

EAST AFRICA is a term sometimes used loosely to connote the territories of Northern Rhodesia, Nyasaland, Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika and Zanzibar, but more frequently only the latter four territories. The four latter comprise an area of some 682,000 square miles with an estimated population of about 18 $\frac{1}{2}$ millions, of which about a quarter of a million are Asians and Arabs, 44,000 are Europeans and the rest are Africans of a great variety and multiplicity of different tribes. Time does not permit of any attempt to describe the early history of these territories and the steps by which they came to be administered by the Colonial Office. But it was only at the beginning of the present century that the East African Protectorate was officially taken over by the British Government, and it was not till after the 1914-18 war that Britain accepted the mandate over Tanganyika, the greater portion of which had /been

- 2 -

been formerly German East Africa. For official purposes, therefore, East Africa in its present form dates back to 1920, when Kenya was declared a Colony and Protectorate. The progress that has been made in the last 30, or at most 50 years, from the earliest days of settlement is in retrospect no mean achievement. For example, the revenue of Kenya and Uganda combined was £133,000 in 1902. In 1952 it was about £35,000,000. Exports in 1902 were valued at £200,000; to-day they are nearly £75 million. The Colony and Protectorate of Kenya comprises some 224,960 square miles, of which 5,230 square miles is water. It has an estimated population of 5,251,000 Africans, 91,000 Indians, 30,000 Europeans, 24,000 Arabs, 7,000 *sons*, 960 Coloured and 2,000 other persons. There are some 80 different tribes, and it is of importance to remember, if the present Mau Mau disturbances are to be viewed in proper perspective, that

/the

the Kikuyu tribe numbers only a million -- about 19.5% of the total Native population.

Small as the European population of some 30,000 is, it greatly outnumbers the European population in Tanganyika (10,000) and Uganda (3,500). Partly for this reason and partly for geographical and climatic reasons, the Kenya settlers have always exercised an influence in the framing of policy in Kenya, and to a lesser degree throughout East Africa, out of all proportion to their numerical strength. Their arrival, at first at any rate, was not resented by the African population, as there was at the time much empty land as the result of tribal wars, pestilences and famine, and the advent of the railway quickly followed by the first White settlers provided an easy means of procuring food and cash. But the Indians, who had very long trade associations with the /East ...

East Coast, and later had provided most of the labour for the construction of the Railway, began early to contest the predominance of European influence, and matters were brought to a head in 1920. For they then demanded equal unofficial representation with the Europeans on a common roll, when it was proposed to give the Europeans eleven unofficial elected members in a reformed Legislative Council. This gave rise to the well-known pronouncement of the Duke of Devonshire in 1923 on the paramountcy of Native Interests which, coupled with the ultimate grant of 5 Indian seats on a separate communal roll, sowed the seeds of a political controversy, which has not been resolved to the present day.

The Uganda Railway, which was started in 1897, was primarily constructed for the purpose of suppressing the slave trade

in accordance with a recommendation of the Brussels Conference of 1889, so as to provide an essential link for the effective administration of Uganda over which the British Government had recently declared a Protectorate. By the time the Railway reached Kisumu in 1903, a number of British Settlers had taken up land in what is to-day Kenya with the active encouragement of the British Government, with the result that they became actively interested in the policy and administration of the Railway.

By 1924, when the Ormsby Gore Commission visited East Africa, Kenya, which had become a Colony in 1920, already had joint Railway, Customs and Posts and Telegraph Departments with Uganda, and nine years later Tanganyika was included in a joint inter-territorial Post & Telegraph administration.

/It

It was from these small beginnings, largely brought about for economic rather than political considerations, that the East Africa High Commission, as now established, was evolved. While these arrangements were hammered out locally, for reasons of practical convenience though not without a good deal of inter-territorial controversy, there was all the time in the background a much more ambitious scheme for some form of amalgamation of these great undeveloped areas. Provision had been expressly made in the Tanganyika mandate at the instance of General Smuts and Mr. Amery to enable that territory to form a customs, fiscal and administrative union or federation with the adjacent territories of the British Mandatory Power.

