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INSURGENCY: A CASE FOR THE KENYA POLICE

James E. Crow

Army War College
Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania

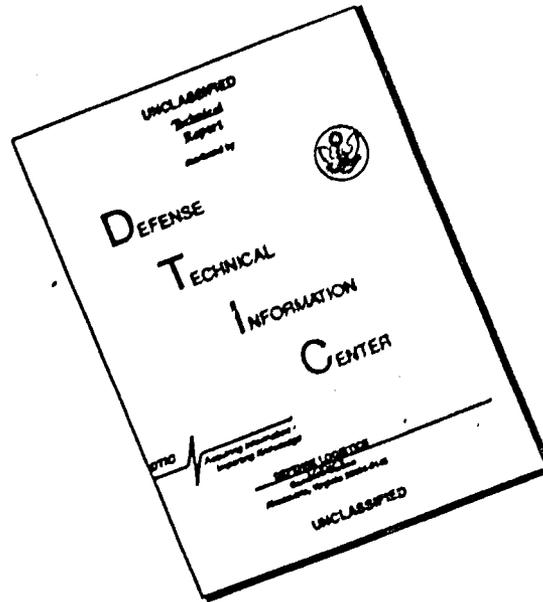
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INSURGENCY
A CASE FOR THE KENYA POLICE
A CASE STUDY

by
Lieutenant Colonel James E. Crow
Infantry

US Army War College
Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania
1 March 1971

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ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: James E. Crow, LTC, Infant.
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This case study traces the history of the Kenya Police and examines the role of police in dealing with internal security. Emphasis is placed on the Mau-Mau insurgency period leading up to the declaration of the emergency in October 1952, to the completion of counterinsurgency operations in January 1960. During the struggle against the Mau-Mau terrorists, the Kenya Police proved themselves not only to be a highly trained, efficient, courageous and ingenious instrument in the restoration and maintenance of law and order but to be the most dynamic and capable force to handle such a counterinsurgency operation.

It is not unnatural for a military force to historically cover its operations; yet, the police have had less publicity and their operations, until recently, have received little study. Therefore, in view of increased interest in internal security and guerrilla warfare, an understanding of the historical counterinsurgency role and capabilities of police justifies such a study of the Kenya Police and the Mau-Mau emergency.

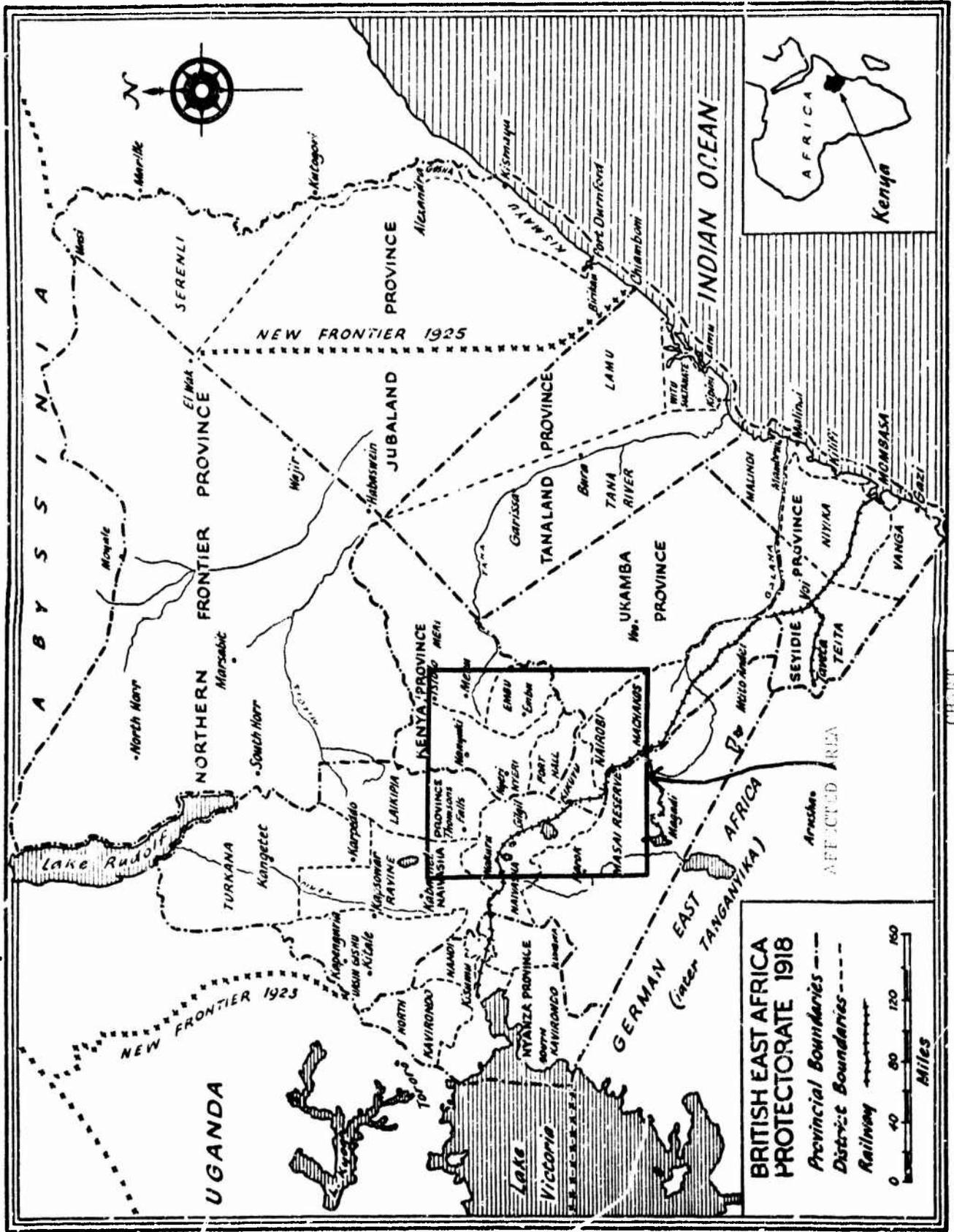
This study is based on unclassified research material, stories and books available in libraries. Since time has seasoned the drama of the Mau-Mau insurrection and both personal and official accounts have been written, classified sources or further personal interviews were considered unnecessary in presenting an accurate account of the period.

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MAPS, CHARTS AND ABBREVIATIONS

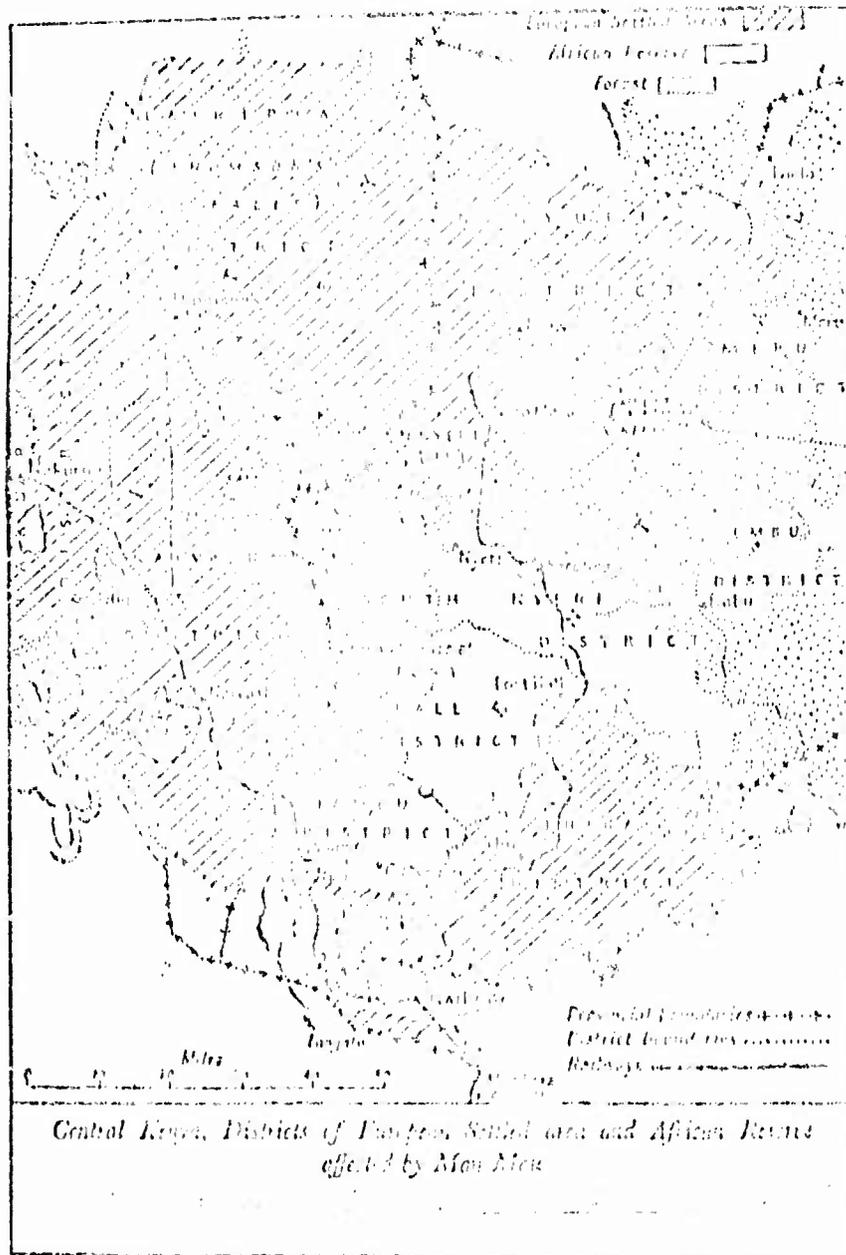
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<u>COMMON ABBREVIATIONS USED</u>	
CID....Criminal Investigation Department	
KAR....King's African Rifles	
KAU....Kenya African Union	
KCA....Kikuyu Central Association	
KPR....Kenya Police Reserve	



**BRITISH EAST AFRICA
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

TERRORISM IS A FRIGHTENING TERM. As an existing condition, it is even more appalling and shocking.¹ . . . Let all law enforcement agencies insure that bombings receive tenacious and vigorous investigation and the guilty are arrested. And equally important, let an aroused citizenry stand firmly in support of law enforcement and give its full cooperation. And finally, let the courts show those who deal in fear and terror by use of the bomb that theirs is a costly folly.²

Violence in its many forms is a very real and personal problem to the nation's police officer, partly because it is so frequently directed against him and partly because of his professional responsibility for maintaining peace and order.³

Common sense alone demands a realistic approach to this crisis of our time. Unbiased consideration must be given to the time-proven crime deterrents of swift detection, prompt prosecution and realistic sentencing. While subscribing wholeheartedly to the humanitarian principles of parole, probation, and related leniency, I suggest the possibility that you might be the next victim of someone's misguided and overindulgent leniency.⁴

These comments were made in 1970-71 by police in America.

While this study will make no attempt to relate the problems in Kenya to America or any other part of the world and will draw

¹J. Edgar Hoover, "Message from the Director," FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin, (December 1970), p. 1.

²Ibid., p. 2.

³Quinn Tamm, "Violence in America, a Law Enforcement Perspective," The Police Chief, (January 1971), p. 34.

⁴J. Edgar Hoover, "The Ultimate Victim," FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin, (January 1971), p. 31.

no comparison conclusions, the reader will see that similar statements were made in Kenya. Violence can become a "fad" which can return a society to the stone age where brute force was supreme. Terror tactics can be used by the frustrated social or economic revolutionist and serve as a cover for the thug, the gangster, and the egotistic power monger. History (to include Kenya) clearly reveals that law, order, and justice exist only when individual liberty is in balance with individual responsibility. The problem faced by a nation suffering from terror and violence, or the threat of such, is when to impose tighter controls. Insurgency can result from uncontrolled violent dissent which often insidiously creeps up on a nation. Although underlying factors (psychological, social, or economic) may give reason for dissent, national growth and progress can be made only when internal security is maintained. For this reason, the police have a primary, if not the primary, role and responsibility in nationbuilding.

This study attempts to examine the roles and responsibility borne by the Kenya Police during the Mau Mau insurrection. The words insurrection, rebellion, disorder, uprising, civil war, and "the emergency" will be used interchangeably in this study. Background sources used for the study fail to agree on just what it was. A report written by a student (a Kenya policeman at an international police academy--his name and paper may not be revealed) refers to the period simply as a "period of increased crime and thuggery."

This study does not make any attempt to evaluate any causes or justifications for the uprising but concerns itself with the problems of recognizing the danger and of bringing it under control. The background of the British Colonial System and the history of the Kenya Police are essential to the understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the police as the emergency began to arise. British colonies, and particularly Kenya, had the advantage of an organized Colonial Police System to provide emphasis and expertism to the local police; yet, the colony supplied the finances. In the case of Kenya, financial support was insufficient to properly man, train, and equip a force large enough and modern enough to cover all of Kenya. The police, however, had surely become a professional force capable of dealing with all but a major insurrection, as was Mau Mau, which had not been earlier brought under control. The police had had the experience of dealing with not only commonly conceived police missions but with all elements of internal national security and border security. It functioned as a metropolitan police, an FBI, a national guard, a border patrol, and a federal marshal's office. It had dealt with the criminal elements in Kenya from the individual, to the gang and to the supergang. It knew of overt and covert subversive activities of tribal societies and had played a major, but relatively unsupported, role of warning the Kenya Government of the dangers of Mau Mau early enough that the police alone (with other government supporting social,

economic, and political policies) may have prevented the trying eight years of the emergency. It played a major role, even during the emergency, in defeating the Mau Mau..

Police initiative, ingenuity, knowledge, and adaptability proved its most valuable asset. The training of the police was a basic and an important factor in its success. Even the US Supreme Court decisions recognize the professional distinction between the policeman and other citizens in dealing with crime. The policeman, who operates often alone or in small groups, learns by training to see, to act and then report--to take charge of the crime scene; whereas, the military soldier, who functions as a member of a group, is prone to observe, to report and then act on orders as a group. The policeman holds a warrant and power of arrest as an individual.

An evaluation of the intelligence network of the government and police is deemed important. As noted, one of the most difficult problems facing any country is knowing when dissent will foster rebellion--knowing when to apply stronger measures to halt the spread of insurrectionist gangs. A government must heed the warnings in time to react with forces available to ward off rebellion and civil war. Thus, references must be made to the government, the legislature, the courts, and the police and the role they played not only after the declaration of the emergency but before it was declared. The effectiveness of the police, in Kenya, in an insurgency suppression role,

depended on the interplay of all governing agencies before the emergency and on all agencies, to include the military and paramilitary forces, after the declaration of the emergency.

Stability operations present complex problems and conflicting objectives in an environment of multivariabes. Thus, this paper traces the actions of the Kenya police before and during the emergency as they happened. No attempt is made to arbitrarily divide the emergency into distinct stages; however, two stages may be easily recognized--the brewing period prior to the declaration of the emergency and the operational period. During the brewing period the Mau Mau undercover conspiracy developed. The increased tempo of terror was dealt with by the police although handicapped by the lack of support and by having to operate within the meticulously applied and strict framework of the common law of the land. This period ended with the declaration of an emergency which brought with it long overdue police support and by that time needed military assistance. The operational period contained what might be referred to as three phases--the buildup and containment phase, the suppression phase, and the winding down phase. The latter phase returned the country to normality and returned control back to a better and better supported police force. Majdalany in State of Emergency speaks of a classic pattern of three phases in all British-involved insurgencies--the undercover development,

the containment, and the military crushing of the revolt.⁵ Whatever the mechanical breakdown may be, the events as they occurred in Kenya support either approach.

Although the police have little or no political responsibility in a democratic society, in developing nations they are deeply involved in all aspects of internal security which threaten by subversion, major disorders, and gang warfare the welfare and security of the nation. The flexibility of the police roles and missions, the ability of the police to organize and to effectively manipulate its organizations to meet varying degrees of disorder, and the fact that the police train, live, and work with locally known criminal elements make it the prime agency to uncover, counter, and disrupt revolutionary organizations. When prevention fails, outside assistance is essential; yet if the police are prepared, trained, and organized for stability operations, these outside forces become an integral part of the police operation rather than a separate force attempting to fight a conventional war against an uniformed army that does not exist. The operations in Kenya, therefore, are viewed here as police operations supported by other forces--a civilian-based operation rather than a military-based operation.

Care must be taken not to measure the success or the failure of the operation in Kenya (or even its necessity) by a body

⁵Fred Majdalany, State of Emergency (1967), p. 55.

count. Although one cannot predict what might have happened should no emergency have been declared, the operation did return Kenya to law and order.

CHAPTER II

THE BRITISH COLONIAL SERVICE

The Colonial Office

Politics which affected Kenya, as well as all other British Colonial Territories, fall into two major divisions: the colonial affairs of the British government and the local politics of the respective territories. A conflict can exist between the local politics and that dictated by the House of Commons.¹ Thus, it is essential to understand the operations and responsibilities of both of these politics in order to appreciate the interplay and separatism which moved Kenya before and during the Mau Mau emergency.

In 1660 the British Government found it desirable to establish its first organized machinery for handling business affairs concerned with the colonial settlements of North America and the West Indies. This need resulted in the Committee of the Privy Council for the Plantations and evolved by 1854 into the formal establishment of the Colonial Office as a separate and independent Department of State. In 1925, because of the expanded empire and the exposed business relating to the self-governing dominions, two offices were formed; an Office for Dominion Affairs and an Office for the Colonies, each headed by a

¹J. F. Lipscomb, White Africa (1955), p. 130.

Secretary of State.² The prime authority, however, rested with the Parliament and "any powers conferred upon or exercised by the local colonial assemblies or officials must be in the nature of delegated powers which can . . . be abrogated or overridden by an Act of the Parliament of the United Kingdom."³ Thus the ultimate responsibility for peace, order, good internal colony government, and external colony affairs rested with the Crown. The tasks, therefore, of the Colonial Office were "to represent the interests of the territories, to see that they got a fair deal and to justify the way in which they were governed,"⁴ while, secondly, directing from London the decisions of Her Majesty's Government concerning territorial rule.

The link of the Colonial Office to the colony is through the Governor General who might justly be called the king-pin in the system. The Governor General exercises all the constitutional functions of the Crown within the territory and is subject to the directions of the Secretary of State. Yet, in reverse, the Secretary is dependent upon the Governor for information and advice. Thus the Colonial Office is somewhat of a secretariat between the Parliament and British public opinion, and the Governor General. While looking toward London, the Governor's

²Sir Charles J. Jeffries, The Colonial Office (1956), pp. 24-26.

³Ibid., p. 34

⁴Ibid., p. 35.

position is strongly influenced by local public opinion wherein his power as head of the Colonial Government rests.

Whatever the policy of the Colonial Office might have been in the past, in 1948 it was crystallized in an official report which stated that the British colonial policy was "to guide the colonial territories to responsible self-government within the Commonwealth in conditions that ensure to the people concerned both a fair standard of living and freedom from oppression from any quarter."⁵ Although this is the policy of the Colonial Office, the British colonial system places upon the territorial peoples the direct responsibility for administering the policy and working out their own salvation as a separate governing community. As an aside, this differed from the French System in which the French Parliament (which included Deputies from the territories) legislated for the colonies.

The British Colonial Office is charged, however, with the responsibility to supply advice and direction and help within its capability. The idea of financial help of any kind to a colony was unknown until 1929 and this only on a loan basis to help British unemployment. It was not until the 1940-45 period that the British became concerned with colonial development and welfare and established some financial support to the colonies to supplement local self-help. Thus, the Governor General and his local

⁵Ibid., p. 38.

administration depended on local taxation to finance the colonial government as well as to attempt to meet the policy of colonial development. While none of the territories was an independent sovereign state in the international concept, each had its own separate government, law, finances, civil service, judiciary, and courts.⁶ It is important to note, however, that because of the colonial office system and the direction of colonies by Britishers, the British system generally was transported to the colonies, and expertism and continuity could be maintained by gazetted offices of the Colonial Office. (Some of the problems in fighting the Mau Mau resulted from the importation and operation of the British judicial system as well as the financial policy which required the colony to bear the major burden of both internal and external security costs.)

The Colonial Police

The expertism and continuity can clearly be seen by a look at the Colonial Police Service which is an integral part of the Colonial Office Service. Although the local legislature votes the money and passes the laws, the police force of a colony was of prime importance as seen not only from the local level but also from the Colonial Office level. Each colony developed its self-contained police force, responsible to the Governor and paid for

⁶Sir Charles J. Jeffries, The Colonial Police (1952), p. 10.

from the funds of the territory; yet, collectively, these forces were part of the Colonial Police as a unity in itself. This emphasis on police might be explained in the words of the British Report of the Police Commissioners in 1839--which states that the police are "the primary constitutional force concerned with the maintenance of order, the enforcement of the law and the protection of individuals in the enjoyment of their legal rights."⁷ The word Police has acquired a somewhat sinister significance in certain countries as an agent of a totalitarian government. In Britain, however, the police are not strictly the agents of the government but the agents of the law and the law is not always the same as orders of the government. Even as far back as the founding of the American Colony, the British brought with them, wherever they went, the English Common law, the English judicial system, and the concept of the rule of law.⁸ The very foundation of the British Police resulted from the uncontrolled mobs and crime in London during the late 1700s and the distaste that the British had for internal control by the military. Thus, the principles which underlay the foundation of the British Police, as well as the British territorial police, are that the police are civilians, that they are uniformed and not secret agents, that each policeman holds a warrant as an individual and that all police are not

⁷Ibid., p. 18.

⁸Ibid., p. 19.

directed by a single authority.⁹ The latter point will be seen later in the discussion of Kenya where there existed the Kenya Police and the Tribal Police. The British did recognize that less developed countries with indigenous populations needed an organized force with greater central government control to keep order and maintain the law.

The Colonial Police tradition may be divided into three stages of development. The first stage is more or less an improvised arrangement for security; the second stage is the establishment of a semimilitary constabulary force; and the third stage is the trend toward the conversion of these semimilitary constabularies into civilian police forces but still retaining certain functions of a military character.¹⁰ Even in this third stage, in spite of the availability of some military units, internal security remained a police function. For general defense purposes separate military units, on a voluntary basis (such as the King's African Rifles, KAR, in Kenya) were organized to assist police in time of war. The British recognized that police would have a heavier burden dealing with crime in time of war.

As the police developed through the three stages, progressive changes in the composition of the colonial police forces took place. In the first two stages basically all of the superior

⁹James Cramer, The World Police (1964), pp. 16-17

¹⁰J. Jeffries, The Colonial Police, pp. 32-33.

rank was held by Europeans and only during the third stage did natives acquire any position of responsibility above that of police officer. The Colonial Police Service acted as the central recruiting agency for the separate colonial police forces and controlled the promotions to the senior posts. Such senior personnel were moved from colony to colony to provide expertise (so long as such a move resulted in promotion). Thus, a unifying force existed within the Colonial Police Service as the Colonial Office maintained the control of "gazetted police officers" (the registration and listing of senior police officers) as well as much of their training. Additionally, the Police Service provided training for lower ranks not only in Britain but in other colonies. This direct involvement in the personnel area by the Colonial Police Service did not, however, remove from the local authority the control, power or operation of its police.¹¹

It is true that a conflict does exist between the native population and the imported judicial and police system. Even in 1951 just prior to the Mau Mau emergency, the British were debating the extent and character of their colonial police-- military, semimilitary, or London civilian type and British or native-led forces. Brigadier Dunn, Commandant of the British Police College, stated that the territories are at various stages of political progress with an imported law not springing from

¹¹Ibid., pp. 40-55.

the local community. "It is almost impossible--if not completely impossible--to enforce an imported law by any other means than an armed State police force."¹²

The colonial police forces, with their semicentralized colonial office personnel control, have borne the brunt of numerous riots and disturbances within their colonies, even prior to 1952; yet with their power, the British have attempted to avoid the police state concept and have attempted to follow the rule of law.

The Colonial Office and the Colonial Police Service provided a unifying force to the colonies; and the Colonial Police Service had a most direct influence on the early establishment and development of police forces within each colony. The British concept of rule of law, under British control, influenced each police force, and its central corps of trained police (gazetted and nongazetted) has given expertism to each colonial police force while leaving the financial bill to the local populous.

¹²ibid., p. 220.

CHAPTER III

A HISTORY OF THE KENYA POLICE 1887 RISE OF MAU MAU¹ (1948)

Although mentioned in Chapter II, it is worthwhile to review the three phases of Colonial Police development, discussed by Sir Jeffries in his book The Colonial Police, before tracing the history of the Kenya Police.²

The first phase was one of more or less improvised arrangements for securing the basic essentials of law and order, such as the execution of constabulary duties in towns and selected rural areas, the provision of armed guards and escorts when needed, and the mobilization of the voluntary assistance of the public in case of civil disturbance.

The second phase was the establishment of semimilitary constabulary forces modelled after the Royal Irish Constabulary and organized mainly with a view to the suppression of crimes of violence and mass outbreaks against the peace. This type of force became general in the Colonies during the second half of the nineteenth century and in the first decades of the twentieth century. These semimilitary forces were not only suitable for

¹W. Robert Foran's book The Kenya Police, 1887-1960 is an officially commissioned history of the Kenya Police and has been used as a basic reference for much of this chapter. Numerous and difficult to obtain original British documents, such as copies of The Kenya Police Review and The Official Gazette, not available to this author, were used by Foran. References have not been doubly footnoted.

²Jeffries, The Colonial Police, pp. 32-33.

peace-time police work under the conditions then existing, but were capable of being mobilized as defense units in time of war. Many of the forces did in fact function in this dual capacity in both World Wars and often officers of the police were granted military rank as well as police rank. Thus, the description of a Commissioner of Police in some Colonies as "Colonel X" does not necessarily mean that he is not a professional policeman. The title may be an indication that the force which he commands is a recognized part of the Colony's military defense organization. This titling system is, however, almost universally used today.

The third phase of police development in the Colonies was the conversion of these semimilitary constabularies into more conventional civilian police forces; yet, still retaining certain functions of a military character. These military functions were necessary in the special conditions of most Colonial territories for the preservation of internal security. Emphasis was placed on police and often no regular military forces were readily available. Reliance was placed upon the police to deal with any emergency calling for armed action. For general defense purposes, however, a small separate military force, usually on a volunteer basis, was often established by the colonists (such as the Kenya Regiment in Kenya).

