case, clear that the future Kenya government would not by itself be able to afford the cost of such compensation."

[63] TNA, CO/822/1911, Report on Kenyatta's speech at Doonham Road Stadium, January 22, 1962. Report relayed by the Governor to the Colonial Secretary on January 25, 1962. The Governor added that the account in the *East African Standard*, "was not in accord with police account." Nonetheless, the Governor indicated that "police report subsequent to the meeting" showed that "the majority of Africans present appeared to have the same impression of Kenyatta's meaning as in the Standard report."

[64] *East African Standard,* January 29, 1962, p. 5.

[65] *East African Standard,* January 31, 1962, p. 1.

[66] *East African Standard,* January 31, 1962, p. 1.

was the clause on equality under which "all men are born equal" and, as such, there would be "constitutional protection under which all may enjoy freedom from fear and want, and freedom of expression and worship, and live their lives in their own way with full justice (social, economic, political) equality of political status and economic opportunity." The KANU also wanted to promote the "fraternity and brotherhood" of Kenyans, by enshrining in the constitution "protection of basic individual rights and prevention of all forms of discrimination, intimidation and exploitation."[67] However, this document clearly frowned upon any form of Balkanization of the country and was hence resolutely opposed to *Majimbo*. The KANU would not "tolerate either a Balkanization of the country or splitting it up into units, weakening its body politic, helping the entrenched interests and denying equal opportunity to the people."

Among the fundamental rights contained in the KANU document were: "Freedom from discrimination on grounds of race, religion, creed, descent, sex or place of birth in matters such as employment under the State, admission into educational institutions, financial aid to students; freedom from discrimination with regard to carrying on any trade, business, profession or occupation; protection of all property rights and right to adequate compensation in the event of its acquisition under the process of law; right to reside and settle in any part of the territory."[68] Regarding the Head of State the KANU document provided that, "as in most of the countries having democratic constitutions, the head of State will be elected by the people." The constitution would need to specify the conditions of election to this important office.

Blundell's reaction to the KANU proposals was, at best, mixed. He remained skeptical about the sincerity of the KANU in matters related to land ownership. "If KANU believed in these fundamental rights and freedoms," Blundell asked, why had the party not been able to "get their youth wing in order?" The youth wing, composed of young exuberant party supporters had, according to Blundell, been engaged in acts of intimidation, especially in the White Highlands. He supported the establishment of the "settlement schemes provided with the assistance of the British Government for the poorer people." Still, it was his view that unless the constitution "met the fears of many of the remoter

[67] *East African Standard,* January 31, 1962, p. 1.

[68] *East African Standard,* January 31, 1962, p. 1.

people and the different groups in the country, there is no possibility of our advancing towards independence with tranquility and agreement."[69] Blundell also stated, without clarification, that the KADU's views on "regionalism in no way advocated Balkanisation." Lord Delamare felt that the KANU's statements on "agricultural land policy was 'most encouraging'."

The KADU's non-negotiable position at the Constitutional Conference was *Majimbo*. Ngala and other KADU leaders were adamant on this question. The conference would be "a waste of time and money unless the British Government recognizes that a unitary form of government on the Western pattern will not solve Kenya's problems. Special circumstances in Kenya," Ngala added, "made a federal constitution a necessity. The unitary form of government would not give safeguards or guarantee any individual rights because an amendment could easily be made by one dictator or any dictating majority party."[70] For his part, Kenyatta wanted to convey to London and Nairobi that he was going to the conference from a position of political strength. He was assured that "the overwhelming majority of the people of Kenya are with me." The KANU, Kenyatta stated, was a national party, unlike the KADU, which was "a rough and ready amalgamation of dissident tribal elements." The KANU drew "its leadership and support from every tribe in Kenya." Kenyatta sought the "complete integration of all peoples of Kenya into one nation. I believe that in a free Kenya a person's loyalty must be to his country and not to his tribe or race."[71]

Discussions at the Constitutional Conference clearly indicated that the KANU, although the majority party, was functioning under enormous disadvantages compared to the KADU. Members of parliament from both the Conservative and Labour parties seemed optimistic that this Constitutional Conference would be successful. This was in part due to Maudling's briefings to the appropriate committees on the eve of the conference. Maudling's intent, revealed to Conservative Party backbenchers, "was to design such a strong constitution that it would take

[69] *East African Standard*, January 31, 1962, p. 1.

[70] *East African Standard*, February 2, 1962, p. 13. Also see "Mr. Ngala details Kadu's plan," *East African Standard*, February 15, 1962, p. 3.

[71] *East African Standard*, February 9, 1962, p. 2.

an army to break and not a single lawyer, as in Ghana."[72] In advance of the conference Maudling was also known to have come to favor the main outlines of the KADU constitutional proposals including "a bicameral non-Westminister system." Due to this initial predisposition, Maudling was clearly more forgiving of the KADU party, thus enabling it to stubbornly hold on to positions that delayed progress at the conference. In these acts of political brinkmanship, the KADU continued to bank "on the theory that the British Government would not accept a Kenya Government controlled by Mr. Kenyatta."[73]

Maudling presented his initial outlines for the constitution to the conference in March 1962.[74] Outlines that would later form the bulk of the "Report of the Kenya Constitutional Conference, 1962" that was published at the end of the conference in April 1962.[75] Both documents, complex and full of contradictory tendencies, nonetheless secured the KADU's main objective of *Majimbo*. Thus, although the KADU was the minority party, and therefore the "party on the defensive, it was KANU which conceded most of the points *en route* to an agreement. For KADU's case was strongly supported not just by European and Asian leaders but also by the British Government. Against this combination KANU had little chance of prevailing."[76] Had the KANU refused to accept this constitution there was a very real danger that there would have been a split within its restless ranks. So Kenyatta, as leader of the party, asked the delegates to accept it. "Kenyatta called KANU delegates together," Odinga later recalled, and told the delegates that it was imperative for the party to strike a compromise in order to reach an agreement. "Arguing, he said, was all very well, but we had to reach a settlement. If we failed government would be snatched from our hands. If we brought no government back with us, the people would regard it as a failure. We might be forced to accept a constitution we did not want, but once we had the government we could change the

[72] *East African Standard,* February 9, 1962, p. 18.

[73] *East African Standard,* March 27, 1962, p. 1.

[74] *East African Standard,* March 23, 1962, p. 1.

[75] *Report of the Kenya Constitutional Conference, 1962. Cmnd. 1700* (London: HMSO, April 1962).

[76] David Goldsworthy, *Tom Mboya: The Man Kenya Wanted to Forget* (New York: Africana Publishing Company; London and Nairobi: Heinemann, 1982), p. 192.

constitution. The Colonial Secretary," Odinga lamented, "must have perceived our eagerness to get into the government."[77]

Maudling's Constitution, which endorsed the broad outlines of *Majmbo*, has to be seen as Blundell's ultimate political triumph. "In its specific aim of gaining support for the policy of regionalism, Blundell's lobbying attained its objective. The Lancaster House Conference in January 1962 agreed to devolve powers to regional assemblies and it was only after independence that the policy of regionalism was abandoned."[78] This constitution, even after being abandoned soon after *Uhuru*, left an unmistakable imprint on Kenya's post-colonial politics and history.

The details of the Maudling Constitution demonstrate the extent to which the Colonial Office went to accede to the KADU's intent and policy, while seeking not to completely alienate the KANU given its political dominance in the country. The KADU's *Majimbo* had been strategically used to "extract concessions from the KANU and put it in a weaker position after independence." Thus, on one hand, the constitution's objective was to create "a united Kenya nation able to make progress in the modern world, and a united Kenya in which men and women have confidence in the sanctity of individual rights and liberty and in the safeguarding of minorities." On the other hand, since this united Kenya did not currently exist, there was a need to devise a system that took "account of those fears and differences, and provides for them in the constitution, but does not provide for them in such a way as to prevent the growth of a united nation."[79] This was to be accomplished by simultaneously promoting "a strong and effective Central Government" and *Majimbo*! The central government, to be formed by the leader of the majority party in the Lower House, would be responsible for "foreign affairs, defence, international trade, Customs, economic development and for the raising of funds from overseas."

Majimbo was to receive its functional sustenance from "the maximum possible decentralization of the powers of government to effective authorities capable of a life and significance of their own, entrenched in the Constitution and drawing their being and their power from the

[77] Odinga, *Not Yet Uhuru,* p. 229.

[78] Murphy, *Party Politics and Decolonization,* p. 67.

[79] *East African Standard,* March 23, 1962, p. 1.

Constitution and not from the Central Government."[80] Maudling proposed six regions whose boundaries would be "drawn up with reference to existing provincial boundaries—which should be regarded as very relevant but not decisive." He envisaged that there would be alterations in the existing boundaries to accommodate the wishes of "people who want to be together." This was, however, not always honored. The country is full of tales of peoples who feel they were assigned to the wrong regions or provinces. A particular example is that of the Abaluhya of Trans-Nzoia and (Kitale). Initially, Muliro and most of the Abaluhya politicians and elders were sure that this rich agricultural area would be part of Western Region (Province). The Regional Boundaries Commission under Sir Strattford Foster-Sutton in the end recommended that Trans-Nzoia should be part of the Rift Valley Region. This was, as most issues during this period, the result of political calculations, especially political rivalry. Fervent efforts by Ngala, Muliro, and even Moi failed to shift these boundaries. This was in a large measure due to the rules of engagement agreed upon in advance by the Council of Ministers. "The Council of Ministers had agreed in advance not to change any of the recommended boundaries except by unanimity."[81] Mboya vetoed any alteration regarding the Trans-Nzoia. This issue provided a political opportunity "to exploit tribal divisions in his opponent's camp, with the Pokot from the Kalenjin group and the Maasai favoring the report's verdict, and the others," the Abaluhya, opposing it.[82] After *Uhuru,* this boundary was left in place when Odinga, as Minister for Home Affairs, "vetoed the change at the last minute, following attacks by Sabot on Bukusu around Mount Elgon. This decision", Charles Hornsby correctly concluded, "was to remain a vexatious anomaly for Luhya 'nationalists' for the next forty-five years."[83]

What would the regional assemblies and governments be responsible for? "Education up to and including intermediate level would be one of the functions of the Regions and should have responsibility for its practical application." The same was true for "certain parts of the Public

[80] *East African Standard,* March 23, 1962, p. 1.

[81] Kyle, *The Politics of the Independence of Kenya,* p. 170.

[82] Kyle, *The Politics of the Independence of Kenya,* p. 170.

[83] Charles Hornsby, *Kenya: A History Since Independence* (London and New York, NY: I.B.Tauris, 2012), p. 78.

Health Service." Also affected was local government whose "organization would be entrenched in the constitution, and the Regions should have responsibility for its practical application." On the sensitive matter of law and order it was expected that the central government would be responsible for the armed forces and the ultimate sanction of law and order, but the day-to-day responsibility for law and order within each region would rest with the Regional Assembly.[84] It was not going to be easy to change any provisions of this Constitution since any change would "require a majority of 75 per cent of each House, except with regard to particular changes which affect the entrenched rights of individuals, Regions, tribal authorities or Districts the majority in the Upper House would have to be 90 per cent."

At the end of the conference, both the KADU and the KANU declared victory; "Ronald Ngala said regionalism had been achieved. No such thing, said Kenyatta."[85] Several issues in the constitution had been left unresolved and it was expected that a new coalition government, formed between the KADU and KANU, would endeavor to agree on outstanding details. It was through a coalition government that the KANU and Kenyatta entered government for the first time. Kenyatta became Minister of State for Economic Planning and Constitutional Affairs. Other KANU members appointed as ministers were: Gichuru (Finance); Mboya (Labour); and McKenzie (Land Settlement).

Maudling, on the insistent advice from the colonial government and the settler lobby in London, vetoed the appointment of Odinga to the coalition government. He told Kenyatta that Odinga was unsuitable to serve in the government because of his "close contact with Communist Governments" that also provided him with funding.[86] But why now? Part of the background to this exclusion lay in the "behind scenes ideological struggle" waged against radicalism at the Constitutional Conference. Odinga had, as already remarked, come to be identified as the champion of the radical wing within the KANU. Toward the end of March 1962, a sensational report circulated in London accusing Odinga of planning to "overthrow the very constitution that the conference at

[84] *Report of the Constitutional Conference 1962,* p. 18.

[85] Gerard Loughran, *Birth of a Nation: The Story of a Newspaper in Kenya* (London and New York, NY: I.B.Tauris, 2010), p. 60.

[86] Kyle, *The Politics of the Independence of Kenya,* p. 151.

Lancaster House is so laboriously trying to establish."[87] According to this report the KANU delegates at the Constitutional Conference had met in London and accused Odinga of being the "chief architect of the alleged revolution plan." These delegates then spoke of now being forced to fight "a battle against Mr. Odinga, Communist influence and the threat of revolution." The reaction of the KANU was reported to include anger at "the disclosure of private party affairs" and "calls to prevent Mr. Odinga from taking part in any future government."[88]

The exclusion of Odinga from the government served as a sort of political deterrent to would-be radicals; that to advocate for radical policies would exclude one from power. But it was also aimed at Kenyatta to show him that it was in his political interest to distance himself from Odinga. Maudling had reluctantly come to recognize that it was not politically possible to exclude Kenyatta from the new coalition government. The Colonial Office was in receipt of several reports filed by the colonial intelligence services that had repeatedly come to the same conclusion. Also, at this conference Mboya and MacKenzie had, through their frequent meetings with Maudling, apparently convinced him that "Kenyatta could not be excluded from the leadership."[89]

In excluding Odinga from the coalition government the Colonial Office ensured that the radical wing of the KANU would not be represented at the talks held between the Governor and the Cabinet regarding the practical application and political implications of the 1962 Constitution. By shrewdly exploiting their remaining power in Kenya the British were able to embark on what turned out to be a successful effort to determine the shape of the new government and the values that this government in an independent Kenya would espouse and defend.

From the KADU Ngala was appointed Minister of State for Administration and Constitutional Affairs. The other KADU Ministers were: Moi (Local Government); Muliro (Commerce and Industry); Havelock (Agriculture). The coalition government reported to the Governor who continued to wield considerable authority and power.

Yet, as this new government was assembled there remained the problem of Renison as Governor. Colonial Secretaries from Macleod

[87] *East African Standard,* March 30, 1962, p. 6.

[88] *East African Standard,* March 30, 1962, p. 6.