In 1919 the Governors of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika had been instructed by Lord Milner to study the possibilities

/of

of closer co-ordination of their territories and prepare a plan.

In Kenya the European settlers, under the leadership of the late Lord Delamere, strongly supported such a scheme. So in 1924 Mr. Ormsby Gore visited East Africa as Chairman of a Parliamentary Commission to consider what measures should be taken to accelerate the general economic development of the British East Africa Dependencies (his terms of reference included, mark you, Northern Rhodesia, Nyasaland and Zanzibar, as well as Tanganyika, Kenya and Uganda) and to secure closer co-ordination of policy. The report advocated as a first step a series of Conferences of the Governors of these five Territories on matters of common interest. As a result, the East African Governors' Conference with a Secretariat of its own was set up. Later the Hilton Young Commission...

sion was appointed by Mr. Amery to examine the same subject and reported in 1929. But the report was not unanimous and no immediate action was taken. I will not weary you with enumerating the spate of White Papers that followed in the next two years, but finally in October 1931 a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament, which had been appointed to consider the question and to receive oral and written evidence from all three territories, reported that the time was not favourable for taking any far-reaching step in the direction of formal union, and recommended that each of the three territories should continue to develop upon its own lines, but that increasing use should be made of the machinery of the Governors' Conference to co-ordinate certain economic and scientific services and any other matters of common interest to East Africa as a whole.

During the next nine years, though some minor expansions of inter-territorial services took place, notably that of an East African Income Tax Department, closer union ceased to be a live political issue and so far as the British Government is concerned, still remains in official cold storage. But with the entry of Italy into the war in June 1940 the need for the closer co-ordination of the war effort of all three territories, particularly in the spheres of Production Supply and Defence, became urgent. By this time the Headquarters of the East African Command had been set up in Nairobi with jurisdiction over the Governors' Conference territories, which still nominally embraced Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, though in peace time they had made little use of the Conference machinery. In order,
/therefore

therefore, to facilitate liaison with the G.O.C., the Governor of Kenya became permanent war time Chairman of the Conference, and its Secretariat was largely expanded under the direction of a Chief Secretary to deal direct with the G.O.C.'s Staff on all questions of military manpower and defence. In addition an East African Production and Supply Council was set up, at first under the Chairmanship of the Governor of Kenya and later under a separate Chairman with unofficial representatives from all three territories. Closely linked with it was a War Supplies Board and Industrial Management Board for the stimulation of local industries of value to the war effort. In addition to these joint activities promoted by war conditions, other activities particularly in the field of scientific research and higher education received substantial impetus. Indeed,
/when

when I left Kenya towards the end of 1944 the process of collaboration in many fields had resulted in an organic growth which, based on the Secretariat of the Governors' Conference, was in effect a form of central administration for a large group of subjects. But it lacked any juridical or constitutional foundation on which to base its authority. The end of the war saw a general desire to consolidate this machinery and to provide it with the necessary constitutional basis. Accordingly my successor, Sir Philip Mitchell, prepared a scheme which after some controversy and revision of the original proposals culminated in the abolition of the old Governors' Conference and the setting up of the present East Africa High Commission for the 3 territories of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika on January 1st 1948.

/The ,.....

The Governor of Kenya is Chairman of the Commission, of which the other two Governors are members. In his absence the High Commission appoints one of its members to be Chairman. The High Commission has power to legislate in respect of certain specified subjects, and for this purpose the East Africa Central Legislative Assembly has been established. It is presided over by a Speaker and consists of 23 members of which 13 are unofficials. Of these 5 are Europeans, 4 Indians, 3 Africans and 1 Arab. This assembly, originally appointed for an experimental period of 4 years, has recently had its life extended for a further four-year period. Despite a good deal of adverse criticism of the High Commission, which manifestly falls short of a complete amalgamation or federation of the three territories, this decision would appear to