With the development in organization there was a progressive change in the composition of the Colonial police forces. In the

first two phases most, and in many cases, all of the superior ranks were filled by European officers and non-commissioned officers; only the rank and file (and sometimes not even these) were recruited from the local populations. As the social and political advancement of the nations took place, a larger number of qualified local candidates became available for responsible police work. The general level of education and efficiency throughout the forces improved, and local men were appointed in increasing numbers not only to the subordinate but also to the superior grades.

A chronological approach to the history of the Kenya Police has been taken and no attempt has been made to split the phases as they flowed into each other. It should be obvious, however, that at the time of Mau Mau, the Kenya Police was somewhat past phase two but barely into phase three--a transition period with sufficient semimilitary influence to be extremely effective.

The story of the police in the territory began in 1887 with the beginning of trade and the arrival of the British East Africa Company at Mombasa which in 1889 was granted a Royal Charter as the Imperial British East Africa Company (IBEAC Company).³ To prevent constant hinderance or attacks from savage tribes along the trade route, two battalions of troops were recruited with British and Indian officers to guard the scattered trading stations and maintain peace and order. As Indians furnished the bulk

³W. Robert Foran, The Kenya Police, 1887-1960 (1964), p. 3.

of the labor force, Indian Police and watchmen were brought into Africa to field the security force while East African tribesmen were recruited and uniformed as askari. These battalions later became the base for the King's African Regiment and furnished manpower to the police.

The first European Police Officer assigned to IREA Company was in 1896 on the recommendations of the British Foreign Office and the Commander-in-Chief of the Protectorate.⁴ The police with headquarters in Mombasa expanded by 1901 to three European Inspectors, three Indian Deputy Inspectors, and 150 other ranks of Indians, Somalis, Swahili, and Cormorans.⁵

The Uganda Railway Police, recruited primarily from India and commanded by European officers who had served with the Punjab (India) Police, was formed and reached a size of 300 to 400 by 1899. Its purpose was to protect the railheads.⁶

By 1902 Police forces of a sort had been established in three cities; Mombasa, Nairobi, and Kisumu; each operating separately and separate from the Railway Police. In December of that year a Deputy Inspector General of Police was appointed and given supervisory power over all city police forces as well as the Railway Police. Because of the shortage of European Inspectors and financial stringency, the consolidation took two years. It

⁴Ibid., p. 6.

⁵Ibid., p. 7.

⁶Ibid.

is interesting to note that at this time records were kept in Urdu because of the large number of imported Indian Police.⁷ The consolidated force was authorized by the Foreign Office, an Inspector General, a Deputy Inspector General, six Assistant District Superintendents, seven European Inspectors, six Sergeant Inspectors, and 1,815 Asian Inspectors and Sub-Inspectors, Asian and African NCOs and men. The force was ill-trained and poorly equipped and uniformed. As there existed no fire brigade, the Police were expected to deal as best they could with all outbreaks of fires within the towns and where no doctors were available, the Police Officers attended the sick and even performed surgical operations.⁸ The Police were even required in the early days to assist the understaffed Agricultural Department by visiting all farms to report on the progress and development of each.⁹

By 1907 the British East African (BEA) Police had become better organized, better trained, and better equipped; yet its problems continued to mount. Ivory poaching and gun-running had become prevalent, particularly in the unadministered regions. A typical story of the day, yet a good example of police work, is The Ivory Raiders (1923) by Henry Rayne, an inspector of the BEA Police. Rayne, two Wakamba Police, and a Nubian Police Sergeant set out to find and arrest a group of ivory poachers. The mission was

⁷Ibid., p. 10.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid., p. 31.

accomplished. More than 100 guns were found and destroyed and Mwenyi Kombo and all his followers (some 200) were arrested and brought to trial.¹⁰

In 1908 the Colonial Office appointed the first Commissioner of Police, W. K. Nutley, who had distinguished himself as a Deputy Inspector General of Police in Uganda. Drill, discipline, and musketry were ranked as being the prime factors of instruction in normal police work. A fingerprint and criminal investigation department was established and the police took on the character of a force settled in more routine police work. Also the Tribal Police were activated to extend some police protection beyond the cities.¹¹

The outbreak of World War I brought from the Governor of East Africa Proclamation 17. "A state of war existing between England and Germany, the King's African Rifles, the East African Police Force and the Uganda Police Force will, until further orders, be under the conditions of active service . . . signed Henry Conway Belfield, Governor and Commander-in-Chief, God Save the King."¹² The police had been given a special mission of border guard in case of German movement. The morale of the police was high. They were kept busy at training in military exercises, digging trenches, and border patrol. During the war in which the

¹⁰Henry A. Rayne, The Ivory Raiders (1923).

¹¹Foran, pp. 36-42.

¹²Ibid., p. 43.

British had moved troops from India and South Africa to protect the territory, the Police continued to serve in a quasi-military role. Although they were engaged in numerous operations, they suffered only one European officer and 23 African rank casualties. Late in 1914 the EA Police Service Battalion was formed to help meet the vital needs for African troops to fight against the large force of Africans serving with the Germans. At the outset the strength was just over 400 men, yet they had been hand-picked and had had some military training (either under Europeans or tribal warriors) and had received police training.

The Service Battalion's first mission was to bring the turbulent Turkana in the North under proper control and to protect their neighbors from constant savage raids. One of the Turkana tactics, which had to be overcome, was their tunneling under the thorn zariba around the Police camp and with three or four men trying to spear as many police as possible before being killed themselves. After six months and the recapture of 19,000 head of cattle, 8,300 camels, nearly 7,000 donkeys, and about 123,000 sheep or goats (all of which were eventually returned to the resettled Turkana), the battalion was re-outfitted in Nairobi and ordered to conduct raids against German positions along the Kagera River. In March 1916 the Police Service Battalion was moved to the Northern Frontier Province to deal with some 500 strong Somalis who had raided and destroyed a small garrison of Tribal Police. The distance was some 450 miles and transportation was primarily

by hired camel. By the time the unit reached the area the Somalis had fled into Abyssinia. In September 1916 orders were received to leave one company of the Police Service Battalion at Wajii and for the Battalion minus to return to Nairobi.¹³

In 1917 a force of 30 King's African Regiment (KAR) troops and 40 police engaged and defeated a large band of Degodia by killing more than 200 of the band. At the end of the war, November 1918, the Germans on the northern frontier surrendered. The Germans numbered 30 officers, 125 German other ranks, 1,165 African Askari, 2,294 African carriers, and 819 African women.¹⁴

After the war and for the next two years, the Police Force, which had of necessity concentrated on military and paramilitary duties, began to cope with an ever-increasing influx of settlers. New areas had been opened to the settlers and police resources had to be strained to provide police protection. Often police stations were commanded by a single European Police Constable with a mere handful of African police. The depression also hit the force with its aims toward modernization. The police could not afford modern transportation and it is reported that the Assistant Superintendent of Police at Eldoret had to rely on an ox cart for transportation.¹⁵ Many ex-servicemen joined the force and found it was not as dull as had been expected. The police office

¹³Ibid., pp. 46-49.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 50.

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 52-54.

was called upon to cope with innumerable difficulties that were being experienced by new settlers and their families. The atmosphere in the towns was a replica of the wild west town of the western movies with fighting, shooting, and over-drinking common offenses. One problem faced by the police was what to do with Europeans sentenced to imprisonment by the Magistrate. It was not always practicable to send them to the ill-fitted Nairobi jail so the Magistrate often reduced the imprisonment, increased the fine, and required the local police to lock the prisoner up at night in the local station and guard him during the day as he performed public works.¹⁶

During 1922 there occurred the affair of Harry Thuku of the Kikuyu Central Association (KCA). As a young man he had stolen a checkbook, forged the owner's name, had been arrested, and sentenced to two years of hard labor. After his release he organized the subversive KCA. In 1922 warrants were issued for his arrest and two of his chief confederates. The Chief Inspector of the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) arrested him and two of his followers at a meeting. Some thousands of Africans, mostly Wakikuyu, marched on the police station. The African police force (which only had two Europeans) formed a line which by the following morning required reenforcement. The Wakikuyu demanded the release of the prisoners. By afternoon the crowd

¹⁶Ibid., p. 56.

had pushed forward, women in the lead, and began to attack the police, expecting them not to fire. An African constable was the first policeman to open fire which set off mass firing. The crowd melted away quickly, leaving a number of dead and wounded behind. A detachment of the KAR assisted the police in patrolling Nairobi until the next morning. There was no further trouble. Thuku and his two colleagues were deported to Kismayu. Several Africans arrested during the riot were given prison sentences. An official inquiry into the incident was held which resulted in the decision that the police were justified in opening fire to disperse the large crowd of rioters.¹⁷

The following year the police were faced with trouble from the Asian population demanding equal rights of land in Highlands. The rumor was that the white settlers would carry out a coup d'etat and would kidnap the Governor. This plot supposedly involved the removal of all commanders of the KAR and the African Police. A white paper proved the plot unfounded and the Police, though prepared, were not faced with an outbreak of lawlessness akin to the Ulster affair.¹⁸

The unrest in Jubaland, in 1925, provides a good example of combined operations--KAR and the Police. The government dispatched a police element of three European inspectors and 125 African

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 57-58.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 59.

Policemen with elements of the KAR to take repressive action. Although in June 1925 Jubaland was ceded to Italy by the Kenya Colony, the Northern Frontier Province Police Unit was reinforced by some 200 African police and the KAR was withdrawn from the northern area leaving the security in the hands of the police. While this action was taking place, the Kenya Police arranged security measures for the visit of the Duke and Duchess of York (later King George VI and Queen Elizabeth)¹⁹ as well as other official visitors, in keeping with a more conventional role of police.

During the year The Tribal Police in the African Reserves were removed from the control of the Administrative Officers and became the responsibility of the Commissioner of the Kenya Police. This was done because the administrators neither had the time nor the knowledge to maintain an effective police force. Until this time about one-third of Kenya Police had been stationed in the Reserves but not under central control.²⁰ The Tribal Police did, however, remain the sole police of the province administrators and the Commissioner exercised little control over them.

The 1925 Annual Police Report revealed the lack of funds and trained personnel in the CID, so in 1926 added emphasis was given to the CID.²¹ This was the beginning of an intensive

¹⁹Ibid., p. 60.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Ibid., p. 62.

reorganization period. A new Commissioner of Police was appointed. Before being transferred to Kenya, R.G.B. Spicer, M.C. was Superintendent of the Ceylon Police. This was typical of the influence of the Colonial Office and the Colonial Police Systems which brought qualified, experienced personnel to police leadership positions throughout the colonies. Shortly after assuming command, he began to introduce new methods, as well as improvements in administration. He found only 16 African Policemen literate in English and 246 in Kiswahili and by the following year these numbers were nearly doubled. He organized the Police into 31 police stations and 57 police outposts. Sixteen units of the force were in settled areas and 21 in the native reserve. He added four African sub-inspectors which was the first entry of Africans to the command level. He established a Police Boys' Brigade with the idea of future better trained police.²² With the Governor's support, the Police were relieved of many of the extraneous duties previously done for other departments. Spicer established the motto for the Kenya Police--"Salus Populi," Service to the Public.*

Crime was on the rise again in Kenya Colony. The African criminal elements were becoming more expert and dangerous in the commission of burglaries, assaults, rape and forgery. This was the time of "The Bat", an accomplished burglar who kept the CID busy. Although his identity was never confirmed, the arrest and

²²Ibid., pp. 54-67.

*Later translated to Safety of the People

conviction of an African for complicity in a similar type of crime suddenly stopped the operations of "The Bat."²³

By 1926 vehicles and traffic control were added to the Kenya Police duties and a mounted police was established. Kenya had at that time 3,469 cars, 622 lorries, and 1,248 motor cycles licensed.²⁴

A reported border action in 1926 was the raid on an isolated police post in the northern Frontier Province by some 400 Abyssinians. Corporal Abdi Yero (or Mgosha), Constable Kipkalya (a Kipsigio), and three other constables followed the raiding party and overtook a band of some 100 armed men with 300 cattle. The small police unit inflicted heavy casualties on the raiders and recaptured the stolen cattle. While returning to the post they encountered another band of 30 armed men. They opened fire, dispersed them, and recovered 150 stolen camels.²⁵ This is only one example in the history of the Kenya Police of effective operations against superior forces (gangs) by a small number of police employing police techniques.

It was easily seen even at this date that the police functions throughout Kenya varied considerably--the more conventional police functions in the cities and the quasi military-border security problems on the reserves and along the frontiers.

²³Ibid., pp. 68-69.

²⁴Ibid, p. 69.

²⁵Ibid., pp. 69-71.

In 1927 the use of patrol and tracker dogs on police work attracted great interest and police dog sections were established.²⁶ This small beginning proved beneficial during the search for Mau Mau. Their successes and failures are covered in Chapter IV.

In 1929 the police were called upon to halt the cattle thieving which had resulted from the famine, drought, and locust invasions of that year. As demonstrated so clearly in Kenya's history, such types of adversity are often reflected in crime statistics. Eight European officers and some 200 African police returned over 5,200 head of cattle to their owners. One operation involved encirclement of a forest area and a coordinated entry from nine different points on its fringes.²⁷

The depression in the early 30s caused a reduction of the Kenya Police. Recruiting of African police fell from 500 men in 1930 to below 200 in 1931, yet as expected, crime increased and the police load was marginally carried because of increased efficiency. Kenya had developed a growing class of habitual criminals; and some 30 percent of the accused persons were found to have had previous convictions. Juvenile crimes became more prominent with 777 recorded in 1932 alone and a phenomenal series of outrages of a violent and brutal nature began in 1933. Most of these crimes occurred near Nairobi. One such example was the

²⁶Ibid., p. 75.

²⁷Ibid., pp. 77-78.

brutal murder near Nairobi of two elderly European men.²⁸ A book by Jack Smith-Hughes, Nine Verdicts on Violence, reveals the violence aspects of murder in Kenya by the African during the 1930s, thus revealing that the Mau Mau brutality of the 1950s was not a new revelation. Two Wakikuyu were convicted of murdering an Asian youth in 1933; three others were convicted for murdering an Asian merchant near Thika; five Samburu were arrested after three years of investigation for the supposed murder of Theodore Powys, tried but acquitted on appeal for lack of evidence.²⁹ During 1934 a particularly brutal murder occurred near Naivasha. Seven Kipsigis, intent on robbing, attacked a European with spears, simis, and sticks, and inflicted numerous wounds. The wife of the victim was raped. The seven were found guilty and sentenced to death by the Supreme Court.³⁰

In 1934 much interest was given to a section of the Kipsigis tribe, known as Laibons or witchdoctors. Although the final suppression of the Laibons in Kericho district was more of an administrative affair than a police one, the whole matter was discovered during a police search for tempo (native liquor) which uncovered eight stolen rifles. This small tribe was deeply involved in numerous crimes against both property and persons. Witchpower was their hold on the criminals. An example of this power was

²⁸ibid., p. 83.

²⁹Jack Smith-Hughes, Nine Verdicts on Violence (1956).

³⁰Foran, p. 85.

revealed in police records of a prisoner being ordered by another prisoner (Laibon) to get tobacco. When the first prisoner refused, the Laibon "bewitched" the man. The prisoner on release became sick and was convinced he would die unless the police released the Laibon to "unwitch" him. Thus the power of the supernatural was manifest in Kenya long before the Mau Mau oathing. A new ordinance was passed requiring the deportation of the Laibons to unsettled areas. The police assisted in the movement of their wives, families, and stock to Karungu. This special case of the Laibons deserves note not only from the criminal activity in which they were involved but from the supposed supernatural powers they possessed and "used." At the time just prior to deportation it was said by Superintendent of Police, E. K. Laws, that 80 percent of the Kipsigis were at least indirectly under the Laibors' witchcraft sway.³¹

In 1934 the Kenya police again experimented. This time they acquired camels for patrol duty and found them especially effective in liaison missions between outposts.³²

The Italians declared war on Ethiopia on 3 October 1935. Since much of the fighting was along the Kenya-Ethiopian border, the police reinforced Mandera with a Special Police Detachment of one European assistant superintendent and 125 African constables.

³¹Ibid., pp. 87-89.

³²Ibid., p. 90.

Eleven new police outposts were established. The Italian-Ethiopian war cost Kenya colony some 27 thousand pounds which the British Government finally reimbursed.³³

Apart from Police activities resulting from the war, another incident took place which points out an administration principle governing police activities. This principle was to avoid actions, where possible, which might provoke intertribal feuds. Since many incidents of cattle thievery were historically common, the police had difficulty keeping tribal rivalry out of disputes. In March 1936 three constables were on duty at a waterhole in the Kurdi area of the Garissa district. The patrol located about 50 heads of trespassing stock and impounded them pending their return to the proper owner. The owner, however, believing the cattle stolen, went on a search party to find them. Some 50 tribesmen with bows and poisoned arrows attacked the patrol. After six attacks, which wounded one of the constables, the patrol withdrew to a nearby village. The village chief offered assistance which was refused by the police patrol in spite of needing help, because of the possible renewal of tribal feuds. Although this report does not tell the outcome, the three members of the police patrol received the African Police Medal for Gallantry (one posthumously).³⁴

³³Ibid.

³⁴Ibid., pp. 90-91.

In 1937 more than 1,000 Eritrean deserters surrendered to the Kenya Police who disarmed them and transported them to Mandera and then to a refugee camp at Isiolo. At one time some 10,000 refugees were in the camp at Isiolo and the police "ran the show." The Commandant of the Police Training School at Kiganjo was placed in charge. This was only a minor problem for the police, considering the refugee problem toward the end of the war. Hundreds of refugees, suffering dysentery, small pox, and starvation, were met by police elements. In 1937 more than 700 died in refugee camps. When World War II broke out, many of those refugees, those in good health, were trained and dispatched to Ethiopia to fight as irregulars against the Italians.³⁵

The second World War did not seriously affect Kenya until 1940 when Mussolini joined forces with the Germans. Police strength was increased by 850 African rank-and-file and a second training school was established at Maseno. Major General D. P. Dickinson was appointed by the British as General Officer commanding troops in East Africa, and on Italy's entrance in the war, he assumed command of all forces in Kenya, including the police. General Dickinson, realizing the lack of experience of the military forces with the land and peoples, placed the police in charge of matters of intelligence and security. The police also furnished guides and interpreters to army units.³⁶

³⁵Ibid., pp. 93-94.

³⁶Ibid., p. 98.

In the Northern Frontier the police were assigned as a forward screen to the military, holding small posts over a distance of some 1,000 miles. Police patrols were established between the posts which were maintained until the military forces advanced into Ethiopia and Italian Somaliland. According to Foran, there was "no doubt that these advanced posts were responsible for the curtailment of Italian Bonda (Irregulars) activities, as the latter had the greatest respect for the Police and never once attacked a Police Post, though often they were numerically superior by as much as twenty to one."³⁷ These posts were, however, subject to enemy fire and bombing attacks. Again, as in Italian/Ethiopian war, the police were charged with refugee control. However, as well as refugee control, the police were assigned the mission of operating German Prisoner of War camps. For this purpose the police trained more than 200 African guards, many of whom became regular police after the war and after a regular police training course.³⁸ Also with the lorries and camels, the police often provided the messenger service as radio communications to the numerous posts were nonexistent.

By the middle of 1940 Assistant Inspector R. K. Allen, of the Mandera Police Detachment, was moved to Buna to assume command of all the police there. Some 100 African constables and one European were reorganized into a fighting company with the best

³⁷Ibid., p. 99.

³⁸Ibid., p. 108.

police marksmen being assigned to the military unit in the area to help hold Buna Hill. The police company was to defend the Buna Water Point, a needed water supply for the Italians.³⁹ Other such units were formed for special missions and police operated closely with all military units.

Numerous examples of small police patrols operating along the border and behind enemy lines for intelligence and battle purposes are a matter of record. Yet, perhaps as the war continued, the police elements, particularly in the Northern Frontier Province, became more soldier than police, yet their initiative and ability to operate alone or in small numbers bore great resemblance to the police training received. As a single policeman might approach and arrest a group of robbers, so in this situation, the same approach was used by the police with respect to the enemy.

It is interesting to note the use of the police as patrollers behind enemy lines, guides and interpreters, outpost lines and holding forces. The military units provided back-up against major attacks by the enemy.

At this point another example of the operation of the Colonial Police System is worth noting. In January 1940, Captain W. S. Gullock was appointed Deputy Commissioner of Police. He had served with the Cameroonians during World War I, transferred

³⁹Ibid., p. 105

to the Gold Coast Regiment in Togoland where he joined the police. From 1927 to 1937 he commanded the Gibraltar Police and then was reassigned to the Cyprus Police. After service for three years, he left the position of Deputy Commissioner of Police in Kenya and became Commissioner of the Ethiopian Police to return to Kenya in 1944 as the Commissioner of Police. In 1947 he retired and was followed by C. H. Ward from West Africa.⁴⁰

During the war the police training was reduced to three months. Although time was limited, long hours and personal attention allowed them to meet the minimum requirements. Basic police knowledge and personal initiative essential to the policeman continued to be of prime importance during the training.⁴¹

To break away from the semimilitary type of police operations taking place, the other side of police functions--prevention and detection of crime--remained paramount. The May 1949 edition of the Kenya Police Review (summarized by Foran) devoted itself to the famous Loitoketok Murder Case. Deep in the Masai Reservation, which was not policed directly from Nairobi, an Asian family was brutally murdered and several thousand shillings were taken. African plain-clothes detectives over a seven-month period worked on the case which ended in the conviction of two Kikuyu (who spoke Masai). Fingerprints, blood traces, and informers

⁴⁰ibid., pp. 107, 137.

⁴¹ibid., p. 107.

were used during the protracted and difficult investigation and bore testimony to the police professionalism which continued even in time of war and double missions for the police.⁴²

With the increase in crime during the war, measures were introduced to improve the police efficiency particularly in the rural areas. All police divisions established mounted sections. Ninety mules were purchased and Mounted Police were found particularly effective near settled areas and Native Reserve boundaries. Three additional provincial commandants were appointed with new headquarters in Nakuru, Nyeri, and Kisumu.

In 1943 the government gave direct responsibility for the policing of the Native Reserves to the police. The government, as an experiment, authorized units of the regular force in the Kiambu, Nandi, and Narok districts. The following year Kipsigis and Kissi districts were added to the area under direct policing of the regular force.⁴³ It is of interest to note that these districts, except in Kiambu, were not those involved in Mau Mau. The Mau Mau affected districts remained primarily under the Tribal Police with little regular police control. It was not until December 1952 that authority was given to increase the regular force in the Fikuyu Reserve. Radio communication among the police stations was improved yet remained far from desirable.⁴⁴

⁴²Ibid., pp. 116-121.

⁴³Ibid., p. 122.

⁴⁴Ibid., pp. 123, 206.

Toward the end of 1945 the Masai and Kikuyu tribes became bitterly involved in a series of raids and counterraids of each other's livestock. The police, using the new mounted elements, moved into the border area between the tribes and reestablished order.⁴⁵ The majority of criminal cases within the reserves involved stock thefts and the police mounted system kept relative order.

As an aside, one case of murder in 1946 on the Masai Reserve is worthy of mention for its insight into the peoples of Kenya. The administration was engaged in a sale of confiscated stock from Ngidongi. The owner of one of the animals confiscated pleaded to retain that pet and substitute another. When the request was refused, the owner, in full view of the people and police, walked up behind Major Grant, the Commissioner, and thrust a spear into his back, killing him. The murderer was arrested, tried, and convicted.⁴⁶

Mention was made of the camps run by the police to handle the refugees and prisoners during the war. Another one worth mentioning was the Special Jewish Detainee Camp at Gilgil, established by the British to hold Palestine terrorists. Some 300 Jews were arrested (mostly of the Stein gang), shipped to Kenya, and placed under the guard of the Kenya Police. After the mandate in May 1948 the Jews were repatriated.⁴⁷

⁴⁵Ibid.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 133.

⁴⁷Ibid., pp. 135-136.

In February 1947, the provision of the compulsory National Service came to an end and the members of the Auxiliary Police Force were released. A voluntary Special Police Branch was established and some 255 enrolled as Special Police officers. In 1948 the Kenya Police Reserve was formally established as the auxiliary force. By 1955 the strength of this force had risen to 9,076 and it had proven a valuable force during the Mau Mau Emergency period.⁴⁸

By 1948 the Kenya police had somewhat modernized. The Police Signal Branch was expanded and the police added 131 radio equipped motor vehicles, and 45 fixed radio stations. In 1948 some 2,500 messages were handled each year. (By 1950, as the Mau Mau situation began to develop, this network had expanded to over 900 radio sets and by 1959 over 63,000 messages were being handled each month.)

In 1947 a new sect purporting to be religious became active within the Kikuyu Reserve--the Dini ya Jesu Kristo--who became known as "The Skin Men." Ruben, the organizer, had gained many supporters in the rift among the Kikuyu laborers in the Rift Valley Province. The details of the sect are relatively unimportant to this study; however, they were involved in the killing of an African citizen and a policeman. Following the killings, Ruben and his gang moved toward Mount Kenya declaring victory and emphasizing their bath in European blood. Following an intensive police search of the Nyeri and Mt. Kenya area, Ruben and

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 136.

his followers were rounded up and arrested. Ruben and three others were sentenced to death, 17 were imprisoned as being unable to furnish securities for their good behavior, and 11 were acquitted.⁴⁹

In 1949 the police contended with another politico--religious element--the Dini ya Msambwa Sect. The movement was anti-European and several cases of arson occurred in the Kitale area. The sect even attempted to set fire to the Cheranpani Police Station but managed to set fire to nearby huts on four successive times. A concerted police effort led to the conviction of 15 of the sect members for that incident. Yet in 1950 they became active again and some 300 members of the sect in the Suk country attacked 40 Kenya Police. (No results are reported by Foran.)⁵⁰

Foran states, "The threat of political trouble in the colony was becoming ever more apparent as the years flowed on and the country, with its three main races and differing ideologies, became more developed. The (Police) Force was fully alive to the fact that serious trouble was brewing and that it would be called upon to experience a stormy time in the near future."⁵¹ Thus the police as early as 1948 were aware of the trouble ahead for Kenya Colony. Chapter V amplifies Foran's statement.

In February 1949 the new Commissioner of Police, M. S. O'Rourke, was posted. He had served in the Royal Irish Constabulary and the

⁴⁹Ibid., pp. 138-142.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 154.

⁵¹Ibid.

Palestine Police and was Public Safety Adviser in Germany prior to his Kenya appointment. His first task was to extend police coverage to all Kenya. At the close of the year there were 35 divisions, 92 police stations, and 162 police posts in the Colony, of which 12 divisions and 31 police stations were in the African Reserves. The duties of the police in the Northern Frontier Province continued to be more as gendarmerie (quasi police/military) with a strength of 18 European officers and 1,153 African ranks, while the authorized total force in 1950 was 6,039 of all ranks. In a decade the force had doubled and the cost had risen from 561 thousand pounds in 1948 to 900 thousand pounds in 1950. The Police Training School was expanded and conducted as a six-month course. Women Assistant Inspectors numbered nine and they devoted most of their time to juvenile delinquency cases. More than 320 thousand pounds was spent on a modern building program which had frequently been neglected in the past.⁵²

The 1949 Annual Police Report submitted by Commissioner O'Rourke read as follows:

The year 1945 marked the beginning of a great change in the mentality and outlook of the Africans of this Colony, a rapid growing consciousness of his social status, his political rights, his educational limitations and other circumstances as they affect him. He has developed far beyond the simple unsophisticated person of even a few years ago and from the Police point of view requires very different handling from what he did some few years ago. The difficult economic position of considerable numbers

⁵²ibid., pp. 155-160.

living in the vicinity of the larger towns and the acquisition of undesirable and expensive tastes in liquor and other things, and the insecurity of premises, have tempted quite large numbers into crime as the solution of their difficulties and have encouraged the worst elements of these into gangster crime. These trends will require a higher standard of policing than was adequate some years ago and, among other things, a better system of corrective training for recidivists, whose numbers are rapidly increasing.

Keeping pace with the growth of the African if not, in fact outdistancing it proportionately, has been the increase in the Asian population. Although a very law-abiding community, it nevertheless produces crime which is usually of a most complicated nature.

Commercial crime is on the increase. All these factors have shown very clearly the urgent need to bring about a more rapid development of police, to adopt more advanced methods and provide more up-to-date equipment. At the same time it is necessary to retain the entirely different order of policing required in those outlying areas where development has been but little and the task of the police has hardly changed in the last twenty years.

For all that it had a difficult year, the personnel of the Force remained in good heart throughout, reliable, keen and always willing to give that little extra

The Kenya Police is fortunate in having the sympathetic ear and ready help of many that matter in this Colony and a public which appears to be more appreciative of its good work than critical of its failures⁵³

It is with this background that the Kenya Police faced the rise of the Mau Mau, the Mau Mau emergency, and the defeat of the Mau Mau. The Kenya Police therefore was someplace at the end of stage two and the beginning of stage three development when the Mau Mau emergency began.

⁵³ibid., pp. 160-161.

CHAPTER IV

COMMENTS ON THE ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTIONS OF THE KENYA POLICE

The Kenya Police, like most police forces, is an outgrowth of a variety of security organizations created over the years and altered frequently to fit changing conditions and problems. By 1920, when Kenya became a colony, the Kenya Police had become a reliable and competent organization. Led by British police officers, it was staffed by many Indian (Sikhs) brought over to protect the railroad and Africans in lower ranks. Police strength, which in 1905 was 1,800 men, rose to over 13,000 during the Mau Mau emergency, bolstered by an expanded reserve which attained a maximum of 9,000 men. In the Mau Mau emergency there were nearly 600 police casualties--525 of them Africans.¹ Between 1939 and 1949 the force had doubled. At the end of 1951, before the real buildup began, the force consisted of 87 gazetted officers, 194 inspectors, 5,769 lower inspectors, and other ranks for a total of 6,050 people covering an area of 224,960 square miles with a population of 5.406 million.²

The mission of the Kenya Police is to maintain law and order, preserve the peace, protect life and property, prevent and detect

¹US Department of the Army, Pamphlet 550-56: Area Handbook for Kenya (1967), p. 630.

²Jeffries, The Colonial Police, pp. 224-225.

crime and apprehend offenders. Its motto, Salus Populi (Safety of the People) could apply to most police forces in the free world.

At the time of the declaration of the emergency, the organization was well established and the police chain of command, although slightly altered with the establishment of Emergency Committees and a central joint command of all operations, remained basically fixed and proved to be sound.

The force, national in nature, was headed by a Commissioner of Police who was assigned by the Colonial Office with the approval of the local administration. This commissioner was initially responsible to the Member for Law and Order. The latter was head of both the court system and the police system. As discussed in following chapters, this arrangement proved detrimental and a new Secretary for Law and Order was established separating the two functions.³ The general function of the Secretary could be compared to the Public Safety officers employed by many American cities. During the emergency the police reported to a Minister of Internal Security and Defense.⁴

Although the breakdown was slightly different and additional elements were required due to situations and terrain, the Kenya police had all the functional areas of a modern force which are

³The member for Law and Order became the Attorney General with judicial responsibility.

⁴The police now come directly under the Ministry of Defense with policy guidance by the National Security Council. (Cramer, p. 154, and USDA, Pamphlet 550-56, p. 620.)

an operations, auxiliary, and service element. The operations element contains patrol, traffic, criminal investigation, vice and juvenile divisions; the auxiliary element contains records, detention facilities, and crime laboratory; and the service element contains training, planning, management and administration.⁵ As mentioned before, the Kenya Police had not developed to the stage of the London Metropolitan Police Force but were in a quasi-police/military/security force stage. (It might be noted here that with the increase of violence in other countries, so called modern police are beginning to incorporate special riot control units somewhat similar to those found in the Kenya Police.)

Three major elements made up what I shall consider the total Kenya Police security force; The Kenya Police, The Police Reserve, and The Tribal Police. Although the Tribal Police were the personal retainers of District Commissions and District Offices and operated in more remote rural areas, their operations were indirectly coordinated by the regular police system and they were cadred by regular police officers. Thus I shall consider them police rather than paramilitary such as the Kikuyu Guards which were formed during the emergency to assist in guarding the loyal Africans in the reserve. (The Kikuyu Guards reached a strength of 30,000 at the peak of the emergency.) The Police Reserves, which was formed in 1948, reached a strength of 9,076 in 1955 and

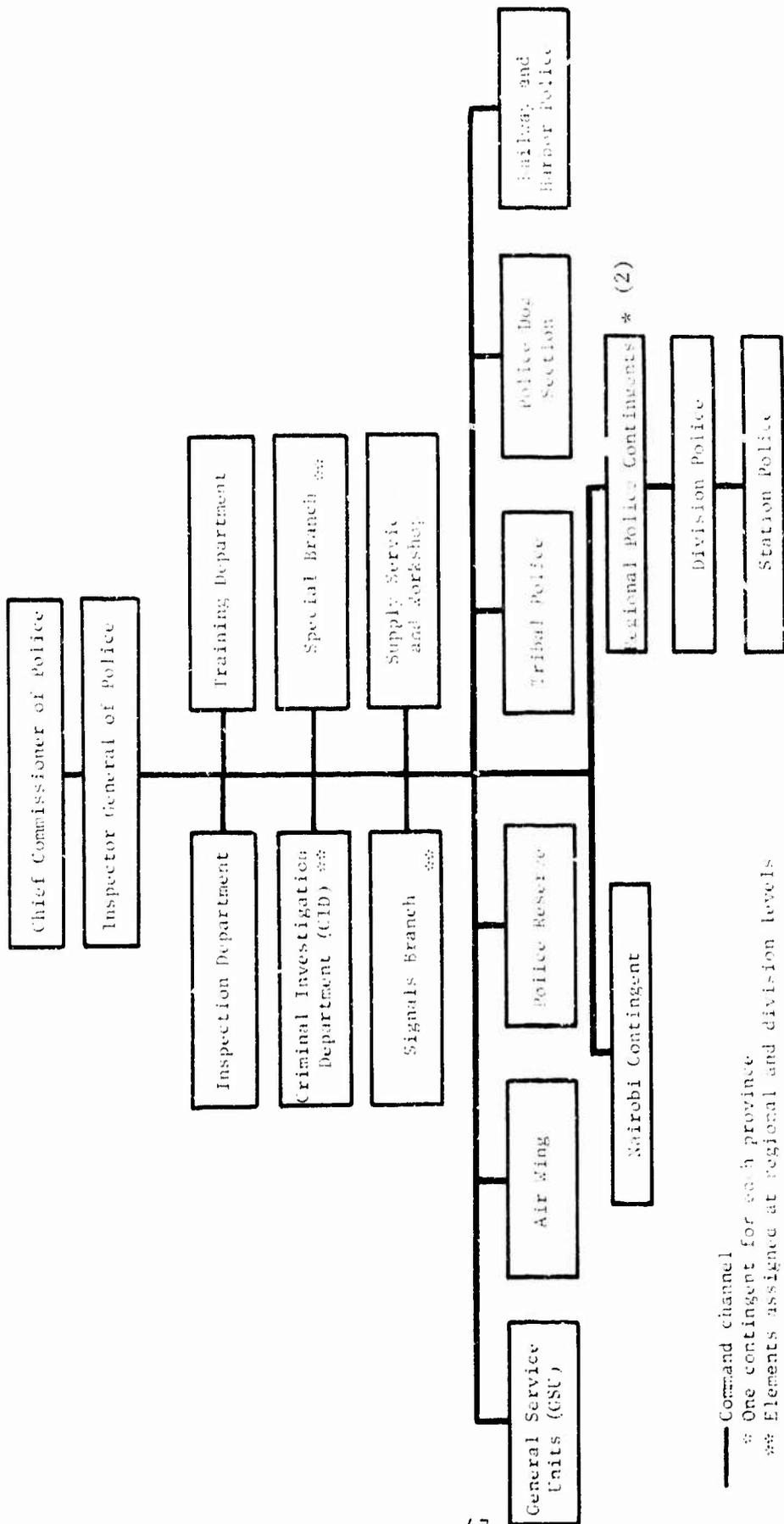
⁵O. W. Wilson, Police Administration (1963).

performed valuable police service.⁶ The strength of the Tribal Police was not found in this research; however, this might be understandable as they were deeply involved with operations of the Police and the Kikuyu Guard--both of whose strength would overshadow the Tribal Police strength.

⁶Foran, p. 136.

THE KENYA POLICE ORGANIZATION

POLICE HEADQUARTERS (1)



— Command channel

* One contingent for each province

** Elements assigned at regional and division levels as required

SOURCE: Adapted from James Cramer, The Kenyan's Police (1964), in DA Pamphlet 530-56, Area Handbook for Kenya, 1967.

(1) Elements from Police Headquarters support contingents

(2) One contingent for each

province

CHART No 1

THE KENYA POLICE⁷

The Kenya Police consists of a central headquarters at Nairobi and subordinate police elements for the Capital and each of the seven provinces. The chain of command corresponded roughly with that of the officers of the administration. Under the senior police officer in each province there were district offices with subordinate divisions and under them again officers commanding police posts and stations. In addition to the uniformed branches of police there were also at each district headquarters a criminal investigation (plainclothes section, CID) section and another for intelligence (Special Branch). Little real change in organization from the days of Mau Mau exists even today.

The force, due to conditions in different parts of the country, may find its members working in desert areas such as the Northern Province where intertribal fighting over cattle is frequent and where many of the tribesmen are armed with rifles. Other policemen may be engaged in densely forested areas (the haven of many Mau Mau) such as in parts of the Central and Rift Valley Provinces, where wild animals abound and tracking is difficult and dangerous. In the Northern Province camel patrols are used extensively; in the mountain areas of Mount Kenya or the Aberdare Mountain Range (another Mau Mau site) mountain techniques

⁷See Chart No. 1, ORGANIZATION.

are essential; and in the cities more conventional police patrolling, both foot and motorized, is the mode of operation. The air wing, consisting of only two aircraft in 1952, as well as roving foot and mounted patrols, prove a necessary part of numerous successful operations. The interaction of these elements is best described by the operations conducted both before and during the Mau Mau emergency. Thus the force developed in Kenya was a police force capable of meeting all types of internal security and law enforcement problems. A survey, therefore, of the more important special functioning elements within the Kenya Police is important in order to appreciate the success of police operations. The interplay with the military and paramilitary forces developed after the declaration of the emergency will be discussed in the chapter on Police Operations during the Mau Mau.

1. CID--Criminal Investigation Department: As early as 1907 the police in Kenya recognized the need for specially trained officers to handle the investigation of serious crimes. The patrolman was capable of conducting the preliminary investigation; however, to tie him down to detailed, complicated, and technical investigations resulted in inefficient use of manpower as well as greater training time to enable him to efficiently conduct such investigations. The use of fingerprints as a means of identification was a relatively new technique in 1907; yet, by 1909 the Kenya Police (then called the British East Africa Police) had established a Fingerprint Bureau. Although this bureau later

became part of the CID in 1925, it contained the fingerprints of 4,035 accused or suspected criminals and in 1956 the fingerprint file increased to 90,726. This section proved extremely valuable during the emergency. Stories are told of patrols cutting off the fingers of dead Mau Mau and bringing them into the CID for identification rather than having to transport a complete and decaying body.⁸ By 1952 the CID was well established to include crime laboratory facilities, modern for its time, and plainclothes agents were stationed at each district level. It acted as a countrywide detective force and had charge of plainclothes activities in the fields of investigation and detection of crime.

In April 1954 Colonel Young of the Metropolitan Police became Commissioner of Police in Kenya. He spent great effort in his short tour of these months enlarging the CID. The reason for much of this was to investigate accusations of "Police Brutality" made by Members of Parliament who disagreed with the techniques used by the police and supported by the Kenya Government.⁹ Mr. Cattling, who followed Colonel Young, continued to emphasize CID for it is CID that takes the prisoner before the court.

2. Special Branch: The Special Branch is concerned with political intelligence and countersubversion. Perhaps no

⁸William W. Baldwin, Mau Mau Manhunt (1957), p. 143. (Similar stories are found in accounts by Kitson and Ruark.)

⁹"Justice in Kenya," New Statesman and Nation, Vol. 50 (17 December 1955), pp. 821-822.

other organization in the Kenya Police or the military was more responsible for developing and employing effective techniques for defeating the Mau Mau than Special Branch; yet, perhaps no other organization of the Kenya Police or military received so much criticism from writers (including Corfield) for failing to develop and evaluate trends and intelligence about the coming Mau Mau crisis on which the Government could act effectively. It is simple to take a small element, as Special Branch was at the time, and make it the scapegoat. There is no doubt that Special Branch had its weaknesses.

Although the Colonial Office gave guidance on the organization and need for political intelligence in the colonies, the implementation of a system was left to the local administrators.¹⁰ Up until 1945, before Mau Mau, Special Branch, headed by a Director of Intelligence and Security, was an integral part of CID. One fundamental defect in this was that the detection of crime was urgent, and the collection of political intelligence appeared less urgent. In 1945 Special Branch was separated from CID. It remained a police function under the Commissioner of Police but the Director was to address his reports directly to the Member for Law and Order with copies to the Commissioner and other interested agencies. In 1947 the Commissioner of Police submitted proposals to the Member for Law and Order for an extension of

¹⁰F. D. Corfield, Historical Survey of the Origins and Growth of Mau Mau (1960), p. 30.

Special Branch to the Provinces. However, except for small additions to the staff at Nairobi (none to Mombosa) and the appointment of two Specialists Officers in the Provinces, no other action was authorized until shortly before the declaration of the emergency. The reason given was that necessary funds were not available.¹¹ Note that the timing also corresponded with a Special Branch report of antigovernment activities of "Forty Group" which it described as "nothing but a collection of hooligans and thugs."¹² Corfield points out that Special Branch suffered from the defect that it had limited authorized personnel; however, it submitted vast volumes of factual intelligence on which the government could have acted.¹³ Corfield criticized Special Branch and the provincial administration for not coordinating intelligence;¹⁴ however, the 27 May 1951 warning to the Government by the District and Provincial Commissioners, Nyeri, following the antigovernment KAU mass meeting was based on the translation of Ian Henderson, the Assistant Superintendent of Police, Nyeri (Special Branch)¹⁵ and was fully aired by both government and police. Corfield does admit that "however effective a Special Branch may be in the sifting and collecting of intelligence, the final assessment of the value and import of that intelligence rests with the Administration

¹¹Ibid., p. 31.

¹²Ibid., p. 69.

¹³Ibid., pp. 31-32.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 36.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 106.

who, by training and the very nature of their wider contacts with native opinion, is best fitted to do so."¹⁶ The first part of this statement is perhaps sound; yet, in Kenya the agitation was relatively local and the police, above all other persons, had the most direct relation with the criminal element of any community. An interesting aside is recorded in the book Mau-Mau Detainee by Kariuki, a hard-core Mau Mau. He speaks of his difficulty in joining the KAU in 1947 as Special Branch was paying so much money to penetrate the organization, all prospective new members were carefully screened.¹⁷

This has not been an attempt again to overlook Special Branch weaknesses but to place Special Branch efforts in perspective. Until the emergency it had been an intelligence-gathering outfit with little activity. As the emergency drew closer, the police continued to place more and more effort, often with marvelous results, when considering the secret nature of Mau Mau. A source involved in the actions against Mau Mau (not to be quoted) stated that intelligence under these conditions must remain a primary function of the police because of their closeness to the people. This source did agree that one of the reasons for the unpreparedness was the lack of an effective intelligence organization--not the gathering of information necessarily, but having personnel of sufficient stature to move the government to action.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 238.

¹⁷Josiah Mwangi Kariuki, Mau Mau Detainee (1963), p. 17.

By May 1952 the Commissioner of Police had established, under Special Branch Headquarters, a special bureau for the coordination of police actions against the Mau Mau and the collection of evidence against leading Mau Mau personalities. This preceded the appointment at Government level in September 1952 of a Special Commissioner for Security.¹⁸

Thus before the emergency declaration was read, the Special Branch had gathered together a list of key subversive Mau Mau for immediate detention. Also the Special Branch had the difficult task of increasing intelligence gathering techniques in order to supply sufficient intelligence not only for police but for military operations.

Special Branch, after the declaration of the emergency, gained increased interest and support from the Special Commissioner for Security, the Supreme Military Commander, the Emergency Committees, and all elements of government as well as the Commissioner of Police. Special Branch activities were expanded to better cover the affected Mau Mau area which had been better identified. Special Branch was augmented by intelligence officers from the British Army, members of the Kenya Police Reserves, transferred and newly recruited police officers, and, eventually, converted members of the Mau Mau. The latter primarily served in "pseudo gangs." Many of the new personnel found themselves in an expanded

¹⁸Corfield, p. 154.

police intelligence unit, knowing the mission but having to learn the most effective means of carrying it out.¹⁹ Officers were assigned as District Military Intelligence Officers (DMIO) and NCOs worked as Field Intelligence Assistants (FIA). In most cases the FIAs were assigned by Special Branch Officers to outlying parts of their districts.²⁰ The intelligence generated was to be used by all security force elements--the police, the Army, the Tribal Police, and the Home Guard. It is important to realize that Special Branch still remained a police organization and its functions had existed before and after British military units were in Kenya. It was the Commissioner of Police who had strongly supported the use of "psuedo gangs" and the formation of Special Forces within Special Branch, although the ideas are rightfully credited to Frank Kitson, a British Army officer who served as DMIO in Special Branch and Ian Henderson, a long seasoned inspector of the Kenya Police. Although I have found no source that credits the phrase, Police Operation, to such wars as Kenya during the Mau Mau, there is little doubt that the military was supporting a police operation rather than carrying on a conventional war as had been known in the past. General Erskine states in his preface to Frank Kitson's book Gangs and Counter gangs that the secret success was that Special Branch had an element, Special Forces, on hand which put it in a position to follow up information

¹⁹Frank Kitson, Gangs and Counter gangs (1960), p. 17.

²⁰Ibid., p. 19.

instantaneously and to take appropriate action.²¹ Majdalany in his book State of Emergency stated that "While the Army was applying the bludgeon, General Erskine again brought into use the rapier offered by the Police Special Branch."²² He further stated that the Special Forces, under the police rather than the Army, was the most effective final weapon against Mau Mau, and the man destined to bring the idea to its final successful fulfillment was Ian Henderson, Senior Police Commissioner.²³ Therefore, Special Branch became not only a collector of intelligence but an eliminator of the criminal.

The operations and impact of the operations of Special Branch are covered later but it is appropriate here to say that new ideas in counter-gang fighting which were later to be used in Malaya (as well as Vietnam) were developed and perfected by the Police Special Branch in Kenya.

It is right to mention here that requisite bodies to collect and process intelligence within the administration were set up as well as improvements made throughout the system as a result of a study submitted 28 November 1952 by the Director-General of Security Services in the United Kingdom after an on-the-spot month survey. The study had been requested by the Governor soon

²¹Ibid., p. xii

²²Majdalany, p. 214.

²³Ibid., p. 218.

after his arrival in Kenya.²⁴ Yet, Special Branch with initiative and imagination must have gone far beyond the results of this study.

3. General Service Unit (GSU): The need for a Regular Police Reserve or Emergency Company was met in 1948 by the formation of what was an Armored Mobil Unit.²⁵ An operation of this unit is discussed on page 116, Chapter VI, in connection with the East Suk affray in 1950. The units were mobile and quasi-military, and could be readily dispatched "in totus" or by platoon or section to trouble spots throughout Kenya. (A term Levy Force was often used to refer to these mobile police units.) As disorder increased in Nairobi in August 1952, some 700 men of this unit were ordered from the Northern Frontier Province to Nairobi. In September 1953 the Emergency Company was redesignated the General Service Unit and expanded to a strength of 47 European officers and 1,058 African ranks. The unit was broken into platoons in order to provide Mau Mau-affected areas and provinces with their own mobile strike force. The unit was divided into five Provincial companies--Nyeri, Rift Valley, Nairobi, Nyanza, and the Coast. Companies consisted of platoons which were divided into three sections consisting of a sergeant, two corporals, and ten constables. Each platoon was fully mobile, armed with Bren guns, self-sufficient, and could

²⁴Corfield, p. 37.

²⁵Foran, p. 146.

operate independently. In December 1953 the unit was disposed as follows: Headquarters and Colony Reserves (178 of all ranks); Nyeri Provincial Company (12 platoons, 503 of all ranks); Rift Valley Provincial Company (5 platoons, 212 of all ranks); and Nairobi Special Area Company (212 of all ranks).²⁶ Later in the operation the GSU operated extensively in the Forest areas. They conducted patrols of extended length and duration, conducted ambushes, and conducted mop-up operations such as "Operation Tusker" in the Aberdare Forest and in the Embu and Meru areas in 1958.²⁷

An interesting book on the operations of GSU was written by William Baldwin, Mau-Mau Manhunt. William Baldwin was an American World War II veteran who had arrived in Kenya and had joined the Kenya Police Reserves with assignment to the GSU.²⁸

4. Police Air Wing:²⁹ The Kenya Police Reserve Air Wing was formed in late 1949, and consisted of a headquarters with three squadrons. The transport squadron used aircraft of the East African Airways, the Communication Squadron used local charter company aircraft, and the Reconnaissance Squadron used privately owned aircraft and Aero Club aircraft. The Kenya Police was the first Colonial Police Force to recognize the value of aircraft

²⁶Ibid., pp. 190-191.

²⁷Ibid., pp. 190, 208, 226.

²⁸Baldwin was the only American who fought as a member of the Kenya Police during the Mau Mau.

²⁹Foran, pp. 194-200.

in police work, particularly under the conditions which existed in Kenya. The pilots, most ex-RAF, were paid on a part-time basis. The part-time pilot police participated in exercises, assisted with communication relay, and acted in rescue and med-evacuation operations. The police actually owned and used one second-hand Austen before the emergency.

On the declaration of the State of Emergency in October 1952, the entire KPR Air Wing mobilized in a matter of hours and by early 1953 the police had purchased an additional aircraft of the Piper Tri-Pacer type. By mid 1953, fourteen police aircraft were in constant operation.

Although there was close coordination and help given by the military, the smaller police aircraft proved extremely effective. Improvisation, particularly, during the early days of the emergency period was often the norm. One interesting story was the building and dropping of the first bombs secretly manufactured in Nairobi for the Police Air Wing--the "Goz" and "Magoz" with galvanized-iron casing packed with 60 sticks of gelignite and a firing mechanism made of nails and blasting caps. The dropping of both bombs was unsuccessful because of the difficulty experienced by the pilot in cutting the ropes tying them to the aircraft.

In 1953 the British sent four RAF Harvards from Rhodesia to help the police in the operations, for the Police Air Wing was supporting the entire security force including the British Army elements. On 20 February 1954, the Air Wing dropped supplies to a

joint patrol on Mount Kenya which at the time set a record for the highest altitude supply drop at 14,600 feet. Another record set was the dropping of 56,000 pounds of supplies over a period of 13 days in April 1955 to Security Forces.

In January 1957 the mobilized KPR Air Wing became a part of the permanent police force.

5. Police Dog Section:³⁰ The Kenya Commissioner of Police as early as 1927 had seen the use of patrol and tracker dogs in police work in South Africa. Police dogs were found valuable not only in the detection of criminals but their presence often proved an effective deterrent. By 1948 six dogs had been purchased and three dog handlers from the Palestine Police had joined the Kenya Police.

The Annual Police Report of 1958 states:

Police Dogs--As a result of casualties inflicted on Patrol dogs whilst working, new patrol techniques were introduced which, so far have proved effective. Escorts to patrol dogs receive intensive training in working closely with the dog and handler. The dog, handler and escort now work as a well-balanced team. Seven dogs died during the year: two of these were killed in action when attempting to arrest criminals, four others received serious wounds from the criminals they were arresting and six others received superficial wounds.

The department by 1958 was using 64 dogs with 15 European dog masters and 57 African dog handlers, and total arrests of some 200 criminals a year, with the assistance of dogs, were being made.

³⁰Ibid., pp. 75, 143-145.

The dogs were divided into three categories--the trackers worked from direct scent and were used extensively during the emergency; the patrol dogs were used with policemen while making difficult arrests; and other dogs were specially trained to wind-scent a criminal and trace stolen property.

One dog "Pony" was credited with 30 arrests by 1957.

6. Signal Branch:³¹ The advancement of the Signal Branch was discussed in Chapter II. The Police Signal Branch initially came into its own in 1943 with the establishment of five radio stations across Kenya with military type equipment. In 1948 the network had been extended to 45 stations with more up-to-date equipment. In 1950 the entire Branch was reorganized to include workshop facilities, VHF trunk radio telephone with all Provinces, and radios in most police vehicles. By 1959 the police communications net was handling an average of 63,554 messages per month.

7. Inspection Branch: No date for the establishment of this branch was found; however, such an office is common to most all police forces. This is the internal investigation branch which handles disciplinary problems within the department. This branch became extremely active as the Mau Mau battle continued and as members of Parliament and the press began to "yell" police brutality and corruption. CID is also used where needed to assist

³¹Ibid., pp. 137-138.

personnel of the Inspection Branch and initially CID controlled most of the investigations.

Extreme care must be taken in keeping the subject of police corruption in proper balance and it is not the intent in this section to indicate in any way such was an uncontrollable problem. With the care in initial screening of personnel for police duty, such conduct is the rare exception.

A famous case in the Kenya Police did exist as early as 1904 when a squad of railway police was implicated in a series of burglaries. The police immediately handled the matter and after heavy fines, the Indian Constables were deported to India, and the African Constables returned to the Tribal Chiefs for further discipline.³² A task which kept the police and the Inspection Branch (and CID) busy was the control of ammunition and firearms. Corfield states that such losses aided the rise of Mau Mau.

During the rise of Mau Mau, gun control and ammunition accountability was a major problem. As early as 1949 the Naivasha Police reported that 32,000 rounds of 22 ammunition had disappeared from the Army, KAR Command Ammunition Depot at Gilgil. Although the loss of millions of rounds was reported, the CID confined the total loss in all depots at 76,748 rounds of mixed ammunition and two pistols. The investigation revealed that the Army Command Depot was guarded by 18 Africans armed with pick helves, without

³²ibid., p. 22.

European supervision. By 10 March an African soldier and a Kikuyu civilian had been arrested. Loss continued and it was not until April that the police were able to report that the Army had changed the entire guard and that theft of ammunition at the depot had been stopped. By February 1950 the Army had instituted a monthly inspection system. Similarly, the police tightened up their control of weapons. By 1950 mass loss of ammunition had been stopped; however, small-scale thefts continued. One continuing, although small, source of ammunition for the Mau Mau came from Kikuyu prostitutes who demanded payment in rounds of ammunition. Of some 1,247 rounds of ammunition found in illegal hands, only 180 had come from the police, 544 from the Army, and 523 from prison guards and Kikuyu guards.³³ (Most sources dealing with operations against the Mau Mau mention the necessity to maintain a count of even unexpended ammunition.)

Kariuki (a hard-core Mau Mau) in his book Mau Mau Detainee writes of an incident in which a Meru constable had hidden him during a "sweep" in Nakuru in January 1953. He also tells of buying a pistol from a soldier for 300 shillings.³⁴ However, it is important to note the source and that throughout his book he talks of corruption in the police and the "toughness, manhandling, and abuse" of the police. Kariuki stated that the best bargain he

³³Corfield, pp. 225-234.

³⁴Kariuki, p. 43.

the best way to prevent possible charges of brutality or unlawful use of force.

Baldwin in his book Mau Mau Manhunt discusses a case against a former District Commandant (of the Kenya Police Reserve) and an Inspector of CID charged with perjury at the trial of the Kariuki Kimani whom they had arrested (and who was found guilty) of illegal possession of ammunition. Kimani's lawyer had found on a statement written by the Commandant the word "I" rather than "we" when referring to the Striking Force (GSU). Kimani had passed from the Commandant's hands through two police and then to the Inspector, thus technically omitting two witnesses from the case. In order to prevent police embarrassment, the District Commandant and the Inspector were advised to plead guilty, to waive jury trial, and to accept a fine with no jeopardy to their careers. The appeal to change the plea was rejected by the court and both were sentenced by the Magistrate 10 December 1954 to four years imprisonment at hard labor. Several thousand pounds were raised by Nairobi citizens to fund an appeal which reduced the sentence to 18 months. Kimani, in the meantime, successfully appealed his case and was released. Disgust and indignation among both police and civilians existed and several police resigned (including Colonel Young on 30 December 1954--the reason, never given). Baldwin follows up this case with a quote from a senior police officer several months later, "Searle and Horsfall were unfortunate to make a mistake at a time when pressure from the home (England) government was being

had ever made was the purchase of a police guard manual on rules of conduct so that he could use it to quote misconduct by paragraph and regulation number and write members of Parliament about brutality.³⁵ His letters did bring action from leftist members of Parliament and such reports kept the Inspection Branch and CID busy.

In April 1954 Colonel A. E. Young, Commissioner of the City of London Police, was appointed Kenya Police Commissioner. He remained in office until December 1954 when he resigned. Mystery still exists as to his reasons for resigning. He was a London Metropolitan cop with no experience in colonial policing. Speculation exists that he was appalled at the police techniques being used and it is known that CID and Inspection Department became extremely active under his command. Martial Law had not been declared with the emergency and Young's resignation gave further fuel to the flames in England of antipolice tactics. Soon after his resignation, the Governor of Kenya announced amnesty to Security Force members accused of using harsh practices but vowed to prosecute any further offenders. Throughout the Security Force morale had been affected by constant probes and investigation of operating techniques. The pendulum had swung and this time, perhaps, to the other extreme where police inaction was often

³⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 172, 102. (Throughout the book he explains how he used such letters to bring down Mau Mau suppression.)

increased. Members of Parliament and various citizen groups were demanding to know what was being done about keeping the Security Forces from 'abusing' the poor Kikuyu."³⁶

The above is given as an example of the work of the Inspection Department with CID to keep corruption and brutality out of police.

8. Training Department: Here, perhaps, is one of the keys to the success of the Kenya Police in Kenya during the Mau Mau emergency. Mention has already been made of the types of operations required and developed by the Kenya Police in dealing with terror and violence as well as the "stage" of development of the Colony Police.

A police training school had been established in 1911 in Nairobi. Because of the semimilitary role, particularly during the First World War, the system was similar to that of the Army. By 1931 the instructional methods and systems were revised to provide more practical and up-to-date police training; however, drill and ceremony still remained. An article in the 1928 The Police Journal (London) stated that in Kenya the police could be expected to act as a second-line of defense in a military role; that some military training made it easier to teach police subjects as it developed alertness, discipline, and concentration, even if it had little to do with police work; and that it developed another specialty.³⁷ The course lasted six months.

³⁶Baldwin, pp. 187-190.

³⁷Foran, p. 148.

By 1948 the training school had been transferred to Kiganjo and professional training was increased with less emphasis on the military. The course remained six months until 1953 when 3,257 African recruits were enlisted and training was curtailed to three months. It was, however, subsequently returned to six months. Special departments in the school gave additional courses in specialist operations such as CID and Special Branch and the facilities of schools in England were also used. Needless to say, most European officers of the force had been trained in England and had had service in other colonial police forces. Language was a problem in the school and in the police. Few Africans were literate and fewer used English, yet by 1950 many police stations were staffed with African inspectors as a result of language training in the school.

Course material from this school is unavailable; however, it is obvious that it was capable of providing the fundamental knowledge of the police service, of the requirements expected of the police officers, of local operating procedures, and of special techniques that must be mastered. The length of training itself is an important factor. In America, the Task Force Report: Police, part of the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, found that formal police training should consist "of an absolute minimum of 400 hours of classroom work spread over a 4 to 6 month period so that it can

be combined with carefully selected and supervised field training.³⁸

Winters in a speech given in 1963 to the First Annual Southern Institute for Law Enforcement described police training as follows:

When recruits are properly selected they bring to the job considerable native ability but little knowledge or experience in police work. In a short time, they must be prepared to operate alone on the streets under a variety of conditions that call for knowledge of laws and ordinances, legal procedures, police practices, and human relations. As they progress, they must not only acquire more of the same kind of knowledge but also should develop some specialized understanding of investigative techniques and scientific crime detection. This will enable them to conduct initial and preliminary investigations and to preserve vital evidence for the specialists who will assist them on difficult cases.³⁹

Here is one of the major keys to the success of police in "counter-gang" operations--the necessity to act alone, to make decisions on the spot, to take appropriate actions, to take the initiative, and to face the criminal or group of criminals with authority and without having to obtain directions from a superior. The military are taught to act first as a member of a team, to follow orders of his team or squad leader who is on the spot; the police are taught first to act alone and second to reinforce other police officers as required.

³⁸The President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice. Task Force Report: The Police (Washington, D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 1967), p. 139.

³⁹Ibid., p. 137.

(One difficulty, perhaps, experienced by police forces in America during recent riots was the lack of training to act as a unit in a semimilitary role and to face mass mobs, rioters, and demonstrators. The American police forces were past "stage three" of their development; yet, these forces are reverting to Special Branch tactics to protect counterriot techniques. Riot control units are being formed and trained from squad to company size.)

In Kenya, as discussed, the Kenya Police were still in "stage two" and the training was aimed at meeting all internal security problems. The colony throughout its police history, as shown, had experienced the single criminal, the border clashes, the intertribal disturbances, and gangs of "societies" aimed at destruction and subversion. The training first taught the police to act alone, on his own initiative, and to deal with the criminal element; and secondly, to act as small groups to suppress larger elements, and to mass where necessary. It taught the policeman to know his beat and the terrain; to know the nature of the people, both the loyal and the criminal element; to know the limits of his capability to act within the law. The policeman was taught individual loyalty and dedication and he was taught the skills to take care of himself--to use force where necessary. Special units were formed to handle special problems; yet, the beat policeman was the generalist capable of meeting any situation, under any conditions, and against any set of actors.

Police and military training may be described by a pyramid. In the police, the real power rests with the policeman at the top of the pyramid while the chiefs retain broad powers but relatively little influence at the crime scene. In the military the power and control of the leader rests at the top of the pyramid with the soldier primarily moving "as a pawn" operated from above. Although this is perhaps an oversimplification, the analogy is no less true.

There is no question that by 20 October 1952, the crisis had gone beyond the limits of the very size of the police to handle it: yet, the question will remain as to what might have happened if the police had received the Government support and backing earlier. Would the emergency measures, if they had been put into effect in 1948 or 1950 or even 1951 or 1952 have made outside assistance unnecessary? Continued look at the operations in Kenya of the police, resulting from their training and experience before and during the emergency, seems to support a yes answer.

9. Jail and Detention: As was seen in the discussion of the history of the Kenya Police, the police had been involved not only in the jailing of individual prisoners but in detention camps such as the Jewish Detainee Camp at Gilgil from 1946-1948.⁴⁰ A special police was established for this purpose but remained under the Commissioner of Police.

⁴⁰Foran, pp. 134-135.

Little preparation time existed for the solution of problems of detention which would result from the mass Mau Mau detention operations.⁴¹ Detention camps were immediately established at old military training sites and the Prison Department was enlarged and placed directly under the Minister of Home Affairs with the Army responsible. Even though the formal control of the detention camps had passed from the Commissioner of Police, the primary burden of cadre for the Prison Department fell to the police, particularly the Kenya Police Reserve. Members of the Tribal Police and the Kikuyu Guard augmented the force of Army guards. The Prison Service at the height of the Mau Mau difficulties reached a total of over 14,000 wardens, most of them temporary hire and many hired with no experience. Africans performed the major guard duty.⁴²

The number of prisoners and detainees had quickly grown from some 9,000 before the rebellion to nearly 90,000 at the peak of the Mau Mau emergency. Within the first fourteen months of the emergency, 156,459 Kikuyu (and their Embu and Meru allies) had been arrested of whom 64,000 had been brought to trial (the others released after screening).⁴³ It was not necessarily the number of detainees which had strained the system but the rapidity with which the numbers grew. The first mass operation,

⁴¹Majdalany, p. 203.

⁴²USDA, Pamphlet 550-56, p. 638.

⁴³Majdalany, p. 188.

"Anvil," resulted in 11,600 Africans being screened by the police with 8,300 passed to Langata for initial detention pending further screening. Within two weeks 30,000 had been screened with 16,538 being detained.⁴⁴

The book by Kariuki, Mau Mau Detainee, is the autobiography of Kariuki, a hard-core Mau Mau, and his experiences in the detention system. Even Miss Perham, who wrote the preface and who had debated long in Parliament against Government policies being used with the Mau Mau, admits that those in Kenya at the time would find the book "untrue and greatly exaggerated."⁴⁵ It does reveal, as she says, another side of the story--the side of a hard-core Mau Mau, a "guard house lawyer," who used the events in the detention camps to help cause a complete investigation. His smuggled-out letters to supporting British Members of Parliament gained press attention which caused bitter debates in England and affected public opinion. As mentioned before, it is an insight into the ability of the Mau Mau to take advantage of their newly discovered British legal and humanitarian systems.

By 1954 plans had been worked out for the reabsorption of detainees released from work camps. Of the some 46,000 being detained in early 1954, 17,000 were in work camps being paid for their labor. These were the less hard core.⁴⁶ In 1960 when the

⁴⁴ibid., p. 204.

⁴⁵Kariuki, p. xi.

⁴⁶British Information Services, ID 1262, The Kenyan Emergency Report by the Kenya War Council (November 1954).

Governor of Kenya officially signed the proclamation bringing the emergency to an end, 4,000 were still being detained and this number was to be reduced to 1,000 within a few weeks.⁴⁷

The Prison System, although not an integral part of the regular Kenya Police during the emergency, was dependent on the police and the police reserves for leadership personnel, prisoner screening, and prisoner transportation.

10. Other Elements: Other elements of the police such as the Service Battalion, the Rail Police, the Water Police, and administrative elements continued to play their role during the emergency. Their nondirect involvement in the emergency makes special comment unnecessary. Also, the operation of the more conventionally thought-of police functions continued but did not, naturally, receive the publicity given to the special agencies directly fighting the Mau Mau.

THE KENYA POLICE RESERVE (KPR)

The KPR had been formed in 1948 and consisted of many volunteers who had served with the Auxiliary Police Force during the Second World War. In 1955, during the emergency, the strength of the KPR rose to 9,076.⁴⁸ It is of interest to note that approximately one-half of this force was European and one-eighth Asian.⁴⁹

⁴⁷Majdalany, p. 230.

⁴⁸Foran, p. 136.

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 191.

Throughout 1952 and 1953 the Mau Mau emergency overshadowed everything. "Crime assumed a grave and violent turn of an abominable and murderous nature, while gangsterism became a common feature." Urgent demands for police reinforcements were needed and the KPR was first called upon to assist in the manning of newly established police posts and stations.⁵⁰ The official history of the Kenya Police states that "The help provided by the Kenya Police Reserve resulted in an outstanding improvement in the total effort to suppress the Mau Mau rebellion."⁵¹

By 1953 the principle of integration was established in three major areas--(1) the establishment of a combined Regular and Reserve Headquarters at Colony, Provincial, and Divisional Headquarters as well as certain selected district; (2) Provincial and District Commandants of the Reserve to be employed as Deputies of their Regular Police opposite number; and (3) Staff Officers of the Reserve to act as Staff Officers at the various combined headquarters. A further change was that Reserve Police were junior only to those of an equivalent rank. By March 23, 1954, all KPR Police were subject to all police regulations and disciplinary actions and had in effect become "Regular Police."⁵²

In March, also, authority was given to enroll Africans in a Special Police to serve at the many new police posts. These posts

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 184.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 188.

⁵²Ibid., p. 191.

were all commanded by Europeans, many reservists. In the early days of the emergency the African Special Police either brought with them, or were issued with, their traditional weapons--spears, bows and arrows, and pangas. As their training progressed they were issued rifles and by the end of the emergency at least 90 percent of the 1,998 enrolled African Special Police had been armed with rifles. ⁵³

The Special Police and the companies of the KPR (absorbed in GSU) served in forward, more affected Mau Mau areas. ⁵⁴

In the Thomson's Falls area the Kenya Police Reserve Tracker Combat Teams proved extremely effective and well trained. They had become expert in anticipating the movement of Mau Mau gangs. This particular team's "knowledge of direct tracking was almost unbelievable." ⁵⁵

The operations of the KPR and its Air Wing, are not treated separately as they were not operationally treated separately during the emergency.

THE TRIBAL POLICE

Again, as with the Prison Service, the Regular Kenya Police had only indirect control over the Tribal Police. Initially, the Kenya police was charged with the full responsibility for the prison

⁵² Ibid., p. 191

⁵³ Ibid.,

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 192

system, but surrendered this direct control to a separate agency. The Tribal Police, initially, were the sole force of the District Commissioners even though in 1925 they were made the responsibility of the Kenya Police. Toward the end of the emergency, they were integrated into the police system as an auxiliary force. For the most part, Tribal Police units were found in the thinly populated areas and on the reserves and many performed with high standards during the emergency. ⁵⁶

Majdalany states that one of the failures of the police in halting the tide of Mau Mau was their failure to use the Tribal Police prior to the emergency. The long-standing custom was that the Kenya Police with its European-officered colony force did not operate in the Reserve but only in the European settled areas and the town. The African Reserve was left to the African Tribal Police who came directly under the Provincial administrators. According to Majdalany the force consisted of men of good standing who served in their own home location. They could aptly be called the personal retainers of the District Officer and the "village Bobby" of Kenya. In peacetime the system had worked well but during the rise of Mau Mau regular police reinforcements were essential, not only to bolster the intelligence gathering effort but to take the full weight of Mau Mau's constant intimidation and bribery campaign of the Tribal Police. ⁵⁷ Once bolstered

⁵⁶DA Pamphlet 56, p. 635

⁵⁷Majdalany., p. 13

support was given by the Regular Police, the Tribal Police served well as will be shown in their operations.

Again, as with the KPR, the operations of the Tribal Police became integrated in all Police Operations. They assisted as prison guards, reinforced Special Branch and GSU and bolstered the Kikuyu Guard.

CHAPTER V

INTELLIGENCE AND GOVERNMENTAL ACTIONS DURING THE RISE OF MAU MAU 1946-1952

There is little doubt that much information was collected about the Mau Mau secret organization. The special branch of the police was functioning well and local administrators supplemented their information with numerous warnings of the danger of the Kikuyu unrest. Corfield, in his study, found volumes of reports; however, he concludes that the machinery for the interpretation of these reports as to their short-term and long-term implications was missing.¹ This assessment is perhaps true but the base of the problem was also perhaps a reluctance of the administration and persons in governmental power to admit failure. This Chapter does not intend to admit that there were no weaknesses in Police Intelligence or to overlook the recognized problems the Police had for failure to increase Special Branch earlier or to patrol the Kikuyu Reserve. It does however, purport that all the blame is not that of Police failures.

First, consider what was known. It is obviously asy to Monday-morning quarterback but the possibility of closed ears and eyes appear unbelievable.

Gradually, the words Mau Mau came into use and represented a secret and highly subversive organization. These words were not

¹Corfield, p. 32.

heard until 1946 (incidentally, the year Jomo Kenyatta returned to Kenya). In 1947 there was circumstantial evidence of midnight oathing. In 1948 the words reached the world press. Mau Mau had grown out of the KCA (Kikuyu Central Association) and mass meetings also became the instrument of open anti-government subversive talk.

Corfield records some of the official reports prior to 1952 that reached the Central Government, that were distributed to other colonial governments and that reached Britain---reports which were often disbelieved. We know that at this time Britain, the Colonial Office, and the Governor General were embarked on social and economic progress which could have had some effect on the interpretation of the danger. Changes were needed, they were taking place; yet, events can overtake social progress if a pulse of dissent is not monitored and controlled.

The KCA had been outlawed in 1940, but by 1946 a KAU (Kenya African Union) had emerged. In his annual report for 1945, the Provincial Commissioner, Central Province stated that the KAU is "to emulate the proscribed KCA."²

In 1946 the following two secret intelligence reports were issued.

It is with growing amazement that I notice the increase in anti European sentiment among at least one section of the African population in Nairobi.

²Ibid., p. 65

Recent debates have revealed in startling fashion attitudes of mind which I find surprising after 18 months in an urban African city. (District Commissioner, Nairobi)

The outward signs of unrest among Africans is a pernicious African press, increased activities of the known political agitators and opposition to many forms of Government activity in the reserves, particularly if it is directed by Europeans or Chiefs. (Provincial Commissioner, Central Province, December 1946) ³

In 1947 two major protest actions emphasized the unrest and dissatisfaction with the "squatter agreement" and overcrowded conditions in the Kikuyu Reserve. About 100 Kikuyus marched on Nairobi to be followed by a better organized group of 300 who invaded the Governor's House. In June of that year Kenyatta was elected President of the KAU after declaring that bloodshed for freedom would be necessary. This was reported in the 1947 Annual Report. Riots, strikes, and violent agitations became common occurrences after August 1947. In one such incident the District Commissioner and the Superintendent of Police were both injured by stones. In October, Chief Ignatis of Fort Hall was given an armed guard to protect him. Unapproved meetings were held and in one incident the District Commissioner, who had attended the meeting alone to prevent an appearance of intimidation barely extricated himself when pandemonium erupted against the government and white rule. The Special Branch by September 1947 had established and reported in the Kenya Intelligence Summary that the agitations were centrally directed. An extract

³ibid.,

of information was known about 2000 men of the Forty Group (so-called by their circumcision year---a Kenya custom in 1940) who were sent to Fort Hall district to "go after people who were taking information to the Government, and to go after our elders, headmen and chiefs who are spoiling our district."⁴

On 19 September 1947 the Acting Provincial Commissioner, Central Province directed a long secret letter to the Chief Secretary discussing the increase in violence and the "now subversive gatherings" with known central direction. He had also spoken to the Acting Governor and the Member for Law and Order of the necessity for firm steps to prevent such defiance of authority.⁵ He requested power to prohibit such meetings which openly advocated the destruction of "all the institutions of good government. The only response received was a semi-official note from the Member for Law and Order saying that the Governor had asked him to point out to the Province Commissioner that since this dealt with Law and Order it should have been addressed to the Member for Law and Order."⁶ Procedure, not contents, seemed of prime importance. The letter did, however, result in a notice referring to Police Ordinance, 1930, Section 33, concerning the licensing requirements for mass meetings.⁷

⁴Ibid., p. 298

⁵Ibid., p. 70

⁶Ibid., p. 71

⁷Ibid.,

By the end of the year, the Fort Hall District Commissioner had reported to the Director of Intelligence and Security the strong rumor circulating that the Kikuyu would right all wrongs by the murder of all Europeans.⁸ The year had been turbulent and the provincial annual report noted it as one of "political unrest fomented by unscrupulous agitators working often consciously against the common good and thriving financially on the troubles created.... the chief active supporters were found among the urban riff-raff."⁹

The Kenya Intelligence Reviews, compiled by the Director of Intelligence and Security, and approved by the Commissioner of Police and the Member of Law and Order, were dispatched to the Colonial Office in the name of the Governor. The anti-government activities of 1947 were reported.¹⁰

The year 1948 started with two heated debates in the Legislative Council reference the political unrest. The first resulted in a motion accusing the Administration from top to bottom for the responsibility of the chaotic state of affairs concerning the native agitation and unrest.¹¹ The second debate concerned the government's requirement for approval to have political meetings. It was obvious that the government was faced with a dilemma---the necessity for law and order which was essential, the shortage

⁸Ibid., p. 72

⁹Ibid., p. 72-73

¹⁰Ibid., p. 74

¹¹Ibid.,

of police and money and the "rabble-rousers" using the principle of freedom of assembly to advocate sedition as referred to by the Chief Native Commissioner.¹²

Dissidents were also beginning to use the legal system to undermine the authority. Chief Malsimai and Chief Waruhiu provide two examples. The militant leaders set out to destroy the chiefs. Both had to face the court on charges of assault based on trumped-up evidence but legally admissible. In both cases the Provincial and District Commissioners acknowledge the deplorable situation yet legal technicalities had been fulfilled.¹³

"The Revolt of the Women" of Fort Hall, contrary to Kikuyu custom, revealed the work of the agitators; yet, it was during a trial of two Kikuyus in March 1948 that the agitators and the KCA were linked. During the trial, witnesses, in conversation with the police, referred openly to the subversive organization of Mau Mau. The two Kikuyus were found guilty of assault against Africans who refused to join an illegal squatters' organization.¹⁴

By June 1948, the Director of Intelligence and Security was reporting the illegal oathing by dissident Africans and on 21 September 1948 the words Mau Mau, "a new movement," was used for the first time in official documents.¹⁵ By December 46 branches of the illegal KCA were identified and 1,834 names of members

¹²ibid., p. 76

¹³ibid.,

¹⁴ibid., p. 77

¹⁵ibid., p. 78

were known. By the end of 1948, the District Commissioner of Fort Hall was reporting that "storms are brewing and gale warnings should be sounded," but acknowledged that 1948 had been notably quieter than 1947. It is interesting to note that the only incident recorded in the year end intelligence review was the conviction of the two Kikuyus for assault with respect to illegal oathing.

By mid 1949, the new Commissioner of Police, M.S. O'Rorke, who had been seconded from the Palestine Police, recognized the "troublesome times ahead for the Kenya Police" and began expanding police control into the reserves.¹⁶ Although the dissidents were definitely playing low key, this period of quiet seemed to build the tension and the concern about elements following Kenyatta, the Independent Schools, and the KAU.

In March 1949 the District Commissioner, Kiambu, reported that the "subversive political temperature appears to be rising." Secret intelligence reports from the District Commissioner, Thika, in April and June reported the trouble being caused on the reserves by Kenyatta, the increased crime and the fear of the loyal chiefs. The Superintendent of Police noted that there was a dangerous undercurrent in Kenya; yet, he had never experienced such "difficulty in obtaining information of a political nature and that there appears to be a definite move afoot to prevent the leakage of information being received."¹⁷

¹⁶Foran., p. 158

¹⁷Corfield., p. 80

By April 1949 Colonel Meinertzhagen, a retired officer of the King's African Rifles, sent a personal letter to the Governor warning him of the unrest of the Kikuyu, and giving him information received from a chief about the secret society called "Maw Naw," the oathing, and the possibility of violence by the Kikuyu. The Colonel received no reply from the Governor. ¹⁸

By June 1949 the Kenya Intelligence Review was reporting frequent meetings of squatters in the Rift Valley Province, while district commissioners by the end of the year were reporting that "natives were openly talking of the Kikuyus' assertion that they will one day take over Kenya and the Europeans will be driven away." ¹⁹ A link had definitely been established between the unrest of Rift Valley squatters and the KCA, KAU, and the Kikuyu Karinga Education Association. The year end intelligence report indicated the growth of the KCA and the authorized police searches of KCA managers' houses which resulted in negative findings. It was learned, however, that KCA instructions were issued by "word of mouth" rather than written in order to avoid compromise and to maintain secrecy. Because of no concrete evidence the courts could not act against these managers. ²⁰

On 4 April 1950, the Nairobi African Affairs Officer addressed a secret letter to the Director of Intelligence and Security, with copies to district commissioners, saying that a

¹⁸ibid., p. 81

¹⁹ibid., p. 82

²⁰ibid., p. 82-83

responsible and reliable Kikuyu had revealed the oathing of Kikuyus to include its contents, administration procedures, costs and secrecy.²¹ Following this report numerous other reports began to piece together the effects of forced oathings.