[89] Kyle, *The Politics of the Independence of Kenya,* p. 151.

onwards had been consistent in pointing out that Renison was ill-suited to be Governor of Kenya at this time. He had increasingly become a major obstacle to any meaningful discussions aimed at resolving the complex political problems facing the country. He "never achieved any rapport" with Kenyatta, and unfortunately continued to view him with disdain as the "African leader to darkness and death." During the 1962 Constitutional Conference, Renison had not been as useful to the Colonial Office as was expected. "The feeling grew in the Colonial Office that it was not getting the range of imaginative advice from Renison that it was entitled to receive."[90] Another of his drawbacks was that he did not feel at ease with Africans, especially African politicians. Even some of his local supporters reluctantly acknowledged that he was "never … really at ease with the political leaders of Kenya."[91] Renison's removal from his position was, therefore, expected. The prevailing view at the Colonial Office was that the knotty problems of Kenya now demanded a much more shrewd and experienced political governor. Such a governor would endeavor to safeguard long-term British interests in the country by overseeing a peaceful transfer of power to effective and "correct" African nationalists.

[90] Kyle, *The Politics of the Independence of Kenya*, p. 151.

[91] Blundell, *So Rough A Wind*, p. 293.

CHAPTER 8

The Turning Point: Kenyatta and Malcolm MacDonald

Duncan Sandys, the new Colonial Secretary, moved quickly to remove Renison and appoint Malcolm MacDonald as Governor of Kenya in January 1963. Sandys wanted MacDonald to proceed to Kenya immediately. Why MacDonald?

Malcolm MacDonald was the son of Ramsay MacDonald, the first Labour Prime Minister of Britain. In the 1930 s he had served "two terms as Secretary of State for Colonies." He later recalled that he had been "the first Colonial Secretary to define unequivocally—national independence for all our African dependencies."[1] He had also served with distinction as High Commissioner to Canada. In 1946, Prime Minister Attlee appointed him as "Governor General of Malaya and Singapore," which also covered North Borneo, Sarawak, and Brunei. In 1948, MacDonald's responsibilities were expanded when he was appointed "Commissioner General for South East Asia."[2] It is worth mentioning here that he had served in South East Asia "during the communist insurrection in Malaya" and therefore had some experience in "bringing an end to empire" in countries recovering from an armed revolt. He had also served as High Commissioner to India from 1955 to 1960.

[1] Malcolm MacDonald, *Titans and Others* (London: William Collins & Sons, Ltd., 1972), p. 240.

[2] Sanger, *Malcolm MacDonald*, p. xix.

W.O. Maloba, *Kenyatta and Britain*, African Histories and Modernities, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-50895-5_8

MacDonald was highly regarded "as an administrator" at the Colonial Office. Within the British Government he was known to have that valuable and unique "political deftness" that enabled him to cultivate effective relationships with nationalists in the transition to political independence. He had done this in Malaya and it was expected that he would draw on that experience in his position in Kenya. Although MacDonald had "not been a policy maker for many years," he was still very well connected to powerful politicians and policy makers in the British political establishment. In his many assignments on behalf of the Empire, his constant objective had "been to uphold British influence and prestige in the new and restless Commonwealth."[3] These services were also characterized by an ideological opposition to Communism. His views on this matter, developed as a result of his experiences in South East Asia, could be "defined as 'the obstruction of Communism by the fostering of healthy nationalism' and the raising of the standards of living and education in the emergent countries."[4]

Although "not a particularly good speaker," MacDonald possessed several qualities that easily endeared him to the local nationalists: he "was the mildest of men, incapable of deliberately making an enemy" and he was "without any vanity."[5]

His biographer argues that MacDonald's success in his many assignments "came from a combination of inconspicuous hard work with informality, a lack of starchiness with a firm grasp of democratic principles."[6]

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[3] *East African Standard*, January 4, 1963, p. 4. For more details on MacDonald's reputation for getting along with diverse groups of people, see *East African Standard*, November 19, 1962, p. 4. In Asia, he had "left behind him the imprint of an attractive figure who mingled easily and kindly with people, whether they were rich or poor, white or black, yellow or brown, and who reconciled differences, persuaded and helped people to work together, and found solutions where solutions looked difficult and sometimes impossible."

[4] *East African Standard*, January 4, 1963, p. 4.

[5] *East African Standard*, January 4, 1963, p. 4. It was noticed, for example, that MacDonald chose to "remain plain 'Mister' during his term of office in Kenya rather than accept the customary knighthood of office."

[6] Sanger, *Malcolm MacDonald*, p. xii. Also see *East African Standard*, November 19, 1962, p. 4. "As a diplomatist, conciliator and negotiator, there are few more effective personalities in British political life than Mr. Malcolm MacDonald … He traveled widely in South East Asia and made a host of friends. Race distinctions are unknown to Mr. MacDonald, who kept open house for all. His work in promoting harmonious race

MacDonald was confronted with long-standing economic and political problems that demanded immediate attention as part of "his feat of smoothing Kenya's move to independence in 1963." There was the lingering question of addressing the fears of white settlers. While it is true that they were now politically considerably weakened, they still retained enormous economic clout in the country not to mention powerful political supporters in London. To be sure, this support was not what it had been in the past. Still, the voices of their supporters continued to command attention in London. Lord Salisbury, "a former Commonwealth and Colonial Secretary," continued to advance the cause of the settlers urging the British Government to offer them some economic (and even political) assurances. If Britain were to impose "on the European population in Kenya 'something which they consider intolerable' the white people ultimately 'will take the only action open to them and they will walk out'." Such action would "mean the ruin of the colony," leading to a "relapse into barbarism." This would bring "untold misery for the African millions themselves."[7]

In May 1962, Lord Colyton spoke passionately about the precarious fate of the settlers as Kenya advanced toward *Uhuru*. "When all is said and done," he stated, "it was the much-maligned British settlers who, under the devoted administration of British colonial servants, and with the help and labour of the African inhabitants, in the short space of sixty years transformed Kenya from a backward poor pest stricken territory into what was one of the most advanced and civilised countries of East and Central Africa. These settlers," Lord Colyton continued, "are the people who now, in many cases through fear and insecurity, are being forced to leave their homes in hundreds if not yet in thousands, and to abandon all they or their forebearers have built up. In my view," he concluded, "we owe the settlers not only a debt of gratitude but an obligation to ensure that, so far as is humanly possible, they shall not suffer disproportionately from events over which they have no control."[8]

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relationships quickly won acclaim—he sweetened the relations of Malayans with Chinese, of these with Indians, and of all these with Europeans. He also made a name for himself for his dislike of formality in dress as well as manners."

[7] *East African Standard*, March 28, 1962, p. 1.

[8] Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 43/2/1-99, Parliamentary Debates (Hansard), House of Lords, May 15, 1962, pp. 532–533. It is useful to mention that this specific report comprised one of the papers/

During the Constitutional Conference, Maudling had warned of a gloomy economic future for Kenya unless a quick resolution was found to allay the fears of the settlers and the business community. "Under the shadow of fear Kenya's economy" was, as he put it, "running down. The budget deficit was increasing and confidence dwindled." It was therefore vital for the African nationalists to arrive at an agreeable constitution that gave "individuals freedom from fear, freedom from apprehension and an assurance of equality before the law." Without such an agreement, Maudling lectured the African nationalists, farmers would not have "confidence to plough back their money into their farms," and it would be impossible to attract capital for investment in the country.[9] Maudling also let it be known that a collapse of Kenya's economy "could bring down with it many of the economies of adjoining countries."

Politically, the main issue that demanded MacDonald's immediate attention revolved around hastening discussions toward *Uhuru* on the basis of the constitution arrived at in 1962. There was a palpable "impatience in the land at the slow progress to self-government." Even more worrisome for the Colonial Office, were reports which indicated that, "The Kikuyu, Kenyatta's own people, were said to be taking oaths again as they had done in Mau Mau days, and the police were arresting members of the Land and Freedom Army."[10] The oaths were being administered in the name of the Land Freedom Army (LFA), which was particularly active in the Rift Valley at this time. Many white settlers were especially alarmed when it was reported that an African worker on Blundell's farm in the Rift Valley had been arrested and confessed to being the "district officer" of the LFA in Subukia. "He was one of the 12 men jailed for a total of more than 30 years for being members of the Land Freedom Army at Solai and Subukia."[11] Police action against the LFA continued throughout 1962.[12] According to the white colonial

documents, read by Malcolm MacDonald during his few days in London prior to assuming his new position as Governor of Kenya in January 1963. He also read, *Report of the Kenya Constitutional Conference, 1962*, Cmd. 1700, April, 1962.

[9] *East African Standard,* February 15, 1962, p. 4.

[10] Sanger, *Malcolm MacDonald*, p. 6.

[11] *East African Standard,* October 3, 1962, p. 1.

[12] *East African Standard,* October 12, 1962, p. 15. "23 people were sentenced to a total of 83 years imprisonment by Kenya Magistrates's Court yesterday for offences in connection with the LFA … At Molo, the Chairman of KANU's Elburgon branch was jailed for

administrators in the Rift Valley Province, "the LFA was exactly the same as the Mau Mau with same aims but different methods organized into water tight compartments."[13]

The Coalition government met in early October 1962, and authorized police and military action against the LFA. In its editorial on this issue, the *East African Standard* applauded the action of the coalition government arguing that, "seeking to attain political ends whatever these may be, through constitutional means is perfectly permissible in a democracy, but there is no place for attempts at overthrowing an ordered society by violence."[14] Gichuru, now Minister of Finance in the coalition government, commented afterwards that if employment were provided for the people in LFA "they would not go into the forests … I don't think they like it in the forests."[15]

Complicating matters for MacDonald was the level of heightened distrust between the African nationalists in the KANU and the white settlers supported by the KADU. Mboya brought the simmering fears and suspicions to the surface in October 1962, when he stated that there had been several "allegations in the Rift Valley Province such as that the Europeans and the police were bribing some people to make guns." This statement clearly implied that "Europeans were bribing Africans to take illegal oaths and that the British would try to stir up trouble."[16] In the debate over this issue in the Legco, J.P.H. Okondo, a KADU supporter, speculated without any foundation that, "Communist money might be behind the Land Freedom Army." He wanted the LFA and Communist money eradicated forthwith "because on the day we get independence we are most likely to be faced with the position that the Communists have already trained an army here to be used against the forces of democracy."[17] In his official response to Mboya, "after investigation," Ellerton, Acting Minister of Defence, stated that there was not a "shred of evidence to support the allegations concerning European farmers and

seven years after admitting that he was a founder member of the LFA and its leader in Rift Valley Province."

[13] *East African Standard,* October 14, 1962, p. 1.

[14] *East African Standard,* October 11, 1962, p. 4.

[15] *East African Standard,* October 5, 1962, p. 13.

[16] *East African Standard,* October 18, 1962, p. 1.

[17] *East African Standard,* October 19, 1962, p. 1.

gun making. Not a single person has come forward," Ellerton continued, "to make a statement alleging European complicity in this or any other activity of this kind." This included captured LFA members.[18] There was also no evidence of police involvement. Mboya had earlier stated that he "had no apologies to make and stood by his speeches" in which he had raised this matter.[19]

MacDonald was also faced with a relationship of marked personal rivalry between Ngala and Kenyatta. Ngala's party had, for some time, enjoyed the support and patronage of Renison and the rest of the colonial government. The KADU was aware that the settlers, the colonial government and even the Colonial Office continued to have several misgivings about Kenyatta. As such, the KADU party leaders continued to make statements linking the KANU to Communism or to the Mau Mau. A more provocative strategy was to link Kenyatta directly to the Mau Mau. This was an old tried tactic but it could still be counted on to arouse emotive responses. This is what Ngala tried to do in his speech in Mombasa in October 1962. He "challenged the Kanu president, Mr. Kenyatta, to take the British Government to court to prove what he said at his Kapenguria trial ten years ago—that he was not connected with Mau Mau." Kenyatta, according to Ngala, could only be hailed as, "the only nationalist leader in Kenya if he proved that he was not connected with Mau Mau."[20] For his part, Kenyatta sought to link Ngala and the KADU to the despised colonial regime. He, therefore, accused the KADU and Ngala, "of helping the colonial government to divide Kenya into pieces so as to give Rift Valley Region to 'their masters, the imperialists'." In this subservient capacity, the "KADU leaders could not make their own decisions on the future of Kenya, but were used by the imperialists to voice their own ambitions."[21]

[18] *East African Standard*, October 25, 1962, p. 4.

[19] *East African Standard*, October 17, 1962, p. 1.

[20] *East African Standard*, October 29, 1962, p. 1.

[21] *East African Standard*, January 21, 1963, p. 5. In this speech, delivered in Mombasa, Kenyatta added that, "tribalism was thing he had utterly rejected during his 40 years in politics. He had all along been advocating unity in Africa, and by Africans, he also referred to American Negroes and West Indians. He believed "the moment we achieve unity in Africa we should be able to free ourselves from the imperialists who came to Africa without our invitation."

Before embarking for Kenya, MacDonald met with "Lord Howick and Sir Andrew Cohen, former Governors of Kenya and Uganda." He spoke with Renison "on the phone as the ex-Governor was snow-bound in Sussex."[22] He also received detailed briefing at the Colonial Office on Kenya, including its political, economic and security problems. Most of the senior officials pointed to Kenyatta as the country's main problem, the chief obstacle to constitutional progress. The image of Kenyatta as the anti-European radical had taken root, and many officials were still determined, if at all possible, to keep him out of government. He was, according to these officials at the Colonial Office, "a wicked old man who was fortunately past his prime, who was quickly declining in physical and mental powers, and whose influence was being progressively subordinated to that of younger and abler colleagues."[23] There was reason to be optimistic about the future since Kenyatta was old with immense health problems and "a heavy drinker who was rapidly boozing himself to death." These officials therefore wanted MacDonald to prepare for a Kenya without Kenyatta who would be dead soon either from poor health, old age, or over-consumption of alcohol. A few officials at the Colonial Office were less dismissive of Kenyatta. They informed MacDonald that, "few Europeans either inside or outside Kenya really knew much about Kenyatta." For nearly a decade, Kenyatta had been banished by the colonial government "to a remote semi-desert" and these authorities "had not bothered to keep in serious contact with him since, and that for long they had virtually dismissed him from their thoughts, trusting they could forget all about him in connection with future Kenyan affairs."[24]

Still, there was no denying the fact that Kenyatta was the dominant nationalist politician at this time. He was "not only the paramount leader, but also the symbol and embodiment" of African nationalism in Kenya. As a result, no politically astute colonial administrator could "deny his commanding role in Kenya's nationalism."