/have

have been a wise one. Owing to recent events in Kenya and Uganda the present time would clearly be inopportune to press for any closer form of union and Tanganyika has clearly indicated that it is more interested in the economic development of its still largely unexplored resources than in the controversial question of further constitutional reform. I have given pride of place to this necessarily sketchy history of the efforts made in the past to secure some form of amalgamation or federation of these five territories for which the Colonial Office is responsible, because without it the newly established federation of the Rhodesias and Nyasaland or Colonel David Stirling's Capricorn Africa Society may not be viewed in proper perspective. The establishment of a stable form of unitary or federated government on the British

/Parliamentary

Parliamentary model in this part of Central and Eastern Africa is a conception - a pipe dream, if you will - at least half a century old. Southern Rhodesia, jealous of her self-governing position, was excluded from the purview of the Ormsby-Gore, Hilton Young and Bledisloe Commissions. In the interval, experience has proved that owing to the difficulties of communications over these vast territories the idea of a single block was impracticable, initially at any rate, and geographically the two Rhodesias and Nyasaland fell naturally into one division and the three northern territories into another. By the device of a federated central Government with special subjects reserved by law for the territorial governments, it is hoped that the susceptibilities of Southern Rhodesia on the one hand and the suspicions of some of the

/Africans

Africans in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland on the other will have been equally overcome. It is therefore an experiment, the result of which will be anxiously watched, since its success, for which we all hope, may have important repercussions beyond its borders. For in essence the same problem awaits solution in all these territories -- the fundamentally human problem of devising a pattern of government and society under which individuals of different races and varying standards of life and culture can live and work harmoniously together with mutual respect for each others' rights and aspirations. The practical difficulties in the way of arriving at any agreed solution are formidable and are well illustrated by recent events in Kenya. As a result of a visit of Mr. James Griffiths, the then Secretary of State for the Colonies,

/in

in 1951 all communities in Kenya agreed to hold a round table conference within a year on the subject of further political advance or alterations in the Constitution. Owing to the state of emergency resulting from the Mau Mau outrages, this has necessarily been postponed. But in November last the European Elected Members Organization issued a statement of Policy, which was quickly followed by Policy Statements from the African members of Legco and the Kenya Indian Congress. They are too long for me to quote verbatim, but those interested can read the text in the issues of East Africa and Rhodesia of November 19th, 26th, and December 31st. In matters of detail the statements, as might be expected, either expressly or by implication represent considerable divergencies of view. Thus the European statement is silent on the subject

/of

of the franchise and the common roll, the African represents the urgency of introducing election by secret ballot for all local, central and inter-territorial statutory bodies, while the Indian comes out unequivocally in favour of a common roll on the basis of adult franchise without reservation of seats in the legislature for any race. On the other hand there is a remarkable unanimity as to the necessity for maintaining British guidance and control on the short term though the ultimate goal may be self-government within the Commonwealth. What is perhaps the most encouraging feature of all three statements is the recognition of the necessity of promoting inter-racial harmony. Thus the European statement stresses the importance of making every effort to promote friendly co-operation between all groups and races in Kenya. The /ultimate ...

ultimate objective -- a nation.

The African statement begins with the words:- "The emergency must be given the highest possible priority to bring it to a successful end as quickly as possible. To this end African members must continue to support the Government fully." It ends with the sentence:- "Harmonious relations among all inhabitants of Kenya are absolutely essential for the happy future of the country. Africans are prepared to come more than half-way to meet the other races. The immigrant races can do more than they are doing to create happier racial atmosphere by removing the dominating attitude held by many."

The Indian Congress statement is, as might be expected, an able but highly polemical document largely directed against

the predominant political influence enjoyed by the European settler community at present, but at the same time it appeals to the various racial groups to get together and formulate a programme of progress by mutual consultation. In a later paragraph, while envisaging the disappearance (in law and practice) of all forms of discrimination on the grounds of race, religion, or colour, it agrees that in the meantime it is necessary by law to protect the economic and political interests of the African community until such time as it reaches a level of civilization enjoyed by other races.