On 11 April 1950, the Assistant Superintendent of Police, Kiambu, submitted a long statement on illegal oath administration and the activities of the KCA supplied by informers.²² As a result of this report the police, in a meeting with district commissioners, opened case files on possible oath administrators and on 29 April, 27 persons were arrested, found guilty and given varying terms of imprisonment. The case did not concern any matter other than "Section 62 of the Penal Code" referring to illegal oathing---the purpose or eventual impact of such oathing was incidental information during the course of testimony.²³

The police continued to bring cases of illegal oath administrators to court and each case added new information (piece by piece) to the "Mau Mau" story. In April 1950 eight were convicted of illegal oath administering, and in June, nineteen. The latter trial led to the proscription of Mau Mau. Section 62(1) of the Penal Code was changed to read: " Any person who (1) administers or is present at and consents to the administering of any oath or engagement in the nature of an oath, purporting to bind

²¹Ibid., p. 84

²²Ibid.,

²³Ibid., p. 85

the person who takes it in any of the following ways . . . is guilty of a felony." ²⁴

At this point it is essential to note what happened following the June 1950 trial. Nabrougi s/o Kadagoya, a Masai, appealed his conviction. Although the section of the Penal Code was all-inclusive and covered either the administering of an oath or the willing presence during an oath ceremony, the actual charge sheet had contained the words "unlawfully administered." The Court of Appeals stated that although Kadagoya was guilty under the code the wording of the charge was improperly framed and that it had no option under the law but to reverse the findings. Thus, Kadagoya and his compatriots were released.

This trial, with its subsequent appeal, was recognized by all, both in the reserves and the settled areas, as the first major test of strength between Mau-Mau and the forces of law and order, and the news of these releases spread far and wide, giving a great flip to the supporters of Mau-Mau and causing consternation among pro-Government Africans, who, not being conversant with the intricacies of the law, could only assume that the power of the Government to take effective action against Mau-Mau were seriously curtailed. On 17 November 1950, the Divisional Police Headquarters, Nyeri reported (that) there can be no doubt that Mau-Mau leaders will make good capital out of the results, and it is thought that the oathing campaign position will now become delicate. ²⁵

This event, above all others, had the most impact on the ability of the police to stop the spread of Mau Mau. Although Corfield points this out clearly, he avoids a direct criticism of the court system.

²⁴Ibid., p. 86

²⁵Ibid., pp 86-87

Following the actions of the courts, the police continued, yet with further frustrations, the effort to root out the Mau Mau. By January 1951, the police had six cases before the court. Although available records do not discuss the outcome of each case, at least one was reversed on appeal and in another the state witnesses disappeared.²⁶

As subversion increased during 1950, so did lawlessness and the police called this to the attention of the Secretary for Law and Order. Yet, as Corfield points out, the Central Government felt that many illegal acts were not attributable to the Mau Mau and that Mau Mau incidents were being exaggerated. The Acting Governor did, however, in June 1950 in an address to the Chief Native Commissioners recognize that the press and a number of people were concerned about the Mau Mau association. He stated that the matter was the commissioners' responsibility and that he would like an investigation with recommendations concerning special action which should be taken. The commissioners' reply recommended the outlawing of Mau Mau under Section 69 of the Penal Code and on 4 August 1950, the Executive Council proscribed the Mau Mau association based on information supplied by the Director of Intelligence and Security. The Special Branch documents at the time considered KCA, KAU, and Mau Mau indistinguishable. Corfield considers this a factor which militated against the full

²⁶ibid., p. 87

appreciation of the extent of the Mau Mau danger at the time.

However, it is clear that he is perhaps speaking from the
Governor's view rather than from the police view.²⁷

The magnitude of the oathing was becoming clear. The District Commissioners of Nairobi and Kiambu had reported 480 Kikuyu were oathed in two days in May 1950. (The arrest by the police of Dedan Mago had temporarily stopped the oathing; however, with his release by the courts an increase could be expected.)

On 21 July 1950 the District Commissioner of Nyeri, prior to the proscription of Mau Mau, reported that his theory was that there existed in his district an organization, the members of which were centrally trained and directed, which has as its aim "the eventual disruption of Government's activities and authority: the organization is at present insufficiently powerful to provoke any breach with Government, but aims by subtle methods to attract a sufficient following to be able to put into operation at a future date some form or forms of civil disobedience, backed by a substantial proportion of the population." He mentioned the rumored conspiracy to assassinate leading pro-Government Africans in order to cause a public commission of enquiry to be sent from England which would uncover evidence of oppression and recommend "freedom" for Africans. He noted that such actions were followed in Uganda and on the West Coast of Africa. This theory got wide distribution but the Central Government files showed on the report only a Secretariat's initials.²⁸

²⁷ ibid., p. 90

²⁸ ibid., p. 92

Following the proscription of Mau Mau on 13 August 1950, police were dispatched on 22 August 1950 to the Nyeri district to investigate a large meeting of the KCA which was to take place and where many people were to be forced to take the oath. Although the meeting had dispersed on arrival of the police, evidence of the oathing was found and 37 men were arrested. Fifteen were subsequently charged and found guilty of administering or being at the administration of an unlawful oath and were given varying terms of imprisonment. ²⁹

This outbreak in Thegenze, Nyeri led the police to increase its CID and Special Branch coverage of the Central Province and the settled areas of the Rift Valley Province. Two additional police officers were assigned to Nyeri and Nakuru and the Assistant Superintendent of Police ordered a full enquiry into the build-up of Mau Mau. The enquiry confirmed the views and theory presented in July by the District Commissioner of Nyeri but could not, with concrete evidence, connect the KCA and Mau Mau. A separate Nyeri police report did provide evidence of illegal oathing ceremonies taking place in the Independent Schools. ³⁰

Evidence did continue to grow. Tom Mbotela, a non-Kikuyu and member of the KAU, informed the Government that Kenyatta had advised KAU to support Mau Mau; he stated that Mau Mau was stronger than ever; he stressed the danger of the Kikuyu Age

²⁹Ibid., p. 92

³⁰Ibid., p. 93

Group Association (Age Group 40); and he suggested that funds collected by this group were directed to the illegal KCA.³¹ Meetings were planned to get Mbotela, Kenyatta and other leaders to denounce Mau Mau. The militant course of actions taken by Mau Mau were repudiated by Mbotela frequently until November 1951 when Kenyatta, with his KAU flag vowed a self-governing African Kenya. The activities of the Kenya Government during these supposed Mau Mau denunciation meetings which were planned over a period from 1950 into 1952 are well recorded in Rosberg's and Nottingham's book The Myth of Mau-Mau: Nationalism in Kenya. This indicated that political actions were deeply involved in getting African support to stop African Mau Mau from spreading.³² Thus, as early as late 1950, the Government was fully aware of the potential danger of the spread of Mau Mau, yet, no emergency was recognized. (Mbotela was assassinated 26 November 1952 by Mau Mau).

In November 1950 a meeting was held in the Provincial Commissioner's office at Nakura with representatives of the court, police, native commissioner's office and district officers. The Inspector of Police stated that the secret society appealed primarily to the Kikuyu and was well established over a wide area. When the suggestion was given to increase the punishment (extension of the punishment of flogging) the Member for the Law and Order (who headed the court and police) stated that such action would not

³¹ibid., p. 95

³²Carl G. Rosberg, Jr. and John Nottingham, The Myth of Mau Mau: Nationalism in Kenya, (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1966). p. 260-276

get the approval of the Secretary of State as the current tendency was to restrict the number of offenses for which flogging could be imposed.³³

Still another such meeting held was under the chairmanship of the Acting Governor. At this meeting the Provincial Commissioner, Central Province, argued that propaganda against the Mau Mau Association was useless and that legal action against offenders was the only line of action. Preventive detention was suggested by the Chief Native Commissioner but again the Member for Law and Order argued that the Secretary of State would not accept such a measure during peacetime. As previously mentioned, however, the only action was to make it a felony to administer or be present at the administration of an oathing.³⁴

The police by the end of November 1950 had presented an evaluation of the danger of Mau Mau and its effect on the Kikuyu tribe members. The schizophrenic nature of the Kikuyu was recognized. This allowed the Kikuyu to act and appear normal when in view of the Government and the opposite when alone with Kikuyus. Thus, 1950 closed with a reasonable good evaluation of the dangers of Mau Mau by the police and the commissioners but with no legal actions to assist the police in limiting its spread except arrest or oath offenders.

It was during 1950 that the "many and varied facets of the

³³Corfield., pp. 96-97

³⁴ibid., p. 97

campaign of Mau-Mau subversion came more definitely to notice and the general pattern of the overall plan of Mau-Mau became more apparent, at least to those in the field who were in closest contact with it." ³⁵ By the end of the year 142 persons had been prosecuted in connection with oathing and 120 had been convicted; yet, this had little weakening effect on the escalating Mau Mau. The police had been kept to their role of "arrest after the act" not "prevention before the act takes place."

The year 1951 was a year of talk---Kenya, Mau Mau denunciation attempts, continued social and economic government goals, continued oathing and continued attempts to convict offenders. The secrecy among the Kikuyus increased and greater difficulty was experienced by the police in obtaining evidence which would stand up in court.

Much attention resulted from a Government-approved mass meeting by the KAU on the showground at Nyeri on 27 May 1951 and varying views of its results are worth noting:

(1) District Commissioner using information furnished by the Assistant Superintendent of Police, Nyeri:

The meeting itself displayed a very nasty temper.... after Anderson (Wamuthenya) sat down it would have been suicidal for anyone to pass a remark in favor of the Government....it was clearly stated that the Secretary of State would be given a period to accede to their requests....There is every likelihood of trouble in the near future if, as seems certain, the K.A.U. memorandum on the Kikuyu lands is rejected....any future meetings will almost certainly result in either (universal civil disobedience, a march on

³⁵ibid., pp. 100-101

Government house, the assassination of leading Government supporters, an attack on Chiefs' offices, etc., in the reserves or women sent to cultivate European farms near the boundary of the reserve)....

(2) Director of Intelligence and Security to the Member for Law and Order:

I am informed by the Senior Superintendent of Police, Nyeri District, that he considers this report to be exaggerated....if the report is in fact true.... I am getting the views of the Senior Superintendent of Police, Nyeri, in writing.

(3) District Commissioner in a reply to the Chief Native Commissioner:

The account of the K.A.U. meeting....is entirely accurate....The meeting was covered by a number of people in the employ of the Police and Administration, and by the Assistant Superintendent of Police, Mr. Ian Henderson, who speaks fluent Kikuyu. All were unanimous that it was stated that a plan of action had been prepared should the memorandum to the Secretary of State be rejected....The general atmosphere in the reserve is still good, but there can be no doubt but that the extremists are becoming increasingly active and violent....I am holding a security conference with the Senior Superintendent of Police and various administrative and departmental officers, at which we are going to draw up all possible courses of action open to the agitators and means of dealing with them....To sum up, I would welcome the ban of all public meetings until the end of the year....

(4) Provincial Commissioner:

The District Commissioner has painted the picture in strong colours, but it is a fact that there has been a swing towards the extremists who have gained control of the K.A.U. committees in both Nyeri and Fort Hall (also Nairobi) during the past six months.... Mob oratory, linked with the ability to say anything fantastic regardless of truth, and bearing repetitively on "Lebensraum" as the main theme with popular appeal in Kikuyu, has a great inflammatory potential and the District Commissioner...goes to the root of the matter.... I am not seriously worried by the situation at this moment...but it may get seriously out of hand unless we take a pull on the reins.

(5) Director of Intelligence and Security forwarded an evaluation of the situation by the Senior Superintendent of Police to the Member for Law and Order:

My attitude is this. I accept the threat of the meeting but cannot all the time guard against every possibility. If the opposition are set on trouble, I have sufficient force to deal with this when they show their hand. In the meantime, every effort is being made to collect all intelligence which bears on the intentions of the leaders and a meeting has been held (administration and police) which considered possible lines of action open to agitators and suitable counteractions....In view, however, of the alarmist reports....I think I might bring the matter of the validity of these local opinions to a head by formally asking the Provincial Commissioner, Central Province, whether he requires any police reinforcements other than those which can be made available from the school....

(6) Provincial Commissioner's reply, 31 August 1951:

Apart from the proposed police post at Othaya the Provincial Commissioner did not think that from the security angle there were grounds for strengthening the existing police force....³⁶

(This dialogue is included to demonstrate the dichotomy which existed between the local level and the governmental level. The potential for violence was not Kenya-wide but primarily confined to the Kikuyu. This was perhaps a contributing factor in the inability of the government to recognize the real danger.)

The final outcome of the dialogue was the establishment of another police post at Othaya and the provision that the KAU meeting in Nyeri would require the prior approval of the Provincial Commissioner. There was no overall assessment made

³⁶Ibid., pp. 107-109.

and definitely a lack of personal contact between Nairobi responsibility for law and order and those in the field.

Signs of increasing unrest and the spread of Mau Mau among the Kikuyu labor in the settled area of the Rift Valley Province were noted throughout the year. Each period of unrest was counteracted by showing of movies and increased use of anti Mau-Mau propaganda. Indications were reported even at local level that the general picture was improving and the Mau Mau followers in the area were showing signs of distrust and discouragement, and it would appear that the Mau Mau is "cracking up."³⁷ This information was quickly picked up by Intelligence and forwarded to the Member of Law and Order. This was in June 1951; yet by October 1951 anxiety and concern began again. On 24 October 1951, the Chief Native Commissioner and the Acting Provincial Commissioner reported:

. . . there can be no doubt that the Mau-Mau movement, even if quiescent at the moment, is not only wide-spread throughout the settled areas of the province but is extending its tentacles...and it would be a mistake to imagine that its powers to create disturbances, disrupt labour relations or incite sabotage have in any way diminished, or that it will not again at any moment have recourse to overt action. From it follows that the present methods have not been successful and, therefore, increased powers are essential for its suppression. It has proved extremely difficult indeed for the police to obtain convictions, in view of the unwillingness of witnesses to expose themselves to retaliatory action by the society, and it was generally agreed at the meeting that the sentences which magistrates were competent to inflict were insufficient to act as a real deterrent.³⁸

³⁷ibid., p. 111

³⁸ibid., p. 112

Another Administration and Police joint meeting was held on 31 October 1951 which set up seven aims. Most of these were in the social/economic/psychological areas; however, the first was: "The Kenya Police should continue their present activities and police officers would press for longer sentences, since magistrates could, if it was considered necessary, ask for the Supreme Court to enhance sentences above the maximum with which they are empowered." The remitting of prisoners to the Supreme Court for sentence proved ineffectual as the Supreme Court was circumscribed by the sentences outlined in the Penal Code. Therefore, effective action was blocked and the anti-Mau Mau propaganda actions seemed the only course at the local or police level. ³⁹

The first overall evaluation of the Mau Mau situation conducted by the Internal Security Working Committee submitted a report to the Governor in November 1951. Under the heading "Mau Mau", the report consisted of the following:

This is a Kikuyu secret society which is probably another manifestation of the suppressed Kikuyu Central Association, its objects are anti-European and its intention is to dispossess Europeans of the White Highlands. Its members take an oath not to give information to the police, and may also swear not to obey certain orders of the Government. It is suspected that some members employed on European farms indulge in a "go slow" policy, and that they may also have committed minor acts of sabotage on farms. Successful prosecutions against the society are believed to have checked its growth; or at least to have curbed the forceful recruitment of adherents. The potency of the organization depends on the extent to which it possesses

³⁹ibid., p. 113

the power, latent in all secret societies, of being more feared than the forces of law and order. It is possible that as soon as the Sh. 60 entrance fees are no longer forthcoming little more will be heard of Mau-Mau; but, in the meantime, this society, like the religious sects, remains a possible instrument for mischief in the hands of agitators, though one of which the potentialities appear to be waning. ⁴⁰

Corfield concludes that although the existence of Mau Mau, oath-taking and often violent unrest existed, even the police and particularly Special Branch had not appreciated the existence of central direction and common policy behind the movement. There had been implications of the return of the proscribed KCA and the possible link between the KAU and Mau Mau; yet, this could not be proved.

Thus, 1951 ended with the Governor sending the report of the Internal Security Working Committees to the Secretary of State. In a cover letter he pointed out that "it is well to bear in mind that although a sentiment such as nationalism may acquire great strength and momentum, quite apart from the existence of poverty or other causes of social discontent, the major problem in Kenya and East Africa generally is social and agrarian and not nationalism."⁴¹ He requested a Royal Commission and study of the problem by the Colonial Office.

Here again is perhaps a break in the full recognition of the problem to be faced. The Governor General had spent some 30 years on assignments in Africa. He had seen such secret movements rise

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 116

⁴¹Ibid., p. 118

only to fall of their own weight. Although no reference can be found which states such a premise, perhaps the Governor had much impact on the thoughts of the Member for Law and Order, the Superintendent of Police, as well as other cabinet members less expert in African affairs concerning the danger. He was greatly concerned with other affairs such as social and economic advancement but he failed to realize that such advancement can take place best where law and order exist. After his retirement prior to the declaration of the emergency in 1952, he wrote a book; yet, his book provides no explanation of his failure to use greater law enforcement techniques to ensure the advancement of his welfare programs. Majdalany in State of Emergency states that "Sir Phillip Mitchell contrived to cocoon himself against the warnings that were constantly pouring into Nairobi from the officials in the field. Game to the last, at a time when his successor was all but packing his bags for the journey to Kenya, Mitchell back in London was quoted as saying that 'the suggestion that there was serious unrest in Kenya was a fabrication of mischievous agitators and unscrupulous journalists'".⁴²

Although it was becoming increasingly difficult for the police to obtain evidence necessary for prosecutions in the courts of law, reports from all district commissioners and police elements showed a continued intensification of oathing ceremonies

⁴²Majdalany., p. 96.

into 1952. By February 1952, following numerous cases of arson and oathing, the Assistant Commissioner of Police, CID reported:

There appears little doubt that the object of this campaign is to intimidate such local Government supporters as exist in the Aguthi location, and so establish an area, which has for long been a source of trouble and concern to the Government, as an impregnable fortress from which organized gangs of young Kikuyu, anti-Government and anti-European fanatics may operate with complete immunity.... The plan appears to be therefore to consolidate their position in the reserve as a preliminary to further lawlessness spreading to other areas. The fact that most of these crimes were committed by natives against natives does not minimize their seriousness in any way.... It is evident, too, that even the loyal chiefs and headmen are becoming uneasy and less effective as valuable aids to Government in the maintenance of law and order. 43

Six temporary police posts staffed by an European police inspector and 15 men from the police training school, complete with radios and transportation, were established in Nyeri. In addition, two mobile patrols of police were kept in the reserve at Kigango to carry on raids. A police post at Muthaya was reestablished. Again the District Commissioner, with police support, requested the Member of Law and Order for stronger punishments and fines. And again the Member for Law and Order argued about rights of the individual and his responsibility to the law. After much debate, in which the group responsibility aspects of African tribes in contrast to the European concept was argued, did the Governor on 8 April 1952 sign an order authorizing the imposing of a fine of 2,500 pounds. The Secretary of State and the House

43 Corfield., p. 124.

of Commons got into the debate arguing that such a collective fine was contrary to the principles of natural justice; however, they finally concurred in the Governor's actions. ⁴⁴

Chapter VI, discusses the increased violence that 1952 brought; therefore, here, where concern is more of what was known of Mau Mau prior to the declaration of the emergency than with specific violent acts, suffice it to say that disorder among the Kikuyus increased in 1952.

By April 1952 the Director of Intelligence and Security had submitted a summary connecting the Mau Mau with the illegal KCA and the KAU, but still questioned the possibility of large-scale, overt, subversive acts. In a report he did state that "Continued police action is required in order to protect respectable citizens and to uphold law and order."⁴⁵

In February 1952, the Governor was quoted as having said in London during a brief visit that the general political feeling in Kenya was better than he had ever known it for many years whereas the Kenya Weekly News commented that "the political situation is now more disturbing and the prospect more anxious that it has been since 1936."⁴⁶

Two important things happened in June 1952; one, the Kikuyu oathing was confirmed as a "killing oath"---to kill Europeans, and second, was the retirement and departure of the Governor, Sir

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 125.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 130.

⁴⁶Majdalany., p. 87

Phillip Mitchell. His position remained vacant, even at a time of crisis, for three months while on retirement leave. Since the Colonial Office was allowed only one governor per colony, the new appointee could not assume office until the final retirement date of the former.⁴⁷

On 14 July 1952 the views of the Commissioner of Police in a Top Secret letter to the Member of Law and Order under the title "Kikuyu Political Activity" became the basis for further government action. Extracts of this lengthy report are worth noting.

The recent activities of the Kikuyu people, both constitutionally as well as unconstitutionally, together with other evidence of the state of mind of these people, give one very seriously to consider what is afoot among these million and a quarter of the most intelligent and most progressive, but at the same time most disgruntled and most criminal, people of Kenya. Is this but one of their periodical manifestations of discontent, or is it something far more dangerous to the peace and good order of the colony? I am forced to the conclusion that it is the latter, and that something in the nature of a general revolt among the Kikuyu against European settlement and the policy of Government has been planned and that the plan has already begun to be put into effect....The Kikuyu is a strange suspicious people, deeply influenced by superstition, steeped in black magic and intensively secretive. These qualities make them a people exceedingly difficult to penetrate... I am strongly of the opinion that the events of the last seven months clearly indicate the existence of such a plan...to revolt....The events and evidence which I considered....a) The mass demonstration of thousands of Kikuyu women.... b) The rapid spread of subversion.... c) the general increased tempo of Kikuyu political activity....d)The influence and position of the Kikuyu Independent Schools....e) The growing truculence of these people....f) The increased incidence of serious

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 88

Kikuyu crime...If it is accepted that a general revolt amongst the Kikuyu people is being carried into effect /he compares the similar signals preceding the Gold Coast, Irish, and Palestine, uprisings/ and I have no doubt that this is the case, the situation calls for immediate action, and action which must go far beyond that which lies in the hands of the police....

(He continued by stating that there was little hope now of police action alone being successful. To take action against even a small proportion of the real criminals would result in the conviction of tens of thousands for whom no prison accommodations were available. He continued by stating that urgent police action was required and would be taken, but at best it could only have a delaying effect.)

There are certain lines of actions to suggest which fall outside of the police province; I shall be glad to make suggestions with regard to these measures if it is considered that the situation requires other than police measures.⁴⁸

It was not until this report by the Commissioner of Police that the Central Government seemed to take the matter of dangerous unrest seriously. As an aside, the timeliness of this report, one month after the departure of Governor Mitchell, is interesting.

A governmental meeting on 24 July 1952 was called to discuss the report of the Commissioner of Police. Corfield notes that the Commissioner of Police was not invited to attend the meeting. He was told that the reason for this decision was that matters of higher policy, which would be discussed, were not the concern of the police.⁴⁹ Although Corfield does not carry this forward, there was probably a key to the failure of the government to act sooner. The Member for Law and Order, as previously discussed,

⁴⁸Corfield, pp 141-142

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 143

was head of internal security, both the court and police. Majdalany in his book State of Emergency points out that "for an academic lawyer to be able to combine both functions with equal aptitude would be something of a tour-de-force of split personality...In practice this tended to mean too much law chasing too little order."⁵⁰ Corfield's report does, however, contribute a major cause of the Government's failure to deal sooner with Mau Mau to this double function of the Member for Law and Order, the evidence also clearly points out the difficulty that the police had in submitting their case (through the Member for Law and Order) to the Government. The police had been delegated to a subservient position at a time when their expertism was essential to early forecast danger.

With the Member for Law and Order representing the court and police, the following decisions were obtained in July meeting:

- 1) No more KAU meetings would be allowed.
- 2) Provincial Commissioner recommended action be taken against Kenyatta and his lieutenants--the Member for Law and Order favored action against lesser important leaders and that Kenyatta and his lieutenants should be left alone unless they committed criminal offenses.
- 3) The Member for Law and Order agreed to consider special legislation for imposing corporal punishment to persons convicted of using bodily violence in connection with Mau Mau ceremonies.

⁵⁰Majdalany., pp 88-89.

4) Aid of churches should be enlisted for organizing an anti-Mau Mau campaign on a religious basis.

5) Counter-oathing ceremonies were to be continued.

6) Important Mau Mau prisoners should serve their sentences in special prisons.

7) KAU headquarters and the Kikuyu Club in Nairobi would be raided.

8) Legislation proposed to ban the flying of the KAU flag.⁵¹

Subsequently, the Member for Law and Order decided against (1) and (8) reasoning that they might cause a general strike.

In August two meetings of the European Elected Members Organization met with the Acting Governor. The Commissioner of Police, as well as the Member for Law and Order, was invited. This meeting raised six salient points:

1) That Emergency Powers in certain areas should be authorized immediately.

2) That the leaders of KAU should be dealt with immediately.

3) That a special Commissioner for Security should be appointed.

4) That the posts of Attorney General and Member for Law and Order should be separated.

5) That the Government should state that African nationalism was not H.M. Government's policy for Kenya and statements contrary were seditious.

6) That there was a real danger that Europeans would take

⁵¹Corfield., p. 143

matters into their own hands if the forces for law and order did not deal immediately with present lawlessness.⁵²

Although these measures were not adopted by the Acting Governor, they did provide a framework for further meetings and eventual action.

The Commissioner of Police warned against high hopes of finding real evidence to support the prosecution for sedition of the KAU. He reminded government officials of the cunning of the KAU in knowing the technicalities of the law and how far they could go "legally" as well as the time lag in processing legal action.⁵³ The Member of Law and Order, noting the large number of weapons and ammunition which had been stolen, did support tighter controls by the police.⁵⁴ Yet actions of the Mau Mau were proceeding faster than the decision making process. The situation in Nyeri and Fort Hall had further deteriorated and police reinforcements were sent from Nairobi and a curfew was imposed.⁵⁵

Still as late as 19 August 1952 the Member for Law and Order insisted with the Acting Governor's support that there was no emergency and the Acting Governor, agreeing, refused to give powers to the police as requested by the European Elected Members Organization. Thus, the Acting Governor killed the first four proposals of the Organization.⁵⁶ The Acting Governor did decide that it was

⁵²Ibid., p. 144

⁵³Ibid., p. 146

⁵⁴Reference Chapter V discussion of ammunition and firearms control under the Kenya Police -7. Inspection Branch.

⁵⁵Corfield, p. 146

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 147

time to warn the Colonial Office of the difficult times which lay ahead. This was the first official notification of the Colonial Office of the magnitude of the trouble.⁵⁷ In the meantime the Attorney General's chamber was preparing legislation for possible implementation; yet, the Member for Law and Order in a letter to the Colonial Office outlining the proposals stated that:

"methods of indirect pressure from the perimeter are being used with good results...it looks as if the thugs, who are the militant element in Mau-Mau, have got their heads down, as things have been very much quieter during the past few weeks...Last Sunday Jomo Kenyatta himself publicly condemned Mau-Mau at a meeting of 30,000 Kikuyu...If this resistance movement gathers strength, then I think we shall succeed rolling back the Mau-Mau movement before too long." He added, "I do not expect you will look upon them with great enthusiasm."⁵⁸

Here again the danger of judging the situation at a selected time rather than over a period of time can be seen. Throughout the buildup phases of Mau Mau, periods of calm were frequent---these were most likely planned to keep the experts off guard and to deceive the optimist.

Also, the true story of Kenyatta's denunciation, interpreted by people who knew the Kikuyu and their language, clearly indicated that Kenyatta had not denounced Mau Mau. His statement was oratory elegance using the denunciation as a means of indicating support.

On 12 September 1952, the Commissioner of Police continued his warning of the increase in terror and violence and supported

⁵⁷Ibid., pp 150-151.

⁵⁸Ibid., pp 153-154

his claim with numerous examples of degraded lawlessness of natives against natives. Charges had been made against more than 100 persons connected with illegal oathing and four magistrates had acknowledged the existence of intimidated witnesses. The Commissioner of Police stated that:

There is little doubt that unless extraordinary legislation is enacted to combat this insidious and vicious campaign to obstruct and prevent justice, the situation will become intolerable. In the absence of such legislation (i.e., the admissability of secondary evidence) the police and courts of justice are virtually powerless.⁵⁹

The number of known murders attributable to Mau Mau from 14-24 September increased from 9 to 23 (2 women and 3 children), 12 attempted murders and 4 suicides: 412 Mau Mau convicts were in prison and many hundred awaited trial. The majority of these were low-level participants, not leaders. On 25 September five Mau Mau raids took place which resulted in setting fires to five farms, killing of 120 cattle (and leaving 26 wounded), and killing of 240 sheep (and leaving 140 wounded).⁶⁰ This was the status when Sir Evelyn Baring, the new Governor, arrived on 29 September 1952.

Up to this point the Government had authorized only curfews and collective fines to assist the police. Additional police had been dispatched to the worse areas. No conclusive evidence had been found to place Kenyatta in the leadership position. Mau Mau had succeeded in dominating the three Kikuyu districts and was beginning to appear in neighboring districts.

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 156

⁶⁰Ibid.,

On 7 October Senior Chief Warukiu s/o Kungu was assassinated and the news of his murder swept through Kenya shocking all but the militant Mau Mau. Tom Mbotela, who had been under police protection for five weeks, expressed again his fear of increased Mau Mau terrorism. 61

After two days of investigation, the CID arrested two Kikuyu who confessed of the murder and told of their accomplice, the son of an ex-chief. During the course of the trial, the two Kikuyu recounted their confessions and counter-charged that they were obtained under duress. The two Kikuyu were found guilty based on other evidence but the third was acquitted on the ground of an inadmissible confession. 62

After the information of Mau Mau threats against loyal Kikuyu, the shock of Chief Warukiu's murder, and a personal tour; the new Governor with only ten days in office dispatched a Top Secret message to the Colonial Office giving reasons for a declaration of an emergency. Extracts of personal letters to the Secretary of State by the Governor stated:

...the position is very serious. By police action, Nairobi and the Rift Valley have been contained but the position in the Kikuyu reserve is getting very much worse...There is evidence that most criminal action is planned in, and instructions are sent from, Nairobi...It is now abundantly clear that we are facing a planned revolutionary movement. If the movement cannot be stopped, there will be an administrative breakdown, followed by bloodshed amounting to civil war....63

⁶¹Ibid., p. 157.

⁶²Ibid., p. 158.

⁶³Ibid., p. 159.

The Secretary of State approved the proposal to declare a State of Emergency and confirmed the reinforcement by air of a British battalion. October 20, 1952 was the agreed day.⁶⁴

(Between 1 October and the declaration a Mr. Bendloss was assaulted and seriously wounded while protecting his wife and a LTC Tullock and his wife were savagely attacked.) The Commissioner of Police was deeply involved in the planning for the declaration of the emergency. Orders were signed by the Governor for the immediate detention of 183 Africans as soon as the proclamation was read by the Governor. On Tuesday morning, 21 October 1952, the Governor broadcast the proclamation signed the day before.

The state of affairs has developed as a result of the activities of the Mau-Mau movement. There is every sign that these activities have followed a regular course in accordance with a considered plan. There is a pattern in the acts of violence; and there can be no such pattern unless someone has made a plan. In order to restore law and order and to allow peaceable and loyal people of all races to go about their business in safety the Government have made emergency regulations to enable them to take into custody certain persons who, in their opinion, constitute a danger to public order...Disorder leads to lack of confidence and where there is no confidence there is economic stagnation. In a state of economic stagnation the standard of life falls and social services, such as education and health, suffer.⁶⁵

The above is extracted from the full broadcast.

By nightfall 99, to include Kenyatta, had been taken into custody.

⁶⁴ibid.,
⁶⁵ibid., pp 160-161

It has been frequently stated that Mau Mau was an unknown quantity until the declaration of the emergency shocked the world. As stated in the beginning of this chapter, care must be taken to avoid Monday-morning quarterbacking; however, the evidence found clearly reveals that those closest to the problem understood the problems to be faced.

In reviewing the facts presented in this chapter concerning knowledge of the buildup of Mau-Mau and law enforcement actions prior to the declaration of the emergency---facts corroborated not only by Corfield but other sources---the following conclusions seem logical:

1) Mau Mau was no surprise to the police of Kenya in 1952; yet in spite of efforts (frequently not supported by technically legal admissible court evidence) to gain sufficient backing to take action as early as 1948, such efforts were not successful.

2) There is reasonable belief that the Governor, prior to 29 September 1952, had let previous experience of 30 years in Africa blind him to changing conditions in Kenya. The reasons behind this lack of awareness of the danger have not been revealed in sources known. Perhaps he wanted to retire with success and progress during his tour in office; perhaps he failed to receive or accept available warning; perhaps he relied too heavily on the advice of his Member for Law and Order; or perhaps he had lost contact with reality. Whatever the "perhaps," he was a definite detriment to early effective reaction to Mau Mau.

3) The Member for Law and Order did not see beyond absolute technical legality of European Natural Law. His reaction to reliable intelligence of the dangers of Mau Mau reflect little knowledge of the real world of crime. He acted as a void between the local and police warnings and the inactive Governor.

4) As evidenced by the one example of failure to consult the Commissioner of Police as a major member of government, the police were ineffective in getting the warning of danger to the Governors where more positive and early action could have been obtained.

5) The European court system imported to Kenya was ineffective in dealing with a secret society of Kikuyu Mau Mau. The Kikuyu (Mau Mau), acknowledged for their intelligence, were able to use the courts to their own advantage.

6) Although actions of the police force are discussed in another chapter, there is no evidence, other than the lack of a forceful Director of Intelligence and Security, that can place blame on the police for their failure to prevent the need for a declaration of the emergency. Police actions had prevented chaos. Sources have placed blame on the lack of intelligence; yet, the position of the Director of Intelligence and Security in relation to the Member for Law and Order was perhaps an untenable situation.

7) The heads of Special Branch sitting at Government level, must have sufficient stature, rank and experience to be able to go directly to the Government with the facts, and see action taken.

Information and intelligence seemed to take a pyramid approach, great at the base (local and police levels) with knowledge of the dangers of inaction, and filtering out to an infinitesimal peak void of knowledge of reality that the base was being eroded by the Mau Mau threat.

It appears in summary that most everyone knew the situation and the dangers of Mau Mau before 1952 but that the facts are often difficult to consolidate at government level into justification for suppressive action. Those who could have acted; the Governor, the Member for Law and Order and the Court System; must assume a large part of the blame for the loss of effective control of law and order and the rising rebellion.

CHAPTER VI

POLICE OPERATIONS DURING THE PERIOD OF MAU MAU DEVELOPMENT 1948-1952

The history of the Kenya Police 1887-1948 reveals the historical preparation which the police had gained. The police had faced all the normal police functions dealing with more conventionally thought of crimes---murder, robbery, rape, burglary, theft and disorderly conduct. Additionally, the police had functioned in a quasi-military role not only in wars involving Kenya with external enemies, but with wars and raids between the tribes of Kenya Colony. For these operations it had perfected somewhat the use of cordons and searches, long range patrols techniques, raid operations behind enemy lines and infiltration for intelligence purposes. It had faced the growing dissent of disloyal politico/religious groups. Through all of this the police principles of operation remained paramount---the initiative of the individual police officer to face the criminal or criminals and bring them to arrest.

Unlawful societies had existed in Kenya and had been dealt with forceably by the police. Yet, 1948 revealed the beginning of still another such organization---Mau Mau. The Commissioner of Police had recognized by 1949 the political unrest and the increase in crime that was resulting from a frustrated society but he had not forecast the real danger to be faced by Mau Mau. In 1947, he had recognized the need for the extension of Special Branch to the Provinces and an increase in intelligence gathering

capability. His request to the Member for Law and Order resulted in only a modest increase in the staff in Nairobi and the appointment of two specialist officers in the provinces. No further increases were gained until just before the emergency was declared in October 1952.¹ Corfield states that "The efficient and hard-working Special Branch, which in relation to its size, produced a constant and voluminous stream of reports. But that was in fact as far as it went."² Special Branches were, however, not organized in the Central and Rift Valley Provinces where much of the problem existed. Corfield does not feel that this was a serious defect or a vital one. Information was flowing in from these areas. The police were found somewhat guiltless of neglect.

The Mau Mau movement became active toward the close of 1947. In the following year several oath-taking ceremonies were known to have taken place in the Naiyasha district of the Rift Valley Province.³ Jomo Kenyatta had returned to the colony and as early as 1946, the District Commissioner, Fort Hall had reported "a marked deterioration in the morale and discipline of this district."⁴ It is not my intent here to outline the intelligence or lack of intelligence preceding the Mau Mau, but to note, as the police were dealing with "The Skin Men (1947)" and the "Msambwa Sect (1949)," the Mau Mau movement had begun and the KCA (and Kenyatta) were

¹Corfield., p. 31

²Ibid., p. 36

³Foran., p. 177

⁴Corfield., p. 50

believed to have been involved. Yet bound by the court, the Director of Intelligence and Security stated that insufficient evidence existed to support arrest.⁵ The Court required arrest after the deed not prevention or deterrence before the deed.

In 1950, the police were faced with problems among the Suk (members of the Nandi Group and the Msambwa Sect). The pastoral Suk, numbering about 43,000 in 1950, were a carefree tribe. They were not used as troops during the war because of their lack of discipline and frailty when out of their native area. In this peaceful, little policed area, Lukas Pkiech, the unbalanced leader of the "Sect", conducted secret meetings and promised the Suks freedom from blindness and illness, the acquisition of cattle, the guaranteed fertility of their women, and immunity from bullets. He promised them self-government as the Europeans were driven out. Hundreds of East Suks, in a state of frenzy, were ready to meet the "enemy". The report of what was going on was passed to the Tribal Police to investigate. On April 1950, five European officers and 35 African police had arrived in the area. The police air wing, recently formed and having two light aircraft, flew over the area and acted as messenger relay between the police and headquarters in Nairobi. The police plan called for an unarmed police envoy to parley with the leaders. If the Suks remained armed and attacked, the police were to fire and withdraw. Lukas was the prime target. The envoy met Lukas who stated that he had

⁵Ibid., p. 78

500 men and that if the police bullets killed him, they could take the Suks; however, they were travelling in peace to pray to God. Evidence confirmed that the group was moving into the West Suks' area. While further plans were being made to capture Lukas, the East Suks moved on the police line. When the Suks had reached 90 yards and had surrounded the police, the District Commissioner ordered "fire". Although many Suks fell, the others continued to dance forward with spears in hand until within eight or so paces. The police line had broken and hand-to-hand combat took place. Three Europeans and a Tribal Police corporal were the only casualties on the police side. Lukas and 28 Suks were killed and some 50 wounded. A police emergency company was assigned to the area to follow up the action. Nineteen Suks, who had escaped, were arrested and convicted for murder and an additional 123 of the tribesmen were prosecuted as members of the Msawbwa Sect.⁶ In addition, during 1950 and exclusive of this affray, 249 others were prosecuted for membership in the Sect.

Soon after this affray, trouble broke out at Eil Wak Fort in the Mandera district. Here the Gurren tribesmen reported that the warlike Marehan tribe of some 300 men from Somalia had crossed the border, raided the Gerreh, and driven off some 2,000 cattle. A ten-man patrol of constables operating in the area encountered the party of Marehan with 500 of the cattle. Returning the fire of the Marehan, the patrol drove off the Marehan and returned 500

⁶Foran, pp. 161-171

of the cattle to the Gurreh. Seventeen police under an Assistant Inspector joined the continuing search for the Marehan. The trail was easily found because of the large number of cattle being driven away. Four men were left with the lorry and the remaining moved out on foot using an extended formation with advance, rear and flank guards. The first encounter was a frontal assault which caught the moving Marehans by surprise. The Marehans scattered. The next encounter was the result of an ambush by 15 of the police. The Bren-gun was placed in the center of the ambush formation. The lorry was placed on a ridge, a likely escape route. Another ten-man patrol was involved in driving recaptured cattle back to the Burreho. Soon after the ambush was in place, 100 Marchan with cattle approached. At 50 yards the ambush opened fire which was returned by the Marehan. Once the ambush was disclosed, the Assistant Inspector ordered the ambush to advance with heavy fire. The Marehan retreated, some ran into the lorry and others ran into the ten-man patrol driving the cattle. The results of the operation were 30 Marehan killed, an unknown number wounded, no cattle crossing the Somali border, the return of most of the cattle to the Gurreh, and no police casualties.⁷ This operation shows the capability of the police to operate in small units against superior forces using ambush and escape route blocking positions. Such operations were to have further use during the Mau Mau campaign. The police had perfected the technique

⁷ibid., pp 171-172

which later had to be mastered by regular British military forces. They knew the terrain and the modus operandi of the natives.

During the early part of 1950, the Mau Mau sect grew in prominence and compelled the serious attention of the police. Mau Mau had spread with great rapidity and secrecy among the Kikuyu, Meru and Embu tribes, although predominately among the Kikuyu. The KCA had been proscribed in 1940 and again ten years later. As discussed in Chapter V the Mau Mau movement became active toward the close of 1947 and the police were obviously involved from the beginning. Up until 1950 some 140 oath administrators had been arrested and prosecuted but given short sentences.

During late 1951, the Kikuyu made a determined resistance to the inoculation of cattle, particularly in the Fort Hall area. Resistance grew, noisy demonstrations took place and large herds of cattle were burned or maimed. A Police Levy Force was dispatched to break up the disorder. The force arrested 400 women (note contrary to custom, women were the prime instigators) who were found guilty of illegal assembly and malicious destruction to property and given small fines or short prison sentences.⁸ Except for this incident (later connected to the Mau Mau) mass demonstrations in 1951 were non-violent. Jomo Kenyatta had started his "political" campaign and was holding meetings which brought large crowds. Much of the police effort was in gathering information in connection with District Commissioners on the Mau Mau. The meeting of 27 May at Nyeri, previously discussed, is

⁸Ibid., p. 178.

of particular importance. It was at this meeting that Ian Henderson, the Assistant Superintendent of Police, Nyeri, who spoke fluent Kikuyu, first revealed the real potential danger of the KAU and Mau Mau. Oathing had been outlawed and the police were active in bringing violators to court. Although the police were reasonably effective in identifying suspects, as revealed earlier, the British imposed legal system caused only frustration to the police effort. The Mau Mau had taken oaths of secrecy and oaths denying help to the police. The fact that the Mau Mau leaders demanded such a latter oath indirectly revealed the fear that the Mau Mau had of the effectiveness of the police to break the movement. Whether oathing could have been stopped by effective law enforcement and court actions as early as 1950-51 is a matter of speculation; however, it is obvious that the police had their hands tied.

In February 1952 the Mau Mau felt strong enough to undertake an experiment in terrorism within the Nyeri Reserve. Arson was the instrument. Many huts of loyal Africans were burned and in several cases the doors had been wired shut in order to trap the victims inside. Although strong police action was taken and collective fines imposed, the inability of the police to gain legal evidence or to find willing witnesses against the suspects made nearly ineffective their collective effort to halt the oathing and the growing of Mau Mau.⁹

Also in February 1952 Princess Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh visited Kenya. With the Mau Mau troubles already posing

⁹Ibid.,

a strain on the police, the police were held responsible for all security arrangements during the visit. This to Kenya and the police was an important visit; yet, on 6 February 1952 King George VI died. Although the visitors were on safari, police arrangements were immediately changed to secure the visitors' immediate departure.¹⁰ Thus, the more conventional role of police continued even as the Mau Mau were gaining boldness.

At the beginning of 1952 the Force was not adequately equipped to deal with crime of such magnitude. The Commissioner of Police, realizing this need, began extensive recruiting; training was reduced to essentials; many temporary police stations and posts had to be built, many of which lacked adequate communication and transportation. The Kenya Police Reserves were called to duty to assist in restoring order.

The Mau Mau disturbances had afforded the criminal classes an opportunity to cover for their crimes. While the police had been reasonably successful in keeping crime under control in the major parts of the Colony, Nairobi and the surrounding areas had produced more than 40 percent of all recorded crimes. The proximity of the Kikuyu Reserves to the capital had been identified as the major factor contributing to the high crime rate.¹¹

Still, border trouble kept the police busy in the Northern Frontier Province. A small number of Ethiopian Solubba had occupied two villages. The police decided to raid the villages

¹⁰Ibid., pp 187-188
¹¹Ibid., p. 185

and two parties were formed--one with an assistant inspector, three NCOs and 15 men, and the other with an assistant inspector, two NCOs and 18 men. One village was found deserted; however, the force in the other village was larger than had been reported, approximately 250 men. The police were forced, after trying to approach the village, into a defensive position. Heavy fire continued for more than four hours with the Gelubba suffering sufficient casualties to cause them to withdraw. Two police had been wounded and a radio call resulted in the police aircraft coming in to pick up the wounded.¹² Perhaps this was not the beginning of med-evac, but it is an example of police use of its air element for medical evacuation. Later, the Police Air Wing experience in surveillance, resupply and message service was to serve an invaluable part of the police operations against the Mau Mau.

On 5 April 1952 Nairobi experienced an incident of crowds supporting the criminal. Two plain clothes detectives were in the African area of Nairobi when they identified and pursued a wanted African criminal. The criminal turned and threw a stone at the policemen whereupon a large hostile crowd formed and joined in the stoning. One policeman was hit and knocked unconscious. As the crowd drew closer the second detective opened fire, killing the criminal and causing the crowd to drop their stones. They continued to shout threats. Reinforcements arrived to disperse the crowd.¹³

¹²ibid., pp 185-186

¹³ibid., p. 187

By May 1952 a Special Branch Bureau was established to work exclusively upon Mau Mau cases. In Nairobi the two murders of a Crown witness and his companion had occurred. Beatings, forcible administration of oaths to women and men and violent attacks on those who either refused to take the oath or who were believed to be informing for the police were reported in June and July. In July one constable came upon a Mau Mau oathing ceremony and was beaten to death by those present.¹⁴

By August the police were forced to redeploy detachments of police (700) from the Northern Frontier Provinces to reinforce Nairobi as disorder, lawlessness and murder mounted.¹⁵ The difficulty facing the police with its limited number of personnel and the mounting unrest began to mount. This inability to effectively cover all areas with sufficient police was a definite weakness. Yet, as recorded, the lower echelons of law enforcement had been unable to convince the Government of the magnitude of the Mau Mau situation. Much improvisation, ingenuity and just plain courage was required of all ranks of the police as recorded in its official history.¹⁶

At 0100 on 26 September 1952, the police station at Nanyuki (manned by two European officers and 30 African ranks) was notified by K. McD. Robertson that more than 100 of his sheep, kept in pens at night, had been slaughtered and maimed by a large gang. (The

¹⁴ibid., p. 179

¹⁵ibid.,

¹⁶ibid., p. 184

final count was 257 killed and severely maimed sheep.) When the police tried to call for reinforcements and assistance for the investigation they found the lines cut and therefore a messenger was dispatched to Nyeri Province police headquarters. Before light a police tracker dog team had been flown to the area. Before the search party could start a neighboring farmer, Bill Hearle, arrived to report that 57 of his cattle had been killed, disembowelled, and hacked up. Some were left still living. A third neighbor who lived five miles away, arrived to report three of his high-grade cattle had been hamstringed, an engine house burned down and a standing crop of maize cut down. Still a fourth victim arrived to report his pump-house had been burned down. The police were thus faced with four major incidents, all the result of a carefully planned operation, including the cutting of telephone lines. CID had found two Africans who had heard that many of the laborers on two farms were involved and were Mau Mau. By noon the police had rounded up and arrested 30 of the participants who worked on the Munro farm, eleven more were arrested in the Forest Reserve and seven more in a forest leasehold area. By midnight 100 had been arrested during a large-scale sweep operation. Evidence revealed that on the night of 25 September a Mau Mau oathing of some 100 Africans was conducted near the Munro farm and had received instructions to destroy the property of Europeans. The group had split into three parties. Wakabi was to cut all telephone lines to prevent warnings being given; one group, under Wanbugu, was to maim and disembowel Hearle's 60 young steers. Next they were

to go to Robertson's farm and massacre the sheep. A second gang was to attack Major Thacker's farm and a third one Munro's farm. On 30 September, 32 received two to three years at hard labor on ten counts of malicious destruction of property and conspiracy; and 58 were given one year of hard labor for being members of an unlawful society. In these cases the Supreme Court of Kenya backed the verdicts and sentences. This was the first large-scale attack on European property attempted by the Mau Mau.¹⁷

Mau Mau terrorism rose to a crescendo in October 1952 when four African loyalists and a much respected chief, Chief Waruhui, were assassinated in typical gangster style. One European woman was murdered; four Europeans, and an Asian were attacked, all of them being severely injured; and a well-known loyalist, Chief Paulo, was fired at but escaped injury. On 22 October 1952, the day after the declaration of the emergency, another loyalist, Chief Nderi, and two African police escorting him, were also murdered.¹⁸

At this point, The Declaration of The Emergency, the Government and the Mau Mau had set their course. (Chapter VII deals with the suppression of the Mau Mau from 20 October 1952-1960.) Whether this date can be called a turning point or not is doubtful; yet it was the date on which Government action had been recognized as essential. It was the date of renewed support to the police and the introduction of regular British military forces into the action.

¹⁷ibid., pp 179-182

¹⁸ibid., pp 182-183

It was the beginning of large-scale efforts to break the Mau Mau.

It is true that the police had been unable to stop the rise of Mau Mau terrorism; but care must be made not to judge their effort as a failure. They had maintained the general peace for some five years against the lack of full government support and against a determined, secret, gangster-like, nationalist movement of more than one million Kikuyus while still, as shown, keeping order on the border and fighting an increased crime rate, particularly in Nairobi. They had brought the potential crisis to their superiors and had finally gotten action.

The following excerpt from Jeffries' The Colonial Police is worth noting.

Except in the sphere of collecting and passing on 'intelligence', there is indeed little that the police as such can do to forestall the occurrence of disturbances. Disturbances---are due basically to discontent, and the causes of discontent are for Governments to diagnose and remove (if they can), not for the police. They are a matter of policy, not of policing. It is when things look like getting out of hand that the police come in, to prevent actual disorder taking place if possible, to limit its extension in time and space if it cannot be entirely prevented. It is not, of course, the function of the police to take sides with one party to a dispute or the other. Their job is to act impartially in the interest of the community as a whole, to preserve or re-establish the rule of law and order, to protect life and property and to prevent breaches of the peace. They are simply a disciplined body of men, especially engaged in protecting 'masses as well as classes from any infringement of their rights on the part of those who are not law abiding.' 19

19Jeffries, The Colonial Police., pp 198-199. The internal quote was by J. Munro from Melville Lee's History of Police in England.

CHAPTER VII

OPERATIONS AGAINST MAU MAU 1952-1960

As referred to in Chapter I the operational period may be subdivided into three phases---the build up and containment phase, the suppression phase and the winding down phase. The undercover conspiracy had run its course and the Mau Mau were now ready for open violence and terror. What was called the brewing period was over and the fight to eliminate the Mau Mau had begun.

The First Phase

It had taken Sir Evelyn Baring just ten days after his arrival in Kenya as new Governor General to realize the gravity of the situation and to take the action of declaring a state of emergency on 20 October 1952. Only six weeks earlier the Acting Governor had denied categorically that danger existed. To re-quote Majdalany--

For eighteen months before that---from the time he signed an Order in Council proscribing Mau-Mau in 1950 to his retirement in June 1952, Sir Phillip Mitchell contrived to cocoon himself against the warnings that were constantly pouring into Nairobi from the officials in the field.¹

Even in Sir Mitchell's memoirs, published nine months after the declaration, he stated that

It is necessary to remember that there is nothing new in trouble between the government...and the Kikuyu...Forest--and mountain--dwelling primitive people...are particularly given to ritual murder, to ordeals by oath and poison, and to cults of

¹Majdalany., p. 96

terror--Mau-Mau is only one of these cults.²
In a British colony the powers of the
Government to deal with dangerous political
agitators or fanatical tribal sorcerers are
very limited, until the law has been broken
and evidence can be produced to that effect.
The Governor's powers used to include the
making of restriction orders---in cases where
he was satisfied it was necessary to make
them for the preservation of order...but
(the) power no longer exists in Kenya
unless a State of Emergency is formally
declared. ³

Thus, a dilemma of colonial government existed: its
powerlessness when faced by a "violent rebel who knows all about
the rules and niceties of evidence and arrest under British law."⁴
Despite the weaknesses in the police, its limited operation in
the Kikuyu Reserves, and the oft-quoted limited Special Branch,
the police had (if nothing else) reluctantly stalled the state
of emergency. Its efforts to warn of the danger or to halt the
use of the exponentially increasing danger had failed. The true
dichotomy of the situation is that a declaration of an emergency
was necessary to provide the police additionally needed support
to combat Mau Mau, to include outside manpower assistance; whereas,
such support given earlier and before the expansive growth of
Mau Mau might have allowed the police (with other economic and
social aids) to have stopped the rebellion before it exploded.
The collision course was set. The Mau Mau had become bolder in
its actions. For five years people had watched and felt Mau Mau

²Ibid., pp. 96-97

³Ibid., p. 99

⁴Ibid.,

in its conspiracy phase and the declaration of the emergency, which brought with it headlines, was perhaps to the police only a continuation of its mission to fight the criminal element, but now with greater power and support. To them it was not a sudden outbreak of war as often described but only the beginning of a more concerted drive to end the terror.

On 20 October 1952, the day that the Governor signed the emergency proclamation, a second document was signed empowering the police to make arrests under the emergency powers. By midnight the police had begun to round up Mau Mau suspects and by dawn they had arrested all 83 prime suspected Mau Mau leaders, including Jomo Kenyatta. All had gone as planned for "Operation Jock Scott."⁵ The arrest of Kenyatta was accomplished at 12:45 AM 21 October 1952 by the Assistant Superintendent of Police Benton and some 80 police at his home at Gatunda in the Kiambu Reserve. They took him and a ton and a half of documents to Police Headquarters.⁶

Three battalions of the KAR had been brought into Kenya during the two weeks before 20 October 1952 to augment the three battalions that made up the normal Kenya garrison. Troops of the Lancashire Fusiliers began to airland in Nairobi on 20 October 1952. Police Reserves received orders to report to duty. All these forces "stood to support the police, who were still in charge--for this was a police operation and the Army was in support, not in charge."⁷

⁵Foran, p. 183.

⁶Rosberg and Nottingham, p. 280

⁷Majdalany., p. 105

The Army (450) had been given the task of patrolling Nairobi and "showing the flag" in the Kikuyu Reserve during the first week.

Except for the murder of Senior Chief Nderi who was hacked to death by a crowd of 500 preparing an oathing ceremony on the second day of the emergency, the first week was free of violence.⁸ The police had confessors who identified Mathenge as the organizer of Chief Nderi's murder and police leaflets placing a 5000s to 10,000s reward for the capture of Stanley Mathenge were circulated. The authors of the book Mau-Mau from Within state that the police announcement had given Stanley Mathenge prominence among Kikuyu and had failed in its purpose.⁹ Stanley Mathenge became the head of the Ituma Ndemi Army and was arrested by the Mau Mau Kenya Parliament in the forest during the efforts of Ian Henderson to gain the surrender of Kimathi and his army. Mathenge was attempting to organize another Mau Mau army against Kimathi at the time of his Mau Mau arrest. His escape resulted in his being left in the forest with his gang after 1956 when Barnett and Njama state that the "revolution popularly known as 'Mau-Mau' came to an end. The forest groups which remained in the Aberdares after this time were no longer part of an organized, active revolutionary movement."¹⁰

The second week of the emergency began with the Mau Mau murder of the first settler. (An European women had been murdered before

⁸Ibid., p. 107.

⁹Donald L. Barnett and Karari Njama, Mau-Mau from Within. (London: Monthly Review Press, 1966), p. 129.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 491.

the emergency and four Europeans had been severely injured)¹¹
Mau Mau had attacked him with pangas while in the bath and after
having killed his two African boys who cooked and cleaned for him.
It is of interest to note that on the same day of the murder the
Kenya Police were escorting and protecting from angry Europeans
Fenner Brockway, M.P. and Leslie Hale, M.P., who had arrived in
Kenya at the invitation and expense of Jomo Kenyatta's close
associate, Peter Koinange and the KAU.

"Operation Jock Scott" which began the emergency continued¹²
until 200 Mau Mau leaders had been arrested in eleven police raids.
But Mau Mau incidents continued. Mau Mau had built a system of in-
frastructure which did not die with the arrest of a few.

The emergency declaration had brought with it greater power
for the police; however, as pointed out by Kitson in his book
Gangs and Counter-Gangs, the legal code of Kenya continued to cause
difficulty. Some extra laws were made to fit special circumstances
such as the legal carrying of arms and certain areas of the forest
were declared out of bounds. Certain Emergency Regulations dealt
with the occasion when armed fire could be used by the security
forces--in self-defense or when a terrorist failed to answer a
challenge to halt. The rules of evidence and arrest by police of
all prisoners remained. Kitson points out the dilemma which remained
even after the emergency declaration to include the court backlog

¹¹Foran., p. 182

¹²Ibid., p. 110

or masqueraded as Masai by wearing long muddied hair traditionally
17
Masai.

At the beginning of the emergency, it became apparent that the local security forces in the Rift Valley were inadequate to cope with the situation. Police transport and communication were particularly inadequate. One of the first steps was to enlist a substantial number of African Police Reservists who had to be initially armed with native spears and locally purchased quasi-uniforms. Home Guards and Police Reservists helped to hold the situation until military forces arrived.

The police were greatly concerned about the ability of the military to work in small numbers. The military was to "keen" on carrying out military sweeps. Therefore, a system of liaison was established to assist the military in adopting tactics similar
18
to the Mau-Mau tactics.

In the Central Province there were 13 police in Fort Hall township and 200 of all ranks in the Nyeri area at the beginning of 1952. By the middle of 1952, the police had estimated that a quarter of the Kikuyu in the Reserve had taken the Mau Mau oath. Loosely knit gangs of thugs formed, dispersed and then reformed
19
to commit acts of arson, violence and plunder. In December 1952 the police added six European officers, 65 inspectors, and 944 African rank and file to be employed in the Kiambu, Fort Hall,

17 ibid., p. 203

18 ibid., p. 204

19 ibid., p. 205

South Nyeri, Embu, and Meru Police Divisions. New police stations were planned and by the end of the year 70 police stations and posts were added. It was not, however, until early 1954 when all were properly manned with sufficient forces.²⁰ African Police were recruited from other districts and because of difficulty in recruitment of sufficient European police, members of the Kenya Regiment (numbering about 500) were permitted to transfer to the police as Special Police with legal powers. At the peak of action, the Provincial Police Force consisted of 450 Europeans and 4,500 Asians and Africans. One hundred-ten police stations were in use and 17 platoons of the GSU were being employed in the area. By mid 1953 the police were able to provide assistance to the newly organized Home Guard. Tribal Police were used to assist. A system of SOS red flares for Home Guard posts was established in case police help was needed. Police training of the guard was emphasized.²¹ Large Mau Mau gangs were now operating and in spite of military and police efforts, the Fort Hall district was virtually Mau Mau controlled, and additional assistance was needed.

During what has been called the "first-phase," on 26 March 1953 the Lari massacre occurred. Lari was located some 30 miles from Nairobi and was defended by a local police post staffed with two former members of the Kenya Regiment and 20 African ranks. A group of some 400 Mau Mau attacked the village, set houses on fire,

²⁰Ibid., p. 206

²¹Ibid., p. 207

and murdered 84 men, women and children, and maimed 31 others. On 28 March 1953, a CID unit set up camp and began screening the some 2,000 detained suspects. Eventually, a total of 342 persons were charged with murder, of whom 135 were convicted and sentenced to death. Appeals were lodged by 58 of the 135 convicted and the 22 appeals were upheld by the Court of Appeals of Eastern Africa. Lari had been a humiliating disaster for the Kenya Police. The police had been under fire for some time. They had had to start the emergency under-strength in men and equipment "because the pre-emergency government had been unwilling to spend money making up these deficiencies when they were pointed out." During the first six months of the Emergency a huge expansion had taken place but time was needed to shake down, train, and prepare. Lari resulted in a police self-examination and keen drive to live it down. 23 Of those arrested fifty percent were from the adjacent Githunguri location. 24 Lari had crystallized the Government's thinking on the problem. 25

Counterinsurgency measures in early 1953 were defensive in nature. Forest areas in the Aberdares and Mt Kenya region were declared Prohibited Areas and anyone caught there could be shot. The Kikuyu Reserve was made a Special Area in which an unheeded challenge was required before shooting. All detainees were,

²²ibid., pp. 188-189.

²³Majdalany., pp. 145-147.

²⁴Kosberg and Nottingham., p. 292

²⁵ibid.,

however, to be processed by the police under the arrest power.²⁶

In April 1953, a directive was issued formally establishing the Kikuyu Guard, the police had been doubled in size, and UK Army troop strength had reached 3,527. By April 1953, 522 Mau Mau had been killed against 194 Security Force dead. The Mau Mau had killed at least 500 loyalists. Special Branch had been given increased emphasis and the GSU had been reorganized and expanded.²⁷

In January 1953 Major General W. R. N. Hinde, stationed in Libya, was appointed as military adviser to the Governor General and was given a title of Director of Operations. The Member for Law and Order was relieved of his internal security²⁸ but remained as Attorney-General and a Chief Secretary for Internal Security was installed. General Hinde immediately recognized the need for civil-military coordination and devised the Emergency Committee System to run the Emergency. Friction existed. Friction between police and administrators, between Army and civilians, between Africans and Asians, between UK Army troops and members of KAR, between police and police recruits and reservists, etc. The mere arranging of a patrol, ambush or raid involved personnel from all forces. The expansion had caught all elements somewhat unprepared, yet, somewhat over enthusiastic to get the job done. Cases existed where during an operation an officer of another security element would berate a young patrol commander, not his own. The police

²⁶DeMoya. , p. 22

²⁷British Information Services, ID 1202, p. 18.

²⁸Najdalany, p. 128

and the problem of corroboration of evidence faced by the police.¹³
The police could detain suspects on court order only---called a
Detention Order. Dr. Leakey in his book Defeating Mau-Mau
discusses this problem and supports the detaining authority given
the police.¹⁴

November 1952 saw the proscription of the Kikuyu Independent
Schools and the closing of some 34 of them; the exodus of Kikuyu
from the Rift Valley to the Central Province; the murder of Tom
Mbotela, the former vice president of KAU and a loyalist; and the
trial of Kenyatta. The police had expanded their force into the
Reserve but the mass movement of Kikuyu, estimated at 100,000,
into the Reserve (and to the forest to avoid tribal punishment)
had aggravated the problem.¹⁵

In the Rift Valley the police had gradually whittled down the
original Mau Mau leaders, but less intelligent Kikuyu had replaced
them. According to the Kenya Police Review this lower strata was
more interested in "feathering their own nest." Their inability
to lead by any other means than terrorizing brought extreme
bestiality in oaths, the beating and torturing of any who disobeyed
orders, and the slow disintegration of all but the true hard-core
gangs.¹⁶ A police round-up in Nakuru resulted in the arrest of
some 2,000 Mau Mau which eased some of the tension throughout the
early stages of the Emergency. Many of these had dressed as women

¹³Kitsen., p. 4.

¹⁴Louis S. B. Leakey, Defeating Mau Mau, (London: Methuen,
1954), pp 124-126.

¹⁵Roseberg and Nottingham., pp. 285-286

¹⁶Foran., p. 201

were officially in charge but expansion had left junior police personnel in areas with more senior military personnel. General Hinde quickly became a focal point to bring the "loose confederation" together. General Hinde also had the task of convincing some elements of the ²⁹ danger of the enemy. The Lari massacre had convinced these elements of the danger and it was General Hinde who took the calculated risk of arming the Kikuyu Guards.

The system of joint committees was overhauled by General Hinde and given specific form and procedures. Chart 2, Framework of the Security Force Organization, diagrams the system, page 138.

It meant that at Province and District level Joint Emergency Committees meeting regularly decided the general policy; Joint Operations Committees planned the actual day to day operations; an executive officer common to both committees provided a permanent link. In each case the committee consisted of the senior available representative of the Army, the police and the administration; and in addition a suitable local civilian. Attached to the committees were Intelligence and Communication officers. ³⁰

A similar arrangement was established at Colony level but scrapped for a four-man war council of the Governor, Deputy Governor, the Commander-in-Chief, and European Minister without Portfolio.

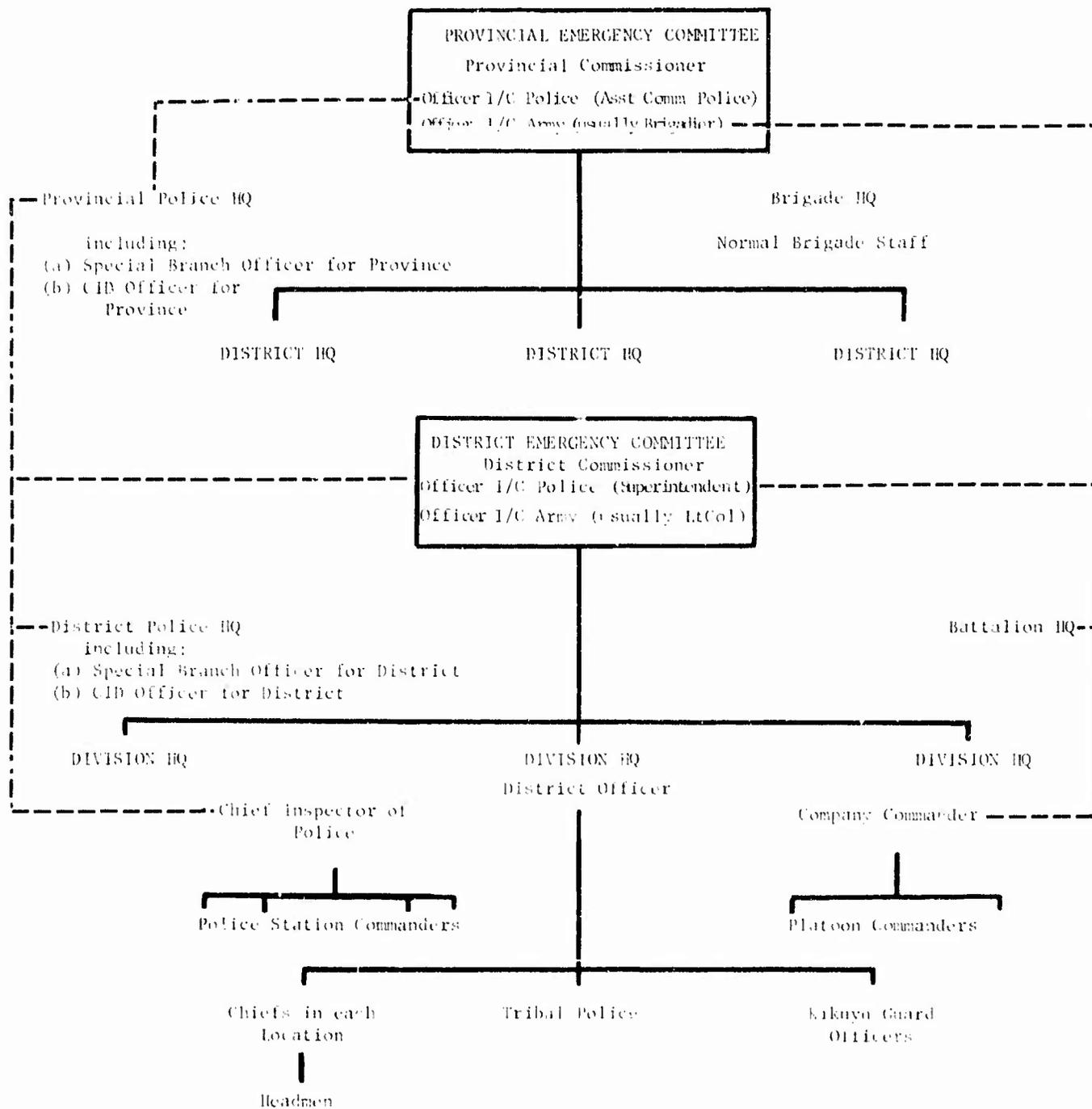
At levels below District the same principle was observed, local operations being controlled by a similar triumvirate of army, police and administration with, usually, the addition of a prominent local settler (who would know the country intimately) as a civilian member. The efficacy of this system was obviously dependent on the degree of harmony and teamwork that could be brought to it...The system worked well after

²⁹Ibid., pp. 131-136

³⁰Ibid., pp. 151-152

FRAMEWORK OF SECURITY FORCE ORGANIZATION

PROVINCIAL HEADQUARTERS



————— - Line of Op. Control
 - - - - - non Op. Control, i.e., administration, training, etc.

SOURCE: Frank Pitson, Gangs and Counter-gangs (1960).

some weak links had been removed and the great majority saw that it had to be made to work. ³¹

guides, interrogators, interpreters and advisors were provided by the police and the KAR to the regular military forces and, as the campaign continued, greater cross attachment and more frequent joint operations became the norm.

According to Rosberg and Nottingham in The Myth of Mau-Mau the first phase of the Emergency is described as a period during which neither the Government nor the militant Kikuyu leaders understood very well the full implication of the situation. The panic which led to the emergency and the lack of preparation on either side led to an air of improvisation by both forces. ³²

As seen, however, throughout this study improvising is inherent in police work and the Kenya Police had become experts in meeting numerous and varied crises. Raids, patrolling, ambushes, tracking criminal elements, control of rioters and small unit operations against gangs were common techniques. Mau Mau had just added magnitude to the problems frequently faced by the police. The Mau Mau cult had grown faster, however, than the police manpower could control alone.

The first phase, therefore, was defensive in nature and marked by expansion of all forces. It was a period of localizing the threat and relocating forces to meet it. Thus, the first phase,

³¹ibid.,

³²Rosberg and Nottingham, p. 292

as it may be called, ended in mid 1953 with the appointment of General Sir George Erskine as Commander-in-Chief. Progress had been made rapidly to control the exploding situation and Kenya was set for the second phase.

The Second Phase

Majdalany refers to the arrival of General Erskine and June 1953 as "the turning of the tide." His assignment had been a sort of psychological upgrading of the Emergency to a more warlike status. General Hinde became Deputy Director of Operations and a Major General Heyman joined the commander as Chief of Staff. The local aspect of Mau Mau in Kenya and the simultaneous waging of peace and war demanded the civilian/military control, whereas in Malaya and Cyprus sole responsibility was vested in the military commander. The debatable question and the talk in clubs and farmhouses was that General Erskine would start thinking in terms of military strategy and that the battle could not remain a "policeman's war forever."³³

General Erskine was concerned about the lack of an offensive and the dispersion of security forces. As security force losses had been only 18 killed and ten wounded, this supposedly lent weight to his view. With the arrival of other military units the total security force had reached a peak strength of 11 battalions (some 7,000 men), a police force of 21,000, and a Kikuyu Guard

³³Majdalany., pp. 148-150

strength of 25,000. Two Mau Mau "Generals" (General China and Kimathi) were the chief opponents.³⁴

The basis of General Erskine's redefined strategy was that the army should progressively be released from static police duty to hunt Mau Mau in the Prohibited Areas where unrestricted military operations could be carried out.³⁵ It was in July 1953 that the military handed over the control of the Fort Hall Reserve to the police who had under its command the Tribal Police and the Kikuyu Guard. This left the military free to concentrate on the forest areas. Additionally, to prevent the terrorist from moving toward the tribal areas of the Mandi and Kipsiges, the police duty in the Rift Valley Province was to prevent Mau Mau from infiltrating and intimidating the local tribesmen.³⁶

Military offensive operations in the forest areas of Aberdares and Mount Kenya began in June 1953. Police posts were established along the edge of the forest as the military began great sweeps. During these sweeps "the strongest police air force that ever went to war," the Kenya Police Reserve Air Wing, provided the military support.³⁷ The European military had their difficulties in adapting not only to the Mau Mau tactics but to the forest. There were few results in the forest for quite a time and it was not until the military had altered their tactics that any success, though small

³⁴ibid., pp. 156-160.

³⁵ibid., p. 161

³⁶Foran., pp. 204, 210-211

³⁷Majdalany., p. 178

in comparison, was gained. Sweep tactics failed to produce desired results and the military began to adopt tactics previously employed by the police; small unit patrols, ambushes and native trackers. Yet, even with these, the problem of defeating the Mau Mau in the forest was not solved.³⁸

By the end of 1953, the first full year of operations, 3,064 Mau Mau had been killed and over 1,000 captured.³⁹ The British Information Service recorded 1,633 and 2,417 Mau Mau killed, 92 and 270 captured and wounded, and 533 and 1,917 detained for police investigation during the periods April to October 1953 and October 1953 to April 1954 respectively.⁴⁰ This had brought the totals to some 4,572 killed, 492 captured wounded, and 2,450 detained. Security Force losses had reached 383 killed and Loyalist losses were 1,022 killed. Police costs had risen by some 400 thousand pounds over 1952 with the total emergency costs set at 2.2 million pounds.⁴¹ The trial of strength between the Government and the Mau Mau in the Reserves was about even but the initiative had shifted to the Government.⁴²

During 1953 the Police Special Branch had become extremely active. Field Intelligence Agents (FIA) and Province and District members of Special Branch were beginning to receive and collate

³⁸Ibid., p. 185.

³⁹Walter A. Dumas, LTC, A Study of the Campaign Against the Mau Mau Insurgents in British Kenya. Thesis, (Carlisle Barracks, 3 March 1957) p. 21

⁴⁰British Information Services, ID 1201, p. 18.

⁴¹Foran., p. 192

⁴²Ibid., p. 193

numerous intelligence reports but the elusive actions of the Mau Mau made it difficult to act quickly. Special Branch was feeling the urge to move more into the operational area to follow up incident reports, particularly gang sitings. Kitson in Gangs and Countergangs tells of one incident in November 1953 in his District of Thika. He states that October 1953 had marked the beginning of a Mau Mau change from non-violence with the hacking to pieces of two headsmen on an European estate near Kiambu. Incident charts in the operations room showed a steady rise, usually of reports of gangs of ten to twenty, breaking into African huts and killing the occupants. Special Branch had interpreted this as actions by strong arms groups attached to committees or marauding gangs from Nairobi. In November 1953 Kitson arrived at the operations room to overhear the Superintendent of Police personally taking a gang siting report and the killing of a KPR officer by the gang. Kitson went to the area to observe a cordon operation where the gang had been siting. The operation was being conducted by elements of the KPR, the police and some soldiers of the Black Watch. The gang, however, escaped through the thick coffee. The following day, however, another large gang was brought under fire by the combined force. Ten were killed and some others captured but the major portion of the gang retreated toward Fort Hall. One of the captured Mau Mau broke under interrogation by Special Branch revealing intimate details of all the Aberdare leaders. The gang was unsuccessfully followed until December 1953 when it was again cordoned in a triangular area by

KPR officers, policemen from Thika and most of a Black Watch company. The operation, under the command of the District Commandant of the KPR, who normally controlled all combined operations in the area, again proved unsuccessful in holding the gang in the cordon. Night came and the commander decided to improvise illumination by burning petrol. This technique worked more successfully for the Mau Mau who opened fire on the cordon. By night the Mau Mau had found a weak link in the cordon where two African police were sleeping. Killing the two police, they escaped.⁴³ This series of incidents, although unsuccessful, illustrates the degree of integrated operations which had been developed among elements of the Security Forces and the ability of police operations centers and Special Branch to follow such actions.

The failures to cordon gangs in large areas had its morale effect; however, Kitson comments the greatest problem was still how to deal with the Mau Mau without breaking the law. He tells of his sergeant's contact with a small gang in which he killed one and captured two, one with a rifle. The police charged one with being an armed terrorist and the other with consorting. The defense case for the first man was that he had recently been captured by the gang and forced to carry the weapon. The judge accepted this explanation and therefore not only acquitted him but ruled that the second man could not be consorting if the first was innocent.⁴⁴ Normal legal action, detention orders, and actual engagements with

⁴³Kitson., pp. 34-44.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 45

armed gangs were the only means of dealing with the Mau-Mau, particularly in non-Prohibited Areas. These are normal police methods of operation.

It was in late 1953 that "General" China was captured but as follow-up operations began in 1954, the operations will be covered later.

The year 1954 was really the breaking year for Mau Mau, but not without struggle. Efforts to rid Nairobi of the wave of serious crime against property, aimed at obtaining money and supplies for the terrorists was at its height. In the African portion of the city murders had become a daily occurrence. The police were deeply involved in trying to determine the source of weapons and ammunition. Examination of bullets removed from bodies of victims showed that the same weapon had been used for a number of fatal shootings. For instance, the same weapon that killed Senior Chief Waruhiu early in the emergency had been used for at least six other murders. The weapon was recovered by the police at a later date. Home-made fire arms and bombs received for examination were primitive but effective.⁴⁵

Before discussing "Operation Anvil", an operation to eliminate the passive wing of the Mau Mau in Nairobi, other operational police actions in Kikuyu country should be considered.

On 17 February 1954 "General" Kago attacked the Administration Center and Police Station in Kandara, in the Fort Hall area, with

⁴⁵Foram., pp 193-194

some 300 well-armed terrorists. Repeated attempts to break the defenses failed although the police contained only African ranks. The police counterattacked and drove the attackers out of the Center. They killed 40 terrorists and wounded many others.⁴⁶

A few days later, "General" Kago and a large gang ambushed the District officers' vehicle at 1000 hours. Police from Kigumo were quickly dispatched, engaged the terrorist, and drove them toward the forest. The battle had lasted throughout the day with police reinforcements assisting. On 31 March 1954, a mixed force police and Home Guard, reacting to the information received, made contact with "General" Kago and his large gang. "General" Kago was killed during the action and the disorganized gang retreated to the forest. This left the police with a mission to deny food and supplies to the terrorist and a system of night ambushes was planned.⁴⁷

Baldwin in Mau-Mau Manhunt states that⁴⁸ "Without a doubt the killing of 'General' Kago Mboko did more to ease tension around the Fort Hall Reserve than any other action."

The Mau Mau gang carried out a successful raid of the Naivasha Police Station and after inflicting several casualties made off with a number of firearms and a quantity of ammunition. The gang's inability to start the police vehicle perhaps reduced the loss. March also brought out the Gachera's gang of terrorists from the Mount Kenya forest with an attack on the Ngare Ndare Police Post. Three police were killed and a policeman and two woman were captured.

⁴⁶ibid., p. 210

⁴⁷ibid., pp. 209-210

⁴⁸Baldwin., p. 83

The gang was tracked for 100 miles during the next three days by a police tracker team and contact was made at a spot only ten miles from the incident. During the fight Cachera was killed along with several of his gang and the policeman and two women were rescued.⁴⁹ During the first three months of 1954, 405 Mau Mau terrorists in the Central Province had been accounted for by police.⁵⁰

The more intense large-scale raids of the Mau Mau in the Reserve had been controlled by mid 1954 with the police well established and with dominance over the area.⁵¹ With food from the Reserves virtually denied, the forest Mau Mau were becoming isolated.

"General" Kago was killed but two other Mau Mau leaders, Dedon Kimathi and Waruhiu Itote ("General" China), were generally acknowledged as the senior leaders in the Aberdares and Mount Kenya forests, respectively. They had little communication with each other which would perhaps explain the failure of the Government's surrender plan.⁵² "General" Kago had been killed and on 16 January 1954 the other, "General" China, was wounded and captured during a routine patrol operation near Karatina to the southwest of Mount Kenya and turned over to Ian Henderson, Assistant Superintendent of Police, serving in Special Branch. Ian Henderson was Kenya-born and had come up through the police ranks. He was an expert on the Kikuyu; spoke their language, and knew their minds.⁵³

⁴⁹Foran., pp. 189-190

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 210

⁵¹Rosberg and Nottingham., pp. 298-299

⁵²Ibid., p. 200

⁵³Majdalany., p. 195

Using all his knowledge of Kikuyu, Ian Henderson extracted from China a complete picture of the composition and organization of his armies on Mount Kenya---5,000 strong. Significantly, China had no knowledge of Kamathi's horde in the Aberdares. Henderson, also, extracted from China an agreement to cooperate in obtaining a mass surrender of the Mau Mau in the Mount Kenya area. Henderson devised a plan and obtained the approval of General Erskine. With a small Special Branch team, Henderson, with "General"China dressed as a police askari set up headquarters for "Operation Wedgewood" in a hut in Nyeri. The aim was to make contact with main Mau Mau leaders, with China's help, and sell them on the idea of surrender. After slow and laborious negotiations, Henderson had arranged for a rendezvous with the leaders. Two attempts failed. Then two other ex-Mau Mau were added to the team for a third attempt. Contact was made, the Government proposal given, a Government cease-fire between 30 March and 10 April in the Prohibited area arranged, and the Mau Mau leaders released. When no news came back, Henderson went back to the forest to renew talks. Some 2,700 had agreed to surrender on 7 April 1954 but due to a friction of war, the surrender was cancelled. An Army unit, with a legitimate target of a small roving Mau Mau gang, had opened fire near the forest area within sound of the surrendering Mau Mau.⁵⁴ Although "Operation Wedgewood", planned and executed by the police failed because of a military mishap which broke the confidence of

⁵⁴Ibid., pp. 194-201

the Mau Mau, much valuable information had been gained and Special Branch had been touched with the concept of forming pseudo gangs. The success of these gangs and the foundation of Special Forces will be covered later when discussing the manhunt for Ki... In the words of Sir Evelyn Baring, "A number of people were giving us advice on what the Mau-Mau would do next. No one was right the whole time, but Ian Henderson was right more often than anyone else. "

While "Operation Wedgewood" was going on plans were being completed to eliminate the Mau Mau passive wing in Nairobi-"Operation Anvil". Since 1952 an estimated 30,000 Kikuyu had come to Nairobi to swell the Kikuyu population in the city to 65,000. The Reserve was reasonably under control but Nairobi was still the source of passive support to the forest gangs. No advanced preparation could be made openly except for the construction of reception and detention camps and arrangement for detention camp guards to be controlled by the Army. A reception center for 10,000 was completed at Langata, five miles from the city center and two permanent detention camps for 7,000 persons and 3,000 persons (later increased to hold 17,000) some 250 miles away. The plan was to place a thin Army screen around the city. Sectors would then be cordoned off and searched by the police. When an area was searched, the Army was to retain control of it. Troops were withdrawn from other areas to

⁵⁵Ian Henderson (with Phillip Godhart)., Man Hunt in Kenya. (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc. 1958) p. 33

⁵⁶Majdalany., pp. 203-204

participate in "Operation Anvil" as well as police to handle the search and the detaining of Kikuyu.

Kariuki, a Mau Mau who was detained, described the police part of the operation which started 24 April 1954. Police were used to rout out all Africans and to segregate Kikuyu, Embu and Meru from other tribes. After wholesale arrests of most all in the cordon, they were taken before Special Branch agents who were dressed in huge hoods with eye-holes and who became known as "Little Sacks" or Gakunia (Special Branch referred to them as the Hooded Men.) The agents were a mixed lot. Some were ordinary "spivs" who became professional betrayers and others were educated young men. He claimed that it was the "illiterate people who throughout remained strongest in the struggle." Everyone filed slowly past the ghostly figures who would suddenly say "Take him" and anyone so named was brought to the detention camp for further screening. He doubted that so few hooded men could know so many Mau Mau.⁵⁷ Kitson found the "Hooded Men" system effective and protected the informers by the disguise.⁵⁸ Although flaws perhaps existed, the Special Branch plan seemed the only feasible way for initial fast screening. The system was later refined and with limited suspects to be screened proved most effective. In the Manyuki area in a similar operation to Anvil, "hooded men" identified 5,000 suspects of which 1,000 proved to be important passive

⁵⁷Kariuki., pp. 60-61

⁵⁸Kitson., p. 101

wing leaders. Military intelligence officers, field intelligence officers, and police assisted in the screening. The first day of "Operation Anvil" some 20 hard-core Mau Mau to include a "General"⁵⁹ and other high-ranking leaders were identified and arrested.

After the second week of "Operation Anvil", 30,000 Africans had been screened, 16,538 detained, and 2,500 dependents sent back to the Reserve. Forgery-proof identification cards were issued to all Africans in Nairobi and travel in and out of the city was greatly restricted.

The effect of Anvil was also shown by the reduction of the crime rate. In April 1954, the lawlessness accompanying the Mau-Mau resulted in 950 reportable and serious crimes; in May 1954 this had dropped to only 152; and after several months, as the shock wore off,⁶⁰ crime was still 25 percent below the pre-emergency average. Anvil had produced a great quantity of intelligence, the passive wing in Nairobi had been broken, and the forest gangs had been further isolated.

The problems of the detention camps and the enduring effect of Anvil on Kenyans (even today) must be viewed when considering the success of Anvil. Anvil has been criticized by police experts as having been too indiscriminate in its method. They called it a "shock treatment with a vengeance." Innocent Kikuyu were caught up in the trap and placed in detention camps with hard-core Mau Mau.

⁵⁹ibid., p. 102

⁶⁰Majdalany., p. 206

But the police did admit that it did achieve what was desired,
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the smashing of the Mau Mau organization in Nairobi.

Although other cordons were used in Nairobi after Phase 1, the strength of troops and police in Nairobi was reduced and operations were renewed in other areas by the police primarily as the Army was occupied with the detainees.

Mid 1954 saw further police strength authorizations. The Police Training School was overhauled for the retraining of some 2,000 police who had received shortened courses of instruction and the Kenya police took over the forest area operations to slowly reduce the number and effectiveness of the active Mau Mau. It was about this time that William Baldwin, an American ex-GI, joined the KPR to head up a GSU platoon. His book Mau-Mau Man-Hunt is a source of valuable information about the operations of the police combat platoons. He quickly became indoctrinated in police methods. While on patrol in the forest with an element of the KAR, he was surprised to see the overuse of mortars when trying to find a Mau Mau hideout. The following quote is credited to the Kenya Regiment officer.

Look, you're in the police and you probably get strange orders. Well, we're a military unit and come under the jurisdiction of the British Army. The high brass know little about the terrain and even less about the people we're fighting. So some bright chap gets to thinking he's back on the fields of France and has the brilliant idea that if mortars worked in France, then mortars will work in the Aberdares. So here we are acting like

61 ibid.,

asses and getting soaked to the skin when all the time we might be doing a proper patrol with a chance of running into a gang. 62

Although this quote could be fiction or exceptional case, it does clearly point out a problem area faced by the military when it comes into a strange area with a strange non-conventional enemy.

"Operation Grubstake" was an operation planned at General Headquarters and conducted primarily by the police, GSU and KAR along the edge of the Aberdare. The plan called for establishing dusk-to-dawn ambushes along likely routes which the Mau Mau might use to come out of the forest for food and resupply. After two weeks the operation was called off as a failure. A later refinement of this type of operation was to place two squads in evening ambush positions and one squad on daylight patrol. This technique proved more successful. 63

The most successful operations of the GSU platoons were those resulting from contacts during extended patrols (long-range type patrols). The patrols were based on gang siting reports and resulted from the concept of GSU platoons as "Striking Forces" ready to pile on in the event of patrol contact. 64

Patrols or ambushes were seldom made up of platoon size units which could be too easily compromised. By this time the Mau Mau were traveling in smaller groups; therefore, justifying smaller but more numerous friendly fighting elements. As the emergency continued

62 Baldwin., p. 99

63 Ibid., pp. 100-104, 140

64 Ibid., p. 160

GSU platoons often became a reaction force for Special Branch. Also platoons were used as guards when moving large contingencies of detainees from one camp to another.

Baldwin describes the actions of an eight-man typical patrol of his patrolling the Kiambicho Hills. An African Scout reported sighting two men. Baldwin used his binoculars but saw nothing. He had learned that his men had sharper eyes and a keener sense of the Mau Mau and terrain than he had. The patrol ran into 50 Mau-Mau who opened fire. The fire was returned in such volume that the Mau Mau withdrew. Baldwin radioed for reinforcements and a police spotter plane, and began to follow the trail. Although the main body disappeared, five Mau Mau had been killed and a precision rifle recovered. ⁶⁵ This type of operation was what may be called a "nibbling tactic"--each one slowly depleting the Mau Mau force. This same type of tactic was really part of the basic success of the "psuedo gangs". While the troops and the police were tracking gangs in the forest, Ian Henderson of Special Branch was perfecting his concept of "psuedo gangs". Surrendered terrorists were formed into gangs led by young Europeans, most of whom had been born in Kenya. Dressed in rags, with faces blackened by burnt cork and shoe polish, they roamed through the forest and accounted for still more ⁶⁶ gangsters. The "psuedo-gang" technique was not evolved in Kenya, it was used many years earlier by the Palestine Police, during the

⁶⁵Ibid., pp. 119-120

⁶⁶Henderson., p. 15

Arab and Jewish rebellions in that country. But it achieved its
widest measure of success in Kenya. ⁶⁷ It was an extension of the
informer system in common use by all police and eventually developed
into the refined concept of Special Forces. The military has adopted
the policing system. No attempt here is being made to prove who
invented or refined the concept but there is no doubt that Ian
Henderson, the policeman, discovered its effectiveness and employed
it with success in Kenya. General Erskine called it his "rapier";
and General Lathbury stopped large operations in favor of small,
highly trained patrols and credited Special Branch with a major
portion of the victory. He states "Ian Henderson has probably
done more than any single man to bring the emergency to an end." ⁶⁸

The numerous adventures and operations of "pseudo gangs" are
well recorded by Henderson, Kitson, Baldwin and other writers.

"Operation Chui" and the hunt for Kimathi deserve special
note.

"Operation Chui" was more of a conventional Special Branch
operation, sometimes using disguises but aimed at convincing the
Mau Mau of the Government's good intentions. An article in the
Kenya Police Review, January 1956, gives an account of the operation.
"Operation Chui" was an attempt (similar to "Wedgewood") to bring
Mau Mau terrorist leaders in the Aberdares into direct contact with
representatives of the Government with a view to encouraging them
to accept the special surrender terms which were offered on 18

⁶⁷Ibid., Foreword

⁶⁸Ibid., pp. 35-36

January 1955, and to bring the forest fighting to an end. Although the aim was not achieved, as before, the Special Branch teams made frequent trips into the forest to rendezvous with Mau Mau leaders, often while hostile Mau Mau hid in the bush. More than 30 trips were made but negotiations failed. Between the breakdown of talks and the end of the surrender offer (18 July 1955), some 439 terrorists did surrender. Over the same period of time, 433 terrorists were⁶⁹ killed and 253 captured. Special Branch had had some success.

The hunt for Kimathi began in late 1955. The forest gangs had been cut to about 1,500 strength but the Kimathi gang and Kimathi still existed. A three-man committee, the Director of Special Branch, and Police Superintendents Lapage and Ian Henderson, met to devise a plan. They reviewed the numerous operations that had been launched during the past three years in an effort to catch Kimathi. There had been sweeping operations, cordon operations, operations to starve him into the open country, and intelligence schemes designed to attract him toward bogus sources of supply. There had been psychological operations and none had succeeded. The committee chose to try to seize a member of Kimathi's gang and convert the gangster and use him with a "pseudo-gang" to find Kimathi. The Commissioner of Police and the Commander-in-Chief⁷⁰ concurred. The story is well told by Henderson himself in Man Hunt in Kenya (British title, The Hunt for Kimathi). In the end

⁶⁹Foran., pp 216-220

⁷⁰Henderson., pp. 39-40

Henderson's Mau Mau, so much better officered than their Mau Mau past, proved superior to Kimathi's Mau Mau. On 17 October 1956 Kimathi was wounded by Henderson's men but succeeded in escaping. For 28 straight hours they tracked him. Early on the 21st he was found and challenged by a Tribal Policeman who wounded him again and captured him. This hunt by the police has been classified as the most important battle of the emergency.

Before reviewing some of the other battles a note about the formation of the Police Special Forces, an outgrowth of the "psuedo-gangs" and Special Branch operations, is needed. In May 1955, after the arrival of General Lathbury who replaced General Erskine, five Special Forces teams, each with ten ex-Mau Mau were formed. The Special Forces was established under Special Branch and commanded⁷¹ by the Commissioner of Police rather than the Army. The whittling down of the increasingly disrupted gangs was from then on primarily left to the Special Forces.⁷² Kitson makes an interesting point that in the end the Special Forces became out of date as the terrorists grew more and more like animals in their instinctive suspicion. It was this factor that had caused Ian Henderson to tailor his concept by including a Kimathi gangster in the⁷³ "psuedo-gang" to find Kimathi.

To return to 1955, three military operations should be reviewed; "Operation Hammer," "First Flute," and "Dante." Operation Hammer"

⁷¹Foran., p. 218

⁷²Ibid., p. 219

⁷³Kitson., p. 209

was a sweep through the Aberdares by an infantry division while employing Tribal Police ambushes along the fringe of the forest. The results were only 161 dead Mau Mau. "First Flute" was a modification of the Hammer Operation for use in the Mount Kenya forest. The essence of this was that instead of sweeping the forest, units would be given areas of it to dominate. After two months (April 1955) "First Flute" ended with 277 Mau Mau being killed, captured or surrendered.⁷⁴ "Operation Dante" was one of the last full-scale operations of the emergency. The plan was to cordon the forest and use artillery and aircraft attacks to drive the estimated 300 terrorists from the center of the forest to the line of ambushes. At the end of four days, only eight Mau Mau were killed. "Operation Dante" continued for a month but results were poor and the "domination of areas" technique seen previously was used by platoon-size units. Later security forces organized a population sweep in the south in conjunction with "psuedo-gang" operations in the north. This was a new technique and proved more successful. Tribal Police and the Kikuvu Guard formed the stop lines while some 15,000 Africans, mostly women, hacked their way through the underbrush. The first Mau Mau was shot 28 times. Later operations used up to 70,000 in a sweep line.⁷⁵ These kill figures were not impressive but perhaps their success could be measured in the disruption and psychological effect which they had on the Mau Mau. They made other techniques possible.

⁷⁴Majdalany., pp. 212-213.

⁷⁵Kitson., pp. 190-207.

During these three years the Tribal Police had joined in numerous operations, primarily in the Reserve areas. Following "Operation Anvil", they were employed with the Kikuyu Guard to provide security to the newly relocated villages of loyal Kikuyu. The Tribal Police had assisted the Kenya Police in holding control over the Reserve while the long forest battles continued. The Home Guard and the Tribal Police had assisted on cordon and sweeps in local areas to find Mau Mau and had proved to be worth the risk. Needless to say, they were a source of Mau Mau bribery and intimidation; however, the fact that the Mau Mau spent much effort to eliminate their posts proves that they had been an effective force. The Tribal Police had captured Kimathi.

The year 1956 had obviously been a year for planned return to normal. By the end of 1956 the police had released 1,008 full-time and part-time Europeans and 341 Asians in the Kenya Police Reserves, while the number of African employees had been increased. Part of this was the plan to replace the special farm guards with Africans of the KPR. It was not an easy matter for the police force to recover from the inevitable results of a rapid and major expansion; yet, what had been achieved had been sturdy and worthwhile. With the improvement in the emergency situation, it was possible to resume more normal police work in the operational areas. During the year the KPR Training Center consolidated with the Police Training School at Kiganjo and the tempo of the police building program continued. Princess Margaret had visited Kenya in 1956 posing no security problems.

Although at the start of 1956 it was estimated that some 2,000 Mau Mau terrorists were still at large, at its close there were believed to be less than 400 and, of these, only 130 had been identified during the last few months of that year. By February the Meru area was considered no longer a military problem, and by the end of March, there were practically no terrorist organizations left in the Embu district. The military, therefore, began reducing its strength.

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At the end of 1956, when the second operational phase of the Emergency ended, Mau Mau had lost 10,527 killed, 2,633 captured: the security forces 63 Europe 3 Asians, 534 Africans killed; 102 Europeans, 12 Asians, 465 Africans wounded. Of loyal Africans 1,826 were killed, 918 wounded compared with European figures of 32 killed, 26 wounded; and the Asians 26 killed, 36 wounded. At this time 38,449 Mau Mau were in detention (the maximum number had been 77,000 in 1954). Figures show that the Kikuyu Guard and the Tribal Police had accounted for 42% of Mau Mau killed. Although figures cannot be found, it would appear that the British Regular Forces had eliminated the least Mau Mau (if detention-Anvil is not counted). Thus, the police, Kenya police, KPR and Tribal Police had done a major share of the job.

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The Third Phase

The capture of Kimathi has been called the decisive blow and from 1956 to 1960 the wind down, the cleaning up operation began.

76Foran., pp. 222-223.

77Majdalany., p. 221.

By February 1958 all military forces were withdrawn from operations and the Kenya police reassumed responsibility for all security measures.

By the end of 1958, the police had retained 3,600 of the 5,000 constables who had joined the force at the start of the emergency.

During 1957 the Government began a determined campaign against the poaching of game and the illicit traffic in ivory, rhino horns, and skins. In November 1957, armed raids by the Merille from Ethiopia into the northern area of the Turkana district occurred which resulted in the killing of 181 Turkana (men, women, and children).⁷⁸

It was a misconception for many to think that Mau Mau terrorism was completely over and that the State of Emergency could be lifted. The process of picking up the gang continued. In August 1958, the GSU staged "Operation Tusker" in the Aberdare forest and "Operation Tusker Two" in the Embu and Meru areas. By the close of 1958, it was confidently believed that only four Mau Mau leaders and 96 terrorists remained at large.

The Kiama Kia Muingi (KKM), a secret society which was an off-shoot of the militant Mau Mau, was uncovered by the police and proscribed by the Government in 1958. Many of the members were arrested, a large number of its inberents sent to prison by the courts, and others detained under the Emergency regulations.⁷⁹

⁷⁸Foran., p. 225

⁷⁹ibid., p. 226

It is interesting to note the speed of Government action with respect to KKM.

Things were returning to the "normal" pre-Mau Mau period. The history of operations of the Kenya police were somewhat repeated, but by this time the need and the support of the police was recognized.

"Everything that can heighten in any degree the respectability of the office of constable adds to the security of the state and to the safety of the life and property of every individual."⁸⁰

The Emergency officially ended in January 1960.

In October 1970 a silver center piece was presented to the Kenya Police by the Legislative Council. Mr. R. C. Catling, the Commissioner of Police, in accepting the gift stated:

...There have been times in the past, let us be frank about this, when both tools and service conditions have not been adequate and as a result we have found ourselves ill-equipped to do the work expected of us by the public. The beginning of the recent emergency was one of these times. In 1952 the Police were unprepared for the Mau-Mau storm which broke and I have been in my present post long enough to know, perhaps better than most, how manfully and successfully one of my predecessors... must have striven to make good the deficiencies. He and I both know the difficulties of fighting an armed insurrection with one hand while expanding, training and reequipping with the other. Yet it is to be hoped that that particular lesson has been learnt. 81

⁸⁰ibid.,

⁸¹ibid., pp. 228-229

CHAPTER VIII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In viewing the organization, role, actions, and results of the Kenya police before and during the Mau Mau rebellion, it has been necessary to examine other aspects of the government machinery to place the police in the proper perspective. One may conclude that the police failed, for varying reasons, to prevent the rise and growth of Mau Mau to a state of civil war and that the military was required to stabilize the situation. An opposite view could be that the military was unnecessary and that they simply confused the issue which was better left to the police. A more balanced conclusion, is perhaps, that once the emergency was declared, success was possible only by the close coordination of all elements involved in the fight.

From a review of the history of the Kenya police, it is obvious that the Colonial Police System and the operational training and experience during the pre-Mau Mau years had prepared the police to meet both external and internal threats to the security of Kenya. Events had kept the Kenya Police at a stage of development where it was capable of dealing with conventional criminal type elements, border disputes, and internal tribal unrest. Its organization was so constructed to provide police protection from ordinary criminal elements as well as quasi-military police units capable of dealing with violence, unrest, and insurrection. There can be no doubt that mass uprisings create problems too large for a police force or any limited size force to handle; however, the government had

received adequate warning of the rising threat and the coming insurgency. These warnings, if heeded and if followed by police support, were given in sufficient time to have prevented the "war" that followed.

Influences, beyond the control of the Commissioner of Police, bore heavily on the inactivity and lack of success in quelling the disturbance while it was still easily controlled. The Governor believed Mau Mau was only another secret tribal organization which would wither away as many before it had done. The Member for Law and Order, wearing both the hat of the Attorney General and Minister for Internal Security, was more concerned with the law than the order. The courts, based on English Common Law, were functioning on a system of leniency, rehabilitation, and legal technicalities rather than justice and even after the declaration of the emergency the Court of Appeals continually reversed cases against Mau Mau because of lack of knowledge of the movement combined with the letter of the law. Members of Parliament in England (the further away from the problem, the less the problem exists) used the emergency for political advantages and frequently gave aid and assistance to the Mau Mau movement in its criticism of security force actions. Even members of the Kenya Legislature refused to provide adequate assistance and money to the police, in spite of requests to increase its intelligence net and coverage of the Reserves. It is easy to place the blame on the police, and particularly Special Branch; however, regardless of their size and limitations no evidence was found to indicate that the failure to halt Mau Mau growth was lack of

knowledge. It is true that inadequate and timely political assessment of the intelligence reports and warnings did exist.

The British policy of using the military to support the police wherever possible proved sound. At the beginning of the emergency the lack of a real military objective resulted in military units often working alone and improving methods of coordinating operations with the police. Similarly, the unpreparedness of the police to assume not only the responsibility for their own expansion but that of all security operations resulted in the creation of an effective triumvirate committee command system to control the operations of police, military, and civilian forces. The police provided expertism to regular military forces and home guards by providing guides and teachers while the military augmented police forces, particularly in Special Branch.

During operations the police tactics proved more successful than the more conventional, large-scale military operations. The method of police training and operation proved invaluable in rooting out the un-uniformed gangs. The knowledge of the terrain and the culture of the Kikuyu possessed by the police could not be replaced by imported foreign troops. The ability of the police to expand, modernize, school, and train when support was given made it the best police force in Africa. But above all the knowledge which the police had in fighting gangster warfare, its ability to use imagination and initiative proved most successful. Many of the tactics successfully developed and employed in Kenya by the police have been adopted by the military---the informant system, the "psuedo gangs,"

the small-scale raids, the long-range patrols, and the simple ability to act alone or in small groups lists only a few.

The military elements provided indispensable individual expertise to the police but the military units' operations, other than psychological, area saturating, and time conserving for police operations to succeed, had little effect on eliminating the Mau-Mau. One major exception, the joint "Operation Anvil," did take out of circulation the passive wing of Mau Mau in Nairobi even though its final effect may not have made it a successful operation. The military approach to insurgency does not lend itself to cracking organizations for this must be based on long-term residence, training, time, and experience. These four factors give the police the advantage in dealing with insurgency.

In Kenya, the failure of the Government and the courts to take appropriate and timely actions, not the police, perhaps resulted in the failure of the police to halt the rise of Mau Mau. The weaknesses of the police, caused by lack of support (not ability), were quickly corrected after the emergency was declared. The public must pay and support the police if it is to provide adequate protection and security. The support must be given also by the elements which back the police, such as the courts and government.

Insurrection creeps up upon a nation and is difficult to detect before it explodes because the people live it daily. The key factor, therefore, to successful prevention is knowing when dissent becomes a revolutionary force and when to provide limited but increased powers to the police and courts to "nip it in the bud."

The name of the force performing such police functions as the Kenya Police is irrelevant but the job was best done in Kenya as The Kenya Police did it.

Police cannot stop insurgencies alone; but with forward looking government policy, (capable of standing up against the enticements offered by the insurgents to the people) and with supported police maintaining law and order and with programs to get to the social, economic or psychological problems at the root of the insurgence, insurgency can be stopped without having a police state.

Five points seem to characterize the Mau Mau suppression operation:

- 1) Protection of the population from the insurgents.
- 2) Expansion of the country's police force.
- 3) Utilization of military, to support the police and to carry the fight to the isolated insurgents.
- 4) Operation of a joint planning group system from top to bottom of government, police and military representatives.
- 5) Utilization of an effective public information program aimed at both the insurgents and "the friends", (perhaps some of this failed).

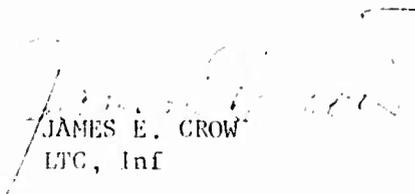
During the "brewing stage" the police must be expanded, particularly their intelligence and CID agencies. Emergency powers must be authorized short of an emergency to allow "detaining pending investigation" authority. The public agencies must join to realize that progress does not exist under lawlessness. Court

actions must be reviewed to insure that hard-core insurgents are not using legal technicalities and short sentences to their advantage. A realistic evaluation of the pending danger must be sold to the leaders of the country by those who know the problem at the affected level.

During the "operational stage" the police must be the backbone of the suppression operation. Military, if needed, must act as a support agent. A Joint Planning System is essential to gain maximum advantage of all elements' expertism. Imagination and ingenuity are essential. The insurgents must be fought by people who know their mode of operation, the terrain and the insurgent, himself. Previous operations, not even one of insurgency, can be blindly followed---they should be studied and used as appropriate but only with the full knowledge of the present enemy and his tactics in his environment.

A former Commissioner of Police (name withheld) stated:

It is the police, rather than any military body, which, being so close to the people, is most likely to produce not only the operational intelligence on which you as soldiers cannot function without, but a whole mass of other things, because we policemen are of the people. You soldiers are too but not in quite the same way. We move among the population, we see them, and we talk to them, and we deal with them, everyday and all day, and this whole business is a business of the people.


JAMES E. CROW
LTC, Inf

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