It was therefore not surprising that MacDonald decided to reverse long-standing British policy "and bet heavily on Kenyatta. And anyone who knew Malcolm," Clyde Sanger explains, "would expect him—

[22] *East African Standard*, January 4, 1963, p. 1.

[23] Malcolm MacDonald, *Titans and Others*, p. 241.

[24] Malcolm MacDonald, *Titans and Others*, p. 241.

by instinct—to back the main nationalist leader, to show confidence in him and his colleagues. He had done that with Sukarno in Indonesia, and with Dato Onn in Malaya."[25] The linkage, then close friendship, between Kenyatta and MacDonald had a very vivid and decisive imprint on post-colonial Kenya. This relationship, forged at a critical moment in the country's history, produced decisions and policy positions that have, since 1963, influenced Kenya's political culture and determined its economic foundation and emphasis.

One of the first decisions that MacDonald took as the new Governor was to speed up the constitutional talks with the Council of Ministers of the coalition government "on the draft of a Constitution for first a self-governing and afterwards an independent Kenya." Progress on the draft constitution under Renison had been frustratingly slow since the governor "found the making of constitutions a wearisome business and had scheduled only one meeting of ministers each week for this purpose."[26] Under MacDonald's chairmanship, the Council of Ministers met three days a week "from 10 o'clock in the mornings until 11 o'clock at nights, discussing, arguing, agreeing on innumerable detailed questions, with only two brief breaks for lunch and dinner."[27]

These meetings, held at Government House (the Governor's Mansion) in Nairobi, afforded MacDonald an opportunity to take measure of the principal African nationalists destined to play significant roles in an independent Kenya. Kenyatta was a key participant in these talks, which lasted three months. This tension-ridden and serious undertaking enabled MacDonald to observe Kenyatta at very close range. Whether Kenyatta knew it or not, it became very clear later on that the nature of his participation in and contributions to these constitutional talks was decisive in changing his political fortunes. Kenyatta's participation, contributions, and bearing at these talks, evolved into an effective start for an audition for the position of an acceptable leader of independent Kenya.

After three months MacDonald arrived at some crucial conclusions concerning Kenyatta as an individual and leader. The first conclusion

[25] Sanger, *Malcolm MacDonald*, p. 5.

[26] Sanger, *Malcolm MacDonald*, p. 6.

[27] Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 71/8/32, Kenyatta, p. 2.

was that Kenyatta was not senile. "Kenyatta, then aged over seventy, sat through all those meetings early and late." By eleven o'clock, when MacDonald adjourned the meetings, "the septuagenarian was wide awake. His eyelids never flickered with drowsiness, as I had sometimes seen those of elderly Cabinet Ministers in other countries do in similar circumstances."[28] Although he would often remain silent "for hours on end" at these meetings, "he was always alert." MacDonald also keenly observed that some of Kenyatta's colleagues, "such as Tom Mboya and James Gichuru exerted more influence than he did on the settlement of many important questions, and he was clearly guided a great deal by their advice. Sometimes he seemed undecided on policy, and occasionally even not interested in a detailed matter under examination." In spite of all these seeming drawbacks, MacDonald noted with satisfaction that when Kenyatta "did speak it was with clarity and authority. In addition, he was invariably reasonable, and prepared for sensible compromises with rival KADU politicians. His sagacity was impressive, if it did not seem to be outstanding."[29]

Throughout these meetings, MacDonald was impressed by what he called "the glorious African sense of humour," which several times saved the talks from collapse. Even "in the middle of a crisis" when he thought the KADU and KANU ministers would not agree on a point, "someone would make a joke—and immediately everybody round the table burst into peals of almost childlike laughter. The crisis was over. Both sides recovered their sense of proportion, someone yielded a point, accord was reached."[30] He came to enjoy and appreciate the value of this sense of humor, which he regarded as "a civilised virtue." He was very encouraged by the fact that Kenyatta had a salutary "capacity for joking and leg-pulling … as the best of them, and he laughed just as heartily at a jest against himself as one leveled against anybody else."

How about Kenyatta as an aging alcoholic? MacDonald's British advisers had initially expressed reservations about the wisdom of serving alcohol at dinner during the talks. African ministers, they feared, would take the opportunity to get drunk and thus be of limited value at the talks. This did not happen. African ministers took the task at

[28] MacDonald, *Titans and Others*, p. 245.

[29] MacDonald, *Titans and Others*, p. 245.

[30] MacDonald, *Titans and Others*, pp. 245–246.

hand seriously and worked with due diligence, even as they "consumed in reasonable quantities … whisky, gin and liqueurs" at dinner. As for Kenyatta, "there was never the slightest sign" that he was "drinking himself to death. He sipped glasses of coca-cola and cups of tea during our meetings and at social gatherings outside; but he never indulged in any more potent beverage. He was always as sober as a mythical judge."[31]

But could Kenyatta be a strong leader? There was always the matter of his advanced age and the toll that his body had taken from years of imprisonment and detention in particularly harsh circumstances. Many leaders of the KADU repeatedly came back to this point as they canvassed for support in the period before June 1963. The KADU leaders (and candidates) "became outspoken in their criticisms of feeble, hesitant, outworn Jomo Kenyatta. In fact he did not seem to be the sort of national leader who could powerfully unite a people in their hour of national need."[32] These thoughts, it is fair to say, were also entertained, albeit quietly, by some of his colleagues in the KANU. His performance in the coalition government had not been especially outstanding. He had not over-asserted himself or sought to have the dominant voice. This had initially puzzled MacDonald. Later he determined that the lack of assertiveness by Kenyatta at this time was partly circumstantial and partly deliberate. "During that long exile he was unable to keep in close touch with political developments in Nairobi and other densely populated areas of Kenya; and changing events and opinions had altered many features of the political scene since he was familiar with it at a much earlier period. So he found himself out of contact not only with the facts of the contemporary situation, but even with some of the evolution of thought in the Nationalist Movement of which he was the father. He therefore felt a little confused and uncertain, and he took time to adjust himself to the new circumstances."[33]

As for his performance in the coalition government, MacDonald attributed this to the clumsy nature of the arrangement and the fact that neither the KANU nor the KADU "Ministers alike wielded no true

[31] Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC71/8/32, Kenyatta, p. 2.

[32] Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC71/8/32, Kenyatta, p. 3.

[33] Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 71/8/32, Kenyatta, p. 3.

power, since technically they were simply advisers to … the Colonial Governor." This arrangement also forced Kenyatta to "share authority with the KADU leader, Ronald Ngala, whose rather second-rate qualities he felt a measure of contempt." Yet, as MacDonald worked very closely with Kenyatta, which involved "sometimes confidential collaboration," he was able to discern that in the given circumstances Kenyatta "was not at liberty to assert himself as a leader. He accepted it in a friendly and co-operative spirit as a temporary expedient—and bided his time."[34]

Then there was the lingering question of Kenyatta's connection to the Mau Mau peasant revolt. MacDonald knew very well that this question continued to affect the overall British opinion of Kenyatta as a possible leader of an independent Kenya. Locally, there still existed some apprehensions among former loyalists, even if most of them were quickly reconciling themselves to the fact that Kenyatta was destined to assume some leadership role in an independent Kenya. The settlers were still hostile to Kenyatta. This hostility, as already discussed, had a long and emotionally charged history. The settlers had used the outbreak of the Mau Mau revolt to solidify their long-standing hatred and fear of Kenyatta. In October 1962, on what later became known as Kenyatta Day, Mboya opened "The First Historical Exhibition" to pay tribute to Kenyatta's long struggle for Kenya's *Uhuru*. This exhibition, funded by an Asian trader, was seen by *East Africa and Rhodesia* as an effort in the glorification "of the convicted leader of Mau Mau."[35] The paper was incensed by the fact that the exhibition included "relics of Mau Mau and Kenyatta, and press cuttings of the sayings and doings of African nationalists and Mau Mau terrorists with some of their photographs," including Dedan Kimathi.

MacDonald's close relationship with Kenyatta and his "intimate knowledge of Jomo Kenyatta's personality" led him to a critical conclusion: that Kenyatta "never approved of the atrocious Mau Mau excesses during the Kenyan emergency, and that he had no personal responsibility for them. He was of course, a passionate and powerful African

[34] Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 71/8/32, Kenyatta, pp. 3–4.

[35] *East Africa and Rhodesia*, October 25, 1962, p. 181. The paper reported that in his remarks Mboya had said that, "Europeans who were offended by the picture [of Kimathi] should return to Europe, where statues had been erected to people 'more rotten than any one I can think of in Kenya'."

Nationalist leader; but partly because of an occasional streak of indecisiveness in his make-up, and partly because of rival influence of wilder characters in an increasingly complex, difficult and desperate situation, he was not in complete control of every section of his followers; and in any case the British authorities imprisoned him before the worst phase of the atrocities began."[36] MacDonald also noted that Kenyatta's "friendliness towards the European community was no new attitude which suddenly accosted him when he realized that his ambition for an independent Kenya under himself as Head of Government lay unexpectedly within his grasp." He had always been positively disposed toward the European community, MacDonald wrote, "even during his long years of detention by the British Government in a remote wilderness."[37]

As a result of extended interaction with Kenyatta at the constitutional talks and other private sessions, MacDonald concluded that, "the opinion about him given to me at Whitehall was seriously mistaken." In his judgment Kenyatta was "the wisest and perhaps strongest as well as most popular potential Prime Minister of the independent nation to be."[38] In MacDonald's estimation, there was simply nobody with the same or comparable stature, popularity, and wisdom as Kenyatta, who could be

[36]Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 71/8/32, Kenyatta, p. 4. It is important to mention that this conclusion by MacDonald was not shared by many former colonial administrators of Kenya. Lord Howick, for example, still maintained that Mau Mau "was an extraordinary example of highly educated and intelligent men using, in Africa, the belief in witchcraft as a political weapon and in this way striking intense terror into the hearts of a number of simple African peasants." See Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Baring Papers), GRE/I/49/2, Paper forwarded by Sir Evelyn Baring to the Oxford Colonial Records Project; interviewed by Dame Marjery Perham, November 17, 1969, p. 17. On Kenyatta, Lord Howick continued to hold him responsible for the revolt, and had wanted to write a book telling "the truth about the early fifties, according to the way I saw it, which is a rather unpopular truth." He wanted to wait "until Jomo is dead," to write the book. He reckoned that "relations between Britain and Kenya are very good and I don't want to publish something that would damage those relations." Further, Baring still held that he thought Kenyatta "was a double man." GRE/I/48/49, Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Baring Papers). Interview with Evelyn Baring for the Oxford Colonial Records Project; interviewed by M.D. McWilliam, November 19, 1969, p. 28. Baring died in March 1973, before Kenyatta who died in August 1978. He never, therefore, wrote the book on Kenyatta and Mau Mau.

[37]Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, vKenyatta, p. 4.

[38]MacDonald, *Titans and Others,* p. 247.

entrusted with the responsibility of leading Kenya at this time. "I did not think anyone else available would be as good."[39] Kenyatta's contributions to the constitutional talks, and then MacDonald's own detailed observations, provided evidence of a nationalist politician who was neither an implacable radical nor a Communist. MacDonald, it needs to be recalled, was the only British governor of Kenya who had ever had extended and confidential discussions with Kenyatta. He could thus reasonably claim that he knew Kenyatta and saw the essence of the man; and that what he saw was a gratifying and pleasant surprise for British interests in Kenya. It is therefore fair to argue that MacDonald would most certainly agree with the conclusion that, "Kenyatta was probably the most misunderstood nationalist leader in the history of British Africa."[40]

Other reasons that led MacDonald to "bet heavily on Kenyatta" had to do with his position of authority among the Kikuyu. All available evidence meticulously gathered by the colonial security forces, affirmed that the Kikuyu were overwhelmingly loyal to Kenyatta. Thus, MacDonald saw Kenyatta's political value to independent Kenya on two levels: as an ethnic leader and as a national leader. "He was the political chief of the largest, ablest, and most dynamic tribe in Kenya: the Kikuyu." But the Kikuyu, MacDonald wrote, had the "typically human mixture of good and less good qualities." They were therefore most capable of "either bringing real benefits or causing grave mischief to the new nation, according to its mood when Independence was attained."[41] With Kenyatta as the leader of the country, this would diminish the prospects of political and social unrest among the Kikuyu after the attainment of *Uhuru*. Having made this determination MacDonald had two objectives to achieve: first, to repackage and then reintroduce Kenyatta to the British Government; second, to justify why it was in Kenya's interest not to exclude the Kikuyu from power in the post-colonial period. "Hitherto, the authorities in London had taken the opposite view. They not only suspected Kenyatta of increasing feebleness, but also of the Kikuyu as a whole of innate viciousness (as expressed in the Mau Mau episode), which would make an unrestricted KANU Administration very

[39] MacDonald, *Titans and Others*, p. 248.

[40] Hyam, *Britain's Declining Empire*, p. 190.

[41] MacDonald, *Titans and Others*, p. 248.

undesirable from the point of view both of friendly relations between Britain and Kenya, and of reasonably peaceful government in Kenya itself."[42]

For MacDonald's formula for Kenya to work, Kenyatta's party, the KANU, had to score a convincing victory in the elections scheduled for May 1963. Here, MacDonald was confronted with severe problems of official interference in Kenya's nationalist politics. The colonial administration was still very much opposed to Kenyatta and the KANU assuming undiminished power in Kenya. When MacDonald arrived in Kenya as Governor, he found that "the policy of the Colonial Administration was to try to arrange that the general election due to take place later in the year should result in a deadlock between the KADU and the KANU parties, who were to be the principal opponents in the contest." What was the explanation for such a posture that, in effect, undermined the intent and spirit of democracy in the country? Why try and manipulate the outcome of such an important election? "The British officials in the Government," MacDonald discovered, "were averse to KANU gaining a clear majority of members in the new Parliament because it was dominated by Mr. Kenyatta and the Kikuyu tribe, with support from the Luo people and some minor tribes like the Kisii. They feared that such a result would give dangerous power to the Kikuyu, who are not only the most numerous tribe in quantity, but also the ablest in Kenya, and some of whose leaders were responsible for the diabolical excesses of the Mau Mau uprising."[43]

British advisers to MacDonald initially proposed two contrasting strategies whose ultimate end was to deny outright victory to the KANU. There were those who wanted the colonial administration to "use its influence to ensure that the KADU gained a majority at the polls." And there were those advisers who wanted it arranged so that "neither KADU nor KANU gained a majority, but that KADU won the largest number of seats, KANU secured fewer and the African People's Party (APP), a breakaway Kamba group formed by their most unreliable tribal leader, Mr. Paul Ngei, should snatch enough seats to hold the balance between them in parliament." It was in pursuit of this scenario that

[42] MacDonald, *Titans and Others*, p. 248.

[43] Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers MAC 71/8/8, the Political Situation in Kenya—I. The Recent Past, p. 1.

the colonial administration was "secretly and discreetly" using British resources to aid the KADU, "in the hope that the leader of the KADU, Mr. Ronald Ngala, could then become the Prime Minister of a coalition Government in which the Kikuyu would be subservient to other tribes."[44] MacDonald strongly disagreed with both alternatives.

The political reality was that "if there were a free vote throughout the country Mr. Kenyatta and the KANU Party would win a clear majority of seats, with the KADU and AP parties forming a minority."[45] MacDonald chose to support this outcome, arguing that it "would be in the best interests of Kenya." Why so? In his long, confidential, explanatory note to the Colonial Office, MacDonald highlighted the crucial value of Kenyatta to the peaceful transfer of power in Kenya. "In my judgement," he outlined his argument, "it was desirable that Mr. Kenyatta and the Kikuyu should wield the major power, for it seemed to me that the only chance of peaceful progress coming to independent Kenya was if the Kikuyu were free to assert their superior qualities in government, curbed to some extent as well as aided by representatives of other, less capable tribes."[46]

MacDonald therefore advocated for and, in fact, endorsed and advanced, what can only be described as the tribal domination of the Kikuyu in post-colonial Kenya. He feared that if the KANU were defeated, thereby forcing the Kikuyu into "Opposition, or relegated to a secondary position in a coalition Government under a non-Kikuyu leader, they would feel thwarted and cheated." Such a development would produce undesirable outcomes for Kenya since "wiser leaders would lose influence to more irresponsible men, with the result that power in the tribe might quickly return to the more vicious characters

[44]Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 71/8/8, the Political Situation in Kenya—I. The Recent Past, p. 2.

[45]Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 71/8/8, the Political Situation in Kenya—I. The Recent Past, p. 2.

[46]Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers MAC 71/8/8. The Political Situation in Kenya—I. The Recent Past, p. 2. It is important to mention that Michael Blundell came to share the essence of the MacDonald formula. Toward the end of his life, in his last book, Blundell stated that any government in Kenya, "must attempt to meet the wishes of the Gikuyu people to play a large part in the political destiny of their country and at the same time convince them that other peoples also have a major right to share this destiny with them." See Blundell, *A Love Affair With The Sun*, p. 180.

who were only too present in the KANU Party ranks."[47] An unmistakable triumph by the Kikuyu-dominated KANU at the polls would enable the party "to exercise its authority without restraint." Also, this political triumph would ensure that the Kikuyu people felt no sense of frustration in the post-colonial society. In this way, MacDonald concluded, "the qualities of ability and wisdom in the Kikuyus' make-up would grow at the expense of their more irresponsible traits."[48]

A coalition government formed between the KADU and the KANU and other smaller parties, did not appeal to MacDonald at all. He did not see any short-term or long-term political value in such an undertaking. He was convinced that "a coalition Government of KADU and KANU representatives would be still born. Quarrels between their rival leaders would arise; the Cabinet would be crippled by constant arguments and indecision; and the result would be ineptness, inefficiency and inaction."[49] He had also come to determine that the KADU party had "fewer good brains than existed in KANU." The good brains in the KADU belonged to "some of the European politicians … who would in any case be politically eliminated in the new Kenya." Thus, as MacDonald saw it, the KADU was not equipped to provide an independent Kenya with a "dynamic, constructive leadership and government." These essential qualities, which Kenya desperately needed, he concluded "could not come from a coalition presided over by Mr. Ngala, the rather second-rate KADU leader."[50]

The MacDonald formula marked the tactical abandonment of the KADU as the party most preferred by the colonial administration and even the Colonial Office. It had become very clear to MacDonald that British interests, "were best served by supporting" the KANU, whose electoral victory was almost impossible to stop at this time.

The new policy on elections was promulgated prior to the May 1963 elections. It stipulated that the "Administration in Nairobi … should not seek to influence the general election in favour of either a greater

[47] Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers MAC 71/8/8, the Political Situation in Kenya—I. The Recent Past, p. 2.

[48] MacDonald, *Titans and Others*, p. 248.

[49] Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 71/8/8, the Political Situation in Kenya—I. The Recent Past, p. 2.

[50] Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 71/8/8, the Political Situation in Kenya—I. The Recent Past, p. 2.

or a lesser KADU victory." But this did not mark the end of all official interference in nationalist politics or in the political campaigns. Now MacDonald "ordered that in so far as we the British officers could properly and judiciously affect events we should assist in ensuring that the KANU majority should be a small working one, so that the party's 'moderate' leaders would have a good chance of enforcing discipline and unity in the party, and of keeping the more extreme elements among their followers in their place as a minority."[51]

At the conclusion of the constitutional talks, MacDonald decided that it was in the interests of Britain and the nationalist leaders he had come to identify as responsible and dependable, to considerably shorten the transition period to *Uhuru*. The timetable that was on the books in early 1963 was as follows: "General Election should be held in the autumn of 1963, internal self-government should follow immediately, this interim stage would continue for another year, and—if local affairs then appeared to be proceeding peacefully—Independence should be granted by the end of 1964."[52] He found this timetable too long and also fraught with serious and worrisome political risks. Why the preference for a shorter transition period?

A lengthy transition period worried MacDonald since this was most likely to provide opportunities for the radicalization of the nationalist movement. The real fear was that unsettling radicalism could grow among the lower ranks in the nationalist movement if they had adequate time to discuss the provisions of the Constitution just endorsed by the key leaders. "The longer Independence was delayed," MacDonald believed, "the greater would grow the risk of impatience among Nationalists reaching a point where their leaders must either become more extremist or else surrender power to less responsible rivals."[53] A radicalized mass movement could reject or call for major revisions in the just agreed-upon Constitution, thus creating an awkward, if not potentially explosive, political situation. Independence had to come when the leaders, identified by MacDonald as responsible, still had prestige and commanded the respect of the masses in the country. MacDonald

[51] Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers MAC 71/8/8, the Political Situation in Kenya—I. The Recent Past, p. 3.

[52] MacDonald, *Titans and Others*, p. 249.

[53] MacDonald, *Titans and Others*, p. 249.

therefore moved quickly and suggested a new timetable to Duncan Sandys, the Colonial Secretary, "who would be held responsible, and severely criticised in Britain if this perhaps rash hastening proved a mistake." Sandys agreed to support the new timetable and flew to Nairobi to take the measure of the Kenyan politicians whom MacDonald had been dealing with for several months. This trip also provided Sandys with an opportunity to meet and hold discussions with Kenyatta. This was important, since the MacDonald formula had essentially overturned long-standing views and even policies on Kenyatta at the Colonial Office.

At the end of his visit Sandys was very optimistic about Kenya's future. "I leave Kenya with greater confidence than I had when I arrived" he stated, "… this is mainly because of my experiences during the talks" with the Council of Ministers.[54] He also announced the new timetable, which MacDonald had proposed: "Election would be held in May 1963, internal self-government on June 1st, and Independence attained during December the same year."[55] This timetable suited British and settler interests in Kenya. It averted any immediate political risks that could have arisen from a prolonged national examination of the details of the new Constitution. Nonetheless, MacDonald and the British Government "won the gratitude of Kenya's leaders in all parties," and the new timetable, "distinctly strengthened the influence of the more responsible Nationalist leaders on both sides."[56]

The KANU launched its electoral campaign by publishing its manifesto in April 1963. The manifesto was notable for its moderation in language and objectives. "The whole basis of this manifesto," Mboya stated, "is that people are going to work, and work hard." Kenyatta pointed out that although the document "did not go into detail on every subject," it nonetheless "aimed to give an outline of KANU's political

[54] *East African Standard*, March 9, 1963, p. 1.

[55] MacDonald, *Titans and Others,* p. 249. Outside Kenya there had been a steady appeal by Nyerere and Obote to the British Government to grant *Uhuru* to Kenya as soon as possible. In December 1962, for example, Obote brought up the matter of Kenya's Independence at a meeting of Heads of Government of the East African Common Services Organization in Dar-es-Salaam. "Mr. Obote said that he and Mr. Kawawa [Tanganyika] were anxious to get on with economic planning on an East African basis and were impeded by the delay in Kenya's independence." See *East African Standard,* December 7, 1962. p. 1.

[56] Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers MAC 71/8/9, the Political Situation in Kenya—I. The Recent Past. p. 3.

philosophy which would guide it in government." This political philosophy, Kenyatta declared, was "socialism which reflected the African way of life. He rejected the suggestion that an African society would develop into groups of 'haves' and 'have nots' because African custom traditionally countered such development." On this point Mboya added that the published KANU policy "meant that 'the man at the bottom' would be cared for by society and not left out in the cold."[57]

In its editorial the *East African Standard* wrote approvingly of the KANU manifesto, finding it to be "cogently written in direct language which will make an impact on all its readers, whether they be KANU followers or not." However, "politics being what they are in Kenya, regrettably very largely tribal, KANU can be sure of Kikuyu and Luo support. The extent to which this constructive declaration of policy is accepted by others will depend on the success the KANU spokesmen achieve in persuading them of the earnestness of their intentions when it comes to putting promises into practice."[58] The paper also noted with satisfaction that the KANU manifesto provided more than sufficient guarantees to investors. Although the manifesto mentioned that some "degree of public control" may be "considered necessary to ensure the direction of industry, and the public utilities, in the interests of the national economy," there was, however, "no large-scale nationalizations contemplated." In the event of an industry being taken over the KANU government would pay "fair compensation." But, since the new government would have scarce capital at its disposal, the KANU manifesto, according to the *East African Standard*, was virtually saying, "we have better things to do than run around nationalising for the sake of nationalising."[59] Lastly, the paper was very pleased by the fact that the manifesto was not intent on expropriating settler farms in the White Highlands. There was no hint of any "wild threats to eject or dispossess people." The manifesto, the paper concluded, was a "document notable for its moderation and expression of safeguards for fundamental freedoms. Expatriates are given a special welcome if they conform to the national endeavour and character."

[57] *East African Standard,* April 19, 1963. p. 1.

[58] *East African Standard,* April 19, 1963, p. 6.

[59] *East African Standard,* April 19, 1963, p. 6.

It is useful to mention here that the KANU manifesto was hardly a local undertaking. It was, in fact, the outcome of a report sponsored by the newly formed British Ariel Foundation. This was a "discreet rather than secret organization" that received funding from the Foreign Office, City of London, and other private sources. These funds were used to organize "scholarships for young nationalists in Britain and exchange visits between Western and African leaders."[60] Some of the recipients of these scholarships included Kenneth Kaunda (Zambia), Seretse Khama (Botswana), and Joshua Nkomo and Robert Mugabe (Zimbabwe). These individuals rarely suspected that there was any relationship between the Ariel Foundation and the British Government. Nonetheless, during their tour of Britain, "personal dossiers were compiled to assess their leadership potential." Regarding Kenya, the Ariel Foundation "commissioned a report on the country's social and economic potential which was presented to KANU. The author was Arthur Gaitskell, brother of Labour leader Hugh and an experienced colonial administrator. The report was adopted as the basis of KANU's 1963 election manifesto and Mboya was instrumental in arranging its acceptance by the party. Mboya was also involved in the Ariel project to provide scholarships for Zimbabwean nationalists."[61]

The KADU also published its electoral manifesto in April 1963. In his introductory message, Ngala wrote that the party was not intent on promising "a future which our economic situation cannot support, for that would be dishonest." The party envisioned a "raising of the general standard of living of all our people." However, if "this is done by deliberately bleeding the more fortunate of our citizens, as our political opponents advocate, then inevitably our economy will stagnate and no one will benefit."[62] The party was therefore advocating for the maintenance of the *status quo* with very minimal alterations. The rise in the standard of living of the people was seen as "part of the process of history" with minimal intervention from the government.

The manifesto boasted of the party's key victory in ensuring the adoption of *Majimbo* at the Lancaster House Constitution of 1962. "KADU,

[60] Bloch and Fitzgerald, *British Intelligence and Covert Action,* p. 152.

[61] Bloch and Fitzgerald, *British Intelligence and Covert Action,* p. 152. Regarding the KANU manifesto, David Goldsworthy has written that Mboya was "the principal drafter" of this document. See Goldsworthy, *Tom Mboya*, p. 233.

[62] *East African Standard,* April 25, 1963, p. 3.

through unrelenting pressure on Britain and convincing arguments on its political opponents, have provided Kenya in its new constitution with the vehicle necessary to achieve all of our aspirations." The manifesto reiterated the party's central thrust on regional government. "KADU's aim is to achieve nationhood through majimbo. The creation of a national identity if it is to have any meaning, must spring from the willing co-operation of all Kenyan people and not from arbitrary colonial boundaries drawn on the map of Africa. KADU believe that people must feel secure in the control of matters which are vital to them, such as land, education, public service and police, and only when this is achieved (as it has under the new regional Constitution) will there be a willing co-operation in the national interest and emergence of a spirit of national identity."[63]

In its editorial the *East African Standard* was generally supportive of the KADU manifesto. This support was not, as might have been expected, effusive. The paper pointed out that the KADU manifesto had staked a "rightful claim to the credit for having won a regional form of Constitution in Kenya." This constitution envisioned "nationhood through majimbo: unity through the regions working together and with the centre, for common purposes."[64] The paper also wrote approvingly of the manifesto's intent to attract and support foreign investment and capitalism in the country. "Private enterprise is to be encouraged, without fear of nationalization; though some participation by the Government is regarded as essential to influence balanced development in otherwise unattractive areas, and also to ensure that the profit motive does not operate to the detriment of the general good."[65] On other matters the paper noted that the manifesto largely confined "itself to domestic policy, since the party leadership clings to the belief that a voter is far more interested in his own intimate affairs than what goes on in the remote world outside." On the question of land ownership, the manifesto provided a guarantee to land titles and pointed out the "dangers inherent in replacing large land owners who contribute to the national economy through taxation and the employment of labour by subsistence

[63] *East African Standard,* April 25, 1963, p. 3.

[64] *East African Standard,* April 25, 1963, p. 4.

[65] *East African Standard,* April 25, 1963, p. 4.

level peasant settlers." This position clearly demonstrated the continuing influence of the NKP and white settlers on the KADU.

On the eve of the historic election Ngala expressed a fear of a possible coup d'etat by the KANU if the party lost the election. What was the basis for such fear? Because, according to Ngala, the KANU was receiving "'tremendous assistance from outside' to help them win the elections. KANU also intended to get into power and destroy the constitution—an act which would easily bring violence." Further, a large number of students "had been sent to study Communist tactics, so as to prepare for a coup d'etat if the party did not win the election."[66] Kenyatta, on the other hand, chose to provide assurances to white settlers and the general white expatriate community. In a television interview "in front of more than 4,000 supporters" to be broadcast in London, Kenyatta stated that whites were still welcome in Kenya for their skill. "Of course, we will use them. They must work for us, but they will not be our masters."[67] In this same interview Kenyatta reiterated that the aim of the election campaign was not to split Kenya "into tribal groups" but rather to "build a nation composed of all tribes and all races."

On May 27, 1963 the KANU "won a clear majority in the elections for the House of Representatives." This marked the end of the coalition government. Kenyatta would now enter government as the leader of the triumphant party. He pledged that the "new KANU Government … will be guided in its task by the principles of democratic African socialism … The rights of all and their property would be fully protected. There would be no privileges for minorities. Equally, the Government would see that no member of any group underwent discrimination or oppression at the hands of the majority."[68]

As he prepared to become the country's first Prime Minister, Kenyatta issued statements to the press outlining the basis of the policies that the new government would adopt. The new government would "lay the foundations of a society which will be democratic, African and socialist … Kenya would join with other African nations in working out

[66] *East African Standard,* April 18, 1963, p. 5.

[67] *East African Standard,* May 6, 1963, p. 1.

[68] *East African Standard,* May 28, 1963, p. 1. Kenyatta added that, the "KANU Government would work for the removal of racial and tribal animosities and it would look to all leaders, particularly those of political parties, to help in this task."

a society based on the principles of Ujamaa—African socialism, family-hood."[69] These principles of *Ujamaa* would ensure that Kenyans have "decent homes to live in, that they remain healthy and that education lifts them from the bondage of ignorance." This was an amplification of the concept of African socialism, which the KANU had mentioned, without much detail, in its electoral manifesto. "We are determined," Kenyatta continued, "to create conditions under which no person in Kenya goes without a decent roof over his head because he is poor. We intend that no citizen should be condemned to early death or to a life of sickness because he is unable to pay for treatment."[70]

On June 1, 1963, Kenya achieved internal self-government with Kenyatta as Prime Minister. Oginga Odinga joined government for the first time as Minister of Home Affairs. MacDonald continued in his position as Governor. His working relationship with Kenyatta became even closer as the country moved toward *Uhuru* on December 12, 1963 when MacDonald became the first and only British Governor-General. "After several years of terrible birth pangs," MacDonald wrote, "Kenya was born as a hale and hearty infant nation."[71]

By the time Kenya achieved internal self-government and then *Uhuru* in 1963, MacDonald was convinced that his formula for Kenya, with Kenyatta as the leader, was correct and even unavoidable. From 1963 onwards, MacDonald sought to strengthen Kenyatta's political position locally, and internationally, by portraying him as a wise and magnanimous African nationalist friendly to Britain and the West. This was accomplished through a series of both confidential and public displays of support and confidence in Kenyatta's leadership. In a confidential memo to the Colonial Office MacDonald was careful to mention that by the time Kenyatta became Prime Minister in 1963, he "personally felt considerable confidence in his good sense and friendliness."

One of the immediate actions that MacDonald took to help augment Kenyatta's image at this time was to announce "publicly that I would share with him my reserved powers as Governor on questions of

[69] *East African Standard*, May 30, 1963, p. 4.

[70] *East African Standard*, May 30, 1963, p. 4.

[71] Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 71/8/8, the Political Situation in Kenya—I. The Recent Past, p. 3.

Defence, Internal Security and Foreign Affairs."[72] This demonstrated to both the local and the international community that MacDonald trusted Kenyatta and felt comfortable working with him to the extent of sharing responsibilities, even when such an action was not usual or expected. On this and similar matters, MacDonald dealt directly with Sandys at the Colonial Office. His established stature, reputation, and then friendship with Sandys enabled MacDonald to by-pass protocol on many issues regarding Kenya. Many officials at the Colonial Office noted, with some frustration, that the Colonial Secretary had "condoned the action taken by the Governor in delegating responsibility for external affairs and defence to the Prime Minister without prior consultation."[73] MacDonald also conceded to Kenyatta's request to appoint Charles Njonjo as the Attorney General, very soon after the attainment of internal self-government. He informed Sandys that he had gone ahead and approved Njonjo's appointment "since it would, in all circumstances, be quite impossible to refuse the request since this could only make my relations with Kenya Ministers very difficult, and embarrass Webb personally and officially."[74] Webb was the white Attorney General inherited from the ending colonial period.

As soon as he assumed power Kenyatta's sense of confidence and self-assertion, according to MacDonald, underwent an immediate and profound change. "At once his personality grew, seeming to take on additional dimensions, as if it had previously been a bud which now suddenly burst into flower. He became decisive; he became forceful; he became masterful. He showed himself not merely the nominal chief, but the effective leader of the Government. His was the most powerful influence in the Cabinet, proposing, settling, and—just occasionally, when he thought it necessary—imposing policy on major questions. Clearly," MacDonald observed with evident satisfaction, "he possessed,

[72] Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 71/8/32, Kenya: Kenyatta, p. 3.

[73] TNA, CO 822/3114, Appointment of Njonjo as Attorney General.

[74] TNA, CO 822/3114, Appointment of Njonjo as Attorney General. Reaction by some officials at the Colonial Office was not immediately supportive. "We have had no warning of the rather specious reasons given for getting rid of Mr. Webb and substituting Mr. Njonjo, and we consider that there are serious criticisms of the way in which the Governor intends to proceed." Once again, MacDonald's action was supported by the Colonial Secretary.

hitherto half-hidden within himself, a self-confidence, a strength of will, and a mellow wisdom which made him dominate his colleagues of lesser mould—which was saying quite a lot, since among them were several Ministers of considerable experience, ability and character. His new mood did not surprise only comparative strangers to him like myself, but also many of his old friends who had worked closely with him through many years. On separate occasions two of his ablest Ministers said to me with evident surprise, 'We didn't know the old man had it in him'!"[75]

The sum total of Kenyatta, MacDonald reiterated to the British Government, was that he was a great man with "a trait of humility in his nature." He was a man of "mellow wisdom … cool judgment and self-confident authority." Locally, one of his greatest achievements had been the forging of national unity by rising above "inter-tribal jealousies in this tribe-ridden land." Kenyatta's wisdom and "bigness of heart," had enabled him to once again "rise far above tribal prejudices, and to become a super-tribal chieftain of a nation in which those once mutually quarrelsome tribes are co-operating in unity together for the common good. No other man in Kenya," MacDonald emphasized, "could have stimulated that unity, which is a truly titanic achievement."[76]

This unique accomplishment had, however, not been attained at the expense of the Kikuyu. MacDonald continued to regard the Kikuyu as "the most quantitatively numerous as well as the most qualitatively able tribe in the country." While Kenyatta had given "other tribes" what MacDonald called "a fair and impressive share of influence throughout the national Administration," he had nonetheless "ensured that the Kikuyu influence is decisive in the few fields which vitally matter." MacDonald supported this position arguing that it was "right on its merits in present circumstances; all in all Kenyatta has been brilliantly successful in fostering a general tribal harmony."[77]

Another source of Kenyatta's power lay in his oratory "to multitudinous audiences," especially in Swahili and his native Kikuyu language. Although he was not "an effective speaker in Parliament," Kenyatta was

[75]Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 71/8/32, Kenya: Kenyatta, p. 3.

[76]Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 71/8/32, Kenya: Kenyatta, p. 6.

[77]Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 71/8/32, Kenya: Kenyatta, p. 6.

quite effective in speaking to large crowds at public rallies. "His speeches maintain a notably high standard of sound reason, cogent persuasion and public instruction. All that is helped by his handsome, lion-like appearance both on and off a stage."[78]

And what did MacDonald identify as some of Kenyatta's weaknesses? He had an unfortunate tendency to "postpone making decisions which should be urgent, and other times he ignores matters which should receive his attention." This factor could have a negative impact on the running of the government. MacDonald also noted, with some concern, that Kenyatta disliked dealing with paperwork that was inevitable in his official executive position. And so, "although in certain moods he is an avid reader of literary or philosophical books, he dislikes perusing official documents, and is rather neglectful of the 'paper work' which Presidents and Prime Ministers should do." He had an unfortunate tendency to delegate most of this paperwork to "some of his close colleagues." Then there was the worrisome matter of Kenyatta's ignorance of "certain subjects which are of great importance in modern government … such as economic affairs, except in his bucolic comprehension, as an enthusiastic farmer, of agriculture."[79]

MacDonald also thought that Kenyatta was quite capable of what he called "unscrupulous action." In his dealings with him, he had often seen "a mischievous twinkle in his eyes and just occasionally it assumes a glint of wickedness." While, therefore, Kenyatta was not capable of the "brutality and excesses of the Mau Mau" because they "were utterly repugnant to his naturally rather gentle heart," MacDonald still thought that he "would not wholly acquit him of a capacity to perform, however reluctantly, some lesser vicious acts."[80] Was this an unfair assessment of aspects of Kenyatta's character? Was this not doing Kenyatta some injustice? MacDonald defended his conclusions by arguing that "in spite of the remarkable, civilised wisdom and goodness which he himself and several other leaders of newly independent African states have shown in the last few years, we (and they) are not far removed from 'darkest', savage

[78]Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 71/8/32, Kenya: Kenyatta, p. 6.

[79]Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, Kenya: Kenyatta, p. 6. MAC 71/8/32.

[80]Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 71/8/32, Kenya: Kenyatta, p. 6.

Africa. Like all of us, he is a child of his heredity as well as of his environment."[81]

All those interacting with Kenyatta (including the British) needed to bear in mind some contradictory aspects of his character. "Neither as Prime Minister first nor as President afterwards has he put on any superior airs. On the contrary, he retains his unaffected simplicity of habits, usually reduces pomp and ceremony to the essential minimum … He is accessible to all men, both the exalted and the humble—and of those two types he is inclined to prefer the latter." But "at the same time," MacDonald pointed out, Kenyatta "had no silly false modesty, and is far from unaware of his own greatness."[82] However modest he may be at any moment, Kenyatta was always aware of the unique role that he had played in Kenya's nationalist history. This uniqueness, which included participating in Pan African activism, gave him a status that was both national and international. "He knows his unique importance to Kenya, and his unsurpassed prestige throughout Africa as a man of destiny leading his fellow Africans from bondage to freedom." Thus, in Kenyatta, as MacDonald saw it, there existed both humility and "a strong self-pride—even personal vanity." Due to this factor of "personal vanity," MacDonald advised that, "flattery is a weapon that can be used very judiciously in dealings with him."[83]

There is little doubt that MacDonald employed this strategy of flattery in his personal interactions with Kenyatta, including personal and private correspondence. In the many personal letters he wrote to Kenyatta he frequently mentioned his greatness, strength of character, and wisdom. On August 21, 1963 MacDonald wrote a letter to Kenyatta after visiting him in his new office as Prime Minister. He sent him a set of books with an accompanying note that stated, "As the books themselves declare on their fly leaves, they come with my admiration and affection." In October 1963 MacDonald wrote to Kenyatta to thank him for sending him the new Independence Tie. "I am delighted," he wrote,

[81] Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 71/8/32, Kenya: Kenyatta, p. 6.

[82] Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 71/8/32, Kenya: Kenyatta, p. 5.

[83] Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 71/8/32, Kenya: Kenyatta, p. 5.

"and proud to have it, especially from you."[84] While still Governor, MacDonald invited Kenyatta to several garden parties and informal dinners at Government House (soon to be State House), to meet with local and visiting dignitaries. One such visitor was Lady Jackson (perhaps better known as Barbara Ward). MacDonald considered Lady Jackson to be "a first-class English economist." He wanted Kenyatta to meet with her to discuss economic issues, especially since she was "a person of outstanding ability and influence." She wrote for *The Economist*, "which is of course read by intelligent people all around the world, and she also contributes to various other important publications. She promises to write a number of articles which will, I am sure, be of real help to Independent Kenya."[85] MacDonald reminded Kenyatta that in an earlier meeting with Lady Jackson, she had been quite impressed with him and the policies of his new government.

In March 1964 Sandys again visited Kenya and MacDonald hosted a party for dignitaries in his honor at Government House. He asked Kenyatta to be a joint host to the party and therefore participate in the greeting of the invited guests. MacDonald suggested to Kenyatta that "you, Duncan Sandys and I should stand at the entrance to the ball room, and receive all the guests as they arrive. You will greet them first, then Mr. Sandys and then me—a friendly trinity."[86]

When Kenyatta attended the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference in London in July 1964 and was attacked by right-wing zealots, MacDonald wrote him a special note of support. "Like every one else, I read with anger about the attack on you by a Fascist lunatic in London, and with delight of your successful defence against him. There was a superb photograph in the *Daily Nation* a day or two later of you standing four square at your car door rebutting the assault. At first," MacDonald gushed, "I thought it might be a picture of the

[84]Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 44/1/1-78, Private Correspondence with Kenyatta.

[85]Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 44/1/1-78, Private Correspondence with Kenyatta.

[86]Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 44/1/1-78, Private Correspondence with Kenyatta.

Rock of Gibraltar, but then I saw it was Mount Kenyatta defying a little hurricane!"[87]

On November 4, 1964 Kenyatta wrote to MacDonald requesting him to write a Foreword to his new book, a collection of speeches aimed to coincide with Kenya becoming a republic in 1964. MacDonald agreed and on November 9, 1964 sent a draft of the Foreword to Kenyatta for comments/input. In the Foreword MacDonald again drew attention to Kenyatta's unique contribution to the new Kenya nation, as "responsible for making the seemingly impossible become possible." Without his wise and strong leadership, the Ministers and other political officials in Kenya "might easily have fallen apart in fratricidal inter-tribal, inter-racial or inter-class bickerings, with disastrous results for the nation."[88] MacDonald also touched on one of the major thrusts in Kenyatta's speeches and policy formulation in post-colonial Kenya: forget the past. In June 1963 he told Kenyans that he wanted them to "forget the past … to forget the differences of the past and work together to build a new nation." Thus, where "there had been racial hatred it must be ended. Where there had been tribal animosity it would have to be finished."[89]

In his Foreword MacDonald picked up on this theme of forgetting the past. He thought that this reflected "one of Kenyatta's fine qualities: his capacity to view the past as something that is finished—the lessons of which should never be forgotten, but which otherwise should be dismissed to its proper place in history, whilst everyone turns to the new, challenging problems of the present and the future."[90] Looking back was something that MacDonald discouraged for Kenya and was clearly very pleased with Kenyatta's intent to pivot the country more toward the future than the past. This position contained within it a definite political strategy that, if implemented, would work in favor of British interests in Kenya. To re-examine the past, MacDonald wrote, would "prejudice Kenya's future by promoting a wrong, backward looking instead of

[87] Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 44/1/1-78, Private Correspondence with Kenyatta. For media coverage of this incident see, for example, *The Times*. London. July 16, 17, 1964, p. 12 and p. 9, respectively.

[88] Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 44/1/1-78, Private Correspondence with Kenyatta.

[89] *East African Standard*, June 24, 1963, p. 1.

[90] Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 44/1/1-78, Private Correspondence with Kenyatta.

forward looking mood in the masses of" Kenyatta's "African followers, by recalling and encouraging of inter-tribal differences of opinion, and by arousing feelings of insecurity among the European and Asian peoples whose cooperation would be essential."[91] Forgetting the past easily made it possible for imperialism, in all its guises, to escape any meaningful scrutiny.

MacDonald's charm offensive went beyond publicly demonstrating his "trust in Kenyatta's statesman like ability" and stimulating "his own self-confidence as well as his national prestige." It also included Cabinet Ministers, local dignitaries, and then African peasants and workers across the country. He was determined "to maintain close confidential co-operation between myself and Kenyans in all matters of vital importance." He employed his legendary informality to reach out to ordinary people in ways that no other governor had done before. Many of the governors had been remote and regal and, in keeping with imperial tradition, had not interacted with the colonized population. Against this background MacDonald's gestures were a welcome departure from established imperial protocol. He undertook several official tours across the country during which he was invariably pictured happy and smiling in close contact with the workers and peasants who had come out to greet him.

His first official tour was to Nyanza Province. Accompanied by his wife Audrey, he called on the African Mayor of Kisumu, Mathew Ondiek.[92] In one of his tours to Central province "he visited a Kikuyu settlement scheme in Wanjohi-Kipipiri. He had worn a short sleeved shirt with a design of banana bunches, and he borrowed a hoe and hacked at the soil, then offered to swap jobs with the farmer."[93] To be sure, this was a minor event in the history of British colonialism in Kenya. Yet, it would be wrong to discount its symbolic value—at the time—and the good will that it generated toward MacDonald as governor.

It is, however, toward the new crop of African politicians that MacDonald devoted most of his attention. He did this through interpersonal relations; dinners, introductions, appropriate letters sent

[91] Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 44/1/1-78, Private Correspondence with Kenyatta.

[92] *East African Standard*, January 14, 1963, p. 5.

[93] Sanger, *Malcolm MacDonald*, p. 7.

to acknowledge a major event in the social life of the politician, compliments for tasks undertaken and completed, and so on. He wanted to have a personal connection to the individual and this was certainly reflected in the letters that he wrote. When Ngala Mwendwa (Minister of Labour and Social Services) lost his father, MacDonald wrote to express his condolences and to acknowledge the father's contributions to Kenyan society. "Your father was a remarkably fine man with a great record of service to Kenya and its people … One of his remarkable achievements was the production of three very distinguished sons. So his name and fame will be maintained in various ways and the family's notable constructive contribution to Kenya's progress will continue."[94] He responded in a similar manner when Odinga's brother died. He wrote to Odinga saying that he "was very sorry indeed to hear of the death of your brother. You and your relations must feel very aggrieved. Please pass my condolences to them all."

MacDonald also invited several politicians to Government House or elsewhere for dinner or some other festive occasion. On June 24, 1964 he invited Mboya and his wife to the races at Nairobi Jockey Club. "If you and Pam would like to come then, I hope you will join the party in my box. The others whom I am inviting are the Murumbis, the Gichurus and Charles Njonjo."[95] A similar invitation was extended to Odinga on May 18, 1964 when MacDonald very much wanted "to hear about your experiences in Russia and China." Odinga was invited "to come either for tea or for a drink." When MacDonald visited the prison industries, which fell under Odinga's portofolio at the time, he wrote him to "congratulate you and your advisers on the admirable work being done in these creative ways among the prisoners."[96] Odinga received many invitations from MacDonald to meet with a wide array of expatriate interest groups in the country, including white farmers. On November 6, 1964 Odinga was invited to meet with "some of the leading European businessmen" in the country who wanted to meet and talk with him "in an

[94]Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 44/8/1-25, Personal Correspondence. MacDonald sent a similar letter to each of Ngala Mwendwa's two brothers.

[95]Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 44/6/1-32, Personal Correspondence.

[96]Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 44/9/9, Personal Correspondence.

informal atmosphere. They have no particular points that they wish to put to you, but would like the opportunity to get to know you personally better. So if you were able to come and lunch with me one day, I would invite eight or nine of them to join us … If you would like to bring two or three of your colleagues, they would be very welcome."[97] Odinga was reminded that he had previously stated that he "would readily consider this idea."

Many Ministers or prominent individuals covered in the press on account of their accomplishments also received a letter of congratulation from MacDonald. On August 11, 1964 he wrote to Mboya to congratulate him for having delivered a very good and informative speech at Makerere University in Uganda. "It is a brilliant speech, and a masterly survey of the Kenya and other African Government's attitude to international affairs. And of course it contains a lot of very high wisdom in its comments on those affairs. I really think the speech is a classic."[98]

On several occasions MacDonald wrote letters of introduction on behalf of Kenya Ministers or politicians to prominent individuals in the West. Due to his long diplomatic and colonial service in many parts of the world, he knew many individuals who held very prominent positions in government or business in different countries. In each of these letters MacDonald never failed to also touch on Kenyatta's wise and steady leadership. On February 19, 1964 he wrote to Lester Pearson, the Prime Minister of Canada, to introduce Bruce McKenzie and appeal for generous aid to Kenya. "Above all," he wrote, "Jomo Kenyatta is a truly great man, with much sound wisdom and with a magnificent power of leadership." Although Kenyatta's government was "strictly 'non-aligned' in international affairs, he and the government feel nothing but friendship for Britain, the USA, Canada and their Western allies, just as they are perfectly ready also to have good diplomatic relations with Russia and other members of the Communist world." The exception was the People's Republic of China, "because of suspected Chinese efforts at interference in East Africa's internal affairs."

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[97] Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 44/9/9, Personal Correspondence.

[98] Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 44/6/1-32, Private Correspondence. Mboya's speech was delivered on August 10, 1964.

MacDonald informed the Prime Minister of Canada that, in Kenya, Kenyatta was "the dominant figure" although he worked very well with a team of "good Ministers, many of whom have considerable ability." Why aid to Kenya at this point? Because "if the present Kenya Government is sustained … it can overcome the serious problems of unemployment, etc., which at present afflict this new young nation. And if things go well in Kenya", MacDonald believed, "that should have an excellent influence throughout most of East Africa as well as further afield."[99] The value of any aid to Kenya at this time would, as he put it, "be politically worth far more than its weight in gold."

Less publicized, yet equally integral to the success of MacDonald's charm offensive, was the crucial role that he played in quietly promoting and then facilitating the reconciliation of Kenyatta with some individual whites and with a variety of white special interest groups in the country on the eve of *Uhuru*. Included here was Kenyatta's reconciliation with L.S.B. Leakey, the Kenya-born, world famous anthropologist and archeologist. Leakey and Kenyatta had known each other since the 1920 s when Leakey's father, a missionary "at a Scottish mission not far from Kabete," had actively tried to dissuade Kenyatta from making his first trip to Britain in 1929.[100] Like his father, Leakey "disliked Kenyatta's political leanings and considered him a trouble maker." While in the UK at the same time as Kenyatta, "he heard that Kenyatta was giving a seminar on Kikuyu custom of female circumcision at the London School of Economics," and immediately "decided to attend."[101] He then proceeded to dispute Kenyatta's interpretation of aspects of Kikuyu tradition, especially the female circumcision. At one point, this degenerated into a shouting match in the Kikuyu language in front of Kenyatta's fellow graduate students in Malinowski's seminar.[102]

During the Mau Mau peasant revolt Leakey's dislike for Kenyatta was evident in the roles that he played in opposition to radical nationalism, and particularly against this peasant-based revolt. He was a paid officer

[99] Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 44/6/1-32, Private Correspondence.

[100] Virginia Morell, *Ancestral Passions: The Leakey Family and the Quest for Humankind's Beginnings* (New York, NY: Simon Schuster, 1995), p. 169.

[101] Morell, *Ancestral Passions,* p. 169.

[102] See Murray-Brown, *Kenyatta,* p. 192. Murray-Brown adds that "Like his father, L.S.B. Leakey regarded Kenyatta's potential influence on the tribe as mischievous."

in the colony's Special Branch; "the colony's equivalent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation in the USA." During colonial rule, however, this unit was mostly concerned with spying on African political movements and initiatives. In this role, Leakey kept "in touch with his Kikuyu informants … interrogated Mau Mau suspects, translated their oaths and special hymns, broadcast propaganda to the tribe, and initiated a counter-oathing ceremony."[103] He played an even more public role on behalf of the colonial government in its now discredited case against Kenyatta for "managing the Mau Mau."

Leakey was retained by the colonial government as the court interpreter at Kenyatta's trial at Kapenguria, on account of his knowledge of the Kikuyu language and customs. But it soon became evident that he was not a neutral interpreter, that he was in fact "an integral part of the prosecution's team." After heated objections from Denis Pritt, Kenyatta's British attorney, Leakey withdrew from the case as an official interpreter. However he remained part of the prosecution's team at Kapenguria translating "KAU documents, political song books, and letters seized at Kenyatta's home after arrest." The government "hoped that somewhere in these" documents Leakey would "find positive proof of Kenyatta's ties to Mau Mau, but," he "succeeded only in turning up vague references."[104] He also wrote a number of books in which he not only denounced the Mau Mau, but also "linked Kenyatta to Mau Mau."[105]

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[103] Morell, *Ancestral Passions*, p. 166.

[104] Morell, *Ancestral Passions,* p. 170.

[105] Morell, *Ancestral Passions,* p. 168. Leakey's books on the Mau Mau include: *Mau Mau and the Kikuyu* (London: Methuen & Co., 1952), and *Defeating Mau Mau* (London: Methuen & Co. 1954). In *Defeating Mau Mau* Leakey argued that "the just and genuine land grievances of the Kikuyu were insufficient to stir up the degree of anger against the white man that the Mau Mau wished to engender. It, therefore, became necessary to falsisfy history for the benefit of the growing generations and tell the youth of the tribe that other land—which had never been in Kikuyu possession and which was now in European ownership—was also land that had once been Kikuyu property and had been 'stolen' from them … We know only too well, from Nazi Germany", he continued, "how a lie, repeated often enough, finally becomes accepted as truth. This is what indeed happened and by 1950 there were thousands of the younger generation of Kikuyu who had come to believe—absolutely—that the greater part of the 'White Highlands', the land in occupation by Europeans in Kenya, had formerly been Kikuyuland," p. 23.

In the closing days of colonial rule, Leakey was rightly worried as to his place in Kenyatta's Kenya. What would happen to him? How would Kenyatta react to a man long regarded as his "old opponent?" And if Kenyatta's reaction were negative or even hostile, what would become of Leakey's extensive archeological work in Kenya? It was therefore not surprising that Leakey sought MacDonald's assistance. MacDonald spoke to Kenyatta about this matter and arranged for a lunch meeting at Government House. The meeting was a resounding success for Leakey. Kenyatta expressed his admiration for Leakey's work on human origins, and gave him "the warmest possible greeting." The two of them "broke out in conversation in Kikuyu, laughing together with uninhibited camaraderie." MacDonald would later remark that he had "never attended a more interesting, scholarly and cordial lunch party."[106]

Throughout his tenure as Governor, MacDonald cultivated warm relationships with several white settlers, including some of their leaders. To be sure, some of the more incorrigible racists resented the fact that he had come to Kenya to bring the empire to an end and hand over power to Africans, and especially to Kenyatta. A few of them were disturbed by his closeness to Christina Locke, "his great Chinese friend and expert photographer," from his days in South East Asia, "who toured the game parks with him … They gossiped that every time Audrey MacDonald flew off to visit her family in Canada, Christina Locke flew in."[107] Still, it was his quiet close relationships with some of these white settlers that became instrumental in enabling him to lay the colonial enterprise in Kenya to rest with such a lack of rancor,[108] contrary to what had been feared for so long in both London and Nairobi. The key to this outcome was Kenyatta's reconciliation with the white settlers, which MacDonald carefully facilitated.

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[106] MacDonald, *Titans and Others,* p. 264.

[107] Sanger, *Malcolm MacDonald,* pp. 6–7. Gerard Loughran refers to MacDonald as "a known womanizer," p. 65.

[108] Murray-Brown, *Kenyatta,* p. 310. It is relevant to mention here that Sir Philip Mitchell, who in retirement settled to farm in Kenya, decided to leave the country in November 1963, on the eve of *Uhuru*. He and his wife chose to go to Spain, near Gibraltar. "Sir Philip said he made the decision to go 'because the politicians are determined to make farming impossible in this country'." Lady Mitchell's nephew took over the farm in the White Highlands. See *East African Standard,* November 11, 1963. p. 4.

All attempts by the white settlers to block Kenyatta's ascent to power had, by June 1963, evidently failed when he became the Prime Minister. But they still wielded a lot of economic power in the country; power that had been enhanced by the adoption of the regional constitution. Since the time of Renison as Governor, assurances had repeatedly been given to white settlers by the colonial government and then an array of African politicians, including Kenyatta. But these assurances, sustained and well-meaning, had been unable to erase the insecurity of these white settlers, whose fate was closely monitored in many Western countries. In July 1962 Mboya addressed settlers in Eldoret and urged them to rapidly become Kenyan citizens. In fairly pointed language, which failed to reassure the settlers, he told them that those who were not "prepared to be citizens of Kenya, there will be no room for you here, except as aliens." White settlers wanted much more political reassurance, preferably from Kenyatta himself.

In August 1963 Kenyatta took the initiative and "invited a large audience of British white settlers in Kenya to meet him; and he made a speech to them." It is noteworthy that although Kenyatta had called for the meeting, he went to them; he went to address them in Nakuru, which had long been seen as the center of the White Highlands. MacDonald had been instrumental in the crafting of the now famous speech that Kenyatta delivered to the settlers in Nakuru. "He is thought at least to have contributed to Kenyatta's most memorable speech, which he made to five hundred farmers and families in Nakuru in August 1963."[109] The initial mood at this meeting was understandably tense. Many of these settlers had come to the meeting, as MacDonald reported, "reluctantly, sceptically, and even resentfully." Here was the man whom they hated, feared, resented and had, as a result, "done everything they could to defeat him and destroy his work; and he knew that these very farmers whom he was now addressing had been his bitterest enemies."[110] Kenyatta proceeded to tell these settlers what they wanted to hear the

[109] Sanger, *Malcolm MacDonald*, p. 402. Sanger adds that in this "turning point" speech, in which Kenyatta asked the farmers to forgive and forget—and to stay on in Kenya—there are certainly passages that sound like phrases from Malcolm: "There is no society of angels, whether it is white, brown, or black. We are all human beings, and as such we are bound to make mistakes."

[110] Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 71/8/32, Kenya: Kenyatta, p. 4.

most: that there would be no retaliation against them, and certainly there would be no seizure of their lands.

Regarding his imprisonment and suffering in detention, which almost all of the assembled setters had heartily supported, Kenyatta told them that there was no reason for them to be worried. "Let me tell you Jomo Kenyatta has no intention of retaliation or looking backwards. We are going to forget the past and look forward to the future." As for the rest of the complicated past, riddled with animosity and hatred, Kenyatta told the settlers that, "there is no society of angels, whether it is white, brown or black. We are all human beings and as such we are bound to make mistakes. If I have done a mistake to you, it is for you to forgive me; and if you have done something wrong to me, it is for me to forgive you. The Africans cannot say the Europeans have done all the wrong … You have something to forget just as I have. Many of you are just as Kenyan as myself."[111] It is in this speech that Kenyatta rendered an apology to the settlers for his prior political activities. Neither Baring nor Renison had been able to extract this apology from him. It is worth noting that no settler leader stood up to apologize to Kenyatta for past unrelenting hostility toward him and African nationalism. Kenyatta's speech categorically stated that blame for the past was a shared responsibility. The historical meaning of this position was not clarified at this meeting.

Kenyatta received a lengthy standing ovation from the settlers who went home assured of their secure comfortable place in the new Kenya. He followed this speech by appointing Bruce McKenzie, a local settler politician, as the country's Minister of Agriculture. His prominent position, "served to reassure the white settlers, anxious after the final departure of the Union Jack."[112] As MacDonald saw it, part of the reason for Kenyatta's success in this speech was because he never reminded the settlers, "even in one jubilant sentence" that "they had failed and he was victorious." To do so "would have hurt their feelings." Instead, Kenyatta chose to forgive them. Contained in his call urging that, "both whites and blacks should forgive each other for the 'wrongs' done in the past,"

[111] Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 71/8/32, Excerpts of Kenyatta's speech cited in MacDonald's memo to the Colonial Office: Kenya: Kenyatta, p. 4.

[112] Bloch and Fitzgerald, *British Intelligence and Covert Action,* p. 155. McKenzie also played a major role in formulating the KANU's land distribution policy after *Uhuru*.

was "an implied condemnation of Mau Mau cruelties."[113] MacDonald praised Kenyatta for being "magnanimous in victory." He had, in so doing, displayed a quality rarely found among leaders. "Magnanimity," he wrote, "is perhaps the rarest, and it is certainly one of the finest qualities in statesmanship. Possibly only Gandhi and Nehru in modern times have shown a personal magnanimity the equal of Kenyatta's."[114]

After the settlers had been appeased, there remained the matter of the continued existence of the KADU as an opposition party to Kenyatta and the KANU. Linked to this was the rise to the fore of ideological tensions within the KANU party after 1963. Prior to this period, these ideological tensions and cleavages had been subordinated, with considerable success, to the common objective of achieving *Uhuru*. Although many members of the KANU held Kenyatta in high regard, his government and its policies came under constant and severe criticism from the radical wing of the party. It was this radical wing that MacDonald routinely disparaged. Many of the radicals were KANU Members of Parliament, and their criticisms were voiced in parliament and then in public rallies (*barazas*) across the country. These criticisms centered on: "allocation of resources … and allegations of preferential treatment" of some districts over others; "references to tribal dominance of the Kikuyu over other tribes'; severe disagreements concerning "government's land and settlement policies, the squatter problem, the future of labourers evicted from former European farms, the organization of the Ministry of Settlement, the behaviour of settlement officers, the loans policy which required payment of loans within what was regarded as too short a period."[115] These radical Members of Parliament also urged Kenyatta's government to be more aggressive in its Africanization policy, both in business and manpower in the public sector. They also called on the government to "nationalize public utilities and certain industries, including the East African Power and Lighting Company, the East African Breweries and the Nairobi Bus Services."[116]

[113] MacDonald, *Titans and Others,* p. 266.

[114] MacDonald, *Titans and Others,* p. 257.

[115] Cherry Gertzel, *The Politics of Independent Kenya* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1970), pp. 43–45.

[116] Gertzel, *The Politics of Independent Kenya,* pp. 50–51.

The radical Members of Parliament also criticized Kenyatta's government for being too dependent on the West. The economic structure upheld by the government was evidently "too capitalistic and too dependent on the Western companies to allow Kenya to call herself non-aligned."[117] There were also incisive and potentially damaging criticisms leveled against the government's policy on land ownership and redistribution.

On the question of land, Kaggia emerged as the government's most consistent and fiercest critic. He had outstanding and enviable political credibility having been one of the leaders of Mau Mau's *Muhimu* committee, and then having been jailed and imprisoned with Kenyatta. Kaggia saw himself at this time as a credible and principled advocate of land reform on behalf of ordinary Kenyans, but especially for the landless former Mau Mau guerillas and detainees. Therefore, he and "his associates opposed uncontrolled individual purchase of land in the former scheduled areas, outside the settlement schemes. They did so on two grounds. They argued the need to settle those landless Africans who were too poor to buy land for themselves; and warned of the dangers of the emergence of a new class of African large-scale land owners who simply stepped into former European farmers' shoes. Kaggia suggested that to allow an individual to own large amounts of land while poor Africans were starving was to encourage capitalism at the expense of the latter." These piercing critiques of the economic and social values rapidly being established in the country, "raised apprehensions among other members about the future of private property."[118]

The more conservative KANU Members of Parliament, rallied in defense of the status quo, and all its residual inequities and imperfections. These conservative members, "accepted the legitimacy of individual private ownership on a much larger scale" than the radical members, "and therefore the continued existence of economic inequities between different sections of the community based on property." The expressed hope of the conservative KANU Members of Parliament (and the majority in the Cabinet) was that "these differences would be redressed by Government action to redistribute wealth of the country, for example by taxation." More crucial was the conservatives' endorsement of

[117] Gertzel, *The Politics of Independent Kenya*, p. 52.

[118] Gertzel, *The Politics of Independent Kenya*, p. 48.

capitalism, which "placed a greater emphasis on private enterprise as the basis for economic development."[119]

Persistent and often ferocious criticisms by radical KANU Members of Parliament, notably from 1964 to 1966, constituted a real and viable threat to the survival of Kenyatta's government, especially after some of these members came to be seen as political allies of Odinga. This expanding linkage between Odinga and some radical KANU Members of Parliament had the potential of undoing the MacDonald formula that had brought Kenyatta and the KANU to power. These radicals were voicing the frustrations and increasing disillusionment of the majority of Africans toward government policies. These policies had quickly produced a visible class of very rich Africans whose regrettable habit of excessive conspicuous consumption was fueling resentment and a nascent resistance. Even William Attwood, the US Ambassador to Kenya, who worked so hard for the defeat of the radical members, and especially of Odinga, conceded that poverty of the majority and wealth of the elite was a problem that merited attention. "*Uhuru* had not yet made much difference in the average Kenyan's standard of living. Jobs and land were scarce … In the villages parents built 'self-help' schools with their own hands, only to learn that there were no teachers to staff them."[120]

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[119] Gertzel, *The Politics of Independent Kenya,* p. 53.

[120] William Attwood, *The Reds and the Blacks: A Personal Adventure* (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1967), p. 257. The clearest evidence of excessive conspicuous consumption was the case of Charles Rubia, the new African Mayor of Nairobi who, in 1965, ordered "a new $ 30,380 Rolls Royce plus six $980 motor cycles as an escort." This led to a national outcry, forcing Kenyatta to intervene and announce that "no matter what arguments for the car might have been, the order for it was cancelled immediately. The Rolls Royce episode will not easily be forgotten, however, for it brought frustrations to the surface that had not really been acknowledged before." See *Africa Report* (Washington, DC. May 1966), p. 12. Kenyatta also engaged in very conspicuous consumption and expanded the perks of his office. Murray-Brown notes that, "Kenyatta's photograph appeared in every shop window; his face was on Kenya's new currency; radio broadcasts and newsreels featured his daily activities. A special Presidential film crew accompanied him everywhere. Wherever he drove he would be preceded by police outriders with wailing sirens and limousines filled with bodyguards; other road users had to stop, in the ditch if need be. Special red-beretted paramilitary units under 'General China' and other trusted men provided additional protection. Kenyatta enjoyed it all. He reveled in a collection of bigger and better cars—a Rolls Royce from London's Motor Show, a Lincoln Convertible from American businessmen, a Mercedes 600. Gifts from Asian well-wishers and investments in land and property swelled his personal and family fortune," p. 316.

Two mutually reinforcing strategies emerged within the Kenyatta camp to respond to these unsparing criticisms against the government and, by implication, Kenyatta himself. One strategy, discussed in detail in the next volume, involved the manipulation of the KANU party's rules and regulations, heightened propaganda offensives against the radicals, revisions of the party constitution to exclude the radicals from power, and then, eventually, the silencing of opposition voices in the country throughout the remainder of Kenyatta's reign. The second strategy was the successful bid to collapse the KADU into the KANU under Kenyatta's overall undisputed leadership. And it is here that MacDonald played the role of a master tactician and facilitator with the ultimate aim of enhancing Kenyatta's power and authority.

MacDonald acknowledged that there was what he saw as a worrisome divergence of views and opinions within the KANU party and even in Kenyatta's Cabinet very soon after *Uhuru*. He reported confidentially to the Colonial Office that the principal cause of this trouble within the party and government was Odinga. "The Home Minister, Mr. Oginga Odinga, started to make trouble. He was an almost new character to me since he had been excluded by the British authorities from the previous Government, and so was not a member of the earlier KADU-KANU Council of Ministers over which I had presided as Governor."[121]

Besides ideological matters, Odinga had also expelled from Kenya British police officers and other expatriates whom he believed had "stubbornly avowed open contempt" for the country and its leaders. One such official was Ian Henderson, an Assistant Commissioner of Police who had a notorious record for the role he had played in hunting down Mau Mau guerillas in the forests, and had participated in the interrogation of General China after his capture.[122] According to Odinga there was a ground swell of popular sentiment to have Henderson expelled from Kenya after *Uhuru*. But it was not easy to do, since he was protected by the British Commissioner of Kenya Police. The Commissioner

[121] Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 71/8/8, the Political Situation in Kenya: I. The Recent Past, p. 3.

[122] See Maloba, *Mau Mau and Kenya,* for details, pp. 98–99. Henderson had also been responsible for assembling "African witnesses" against Kenyatta at the Kapenguria trial. In this capacity, he had "schooled witnesses and chose about one hundred to come to Kapenguria." See Bildad Kaggia, *Roots of Freedom* (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1975), p. 131.

had threatened to resign were Henderson deported. The political way out for Kenyatta was to have this notorious police officer deported by Odinga. "Kenyatta asked me to take the matter in hand. I agreed to take responsibility and when the opportunity came I deported Henderson at the same time as we took deportation against two Europeans who were making a practice of anti-African talk in hotels and other public places." This action enraged British expatriates and other Western diplomats who surmised that Odinga had "acted independently of the Prime Minister and the Cabinet."[123]

MacDonald's position on this matter was that this was a clear case of Odinga seeking to publicly embarrass Kenyatta and his government. As far as he knew the expulsions had been undertaken "without prior consultation with Kenyatta or consent of the Cabinet." These expulsions, which MacDonald saw as unjust, had shaken "foreign and Commonwealth confidence in the prospects of Kenya's peaceful friendly progress."

What was particularly disheartening to MacDonald was that these deportations had earned Odinga "vociferous support from the more irresponsible elements in the KANU Party, who responded to both his public emotional appeals and his private financial inducements to them."[124] There was a strong, earnest, and eager radical wing of the KANU party that responded very positively to Odinga. Unchecked, this radical wing could easily take over the KANU, then threaten Kenyatta's hold on power, and the policies so carefully crafted as part of the MacDonald formula.

To avoid this unpleasant possibility MacDonald embarked on an ambitious endeavor aimed at weakening and then supplanting the influence of the radicals within the KANU. "As Governor in internally self-governing Kenya, and afterwards as Governor-General in independent Kenya I therefore used my influence in favour of bringing the KADU leaders into a position of support for Mr. Kenyatta and his more moderate colleagues, as against his extremist colleagues in the Cabinet—having

[123] Odinga, *Not Yet Uhuru*, p. 277.

[124] Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 71/8/8, the Political Situation in Kenya—I. The Recent Past, p. 4.

first told Mr. Kenyatta in confidence that I would like to do this, and been wholeheartedly encouraged by him to act accordingly."[125]

MacDonald had earlier concluded that the collapse of the KADU into the KANU was appropriate for, after all, "there was little or no difference of opinion between the principal KANU and KADU leaders. Such a division of parties based on traditional tribal enmities was not a healthy state of affairs." There was also the matter of what he called "the warrior tribes": the Kalenjin and the Kamba. These groups had the "majority of the spears and bows and arrows," but they were not necessarily loyal to Kenyatta and the KANU in the presence of an opposition party. These groups also dominated in the young army, and "Kalenjin and Kamba officers' or troops' loyalty might be subverted from the national Government to their tribal bosses."

The KADU leaders targeted by MacDonald were: Ngala, Moi, Muliro, and Ole Tipis. He especially urged Ngala and Moi to cooperate with Kenyatta. MacDonald singled out Moi as "far more important because although Mr. Ngala was officially Leader of the Opposition he was a representative of the tiny Giriama clan on the coast, with no significant tribal backing, whereas Mr. arap Moi was the undisputed leader of the warlike Kalenjin, with considerable influence among the Abaluhya, the Masai and the Kamba." MacDonald had also concluded that Moi was "a more selfless and patriotic Kenyan statesman than the somewhat egoistical Mr. Ngala."[126]

The first secret meeting between Kenyatta and Ngala to discuss this matter was convened by MacDonald at Government House soon after June 1963. This meeting produced "some measure of understanding" between Ngala and Kenyatta. MacDonald then served to facilitate Kenyatta's close personal connection with Moi: "I gave him a personal message from Mr. Kenyatta that the Prime Minister would always be ready to meet him and chosen KADU colleagues for friendly, confidential consultations on co-operation in the interests of all the Kenyan tribes together."[127] From this moment, Kenyatta and Moi remained "in regular private touch with each other."

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[125] Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 71/8/8, the Political Situation in Kenya—I. The Recent Past, p. 4.

[126] Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 71/8/8, the Political Situation in Kenya—I. The Recent Past, p. 5.

[127] Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 71/8/8, the Political Situation in Kenya—I. The Recent Past, p. 5.

Odinga was shut out from these intricate and highly secretive plans that would drastically alter the tenor and tone of Kenyan politics. Still, Odinga also campaigned across the country urging the KADU officials to join the KANU in the interests of national unity. "I used my tours to different parts of the country, whilst on administrative business of the Ministry," Odinga later observed, "to sound out the leaders of the different KADU regions on their willingness to join KANU for one-party unity."[128] What Odinga did not know was that he was unwittingly being helpful in implementing a political plan whose expressed purpose was to dislodge him from power and influence in the country.

In these "behind-the-scenes manoeuvres," both MacDonald and Kenyatta were, on several occasions, unhappy with Ngala's vacillation. At some of the talks MacDonald noted that Ngala was "inclined to think that Mr. Kenyatta was getting too old and tired, that the younger and in any case irrepressible Mr. Odinga was making more of the political running and the Opposition leaders should therefore be ready to cast in their lot with Oginga Odinga." On the other hand, Moi was vehemently and consistently opposed to Odinga. "A firm anti-Communist, he was a sharp critic of Mr. Odinga's extremist policies, and of his associations with Communist Powers."

By November 1964, in advance of Kenya becoming a republic in December, "the KADU Opposition was voluntarily dissolved." Ngala remained unconvinced about the wisdom of dissolving the KADU "**until 24 hours** before it was actually achieved. He only capitulated," MacDonald noted, "when his party colleagues presented him with an ultimatum, saying that if he did not cross the floor in Parliament with them on the following day, they would nevertheless cross it without him. He then surrendered, and himself announced the decision as their leader in most friendly terms!"[129] This reluctance to quickly and enthusiastically dissolve the KADU "was partly responsible for his later exclusion from the

[128] Odinga, *Not Yet Uhuru,* p. 283.

[129] Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 71/8/8, the Political Situation in Kenya—I. The Recent past, p. 5. In his statement, later published in the newspapers (see, for example, *East African Standard,* November 11, 1964) p. 1, Ngala talked of dissolving the KADU as a response to the country's wishes. "Kadu has taken this step after very serious consideration as to the need for Kenya approaching the Republican status in peace and under one political leadership. We urge all Kadu members and supporters wherever they are in Kenya, to remain calm, peaceful

Government, for it confirmed Mr. Kenyatta's partial dislike and distrust of him." Ngala was instead appointed as Chairman of the Maize Board.

A new Cabinet was announced by Kenyatta a few days before the Republic was established on December 12, 1964. MacDonald was intimately involved in choosing the members of this new Cabinet. "Mr. Kenyatta, his two closest Kikuyu colleagues (Mr. Gichuru and Mr. Njonjo) and I had in fact been preparing the list of appointments in the new Government for several weeks previously; and the final distribution of offices had been settled a fortnight before it was published. But it remained a secret among us four."[130] Odinga was informed by Kenyatta of his new position as Vice President but without portofolio. It was an elevation but without any significant power or authority. He protested to Kenyatta "that he should either be kept in the Home Ministry or else given some other important Ministry, in addition to becoming Vice President; but Mr. Kenyatta politely yet firmly refused all his suggestions." Moi was without doubt the most prominent former KADU official added to the new Cabinet. He was appointed to the crucial Ministry of Home Affairs, previously held by Odinga.

What was achieved by this "reconstruction of the Cabinet" and the dissolution of the KADU? Both the short-term and long-term effects of these developments led to the strengthening of the power and authority of Kenyatta and his conservative policies at the expense of the radical Members of Parliament and their political agenda. "The dissolution of KADU had the effect of enlarging the Conservative element within the KANU Parliamentary Group. It also stimulated increased rivalry for leadership, especially of the backbench group which the Radicals had up to

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and forget any past hostilities between them and Kanu members. We are joining the Government with no grudge or bitterness against Mzee or any leader in the Government, because we consider the cause of Kenya to be greater than any of our personal gains or losses. This is one of the times that we must be prepared to sacrifice our political dignity for the peace and harmony of Kenya. We are joining forces to build our country and unify our social and economic programmes."

[130]Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 71/8/8, the Political Situation in Kenya—I. The Recent past, p. 5. On December 10, 1964, MacDonald wrote a personal note of congratulation to Odinga. "This note brings you my hearty congratulations on being elevated to the position of Vice President. I wish you great success in that high office." See Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 44/9/9, Private Correspondence.

that moment dominated. As a result, the Conservative element in KANU combined with former KADU Members to oust their Radical rivals from official positions first in the Backbenchers Group and then in the Parliamentary Group as a whole. By the middle of 1965, as the policy debate sharpened its focus, the Conservatives had gained the dominant position within the parliamentary caucus."[131] On this question, Odinga had, as he later readily admitted, "calculated falsely." The incorporation of the KADU into the KANU resulted, in practical terms, in the "dilution of KANU's policy from within."[132] Through this merger the British government was indeed able to achieve its original political objective in Kenya: the establishment of a conservative government friendly to the West.

MacDonald was, as expected, pleased with these new political developments within the KANU party and the government. These changes had "resulted in a considerable strengthening of the position of Mr. Kenyatta and the 'moderates' in the Government, and in a serious weakening of Mr. Odinga."[133] Kenyatta had become both President and Prime Minister, thus thwarting the possibility of Odinga becoming an "executive Prime Minister." Further, the key ministries were now headed by "trustworthy supporters of Kenyatta." These included Gichuru (Finance), Njoroge Mungai (Defence and Internal Security), Kiano (Commerce and Industry) Bruce McKenzie (Agriculture), Mwendwa (Labour), Moi (Home Affairs), and Njonjo (Attorney General). Njonjo's power and authority had been strengthened, "by the transfer of the previous Solicitor-General, Mr. Lutta (an Odinga sympathiser), to another Ministry where he would have no influence on such matters as the upholding (or flouting) of the Constitution."[134]

The list of those ministers now deemed closest to Kenyatta excluded Mboya, "who had earlier been the blue-eyed boy of America and other Western ambitions for Kenya." MacDonald pointed out that Mboya had, over a period of eighteen months, "lost a large amount of influence in Kenyan politics" due to "his personal arrogance." This had made him

[131] Gertzel, *The Politics of Independent Kenya*, p. 54.

[132] Odinga, *Not Yet Uhuru*, p. 283.

[133] Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 71/8/8, the Political Situation in Kenya—The Recent Past, p. 6.

[134] Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 71/8/8, the Political Situation in Kenya—The Recent Past, p. 6.

"unpopular with everyone in general." Also, "his capacity for intrigue had made him distrusted by Mr. Kenyatta in particular." He was nonetheless still "by far the ablest administrator in the Government" and so Kenyatta had appointed him "to an important post in the new Ministry" as a mark of appreciation for "his outstanding brains and youthful energy."[135]

MacDonald considered Moi's promotion to the Cabinet to be of "a significance much wider than his individual appointment." It ensured that "the Kalenjin tribe" would wholeheartedly support Kenyatta and his government. Moi's appointment, plus the elevation of several Abaluhya and Maasai former KADU members to junior Ministers, was expected to win the support of "those tribes for Kenyatta."

Throughout this process, in which he served as a guide and facilitator in the eventual dissolution of the KADU, MacDonald did not see the outcome as an assault on democracy. Rather, he saw this as "a typically African solution to a native African problem." Newly independent African (and some Asian) countries had either succeeded or were in the process of establishing "a one party system of government, either with or without a Parliament." MacDonald now felt that this kind of political system and the government it produced "appeared consistent with the age-old tradition in many East African tribes of government by means of unanimous decisions reached after free-for-all discussions in a popular assembly or 'baraza'." Multiparty democracy, which would later be seen as the signature symbol of democracy in Africa, was, in 1964, deemed unsuitable for Kenya when the desired outcome suited imperial interests. MacDonald's ultimate rationalization was that "perhaps a one-party system could help the Kenyan peoples to move away from an earlier, primitive society bedeviled by inter-tribal rivalries towards the establishment of a modern coherent twentieth century state."[136]

In London MacDonald's services had not gone unnoticed. He received a personal letter from the Prime Minister congratulating him for what was seen as immense success in Kenya. "You have made a great success of your short time in Kenya. December 12 seemed to go

[135] Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 71/8/8, the Political Situation in Kenya—The Recent Past, p. 7.

[136] Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 71/8/8, the Political Situation in Kenya—The Recent Past, p. 4.

off very well. I am glad and relieved."[137] Duncan Sandys also wrote to congratulate him for having organized "most effective and dignified Independence celebrations … I cannot recall having attended ceremonies which were better organized or went off so smoothly." He also told MacDonald that he had been "much impressed by the excellent spirit prevailing everywhere and particularly between the political parties. This happy change," Sandys concluded, was due to MacDonald's efforts, "and everyone realises it."[138]

Toward the end of 1964 Sandys once again turned to MacDonald for another appointment in Kenya, as High Commissioner to replace Sir Geoffrey de Freitas. The initial appointment of de Freitas had been made with the open understanding that he would be High Commissioner to the Federation of East Africa that brought together the unity of Kenya, Uganda, and Tanganyika. By 1964 there did not seem to be the prospect of this political union occurring in the near future (if at all). In the absence of a Federation, de Freitas, who had previously served as a "Labour politician and junior Minister," found himself serving in what he considered as the "diminished role" of ambassador to Kenya.[139] His exit, which was therefore expected, prompted Lord Delamare, a local powerful settler, to appeal directly to Sandys to appoint MacDonald as the new High Commissioner.

In a personal letter to Sandys Lord Delamare reminded him that the success of the High Commissioner was "not only of vital interest to all British people here, but is also of paramount importance so far as British prestige and influence are concerned." Because of these factors he wanted Sandys to appoint MacDonald to the position. What were his unique assets for this position at this time? He was "on the best terms with all communities in this country and, more than that, has established great goodwill between himself and the Prime Minister and his Cabinet. However able a successor was appointed who had no knowledge at first hand of Kenya's problems," Lord Delamare continued, "it would, in my opinion, take him at least six months to understand them and even

[137] Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 43/8/42, Letter from Prime Minister to MacDonald, December 13, 1963.

[138] Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 43/8/45, Letter from Duncan Sandys to MacDonald, December 23, 1963.

[139] Kyle, *The Politics of the Independence of Kenya*, p. 199.

then I doubt if he would have obtained a similar position of respect and authority to that which Malcolm MacDonald undoubtedly enjoys."[140]

Sandys forwarded Lord Delamare's letter to MacDonald and added that the letter in fact echoed "thoughts I have had for some time." He then elaborated on the strategic value of Kenya to Britain at that time. "Our future relations with Kenya," Sandys emphasized, "are the key to our relations with East Africa and perhaps with Africa as a whole. The choice of our High Commissioner is therefore of crucial importance."[141] If MacDonald agreed to the appointment, he was instructed to brief Kenyatta and have him indicate that this action was "acceptable to Kenyans." MacDonald accepted the offer and, as expected, was enthusiastically supported by Kenyatta and many in his Cabinet. Odinga was not consulted.[142]

Kenyatta was pictured with MacDonald in the *East African Standard* "toasting to the future." He lavished MacDonald with praise as a man who had been "a true friend of Kenya. He is a man of great foresight and warm personality. He has given us friendship and in times of strain, support. He understood our problems and his experience has been of great value to us in the work of nation building. He understands and

[140] Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 43/4/1-43, Private Correspondence. Letter of Lord Delamare to Duncan Sandys, September 7, 1964.

[141] Durham, UK, Durham University Archives/Malcolm MacDonald Papers, MAC 43/4/1-43, Private Correspondence. Duncan Sandys' letter to Malcolm MacDonald about appointment to Kenya as High Commissioner, 14 September, 1964. Sandys added that it was "of course self evident that there is nobody in the whole world who could do the job as you could or who would command more respect in both countries."

[142] Oginga Odinga complained that in 1964 "the Cabinet was not its own master. When we came to the Cabinet meetings we were faced with decisions that had been taken outside by a group of the Ministers acting as a caucus, with or without outside advisers—we were never told. A curious example of a decision taken out of cabinet was the occasion when we were all invited to go to the airport to meet the Commonwealth Secretary, Mr. Arthur Bottomley, and there Kenyatta took me aside and said, 'We are accepting MacDonald as High Commissioner' … The decision told me at the airport had clearly been taken in advance." p. 276.

sympathises with men in their struggle against social and economic frustration."[143]

In its editorial the *East African Standard* approved this appointment with enthusiasm. It also noted the unique partnership that had developed between Kenyatta and MacDonald which, although "short in years," was "ripe in achievement … Mr. Kenyatta and his colleagues have learnt, as many others before them did in other countries," the editorial continued, "to put their faith in a man of worldly wisdom who has taken a hand in fashioning history in some of the critical periods of the 20th century, but a man, also, endowed with a spiritual warmth of character."[144]

[143] *East African Standard,* November 3, 1964. p. 1. Also see "Farewell to the Governor General" a speech by Kenyatta contained in *Suffering Without Bitterness.* pp. 249–251. When MacDonald returned to Kenya as the British High Commissioner, Kenyatta sent him fresh cut flowers from his garden. Several Cabinet Ministers praised MacDonald and expressed their delight of having him back in Kenya as British High Commissioner. They included Mboya who said, "I don't think they could have found a better qualified person and I am personally very happy that this means Mr. MacDonald will stay in Kenya and continue to work with us although in a different capacity, but with the same goals and aims of development of our country." See *East African Standard,* November 4, 1964, p. 7. Other Ministers featured are Gichuru, McKenzie and then the General Secretary of Labour, C.K. Lubembe.

[144] *East African Standard,* November 4, 1964, p. 6.

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