If you read these statements for yourselves you will find, of course, considerable divergencies of view on other controversial questions such as land, and land tenure restricting immigration, the public services and so on, while the
/Indian

Indian statement concludes with a characteristic sting in its tail with the sentence:- "No political union with the other Eastern African territories should be considered until Kenya gets away from the racial basis of politics and until such union is freely accepted by the people of the other territories. Federation with Central Africa is out of the question, because Central Africa is already deeply committed to a racial segregation policy which is not acceptable to the non-European peoples of Eastern Africa."

Such plain speaking carried on in a friendly atmosphere is all to the good, and anyone familiar with Kenya conditions and traditions must regard it as significant. I gave some account of the early origins of the Mau Mau organization last year, and since then so much has been said and written about it that there is little that I can usefully add. No one can

/condone....

condone the brutality of the outrages or the cynicism of its leaders in playing upon the tribal superstitions and beliefs of the primitive Kikuyu masses in an attempt to paralyse all civilized government by violence and murder. Sir Evelyn Baring in a recent pronouncement has made it clear that steps will be taken to prevent the return of such leaders to any area where they might cause future trouble and that any land in their possession will be forfeited to Government and used for some public purpose, such as the establishment of a school, clinic, or an agricultural experiment centre. The cost of the emergency up to the end of August last had been over £2 million and it was recently announced that the British Government had made the Kenya Government a free grant of £4 million and a £2 million interest-free

free loan for 1954-55, together with a £5 million grant for a 5-year Agricultural Development plan. One may perhaps be allowed the melancholy reflection that but for the state of emergency these large sums would not have been voted with the same alacrity by the House of Commons. Kenya itself appears to have learnt this lesson from the emergency, costly as it has been both in terms of treasure and human life: That the Government must enjoy the confidence of all races, and that without a sense of security there can be no healthy and lasting development. If this object is to be achieved, it is not only on the vexed question of constitutional reform that there will have to be more give and take. As everywhere in Africa land is the question dearest to the African's heart. Throughout East Africa, with the introduction of law

/and

and order and the provision of modern medical and veterinary services, both the human and cattle population is outstripping the carrying capacity of the land. In Kenya the problem is further aggravated by the rigid demarcation of the territory into African Land Units and European settled areas. This, quite apart from the vexed question as to the propriety of some of the original land alienations to Europeans, makes it difficult if not impossible to divorce political considerations from what is fundamentally an economic issue, namely, how and by whom can best use be made of a given piece of land. At the moment a Royal Commission is in East Africa studying this very complicated matter. Personally, I hope they will treat it on an inter-territorial rather than a territorial basis, and that its recommendations

/may

may be based on economic rather than on racial considerations. If such prove to be the case their acceptance may well put to a practical test the ability of the different communities to work harmoniously together in accordance with their published statements of Policy. The recent announcement of the B.B.C. as to the formation in Kenya of a War Cabinet representative of all three races would seem to be a first step in this direction.

Collection Number: AD843

XUMA, A.B., Papers

PUBLISHER:

Publisher:- **Historical Papers Research Archive**

Location:- **Johannesburg**

©2013

LEGAL NOTICES:

Copyright Notice: All materials on the Historical Papers website are protected by South African copyright law and may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, displayed, or otherwise published in any format, without the prior written permission of the copyright owner.

Disclaimer and Terms of Use: Provided that you maintain all copyright and other notices contained therein, you may download material (one machine readable copy and one print copy per page) for your personal and/or educational non-commercial use only.

People using these records relating to the archives of Historical Papers, The Library, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, are reminded that such records sometimes contain material which is uncorroborated, inaccurate, distorted or untrue. While these digital records are true facsimiles of paper documents and the information contained herein is obtained from sources believed to be accurate and reliable, Historical Papers, University of the Witwatersrand has not independently verified their content. Consequently, the University is not responsible for any errors or omissions and excludes any and all liability for any errors in or omissions from the information on the website or any related information on third party websites accessible from this website.

This document is part of the archive of the South African Institute of Race Relations, held at the Historical Papers Research Archive at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa.