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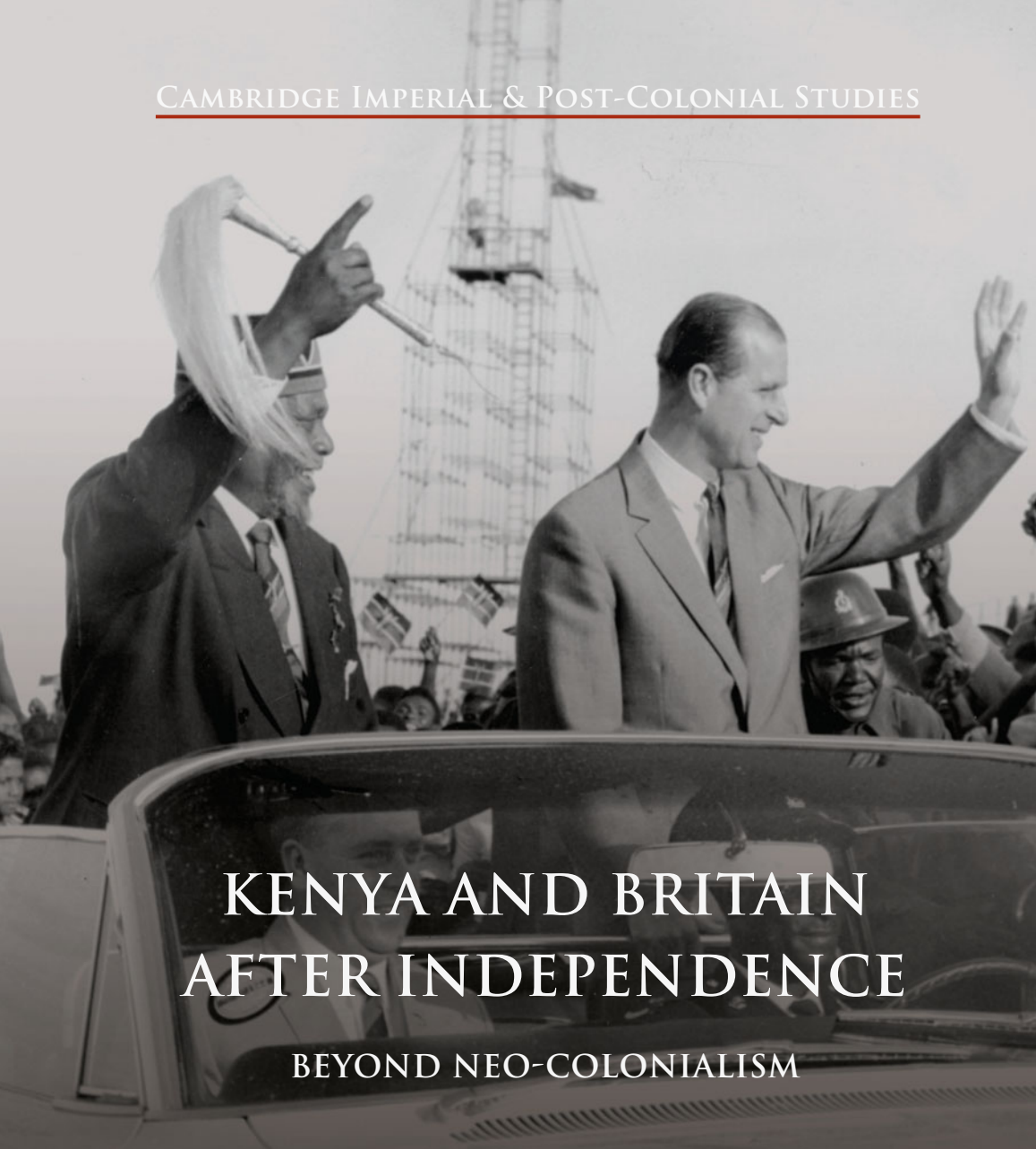

KENYA AND BRITAIN AFTER INDEPENDENCE

BEYOND NEO-COLONIALISM

POPPY CULLEN

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Beyond Neo-Colonialism

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Contents

Abbreviations

BDOHP	British Diplomatic Oral History Project, Churchill Archives Centre, Churchill College, Cambridge
BHC	British High Commission in Nairobi
CO	Colonial Office
CRO	Commonwealth Relations Office
DSL	Diplomatic Service List
EAD	East Africa Department
EEC	European Economic Community
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
FO	Foreign Office
GSU	General Service Unit
HMG	Her Majesty's Government
HMOCS	Her Majesty's Overseas Civil Service
IMF	International Monetary Fund
KADU	Kenya African Democratic Union
KANU	Kenya African National Union
KNA	Kenya National Archive, Nairobi
KPU	Kenya People's Union
MMA	Malcolm MacDonald Archive, Durham
MOD	Ministry of Defence
MOU	Memorandum of Intention and Understanding, 1964
MP	Member of Parliament
ODA	Overseas Development Administration
ODM	Ministry of Overseas Development
RAF	Royal Air Force
SAS	Special Air Service
TNA	The National Archive, Kew

UDI	Unilateral Declaration of Independence
UKPH	United Kingdom Passport Holders
UN	United Nations

List of Tables

CHAPTER 1

Introduction: From Mau Mau Enemies to 'Best Friends'

The relationship with Kenya is an important and largely overlooked example of British post-colonial foreign policy. Kenyan independence came after one of the most intense and bloody insurgencies in Britain's colonial history—Mau Mau and the colonial state of emergency in place between 1952 and 1960. This resulted in thousands of deaths and detentions, and to British contemporaries seemed to be evidence of the 'barbarism', 'backwardness' and 'brutality' of Africans.[1] British policy-makers felt much anxiety about Kenya's future and Britain's relationship with an independent Kenya. Jomo Kenyatta had only recently been released from detention after his conviction as Mau Mau leader, and was still vilified by some in Britain; he was famously described by Governor Patrick Renison in 1960 as 'leader to darkness and death'.[2] Some British officials and politicians had made no secret of their preference for the Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU)—the rival party which Kenyatta's Kenya African National Union (KANU) had defeated. Potential causes of friction abounded: land, British security interests, and the presence of white and Asian settlers. In spite of all of this, however, this was to become one of the closest—perhaps the closest—relationships between a newly independent African state and Britain, while Kenyatta came to both symbolise and manage the transformation in British attitudes, becoming a favoured African ally. How and why this happened are among the subjects of this book.

A brief comparison with Kenya's neighbours and former British colonies Tanganyika (later Tanzania) and Uganda makes clear how unusual Kenya's relationship with Britain was. Tanganyika became independent in 1961,

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the first of Britain's East African colonies to do so, under the leadership of Julius Nyerere, with whom the British expected to have a close relationship, describing in 1961 that Nyerere 'possess[ed] a degree of common sense unusual in an African nationalist'.[3] However, over the following years he pursued relations with China, the Soviet Union and a variety of external partners over and above Britain. His relationship with the British government was more confrontational, especially over Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) in 1965, with Nyerere one of the most outspoken critics of British inaction and breaking diplomatic relations with Britain over the issue in 1965. In Uganda, independent in 1962, British officials came to dislike the first president, Milton Obote, and initially to welcome Idi Amin's coup in 1971.[4] Quickly, however, Amin was reviled in Britain. A key moment was the expulsion of Ugandan Asians in 1972, seeming to show Amin's intractability and unreasonableness. As later chapters show, this action had consequences for Britain's policy towards Kenya. In Uganda and Tanzania, as was the case in Kenya, the choices of the post-colonial leaders were crucial. Their presidents looked to work with others rather than Britain, and took actions which were detrimental to British interests, as well as criticising Britain publicly. Kenyatta, by contrast, followed policies designed to work with Britain and to ensure this relationship.

Post-Colonial Kenya and British Foreign Policy

This book focuses on British foreign policy towards a former African colony. This is a fairly uncommon approach. British foreign policy is a subject which has received extensive scholarly attention. But this has often largely ignored Britain's relationships with former colonies after independence, more concerned instead with Europe and America. Studies of post-war foreign policy always highlight the end of empire as a defining moment, and then former colonies are largely relegated until and unless they became particularly significant, such as Rhodesia and South Africa.[5] This perhaps stems from both a historiographical and a contemporary separation of colonial from foreign policy. In government, these were run by different departments. Scholars, too, have tended to treat these as separate concerns, with a clear tradition of studies of empire and separate studies of foreign policy. In this latter kind of scholarship, the lowering of the colonial flag and raising of its independent replacement typically marks a colony's departure from the narrative.

This scholarly and contemporary divide of foreign policy from empire has created something of an artificial separation, and meant that examinations of foreign policy have not always revealed the full scope of Britain's relations with the world. As Jackson has argued, there has often been:

> an artificial division of the post-Second World War years into a period of 'declining empire' and one of 'post-empire', in which the links between the two have been very poorly conceptualised. This … has deflected attention from the many continuities in Britain's relations with the wider world.[6]

It is true that there is growing recognition of these continuing relations, particularly in recent work by Stockwell on the continuation of British institutions in post-colonial Africa.[7] But there have been remarkably few bilateral studies of British relations with former African colonies.[8] The existing accounts of British relations with Kenya have not extended much beyond independence, certainly not into the 1970s, with Parsons' study of the 1964 East African mutinies and Percox's work on the military sphere until 1965.[9] Asian immigration into Britain in 1967–1968 is often the single occasion where independent Kenya makes an appearance in the wider literature on British foreign policy.[10]

This seems a strange lacuna considering that most scholars agree that British foreign policy aimed at a global role, evidencing what Sanders has described as 'great power syndrome'.[11] A 1964 government report stated that 'it is in the general interest that Britain's voice should continue to be heard and to carry weight in the world', with a clear belief in the importance of Britain.[12] A sense of confidence and self-belief thus remained and the desire to sustain this 'lay at the core of decision-making'.[13] Given this desire for a world role, it seems surprising that scholars of British foreign policy have often largely ignored Africa and former colonies. Part of the reason, of course, is that Europe and America did become the central interests of contemporary policy-makers. The Duncan Report in 1969 divided the world into an 'Area of Concentration' of Western Europe, America and Japan, and 'the rest of the world'.[14] Although this report was widely criticised, it clearly conveyed a message that the world was divided into places where core British interests were engaged, and those where they were not. Africa formed part of Cold War policies designed to maintain influence as a counter to Soviet or Chinese competition, but the continent

played a limited part in Britain's global ambitions. As Rouvez has argued, 'Africa would become marginalized for British policymakers'.[15] Yet this shift in the emphasis of British foreign policy away from former colonies and Africa should not be seen as inevitable. Much scholarship on decolonisation has recognised that metropolitan officials had hoped, and perhaps even expected, to maintain the benefits of empire after independence while avoiding its costs. Darwin has argued that independence was to lead 'into the sunny uplands—as they hoped—of diplomatic partnership, economic collaboration and informal influence'.[16] That in most cases this did not happen was not foreseen. Although we know the outcome, this was, as Cooper reminds us, a time of 'multiple possibilities' and unknown futures.[17]

In contrast to the literature on British foreign policy, which is rarely centred on continuities through independence, scholars of Africa have frequently stressed the importance of continuities. These scholars have increasingly questioned a simple division between the colonial and the post-colonial, highlighting continuities and colonial legacies.[18] As Ellis has argued, independence, 'while significant, did not always mark the radical break with the past that many observers once took for granted'.[19] The nationalist movements which sought independence did so within the colonial system and using its discourses, seeking to appropriate rather than challenge it, so that 'questions of transforming the colonial system were neither answered nor posed'.[20] Colonially imposed state borders were accepted, and so was the primacy of development as a legitimating rhetoric and mission of the state. African economies, built up under colonial rule, were Western export-oriented. They still relied on foreign investment and development aid during the decades after independence and so continued policies of 'extraversion'.[21] Cooper has characterised these as 'gatekeeper states'.[22] In Kenya, institutions, structures and systems of authority after independence remained remarkably similar. Branch and Cheeseman have argued that the post-colonial state should 'be conceptualised as a representation of the interests promoted during the latter years of colonial rule'.[23] Histories of Africa have therefore focused on continuities through independence, while studies of British foreign policy have not, and rarely have these two bodies of scholarship been brought together. The arguments made in this book highlight the importance of continuities in British foreign policy as well as in Kenyan history.

Decolonisation in Kenya

Kenya, particularly because of Mau Mau, has featured prominently as 'one of the classic cases' in histories of British decolonisation.[24] Colonial states of emergency and the measures taken in Kenya were not unique, but the response was particularly brutal; in 2011, the British High Court ruled that the British government had a case to answer, and in 2013, the British government acknowledged this and agreed to pay £19.9 million compensation to victims of British abuse.[25] This also resulted in the British government acknowledging previously concealed colonial archives, which have since been opened as the migrated archives.[26] Through the 1950s, the Kenyan emergency coexisted with moves towards independence in West Africa, but colonial officials continued to prefer a multiracial system for East Africa and to think of independence there as distant. During Mau Mau, British policy focused on counter-insurgency, but, as Furedi has argued, 'somewhere along the way the aim of counterinsurgency changed from restoring the authority of the colonial state to preparing the way for the process of controlled decolonization'.[27] The colonial government implemented two new constitutions which increased African involvement in Kenyan politics, with the first Africans directly elected to the Legislative Council in 1957. But still colonial officials took a long view: at a meeting at Chequers in 1959, independence for Kenya was suggested for perhaps 1975.[28]

Policy changed in 1960, with new Colonial Secretary Iain Macleod accepting at the first Lancaster House conference that Kenya would achieve majority rule. In doing so, Macleod changed the trajectory of British government planning for Kenya. Reluctantly, so-called 'moderate' Europeans led by Michael Blundell and the New Kenya Group accepted this and agreed to the proposals, leading to Blundell's vilification by many Europeans. The New Kenya Group came to argue that 'independence for Kenya is certain and we must plan to make it a success'.[29] The year 1960 was more generally a 'watershed' year for the British Empire.[30] In February, Prime Minister Harold Macmillan made his famous 'wind of change' speech in South Africa, viewed by contemporaries and subsequently as a sign of changed British attitudes. In November, 'the epoch-making Resolution 1514' was passed in the United Nations (UN), calling upon European powers to hasten independence for their remaining colonies.[31] The year 1960 was also the formal end of the Kenyan emergency, with effective military victory having been achieved by 1956. The two Kenyan nationalist parties, KADU and KANU,

were formed in 1960, and it was with these that the British government worked in making future plans.

Kenyatta's release from detention was the crucial issue of Kenyan politics as both KANU and KADU pressed for this. British officials had hoped to continue detaining him. But, in January 1961, Renison and Macleod agreed that the best interests of the British government had changed, and they planned to move Kenyatta from Lodwar to Maralal where he could be visited, 'so that one may embark on a process of debunking the legend of Kenyatta'.[32] In 'the Kenyatta election' of February 1961, KANU won 67.4% of the vote and nineteen seats to KADU's 16.4% and eleven.[33] Renison hoped to attract members of both parties to join the government in 'a Government of moderates, rather than KANU tough boys'.[34] Very quickly, however, this idea of compromise broke down and KANU refused to join the government while Kenyatta remained in detention. A government of KADU and the New Kenya Group was formed. In Britain, Kenyatta's release was discussed at the highest levels of government.[35] Many MPs felt strongly and offered vocal support or opposition. Views in 1961 varied from Fenner Brockway's insistence that 'the release of this man is absolutely essential' to Biggs-Davison's 'outrageous and utterly degrading'.[36] Increasingly, however, British officials came to realise that they could not direct Kenyan politics away from Kenyatta as they had hoped, and the goal changed instead to finding means of accommodation. Kenyatta's release was announced on 1 August.[37] Over the following years, there were two more Lancaster House conferences and further elections were held in 1963. A constitution was agreed, favouring KADU proposals for a regional (*majimbo*) system. Kenya became internally self-governing in June 1963 and independent on 12 December 1963.

Another crucial decision taken during these years was to start a process of land transfer. In the early 1960s, the British government and others provided finance for Kenyans to buy European-owned land in a series of land settlement programmes. Concern about Europeans deserting or ruining their estates if not sold for inflated prices, or of landless Africans claiming them, drove fears of a widespread land grab at independence. Land transfer was not a way of radically altering ownership, but a means of preserving stability. Wasserman has argued that land had the potential to be 'the major hindrance to a smooth transition ensuring the stability of the nationalist regime', particularly as many Kenyans equated independence with access to land ownership, expecting wide-scale redistribution of European land to Africans.[38] Instead, settlement schemes and the principle

of respect for private property were accepted by Kenya's incoming leadership, with additional schemes implemented after independence.[39] This decision was part of a broader choice by the Kenyan elite—which will be highlighted in different contexts throughout this book—to continue to look towards Britain and to maintain systems and structures from the colonial era. For the British government, too, the decision to aid land transfer was an important one. This was a long-term financial commitment and these contributions made up a large part of Britain's aid to Kenya into the 1970s.[40] Land transfer was significant in promoting continuity—indeed, in many ways this underwrote the emergence of the post-colonial relationship. As Wasserman's comprehensive study has shown, it was a key part of the process of 'consensual decolonization'.[41] Land transfer continued to be a concern for the British government and a large part of their aid funding, but the key decisions had been taken before independence and were largely unchallenged as a principle thereafter. The importance of land settlement schemes has been widely recognised, and this book focuses on other aspects of the developing relationship.

Beyond Neo-Colonialism

Neo-colonialism was an accusation made after independence by those who claimed the continued dominance of Britain, particularly economic, over former colonies. For proponents of this argument, this was the defining feature of post-colonial relationships. Initially applied to Latin America, this idea was quickly appropriated for Africa. In one of the key denouncements, Ghana's President Kwame Nkrumah argued in 1965 that:

> the neo-colonialism of today represents imperialism in its final and perhaps its most dangerous stage … the State which is subject to it is, in theory, independent and has all the outward trappings of international sovereignty. In reality its economic system and thus its political policy is directed from outside.[42]

Through the 1960s and 1970s, the period covered by this book, African accusations of neo-colonialism remained, as well as scholarly criticism. This critical view was often coupled with ideas of underdevelopment and dependency, inspired by a world-systems approach. Commentators such as Rodney argued that Europe had from first contact 'underdeveloped' the continent.[43] Kenya became a key example of neo-colonialism as scholars

debated the role of foreign ownership and multinational corporations as opposed to the growth of an African middle class.[44] One significant study was Leys' (1975) *Underdevelopment in Kenya*, in which he argued that foreign ownership remained prevalent while 'direct rule by the metropolitan power [became] unnecessary [as] society has been "locked into" its subordinate role in the international capitalist system by new means'.[45] Mamdani argued in 1984 that Kenya was 'not an independent national economy, but a neo-colonial economy in which Britain was the leading imperialist'.[46] Taken to their most extreme, these arguments posited a situation in which Britain remained in control of Kenya economically and politically, with Kenyans trapped into an economic world system they could not influence, let alone control. These studies have thus been highly critical of British motives and relations with Africa.

The concepts of neo-colonialism and underdevelopment have remained prominent in part because they help to explain undeniable inequalities of power, economic position and prosperity. These have continued beyond the end of colonial empires and the language of 'more' or 'less developed' countries still permeates contemporary discourse. Maekawa has recently argued that, although it is not an appropriate term for considering the East African Community, 'the neo-colonial concept still dominates academia'.[47] But although potentially compelling in explaining the unfulfilled promise of independence, these arguments are problematic. In 1980, Leys revised his original position to take into account an African capitalist class, and even suggested that scholars should 'finally rid ourselves of the ideological handicap of dependency theory', although not all agreed with his new stance.[48]

There are clear limits to the explanatory potential of these theories. They have not paid enough attention to how dependency worked in practice, typically focusing on the abstract with little direct evidence. Especially problematic is what neo-colonialism suggests about British and Kenya freedom of action and motivation. It assumes that the actions of the British government were far more coherent and planned during decolonisation than they actually were, with an evident ambition to convert a formal empire into an informal one. British officials liked to project control, as in the description by one former colonial official in 1979 that decolonisation was 'the culmination of an evolutionary process…consistently, and on the whole logically, carried out, at varying tempo, over a period of nearly 200 years'.[49] In fact, however, British officials 'were never more than a step ahead'.[50] Decisions were sometimes unclear, and almost always

independence occurred sooner than the British government would have liked or had planned. This pragmatic and flexible approach to policy-making continued to characterise post-colonial British activity.

A further major problem with neo-colonialism is the removal of African agency.[51] Neo-colonialism implies a relationship of dominance and subordination and, as Berman argues, is guilty of 'treating Africans as a relatively undifferentiated mass who were exploited, impoverished and impotent victims; dominated classes rather than agents of their own history'.[52] This assumption was clearly false. In many instances, British involvement stemmed from Kenyan requests. Okumu in 1977 argued that 'Kenya *continues to cultivate Britain* as her major source of economic and technical assistance',[53] while Cheeseman has suggested that 'continuity can only be understood as stemming from the *conscious choice* of the KANU executive to reinstitute the structures of colonial rule'.[54] As Pinkney argues, though focusing on a later period, these were 'relationships which are clearly unequal, yet do not imply complete subordination'—a crucial distinction.[55] The Kenyans involved in this relationship sought to gain the greatest possible benefit for themselves and it will be argued in this book that they had substantial power to shape and direct their relations with Britain to their benefit.

British officials were well aware of their need for Kenyan support, and did not feel themselves to be neo-colonial puppet-masters. As independence approached, colonial officials hoped for continued informal influence, but recognised that this would depend on their ability to form and sustain relations with Africans—indeed, the whole colonial project had relied on African intermediaries. As Hopkins argues, during the era of decolonisation, the aim of colonial officials was 'to make friends and influence the people who would shape policies in the new states'.[56] Cultivating allies and thereby retaining influence was crucial to British decolonisation policies, and continued to characterise Britain's relationship with Kenya after independence. This led colonial officials to focus on trying to find 'moderates' to lead the colonies past independence—men who would be prepared to work with the British and to British timetables. But this was by no means assured, and the British were often bad at categorising these men. Both Nkrumah and Kenyatta were nationalists recast by colonial policy-makers from 'extreme radicals' to 'moderates', and others faced similar recategorisation. This relationship could only be pursued by British actors through contact with Kenyans, and was only successful because a Kenyan elite around Kenyatta decided that it was in their

interests to foster this. For the emerging Kenyan elite, there was some common cultural ground with the British but, far more importantly, they seized opportunities to entrench their own positions, and cooperation with the British became a way to do this.

Pushing this still further, this book argues that the kind of relationship which developed after independence between Britain and Kenya was largely owing to Kenyan rather than British choices. Bell has argued that 'in any alliance … it is the weaker partner which makes the crucial choice'.[57] In many ways, the Kenyans set the tone and terms of the relationship. As Branch has highlighted, Britain 'was able to exert some sway in the region only because of a confluence of interests with the Kenyan Government'.[58] Atieno-Odhiambo has argued that for the Kenyan elite an 'ideology of order' was crucial to state power.[59] This focus on order was a goal British officials shared. Kenya's elite decided to continue working with the British in multiple fields, and to pursue a relationship with Britain rather than other partners. They could have chosen differently. Certainly, working with the British was in many ways easier and more convenient: Kenya and Britain had relationships and colonially established connections. As Cowan has argued, the former colonial power 'is at least a known quantity with whom it is easier to negotiate than with an unknown power'.[60] But although the British were those with the resources to allocate, they could rarely dictate entirely, and Kenyatta and his elite were able to make their own decisions and to choose when and how to work with the British. Kenyatta could have decided to refuse land transfer and allow a wide-scale land redistribution, to reject the British military presence as Tanzania and Uganda did, or to expel the Asian population as Amin did in Uganda. These decisions might not have contributed much to stability or outside confidence in Kenya, but they would likely have been popular. Moreover, Kenya's leaders could have pursued closer relations with the Soviet Union, America, Israel or several other states in Western Europe and elsewhere who sought to work with Kenya, or to reject Britain's diplomatic mission after Rhodesia's UDI, as Tanzania did.[61] There were good reasons for not making these choices. A widespread land redistribution would have been difficult and costly, bound to lead to winners and losers and potentially to violence and disruption. Looking to other outside powers would have raised different issues, and there were domestic political reasons not to, with opposition figure Oginga Odinga supported by the Soviet Union. These were logical and realistic choices made by a new government looking

to cement its position, made for a variety of reasons but—and crucially—reasons of their own choosing and not simply at British bequest.

Defining Policy

This book studies policy-making, and, in doing so, asks what 'policy' was and how it was made. It is very easy to discuss British policy as a well-defined concept, simply made and implemented, but this was in fact a much more complex process. Policy emerges from a series of decisions taken at varying times on different issues by multiple people. As Lindblom argues, policy 'is not made once and for all; it is made and re-made endlessly'.[62] In Britain, a combination of 'habits of thought' and patterns of relationships informed multiple decisions across government; and those decisions were policy, and in turn reproduced the relationships which made them. The British relationship with Kenya was shaped by a dense network of relationships which produced policy more consistently and effectively than any position paper could have done.

Explicit discussions about what policy should be were infrequent. Policy-making was not necessarily a result of considered discussions of strategy or based on clear long-term goals, with the national interest 'not … objectively determined but what the decision-makers perceive it to be'.[63] Policy was made through a series of decisions based on precedent, ideas of national interest, circumstances and pragmatism. There were several institutions and individuals pursuing their own agendas; 'not one calculating decision-maker.'[64] As scholars have recognised, British foreign policy was largely pragmatic rather than idealistic. Holt has pointed to the 'general consensus that pragmatism was the over-riding characteristic of British foreign policy-making, an approach that takes attention away from planning, diminishes coherence, and leads to a generally reactive foreign policy'.[65] Indeed, Peden has even suggested that 'some Foreign Office officials were suspicious of long-term planning'.[66] This study confirms that policy towards Kenya was largely pragmatic and reactive, with relatively few grand initiatives aimed at bringing substantial change to the relationship.

A study of foreign policy is by its nature a study of policy-makers, as to understand the policies which were followed, it is necessary to understand who was making decisions and how they did so. In analysing British foreign policy towards Kenya, this book focuses on a select group of people. In Kenya, those most involved were the elite around Kenyatta, sometimes termed his 'kitchen cabinet'. From the British side, although some issues

within the relationship sparked British public interest and press comment, this book focuses on a small group working in Whitehall and Westminster. Mostly, those involved were not politicians but rather civil servants and diplomats—people who were trained for this role, were employed to act in this way for the government, and served in multiple positions around the world and within Whitehall. For them, Kenya was a small part of their careers.

This book thus focuses on the 'official mind' of British policy-making, a concept originally deployed by Robinson and Gallagher in their 1961 *Africa and the Victorians*.[67] Many have since used this idea as a way of explaining the actions of policy-makers, particularly civil servants. Of particular note is Otte's *The Foreign Office Mind*, in which he argues that 'every political action, be it as a recommendation or as an actual deed, is based on a set of values and ideas'.[68] Understanding the 'official mind' thus helps to explain the policy choices that were made. Otte pointed to the shared background of Foreign Office officials from 1865 to 1914 and the values which had been inculcated in them through public schooling and class background; given the necessary condition of a £400 private income, this was a profession open only to a few.[69] Hyam has studied the 'Colonial Office Mind' from 1900 to 1914, highlighting again shared backgrounds and certain shared ideas and characteristics.[70] In both of these works, the number of men being studied was small, and they had homogeneous backgrounds. The number involved in foreign policy-making in the 1960s–1970s was larger, but there were still shared experiences, and many did come from similar backgrounds. Blackwell has pointed to similarities among Foreign Office officials immediately after 1945.[71] But a study of the official mind of late twentieth-century foreign policy-makers is still lacking. Although Heinlein's study of decolonisation is subtitled *Scrutinising the Official Mind*, it focuses less than might be expected on officials, being still concerned with the actions of ministers and prime ministers to a large degree.[72] Here, the 'official mind' of those who worked on Kenya will be explored.

This book therefore highlights the value in studying British policy-making at the official level of the civil service and not simply at ministerial level. This was where British policy-making towards Kenya occurred. Smith, Marsh and Richards have argued that 'government departments are the key policy-making institutions in British politics' yet have received limited scholarly attention, which has tended to focus on issues which engaged ministers.[73] A focus on ministers does cover the most

prominent issues of the time. However, there were a myriad of day-to-day decisions being made by civil servants about relations with countries which did not receive ministerial priority, and looking only at the involvement of prime ministers and foreign secretaries misses this and obscures the work of Whitehall. Kenya received priority at ministerial level fairly rarely, which means that when it did is highly revealing of the importance being placed on a particular issue. Most of the time, the key policy-makers were the heads of the East Africa Department and the High Commissioners in Nairobi. These were the men who shaped ideas about Kenya, and who had significant input into policy.

These men were important because 'who we choose as ambassadors, where we send them and what we ask them to do *are* foreign policy'.[74] Changes to diplomatic practice in the twentieth century, such as the increased speed of communications and technology and the growth of summit diplomacy, had meant ambassadors were thought by some increasingly moribund.[75] In 1998, Wolfe argued that 'the ambassador does not have a prominent place in discussion of foreign policy'.[76] Yet resident ambassadors have remained and continued to be valued. Recently, there has been a growing historiographical interest in the work of diplomats, with a series of witness seminars and several edited collections on Britain's overseas embassies.[77] As Berridge and Young have argued, the key importance of embassies was their permanence as 'a constant presence on the ground'.[78] Britain's diplomats in Nairobi were among the most significant individuals involved in making decisions and recommendations. They asked for permission, clearance or guidance on major issues and worked within the confines of the Whitehall and Westminster systems. But while there were no major concerns, they were largely left to get on with their jobs, and they did. Their work made up much of the substance of the relationship and of British policy-making.

Crucial to understanding the Anglo-Kenyan relationship is an awareness of the differences between the British and Kenyan states. The British system of government was bureaucratic and institutional, 'best characterised as emphasising consensus'.[79] This did not mean that those within it always agreed on the emphasis of priorities; a series of different departments made up the British government and there could be disputes between these. Notwithstanding, the culture of Whitehall fostered a collective identity and 'civil service cohesion' which encouraged a broad sense of British interests.[80] British diplomats and politicians approached their relations from this perspective, as individuals' careers and personal interests were understood

in institutional and national terms, which shaped their behaviours and ideas. British policy on any particular issue was the product of negotiation, shaped by relationships, but always informed by a broad sense of British interests and the parameters of possible action.

By contrast, the Kenyan state was neo-patrimonial, based on personal ties and client networks. Dimier has described that:

> from outside, those states resembled any bureaucracy, with its procedural kind of control, its hierarchies, transparency and impersonal rules. From inside, they were taken over by … a patrimonial kind of authority and legitimacy which rested on bonds of trust, loyalty, mutual dependence and permanent exception to the rules.[81]

Formal structures existed, but personal patron–client networks often proved more significant. Branch and Cheeseman have characterised the Kenyan state as bureaucratic-executive: 'a particularly strong combination of administrative and executive power underpinned by an alliance of elites.'[82] Institutions were not the predominant sites of policy-making, and formal procedures were often bypassed in a situation where personalities were more important than the official positions they occupied. Jackson and Rosberg argued in 1982 that in much of Africa 'persons take precedence over rules'.[83] This was the key difference to the British model. The Kenyans who were involved in decision-making and interacting with the British were seeking their own advantage, as different factions competed over priorities, policies and contacts. Rather than being guided by a general sense of national interest—as British policy-makers were—Kenyans sought personal and factional advantage from their contact with Britain and from the foreign policies they pursued.

This book therefore explores the interaction between a bureaucratic and a neo-patrimonial state. In seeking Cold War allies, and in pursuing close personal connections, international partners have often encouraged African neo-patrimonial systems by focusing on leaders and engaging with them on an individual basis. Cooper has argued that 'it took two sides to foster patrimonialism on the international level … [with] the internationalization of clientage—cultivated from both sides'.[84] The British were no exception to this in their relations with Kenya. They had been doing this already in the colonial period in seeking African intermediaries and allies, and during the era of decolonisation this was apparent in their search for 'moderate' leaders. In the post-colonial period, they worked with Kenyans

individually, privileging certain contacts and focusing on those they viewed as their 'friends', particularly the elite around Kenyatta. Despite their own institutional bureaucracy, in their interaction with the Kenyans, British actors helped to shape and reinforce Kenyan neo-patrimonialism.

The Nature of the Relationship

At the simplest—and in some ways most important—level, British actors consistently sought simply to promote and ensure 'friendly' relations with Kenya. As Young argues, 'promotion of "friendly relations" may seem an idealistic view of the intentions of officials employed to protect their country's interests. But … the promotion of friendliness can be the most effective way to achieve general ends.'[85] For the British involved, this was certainly true regarding Kenya. Prior to independence, they hoped to make 'friends' among emerging nationalists. When it became apparent that they had, at least to some degree, made a 'friend' of Kenyatta, ensuring he remained positive towards Britain became their overriding aim. British decision-makers hoped for a positive relationship in which Kenya would remain favourable and beneficial to Britain. A general positive atmosphere was more significant than any individual outcome. This broad aim allowed for pragmatic and changing interpretations of British interests in Kenya, which could be reshaped and reinterpreted as circumstances shifted. The few existing studies have tended to focus on one aspect of the relationship, such as the military, rather than recognising the constant interplay between different interests.[86] This book argues that there was no single dominant British interest in Kenya, but the combination of different aims and opportunities made Kenya particularly significant as a relationship which offered direct benefits. British concerns included military relationships; economic connections in aid, trade and investment; a stake in Kenyan security; strategic concerns about the east of Suez role; and for Kenya to remain an ally in the Cold War. Making policy involved constant decisions about how to balance and pursue these various interests.

This relationship also involved constant negotiation. Historians have not always recognised this. Rouvez has argued that when interests 'clashed', former colonial powers 'had to interact by cajoling or coercing';[87] but in Kenya the British often reacted by negotiating. British officials were concerned about giving the impression of directing Kenyan decisions, and thereby losing Kenyan goodwill—which was ultimately their most important asset. Accusations of neo-colonialism could damage the

relationship. Nor is it true, as Clayton argued in 1980, that 'Kenyatta has seen benefits without constraints upon his military and foreign policy as a result of the British alliance'.[88] British policy-makers did not dictate, but neither were they disinterested or without a sense of their own interests. British diplomats, politicians and soldiers offered much to Kenya, but they did so because they gained much in return, and, as will be highlighted throughout the book, the balance of advantages was something decision-makers in both countries sought to influence to their benefit. Negotiation is a key aspect of diplomacy and 'an indispensable mechanism for states',[89] but the term in this context has a broader application than purely formal diplomatic negotiations; rather, it is intended to convey the atmosphere of exchange and willingness to talk which characterised relations at multiple levels. Policy-making was a two-way process between Britons and Kenyans, and the relationship was formed by their interaction.

This book thus points to the ability of small states to influence the policies of larger ones, even when it might appear that the more powerful states should be those directing the relationship. Broad has pointed to the importance of recognising that policy is not unidirectional and that historians 'must be prepared to acknowledge the significance of smaller states as an important determinant in the workings of the international system'.[90] He argues that Britain's relationship with the Nordic community, 1968–1972, was both 'highly asymmetrical' and 'mutually beneficial'.[91] This description also fits the Anglo-Kenyan relationship. Kenya was a small state, newly independent, and reliant on external aid; nevertheless, Kenyans were able to shape British policy and determine how this relationship was pursued from within Britain, in terms of both aims and modes of interaction.

Other crucial influences on how policies were made were British policy-makers' claims about their knowledge of Kenya—despite the fact that these were often based on misunderstandings. The ideas of individual Britons about Kenya were shaped by their experiences, by who they talked to within Kenya and by whose views they chose to privilege. Diplomats working on Kenya were expected to provide local knowledge and expertise, and when there were explicit discussions about policy, claims to knowledge mattered. But this information was often flawed; as Vital has argued, diplomats work on 'matters over which their control is severely restricted, of which their knowledge can never be better than imperfect and which they must generally approach without the tactical and intellectual advantages of unambiguous and wholly appropriate goals'.[92] The belief often

held by British officials that they 'knew' Kenya could sometimes lead them towards inaccurate analysis. Yet, while British understandings of Kenya were often mistaken, this presumption of knowledge gave them a sense of confidence in their relationships and negotiations.

British ideas often rested on certain assumptions about Africa and Africans. These were what Joll, in another context, has termed the 'unspoken assumptions' of policy-makers who 'fall back on their own instinctive reactions, traditions and modes of behaviour … things which they take for granted'.[93] Built into colonial justifications was the idea that the British government was acting in Africa's best interests. This was articulated through the idea of a 'civilising mission' and then redefined as 'development' in the 1940s. Both of these discourses carried within them the idea that Africans were 'backwards' and needed improving along Western lines. As Porter points out, 'imperialists justified their denial of power to non-whites on grounds of racial incompetence'.[94] After independence, many similar ideas continued to be articulated—if less explicitly—and there seems to have been an underlying feeling of superiority in the attitudes of many Britons. Robinson and Gallagher argued that Victorian policy-makers looked at Africa 'through the distorting glass of inherited prejudice and preconception', and there were echoes of this among British officials in the 1960s and 1970s; their preconceptions and prejudices may have been different from those of the late nineteenth century, but they had not disappeared.[95] The sense of superiority which sometimes existed meant that British policy-makers had an ingrained bias which shaped their views—although they were often unaware of this. British self-confidence was coupled with a lack of self-awareness, contributed to by a combination of racism and amnesia about the empire, which allowed a succession of British officials to believe that they knew best what was in Kenya's interests, while forgetting the problematic nature of Britain's recent past in Kenya.

British policy-making towards Kenya also highlights the importance of personal connections. Very close personal relationships have typically been associated with French post-colonial relations with Africa, which were characterised by networks between leaders. Particularly significant was Jacques Foccart who 'became the embodiment of a special personalized style', establishing extensive contacts with leading Africans.[96] French networks were symbolic of the strength of post-colonial relationships. But these were not peculiar to France. Personal relationships were also encouraged in the Commonwealth, particularly during the Commonwealth Heads of Government retreats, where leaders would meet without their aides,

encouraging informality.[97] In British contact with Kenya, personal networks with certain Kenyan individuals greatly affected British actions. These existed at multiple levels: governmental and extra-governmental, formal and informal, personal and institutional. Individual ties were extensive, particularly involving the European and Asian populations in Kenya, as well as with Kenyans who had travelled or studied in Britain. These connections were clearly significant, but this book will focus on governmental contact at formal and informal levels; in Cooper's terms, those who controlled the 'gate'.[98] By the very nature of this kind of personal connections not everything can be known; private conversations which were not recorded were no doubt important but untraceable, and 'formal structures that leave the clearest archival traces are not necessarily the ones that count for the most'.[99] Nonetheless, the following chapters try to reconstruct a sense of these relationships.

In this way, the book hints that the contrast between French and British post-colonial relations might not always have been as great as frequently perceived. Britain has typically been seen to disengage more completely at independence than France.[100] The importance of French-African continuities is so well established in historiography that Chafer could write in 1992 that 'reference to continuity has become almost a cliché of surveys of French African policy'.[101] Connections between France and her former colonies were extensive and multiple, with bilateral cooperation agreements signed at independence which formalised defence and economic connections.[102] For France, Africa was intended 'to ensure major-power status'.[103] This is not something that could be said of Britain in the same period, with Africa playing a much smaller role in ideas of British great power status and foreign policy goals. France had a Ministry of Cooperation which 'became effectively a ministry for francophone Black Africa', and a personal advisor on Africa to the president.[104] French presidents were also more involved than British prime ministers, and, between 1960 and 1978, 'French and African presidents held 280 meetings, and Presidents [Charles] de Gaulle, [Georges] Pompidou, and [Valéry] Giscard d'Estaing made 32 state visits to Africa'.[105] These formal political connections were more obvious than Britain's comparatively limited and lower-level focus on Africa. Despite these differences, regarding Kenya, styles of personal policy-making and the continued interests pursued by the British government do suggest some similarities to France.

Sources and Structure

Focusing on British government policy, this book makes extensive use of British government documents from the National Archives, Kew, and British parliamentary debates. This enables comparison of the views of different parts of the British government and the ways policy was decided upon. Sources from the Kenyan National Archives in Nairobi reveal Kenyan policies and together these show communications between British and Kenyan individuals. The question of who made policy will also be addressed using the Malcolm MacDonald Archive (MMA) in Durham, autobiographies of both Kenyan and British policy-makers, and interviews with British diplomats conducted as part of this research, as well as those from the British Diplomatic Oral History Programme. This will nuance the institutional focus and allow an exploration of personal views and opinions. This book also makes use of both British and Kenyan newspapers to consider public and press perceptions of the relationship. These sources together reveal both the personal and institutional nature of policy-making and the role of individuals within both the Kenyan and the British systems; they also enable comparison of the Kenyan and British sides in the negotiation of this relationship.

The book is divided into two parts. Part I addresses the issue of making policy. Chapter 2 is a study of the British institutions and individuals involved in making policy towards Kenya from 1963 to 1980. Within the British government, different departments pursued their own priorities in potentially contradictory ways, and this chapter will introduce the theme of how knowledge was passed between and within departments, and how potential contradictions were contained and managed. This chapter examines the mergers of the different overseas offices in the 1960s to become the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in 1968. It also considers the policy-makers as individuals, analysing the backgrounds and careers of the people working in the departments which focused on Kenya. It argues that there was a broad institutional identity, with many civil servants having similar backgrounds and sharing the same assessments of British interests. It thus highlights the 'official mind' of the British government.

Chapter 3 considers the Kenyan individuals involved in the relationship, assessing who were the most prominent from the British perspective and how the British government related to them. It argues that Kenyatta was the crucial figure, with long-standing British concern over who would eventually succeed him as president. He was viewed as the protector of

British interests and the source of stability in Kenya, particularly owing to his decisions to continue the close relationship with Britain. Relations were formed at high-level meetings between Britons and Kenyans, which gave certain Kenyans privileged access to British officials. This chapter argues that cultural similarities and accessibility encouraged British policy-makers to work closely with certain individuals. Meanwhile, other Kenyans were often viewed by Britons through a series of categorical labels which sometimes obscured realities, with British diplomats thinking that they understood Kenyan politics more accurately than they did.

Part II takes a chronological approach, examining the Anglo-Kenyan relationship in the years from independence through Kenyatta's presidency until his death in 1978 and the largely very positive British views of him. The period begins and ends with transitions: first, independence and, second, the succession to Kenyatta. Either of these transitions could have substantially altered Kenyan politics, and both were major British concerns as British policy-makers struggled to preserve the relationship with Kenya that they wanted. The book ends in 1980 when the relationship was reaffirmed in the wake of Daniel arap Moi's succession as Kenyan president. Given Moi's later reputation, it is easy to overlook that in the first years of his presidency he was seen as bringing beneficial changes to Kenyan politics. This book does not cover the following years when perceptions of Moi began to change and harden.[106]

Chapter 4 covers 1963–1964, a period of uncertainty for British observers as they struggled to predict the choices of Kenya's independence leaders and any future relationship. Yet, very quickly, the interests of British and Kenyan officials came to align, and the resulting shared concerns meant that the relationship continued to be close and beneficial. In the first year of independence, the set of negotiations around decolonisation encouraged a coalescence of interests between the Kenyan elite and the British government. Chapter 5 covers 1965–1969, a period which involved explicit contest in Kenya between 'moderates' and 'radicals'. Stability was a key consideration, and the British government was—unusually—prepared to offer military guarantees to ensure this. Kenya's Asians also became a critical issue, leading to British domestic immigration legislation. During these years, Britain's relationship with Kenya was increasingly seen as 'special', offering particular benefits and problems.

The last three chapters cover the 1970s. Chapter 6 focuses on the negotiated nature of the Anglo-Kenyan relationship during 1970–1973. The period was characterised by multiple negotiations over aid, military

agreements and personal relationships which clearly show that Britain was not in control of this relationship and could not dictate its terms. It highlights the role of Kenyans in shaping policies and what both sides hoped to achieve. The mid-1970s were a more pessimistic period in British ideas about Kenya, as all waited for Kenyatta's death and were uncertain about the future. Military alliances were also being re-evaluated. This is covered in Chap. 7, which begins in 1974 and ends in July 1978, just before Kenyatta's death. Chapter 8 covers the succession of President Moi from August 1978 to 1980. British policy-makers had long feared the aftermath of Kenyatta's death, but in his initial years as Kenyatta's successor Moi sought to maintain the British relationship and use it to his advantage, pursuing this through a series of visits to Britain. British policy-makers were reassured about their relationship with Kenya as they realised that this would continue under a new president, and that British interests remained protected.

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PART I

Making Policy

CHAPTER 2

British Institutions and Actors

Externally, the British government could appear a bureaucratic, institutional system creating a single, defined policy. Internally, however, this was a much less coherent process. As Young argues, 'the Whitehall system sounds rational and tidy, but it does not prevent overlap, confusion and disagreement'.[1] The British government was actually several interlocking institutions of different departments which could have differing, sometimes competing, priorities, and did not always work in harmony; and, as well as formal departmental structures, personal and individual ties also mattered. This necessitated internal bargaining and negotiation before reaching decisions which became government policy. The British ideal of a distinction between politicians who made decisions and civil servants who supplied information and then followed policy did not entirely represent reality. Nonetheless, this was a bureaucratic system. British officials all worked within limits and a set of defined rules. General attitudes and assumptions were framed consensually, although policy in the sense of decisions on particular issues could still be subject to negotiation. The dynamics of decision-making—and therefore of policy—were fundamentally different from those in Kenya.

Institutions were made up of individuals, and the characteristics and experience of these individuals could influence decisions and planning. A 1978 report expressed the ideal of diplomacy: 'the defence of our interests is mainly a matter of patient persuasion and skilful negotiation … it is precisely because our power as an individual nation is diminished, while our interests remain global, that Britain's future is more dependent than

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ever on the skills of those who represent us abroad.'[2] Those making policy towards Kenya were most commonly diplomats and civil servants rather than ministers, and tended to share similar backgrounds. Heclo and Wildavsky have argued that civil servants had a sense of joint community, describing this as Whitehall 'Village Life', so that 'despite department allegiances, all officials are part of a greater civil service society'.[3] These people owed their loyalty to the organisation of the civil service, and this encouraged a shared understanding of the British government and its interests.

Still, there could be differences of opinion and divergent viewpoints. These were particularly apparent in cases where departmental priorities diverged, but also occurred between individuals within departments. Nonetheless, this does not challenge the existence of a Whitehall official mind. As Self has argued about a different period, 'within the small and cohesive elite that decided this question of British foreign policy … such tactical departmental disagreements were contained and resolved within the parameters defined by a set of more fundamental beliefs'.[4] Disagreements were kept within bounds and limits which, although generally not discussed, were widely known—Joll's 'unspoken assumptions'.[5] This chapter will explore the government departments which focused on Kenya, recognising that departmental interests were complicated by structural change, with the creation and reforming of departments. It will also analyse the civil servants who worked on Kenya, particularly noting the disputed importance attached to ideas of local knowledge and experience.

Politicians and Civil Servants

Multiple groups within Britain had a potential influence on foreign policy, including the prime minister, Cabinet, political parties, ministers, pressure groups, parliament and public opinion. In practice, however, Cabinet tended to agree to decisions; there has often been consensus between political parties, and rarely has foreign policy been such a public issue as domestic policy.[6] Regarding Kenya, there was ministerial and prime ministerial involvement at certain times, as well as parliamentary and public concern over some issues. British political interest in Kenya was most pronounced prior to independence when colonial policy was under scrutiny. After independence, ministers were less involved, as Kenya was typically less of a priority. However, on certain key issues ministers did become engaged once more, particularly concerning Asian immigration, as well

as military policy, Europeans and land.[7] Ministers were especially involved in formal meetings to determine aid and military agreements, and personal contact with British ministers was valued by leading Kenyans. In 1972, one British businessman recommended 'that the visit of a senior Cabinet Minister, if not of the Prime Minister himself, would produce important results very quickly'.[8] Ministerial visits encouraged personal relations, and demonstrated that Britain attached value to Kenya.

However, during the 1960s and 1970s, most policy was directed and organised by the civil servants and government departments. The roles of civil servants and ministers were understood to be different: politicians were to design policy; civil servants, who were apolitical appointments remaining in office regardless of changes to government and thus meant to be impartial, were to implement it.[9] Feltham's *Diplomatic Handbook*—intended 'to provide a concise but comprehensive source of information' for future diplomats—argued that 'formulation of foreign policy … is the task of the politician, while the management of international relations and the reconciliation of diverse foreign policy priorities is the task of the diplomat'.[10] Yet in practice, as has often been recognised, civil servants have a role as policy-makers rather than simply policy-implementers, active in designing and creating policies.[11] This was particularly true regarding Kenya, which was rarely a ministerial priority compared to concerns such as the American or European relationships. Ministers did not have the same depth or breadth of knowledge as civil servants, who built up experience and knowledge of foreign affairs over the course of their careers.

Recommendations were made at civil service level before being passed up the hierarchy of authority to head of department, Under-Secretary or minister where necessary.[12] Given the size of government ministries, ministers could not be appraised of all of the workings of their departments, and thus 'the majority of internal politicizing occurs between civil servants rather than between civil servants and ministers'.[13] As Birch suggests, 'there is a well-established hierarchy of decision-making, so that a principal knows what he can decide on his own account and what he must refer up'.[14] Civil servants were aware of how much autonomy they had and when they needed higher approval. They hoped to reach consensus, before ministerial level if possible, in a style labelled 'bureaucratic accommodation' by Jordan and Richardson.[15] Civil servants sought to avoid involving politicians in their disputes where possible: 'I really do dislike sending you a series of nagging letters but there is yet another example before me of a difference of view between our two Departments which was not discussed

at senior official level before being put to your Secretary of State.'[16] On most concerns about Kenya there was substantial autonomy for decisions made at civil service level before seeking ministerial approval.

Overseas Departments

In the 1960s, there was considerable institutional change in how the British government related to overseas countries. The move from colonial empire to Commonwealth, and thereafter 'the British government's disillusionment with, and scepticism about, the Commonwealth',[17] affected the structure of policy-making. Britain's empire had been such a large and important part of external policy that until the 1940s there were three offices devoted to it: the India Office, Dominions Office and Colonial Office (CO); the Foreign Office (FO) meanwhile dealt with the rest of the world. The Dominions Office became the Commonwealth Relations Office (CRO) in July 1947, with the India Office being disbanded a month later as India and Pakistan became independent and responsibility moved to the CRO.[18] Thereafter, British contact with former colonies moved from the CO to the CRO as territories became independent. Kenya had been within the remit of the CO since 1905, but at independence in December 1963 moved to CRO responsibility. The CRO had been intended for the small number of Dominions; and as Joe Garner, CRO Private Under-Secretary, noted, decolonisation was 'an increased burden on the CRO for which it was not well prepared'.[19]

This encouraged the idea of merger between overseas departments. In 1962, Duncan Sandys became Secretary of State for both the CO and the CRO, the first time one person held both positions, although when Wilson became prime minister in 1964 he made two separate appointments. A key step towards amalgamation, despite its indecisiveness, was the report of the Committee on Representational Services Overseas, or the Plowden Report, published in 1964. This highlighted the 'different character' of the Commonwealth connection, but simultaneously argued that 'division of responsibility is becoming an anachronism'.[20] It therefore recommended creating a unified Diplomatic Service, bringing together the Foreign, Commonwealth and Trade Commission Services, and this was established on 1 January 1965.[21] In the longer term, Plowden argued, a CRO and FO 'amalgamation … must, in our view, be the ultimate aim. However, to take such a fundamental step now could be misinterpreted as implying a loss of

interest in the Commonwealth partnership'; the report thus 'hesitate[d]' to actually recommend immediate amalgamation.[22]

Although it had not been the Plowden Report's recommendation, Wilson's government increasingly favoured merger between the CO and the CRO. The Private Under-Secretaries of the departments, Garner of the CRO and Poynton of the CO, were the most powerful civil servants involved. Both valued the distinctive role of their own departments and were concerned for the careers of their staff. Poynton in particular 'fought the Colonial Office corner'.[23] Poynton's attitude influenced the pace of the merger—an interesting example of how a bureaucratic system could be affected by such personal considerations. Poynton recognised in 1964 that the CO 'is bound to shrink further and has no long-term future as a separate Department',[24] but wanted this to 'be described as a "merger" or "amalgamation" … not be spoken of in terms of the Colonial Office being absorbed'.[25] Poynton hoped 'to avoid the impression that the Colonial Office is a piece of carrion which had better be buried as quickly as possible'.[26] The Colonial Secretary liked the title of 'Commonwealth Office' for the new department, and Garner liked that its acronym would continue with the Colonial Office 'CO'.[27] Decision-makers were trying to satisfy everyone and ensure a sense of collective civil service solidarity. Merger occurred on 1 August 1966, coinciding with Poynton's retirement, and Garner became Private Under-Secretary for the new Commonwealth Office.

Quickly thereafter, the new department's amalgamation with the FO was considered. By the mid-1960s, the differentiation of foreign from Commonwealth policy was being challenged. As Garner argued in 1967, 'no-one would pretend that our relations with Commonwealth countries are more friendly than our relations with the United States or, indeed, that our relations with African countries are more friendly than our relations with Western Europe'.[28] However, this did not mean that merger was necessarily popular. Colin Imray of the CRO recalls being 'horrified to learn in 1965 that the FO and the CRO were to be merged. My first reaction was to write to the Australian Public Service Board to ask if I could transfer to the Australian Government Service', although he did not do so.[29] Others, however, did not expect merger to 'be quite such a traumatic experience as some people fear'.[30] Plans were made for amalgamation in 1969 or 1970. Some joint internal departments were created and by March 1968, eighteen of seventy-two were combined.[31] But the timing was sped up by political events; at the resignation of George Brown as Foreign Secretary in March 1968, the prime minister announced that merger would

occur in October. Wilson argued that he had done so 'to make it clear that the decisive option in this matter had then been taken'.[32] More quickly than had been anticipated, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) was created in October 1968.

One issue arising from the mergers was the number of personnel transferred from the CO and the CRO. This was often seen as an FO absorption; Wallace has argued that the 'FCO was still, recognizably, the Foreign Office, absorbing other Departments and Services without losing its character'.[33] Leonard Allinson, originally from the CRO, recalled that 'everyone at the Foreign [and Commonwealth] Office is Foreign Office based and nobody in the Commonwealth Office sat in a senior position there for very long after the merger'.[34] That it is still typically referred to as the 'Foreign Office' rather than FCO is a sign of this primacy. Part of the rationale for the mergers was a reduction in staff numbers. In 1968, the merger committee hoped to 'cut out about ten of the 55 Departments'.[35] A CRO civil servant who worked on staffing at the time recalled that 'the pressure was to reduce CRO staff because it was believed, and I think it was true, that the CRO had been more lavishly staffed than the Foreign Office, certainly in some of the bigger missions'.[36] It was explicit policy that CRO rather than FO staff were more likely to lose their jobs due to merger; Lloyd notes that 'thirty who were considered not up to FCO work were given early retirement'.[37] As this makes clear, the FO staff were thought to be more qualified, with the CRO staff potentially 'not up to' it. One diplomat thought that 'most of the more capable CRO officers adapted quickly to Foreign Office realism'.[38] However, as this makes explicit, it was the CRO staff who had to adapt. There were indeed reductions: 'over one hundred posts have been saved in the first phase of the merger, in addition to the 398 previously saved at home since the unified Diplomatic Service was set up.'[39] The choice of language that the posts had been 'saved' was clearly intended to appeal to an external public and government concerned by staffing costs rather than those who worked within the departments, who would be unlikely to relish their posts being 'saved'. The movement of personnel through the offices is further discussed below in the section entitled 'Diplomatic personnel'.

Other Departments

In the second half of the twentieth century, diplomacy increasingly involved other departments, as the divisions between domestic and foreign policy became less clear-cut.[40] Policies towards Kenya could affect and be

influenced by multiple departments. The three most significant were the Treasury, Ministry of Defence (MOD) and Ministry of Overseas Development (ODM). These departments had different and sometimes conflicting priorities. The Treasury was crucial, as it controlled the budgets of each department and thus had greatest oversight. Britain's economic weakness during these years meant a strict control of budgets. Wallace has described Treasury 'involvement [as] the most direct, the most ancient, and the least amenable to Foreign Office direction'.[41] Different departmental priorities were clear, as typically the Treasury wanted to restrict spending while other departments hoped for the maximum amount possible to finance their desired outcomes. This could lead to conflict, but Thain and Wright have highlighted that departments 'cannot allow relations to break down' as they needed to keep a good working relationship with the Treasury.[42] For the Treasury, Kenya was a very small part of the sum of their work, but control of the finance allocated to the country ensured that its role was crucial to foreign policy-making.

The MOD had a substantial interest in Kenya. During these two decades, defence finance was cut and perceptions of British defence policy shifted. The key decisions were to leave east of Suez and to focus on a 'smaller, professional armed forces, and a potent nuclear strike force' rather than a large conventional army.[43] The MOD was created in 1964 from the separate service departments.[44] There was also some overlap between foreign and defence policy-making: FCO had a Defence Department, while the MOD had 'its own "foreign service" in the 150 or so service attachés and their substantial staffs stationed in overseas missions in nearly seventy foreign countries'.[45] The role of these attachés was to ensure military relationships 'by exchanging military information, to do what can be done to sell military equipment of British manufacture, [and] to act as the immediate go-between in strategical planning'.[46] Defence and air attachés were stationed in Kenya and provided an alternative route of communication directly to the MOD.[47]

The ODM was the other crucial department regarding Kenya. It was created by the incoming Labour government in 1964, and, as Pollitt argues, was 'another example of the implicit theory that creation of a new, separate department could give a new emphasis and impetus within an established policy field'.[48] The creation of a new department recognised the increasing prominence of aid as 'a major activity of Government', a continuation of the idea that Britain had a responsibility and interest in development.[49] In 1970, the Conservative government merged the ODM

into the FCO as the Overseas Development Administration (ODA), before Labour re-established the ODM in 1974, though this time without a Cabinet minister.[50] Killick has argued that 'the contrasts between the two situations were not in practice as dramatic as might have been expected', but where the department was placed and whether its minister was in Cabinet was a symbolic statement about the primacy attached to the government's aid programme.[51]

The key issue was the relationship between departments. Foreign policy-making was 'a shared concern' and often entailed seeking cooperation between departments to find agreement.[52] Communication between officials was vital and, according to one former Private Under-Secretary at the MOD, there were 'major and complex negotiations to hammer out policies'.[53] In another context, Pieragostini has argued that how 'departments interact as they seek to impose their images and protect their interests can be crucial for the nature of the decision that finally emerges'.[54] There could be friction and misunderstanding between departments with competing priorities and different views; as Allison has neatly summarised, 'where you stand depends on where you sit'.[55] One revealing example was the unhappy relationship between High Commissioner Eric Norris and the ODA in 1971. Those in the ODA 'were not altogether happy with the way British High Commission, Nairobi were handling our affairs'.[56] They were internally criticising because they felt their interests in Kenya were not being met. Norris, in March 1972, also voiced criticism about having 'missed important opportunities'—implicitly blaming this on the ODA.[57] This was quite an opaque critique, but in the FCO there was

> little doubt that his comments were directed mainly at the ODA. Relations between the High Commission and the ODA have not been happy recently and there have been some sharp exchanges … In our view Sir E Norris has usually, but not always, had good grounds for his complaints and we have supported him as far as possible.[58]

There was clear tension between the High Commissioner and the ODA, with the FCO trying to play a moderating role. This also encouraged some further criticism from the FCO: 'ODA have at times been obstinate and inflexible, and their processes are long-winded … I find their tendency to dispute our *political* judgements and conclusions (sometimes enlisting Treasury aid against us) very irritating and time-wasting.'[59] The Planning Staff in the FCO used Norris's critique to highlight their own problems

with 'other Departments—particularly that Anti-Foreign Office, the Aliens Department of the Home Office—who strive perpetually to impress upon distinguished foreigners their equality of insignificance in British eyes'.[60] The implication was that the FCO should control foreign relations and its staff were guarding their departmental responsibility. Yet other departments were engaged as their interests—aid, finance, military, immigration—became involved and departments had to negotiate policies and accord priorities. Viewed up-close, the British government was not a single smoothly functioning organisation, but an assembly of different institutions in which differences in institutional culture or personal rivalries could produce considerable frictions.

East Africa Department

Kenya's place in Whitehall altered as departments merged (Table 2.1). Until independence, the country was covered by the CO's East Africa Department. This department was wound up after Kenya became independent, as the last of Britain's East African territories. The years 1964–1968 were those of greatest institutional flux and the changing departments which covered Kenya reflected this uncertainty about how exactly to organise relationships with former colonies. In 1964, responsibility for Kenya was split between two departments in the CRO, one economic and one political. These were united in 1966. Kenya was additionally included in the FO for 'questions affecting the FO' in the North and East Africa

Table 2.1 Kenya's place in the overseas offices

	Colonial Office	*Commonwealth Relations Office*	*Foreign Office*
To 1963	East Africa Department		
1964–1965		East Africa Economic Department; East Africa Political Department	North and East African Department
1966–1968	Commonwealth Office: East Africa Department		North and East African Department From 1967: West and Central African Department
1968 onwards	Foreign and Commonwealth Office: East Africa Department		

Department, curiously transferred in 1967 to the West and Central African Department.[61] With the creation of the FCO, the East Africa Department (EAD) was created.[62] The mergers thus simplified the policy-making process by limiting Kenya to one department and one set of people.

EAD was the most important London department where staff focused on Kenya. In 1969, EAD's responsibilities were described as 'political and bilateral economic relations with Burundi, Ethiopia, French Territory of the Afars and Issas (French Somaliland), Kenya, Mauritius, Rwanda, Somalia, Tanzania, Uganda. Organisation of African Unity.'[63] The EAD also took the role of coordinating policy, and its staff viewed themselves as most knowledgeable, with some level of oversight. In 1976, 'we are monitoring carefully the activities of other Whitehall Departments … in order to ensure that the importance of preserving good Anglo-Kenyan relations is well understood in the formulation of their policies'.[64] Clearly, EAD policy-makers thought that they knew best what policy should be, and were keen to ensure that others followed their advice.

Initially, seven Africa Departments were planned in the new FCO: East, West, North, Southern, Central, Rhodesia Political and Rhodesia Economic, with the latter two intended 'to merge with Southern Africa [Department] when [the] situation allows'.[65] This compares to plans for nine Middle East, South Asia and General departments, four for dependent territories, five for America and the Far East, six for Europe and the UN, as well as the non-geographical departments.[66] This indicates a reasonably large commitment to Africa, even allowing for the effect of the Rhodesian situation. This remained under review by the Post-Merger Committee, which aimed to reduce the number of departments. In 1969, they suggested that the 'ultimate aim should be to cover Africa by two main departments'.[67] This implies a reduced priority being accorded to Africa, but this recommendation was not implemented and EAD remained separate.

The head of department was the highest authority within EAD. The FCO prescribed that heads of department 'remain the pivotal officers of the organisation on whom its good functioning essentially depends'.[68] One former diplomat regarded head of department as 'one of the best jobs available … senior enough to give responsibility for policy and advice to Foreign Office ministers while junior enough to keep one's feet firmly on the ground'.[69] During the years 1963–1980, there were twelve heads of EAD: one in the final CO years, three within various CRO and Commonwealth Office departments, three within FO and five in FCO (Table 2.2). All those within the FCO and several from the FO and CRO

Table 2.2 Heads of East Africa Department (CO, CRO, FO and FCO)

Name	*Role*	*Start date*	*Date of leaving*	*Immediately prior career*	*Immediately following career*	*Previous office experience*	*Previous African experience*
Fernley Douglas Webber	Head of CO East Africa Department	1958	1963	Establishment Officer	Deputy High Commissioner, Kuching	CO	
Walter Geoffrey Lamarque	Head of CRO East African Economic Department	1964	1965	Deputy High Commissioner, Eastern Nigeria	Seconded as Head of ODM East Africa Department	Indian Civil Service, CRO	Nigeria
Norman Aspin	Head of CRO East African Political Department	1963	1965	Deputy High Commissioner, Freetown	Counsellor and Head of Chancery, Tel Aviv	CRO, Treasury	Rhodesia, Sierra Leone
Michael Scott	Head of CRO, then Commonwealth Office, East African Political Department	1965	1968	Counsellor and Director of British Information Services, Delhi	Counsellor, Nicosia	CO, CRO	
Ronald Stratford Scrivener	Head of FO North East African Department	1963	1965	FO	Counsellor and Consul-General, Bangkok	FO	
Denis James Speares	Head of FO North African Department	1965	1968	Counsellor, Nicosia	Head of North African Department	FO	
Charles Martin Le Quesne	Head of FO West and Central African Department	1964	1968	Chargé d'Affaires and Consul-General, Bamako	Ambassador, Algiers	FO	Mali, Algeria

(continued)

Table 2.2 (continued)

Name	*Role*	*Start date*	*Date of leaving*	*Immediately prior career*	*Immediately following career*	*Previous office experience*	*Previous African experience*
Eric George Le Tocq	Head of FCO East African Department	1968	1972	Head of Atlantic Department	High Commissioner, Mbabane	CRO	Ghana, Uganda
Simon Yelverton Dawbarn	Head of FCO East African Department	1972	1973	Counsellor, Athens	Consul-General, Montreal	FO, Treasury, FCO	Algeria
Martin Kenneth Ewans	Head of FCO East African Department	1973	1977	Counsellor, Dar es Salaam	Deputy High Commissioner, New Delhi	CRO, FCO	Nigeria, Tanzania
Alan Gordon Munro	Head of FCO East African Department	1977	1979	Consul-General, Rio de Janeiro	Head of Middle East Department	FO, FCO	Libya
John Adam Robson	Head of FCO East African Department	1979	1982	Head of Chancery and Consul-General, Oslo	Ambassador, Bogota	FO, FCO	Zambia

Source *The Colonial Office List* (1962) (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1962), 459; *The Foreign Office List* (1965) (London: Harrison and Sons, 1965), 382; DSL 1966, 287–288; DSL 1967, 252, 313; DSL 1969, 271, 371; DSL 1970, 355; DSL 1972, 229, 329; DSL 1973, 245; DSL 1977, 306, 389; DSL 1978, 302; DSL 1979, 334; DSL 1980, 110, 165, 181, 283, 316, 323; DSL 1986, 284; *Who's Who* (1990) (London: A & C Black, 1990), 1078; *Who's Who* (1994) (London: A & C Black, 1994), 488, 607, 1374, 1636, 1703, 1706; *Who's Who* (2000) (London: A & C Black, 2000), 1214; 'BHC to retired to Dacre', *Cumberland and Westmorland Herald*, 5 August 2011, http://www.cwherald.com/a/archive/british-high-commissioner-who-retired-to-dacre.375739.html, accessed 12 November 2016; 'Sir Martin Le Quesne', *Telegraph*, 10 April 2004, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/obituaries/1458935/Sir-Martin-Le-Quesne.html, accessed 12 November 2016

had experience in Africa prior to this appointment. Among those appointed in the FCO, there was a mixture of backgrounds, with two coming from the CRO with East African experience and three from the FO. All of them were of a similar age at the time of their appointment, and most came directly from, and many went on to, overseas postings, often as ambassadors or High Commissioners. Length of tenure varied. The longest was 7 years for Fernley Webber in CO, followed by 5 for Martin Ewans in FCO; excluding Webber, the mean was 2.8 years.

British High Commission, Nairobi

The British High Commission in Nairobi (BHC) was the other main site of British interaction and policy-making. A High Commission was equivalent to an embassy and ambassador, but was a specific form for Commonwealth representatives—initially conferring separate advantages, though by the 1960s essentially the same.[70] The BHC was one of the largest British missions in Africa. In 1966, it consisted of thirty-two diplomats in Nairobi and one in Mombasa, compared to eighteen in Tanzania, seventeen in Uganda and thirty-eight in Nigeria.[71] The BHC was also a large mission compared to other foreign missions in Kenya. In 1972, the BHC was Kenya's largest foreign mission, with twenty-four diplomats, compared to twenty from America, twelve from France and ten from the Soviet Union, with all other missions having fewer than ten.[72] This clearly indicates the priority the British government accorded to their relationship with Kenya.

The staff in the BHC included a High Commissioner, Deputy High Commissioner and Head of Chancery, who was 'the main political officer … [and] coordinated the running of the High Commission'.[73] There were also counsellors and first, second and third secretaries, who could have specific focuses such as information, economics, commerce, agriculture, capital aid or administration. There could also be advisors and, depending on what was required, these included labour, passport, agricultural, immigration, aid and commercial advisors. The size and composition of the BHC remained reasonably similar. From 1965 (when the Diplomatic Service was created) to 1980, the BHC ranged from a high of thirty-two to a low of twenty-two diplomats, with an average of twenty-six (Table 2.3). There was also a further staff of lower-ranking civil servants, as well as locally employed staff, although it is harder to find accurate numbers of these. In 1976, there was a total of 115 locally employed staff, focusing mostly on consular work, immigration, registry, secretarial and

Table 2.3 Number of diplomats in the BHC

Year	*Total in BHC*	*Counsellors and High Commissioner*	*First secretaries*	*Second secretaries*	*Third secretaries*	*Defence advisors*	*Others*[a]
1965	28	4	11	9	0	2	2
1966	32	5	10	10	2	2	3
1967	31	5	11	8	2	2	3
1968	24	4	11	6	1	2	0
1969	27	3	14	7	1	2	0
1970	27	3	12	9	1	2	0
1971	24	3	12	5	2	2	0
1972	24	3	9	8	1	2	1
1973	22	3	8	6	2	2	1
1974	23	3	8	8	2	2	0
1975	29	3	10	10	0	2	4
1976	26	3	8	8	1	2	4
1977	28	3	10	8	1	2	4
1978	24	3	10	6	0	2	3
1979	24	3	6	7	0	2	6
1980	26	3	8	5	2	2	6

[a]Includes variously: Agricultural Advisor, Chief Clerk, Passport Officer, Immigration Officer, Commercial Officer, Accountant, Archivist, Labour Advisor *Source* DSL 1966, 27–28; DSL 1967, 30–31; DSL 1968, 31–32; DSL 1969, 32; DSL 1970, 32; DSL 1971, 32; DSL 1972, 32–33; DSL 1973, 32–33; DSL 1974, 33; DSL 1975, 33; DSL 1976, 66–67; DSL 1977, 67; DSL 1978, 65; DSL 1979, 65; DSL 1980, 41–42

administrative work.[74] There were also clearly members of the Security Services among the diplomats, although it is hard to identify them and the absence of intelligence documents means it is difficult to write about this part of the relationship.[75]

London gained information about Kenya from the BHC, and one of the key roles of the BHC was to report events and their analysis of these. In debates and discussion over policy, BHC diplomats were expected to provide local knowledge, and it was this which gave them such influence as they had. The BHC reacted to events in Kenya, decided what was important to share, who should be spoken to in the Kenyan administration and whose ideas would be valued. As one civil servant recalled, 'if a High Commissioner could demonstrate that he and his staff had a good local understanding, and if the host country was not at the top of the political agenda in the UK, the recommendations of the post could … carry great influence in London'.[76] Personal relationships were crucial to claims of

knowledge and influence. Studies of diplomacy have widely recognised this; as one former diplomat described regarding his time in India, 'much the most important thing I had to do there was to get to know a lot of Indians—the largest number possible—and to get to know a certain number of them really rather well'.[77]

The functions of diplomatic missions were 'the promotion of friendly ties, the negotiation of agreements, lobbying, clarifying intentions and promoting trade, as well as propagandising, political reporting and providing policy advice to their government'.[78] Wevill has written extensively about the workings of the British embassy in America and he argues that 'it was the regular reporting and the conducting of negotiations which made up the daily and systematic part of the embassy's activities that underlined its strength'.[79] Table 2.4 shows the division of work the BHC themselves believed they carried out during 1979. As this indicates, consular and immigration work, aid and exports took most time. Civil servants were ranked according to grades, with ten in total and grade 1 the highest, and the division among grades shows that the highest grades spent most time on political work, with defence handled exclusively by the middle grades.

There were multiple forms of communication between British civil servants in London and diplomats in Nairobi. These included telegrams, tele-letters and letters, as well as 'the regular flow of papers, telegrams and files, telephone calls, and informal meetings'.[80] Moorhouse estimated that, in 1977, 600,000 telegrams were sent between London and missions abroad.[81] Telephone calls between London and Nairobi in the 1960s were infrequent; during Edward Peck's 2 years as High Commissioner, 1966–1968, he received only one phone call, 'to ask the whereabouts of Malcolm MacDonald, to which I was able to reply that I had no idea'.[82] Communication between policy-makers could be both formal and personal, and was never purely institutional. In his first letter to a new member of the EAD, Timothy Bellers in the BHC handwrote a 'PS' to his formal letter on 'East German links with Kenya': 'Welcome to East Africa Department—I look forward to much active (and I hope from us stimulating) correspondence between us.'[83] One of the most formalised methods of communication was the despatch. These were formal communiques sent at the highest level of foreign policy-making between High Commissioner and Secretary of State.[84] High Commissioners (and their staff) typically wrote an introductory despatch, annual reviews and periodic

Table 2.4 Functional analysis of BHC work, compiled by the BHC in 1979

Function	*Grades 1–4 (High Commissioner, Deputy, Counsellors)*	*Grades 5–8 (First and Second Secretaries)*	*Grades 9–10 (Third Secretaries)*	*Locally engaged staff*	*Percentage of time (%)*
Consular	8	13	16	14	33.5
Immigration	2	9	14	9	23.0
Aid	17	15	14	5	18.0
Export promotion	7	12	14	3	12.0
Political (including labour affairs)	21	9		1	5.0
Defence		15			5.0
Economic (including scientific and technical)	16	3		1	2.5
Support of UK domestic policies	1	1		1	0.5
Culture	1	1		1	0.5

Source Country Assessment Paper: Kenya, 1979, TNA FCO 31/2605/24

despatches on important events, and outgoing High Commissioners sent a valedictory 'parting shot'.[85] These could be widely circulated within Whitehall as one of the ways that knowledge about Kenya was disseminated.

High Commissioners

The role of the High Commissioner was a crucial one. Onslow has argued that 'a Governor could make a marked contribution to the process and tone of political transition … Old fashioned diplomacy and diplomats therefore should not be airbrushed from history as key individuals navigated the rocky terrain of decolonisation.'[86] The role of High Commissioners differed fundamentally from that of Governors. Nonetheless, their position as those on the ground reporting from post meant that there were similar expectations of expertise, and individuals could be influential, while the language of 'man on the spot' continued to

be used.[87] Young has argued that 'the days of "the man on the spot" pushing policy in a certain direction were not necessarily over … the twentieth-century ambassador was no mere "marionette"'.[88] The importance of diplomats 'on the spot' will be highlighted throughout this book, with High Commissioners able to influence assessments and actions.

The High Commissioner was the highest ranking British diplomat in Kenya. The Nairobi posting was a significant one in the hierarchy of ambassadorial positions. Moorhouse has argued that 'a nation sends its most talented representatives to those places abroad which, for one reason or another, are of the most concern to it'.[89] At ambassadorial level in mid-1975, fourteen countries had grade 1 ambassadors, with Cairo and Lagos the two African posts; in grade 2 were twenty-three, including Cape Town and Nairobi.[90] This offers an indication of the African priorities of the British Foreign Service, and of Kenya's primacy in British relationships with East Africa. Those who became High Commissioner in Kenya had progressed to almost the highest grade, and all received the KCMG.[91]

The choice of High Commissioners after independence is thus revealing (Table 2.5). Although the role was the same, 'some do of course carry more weight than others'.[92] The first two were political appointments, and will be discussed in some detail. These 'non-professional' heads of mission were fairly rare in British diplomatic practice, appointed most often to America and important missions at key times.[93] The following High Commissioners were more conventional career diplomats (although Antony Duff later became head of MI5), though there was no single model and they came from FO, CRO and CO backgrounds. Three High Commissioners—Peck, Eric Norris and Duff—were appointed in their early fifties, and all three returned to become Deputy Under-Secretary of State in FCO. For Stanley Fingland and John Williams, Nairobi was their final posting before retirement, and both also had the most African experience. For Peck and Norris, it was their first ambassadorial and first Africa posting, while the others had experience as High Commissioner or ambassador and had previously worked in Africa.

The most significant of these in his ability to shape policy in the metropole was Kenya's final Governor, only Governor-General and then High Commissioner, Malcolm MacDonald. MacDonald went to Kenya in 1963 and had a crucial role in reshaping perceptions in London about Kenya and Kenyatta. He replaced the previous Governor, Renison, who had struggled to adjust to Kenya's changing political realities. Renison's

Table 2.5 British High Commissioners in Nairobi

Name	*Start date*	*Date of leaving*	*Immediately prior career*	*Immediately following career*	*Previous office experience*	*Previous African experience*	*Previous ambassadorial postings*
Geoffrey de Freitas	1963	1964	High Commissioner, Ghana	Council of Europe	MP	Ghana	Ghana
Malcolm MacDonald	1964	1966	Governor-General, Kenya	Special Representative in Africa	MP	Kenya	Canada, India
Edward Peck	1966	1968	Assistant Under-Secretary of State	Deputy Under-Secretary of State	FO		
Eric Norris	1968	1972	Assistant Under-Secretary of State	Deputy Under-Secretary of State	CRO		
Anthony Duff	1972	1975	Deputy High Commissioner, Kuala Lumpur	Deputy Under-Secretary of State	FO, FCO	Egypt	Nepal
Stanley Fingland	1975	1979	Ambassador, Havana	Retired	CRO, FCO	Nigeria, Rhodesia, Sierra Leone	Sierra Leone, Cuba
John Williams	1979	1982	Assistant Under-Secretary of State	Retired	CO, FCO	Nigeria, Benin	Fiji, accredited Benin

Source DSL 1967, 285; DSL 1970, 320; DSL 1976, 222; DSL 1978, 234, 342–343; DSL 1980, 173; DSL 1982, 338; *Who's Who* (1994), 547, 1416; *Who's Who* (1996) (London: A & C Black, 1996), 638, 1502; *Who Was Who* (1981–1990) (London: A & C Black, 1990), 471. See also and based on: Kirk-Greene, 'Accredited to Africa', 79–128

preference for KADU was apparent and he seemed particularly reluctant to reassess Kenyatta. Poynton argued bluntly that 'he hasn't really the suppleness of mind to cope with the highly charged political situation'.[94] MacDonald came from an earlier career as Colonial Secretary and roles in Canada, Malaya, Singapore and India, key imperial responsibilities around decolonisation. According to his biographer, MacDonald 'hadn't wanted to come [to Kenya] at all … [and] told Sandys that he really knew nothing about modern Africa and African politics'.[95] But his political background and experience of decolonisation encouraged his appointment. As independence approached, he was asked by Europeans, Kenyan MPs and Kenyatta to remain in Kenya as Governor-General after independence, with Kenya becoming independent as a monarchy.[96] According to MacDonald's report of his conversations with Kenyatta: 'I had quickly won the complete confidence of all the new Ministers as Governor, and they wanted me to stay in Kenya to help them through the initial stages of Independence, and if possible longer.'[97] This makes strikingly clear the support MacDonald had from leading Kenyans.

At independence, a High Commissioner also went to Kenya. Geoffrey de Freitas, a former Labour politician, went with the anticipation that he would become High Commissioner to the proposed East African Federation. He was there briefly and unsuccessfully; as Sanger tactfully put it, 'he did not endear himself to the Kenyans'.[98] In July 1964, MacDonald wrote to Sandys: 'I am very sorry indeed to say that Geoffrey de Freitas is doing great harm to relations between the British Government and the Kenya Government, and between Britain and Kenya … he is now an unfortunate liability.'[99] MacDonald advocated that de Freitas leave sooner than planned and suggested ways of orchestrating this.[100] Garner's response made clear that those at the top in the CRO were also concerned by de Freitas's behaviour.[101]

It seems that de Freitas was finally withdrawn at Kenyatta's request. Certainly, rumours later circulated that 'previous High Commissioners had actually been removed from Kenya because the Kenyans had got upset'.[102] According to Malcolm McBain, in the BHC at the time, the withdrawal occurred after Kenyatta visited London in 1964 and 'a former white settler emerged from one of these clubs, rushed up to him and kicked him', following which 'angry, slightly tipsy, African MPs … demanded to see the High Commissioner'; de Freitas refused 'and the word got round that the High Commissioner was a coward'.[103] The choice of the next High Commissioner was therefore a matter of particular concern. CRO needed

someone, as MacDonald put it, 'to try to undo the awful damage that Geoffrey has done and continues to do'.[104] When MacDonald informed Kenyatta that de Freitas would leave, Kenyatta 'hoped a really good man would come here, and remarked with a mischievous laugh that he trusted it would be no one like my predecessor'.[105] The decision that MacDonald would become High Commissioner was supported by Kenyan leaders.[106] Kenyatta publicly welcomed this and described MacDonald as 'a warm friend to me personally as Prime Minister'.[107] Richard Beeston in the *Sunday Telegraph* compared de Freitas's 'dignified and correct behaviour' to the attitude of MacDonald who 'believes in a policy of making friends and influencing people without too much regard for protocol'.[108] This difference between the formal and the more personal approaches was significant, and MacDonald had better and closer relations with leading Kenyans than de Freitas. In 1965, however, Garner wrote to MacDonald that 'in some ways, Kenya is too small for you … when there is a bigger job to be done'.[109] MacDonald left as High Commissioner in 1966, but remained based in Nairobi as Special Representative in Africa until 1969. Thereafter, he continued to be engaged in the relationship, visiting Kenya and meeting Kenyatta, invited to events when Kenyan politicians were in London and attending Kenyatta's funeral.[110]

Diplomatic Personnel

This section will consider the individuals within the EAD and the BHC. These were the (almost all) men who were making decisions and thus British policy. The following analysis is drawn from the *Diplomatic Service Lists, Foreign Office Lists, Colonial Office Lists*, *Who's Who* and *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* to analyse the backgrounds and careers of the British civil servants and diplomats engaged with Kenya. It will take into account those working in the BHC from 1965—the creation of the Diplomatic Service—to 1980, including first secretaries (grade 6) and above, and those involved at the higher levels of the EAD from 1963 as head of department, Assistant and Under-Secretaries with oversight of the EAD. It is not possible to find information for all of those involved, but a total of seventy-nine staff from the BHC and thirty-four from the EAD are included in this study.

Recruitment differed between departments. The key area of colonial experience was the former Colonial Service, renamed Her Majesty's Overseas Civil Service (HMOCS) in 1954.[111] HMOCS was recruited

personally during the period 1910–1948 by Ralph Furse, 'the father of the colonial service'.[112] This was distinct from the CO, whose staff were home civil servants. Jeppesen's work on recruitment to the Colonial Administrative Service highlights the importance of background, so that recruiters preferred 'vacancies should be left unfilled rather than appoint the "wrong type of man"'.[113] Recruitment to the FO was seen as the most elite, and 'the Service was regarded as socially exclusive and arrogant. This view may not have been entirely justified … But there was undoubtedly something in it.'[114] There were two recruitment methods into the FO in the 1950s:

> One was Method A, which was a kind of test of your general civility, urbanity, ability to get on socially with everybody, and included three compulsory papers. The other was Method B, which involved a far wider range of optional written papers plus the other three compulsory ones. That's the method I chose; I knew I'd never survive the house party test.[115]

As this indicates, the ability to make personal connections was a key indicator of job suitability. One diplomat recalled that: 'the Diplomatic Service was held [in] particularly high esteem; thus for the modest salaries which government offered they could command applications from a talented market and they took advantage of it.'[116] This rigorous process allowed entry only to a select group.

Many of these men had similar backgrounds, and tended to fit a general mould (Tables 2.6 and 2.7). A high proportion had seen military service, either in the Second World War or through national service. Most in the EAD were aged between forty-one and fifty-five on starting their position: well established in their careers but not at the zenith. In the BHC, most were aged between thirty-six and fifty-five, as first secretary positions

Table 2.6 Age of civil servants on starting role

Age	*Number in the BHC*	*Number in the EAD*
<30	2	0
31–35	7	1
36–40	10	4
41–45	16	7
46–50	19	12
51–55	17	8
56–60	6	2
60+	1	0

Table 2.7 Background of diplomats and civil servants in the BHC and the EAD

	Number in BHC	*Percentage in BHC (%)*	*Number in EAD*	*Percentage in EAD (%)*	*Number in BHC and EAD*	*Percentage of total EAD and BHC (%)*
Military service	47	59.5	22	64.7	69	61.1
Oxbridge[a]	19	77.0	23	79.3	42	77.8
Other government departments	28	35.4	5	14.7	33	29.2
CO background	4	5.1	7	20.6	11	9.7
CRO background	26	32.9	16	43.2	42	36.2
FO background	36	45.6	15	40.5	51	44.0

[a]University education known for only 29 of those in the EAD and 25 in the BHC

could be reached at an earlier age. The outlier over sixty was MacDonald, as usually there was compulsory Diplomatic Service retirement at sixty. Those two who were first secretaries in the BHC aged below thirty were high-fliers: Imray had moved from third secretary in Canberra in 1958 to first secretary in 1962[117]; Chris Crabbie joined the FCO as second secretary in 1973 and went to Nairobi as first secretary on his first overseas posting in 1975.[118] Most were in position for between 2 and 4 years. Almost 30% had experience working in other government departments, this being more common among those in the BHC than the EAD. They had worked in a range of departments, including the Post Office, India Office, Cabinet Office and Ministry of Education. This experience would have given wider exposure to the priorities of other departments and encouraged a sense of institutional belonging and collective identity, with a shared Whitehall culture and sense of British interests.

A particularly high proportion had been to university at Oxford or Cambridge. This fits a widely recognised bias of the overseas service at this time. As Young has highlighted, civil servants 'were still predominantly male, upper class and Oxbridge educated'.[119] In 1965, the proportion of successful entrants to the Diplomatic Service from Oxbridge was twenty-eight of forty-three; in 1966, thirty-one of forty-one. Even more

notable were the CRO successes, where in the years 1960–1964, only one successful candidate of the twenty-eight appointed had not attended Oxbridge.[120] A 1967 paper on the image of the Diplomatic Service highlighted that:

> We should not, however, be too concerned about the present preponderance of Oxbridge entrants. We need the best brains and personalities from all walks of life in the country, and Oxbridge still seem able to attract the highest proportion of these.[121]

By 1978, this was changing so that 'one in three' were recruited from other universities.[122] This Oxbridge recruitment meant, however, that many shared similar backgrounds and would have been educated with a similar outlook. As one Treasury official described, 'the Civil Service is run by a small group of people who grew up together'.[123]

Issues of personnel management and timing were key to appointments. One example of this is Alan Munro who, in his words, 'was an Arab specialist, not an Africa one', and became head of EAD in 1977 because 'they wanted me to go, and I did eventually go, to the Middle East department, but it wasn't available'.[124] Finding people who were free at the right time was essential in a process of shuffling people between roles. Experience and training were not always priorities; Richard Tallboys recalled being:

> greeted with words along the lines of 'Ah, Tallboys, yes, you are to be Desk Officer for Kenya, Uganda and the East African Economic Community in East Africa Department—go away and do it'. This was I suppose in the best traditions of the Diplomatic Service, that seemed to work then on the principle that if a person was intelligent enough to be appointed to the Administrative Grades then he must be intelligent enough to do any job without delay.[125]

Another recalled that 'my education in the Foreign Office was reading all the despatches coming from all the worldwide posts, which obviously taught you a lot about the countries they were writing on but also taught you an awful lot about your colleagues'.[126] Training by reading others' despatches meant that diplomats were inculcated into the methods and ideas of their predecessors: what had been viewed as important was likely to remain unchallenged if this was how new members were educated. Those higher up

were given more briefing, and when Williams was High Commissioner designate, a list of briefing calls included the minister and three others from FCO, representatives of the Department of Trade, Defence Sales, Export Credits Guarantee Department, Bank of England, Crown Agents, British Council, Commonwealth Secretariat and commercial contacts at five firms.[127] As this suggests, commercial and economic connections were highly significant, and there was a sense of necessary preparation. Prior to leaving London to become High Commissioner, Peck additionally took Swahili lessons and read Kenyatta's *Facing Mount Kenya*.[128] But training was typically not extensive, and diplomats were expected to be adaptable.

Another key issue in organising personnel was knowledge and experience. There was an evident tension between the notional premium on knowledge and the reality that the FCO wanted generalists who would be flexible. Kirk-Greene has highlighted that

> generalists have traditionally been the very foundation and pride of the Diplomatic Service, men and women who have successfully built up a professional repertoire of diplomatic knowledge and practice by regular (or at least frequent) postings between the FCO in London and UK missions around the world, without single country continuity or sustained regional clustering.[129]

Diplomats needed to be adaptable to different situations and countries. Following the creation of the Diplomatic Service, official policy encouraged that diplomats should serve in countries previously covered by the other department. By 31 December 1967, 409 former Foreign Service personnel had served in Commonwealth Office posts, and 262 vice versa.[130] This helps to explain the higher proportion of FO rather than CRO backgrounds in the BHC. Thus, despite the emphasis on knowledge, what mattered most was actually a shared set of assumptions, with the sense that diplomacy was everywhere performed and practised in similar ways.

Prior to the mergers, levels of African experience necessarily differed between departments. Garner argued in 1964 that the CRO had

> built up a volume of expertise in Commonwealth Relations; we have not only a corpus of knowledge but a very wide range of intimate personal contacts and friendships with our opposite numbers … it would be absurd to dissipate this at once and to throw away the experience of a lifetime.[131]

The FO, for obvious reasons, did not contain much African experience; at the time of the merger to FCO, 'only one of its senior officers had any substantial African experience'.[132] Some in CRO valued colonial expertise; for example, John Hickman, working in EAD in 1963–1964, recalled that in a crisis he 'could only go to the Colonial Office to tell us who was who and what was what'.[133] The CO and HMOCS were where greatest expertise about former colonies existed, and it was those who had worked there who had knowledge to pass on.

However, after a country's independence, CRO was 'resolute in its refusal to accept any lateral transfer from HMOCS', and although HMOCS staff could reapply, they had to take the same exams as new recruits.[134] CRO also preferred not to appoint people from HMOCS to the same country, viewing this as implying that little had changed, although there is some suggestion that the new rulers of former colonies were not necessarily opposed to having continuing personnel.[135] This was different from French post-colonial policy where several former Governors remained as ambassadors, and civil servants as advisors; MacDonald was unusual in doing this in Kenya. Some individuals expressed a sense of difference between departments and some suspicion about colonial experience. David Goodall, in the BHC in the late 1960s and from an FO background, 'would like to think that maybe I was more objective', while a former CO official in the BHC at the time:

> was immensely knowledgeable about Africa. I mean, he was very good, he was very tough and so on, but I couldn't say his view was particularly objective. It was just a different sort of mind-set. I don't mean that he was arrogant or imperialistic or anything, but he was used to managing and running an African territory. Whereas we were supposed to be observing it and negotiating with it where necessary.[136]

A difference in attitude and mentality was, at least sometimes, perceived to exist, and some diplomats seemed to fear that their colleagues who had too much local knowledge might somehow be out of line institutionally.

This attitude meant, as Garner later recognised, that the 'chance therefore was missed of recruiting any considerable body of men with experience in depth of life in the new Commonwealth countries'.[137] One who moved from the CO to the CRO thought CO staff were:

> very hurt by the outlook of the CRO, who took the view that Colonial Office people couldn't really serve in CRO posts, and there was a lot of feeling about that, because quite a lot of CRO people were over-promoted to take jobs as High Commissioners and Deputy High Commissioners, which should have gone to some very good Colonial Office people, most of whom ended up in Home Civil Service Ministries.[138]

After the FCO was formed in 1968, only one staff member in the EAD had previous experience in the CO, suggesting that many within the CO and HMOCS left overseas policy-making with the department's end.

Despite this, there was also continuity and transfer. Hodge has argued that the careers of colonial officials formed 'an important thread of continuity across the seemingly fundamental rupture of decolonization and independence'.[139] Some members of HMOCS transferred to the FCO: Kirk-Greene suggests that by the mid-1970s more than 125 were in the FCO, fifty from East Africa.[140] Of those who worked in the EAD and BHC, fourteen had worked in HMOCS, of whom eleven in Africa (Table 2.9). The experience of former CO staff was not entirely lost as some moved through the merged offices. Williams, who became High Commissioner in Nairobi in 1979, had worked in the CO, CRO, Commonwealth Office and FCO.[141] The two most significant colonial officials who worked on Kenya in the years before independence were Webber and Leslie Monson. Webber's career moved away from Africa after the CO's closure, but Monson's did not. He became High Commissioner to Zambia, then Assistant and later Deputy Under-Secretary for Africa, supervising the EAD until 1969, when he oversaw the remaining dependent territories.[142] He has been described as 'one of the most experienced and able members of the former Colonial Office'.[143] Some knowledge and institutional memory from the CO was thus transferred through the mergers.

In terms of African experience, a total of 58.4% of the EAD and BHC sample had prior experience (including in HMOCS) of working in Africa (Table 2.8). This was a majority, but by no means an overwhelming one. Of these, seventeen had experience in East Africa and twenty-four had worked in two or more African countries, with Nigeria and South Africa the most common. These were countries with larger and highly graded missions and thus higher staff numbers. Working in London departments which dealt with Africa could also be a way of gaining experience. It is notable that twenty-one had been working elsewhere in Africa prior to

Table 2.8 African experience

	Number in the BHC (total 79)	*Number in the EAD (total 34)*	*Number from both the EAD and the BHC (total 113)*
HMOCS	13	1	14
HMOCS in Africa	10	1	11
African experience	48	18	66
Two or more countries of African experience	18	6	24
East African experience	14	3	17
Nigeria	12	3	15
South Africa	8	5	13
Tanganyika/Tanzania	10	1	11
Ghana	7	2	9
Egypt	4	1	5
Uganda	3	0	3
Kenya	1	0	1
Immediately prior job in Africa	13	8	21
Immediately following job in Africa[a]	7	2	9

[a]Known only for 70 from the BHC and 31 from the EAD

their role in Nairobi or EAD. This does suggest that at least some were building up African expertise. But still, the FCO valued experience within the department and habits of mind over real 'local knowledge'. Table 2.9 also shows that a lack of African experience was not a bar to working in the BHC, and a larger number of previous postings did not necessarily mean an increased likelihood of African experience. Norman Standen, on his eleventh placement in Nairobi, had worked extensively in South East Asia, with Nairobi his only African posting.[144]

Former head of EAD Munro argued that to be a specialist, on Africa or elsewhere, 'you would be expected to have 70 or 80% of your time, either from home or abroad, in that area'.[145] Many did not develop this kind of specialism, but some did spend most of their working lives focused on Africa. Some even had a more specifically East African focus. Consular first secretary Winefred White (née Durbin), one of the few women to work in the BHC at this level, began her career in the Ministries of Labour and Food and then moved through the CO, CRO, Commonwealth Office and FCO, with overseas postings in Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda, Spain and

Table 2.9 BHC overseas postings

Posting number	*Number in BHC*	*Number with African experience*	*Percentage with African experience (%)*
First	4	n/a	n/a
Second	10	4	40
Third	12	6	50
Fourth	16	11	69
Fifth	15	12	80
Sixth	10	7	70
Seventh	6	6	100
Eighth	2	1	50
Ninth	2	0	0
Tenth	1	1	100
Eleventh	1	0	0

Kenya.[146] She thus had substantial experience in East Africa, as well as in the different overseas departments in London. Several individuals worked in the EAD in several capacities or in both the EAD and the BHC. Norman Aspin, head of the CRO's East Africa Political Department 1963–1966, became Assistant Under-Secretary of State for EAD in 1974 until 1976, and again in 1980.[147] Martin Le Quesne was head of the West and Central African Department in the FO, 1964–1968, and was later Deputy Under-Secretary of State with responsibility over EAD from 1971 to 1974.[148] Allinson was Head of Chancery in BHC in 1970, then Deputy High Commissioner, 1972–1974, and then Assistant Under-Secretary of State with responsibility over the EAD in 1980 (he returned to Nairobi as High Commissioner in 1982).[149] Clearly these women and men who worked in the EAD and then supervised it, or worked on Kenya from both London and Nairobi, would have built up a detailed knowledge and awareness of Kenyan events, people and places.

Conclusion

Relations between and within departments are crucial to understanding how and why policies emerged. British government attitudes may have appeared coherent and stable from a Kenyan perspective, but internally there was conflict and negotiation between departments pursuing their own agendas. Different departments could have differing priorities, and even within the FCO the views of its Defence Department, EAD, BHC

and Economic Department could diverge. Plans were the work of multiple sections of government working sometimes cooperatively and sometimes obstructively as they pursued the interests of their own department, as well as broader British interests.

For the policy-makers involved, a key question was how much emphasis to place on local knowledge and how far to privilege experience. The FCO favoured both specialists and generalists, and even specialists were expected to have wider experience. There was tension over this issue; yet in discussions and making decisions, most believed that local knowledge mattered, and this was what the BHC was supposed to provide. Diplomats were expected and required to have some local knowledge, and even influence. But, as one former diplomat argued:

> there is a possibility that active and sensitive officials will come to understand too well the preoccupations of the foreigners with whom they deal, and give them disproportionate weight. They need the counterweight of the endlessly repeated question, 'Where do Britain's interests lie?'[150]

Local knowledge was essential, but could not be allowed to prejudice British interests. There was also some scepticism about CO and HMOCS personnel and the value of their knowledge following the empire's independence. Yet, as this book will make clear, the idea of local knowledge itself is also problematic, as those Britons who made claims to this frequently understood less of Kenyan politics and society than they believed.

Staff within the BHC and EAD had a reasonable degree of autonomy, and heads of the EAD and High Commissioners were able to exercise influence over the decisions which in effect made policy. But all worked within institutional confines. As Allison and Halperin have argued, those involved in making policy were 'individual[s] in a *position*'.[151] It was their position which made them significant in this context rather than their individual characteristics. The British involved were primarily functionaries, for whom Kenya was one element of a wider career of public service. Therefore, changes in personnel tended to make marginal difference to the direction and pursuance of British policy. Those coming to the office adapted to the knowledge which had built up in files and people, and to the aims and objectives which had been set—or accepted—by their predecessors. The culture of the departments and civil service in general encouraged cooperation and the pursuance of shared goals. Similar backgrounds, outlooks and ideas of British interests meant that disagreement tended to

be over detail rather than the broad scope of policy. There were rivalries, but plans were framed within a Whitehall consensus and shared culture of bureaucracy. This was not necessarily because policy and aims were clearly defined, but rather because a broader sense of what British politicians, civil servants and diplomats wanted to achieve from their relationship persisted. Despite internal departmental and individual disputes, this was, ultimately, a bureaucratic system.

Notes

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58. Dawbarn to Permanent Under-Secretary, 25 April 1972, TNA FCO 31/1197/5.

59. His emphasis. Dawbarn to Cable, 8 May 1972, TNA FCO 31/1197/7.
60. Cable to Dawbarn, 27 April 1972, TNA FCO 31/1197/7.
61. For all this information see *The Diplomatic Service List* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office), (hereafter, DSL), *The Foreign Office List* (London: Harrison and Sons), and *The Colonial Office List* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office) for the years covered.
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93. Moorhouse, *Diplomats*, 252.
94. Poynton to Knox, 8 November 1962, TNA CO 967/408/27.
95. Clyde Sanger, *Malcolm MacDonald: Bringing an End to Empire* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1995), 4.
96. MacDonald to Garner, 3 August 1963, Malcolm MacDonald Archive, Durham (MMA) 45/1/42-3; MacDonald to Sandys, 18 September 1963, MMA 45/1/44-5.
97. MacDonald to Sandys, 18 September 1963, MMA 45/1/44-5.
98. Sanger, *Malcolm MacDonald*, 404.
99. MacDonald to Sandys, 4 July 1964, MMA 45/1/17-20.
100. MacDonald to Sandys, 6 July 1964, MMA 45/1/21-2.
101. Garner to MacDonald, 27 July 1964, MMA 45/1/25.
102. Allinson, interview, BDOHP, 25.

103. (David) Malcolm McBain, interview by John Hutson, BDOHP, 27 April 2000, 20–21.
104. MacDonald to Garner, 10 August 1964, MMA 45/1/27-9.
105. MacDonald to Garner, 23 September 1965, MMA 53/1/65.
106. See for examples: Njonjo to MacDonald, 2 November 1964, MMA 43/5/2; Ngala to MacDonald, 3 November 1963, MMA 43/5/21; Pinto to MacDonald, 3 November 1964, MMA 43/5/50; Mboya to MacDonald, 10 November 1964, MMA 43/5/100.
107. Statement by Kenyatta, 2 November 1964, MMA 43/4/17.
108. Richard Beeston, 'De Freitas ends "bumpy ride" soon', *Sunday Telegraph*, 2 August 1964, 2.
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116. Alan Gordon Munro, interview, BDOHP, 16 May 1996, 21.
117. DSL 1970, 263.
118. DSL 1980, 157; DSL 1977, 204.
119. Young, *Twentieth-Century Diplomacy*, 26.
120. Her Majesty's Diplomatic Service, [1967], TNA FCO 79/71/8.
121. Campbell, 'The Diplomatic Service image', [1967], TNA FCO 79/71/5.
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CHAPTER 3

Kenyan Institutions and Actors

The Anglo-Kenyan relationship was one between two governments, but also consisted of multiple relationships between individuals. This chapter explores what British diplomats thought of the Kenyan politicians with whom they dealt; how they categorised and understood them; how they reported on them to their superiors and politicians in London; and how attitudes in London affected what diplomats thought. Who British officials talked to and how they interacted with them greatly shaped their views, as it was largely through individual contacts that British knowledge was gathered. British policy-makers encouraged communication with certain individuals in a continual search for people who would be 'friendly' to perceived British interests, trying to cultivate and influence them. One of the most significant features of the relationship was that leading members of Kenyatta's elite chose to pursue it. By no means all Kenyans, or even all Kenyan ministers, welcomed such a close relationship with Britain, especially given the colonial history of the relationship.[1] But the most powerful elite based around Kenyatta did favour this—and were in the position most able to influence these choices. These men are the focus of this chapter.

Views of and relationships with individuals mattered because Kenyan politics was very much driven by personalities, as individuals pursued their own interests in a system of neo-patrimonialism. Clapham has defined this as 'a political and administrative system which is formally constructed on rational-legal lines' but in which those with official positions 'exercise those powers, so far as they can, as a form not of public service but of private property'.[2] Kenyatta distrusted institutions, and while Kenya had an

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effective and functioning civil service, he encouraged a political culture in which decisions were ultimately made by an informal elite around him. This encouraged a 'court' politics of personal rivalries and factionalism. Tamarkin in the late 1970s argued that 'policy-making and decision-making is the prerogative of the President who brings into the process a small group of advisers comprised of Ministers, high-ranking civil servants, relatives and friends'; as a result, access to the president was typically the most important way of influencing policy.[3] Those in the British government recognised that 'effective power rests with the President and his most immediate advisers'.[4] This made a small number of people especially significant because, unexpectedly, many of the Kenyan elite remained in position for an extended time. The 1957 and 1958 elections 'brought to the fore a generation of politicians who dominated the postcolonial landscape', particularly benefiting 'elite loyalists [who] later became gatekeepers to the postcolonial state'.[5] Of those Africans attending the 1960 Lancaster House conference (which of course had some major absences, most notably Kenyatta), British diplomats still listed six as key figures in 1978 and several others had been important until their deaths.[6]

British diplomats helped to create and then reinforced this neo-patrimonial system by engaging with leading Kenyans primarily on an individual and personal basis. Wevill has argued that a High Commission's 'power to influence can be rendered useless if policy formation is taking place outside normal channels'.[7] Contrary to this, other channels were being used in Kenya, but this did not mean that British officials found it difficult to work with leading Kenyans. Rather, they came to understand and naturalise a focus on individuals as something 'African'; as one head of the EAD noted, 'Africans, though not without a sense of protocol, attach a great deal of importance to personal relations'.[8] This displayed a clear idea that Africans acted in a personalised way, whereas the British way of doing things was more bureaucratic. This idea that personalised politics was 'naturally' African encouraged the British to favour personal contact with leading Kenyans. It offered a way of understanding Kenyans, as well as rationalising their own behaviour. This was not unique; as Dimier has argued in relation to Directorate General 8 of the European Economic Community (EEC), Europeans could, intentionally or not, replicate the neo-patrimonial practices of those they worked with.[9] This was true in the case of British policy-makers in Kenya, where officials believed an individual, personal

system of government to be something particularly Kenyan, and yet also acted in this way, helping to create this system and their own views of it.

The underlying question is how much British diplomats, or the politicians in London they advised, ever really 'knew' about what was happening in Kenyan politics. It is clear that they thought they understood this well, believing they were in a position to accurately assess Kenyan individuals, politics and interests—often thinking that they knew these better than the Kenyans themselves. But British judgements were by no means always sound. A self-belief and assumed superiority underpinned their views and interactions: 'some new difficulties may arise – as is only to be expected from some of the immature and emotional African political leaders.'[10] This chapter will first consider the importance of Kenyatta and then discuss two interlocutors whose cultural accessibility shaped British views of them, before considering other Kenyans and the categorisations which shaped—and skewed—British views of them.

Jomo Kenyatta

Kenyatta was the central figure in independent Kenya until his death in 1978. He was arrested in 1952 as Mau Mau leader, released in 1961, became prime minister in 1963 and president in 1964—a post he held until his death. These brief details suggest the dramatic nature of his transformation from detainee to key ally. Kenyatta had been accused and convicted of being the leader of Mau Mau, and was vilified in Britain and by many of Kenya's Europeans; visiting Nairobi in 1961, Colonial Secretary Reginald Maudling 'avoided … being photographed shaking his hand'.[11] But these ideas about Kenyatta were based on presumption rather than accurate knowledge. When MacDonald was appointed Governor in 1963, he was told by advisors in London that Kenyatta was 'a wicked old man who was fortunately far past his prime, who was quickly declining in physical and mental powers … rapidly boozing himself to death'; although others did admit 'that few Europeans either inside or outside Kenya really knew much about Kenyatta'.[12]

Once he was released from detention, Kenyatta quickly came to be viewed more positively, a change spearheaded by MacDonald. Kenyatta and MacDonald could see their mutual interests and MacDonald recognised that Kenyatta could provide what British policy-makers desired in a leader: an influential partner who could dominate African politics. By September 1963, MacDonald viewed him as 'the effective leader of the

Government, the arbitrator in all official or personal Cabinet disagreements, and the supreme maker and pronouncer of policy'.[13] In a character sketch of Kenyatta in January 1966, MacDonald (by then High Commissioner) wrote that 'nothing is more important to an understanding of the situation in Kenya – and to some extent in neighbouring regions – during these important times than an appreciation of the quality of that extraordinary man'.[14] One diplomat in London described in response the 'almost Churchillian performance that Kenyatta has produced in the past few years, and which has won him world-wide respect'.[15] Favour towards Kenyatta was strong and continued through the 1960s and early 1970s, before diminishing as corruption increased and Kenyatta became less able.[16] Still, until his death in 1978, Kenyatta was viewed positively by most British observers—Defence Secretary Denis Healey described him in his autobiography as 'a man of great charisma and exceptional vision'.[17]

Kenyatta's personal role in Mau Mau was therefore an awkward issue. Had he been wrongly imprisoned and entirely misunderstood? That one of the witnesses retracted his testimony seemed to suggest this, and recently many historians have come to the conclusion that, as Savage has argued, Kenyatta 'has always been a conservative. Only the circumstances of the moment ever made it seem otherwise.'[18] Another possibility was that he had changed in prison, as the biographer of one of Kenyatta's jailers argued.[19] This was generally the preferred understanding of British policy-makers, rather than admitting that they had been wrong. Whichever version they believed, there was certainly a transformation in British views of Kenyatta. This was recognised in the press after his death, which described 'the Mau Mau leader who turned from Britain's arch-enemy to close friend'.[20]

It was rare that British policy-makers in the 1960s explicitly talked about Mau Mau. But in one revealing example in 1966, MacDonald denied any Mau Mau involvement: 'from my now intimate knowledge of Jomo Kenyatta's personality I feel sure that he never approved of the atrocities [or] Mau Mau excesses during the Kenyan emergency, and that he had no personal responsibility for them.'[21] He thus tried to rationalise his relationship with Kenyatta by reinterpreting his past. Responses from the (CRO) were less certain. One civil servant thought MacDonald 'a little starry-eyed'[22]; another argued that Kenyatta was 'undoubtedly a prime instigator of the terrorist movement'.[23] One official interestingly did 'not think history will acquit [him] completely of some measure of responsibility … I quite see that in the mythology of the post colonial era, history must

be re-written. But we do not have to accept the re-writing.'[24] He clearly recognised that British ideas about Kenyatta and Kenya were undergoing a remembering and forgetting in the process of nation-building which was occurring in Kenya, and simultaneously in Britain about Kenya.[25] This was an important legacy of the colonial relationship: one of forgetting, or at least minimising, the colonial past. Kenyatta's role in Mau Mau, and indeed Mau Mau more widely, was a difficult part of this past which British officials did not want to have to address. And it was something that, at least in the 1960s and 1970s, they were largely allowed by Kenyatta not to face up to.

Kenyatta's personal role in Kenya is slightly ambiguous. Certainly, he was the central figure of Kenya's government throughout his presidency. But his role and ability in the day-to-day running of the country is more open to question. In 1968, he had a stroke, and how far this and later illness and old-age affected his abilities is not entirely clear. Jackson and Rosberg described Kenyatta's role as an 'umpire' as he 'presided over this personal-factional struggle'.[26] From this reading, Kenyatta was in control of the situation, and chose to act through others when it suited him. By contrast, Karimi and Ochieng argued in 1980 that '[Mbiyu] Koinange was, for all practical purposes, the real President of Kenya'.[27] In early 1975, British diplomats highlighted 'the dangerous extent to which Kenyatta's mental powers are failing' and frequently commented on his health.[28] In his relationship with Britain, Kenyatta's personal position also contained some ambiguity: on the one hand, he was without question the most significant individual as the person British policy-makers sought to work with and find agreement with; on the other hand, it was very rare that they saw or spoke to him directly. Rather, their contact with Kenyans tended to go through others, en route to Kenyatta himself.

Charles Njonjo and Bruce McKenzie

The two most significant Kenyans in this regard, who frequently acted as interlocutors with the British government, were Charles Njonjo and Bruce McKenzie. As High Commissioner Peck recalled, these 'two dominant figures … were invaluable channels to the President and meant that I need rarely press to see him personally'.[29] Njonjo had been educated and practised as a lawyer in Britain before becoming a powerful figure within Kenya as Attorney-General and close advisor to Kenyatta.[30] Njonjo was not always favoured by those around him in Kenya, but the British believed

him 'almost certainly the most pro-British of all the members of the Kenya Cabinet'.[31] British diplomats frequently talked to him and generally considered him a useful ally.

McKenzie was born in South Africa and moved to Kenya in 1946. He joined KANU in 1961 as one of the first Europeans to do so and remained Minister for Agriculture in 1963—the only white European to retain a ministry after independence. This unusual position can be explained by his close personal relationship with Kenyatta, and also that his visible presence in government, particularly as Minister for Agriculture with responsibility for land transfer, offered some form of reassurance to Kenya's European population.[32] McKenzie also had extensive business interests as 'Director of over 20 Kenyan registered companies and an unknown number of foreign companies' when he died.[33] He retired as a minister in 1970, publicly due to ill health, to which the High Commissioner's response was that 'for all his faults, we have lost an influential friend at court'.[34] Yet this was by no means the end of McKenzie's influence with either the British or the Kenyan governments, and until he was killed in 1978, 'though he no longer holds public office, [he] is still very much in the President's confidence'.[35] McKenzie had close British ties and knew how to use his connections. He handled key policy initiatives and negotiations well beyond his remit as Minister for Agriculture, and was described by one British High Commissioner as 'Minister for Backstage affairs'.[36] He had a private brief for defence directly from Kenyatta, and was often sent to Britain to broker defence sales rather than anyone from the Kenyan Ministry of Defence, as later chapters will discuss.

It has been suggested that McKenzie was a spy for the British government. One of the key allegations came from the journalist Chapman Pincher who, in an article published after McKenzie's death, described McKenzie as an 'intelligence agent … with close links with Britain's SAS [Special Air Service] … [who] rendered important Intelligence services to Britain'.[37] However, in his 2014 autobiography, Pincher was less explicit; while he still described McKenzie as having 'close personal relations with British, American, Canadian, Iranian and Israeli intelligence', he did not refer to him directly as a British agent.[38] Other evidence which points to McKenzie's connections to British intelligence is a reference by a CRO civil servant that Mackenzie 'was himself in the [SAS] Regiment'.[39] However, even this makes no reference to any current contact, and another diplomat had previously speculated that McKenzie favoured the SAS 'I suppose because McKenzie must have served with S.A.S. during the War'.[40]

McKenzie certainly did serve with the Royal Air Force (RAF) during the Second World War. A former High Commissioner described that McKenzie 'maintained a not-so-secret liaison with the UK High Commissioner', but exactly what this means—if he was a spy or merely an intermediary—is unclear.[41] Many historians have subsequently echoed these ideas. Bloch and Fitzgerald in 1983 suggested that McKenzie had 'been an MI6 agent since at least 1963' and was probably recruited during Mau Mau.[42] Walton has argued that McKenzie 'may well have been' a British agent, and was also an Israeli one.[43] Dowden described him as 'head of MI6 in East Africa',[44] and Branch as 'probably a British and Israeli intelligence agent'.[45]

It seems, however, entirely possible that McKenzie was simply an intermediary, who saw in this an excellent way of pursuing his own interests. Redactions in documents do sometimes conceal the name(s) of people in the Kenyan government who passed information to the British, but it is not clear that McKenzie's name is among those redacted, as many documents do cite him directly as a source of information.[46] One member of the BHC suggested that McKenzie 'didn't trust the British government an inch – probably rightly'.[47] McKenzie was also not uniformly positive about Britain and 'tries to be genuinely non-aligned when it serves Kenya's interests'.[48] It seems clear that if he was a spy, this was not widely known among British officials. As Hornsby recognised, 'McKenzie's dual loyalties were well known at [Kenyan] Cabinet level and there is no evidence in the High Commission correspondence of actions that were to the detriment of Kenya'.[49] Unquestionably, McKenzie had extensive contacts across countries and within their intelligence services and acted as an intermediary passing information; however, as far as it is possible to tell, it seems that McKenzie was acting in his own interests, or what he perceived to be Kenya's interests, rather than directly to benefit any foreign government. McKenzie was much more than simply a conduit for British interests.

One reason why McKenzie and Njonjo were so favoured by the British and vice versa was an underlying cultural affinity. British diplomats still confidently assumed their own superiority, and had closer relations with those most culturally similar—of whom McKenzie and Njonjo were the key examples. One very visible sign of this was Njonjo's choice of dress: pinstripes with a rose in his buttonhole. He was described by High Commissioner Duff as:

> 'the black Englishman', outwardly an intelligent man of urbane charm, [he] is often the haven of normality and calm good sense to which one turns with relief when the rest of the Kenyan political scene appears to be shrouded in impenetrable cotton wool.[50]

This indicates both preference for Njonjo and how difficult British diplomats could find it to relate to others by comparison. Njonjo was one of those Africans (unlike Kenyatta) who had joined the colonial United Kenya Club, intended by British colonial officials as a site of multiracialism, and where he had formed connections with British policy-makers and Kenya's European population.[51] Cultural similarities encouraged and facilitated connections to certain individuals who appeared relatable.

McKenzie and Njonjo had extensive contact with the British. Both met multiple British prime ministers and ministers of various departments across this period. They often went to meetings as a pair and had a considerable level of access in Britain: when they asked for meetings, they generally received them. In 1966, anticipating McKenzie and Njonjo coming to Britain, head of the EAD Scott minuted that 'if the Ministers turn up with a mission to deliver a personal letter from President Kenyatta to the Prime Minister we should find it difficult to sidetrack them to either the Commonwealth Secretary or the Minister of Defence'.[52] Clearly, Scott thought that they could not be denied prime ministerial access. The personal and formal were interlinked, however, as Scott also noted that 'Mr. McKenzie knows Mr. Healey personally quite well, [so] he may very well approach him first'.[53] Personal relationships supplemented professional contacts. Prior to the merger to the FCO in 1968, McKenzie and Njonjo were informed by the Commonwealth Secretary that:

> Mr. [Michael] Stewart would be in charge of the merged Office and that when representatives of the Kenya Government wanted access to the top, they should go to him. He would ensure that Mr. Stewart was aware of the sensitive matters which Mr. Njonjo and Mr. McKenzie might wish to discuss with him from time to time.[54]

Clearly these men were expected to have 'sensitive matters' to discuss, and had the greatest 'access to the top' in Britain of any in Kenya. They also had private and informal communication with British officials, and when MacDonald was High Commissioner he wrote to Njonjo that 'if you ever want to telephone me at 2 Tchui Road without someone else picking up

the receiver, there is a direct line to my study'.[55] This suggests the level and discretion of communication between them, hinting at personal, private and potentially frequent conversations. With McKenzie, too, MacDonald had very personal relations: 'I hope that you will regard this note as purely private and personal, as I do not think that, at the present stage, it would be proper for me to approach you officially.'[56] For MacDonald and other British policy-makers, McKenzie and Njonjo were key intermediaries, encouraged both by their willingness to play this role and by their cultural similarities.

Kenya's Elite

Kenyan politics focused very much on an elite system, with certain individuals having particular importance. The period around decolonisation offered them benefits, as Kenyan 'policy-makers' were largely individuals pursuing personal advantage and enrichment. A new elite was emerging, quickly rising to be very wealthy as their interests embraced both politics and economics. For the well positioned, there was a 'remarkable rise to wealth and prominence'.[57] The factionalism in Kenyan politics both emerged from and contributed to this situation as individuals sought advantage over opponents, and business and other rivalries played into political contests. The interests of these men had been shaped in the latter colonial years, and many favoured the continuation of systems which offered them benefits.[58] As Connan has shown, Kenya's elite took over the Clubs which had been significant sites of colonial privilege and white prestige. The ideas of 'respectability' promoted by these Clubs were adopted by the new Kenyan elite.[59] Many had also been educated in Britain: of Kenyan MPs in 1963, 30% had received educational awards from Britain.[60] In the 1978 British-compiled 'Leading personalities in Kenya' report, twenty-eight of the 106 people included had received some kind of education or training in Britain—although of course this could reflect a British bias that those they had trained were therefore 'important'.[61] Members of this Kenyan elite were those British policy-makers focused on, and those who had the greatest influence and contact with the British. But this did not of course mean that British officials always understood them accurately, or got on well with them.

British policy-makers used several categories to assess Kenyans. Chabal has argued that colonial categorisations could be 'based either on a mixture

of accurate and accidental perceptions or on wilful misperceptions of reality'.[62] Some colonial categorisations of Kenyans, including those based on ethnicity, ability and 'tradition', continued to shape some British ideas after independence. One of the most significant ways in which British officials assessed members of Kenya's elite was by their potential to succeed to the presidency. Given the importance they attached to relationships with Kenyatta, they were highly concerned by his succession, which, especially by the 1970s, came to be the lens through which they viewed Kenyan politics. Favour for Kenyatta meant that 'successors to Mzee [Kenyatta] inevitably look a puny lot. It could hardly be otherwise.'[63] British politicians, civil servants and diplomats had two driving fears about the succession: first, that Kenya under a future leader would be less favourable to British interests, particularly if a new president decided to pursue greater links to the East; second, that Kenya would become unstable—which of course would also be damaging to British interests. A draft paper in 1965 entitled 'After Kenyatta – Who?' categorically stated that 'removal of Kenyatta's control over the Kenya Government poses dangers to the British and the Western position', speculating upon the possibilities for a 'break down in law and order' and the potential need for 'evacuation of British subjects'.[64] British policy-makers were profoundly uncertain about the future after Kenyatta. Significant time was therefore spent on making predictions and assessing possible candidates as they hoped to recognise a successor, forge connections and thereby protect British interests. This seemed so urgent because the date of Kenyatta's death was uncertain but expected to be much sooner than it was, and possibly at any moment.

British officials also drew a distinction between 'moderates' and 'radicals'. Prior to independence, the CO tried to make sense of relationships by casting those who would work with them as 'moderates'. KADU was initially seen as the 'moderate' party, and it was only when it became apparent that KANU was most likely to win the elections that the decision was taken to work with them. But British conceptions of 'moderates' shifted as circumstances changed and people were redefined within their ideas.[65] Tom Mboya and Oginga Odinga were Luo leaders of two factions of KANU explicitly described by contemporaries as 'moderate' and 'radical' respectively. The rivalry between Mboya and Odinga had aspects of both the political and the personal and had begun during the 1950s as they sought national leadership.

Mboya emerged as a significant trade union leader in the 1950s, becoming Minister for Justice and Constitutional Affairs at independence,

and then for Economic Planning and Development in 1964. British policy-makers recognised his political talents and MacDonald described him as 'by far the ablest, most hard working, and in some moods wisest member of the Government, not excluding the Prime Minister [Kenyatta]. He would be pre-eminently able by any standard in any country.'[66] But Mboya lacked parliamentary support and, as MacDonald again noted, 'I fear he has a genius for using his immense ability to rub people up the wrong way'.[67] Mboya was a prominent figure in the West: he published a pamphlet with the Fabian Colonial Bureau in 1956, forwarded by Margery Perham, attended Oxford University and organised an 'airlift' of students to America.[68] But, unusually among the Kenyan elite at this time, he was closer to America than to Britain as 'the one Kenyan moderate figure who completely dominated American thinking'.[69] Certain Britons, Americans and Kenyans considered Mboya in terms of the succession, but despite categorising him as a 'moderate', British officials were uncertain about Mboya, who lacked a cultural affinity which could have made him more favoured; he was not expected to be as pro-British if he did become president. He also did not talk to British diplomats very much, with fewer examples of private conversations with the BHC after independence.[70] His choice not to talk to them extensively surely influenced British uncertainties about him. In 1965, Imray in the BHC suggested that 'Kenyatta has never wholly trusted (or liked) him', perhaps signalling as much his own attitude as Kenyatta's.[71] Following discussions between the BHC and the American Embassy in 1967, High Commissioner Peck argued that the Americans should aim 'to broaden their outlook and counter their tendency sometimes to see the Kenyan situation through Mboya's eyes', implying that Mboya had an excessive influence upon American thinking.[72] British observers were far more sceptical about his chances of succession and clearly thought that they had a more accurate understanding of Kenya than the Americans. Many Kenyans, too, opposed Mboya's succession, and in July 1969 Mboya was assassinated, most likely not by 'radicals' but by other 'moderates' who wished to prevent his succession.

Odinga, by contrast, was a 'radical' Kenyan politician. His background was in business before being elected to Legislative Council in 1957. Odinga was the first to call for Kenyatta's release in June 1958, in a move that shocked and scared the British government, as well as many of his African colleagues, and—ironically given later British views of Kenyatta—it was this which irredeemably fixed his 'radical' label for the British.[73] The description of 'radical' was not just a British language being applied to

Kenyans; it was also one which certain Kenyans chose to appropriate. In part, this was a way to signal opposition, as being 'radical' meant being opposed, in differing ways, to Kenyatta's mainstream Kenyan politics. Ochieng describes 'radicals' as those 'who stood for fundamental changes in the social, economic and political fields'.[74] Odinga supported redistributing land without compensation, thus rejecting one of the pillars of continuity which encouraged Anglo-Kenyan cooperation.

In other ways, too, Odinga was less favourable to the British and their interests. This was particularly shown through his apparent sympathy for communism—another sign of his 'radicalism'. Odinga was the Kenyan with closest links to the Eastern bloc, which he pursued both before and after independence. In a 1965 speech, he described that 'Communism to him was "just like food"'.[75] Yet, how far Odinga actually supported communism is more questionable, as British officials sometimes recognised. In 1964, one suggested that 'Odinga for his part remains something of an enigma. He is probably not a Communist, but an ambitious opportunist, who is glad to dispense the immense funds provided by the Communists and relishes the prospect of buying his way to power.'[76] British diplomats did attempt to nuance their understandings, but in some ways this was perhaps even more damning: not a sincere communist, but an 'opportunist'. Still, the suspicion of communism remained and his links to the Soviet Union and China were clearly apparent. Imray, first secretary in the BHC, argued in June 1965 that 'all this speculation tends to cast Odinga and his followers in the role of "baddies" in Kenyatta's eyes, and the "moderates" in the role of "goodies". This is oversimplification.'[77] But although these labels could be obstructive rather than revealing, for many the simplified version continued to influence their thinking.

British policy-makers maintained a distrust and dislike of Odinga, although some did recognise his skill as a politician. In June 1964, he was described as a 'clever and an able Minister, and a very astute politician, although he occasionally shows disturbing signs of being unbalanced'.[78] In September 1964, Deputy High Commissioner Stanley was seated with Odinga at a function. Stanley was concerned to give the other guests and press 'an appearance of matiness'.[79] This was notably only an 'appearance', and he described that:

> the fanaticism of Odinga's delivery, with his staring eyes and exaggerated gestures, offered no reassurance at all about the kind of Kenya over which he might preside … Although obviously rather mad (I am told that he has done

> a spell in the lunatic asylum here and is apt to produce his discharge certificate as evidence of his present sanity) he can hardly really believe all the nonsense he uttered.[80]

This damning assessment, and rather bizarre comment about time supposedly spent in a lunatic asylum, indicates the struggle British policy-makers had in relating to Odinga. The idea of his 'insanity' allowed British officials to ignore his ideas. But while he was Minister of Home Affairs until 1964, and then vice president until 1966, British decision-makers had to interact with Odinga, and often at the highest level; in February 1965, he met the prime minister after attending Winston Churchill's funeral.[81] Odinga's position changed substantially as the later 1960s saw him lose influence and power—a process fully supported and approved by British observers. He resigned the vice presidency and formed the opposition Kenya People's Union (KPU) in 1966, followed by imprisonment in 1969. After he was released, Odinga's support and activities were still commented upon by British observers, but he was no longer viewed as having the same importance or influence. The BHC 'tended to assume that Oginga Odinga is not a serious threat in present circumstances, since if he really starts being a nuisance someone will put him away, this time perhaps for good'.[82]

By contrast, someone who became increasingly significant to British policy-makers and whom they sought to cultivate was Mwai Kibaki. Kibaki 'obtained First Class Honours (London University) in Economics, the first Kenya African to do so', became a junior minister in 1963, Minister of Commerce and Industry in 1966 and Minister of Finance in 1969.[83] The idea of a Kibaki succession was mooted in 1964 and, prophetically, 'we should regard Kibaki as the next but one'—though the author most likely did not anticipate how long it would be until then.[84] British diplomats viewed Kibaki positively, with his appointment as Minister of Finance 'likely to be very much to our advantage'.[85] The EAD stated in 1970 that 'because of his ability and relative youth, he is likely to be an important figure in Kenya for an indefinite time to come'.[86] Forming close personal relationships was thus a priority, and when Kibaki visited London for aid talks in April 1970 a meeting with the Chancellor of the Exchequer was encouraged 'for the purpose of getting acquainted, rather than for any substantive discussions'.[87] This highlights the importance British decision-makers placed upon fostering personal political communication with those they thought likely to be influential in future, as well as on

Kenya's economy being well-managed and secure. Kibaki was increasingly consulted as one of the key figures of the Kenyan elite, viewed by 1972 as 'the most capable, intelligent and potentially effective'.[88]

The two most likely successors during the 1970s were Daniel arap Moi and Njoroge Mungai and their rivalry became a key feature of politics. Moi had been a teacher before being elected to the Legislative Council in 1957 alongside Mboya and Odinga. He cofounded KADU as a Kalenjin leader and then joined the government in 1964 as Minister for Home Affairs, becoming vice president in 1967, replacing Odinga both times. Mungai was a Kikuyu doctor and claimed great familiarity with Kenyatta as his physician. He had been educated in Uganda, South Africa and America; he became Minister for Health and Housing in 1963, Defence Minister in 1964 and Foreign Minister in 1969.

The position of vice president was a crucial indication of the succession. After Odinga resigned in 1966, he was briefly replaced by Joseph Murumbi, who had previously been Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office, and left politics after this. In early 1967, Kenyatta was to appoint a new vice president. James Gichuru (who stood in as KANU president until Kenyatta's release from detention, became Minister of Finance in 1963 and Minister for Defence in 1969), Kibaki, Moi and Mungai were considered along with others, although the High Commissioner thought former leader of KADU Ronald Ngala most likely.[89] Once appointed, Moi's position as vice president in no way lessoned the speculation among British officials. In a sign of the views held by British civil servants—and the speculation the succession caused among them—directly after Moi became vice president:

> off-the-course book makers in E. Africa department were offering the following odds:-
> 5-1 Arap Moi
> 6-1 Gichuru
> 100-7 Kibaki
> 100-8 Mungai
> 20-1 The field
> The superintending Under Secretary was at that time inclined to think that the price for arap Moi was on the generous side, but clearly much depends on whether he continues to show improvement in training![90]

They did not necessarily expect Moi to succeed and, as this also shows, did not expect to wait another eleven years before the succession. In 1968, a

constitutional change meant that the vice president would automatically succeed for ninety days after the president's death, making Moi's succession most likely, but this, too, did not end speculation.[91]

Much of what was written immediately after Kenyatta's death was designed to make Moi's succession appear inevitable and unquestioned.[92] Khapoya described Moi in 1979 as 'really the front runner to succeed Kenyatta from the very beginning'.[93] It is not clear when the 'very beginning' to which Khapoya refers is—Kenya's independence? Moi's appointment as vice president?—but regardless, it is hard to support this assessment given the many others variously considered. In fact, Moi's succession was by no means inevitable, nor always the British choice. Branch has described Moi as 'the candidate of British influence'[94]; but until the final years of his vice presidency, Moi was not viewed particularly positively by British officials. The High Commissioner in 1967 took Moi's succession 'under consideration, but I think largely as a front man; his performance so far as number two does not suggest that he is of presidential timber.'[95] In 1970, he was considered 'the likeliest of the compromise candidates should the President die soon, but it is difficult to see him lasting long', and this was the most common British assessment of Moi until the mid-1970s.[96]

Mungai, too, occasioned differing British views. Dismissed as 'shallow and rather unreliable' in 1966,[97] from 1967, he was increasingly viewed as a potential successor, although not necessarily positively. Peck wrote that he 'has charm, intelligence and ambition sometimes to the point of arrogance, but is at the same time venal, lazy and a light-weight'.[98] Yet, by August 1970, 'the best hope for United Kingdom interests would seem to be a quick transmission post-Kenyatta to Mungai who appears from many points of view to have outstandingly the best presidential credentials'.[99] The views of British diplomats fluctuated depending on personal preference and changing events in Kenya. But both Moi and Mungai were described as possibly 'damaging to our interests as well as those of Kenya'—neatly equating British interests in Kenya with Kenyan interests.[100] Part of the reason why both were often viewed negatively by British observers was a lack of cultural affinity. Perhaps tellingly, neither had been educated in Britain. Unlike with Njonjo and McKenzie, British policy-makers were not really comfortable with either. The pro-British ethos of Kenya's political leadership appeared potentially threatened as both Mungai and Moi were judged through stereotypes and an assumed superiority.

With Moi, British condescension was intellectual. Moi was viewed as having some serious weaknesses, described variously as 'his precarious hold on the loyalties of his own people (the Kalenjin), his incompetence as an administrator, and his intellectual shortcomings'[101]; as well as 'his widely suspect judgement. His ineptitude, his apparent craving for popularity at any price, and his habit of acting without thinking through the consequence.'[102] In 1971, one diplomat did 'tend to wonder whether Moi is really so inept as Moi watchers lead us to believe'; nonetheless, he questioned whether 'in [some] African eyes some degree of ineptitude is such a bar to high political position'.[103] This suggests a willingness to reconsider Moi, but still with an idea of Africans as backwards and having limited expectations of their political leaders. The Deputy High Commissioner wrote in 1973 that 'in any serious recital of talents and qualifications Moi would scarcely rate a mention … he is very unsophisticated by world standards. In some ways he remains a primitive from the outback.'[104] The condescension which permeates this language indicates the importance of cultural connections: British diplomats did not feel entirely at ease with Moi. In fact, as his succession made clear, British policy-makers consistently underestimated Moi.

By contrast, Mungai was measured against a series of unfavourable stereotypes of lustful, alcoholic and despotic Africans. One critique was that 'Mungai is said to have the makings of a dictatorial, ruthless and leftist leader'.[105] In 1972, he was described as 'something of a playboy … with a taste for beer and blondes'.[106] At a meeting with a British diplomat in Brasilia in 1972, Mungai drank heavily and was explicitly critical of Britain, particularly over Rhodesia.[107] The head of the EAD was not that surprised, although 'when he is sober (as he normally is), Mungai usually behaves quite sensibly, even helpfully'.[108] High Commissioner Duff's response was that:

> below the comparatively polished surface of the African politician, official and businessman there are forces and emotions of a kind which, in the world at large, have long since vanished below the horizon … It often takes little to spark off an emotional surge which can carry even the most literate East African back to a primitive level of thinking … But in dealing with them, in this period between independence and the time when, hopefully, they reach a genuine maturity of good sense and experience, what has to be considered is whether an individual is capable of checking his irrational impulses effectively

> enough for us to be able to do business with him. Fortunately, the senior Kenyan leaders are capable of disciplining themselves in this manner, and Dr Mungai generally does so.[109]

Coming from a high-level civil servant, who would go on to become the head of MI5, this overt racism shows that certain colonial attitudes had changed remarkably little. Both Moi and Mungai were described as 'primitive'—admittedly an extreme opinion—but the views of Moi as unintelligent and Mungai as a 'playboy' were a means of disassociating.

Yet, as the 1970s progressed and no alternative candidate emerged as British observers had expected, it became increasingly apparent that Moi would succeed. There were several key indicators of this. In the 'major upset' of the 1974 elections, Mungai lost his Dagoretti seat.[110] Duff assessed that he lost 'because of his personal unpopularity and his arrogance'; Moi and Mungai were clearly rivals by this time, and Moi was getting better press coverage.[111] This was a key moment in the succession struggle between the two, described by Branch as 'a calamitous blow' to Mungai's chances, as successors had to be elected MPs to succeed constitutionally.[112] Surprisingly, however, Duff thought that:

> Paradoxically, Moi's success in securing the defeat of his outstanding rival for the succession, Dr. Mungai, has weakened his position. While Mungai was there many leading Kikuyu preferred Moi. Now he has gone, at any rate for the time being, they see less need to support Moi and are in any case less inclined to do so because of the maladroitness he showed during the election.[113]

Duff's remarks were seen 'somewhat unexpectedly' by the EAD, and were not borne out by events.[114] This also suggests, however, the unwillingness of British officials in 1974 to accept or back Moi—or indeed anyone else—as a definite successor.

The succession rivalry came to a head with the Change-the-Constitution movement in 1976. The constitutional provision for the vice president to automatically succeed for ninety days meant that Moi was the 'acknowledged front runner in the succession race', and 'an open challenge on Moi's position' aimed to change this by abolishing this provision.[115] The movement was ended in October 1976 by Njonjo, with a statement 'that it is a criminal offence for any person to compass, imagine, devise, or intend

the death or the deposition of the president'.[116] This ended the chance of reframing the constitution to remove Moi's advantage. Fingland, however, thought that 'it certainly should not be taken that we have heard the end of a challenge' to Moi.[117] As Tamarkin has argued, for those in the potential pool of successors, 'the stakes … were so high that it was inconceivable that any group would give up before it was crystal clear that the cause was lost'.[118] There was still uncertainty among British officials, who had not ruled out the possibility of an alternative successor.

Nevertheless, British commitment to Moi did increase through the later 1970s, partly owing to Moi's support from other leading Kenyans with whom the British had closer relationships. By 1977, 'the best hope for a stable succession and action to counter corruption and Kenya's other problems lie with the group now associated with the Vice-President'.[119] The 'group' around him was key, with Njonjo, Kibaki and McKenzie its most significant members. These men were already favoured by the British 'and it was to be hoped that the support of these and other Kenyan leaders would guide [Moi] into sensible paths'.[120] Supporting Moi therefore did not necessitate a change in who the British already favoured. Kibaki, McKenzie and Njonjo were expected to be able to influence a weaker Moi, encouraging the view that Moi would be the most beneficial successor for British interests. Yet, still in 1978, Moi was described as 'cunning rather than clever, impatient and impulsive. Somewhat inarticulate … But a tall and rather imposing man who at least looks like a national leader.'[121] That British policy-makers had to comment on his physical stature rather than attributes speaks volumes to the limits they still believed of him, despite that only months later he would become president. British officials did not favour Moi to succeed until it became unambiguous that he would do so and—as they had in working with KANU and Kenyatta before independence—they then sought to side with and cultivate the emerging victor.

Kenyan Foreign Policy-Making

Kenya's post-colonial politics often lacked firmly defined institutional rules. Britain's High Commissioner in 1966 noted 'the rather confused demarcation of ministerial responsibilities'.[122] Although Kenya had inherited the structures of the colonial state, it was not quite clear how those would work under the very different circumstances of independence. Orwa in 1989 argued that 'states are run by people. It is their character which makes up the character of the state'[123]; but this was in fact a very Kenyan analysis: the

character of the British state was institutional. This personal rather than institutional policy-making is further highlighted by the limited reference, even in what little literature exists on Kenyan foreign policy, to how this was made.[124] Foreign policy was not conducted through a regularised set of norms and practices, or with unified ideas of a national interest, but rather on the basis of personal and factional interests.

That Kenyatta preferred to work through individuals rather than institutions was clearly displayed in Kenyan interaction with Britain. Kenya quickly established a High Commission in London, one of only eight until 1968.[125] The first Kenyan High Commissioner was Josephat Karanja, an academic without diplomatic experience. His successor was Ng'ethe Njoroge, brother of Mungai, of whom Counsellor James Arthur in the BHC commented that he 'was friendly enough in his relations with us, although he never cut a very impressive figure, and I am afraid my first impression on hearing of the appointment was one of disappointment that the Kenyans should not have proposed someone of greater stature'.[126] That a more prominent figure was not appointed, however, was a sign of how minimally Kenya's High Commission in London was used. Following Moi's presidential succession, he was replaced by Shadrack Kimalel. The personalisation of politics was clear as Mungai's brother was replaced by a Kalenjin like Kenya's new president.[127]

However, the Kenyan High Commission in London was not the site of much Anglo-Kenyan interaction. Most communication occurred either with the BHC or through Kenyan ministers and intermediaries being sent to Britain and meeting British ministers—Kenyatta's favoured route of policy-making. This was not always the most direct approach for the British, but when an alternative method was suggested, McKenzie argued that:

> this was simply not how President Kenyatta worked. He recognised how laborious the procedure would seem to us, but said that the President did not trust the Kenyan diplomatic machine or the High Commission in London; that he greatly valued the direct contact with British Ministers which he felt was available to him; and that in a matter of this importance, given that he could not leave Kenya himself, he would only operate by sending one of his senior Ministers with a personal message.[128]

Of course, in making this argument, McKenzie was reinforcing his own importance as one of those sent by Kenyatta to Britain. For leading Kenyans, and especially McKenzie and Njonjo, portraying themselves to

the British as particularly significant, and thus ensuring that they were treated that way, could prove useful. But it is also clear that Kenyatta chose not to work through his High Commission in London, and this was shown in the lack of contact between successive Kenyan High Commissioners and British ministers—especially when compared to the BHC which had extensive contact with Kenyan leaders. Kenyatta's view of his High Commission was revealed before a 1970 prime ministerial meeting, when the High Commission was not informed of the meeting, nor that Njonjo was in London.[129]

Kenya's Ministry of Foreign Affairs was also not the most significant site of policy-making. High Commissioner Peck recalled that 'any substantial matters between us and the Kenyan government passed through other channels'.[130] Those appointed as Kenya's Minister for Foreign Affairs included some prominent figures but also several who were less prominent or favoured, such as Clement Argwings-Kodhek, a figure well outside Kenya's inner circle of power who died in a road accident in 1969—one of Kenya's mysterious political deaths.[131] That someone outside Kenyatta's elite was given this position highlights that it was not of foremost significance. Additionally, and unlike on the British side, civil servants were not the main route of contact. Despite the continuing strength of Kenya's Provincial Administration,[132] most British contact was with politicians rather than civil servants. Indeed, in 1965, one British official suggested that 'Kenya officials do not always know what their Ministers are thinking and doing'.[133] While the British kept track of Permanent Secretaries, who would frequently accompany ministers to formal meetings, they rarely sought them out.

Establishing personal relationships was a key role of British diplomats posted to Nairobi. As Wevill has argued, diplomats were important for their 'ability to identify and then target influential people'.[134] MacDonald believed that 'friendly and trustful personal relations between the Ministers of different countries are at least half the battle in the struggle for peaceful and constructive coexistence'.[135] McKenzie in 1970 raised the importance of personal connections, stating that this was not always recognised: 'this is particularly true of FCO personnel, many of whom have not yet learned the importance of locating and contacting the 5 or 6 people in each country who now really run the show.'[136] He was clearly suggesting the personal nature of African policy-making. British officials certainly looked

to identify those who might be influential in future, seeking 'ways in which we can cultivate the next generation of leading politicians', with visits to London a key part of this.[137] They also focused on informal exchanges, which provided a useful way of passing and gaining information and knowledge. Social events helped to establish and reinforce relationships; although they could also potentially encourage diplomats to focus on those they knew and those who 'turned up at functions when we invited them'.[138] There were multiple occasions of informal, social contact at which the British could gain an insight into Kenyan thinking.[139]

Personal contact was particularly significant because many Kenyans believed Britain to have influence. Links to the British could thus be beneficial for leading Kenyans, who sought to use these to their own advantage. One example was Josiah Mwangi (J. M.) Kariuki, a 'radical' and vocal critic of Kenyatta's. Kariuki had been detained during the emergency, was elected in 1963 and had various roles in government, becoming Assistant Minister for Tourism and Wildlife in 1969.[140] In 1964, he was described by one British diplomat as 'unpleasantly anti-White, although perhaps not strongly pro-Communist'.[141] He was increasingly critical of Kenyatta during the 1970s. This did not mean, however, that Kariuki did not seek contact with the British. In 1970, a member of the BHC had lunch with an aid to Kariuki, who told him:

> Kariuki feels that the High Commission is unfriendly towards him and is deliberately ignoring him … He wished however to make it clear that he is not unfriendly towards the British or against British business interests (despite his speeches) and that he would like to see more of the High Commission.[142]

Some Kenyan politicians, including those self-described as 'radical', saw dialogue with the British as useful. Robert Purcell in the EAD suggested that Kariuki 'has further to go and is worth doing perhaps rather more to cultivate'.[143] Despite his 'radical' tag, there was a desire to get to know and 'cultivate' relations from both sides.

This was by no means the only occasion when leading Kenyans believed British influence to be substantial. In 1973, Deputy High Commissioner Allinson met Fitz de Souza (Asian MP until 1969), who argued that:

> [a] future leader of Kenya needed two things: Kikuyu support and the support, tacit or active, of HMG [Her Majesty's Government]. Moi, Mungai and all other potential leaders were aware of this. British economic and military support was essential for Kenya and no leader thought he could survive without it.[144]

De Souza clearly indicated the strength of his belief that Britain had a significant role in Kenya. Kenyatta, too, was believed to value this relationship particularly highly, so that 'those who know him well say that the President will ultimately trust two countries only: Britain and Israel; and that nothing will persuade him to take a course of action which will seriously harm Kenya's relations with either.'[145] These sources may, of course, have been telling the British what they wanted to hear, but it does seem that many Kenyans believed Britain to have a significant role in Kenya, and wanted to use this to their advantage. Moi's successful use of this at the time of his succession will be discussed in Chap. 8.

Conclusion

Kenyan policy-making towards Britain was confined to a very narrow elite based around Kenyatta, with Njonjo and McKenzie the two most significant interlocutors. These men sustained the Anglo-Kenyan relationship and were crucial to its workings. The British were not the only foreign diplomats in Kenya, but British diplomats typically viewed their own contacts and knowledge as superior. In 1969, the High Commissioner recorded that the BHC 'enjoys a privileged access to members of the ruling inner circle which is the envy of other Missions'.[146] As this makes clear, the key to having influence in Kenya—as understood by British officials—was access to the 'ruling inner circle'. This was something British policy-makers were able to maintain as they focused on contact with a small elite.

British relationships with Kenya were both shaped by and helped to shape Kenya's emerging neo-patrimonialism which favoured individuals and personal policy-making. This involved a small group being involved in decisions, and an active distrust of formal institutions rather than a wider participatory style of governing. British policy-makers encouraged and strengthened this personalisation, relying on individual contacts in their pursuit of British interests—in ways which also served the interests of Kenya's emerging elite. British diplomats sought links with those Kenyans they perceived to be influential and favoured certain individuals, prepared to collaborate with

them in informal exchanges and secret deals, as later chapters will detail. Despite Kenya's more formal institutions—often ones established under British colonialism—and that British personnel operated within an institutional system at home, they were content not to do so in Kenya.

Crucially, Kenyatta and his elite came to view their interests as complementary to those of Britain. For certain leading Kenyans, such as McKenzie and Njonjo, their access to British officials appeared useful. Those who felt excluded from these ties, such as Kariuki, regarded them as powerful and worth seeking. British connections could prove personally beneficial in the uncertain world of Kenyan politics and economics, in which individuals sought their own advantage. British decision-makers would clearly have tried to maintain relations whatever the successor state, but were able to have a close relationship only because those they sought to work with were already committed to continuity in terms of the culture and practices of government, which made close relationships with Britain seem natural.

It is questionable how much British officials ever really 'knew' about Kenya and the Kenyans with whom they worked. One of the key determinants shaping British assessments was their sense of assumed superiority and, at times, openly racist attitudes. The end of colonial rule did not mean a fundamental reshaping of these underlying British attitudes, and ideas about 'Africa' and 'Kenyans' entailed a series of stereotypes and naturalisations. British personnel had closest links with those who accepted this sense of superiority and shared a cultural affinity. Thus, Mboya, who rejected these ideas, was viewed with some uncertainty rather than entirely favoured, while Njonjo was seen to be more significant than Moi because he had assimilated British culture more thoroughly. British diplomats frequently approached Kenya with a series of labels which were not as revealing as they supposed; but it is clear that British diplomats thought that they understood Kenyans and were able to make judgements which accurately assessed them. This British self-belief was a potent diplomatic weapon as it gave them confidence in their interactions. But it was also a weakness: their preference for the most familiar members of the elite meant that they simply did not know some things about Kenya, and left them potentially open to manipulation by those they felt they could relate to. British diplomats were, by necessity, reliant on what they were told, and this depended on both who they communicated with and what those Kenyans wanted to share. Those Kenyans the British talked most extensively and frankly to were those most likely to be listened to and supported,

whose views were most likely to be taken into account, and who were most able to make demands. But while the British had influence, they were far from being in control.

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PART II

Policy-making and the Anglo-Kenyan Relationship, 1963–1980

CHAPTER 4

1963–1964: Decolonising a Difficult Colony

By 1963–1964, British decolonisation was well advanced, but colonial independence did not mean the end to ideas of a British world role in international politics.[1] By 1963, Britain's first application to join the European Economic Community (EEC) had already been made by Macmillan and rejected by French President de Gaulle.[2] The 'special relationship' with America had allowed the British purchase, at a relatively low cost, of Polaris ballistic missiles at Nassau in 1962.[3] While Spiers has highlighted the 'fundamental paradox' that Britain was dependent upon America for her 'independent' nuclear deterrent, the deal itself was evidence of Britain's determination to acquire and maintain a nuclear presence and world role.[4] British politicians looked to America as a partner in world affairs and, by doing so, hoped to play a significant role. There were three prime ministers during these 2 years: Macmillan until October 1963, when he resigned and was replaced by Alec Douglas-Home, and in October 1964, Harold Wilson and Labour won the election. Holt has argued that during Home's premiership 'the legacy of imperial rule continued to create difficulties', including the federation of Malaysia, the confrontation between Malaysia and Indonesia, the East African mutinies, problems in Rhodesia, and South Africa, which had left the Commonwealth in 1961.[5] Former imperial responsibilities continued to influence British foreign policy.

This chapter focuses on Kenyan independence on 12 December 1963 and the first year of independence, with Kenya becoming a presidential republic at the end of 1964. These years were when key decisions were taken, in both Britain and Kenya, about what an independent Kenya would

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look like and what the relationship between the two countries would be. The existing literature on Kenya's decolonisation is extensive and will not be repeated. The early 1960s saw rapid change in British visions of Kenya's future, with policy changing swiftly as a result. There was no consistent British plan, and policies were adapted and altered by circumstances and individuals—both British and Kenyan. The term 'decolonisation' itself is problematic as it 'eliminates contradictions and smuggles a plan – God's or empire's, it does not matter … [to] the "granting" of independence'.[6] Rather than a process dictated by either side, this was negotiated, with groups on both sides aiming for the most beneficial outcome for themselves and engaged in a process of compromise. The negotiations which would come to characterise post-colonial interaction and influence were already a feature of the independence process. This has not always been recognised; Holland argued that 'late-colonial Kenya is a classical example of how the imperial power used "constitutional progress" ruthlessly to bait nationalist leaders into playing the decolonization game by western rules'[7]; while Kirkman has argued that the British government was 'bludgeoned' by the Kenyans into setting a date for independence.[8] In fact, neither of these interpretations is quite accurate. Rather, this was a process of compromise and negotiation, in which each side sought to influence the other to their advantage, but neither exercised such control as Holland or Kirkman suggested. These were not 'far-seeing statesmen' with a coherent plan, but men reacting pragmatically to events.[9] In seeking a successful 'transfer of power', British decision-makers proved flexible and aware of the need to avoid endangering the position of the Kenyans they supported. Rather than following a set of unchanging policy goals, the choices of British decision-makers were based on their ideas of the possible and shaped by negotiation with Kenyans. Crucially, they were prepared to compromise.

Planning for Independence

On 1 June 1963, Kenya gained internal self-government—a key step for British colonies before independence. This followed KANU success in the May elections, which MacDonald now viewed as 'the best result for Kenya'.[10] Also in June, several issues came together in a key negotiation between British and Kenyan decision-makers. Mboya visited London to meet Colonial Secretary Sandys and demand that dates be set for Kenya's final constitutional conference and independence. As Butler has argued,

the date of independence was 'a key bargaining counter', and this demand had previously been rejected.[11] MacDonald recommended Sandys meet Mboya 'as damage could be done if Kenya Ministers should think they have a grievance on this matter'.[12]

Mboya explicitly linked a date for independence to the prospect of an East African Federation. This had been suggested multiple times previously, particularly when Nyerere had considered delaying Tanganyika's independence for federation.[13] Mboya was one of the leading proponents of federation in Kenya, perhaps because of the ideas reported after his discussions with Nyerere in 1961 that they envisaged Kenyatta as a 'figurehead' federal president and Mboya as Kenya's prime minister.[14] On 5 June 1963, East African leaders 'announced their determination to establish an East African Federation before the end of 1963'.[15] MacDonald was informed that they 'hoped that Federation can come into being either on the day of Kenya's independence, or else "within about a week or so" afterwards'.[16] British policy-makers were positive about the prospect of a federation, which MacDonald described as 'a dream answer to many of our Kenya problems'.[17] The British government had long favoured this, but they recognised that 'open advocacy on our part would probably be counter-productive' and appear an attempt at neo-colonial control.[18] Sandys asked 'is this declaration just a device to bring pressure upon us to give Kenya early independence?'[19] Nairobi Special Branch had indeed argued in 1961 that 'politicians in Kenya will use the proposal as a lever to secure an earlier transfer of power than had hitherto been envisaged'.[20] However, MacDonald believed that it was genuine: 'no doubt there is an element in all this of putting pressure on us to speed up Kenya's independence; but in my judgement African leaders' zeal to achieve federation at or about the same time is equally sincere and serious.'[21] Interestingly, Kenyatta did later admit that this had been a negotiating tactic.[22]

As well as using the idea of federation to encourage British officials towards setting a date, Mboya also had something to offer at these meetings. The British had built the Kahawa base in Kenya in the later 1950s and thus, as Nissimi argued, 'precisely when the prospect of losing Kenya became daunting, its strategic importance increased'.[23] Kenya was a key part of Britain's east of Suez presence in the Indian Ocean. British planners hoped for continued access to the base until it became abundantly clear that no Kenyan leaders would accept this.[24] Military aspirations were downgraded, but British officials hoped for a yearlong withdrawal. Mboya thought this feasible, but 'emphasised that the British Government's

agreement to a date for Kenya's independence had a direct bearing on the attitude of the Kenya Government to the period during which facilities might continue to be used after independence'.[25] He was clearly aware of his strong bargaining position on this issue.

Mboya was accompanied by Murumbi, Koinange (Minister of State for Pan-African Affairs), and Njonjo. This was one of the first signs of Njonjo's influence; not yet appointed Attorney-General, he was to be so only weeks later by MacDonald, to the dislike of some in the CO.[26] The delegation met Sandys, who offered an October conference and 'emphasised that [the] British Government had no wish to delay independence any longer than was absolutely necessary to ensure [an] orderly and honourable transfer'.[27] Sandys had accepted the arguments in favour of Kenyan independence and federation by the end of 1963, but did not want to set a definite date. These notions of stability and 'honour' were key to British ideas about how to successfully 'transfer power'.

A draft communique by the CO set out in vague terms what had been discussed: support for a federation and Kenya's independence, 'which it is hoped to effect by the end of the year', a conference in October, and that withdrawal from the base would take some time and 'be a matter for discussion'.[28] Mboya and his delegation refused to 'accept assurance on purely private basis' of a December date,[29] and, in another negotiating tactic, argued that not having a set date would 'put them to a great disadvantage in negotiating Federation with Tanganyika and Uganda'.[30] Webber and Monson, the CO officials who worked most closely on Kenya, went to Mboya to try and resolve this. Together, they rewrote the statement, in which, if Mboya's delegation 'had this sentence about the date, they would be prepared to agree to mentioning the twelve months period for the rundown of the base … if a date were not mentioned, they would prefer to represent the talks as having failed to reach agreement'.[31] Withdrawal from the base was now explicitly linked to setting a date for independence, which was already tied to the question of federation. In this way, different benefits and obligations were negotiated together. The Minister of Defence regarded this as 'not a bad proposition', and Monson argued that 'we have got for the MOD as good an understanding about the base as we could have hoped'.[32] Civil servants had achieved acceptable terms for the base, which encouraged compromise over the date, set for 12 December. A parliamentary paper made these commitments and raised the prospect of 'further discussion' on possible future defence arrangements.[33]

This provides a clear example of the negotiating process through which policy was made.

The prospect of federation fell apart, but on 12 December Kenya became independent. British expectations were more positive than they had been, and MacDonald became Governor-General at Kenyatta's request.[34] By this time, British concern had come to focus not on earlier fears of Kenyatta, but on what would happen after he was gone, beginning a fascination with the succession. In January 1964, the EAD was keen to discover the BHC's 'thinking on the subject of the succession', questioning whether Kenyatta was likely to give up power, whether anyone would challenge him and the position of potential successors.[35] Deputy High Commissioner Stanley responded that 'Kenyatta is an eminent all-African figure; the father of his country; the creator of independent Kenya; and the only major politician to rise above the tribal maelstrom', unlikely to give up power and hard to challenge.[36] British diplomats had come to recognise Kenyatta as beneficial for British interests and stability, and to favour his continuing leadership.

Mutiny

Only weeks after Kenya's independence, revolution occurred in Zanzibar, followed by mutinies in Tanganyika, Uganda and, on 24 January 1964, in the Kenyan army at Lanet barracks. In a major study of the mutinies, Parsons has argued that during the colonial era, the army had been a relatively desirable occupation, but that soldiers had expected improvements and Africanisation after independence.[37] In response to the mutinies, Presidents Kenyatta, Nyerere and Obote all turned to Britain. The Kenyan decision was taken at a meeting between Kenyatta, Mboya and Murumbi, all of whom were pro-Western in their outlook, with the 'presumably very deliberate' exclusion of Odinga.[38] Leading Kenyans in Kenyatta's 'kitchen cabinet' thereby signalled their alignment with Britain. For the British government, receiving a formal written request was essential before intervening. John Hickman in the EAD later recalled:

> Sandys saying 'I will not authorise anything until I have, from the High Commissioners, a request in writing from the Presidents to do it.' But he was ready to do it and keen to do it the moment he got a written request.[39]

The British government was very willing to send troops to back up the new East African governments, but did not want to be accused of neo-colonialism. All three presidents made such requests. On 24 January, Sandys announced in the House of Commons that he had agreed to a request from Kenyatta 'that, should the need arise, authority should be given for the use of British troops to help the Kenya Government in the maintenance of law and order'; although Sandys was keen to 'emphasise that the situation in Kenya is perfectly normal' and that this 'was a purely precautionary measure'.[40] At this point, the Kenyan government was maintaining 'strict silence', with the *East African Standard* gaining its knowledge of this request through the British parliamentary statement.[41]

Kenyatta announced concessions for the Kenyan army in an attempt to prevent unrest, but at Lanet was not seen announcing this on television as expected, triggering the mutiny.[42] This was quickly suppressed, with British assistance given immediately, and 'some shooting on both sides but no British casualties'.[43] Despite the ease with which this had been suppressed, the MOD remained concerned by the possibility of further unrest. Therefore, 'precautionary measures were taken during the night for vigilance on key points … a reliable source states that a mutiny is planned for Sunday night 26th January'.[44] The Lanet mutiny was expected to be only a precursor, and forces in Malta were to be put on 24-hour alert.[45] But by 28 January there was a more general sense that 'Kenya remains calm', although British forces remained stationed throughout the country.[46]

The mutiny was an immediate threat to British ideas of a 'successful' decolonisation and seemed particularly to pose the threat of communism, with wider Cold War concerns shaping British assessments. The British government was still trying to determine Kenya's position within the Cold War, as well as communism's place in Kenya. On 28 January, the CRO asked the three High Commissions in East Africa to report on the causes of the mutinies 'to assess … whether we are faced with a widespread communist plot or simply a chain reaction'.[47] They already had the Joint Intelligence Chiefs' assessment that these were 'a spontaneous reaction' with 'no evidence of any communist bloc influence', but wanted confirmation.[48] In these British uncertainties, their 'knowledge' about Kenya was revealed to be more limited than they had supposed. The BHC was still uncertain, and although they reported 'no evidence here of Communist plot', diplomats were concerned by the actions of Odinga and Paul Ngei (who had been detained with Kenyatta during Mau Mau, formed the opposition African People's Party in 1962 and then rejoined

KANU in 1963), who were 'thought to have been engaged recently in sowing discontent among Kenya Rifles as part of plot to take over Government'.[49] Diplomats here made clear their dislike of Odinga and their fear of communism and Eastern bloc influence.

After the mutinies had been quashed, Nyerere sent a public statement of thanks which was read out in the House of Commons. In this, he wrote of his 'deep gratitude' and that Tanganyika was 'much indebted to your Government, the people of Britain, and particularly to the members of the Royal Marine Commandos and the other members of British forces'.[50] This was a very positive and public response. Sandys did say he had received thanks from all three governments, but nothing from Kenyatta was made public. British officials hoped for this, but at a meeting between Kenyatta, Mboya and the BHC:

> We had a long and rather chilly talk. It is clear that both Kenyatta and Mboya are frightened of the criticisms they are receiving … about the decision to ask for British military help. Against this background it is not surprising but unpleasant to have to report that neither of them would agree that the Kenya Government 'could' go any further in the public profession of gratitude to the British Government.[51]

British officials were keen to be praised for their actions, but leading Kenyans did not want to publicly thank Britain and thereby highlight their own weakness and reliance. Additionally, British troops in Kenya had been 'the cause of tension between Britain and Kenya'; Kenya had been the centre of military operations, so that when British troops moved to Uganda after Obote's request 'this was characterised as a violation of Kenya's sovereignty'.[52] Indeed, one complaint of the mutineers had been about the presence of British soldiers; they were 'very indignant and angry that the British Troops were present and stated that the mutineers would not cease their activities until the British Troops were withdrawn'.[53] This indicates something of the frictions of the relationship, as having British troops active in Kenya could encourage accusations of neo-colonialism and British interference. All were keen to avoid this.

British involvement in the East African mutinies was their most extensive post-colonial intervention in the continent. The military involvement was praised in Britain as a success, described in the *Daily Mail* as 'brilliant'.[54] It is debatable how serious a threat these mutinies really posed, whether the mutinying troops could have taken power, or indeed if this

was their aim.[55] But there was certainly what Parsons has described as a 'crisis of confidence in Great Britain and the new African governments'.[56] The British had not predicted the mutinies, though they had reacted immediately and ensured that they did not advance further. The Kenyan mutiny cemented British distrust of Odinga, whom they believed to have been involved in agitating within the army, even if not directly leading the mutiny as a communist uprising. This also encouraged close relations between Britain and Kenyatta. The conflation of British and elite Kenyan interests had already been occurring, but the mutiny made it explicit. It would be a mistake, however, to view this, as Mburu does, as 'a scheme by British praetorians to either bring down Kenyatta's governance or render him so vulnerable that he would have to depend on Britain for post-independence security'.[57] British policy-makers hoped for stability under Kenyatta and did not seek to 'bring down' his government, but rather to prop it up.

Another significant military issue for the new Kenyan state came from the North East Region of Kenya, on the border with Somalia. The population there were ethnic Somali, and Somalia's policy of 'greater Somalia' claimed territory from Ethiopia and Kenya. In 1960, the colonial government had raised the possibility of the secession of the Northern Frontier District to Somalia, but then withdrew from any decision. The Rome talks in August 1963 did not find a solution, and the incoming Kenyan government firmly rejected secession in favour of maintaining colonial borders.[58] An insurgency known as the *shifta* was fought in the north-east of Kenya, with the insurgents supported by Somalia. Immediately after independence the Kenyan government declared a state of emergency in the region in response to the *shifta*, which 'represented the first serious challenge to the integrity and stability of the new state'.[59] Ethiopia had similar concerns about Somalia and signed a defence agreement with Kenya in 1964 which stated 'that an armed attack against one of them shall be considered an attack against the other'.[60]

British concern centred on the possible involvement of British troops. Prior to independence, colonial officials recognised the limitations of Kenya's military, and that if the Somali army became more involved, 'the Kenya Army could not at present meet them without extensive support from British "teeth arms"'.[61] In view of this, Kenya was expected to want continued support through 1964 while British forces remained in the country. CO officials gave four reasons why it was in Britain's interests to help Kenya in this way: the 'present limitations' of the King's African Rifles

were in large part due to Britain; to ensure stability in Kenya; to be certain that the base functioned well while British troops remained there; and to ensure military negotiations gave the British what they wanted.[62] Thus 'British seconded personnel are to carry on as usual without restriction' in supporting roles, but with consultation if any action was likely to cause either government to be 'embarrassed'.[63] The Secretary of State for Defence wrote to the prime minister that 'there remains a risk of our military involvement'.[64] In reply, Home minuted: 'we must try to get out at the earliest possible time.'[65]

This did not, however, occur. In April 1964, Kenyatta requested further assistance: 'in Kenyatta's view there was no hope of success unless British ground forces were used.'[66] This request was assessed by the British Commander-in-Chief Middle East who:

> cannot see a military requirement … [but] there may be political advantages … we are strongly of the opinion that we should agree to the request by Mr. Kenyatta. Failure to agree to this request might well prejudice our future defence agreements in Kenya and might even lead to our being asked to withdraw our forces from Kenya before 12th December 1964.[67]

This response makes clear that British priorities were not strictly military but political; they were prepared to commit troops to a region of conflict in order to ensure a positive relationship. Policy-makers were trying to make military gains from Kenya at this time (discussed below in the section entitled 'The Memorandum of Intention and Understanding') and thus felt obliged to respond to requests, especially when these came from Kenyatta himself. Of course, the view that this was not strictly necessary might also have encouraged a British assessment that the risks would not be too great. Ministers agreed, subject to the conditions that British troops should not be 'in proximity' to the border nor cross it, and that each operation should be individually approved.[68] In May, Kenyatta requested further assistance, including the use of helicopters and RAF aircraft. The EAD considered that 'it may be argued that we have a moral obligation to help the Kenyans to deal with a problem which they inherited from us at Independence'; however, the problems of greater involvement, including a possible escalation, crossing the border accidentally and the possibility of civilian casualties, meant that the FO, the MOD, the CRO and the High Commissioner agreed that 'we ought not to accede to this request'.[69] At this point, therefore, increased assistance was not given at the level Kenyatta requested.

Abdullahi has argued that Kenya 'had the unflinching support of the military might of the British Government and the Ethiopian Government'.[70] Certainly, the British government supported Kenya in this conflict, both diplomatically and in military terms. But they did not give the Kenyans everything they requested. Branch's assessment is more accurate that the British 'were able to exert a significant degree of restraint on the conflict through controlling the supply of arms to the Kenyans'.[71] The British government was prepared to give some military assistance to fight the *shifta* while their troops were stationed in Kenya. There were always limits to this, however, and in this early case, the British acted to restrain the Kenyans, not wanting the conflict to escalate further. By 1965, British officials were concerned that giving extensive military support might encourage the Kenyans away from a political resolution, which they believed to be the only lasting solution.[72] The *shifta* conflict lasted officially until the Arusha Declaration in 1967, and has recently been described by Whittaker in her detailed analysis as 'overwhelmingly destructive in its effects'.[73] However, while significant, Branch has rightly argued that 'Kenyatta's government never prioritised the campaign'.[74] In British relations with Kenya, too, this was rarely prioritised and infrequently discussed —except in the form of an Understanding discussed in later chapters—and for this reason will receive limited consideration here.

The Memorandum of Intention and Understanding

In 1964, the British government acted to secure their military interests in Kenya. Clayton in 1986 described training and military connections as 'arrangements of minimal political and military significance'.[75] But in fact, military links were crucial to British thinking about Kenya and, as will be argued, a significant benefit of the relationship. These also shaped how influential Kenyans understood the possibilities of their relationship with Britain. Prior to independence, British politicians, civil servants and soldiers hoped to maintain a military relationship, but their ability to do so would be dependent upon the deals they were able to make with the incoming Kenyan leadership, as had been made explicit in bargaining over the base. Military negotiations began prior to independence but were delayed, with Kenyatta, Mboya, Odinga and Gichuru insisting that 'any agreement [must] be one freely concluded between the two independent states', and opposing a 'package deal of British military facilities in return for British aid to [the] Kenya Army'.[76]

Within the British government, there was debate about the military benefits Britain should aim for, clearly shaped both by their ideas of what their Kenyan counterparts would accept and by varying departmental priorities. The MOD sought to gain as much from Kenya as possible. On 2 December 1963, John Burlace—the key figure in MOD working on Kenya as head of Defence Secretariat Division 11 responsible for 'overseas defence policy and political questions (excluding Europe and North America)'[77]—argued that:

> the important thing, from our point of view, will be to ensure the negotiation of the long-term facilities which we require … takes place before we have surrendered the bargaining counters which are our best hope of obtaining what we need.[78]

As this makes explicit, this was to be a process of 'bargaining' and Burlace hoped to negotiate from a position of strength. Britain's position was strongest after the mutiny, and the MOD was anxious to procure benefits, arguing that 'we should not be complacent but rather exploit our success to the hilt'.[79] Burlace wrote on the day of Kenya's mutiny that 'we must give Kenya Ministers enough time to get their breath back but not enough to forget which side their bread is buttered'.[80]

By contrast, the CO and the CRO believed that military assistance could serve multiple interests. The European population remained a British concern, and plans for their evacuation existed—part of why Kenya remained militarily significant, as it would be a staging point for evacuations across Africa if necessary.[81] Aspin, head of the EAD, wrote to Burlace that 'their continued safety and welfare largely depends on the ability of the Kenya Government to maintain law and order'.[82] Aspin thus argued that 'there might be a case for helping the Kenyans to expand their army … whether or not they were prepared to give us anything in return in the way of defence facilities'.[83] This was an argument unlikely to find favour in the MOD, which focused on their own requirements. But while the CO and the CRO shared the MOD's desire to gain military benefits, they prioritised longer-term, less tangible benefits based upon Kenyan stability. They wanted to ensure that Kenya's government was credible and not compromised by a deal which could weaken Kenyatta and thus be detrimental to future British interests.

It was therefore necessary to determine what was 'essential'. Aspin recognised that they may have to compromise. He therefore questioned

Burlace: 'how essential are our various requirements? What would we be prepared to throw away, if necessary, in the course of negotiations?'[84] British civil servants were uncertain of Kenyan reactions to their requests and could not predict how much they might have to bargain and potentially give up. The CRO clearly did not feel that they could force their demands upon the Kenyan state. To establish British priorities, on 10 January 1964 a meeting was held between the CRO, FO, Treasury and MOD, showing the multiple departments which were involved in planning for, and felt themselves to have a stake in, the continuing future military relationship with Kenya. At this meeting, a list was drawn up of British defence requirements: overflying and air staging rights; facilities for an aircraft carrier, training and leave camp facilities; and a strategic communications centre.[85] Percox describes these as 'minimal, if by no means insignificant'.[86]

Whether the British government would achieve even these limited requests was dependent upon the attitudes of Kenya's leaders. Stanley of the BHC saw Gichuru in February 1964 'at a party', showing the significance of informal social connections.[87] As Ashton has argued, 'there was something peculiarly British about reliance on the cocktail party as an intelligence gathering instrument'.[88] Stanley described a 'somewhat disturbing conversation' in which Gichuru suggested that he and Kenyatta 'would like Britain to help Kenya, to our mutual advantage. There were "others" in the Government who would like to get help from, and link Kenya with, "other" countries.'[89] The Soviet Union was looking to capitalise on its support for decolonisation and establish relations with newly independent African states, and Kenya received Soviet and Chinese military offers.[90] But the conversation with Gichuru shows how Kenyans were able to negotiate, and Gichuru was shrewd to point to British concerns about communism and Odinga to encourage them towards the kind of deal most beneficial to his faction. Stanley described Gichuru in this letter as 'one of the most reasonable Ministers and one of our best friends'; he was thus in a strong bargaining position.[91] Stanley's response to Gichuru was that 'we had far too much diplomatic experience to indulge in the crude arm-twisting of which he seemed to suspect us'; to the CRO, it was that 'the important thing now is to get our tactics in the forthcoming negotiations right, so that our friends among the Kenya Ministers—a majority I think—can conclude the bargain which we all know we intend to strike'.[92] This revealing statement shows that Stanley recognised Gichuru's comments as a negotiating tactic, but was apprehensive about the reaction of

some leading Kenyans to British proposals, although still confident that the most influential Kenyan ministers favoured Britain.

Sandys visited Kenya in March 1964 for discussions with Kenyatta on future military and financial assistance. Although the Kenyans had at first resisted a 'package deal' in which 'nothing is agreed until everything is agreed',[93] this became one, with financial and military benefits and obligations negotiated together. At these high-level discussions, the Kenyans 'accepted virtually all we asked for'.[94] High Commissioner de Freitas concluded that as well as achieving direct tangible benefits, an 'agreement reached with Kenya will preserve Britain's position as the principal influence here'.[95] At these talks, the Kenyans gave details of their requests, including the current costs of the army, equipment and weapons for the military, and the RAF to fly in Kenya's air force until Kenya had trained its own personnel.[96] Sandys responded that 'in principle, the British Government do not think it appropriate that direct budgetary assistance should be given to another independent country. Kenya's special difficulties are, however, appreciated, and will be considered.'[97] Already at this early stage in the post-colonial relationship, Kenya was being described as 'special', indicating how important the British government viewed these military benefits to be that they were prepared to consider giving much assistance in return for them. This would be an expensive commitment for Britain, but de Freitas argued that 'of course they have asked for much more than they have offered', and a 'significant positive response' was needed to ensure the relationship.[98] British officials were cautious to prevent the Kenyans rejecting outright their military 'requirements', and anxious to prevent the Kenyans turning elsewhere.

A decision with long-term consequences was the British reply to the Kenyan request for Hunter aircraft. Sandys responded that:

> we could not afford to equip Kenya to defend herself against an attack backed by a major power nor could Kenya afford to maintain such forces: on the other hand if Kenya was afraid of major attack she should bear in mind the possibility of help from the Commonwealth.[99]

Although the Kenyans asked for written confirmation of the availability of Commonwealth support, Sandys was not prepared to offer this. In contrast to French post-colonial African policy, British officials wanted 'to avoid formal written agreements'.[100] However, this was a crucial policy choice. Sandys' message that Kenya could not afford to build up a large military—

and that Britain would not fund this—was coupled with his suggestion of possible British military intervention. For the next decade, the idea that Britain was committed to Kenyan stability and might be prepared to militarily intervene to underwrite this was a key part of military planning in both countries, further discussed in later chapters.

Issues of military training were also significant. In 1959, the first East Africans were sent to Britain for training.[101] Britain faced international competition for training; the first pilots in Kenya's new air force had been secretly trained in Israel, although Britain would 'finalise the training'.[102] At these negotiations in March 1964, policy-makers agreed that a British training team would be set up in Kenya. Following a request by the High Commissioner,[103] Kenyatta confirmed that:

> it is not the present intention of the Kenya Government to seek assistance for training the Kenya Armed Forces elsewhere than in Britain so long as this training is given effectively. We shall adhere strictly to this undertaking but should our interests dictate a different course of action, we shall warn the British Government well in advance.[104]

Although stipulating his own freedom of action, Kenyatta's preference for working with Britain was becoming apparent. This agreement meant that the British would have an extensive role in shaping the Kenyan military. They would also advise on creating a navy and air force.[105] This made it likely that the Kenyans would in future continue to pursue a British military connection, used to working with British officers and equipment.

Prior to independence, the CO negotiated a settlement for Kenya for the 1963–1964 financial year totalling 'up to £10.4 million of which £5.1 million is grant and £5.3 million loan'.[106] This set the pattern to be followed thereafter of dividing British aid between 'general development' and land settlement. The additional funding to secure British access to military facilities and overflying rights was agreed on 30 May and offered 'provision of British aid for both civil and defence purposes amounting to some £53 million, of which about £28 million will be in the form of long term loans'.[107] The size of the 'golden handshake' was particularly large due to pension costs and the land transfer programmes the British government was funding, as well as making a gift of the Kahawa base. This hints at the particular quality of the Kenyan relationship British officials were hoping to pursue. Securing military benefits and influence in Kenya was something the British government was prepared to pay for.

The final Memorandum of Intention and Understanding regarding Certain Financial and Defence Matters of Mutual Interest to the British and Kenya Governments (MOU) was signed on 3 June by Kenyatta and de Freitas. It contained twenty-two obligations of the British government to the Kenyan and seven for the Kenyan government towards the British. As its title recognised, this had been formed by negotiation and was intended to be in the 'mutual interests' of both governments. This offered the British what had become their non-negotiable demands, as well as twice yearly training in Kenya.[108] For the MOD especially, the right to military training became one of their key priorities and most unusual benefits from Kenya. The MOU also stipulated that Britain would 'make available British troops stationed in Kenya to assist the Kenya Government in dealing with internal disturbances'—clearly a reaction to the mutiny and suggesting that neither government was certain of stability.[109] This gave the Kenyan government an interest in ensuring that British forces were in the country—although it also potentially gave the British government an interest in ensuring that they were not.[110] This public agreement laid the basis for the Anglo-Kenyan military relationship and offered a clear sign of Kenya's choice of allies. De Freitas summed up:

> The direct facilities which we stand to gain may not in themselves seem worth it – although it is not easy to evaluate them. But they are not, by a long way, the whole of the credit side … In the defence field in particular we stand to gain a continuing and influential presence which will serve to give security to our many other investments and to those who stay behind to keep our influence alive in many other fields.[111]

This was not simply about the direct and tangible military benefits Britain received, nor the influence of the money they would give to Kenya's new rulers, but rather a culture and ethos which would encourage leading Kenyans to look towards Britain—and which this agreement would foster.

The agreement was reported in the British and Kenyan press. An editorial in the *East African Standard* argued that, 'judged by any standards, the aid given to Kenya is staggering'.[112] The British press also highlighted the large sum, but with more concern over the cost. The *Daily Mail* highlighted that it 'works out at about £1 per head of Britain's population', and *The Times* that 'this year promises to be an expensive one for the British taxpayer in "golden handshakes"'.[113] At the press conference given by de Freitas and Gichuru announcing the aid, de Freitas pointed out that,

per head of population, Kenya was the colony to have received most aid from Britain, with only India actually receiving more. Gichuru was very positive about Britain:

> I appreciate this very much. This is a real gesture of friendship and goes to demonstrate our good relationship with Britain. We feel it is only Britain which could be so generous because of the contact we have had all these last 70 years … In some ways it is a little more than we had actually negotiated.[114]

This suggests that in fact the British government could have offered somewhat less and still found favour, but this additional generosity meant a particular appreciation. David Lemomo of KADU also argued that 'Kenya people should fully realise the great favour that the people of Britain had done to them'.[115] The implication of the large aid package was that Britain valued Kenya more highly than most other former colonies. Indeed, the *East African Standard* commented that 'though Uganda and Tanganyika each received independence settlements, they can be forgiven if they feel somewhat envious'.[116] The MOU was evidence of Kenya's importance to Britain, and this made British assistance particularly significant and publicly welcomed in Kenya.

Continuing Expatriates

Further contributing to the continuing British ethos in Kenya's structures was British technical assistance and the British personnel who continued to serve in Kenya. East Africa was a particularly significant recipient of technical assistance; of the £25 million Britain spent on this in 1962–1963, £13 million was spent in Africa and almost £11 million in East Africa.[117] Table 4.1 shows the significant number of British personnel in Kenya financed by the aid programme in these initial years after independence; and Table 4.2 sets out the cost of British technical assistance to Kenya. In November 1963, the Department of Technical Co-Operation encouraged 'the use of British knowledge, technique and experience to assist Kenya to build up its own resources of expert personnel and to promote the economic and social development of the country'.[118] The Kenyans requested the provision of multiple 'experts'. Stockwell has highlighted that these people had several roles; as well as bringing specific skills, 'they also reflected British determination to perpetuate British influence, traditions,

and models'.[119] The British government hoped to promote their own ways of working and codes of conduct, which 'rested on assumptions about the intrinsic superiority and desirability of a "British way"'.[120] British officials recognised the advantages of supplying these 'experts', looking to cement their own influence while denying that of others: 'it is very gratifying that Kenya are looking in the first place to us for this help.'[121] One of those who worked in the BHC recalled being told in 1964:

> 'You just get on and get as many Kenyans on courses to London as you possibly can.' So I took that on. There were no effective budget limitations. We just went ahead and sent large batches of Kenyans to the UK … The training course in the UK almost became a rite of passage.[122]

Some of these 'experts' were in particularly influential positions. Three key examples will be discussed, all of whom were notably Kenyan requests rather than British impositions. The Kenyans asked for a Foreign Service

Table 4.1 Publicly financed British personnel in Kenya (excluding volunteers), 31 December 1965 to 1968

	1965	*1966*	*1967*	*1968*
Education	479	415	794	851
Development planning	75	62	30	28
Public administration	401	343	191	227
Social services	31	27	13	15
Works and communications	238	202	136	125
Industry and commerce	4	5	4	36
Agriculture	155	134	156	141
Health	170	144	67	116
Other	163	136	50	24
Total	1716	1468	1441	1563

Source 'Kenya: Some Economic Projections 1967–1972', August 1968, TNA OD 26/142/3

Table 4.2 Technical assistance from Britain to Kenya (£m)

	1964	*1965*	*1966*	*1967*	*1968*	*1969*	*1970*	*1971*
Cost	2.323	4.849	2.604	3.815	4.075	2.733	3.271	2.891

Source Kenya Country Policy Paper, 1975, TNA FCO 31/1898/1

Administration advisor in February 1964.[123] De Freitas wrote personally to the Department of Technical Co-Operation 'in order to stress the need for the speedy provision of a suitable man', arguing that the current staff lacked experience and that a good department would encourage stability and economic development.[124] He also hoped to shape interaction with the new Kenyan government to British advantage: 'a Foreign Service trained by a British Adviser in our administrative procedures will automatically be understanding of our problems and talk "the same language" as ourselves.'[125] If the advisor provided the benefits hoped for, those in Kenya's Foreign Service would become by training and instinct more likely to follow British practices, turn to Britain for advice and remain aligned to British foreign policy. Despite initial reluctance—and perhaps ironically, given that British diplomats were to be complicit in the routine sidelining of Kenya's formal diplomatic apparatus—they filled this post.[126]

Another key individual was the only British Permanent Secretary to remain after independence: John Butter at the Kenyan Treasury. Butter's previous career was in the colonial service in India and Pakistan before moving to Kenya in 1950, becoming Permanent Secretary of the Treasury 1959–1965 and then Financial Advisor until 1969, paid for by Britain.[127] The Acting Governor in 1962 argued that 'Butter's maximum value will be as the top official in the Treasury, keeping a political Minister of Finance, probably African, on the right lines'.[128] He clearly believed that the British knew better than the Kenyans what 'the right lines' for Kenya were. Kenyatta chose to retain Butter, 'convinced that your deep understanding and extensive experience of Kenya's financial affairs are great assets to us and are needed here'.[129] Butter had an influential role in the Kenyan Treasury, involved in writing budget speeches and development plans, and he stated in his memoirs that, certainly until 1967, 'the senior officers in the Treasury continued to take my advice, and most matters of importance were referred to me'.[130] Butter's colonial service background and relationships with and payment by Britain made it likely that he would continue to look to Britain for economic assistance. After he left, British negotiators found the Kenyans they now had to work with more difficult.[131]

A British presence was also particularly significant in military leadership. In November 1964, Kenyatta informed Stanley 'in strict confidence that he had decided to appoint Brigadier [A.J.] Hardy … as Commander Kenya army temporarily in rank of Brigadier. He would appoint Lt. Colonel [Joseph] Ndolo as Deputy Commander … until

Ndolo was fit to take over.'[132] Despite Somerville's argument that 'for most Africans, the presence of foreign troops is unwanted',[133] this request came directly from Kenyatta rather than from a British suggestion. This was very different from Uganda and Tanzania where British officers were withdrawn, and highlighted Kenya's particular significance to Britain. In fact, there was some hesitancy within the CRO about having a British serviceman in this role.[134] But MacDonald 'strongly recommends that we accede to Kenyatta's request. If we reject it we will let down Kenyatta personally, and display lack of confidence in authority of Kenya Government.'[135] The Commonwealth Secretary also judged it 'encouraging that his request should have been made'.[136] The CRO agreed only 'on understanding that this will be temporary', and Hardy remained until November 1966.[137] Hardy would sustain the British presence in the Kenyan military and cement relations with Kenyatta. When Kenya's air force and navy were set up, they were also initially commanded by British servicemen.[138] These few examples highlight the British government's willingness to provide 'experts' to strategically significant positions in Kenya; but critically they did so on the basis of Kenyan requests. As Branch and Cheeseman have argued, those who 'inherited the colonial state … deliberately ensured institutional continuity'.[139] Kenyan institutions continued to be shaped by British methods and systems, which were not fundamentally altered at independence.

By contrast, there were some very public expulsions of British citizens from Kenya during 1964, causing British criticism. The first came in July, with the expulsion of Leslie Pridgeon, Assistant Commissioner of Police. The CRO was hesitant to criticise, but the Commonwealth Secretary did want de Freitas to 'inform Kenyatta that he is very unhappy about the impression' it had created.[140] The next expulsions came in August and received greater British resistance. Four were to be expelled: Gordon Hender, who worked for East African Railways; Walter Whitehead, in the Ministry of Natural Resources; Richard Kisch, a journalist at Tanganyikan paper *The Nationalist*; and Ian Henderson, a policeman prominent during Mau Mau. Henderson received the most attention in the British press, described in the *Daily Mail* as a 'Mau Mau hero'—although obviously views of him in Kenya were much less positive.[141] The reason given was simply that they were 'contrary to national security', but it was widely believed that the critical action was Kisch's unfavourable reporting of a speech by Kenyatta.[142] In this instance, the British government did react at

the highest level, with the prime minister sending a direct message to Kenyatta:

> I am greatly concerned at the reports I have received of the expulsion from Kenya of four more British citizens. Whilst I fully accept your Government's legal right to take this action, the abrupt and apparently arbitrary manner of these deportations … inevitably creates an unfortunate impression. This is bound to place a strain on Anglo-Kenya relations and make it more difficult for us to provide the help we are giving, and want to go on giving, to Kenya.[143]

There was a clear concern not to appear to be interfering in the internal affairs of an independent country, but also the hint of a threat to aid and expatriate 'experts' if more deportations were to occur. Deportations were publicly reported, and so had the potential to damage the public perception of the relationship. They also suggested some anti-British feeling within the Kenyan government, something which had the potential to dispel the early signs of a positive post-independence relationship.

De Freitas saw Kenyatta to deliver the message and reported a 'most unexpected conversation' in which Kenyatta said: 'I am very sorry. You can assure Sir Alec that this will not happen again except in real cases of emergency.'[144] This was surprising because it did not seem that the deportations could have taken place without Kenyatta's consent—indeed, de Freitas's explanation was in part that 'Kenyatta is a devious old Kikuyu and the Kikuyu are by nature intriguers and conspirators'.[145] Ideas of particular ethnic qualities remained, and this also shows his somewhat uncertain relations with Kenyatta. However, the explanation which came to hold sway was that Kenyatta had not been entirely informed. Home Affairs, including deportations, was Odinga's department. The working theory, supported by conversations with Gichuru, was that Kenyatta had agreed to Kisch's deportation, and 'Odinga agreed to sign the expulsion order provided that he could throw out Henderson and two other rather nondescript personalities who we think had offended him in some way'.[146] It thus appeared to British diplomats that this was a case of Odinga acting in his own interests, rather than Kenyatta sending a broader signal about the nature of Anglo-Kenyan relations. C. C. Ricketts of the BHC suggested that 'if Kenyatta's reaction to the message from the Prime Minister was sincere, and if a more reasonable attitude results in the future … we may not have come out of this business too badly'.[147]

Further deportations occurred in early December. As on the previous occasion, this was very directly in response to political reporting. In an article in the *Sunday Telegraph* entitled 'Kenya facing threat of Red take-over', Douglas Brown suggested that 'unmarked planes' with a 'sinister meaning' were bringing arms and Luos into Nairobi at night, directed by Odinga.[148] In response, Brown was given an expulsion order. Also, and receiving more attention, Richard Beeston, a journalist at the *Daily Telegraph*, was expelled. Beeston contacted the BHC, and Stanley went to see Odinga, who refused to alter the order.[149] This led to accusations from the British press of limits on press freedom in Kenya,[150] although BHC diplomats viewed the *Telegraph* as a 'major irritant in British/Kenya relations'.[151] This indicates their priority of a close relationship over press freedom and their hope to limit open criticism.

This issue was raised in the House of Commons by de Freitas, who had by this time left his post as High Commissioner in Kenya and returned to being an MP. He asked Commonwealth Secretary Arthur Bottomley 'what representations he is making'; Bottomley was then asked 'is not this the feeblest protest made by any Government for a long time?'.[152] This was picked up by the press, who highlighted the 'feeble' nature of the British government's response.[153] This was further encouraged by an interview with Beeston in which he suggested:

> The general impression is that the High Commission does not want to harm relations with the Kenya Government. They do not want to make a fuss and want people who are expelled to go quietly without making a fuss. They do not, I think, do nearly enough to protect the interests of British subjects in Kenya.[154]

BHC was coming publicly under attack. The suggestion made, however, that their focus was on Anglo-Kenyan relations rather than specific deportations does have some truth to it. In all of these cases, policy-makers were concerned not to criticise Kenya's freedom of decision, and to seek an extension of time rather than question the deportation itself. The wider relationship was more significant, and officials were concerned about appearing to be interfering—something Odinga particularly would have criticised. Privately, Stanley spoke to Njonjo about the 'political embarrassment which Beeston's expulsion has caused in Britain', and MacDonald raised this with Kenyatta.[155] Again, Kenyatta 'in effect admitted in vague language that Odinga had jumped him over manner of Beeston's

expulsion'.[156] Odinga's role in the expulsions of British citizens during 1964 was crucial, and generally perceived by the British government to be the deciding factor.

This situation changed with the rearranging of government. In November 1964, KADU's members crossed the floor, dissolving their party and joining the government, and in December, Kenya became a republic with Kenyatta as president. Several KADU members became ministers in appointments which had been previously decided between Kenyatta, Gichuru, Njonjo and MacDonald.[157] Odinga became vice president without ministerial responsibility—meaning that the Home Affairs portfolio was taken from him. This position was given to Moi and deportations did not thereafter form a major issue.

Despite having spent so much time working on the constitution and safeguards, British policy-makers did not object to KANU removing the regional constitution agreed at Lancaster House, nor to the effective establishment of a one-party state. Rather, British responses to the single-party state make clear the limited priority they afforded to ideas of democracy, preferring a strong centralised government under Kenyatta's leadership. MacDonald argued that the 'creation of a new Cabinet in Kenya should be done not in the British way by prior consultation among all those concerned, but in the African way by a firm, unalterable decision by the head of the Government himself'.[158] He had a clear sense that strong, decisive leadership under Kenyatta was in Kenyan—and British—interests. Partly, this was owing to ideas of African difference and backwardness. MacDonald favoured a one-party state as:

> a typically African solution to a native African problem … I felt that perhaps a one-party system could help the Kenyan peoples to move away from an earlier, primitive society bedevilled by inter-tribal rivalries towards the establishment of a modern, coherent Twentieth Century state.[159]

Stanley also viewed this as 'accord[ing] more nearly with African traditions than the discarded "Westminster model" … Democracy, of an African kind.'[160] Both viewed this through a set of assumptions about Africans and their 'traditions'.

According to his own reporting, MacDonald played a significant role in encouraging Kenyatta and other Kenyan politicians towards a single-party state. In his 1972 book—partly about Kenyatta as one of the 'distinguished people' he had met during his career—MacDonald declared that 'I made

no attempt to intrude into policy-making, nor to question any of the Ministers' decisions when they were reported to me'.[161] This seems unlikely, and only pages earlier he wrote that 'very privately and personally I had suggested' a KANU–KADU merger.[162] At the time, he recorded having 'positively suggested' KADU join the KANU government, as well as discussing this with Ngala and Moi.[163] He described Kenyatta as having 'guided events towards our ultimate aim', equating his own aim with Kenyatta's.[164] MacDonald certainly claimed a large influence for himself and it is difficult of course to know how much he did shape Kenyatta's thinking, and how much he simply persuaded himself that he had done so; Maxon has accused MacDonald of 'seeking to inflate his personal impact on Kenyan affairs'.[165] But MacDonald's particularly close personal relationship with Kenyatta means he did have influence and may well have made or at least encouraged this suggestion.

Conclusion

The first year of independence was fairly turbulent in Anglo-Kenyan relations. It was not yet clear the exact direction Kenyan politics would take: whether Odinga would gain further control, or Kenyatta be able to rule unencumbered. Although beginning with the mutiny, which was a clear sign of instability and the fragile nature of Kenyan independence, the year 1964 came to offer hopes for British policy-makers. Kenya remained aligned to Britain, with the continuation of British relationships. The MOU gained what the British government had wanted, as well as costing a lot, and the negotiations for this seemed successful. Relations with Kenyatta were positive, and de Freitas's replacement by MacDonald as High Commissioner offered good prospects—Kenyatta thought this would 'be very helpful'.[166] Deportations would also likely decrease when Odinga lost control over these. There were positive indications that the relationship would develop well, though so far no certainty.

By the end of 1964, British ideas about Kenyatta had undergone a dramatic shift and come to focus on him as the guarantor of stability and protector of British interests. Diplomats emphasised Kenyatta's personal role, and stability was argued to depend on his 'continued exercise of firm and skilful leadership'.[167] The choices made by Kenyatta's inner elite in negotiations with British officials were crucial in establishing this relationship. Kenyans were drawn into this practice of negotiation as the emerging elite saw their interests as linked to stability and prosperity and

sought to ensure their position in a system which benefited them. Leading Kenyans chose to keep looking to Britain in multiple fields: land transfer and technical assistance; personnel; military support and intervention; army leadership and supply; aid and finance. British officials made it easy for them to do so by being continually willing to negotiate and compromise on terms. A pattern of cooperation and shared interests was thus established and would continue to characterise the relationship thereafter.

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154. Beeston quoted in 'Expelled newsman attacks officials', *Daily Mail*, 5 December 1964, 2.
155. Telegram, Nairobi to CRO, 7 December 1964, TNA DO 213/43/75.
156. Telegram, Nairobi to CRO, 10 December 1964, TNA DO 213/43/84.
157. MacDonald to Bottomley, 'The political situation in Kenya: The recent past', 5 May 1965, TNA DO 213/65/31.
158. Ibid.
159. Ibid.
160. Stanley to Secretary of State, 'Kenya: A One-Party Republic', 23 November 1964, TNA DO 213/67/22.
161. MacDonald, *Titans and Others*, 9, 268–269.
162. Ibid., 266.
163. MacDonald to Bottomley, 'The political situation in Kenya: The recent past', 5 May 1965, TNA DO 213/65/31.

164. Ibid.
165. Robert M. Maxon, *Kenya's Independence Constitution: Constitution-Making and End of Empire* (Lanham, MD: Fairleigh Dickinson, 2011), 160.
166. Telegram, Nairobi to CRO, 10 December 1964, TNA DO 213/43/84.
167. Gilchrist, 'The Kenya Scene', 9 September 1964, TNA DO 213/65/10.

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CHAPTER 5

1965–1969: Ensuring a Valuable Relationship

In British foreign policy, the later 1960s have been described by Parr as the period when 'British interests did shift from a global to a European perspective'.[1] These years appeared to display a sense of 'decline', although the extent of this is questionable, with Reynolds pointing to the 'relative' nature of decline.[2] Nonetheless, as Blank has argued, Britain was in an 'extraordinarily vulnerable international financial position'.[3] In 1965, the government announced plans to limit spending, particularly in defence, initiating a Defence Review with the aim of restricting the defence budget to £2 billion (in 1964 prices) by 1970. Foreign policy also seemed less certain; a 1966 internal minute from the Commonwealth Office argued that 'having reached the end, almost, of our colonial era, we seem also to have arrived at a stage of indecision in which we have no clear idea as to the course our overseas policies should follow'.[4] The implication was that British power was weaker and foreign policy less certain. But although sometimes acknowledging limitations, British policy-makers did not seek to end their world role. Regarding Kenya, there was no desire to limit involvement, but rather a clear commitment to maintaining as much influence as was possible.

From 1965 onwards, the British government faced one of the most difficult problems in their relationships with Africa: the Rhodesian UDI which occurred on 11 November 1965. Wilson had already publicly ruled out the use of force amid fears of British troops not fighting their 'kith and kin', and sanctions did not have the desired result.[5] The Wilson government held talks with Ian Smith's regime on HMS *Tiger* in 1966 and HMS

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Fearless in 1969 in an effort 'to demonstrate to the wider British public that he had made every reasonable effort to negotiate with Smith to end the illegal regime', with neither reaching an outcome.[6] Watts has argued that throughout the period of UDI 'Britain was embarrassingly impotent'.[7] This was a particularly difficult issue for British policy-makers in their relationships with Africa and the Commonwealth. As Alexander has argued, this period witnessed 'a trough' in Commonwealth relations as Britain faced explicit criticism for her (mis)handling of UDI.[8] Britain was sharply criticised by much of Africa, including Kenya, although public Kenyan criticism was tempered by more conciliatory private conversations. The Biafran war in Nigeria also caused criticism of Britain's Africa policies.

There were two major decisions taken by the British government in 1967 relating to her global position. In November 1967, after much delay, the British government devalued the pound in an explicit sign of economic weakness. The other key decision was to leave the east of Suez role, announced in July 1967. This was a significant shift in British foreign policy, acknowledging a more limited presence and ability. It has often been linked to decolonisation and Britain's withdrawal from overseas commitments; French describes this as the event which 'marked the end of Britain as a major imperial power'.[9] However, McCourt has argued that this 'did not represent a relinquishment of Britain's role on the world stage', but was instead 'an acknowledgement that Britain's position in this area was in some senses optional', and that withdrawal did not mean being unable to act in the region if necessary.[10] Although Kenya had been a key part of the east of Suez role, leaving this did not mean that Kenya lost its strategic significance to Britain. What is particularly interesting about Britain's relations with Kenya during these years is that, despite this context of seeming decline, economic weakness and leaving east of Suez, the British government had not ruled out potential military involvement in Kenya.

The choices of the Kenyan elite remained essential in shaping British policy. British officials could only be involved insofar as this was welcomed or encouraged by Kenya's elite, and they still privileged access to a small group of individuals at the heart of the Kenyan government, from which Odinga was excluded. By 1965, key decisions about the direction of Kenya's future politics and relationships with Britain had been negotiated. Having established what they saw as a beneficial relationship which privileged British interests, British policy-makers' concern was in sustaining this

by ensuring stability under Kenyatta's leadership. With Kenya's elite looking to Britain, this period makes clear that, from the British perspective, Kenya was becoming a 'special' case as a place in which British interests remained protected. As one former diplomat recalled: 'Kenya was a sort of favoured son among the ex-colonial African territories.'[11] This chapter will examine two occasions when Kenyatta chose to call upon British support, requesting military backing against a possible Odinga-led coup and then against potential invasion from Somalia. British officials' belief in Kenyatta's importance meant that they were, unusually, prepared to offer military reassurance. Kenya's government also had the potential to damage the relationship and cause problems in Britain. In this sense, too, Kenya was significant, as the threats held over the British were particularly acute. With extensive British investment in Kenya, the removal of stability or a more active non-alignment could damage British interests. Most significant, however, was the Kenyan Asian population, becoming a difficult issue as Kenya made headline British news and prompted domestic immigration legislation. Kenya was 'special' for offering benefits and incentives, but also the possibility of a more difficult future relationship.

African Socialism and Investment

'If you were asked what should be British policy towards East Africa at the present time, what would you say?'[12] This was the question posed by Leonard Walsh Atkins of the EAD in December 1964 to the three East African High Commissions. His letter suggested that, after the mutinies:

> there were really only two possibilities open to us: one was to continue to do all we reasonably could to support the fairly moderate Governments which were available … the other was to pull out. Clearly the latter, abdicating our responsibilities, was not really open to us … I will confess that, on various of the more depressing occasions in the last year, my own answer has been 'to slow down the rate of return of the jungle'. But this cynical observation at the end of a long day will not quite do and I hope is not generally right.[13]

This once more highlights the sense of assumed superiority that at least some British individuals retained. Despite his despondency, Walsh Atkins clearly believed in British 'responsibilities' and retained a sense of colonial tutelage. The response sent in January 1965 from Acting High Commissioner Stanley was considerably more positive, with clear ideas on how to maintain the

British connection: 'the right course', he suggested, was 'to offer an unobtrusive shoulder on which the Kenyans can lean if they want to – and I think they will if the shoulder is unobtrusive'.[14] Stanley, and British policy-makers more generally, believed that supporting Kenyatta offered the best protection of British interests. Stanley also thought that British influence was greater than that of other potential Western allies, including America, arguing that 'the influence of the West means the influence of Britain, the one country they really know well, and which they respect and trust, though they do not like to admit it publicly'.[15]

In 1965, Kenya's Sessional Paper No. 10, written by Mboya's department, outlined the policy of African Socialism which came to symbolise Kenya's economic ideology.[16] The Sessional Paper described African Socialism as a 'political and economic system that is positively African not being imported from any country or being a blue print of any foreign ideology but capable of incorporating useful and compatible techniques from whatever source'.[17] It nominally rejected capitalism, but actually advocated a managed capitalist economy. Much of the motivation behind this document was internal and political; in debates within KANU it aimed to sideline Odinga's more 'radical' ideas in what Ogot and Zeleza have described as 'a skilful attempt to present the conservatives' ideology in the radicals' clothing'.[18] African Socialism encouraged foreign investment, stating that Kenya would 'borrow technological knowledge and proven economic methods from any country'.[19]

This had clear parallels to Kenya's stated and public foreign policy of non-alignment.[20] This was a policy adopted by many African and Asian states after independence, focused on neutrality within the Cold War. Non-alignment did not preclude involvement with economic and militarily partners and donors, but offered African states the opportunity to bargain for support. However, the prominence of Britain within Kenya's foreign relations has been widely acknowledged; as Hornsby has recognised, relationships with Britain were 'the cornerstone of Kenya's foreign policy'.[21] Under African Socialism, Kenya's nominally uncommitted domestic economic policy remained in practice pro-Western and, more specifically, pro-British. Orwa argues that one aim of the policy was 'selling Kenya to potential foreign private entrepreneurs', of whom the British were key targets.[22] The British response to African Socialism was fairly positive. In a despatch on the subject, Stanley wrote that:

> Its policies are generally sensible and realistic but Kenya's prosperity and development will depend upon the Government's ability to advance the African masses economically and socially without frightening away external capital and expertise.[23]

He saw foreign—British—capital as essential for Kenya, and it is clear that British observers thought that they understood Kenya's problems, with British involvement viewed as part of the solution.

African Socialism was also partly intended by its authors for consumption abroad as a statement of intent to the international community. This domestic economic doctrine was a way of distancing Kenya from radicalism, and therefore from Soviet influence. Odinga fostered Soviet connections, but the majority of Kenyatta's elite, in part because of Odinga's contacts, did not. In a talk to Kenyan students in London in June 1965, the Minister for External Affairs very explicitly stated that 'to us communism is as bad as imperialism'.[24] Clearly this was partially aimed at a British audience and offered them encouragement. The Soviet Union made financial and military offers, but Kenyatta was reluctant to take these, preferring British assistance. Still, Kenyan factionalism meant that British policy-makers feared that if Odinga gained power, these alternative offers might be taken up. For the Kenyans, these offered a bargaining tool in discussions with the British, as in the MOU negotiations. High Commissioner Peck recognised in 1967 that ministers 'revert to it as a blackmail in the event of frustration' with British offers.[25] For example, in 1969, 'Kenya Ministers have represented to us that there are elements in their Cabinet which would find great difficulty in agreeing to spend money on British aircraft when aircraft which though not quite so suitable were being offered free of charge, from the Soviet Union'.[26] The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary therefore recommended giving improved credit terms to ensure the purchase of British aircraft.[27] Kenyan politicians were adept at using the threat of accepting alternative offers to encourage the British to greater concessions.

One of Britain's major interests in Kenya was investment, and African Socialism encouraged British officials and business to feel secure. During the colonial period, Kenya had been a regional economic centre and the European population had given confidence to British investors.[28] In 1960, there had been a flight of capital as a result of European uncertainty about Kenya's future. Kenya's leaders therefore came to share the British interest in encouraging investment and a sense of economic and political stability.[29]

Kenya's pro-Western investment policies were thus already emerging prior to African Socialism. The 1964 Foreign Investment Promotion Act had encouraged and given incentives to foreign capital by guaranteeing the right to repatriate profits.[30] The key issue for investors was the safety of their investments, with the prospect of political instability the major concern.[31] Kenya's Minister for Commerce and Industry, Julius Kiano, attended an Overseas Development Institute conference in London in 1965 and strongly advocated further investment, arguing that 'investment itself is a great factor in creating stability'.[32] Increasingly, Kenya was viewed as less risky than her neighbours, and so became a 'focal point for foreign investment in Africa'.[33]

Kenya's openness to foreign investment and regional stability were beneficial to British investors. British investment in these early post-independence years was particularly significant and in 1965 'accounted for 85 per cent of all the externally owned public debt'.[34] Commercial and investment connections encouraged the sense of a significant and beneficial relationship. By 1970:

> We have one third of Kenya's market for imported goods and the balance of trade is about £30 m in our favour. The book value of UK owned companies is some £45 m while loans from UK parent firms to their subsidiaries are worth about £26 m … The value of Kenya stocks on the UK market is £30 m.[35]

Table 5.1 sets out the increasing British investment from 1967 to 1970, after the introduction of African Socialism and with Kenya appearing stable. Britain's investment portfolio in Kenya was substantial and a key part of why the relationship was viewed as 'special'. This was of wider significance as

Table 5.1 British investment in Kenya (£m) (excluding banking, insurance and oil)

	1967	*1968*	*1969*	*1970*
Agriculture	17.2	18.0	18.9	19.2
Manufacturing	14.1	15.5	15.8	16.4
Distribution	10.5	12.2	13.1	16.0
Other activities	6.9	6.5	8.2	8.6

Source Department of Trade and Industry, Briefs for British/Kenyan Ministerial Talks 5–10 March 1973, 'British/Kenya Trade and Investment', 1 March 1973, TNA FCO 31/1503/180

British investors and government sought to protect not only their investments, but also the environment of stability which encouraged and made these profitable.

Operation Binnacle

Issues of stability were crucial in April 1965 when the British government responded to a request from Kenyatta to prepare for a potential coup by Odinga, who had become increasingly isolated as a 'radical'.[36] Njonjo, engaged in his role as intermediary, met MacDonald in April 1965 with 'reports that Mr. Odinga and his associates may attempt some kind of armed or other action to seize power in Kenya'.[37] The request brought by Njonjo from Kenyatta was:

> a strong hope that it might be convenient for a British ship or ships (such as an aircraft carrier) to be in neighbouring waters during this month, as a matter of their routine exercise. If the Government were in serious difficulty here, they would wish to ask for the help of British troops to maintain law and order until the crisis had passed.[38]

Njonjo stressed that this was 'not a formal request', which it 'would be politically inexpedient' to make pre-emptively, though should 'a critical situation' occur, Kenyatta would make a formal request as he had during the mutinies.[39] Njonjo also told MacDonald about the 'Russian offer of an arms gift' which became linked to the possibility of a coup.[40] Cold War considerations were particularly prominent in Kenya at this time, as Odinga had Soviet support and seemed to pose a threat to Western interests. MacDonald conveyed this message to London and John Chadwick of the EAD wrote to the MOD that 'we should work on the assumption that we would wish to intervene if necessary … a contingency plan should be made as soon as possible'.[41]

MOD reacted immediately. The Defence Operations Executive met to consider the requests, setting out potential options for military assistance and sending HMS *Albion* to Mombasa.[42] They recognised that another intervention would not be so easily accomplished as that during the mutinies, and argued that British 'troops cannot "reconquer" Kenya for President Kenyatta'.[43] The MOD thus made a distinction between preventing a coup and reversing one. They were also concerned that 'forces would not operate outside Nairobi or be drawn into a long guerrilla-type

campaign'.[44] Despite their willingness to intervene, they were cautious about the scale of any military involvement. By 9 April, four days after Njonjo's request, the Military Chiefs of Staff Committee had created a plan for the deployment of troops from Aden.[45] This was approved on 14 April and codenamed Operation Binnacle.[46] On 15 April, the Director of Operations in Aden decided that the troops involved 'should meanwhile remain at 24 h notice'.[47] These were reduced to forty-eight hours' notice on 24 April and thus spent nine days on alert for a Kenyan coup.[48] The plan aimed 'to prevent the overthrow of the present Kenya Government … Protect the person of Kenyatta and other loyal members of his government.'[49] This willingness to support the president shows how clearly British policy focused upon Kenyatta personally, and MacDonald kept Njonjo informed of the British plans.[50]

It is questionable how realistic the possibility of a coup was. Subsequent historiography has assumed that the threat was not serious.[51] Indeed, in Njonjo's initial disclosure he highlighted that 'Kenyatta and his principal colleagues are inclined not (repeat not) to take this possibility too seriously [but] they nevertheless feel that they cannot ignore it'.[52] The EAD considered that 'at fight sight it would seem unlikely … [but] I think we must assume for the moment that there is a real danger'.[53] MacDonald's later assessment on the nature of the threat highlighted:

> the apparent design of some external Communist Powers to aid their stooges in Kenya by supplies of arms for use, if necessary, in overthrowing President Kenyatta's Government … surreptitious shipments of Czechoslovakian and Polish arms … students who have returned to Kenya after receiving military training in countries behind the iron curtain, and … the Russian gift of arms.[54]

The key 'evidence' which sparked Njonjo's approach to MacDonald was 'a letter from a conspiratorial colleague' to Pio Pinto (MP 1963–1965 and supporter of Odinga) which 'suggests that some sinister action – which the Kenyan authorities interpreted as perhaps a "coup d'etat" – might have been planned'.[55] It is unclear who sent this letter beyond 'one of Mr. Odinga's friends', exactly what it contained, or even if MacDonald himself saw it.[56] Nevertheless, MacDonald suggested that one reason the coup had not progressed was Pinto's assassination on 24 February 1965.[57] In light of a possible coup, MacDonald described the murder as 'despicable but

timely'.[58] His desire for stability and favour for Kenyatta overrode concern for judicial practice, with tacit acceptance of this political assassination.

Arms deliveries to Kenya, allegedly intended for Odinga, were a significant part of the rumours surrounding the potential coup. Russian equipment and a training team arrived, although MacDonald was 'emphatically' assured when meeting Murumbi, Mungai and Njonjo that this did not affect the position of the British military training team.[59] In his despatch, MacDonald concluded that these arms were intended 'to support, if required, a political overthrow'.[60] The BHC was clearly concerned by the Soviet presence, speculating about links to Odinga, investigating the Russians who arrived and informing Njonjo that three were 'suspected of being intelligence officers. President Kenyatta and his most confidential Ministerial colleagues were very grateful for that information.'[61] The British government wanted to preserve their influence.

In a clear example of the influence of British policy-makers on Kenyan policy, and the role of Njonjo and McKenzie as informal interlocutors, at the end of April, Mungai, Murumbi and McKenzie inspected the Russian arms, accompanied by Brigadier Hardy and Colonel Landy (Ordnance Commander, Kenya Army). Hardy was to recommend whether to accept or reject the arms.[62] That the British commander of the Kenyan army was to assess the Russian equipment was perhaps already a sign that it was unlikely to be accepted. More significant than this alone, however, was that:

> McKenzie and Njonjo asked me [MacDonald] to convey privately and unofficially to Brigadier Hardy that he should give an honest opinion about the utility of the various items of equipment, but with a prejudice in favour of rejecting each and every item as not sufficiently useful. I have no doubt that this represents Kenyatta's own wish, and so I have effectively conveyed this message in strict secrecy to Hardy.[63]

This message was passed from Kenyatta, through Njonjo and McKenzie, to MacDonald, and then to Hardy, in a clear indication of the informal and personal networks which were so important within Kenyan politics. The result of this, as widely publicised, was that Kenya rejected the Russian arms supplies and advisors. MacDonald viewed this as 'a serious diplomatic defeat for the Communist Powers', and indeed communist influence was limited thereafter.[64] Stanley argued that 'by far the most important way of countering Communist influence in Kenya is for us to sustain Kenyatta and

his moderate supporters in power, and to preserve the considerable influence we have with them'.[65] This was to be Britain's Cold War stance in Kenya.

Any threat of a coup quickly dissipated. The whole affair was seen by MacDonald to have been beneficial for Britain, and 'Kenyatta and his principal colleagues' confidence in our wise and effective friendship has been further increased'.[66] The British had demonstrated commitment without having to prove this through actual military action—although they had been, and remained, prepared to do so. In May, the MOD decided that although they no longer expected an immediate coup, 'the plan should still be issued since a potential threat continues and similar alarums could arise in the future'.[67] The possibility of a coup was reviewed in January 1966 and considered 'unlikely', but the idea did not completely dissipate.[68] High Commissioner Peck recalled in his autobiography that the British HMS *Triumph*:

> was stationed in Mombasa Harbour for quite a long time. It was a visible token of our support, particularly at moments when Bruce Mackenzie, for instance thought there might be a coup against the Kikuyu government. ('Is your old tin can still there?' was his crudely-coded message to me at one point.)[69]

As Peck did not arrive in Kenya until 1966, this cannot have referred to the same instance, but suggests a broader idea of the British presence offering support against potential opposition. If threatened, Britain was Kenyatta, Njonjo and McKenzie's choice of ally. Kenyatta's request for British assistance and the British intervention plan encouraged the sense of a particular British stake in Kenyan stability. A British plan for intervention in response to internal unrest existed until 1971.[70]

In another sign of the British role in Kenya's defence forces, in December 1965, McKenzie approached MacDonald 'with a view to getting confidential British advice on the future size and shape of the Kenya armed forces'.[71] It was again McKenzie, with his 'certain de facto responsibilities in the field of defence', who was the key figure in communicating Kenyan messages, and only he, Kenyatta and Njonjo knew of this approach.[72] MacDonald was keen for the British military to fulfil this request and 'need not underline the desirability of our assisting the Kenyans in this way, if it is at all possible', writing directly to Commonwealth Secretary Bottomley.[73] In March 1966, Peck was formally

asked by McKenzie 'to supply a Senior Civil Servant experienced in defence programming to assist the Kenyans in their defence review'.[74] The MOD found it difficult to locate a suitable person, submitting that it was not possible. However, Defence Secretary Healey 'stepped in and said that he was very anxious to give all possible help to President Kenyatta and instructed officials to try to arrange this'.[75] This is a fairly rare and revealing example of a British minister getting involved in policy towards Kenya, and indicates how significant Healey viewed this to be, prepared to overrule the objections of his civil servants. This also makes clear the importance of informal connections within the British government, as the details of this internal MOD dispute had been passed 'on a personal basis' from Burlace of the MOD to Scott, head of the EAD.[76] British policy-makers had to negotiate internally as well as with the Kenyans over their policies.

In April, General John Drew was chosen to lead the review, having previous experience of similar missions in Malaysia.[77] Drew formally sent his report to Gichuru as Chairman of the Defence Review Committee.[78] At this stage, policy was conducted through formal channels rather than with its initial informality. His report argued that Kenya's 'problem is predominantly one of internal security', including a wide definition of this.[79] Drew's main recommendations were to create a Chief of Defence Staff and to focus on intelligence, coordination between the police and military, and coordination between the three defence services.[80] The most significant recommendation from the British perspective was the creation of a Chief of Defence Staff. Interestingly, 'both Drew and Bruce McKenzie and others here agree that Hardy, although an excellent regimental soldier who has done a splendid job with the Kenya Army, is not really suited to be the rather politically minded and unified command type of officer required'.[81] Despite this, Kenyatta was 'now cogitating the possibility of replacing Hardy by another white face assuming a suitable one can be found'.[82] In another example of British assumed superiority, Richard Posnett in the CRO argued that 'while Africans will doubtless come to the top who would be capable of commanding units of modest size, it may be too much to expect men to appear who can exercise broad strategic and administrative control'.[83] The idea that Kenya still needed British assistance was clear.

Kenyatta did request that this position be filled by a British officer, giving them considerable influence over who was appointed. Hardy was replaced as planned by Kenyan Brigadier Ndolo as Commander of the Army, and the British Major General Bernard Penfold was appointed Chief

of Defence Staff. Penfold also took command of the British training team, meaning that he was involved in both Kenyan military policy and British military policy towards Kenya. This opened the possibility that 'Penfold might have divided loyalties', but the MOD argued that 'the situation in which senior seconded officers wear two hats is by no means unusual … but the British loyalty is of course always paramount'.[84] British leadership within the Kenyan armed forces underpinned the military relationship and offered an inside route to discover and influence Kenyan military thinking.

Operation Binnacle had been designed against a possible threat from Odinga, but in 1966, Kenyan politics changed as Odinga left KANU and Kenya returned to being a two-party state. At the Limuru party conference, Odinga was replaced by eight regional vice presidents, something Kenyatta had informed the BHC might be a possibility over a week prior to the conference.[85] The BHC was given certain information by the Kenyan leadership, but this was dependent upon maintaining relationships to ensure they were kept informed. Odinga formed the opposition KPU which was forced to contest the Little General Election of 1966 and performed with fairly limited success in a campaign frequently weighted against them.[86] But electoral intimidation was not the British priority. Imray of the BHC reported: 'afterwards we shall try to examine whether the nasty taste left in the mouth by all these manoeuvres is nasty only to delicate European democratic palates – [or] that in the Kenya African context, once again the end [might] have justified the means'.[87] Peck agreed that the government's tactics 'may arouse concern for the future of democracy in Kenya. But in Kenya's conditions, a tolerably enlightened autocracy may well be the best prescription.'[88] Stability under the strong leadership of Kenyatta was viewed as far more beneficial for British interests than democracy.

Bamburi Understanding

In 1966–1967, another military agreement was negotiated between the British government and the Kenyan elite, this time concerning Somalia and the ongoing *shifta* conflict. Leading Kenyans remained anxious, and it was to Britain that they looked for further reassurance. In May 1966, McKenzie raised the issue in a meeting with British Defence Secretary Healey. McKenzie asked:

> if he was right in his assumption that if Kenya was attacked, the UK accepted an unwritten obligation to come to her assistance … [Healey replied] that he had no doubt that the position would be considered sympathetically on its merits. He added that while we were retaining the capability to help in such a situation, and HMG was very sympathetic to the present regime in Kenya, 'an unwritten obligation' was not a meaningful concept in international relations.[89]

The reason for McKenzie's assumption was the so-called 'Sandys Understanding' allegedly given by the previous Commonwealth Secretary in 1964. The basis for this was referred to in the previous chapter: that the Kenyans could not afford Hunter aircraft, but should consider Commonwealth support if attacked. There were clear differences between the British and the Kenyan interpretations of what Sandys had said: to British policy-makers, this was no more than vague support to a friendly Commonwealth state; for leading Kenyans, this was a commitment they counted on. A January 1966 Kenyan military paper made explicit this reliance. This assessment 'assumed that the British ground attack aircraft would be available to support the Kenya Army within 24 h and that limited ground forces would start arriving within 48 h, of Somali regular forces violating our frontier'.[90] The paper set out very limited goals for the Kenyan army 'to identify, and furnish our allies with proven evidence of the aggression so that they could intervene on our behalf confidently; [and] to contain the enemy thrust or thrusts for long enough to enable our allies to intervene effectively.'[91] There was no sense of the Kenyan military being able to repel a Somali attack without assistance, and they assumed immediate British support. This made Kenya's leaders particularly concerned by Healey's view that Britain was under no obligation to assist.

In the months that followed, leading members of Kenya's inner elite followed this up, reiterating the Somali threat at high-level meetings between Murumbi and the prime minister, McKenzie, Gichuru and the Commonwealth Secretary.[92] Njonjo and McKenzie saw the prime minister, Commonwealth Secretary and Minister of Defence on 11 November 1966, delivering a letter from Kenyatta. At this meeting, Njonjo 'said that he was not seeking a formal undertaking, but an informal assurance that, if Kenya asked for British help if they came under attack from Somalia, this help would be forthcoming'.[93] McKenzie noted that 'apart from President Kenyatta, Dr. Mungai, Mr. Njonjo and himself, the entire Kenya Cabinet believed that there was already such a pact'.[94] Assumptions of Britain's

influence and power in Kenya were actually rather ahead of reality, and this highlights that even within the Kenyan Cabinet there was a lack of complete information.

In the wake of the Kenyan approach, British officials were initially concerned to establish exactly what Sandys had said and whether a 'Sandys Understanding' existed. They searched through the records of conversations but found 'no trace of … an express undertaking'.[95] Walsh Atkins confirmed that 'Mr. Sandys of course said nothing so categorical at all'.[96] Anxious to confirm this, the Commonwealth Secretary spoke to Sandys, who stated that he had never made an agreement beyond the broad suggestion that the Commonwealth was unlikely to ignore aggression.[97] It thus appeared that the 'Sandys Understanding' had not existed as the Kenyans understood it—at least from the British perspective. However, this was based on interpretation, and even though a definite agreement had not been made, this encouraged British policy-makers towards commitment; the Commonwealth Secretary considered that 'it would be unfortunate if we appeared to be less forthcoming than Sandys was'.[98] Later British reports indeed made reference to the 'Sandys Understanding'.[99]

The next question for British officials and politicians was how to respond. Given the Kenyan belief in the Sandys Understanding, coupled with high-level approaches from leading Kenyans viewed as Britain's 'friends', they did not want to damage the relationship by an outright refusal. Peck hoped that 'serious consideration can be given to meeting this request of the Kenyans which goes only very little further than the general obligation to come to the help of any Commonwealth country under attack'.[100] Ministers were involved, with the Commonwealth Secretary recommending this to the Defence Secretary.[101] The BHC took the initiative of writing a paper weighing the pros and cons of an informal agreement, discussing the expense and sense of insecurity faced by the Kenyans over the *shifta*, which would likely be exacerbated without an agreement so that Kenyan 'morale might sink dangerously low'.[102] The disadvantages were that this 'would be an open ended commitment', with an unknown potential cost, and could encourage Kenya 'to escalate their operations against the shifta to the point of provoking Somalia'.[103] If handled badly, it could draw Britain into a war. However, although British assessments agreed that Kenya would be unable to resist a Somali attack, they viewed the possibility as highly unlikely.[104] If it was never to be used, this could gain Kenyan goodwill at low cost. British consideration was also explicitly linked to Kenya's stance on Rhodesia. Despite the criticism in

public which Kenyans sometimes made about Britain's Rhodesia policy,[105] the real business of diplomacy was private, where the relationship was generally much more amicable. In directly considering the Somali military threat, officials noted that Kenya 'has taken a leading role among Commonwealth African countries in supporting our Rhodesia policy'.[106]

The BHC also highlighted the economic and military benefits Britain gained from Kenya and the possibility of a reduction of British influence: 'the British stake in Kenya is substantial … the exceptional rights there are particularly valuable and Kenyan goodwill will be required for these exceptional rights to continue.'[107] This was a reciprocal relationship, and the need to ensure Kenyan support encouraged the British government to offer something. Peck personally promoted the idea, implicitly evoking the Cold War context. He recognised that 'no one in London is going to be very keen', but argued that 'Kenya is a bit of Africa where we have (so far), and we hope to continue to do so, successfully upheld stability in the general Anglo-American interest'.[108] This would also encourage and enable Kenya not to build up a large military, and to pursue a military relationship with Britain rather than elsewhere. Only months earlier, the Israelis had advocated 'building up the Kenyan armed forces', no doubt with their own equipment, while the CRO argued that 'Kenya ought not to build up a strong, sophisticated army that might fall into the hands of [an] anti-West government'.[109] British policy-makers also suggested that, unlike most countries, Israel had 'a vested interest in promoting a head-on clash between Somalia and Kenya in which they would plan to step in and sweep the Somali board', and wanted to prevent this.[110] They perceived an informal commitment which meant that Kenya did not build up a larger military to be in the British interest.[111]

Having determined to make a commitment, there was negotiation within the British government on the language, terminology and form this would take. The BHC suggested that this should be communicated 'at least partly in written form', which had advantages 'both in putting the record straight historically and also in leaving the Kenyans in no doubt as to our future intentions'.[112] The EAD agreed, and recommended a *boute de papier*: 'anonymous and completely informal.'[113] Civil servants were trying to achieve a non-committal commitment. The MOD was concerned that 'we had spent a good deal of last year getting out of open ended commitments', and an MOD meeting 'agreed that the words "outright attack" were not sufficiently specific' and must be amended.[114] On a further draft, the Defence Secretary again wanted revisions, arguing that 'we need to be

very careful about this'.[115] That ministers were involved in issues of drafting shows the sensitivity of this commitment. Legal advisors were also consulted about the language. British policy-makers took seriously the implications of the language they used to try and ensure that what sounded like a commitment did not really bind them.

The wording was eventually agreed. It stated sympathy with Kenya's problems with Somalia and the *shifta*, offered to share threat assessments, but highlighted the need for peaceful and political solutions. The text was read and handed to Kenyatta by Peck on 25 January 1967, and simultaneously read to Gichuru and McKenzie by the Commonwealth Secretary in London. The idea of this double reading was to ensure that Kenyatta did not receive the text after his ministers, and 'between us [we have] neatly stymied McKenzie, whose inevitable caustic remarks' could have coloured Kenyatta's reception.[116] Despite McKenzie's intermediary position, British officials expected criticism from him—this certainly does not suggest that he was a British spy. The key part of the *boute de papier* was:

> any attack on a fellow member of the Commonwealth would be of great concern to the British government: Kenya government may be sure that if Kenya were the victim of outright aggression by Somalia, the British government would give the situation most urgent consideration. While, therefore, the British government cannot in advance give the Kenya government any assurance of automatic assistance, the possibility of Britain going to Kenya's assistance in the event of an organised and unprovoked armed attack by Somalia is not precluded.[117]

This was an extremely limited commitment; it offered nothing beyond consultation, and although not ruling out military assistance, this would not be automatic. It was not very different from the previous unwritten position and shows the balance British policy-makers were trying to maintain between offering something to retain Kenyan goodwill but not committing themselves. However, despite government efforts to try and limit the room for interpretation, when given the text, Kenyatta 'made no comments beyond asking me to convey to Prime Minister his thanks for this message, adding that he had no doubts about our intentions or of the friendship between Kenya and Britain and that he relied on us to come to his aid in the event of real trouble'.[118] Clearly, this had not limited Kenyatta's expectation that he would be able to rely on British military intervention if necessary. Those British personnel aware of this thereafter

suspected that Kenyatta took the commitment more seriously than themselves.[119]

Following the Understanding, the MOD created a plan for 'British Military Assistance to Kenya in the Event of Somali Aggression'. The EAD considered it 'most unlikely that this plan will ever be implemented', but thought it 'only prudent for it to cater for the widest possible range of eventualities'.[120] An initial draft was circulated in May 1967, with further revisions until the final agreed plan of 16 February 1968.[121] During this time the Arusha Memorandum of Understanding in October 1967 brought the *shifta* conflict to an end, after which 'the situation in the area gradually normalized'.[122] More noteworthy is that these military plans were made simultaneously with British plans to withdraw from east of Suez. Rouvez has argued that this was a time of minimising global military commitments and that withdrawal from east of Suez 'demonstrated the extent and the seriousness of British disengagement from former colonial and post-colonial duties'.[123] Yet at the same time, MOD was still making plans for intervention in Kenya. Therefore, this should not be seen simply as a time of the British government removing all commitments or retreating from a global foreign policy.

That British politicians were prepared to offer a written understanding was unusual, revealing that Kenya was, once again, seen as 'special'. From the Kenyan perspective, Britain remained Kenyatta's choice of military ally. In giving the message to Kenyatta, Peck 'emphasized that with Britain's present resources, there were limits to what we could do to help our friends and that we, no more than they, could not be expected to sign a blank cheque. None-the-less Kenya ranked high among our friends.'[124] Peck suggested that the *boute de papier* be known as the Bamburi Understanding, based on where he met Kenyatta, and as it will be referred to from this point.[125] This private and secret negotiation between key people again highlighted the difference in forms of policy-making between the British and Kenyan states. This was not widely publicised within Britain: it was classified top secret in British government files,[126] and civil servants argued in 1976 that this did not fall within the scope of a parliamentary question on military agreements with Kenya so they did not have to publicly disclose it.[127] Nevertheless, departments cooperated. This was in sharp contrast to the Kenyan side of these negotiations, which were conducted by a very narrow elite. Few Kenyans knew of this agreement—in 1973 it was thought 'quite likely' that Mungai and perhaps Kibaki were unaware of it—and those who did were privileged within the Kenyan state.[128] The Bamburi

Understanding has received no serious historiographical attention.[129] However, the Understanding underpinned the Anglo-Kenyan relationship and helps to explain Kenyatta's focus on his British relations, giving him a greater sense of security and stability. The Understanding was central to the British 'special relationship' with Kenya and shaped policy-making through the following years, demonstrating to both sides that this was a particular and unusual relationship.

Asian Immigration

A much more public issue in the relationship was Asian immigration. Kenya's importance as a colony had been partly owing to the European and Asian populations, and in 1962, Kenya's population comprised 8.3 million Africans, 176,613 Asians and 55,759 Europeans.[130] This gave the British government an additional concern compared to many former colonies, and an additional idea of responsibility. The land transfer programmes had largely benefited the Europeans. The Asian population became a direct concern in 1967, when Asian migration became one of the few issues in this relationship which touched on British domestic politics. At independence, Asians and Europeans were offered the choice of British or Kenyan citizenship, with a two-year decision period. Oonk describes this decision as 'the yardstick of local loyalty'.[131] According to Rothchild, 3911 claimed citizenship in the first year after independence, rising to 9018 during the second, with around 10,000 further applications in November and December 1965, just ahead of the deadline, with delay in processing these.[132]

British immigration policy was based on the 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act. This act had 'introduced a crucially important distinction' based on whether passports were issued by the British or other Commonwealth government.[133] What mattered with regard to the Kenyan Asians was that, following independence, their passports were issued by the High Commissioner—or in other words, by the British government—and were therefore not subject to the controls of the 1962 act. British officials recognised and accepted that Kenya's Asians 'enjoy ready access to Britain and are exempt from the controls'.[134] In 1967, the Kenyan government implemented further policies of Kenyanisation. Although based on citizenship, these tended to be interpreted as Africanisation. As later High Commissioner Duff recognised, 'in the eyes of the law, non-African citizens of Kenya have equal rights with African citizens. It is in the implementation

of Government legislation that the African citizen benefits from greater rights.'[135] Kenya's leaders sought a balance between Africanisation and economic growth, but they were always aware that there was strong popular anti-Asian feeling.[136] The key pieces of legislation were the 1967 Immigration Act and 1968 Trade Licensing Act, meaning non-citizens needed work permits.[137] Throughout 1967, Kenyan Asian migration to Britain increased significantly. Home Secretary James Callaghan answered a parliamentary question in early 1968 making clear the extent of the increase: 'annual totals of arrivals in the last 3 years have been about 6,150, 6,800 and 13,600 respectively, mainly from Kenya.'[138]

This became a serious concern for the British government in late 1967. Rumours that the British government intended to legislate to limit numbers helped cause what was described in the British press as 'an exodus that has taken on more the look of a stampede since initial bewilderment turned into panic'.[139] BHC staff argued that, because of Kenyanisation, immigration would increase, 'short of measures by us which cannot be but blatantly discriminatory', and advised stating that passports would not be restricted to return confidence.[140] In much of the government, too, there was no desire for legislation, and the Labour Party, who were in government, had opposed the 1962 act. The BHC also suggested that the Kenyan government would be likely to react badly to any legislation and that there might be repercussions including 'a general deterioration in our relations, and pinpricks of one sort or another designed to make life more difficult for the British community'.[141] They thus opposed the idea of legislation, but the Commonwealth Office was beginning to consider it more seriously, although recognising its 'doubtful morality'.[142] As immigration continued at high rates, attitudes in the British government began to shift towards limiting the numbers who could arrive.

Prior to taking that step, the High Commissioner was to discuss the issue with Moi, 'to encourage Kenya government to take positive steps to reassure leaders of Asian communities that their future lies in Kenya'.[143] EAD policy-makers suggested approaching Njonjo and McKenzie on this issue, seeking to make use of their informal networks and allies.[144] However, fairly unusually, Peck believed that it was 'important at this stage to stick to proper channels and not make too many different approaches'.[145] He wanted to keep to formal channels. Moi 'expressed understanding of the problem' but offered nothing.[146] The Commonwealth Secretary also discussed the issue with Kenyatta, who 'replied with a characteristically frank but stern outburst that, so far as he was concerned,

the fewer "Indians" remained in Kenya the better: though he would do nothing to force them out he considered Kenya could get along without their skills.'[147] The British government had hoped to persuade him to make a statement suggesting that he wanted the Asians to stay and this was unforthcoming. But Kenyatta did offer one helpful remark: he 'suggested we should close our doors to them', thereby indicating that he would not object to British legislation.[148] After this meeting, which made clear that formal talks had not achieved the desired outcome, Peck now argued that 'we shall have to work by more indirect methods', suggesting that Mboya and Kibaki 'are conscious of the risks to the Kenyan economy of too rapid Africanisation' and 'McKenzie can probably be of most help to us in advising on our tactics'.[149] Now that the formal approach had been tried and failed, Peck encouraged informal methods.

This was a public issue, being prominently discussed in the British press and parliament. Integration of the Asian migrants was the major public concern, with the British government concerned by the rate of immigration over a short period and hoping to limit this 'to a tolerable rate from the point of view of absorption'.[150] Malcolm Rutherford and Brian Lapping wrote in the *Financial Times* about 'the threat of an explosion of racial feeling in Britain'.[151] This was a rare occasion of Kenya being debated in the British parliament, and a key debate concerned whether the loophole for East African Asians in the 1962 act had been intended. Two former colonial secretaries, Macleod and Sandys, clashed over whether pledges had been made, with Macleod arguing that a promise was being broken, and Sandys 'that no such pledge was given, either in public or in private'.[152] Sandys evidently had a particularly selective memory when it came to pledges regarding Kenya. Brooke has recently argued for the 'leading role' of Sandys in prompting increased migration and leading to legislation.[153] He argues that 'Sandys' leverage on the Government could only be increased by fuelling the exodus in the short-term', which he did through his personal relations with Kenyatta and Mboya, and then his threat to introduce a private members bill which pushed the government to legislate.[154]

In February 1968, the British government planned legislation to close the loophole of the 1962 act. Cabinet remained reluctant and MacDonald was sent to Kenya in a final attempt to persuade Kenyatta. Their meeting did not achieve the desired outcome of 'taking such measures as would be necessary to re-assure [Asians in Kenya] … that they have no need to uproot themselves and that the policy of Kenyanisation will be pursued

with strict moderation'.[155] Kenyatta was entirely opposed to making a statement, suggesting that the Kenyan government was not forcing them to go, but his attitude was: 'You want to go; all right, the quicker the better.'[156] McKenzie and Njonjo were also at this meeting and supported Kenyatta's attitude. This was a clear occasion upon which the British could not dictate, and Kenyatta refused absolutely to compromise or act as the British government wanted him to. Nevertheless, he did indicate that broader Anglo-Kenyan relations would not be seriously damaged by British legislation. When MacDonald suggested that legislation, and the resulting public and press criticism, 'might seriously prejudice friendly relations between the Kenya and British Governments and peoples', Kenyatta answered that 'even in those circumstances he did not think the British and Kenya Governments would quarrel'.[157] Although he would not change his stance, Kenyatta was making clear the value he placed on his relationship with Britain. This was important because of the obvious limitation to legislation that if Kenya expelled the Asians they would become stateless, and so controls needed to be exercised in Kenya as well. To MacDonald's suggestion that Asians leaving Kenya and not allowed entry to Britain might try to return, Kenyatta 'said emphatically that Kenya would not let them in'.[158] Controls needed Kenyan assistance and cooperation to work —as Amin's expulsion of Ugandan Asians in 1972 would prove all too clearly.

The Commonwealth Immigrants Act introduced in February 1968 meant that no longer was it enough to hold a passport issued by the British government to have unrestricted access into Britain; additionally, there had to be a familial relationship—'the notorious "grandfather clause"'.[159] The debate was inflammatory and impassioned. Callaghan 'envisage[d] the prospect of an invasion … even though it is not likely'.[160] Some MPs accused the government of 'panic', 'racialist legislation' and 'hypocrisy'.[161] The issue was divisive since it set popular domestic anxiety about immigration against express pledges given by government; it was therefore also very embarrassing. *The Economist* described it as 'Britain's decision to treat a British passport as a scrap of paper'.[162] Nonetheless, the legislation moved quickly through parliament, receiving a majority of 372 to sixty-two on its second reading.[163] A new categorisation was created: United Kingdom Passport Holders (UKPH); and this was how Kenyan Asians were subsequently described.

There was also an annual allocation of 1500 immigration vouchers for East African Asian heads of households, a figure decided 'more or less by guess and by God'.[164] The aim was, according to Callaghan, 'to regulate the flow of these people to the United Kingdom—that is, to form an orderly queue'.[165] There were a set of priorities upon which applications were judged, aiming 'to accord the highest place in the queue to those who are under the most immediate pressure to leave'[166]; but by 30 December 1968, the waiting list exceeded 900.[167] This quota was for all East African UKPH, but the BHC in Nairobi coordinated all vouchers and Kenya, at least initially, received the largest share by far: of vouchers issued in 1968, 1199 went to Kenya, 269 elsewhere.[168]

Kenyan and British domestic priorities—on Kenyanisation and immigration respectively—were what drove these policy changes. Relations between the two governments were not the priority but were a concern. Kenyatta indicated his acceptance of British legislation and, after it was passed, BHC reported that his view was 'regret at HMG's action, but understanding of the necessity of it'.[169] Kenyatta was concerned, however, by his (mis)interpretation of something MacDonald had said in their meeting, as he had come to believe that MacDonald 'had made a veiled threat that aid might be affected if Kenya did not agree to making the announcement which you proposed'.[170] This had, in fact, never been suggested, and MacDonald wrote directly to Kenyatta to confirm this. This needed to be cleared up, but the Commonwealth Secretary wanted the letter phrased in such a way:

> to ensure that it does not commit us to saying that the level of our aid to Kenya would not in any circumstances be affected by a deterioration in relations, or by pressure of public opinion in this country, arising out of problems connected with our control of Asian immigrants.[171]

He recognised this as a major and difficult issue in Anglo-Kenyan relations. MacDonald also wrote to Kenyatta that he 'would be very distressed indeed if such a misapprehension disturbed the absolute trust between you and me which has existed so helpfully throughout the last five years'.[172] This personal relationship was a particularly significant one—indeed, it was why MacDonald had been sent to talk to Kenyatta—and MacDonald wanted to ensure that it continued. British officials were concerned that relations with Kenyatta and his elite should not be adversely affected by British legislation and this seemed to have been achieved.

Over the following years, this continued to be an important issue. Leading Kenyans, including Gichuru and Mboya, publicly criticised British policy.[173] Norris in January 1969, 'fear[ed] that this problem is going to be a cause of strain in our relations with East African Governments for some considerable time'.[174] Quickly, however, Norris highlighted 'a good deal of evidence that the Kenyans are concerned about the sharp differences which arose in London and are anxious not to exacerbate the situation. They do not want to have a row with us if they can avoid it.'[175] Although Kenyan politicians took a tough public stance, they also did not want to damage their relations with Britain. This remained, however, an issue of contention, and on a visit to London in May 1969, Moi refused to meet British ministers about this, although the prime minister did raise the topic at their meeting.[176] This was a difficult concern, and leading Kenyans were reluctant to discuss it openly. Norris argued that British policy should be:

> to remain on close and friendly terms with the Kenya Government. If our relationship with them turned sour, we should lose such ability as we may have (although this has not yet been put to the test) to influence the rate at which the British Asians are forced out of Kenya.[177]

This was a bargaining tool for the Kenyans, and British policy-makers were particularly concerned by this threat, seeing no other way of influencing Kenyan actions than focusing on their personal relationships and encouraging conciliation. By the end of 1969, the BHC's Annual Review recognised that 'in the absence of any negotiations or even discussions between ourselves and the Kenyans we have been saved from a direct clash only by Kenyan restraint'.[178] How the legislation worked was dependent upon Kenyan actions, and British officials could not dictate policy on this issue. Norris described the Asian population as 'a special problem'; as well as particular benefits and advantages for Britain, Kenyans held a specific threat.[179]

Kenyan events in 1969 also challenged British views. On 5 July, Mboya was assassinated, which Norris argued 'changed the Kenya political landscape more dramatically than any single event since Odinga's withdrawal from the KANU Ruling Party in 1966'.[180] This was another political assassination, with rumours of Kenyatta's involvement, but Norris was:

> reluctant to believe that the President or Njonjo were in fact parties to this particular plot … [Kenyatta] cannot have been ignorant of what was going on and must at least have allowed the organisers to assume his tacit approval. But it would be characteristic of his methods to adopt an equivocal attitude.[181]

He was clearly unwilling to entirely blame Britain's 'friends'. Le Tocq, head of the EAD, was more sceptical, although he did not directly criticise the High Commissioner's judgement.[182] Norris and the BHC seemed more consciously willing to turn a blind eye to Kenyatta's demerits. The KPU was banned soon afterwards and Odinga and others arrested. British observers had long disliked Odinga and this removed him as a potential threat to their influence. Norris argued that 'the banning of the K.P.U. has its hopeful and positive side. Questions of electoral morality apart, it creates the possibility of reintegrating the Luo into Kenyan political life.'[183] Once again, 'electoral morality' was not the primary concern; Kenyatta's leadership was assured, and this remained the British priority. Democracy was not their focus, and political detention—of someone they disliked—was not criticised.

The relationship continued to be viewed positively by British policy-makers. In June 1969, Norris sent a despatch entitled 'Kenya: Future British Policy' to the Foreign Secretary, in which he considered that 'prospects for the future are increasingly uncertain. Ought we to continue to be so heavily involved[?]'[184] His question was rhetorical, and he was certain of the value of this relationship:

> Britain's policy of generous support for Kenya has so far been a success … any sudden or drastic reduction in the scale of the British commitment to this country would increase the risk of Kenya becoming a cockpit of conflicting foreign interests … In almost every field of activity, the Kenyatta Government looks first for help to us, and make no secret of their preference for British advice or their reliance on British professional standards.[185]

As Norris argued, the British presence in Kenya was both extensive and welcomed by the Kenyan elite. He viewed this as worth preserving. The Cold War influenced these ideas, but Norris argued that Kenya 'has firmly resisted Communist overtures'.[186] Kenya had committed to the Western side, even if not explicitly. Donald Tebbit in the EAD replied that:

> It is a nice matter of judgement, not only in Kenya, but elsewhere in Commonwealth Africa, to know how much of our present involvement is really important to us, how much is to be encouraged, and how much might gradually be allowed to fall away. Kenya is no doubt a special case because of the extent and value of our interests there.[187]

Here was the sense that this was a 'special' relationship, offering substantive benefits to Britain and worth more than most of their African relationships. There was no British reassessment of the value of their Kenyan relationship or their focus on Kenyatta's elite.

Conclusion

A 1968 British paper on future aid policy boldly stated that 'Kenya has been the success story of the newly independent English speaking African states'.[188] This was often how Kenya appeared, and the late 1960s fostered and cemented certain British relationships. British policy-makers focused on Kenyatta, and their diplomacy was all about regular contact with a small number of men around the president—rarely with Kenyatta himself. British officials wanted to ensure the position of these men and to keep their trust, and they conspired and negotiated in pursuit of that aim, with military and security issues dominating discussions. The military planning detailed in this chapter was very private and planned for things which did not occur; Odinga did not attempt a coup, nor did Somalia invade. Yet the plans the British government made on the basis of Kenyan requests were highly revealing. They show how elite Kenyan politics was conducted, with prominent individuals involved in secret discussion with the British government, of which most of the Kenyan Cabinet was kept uninformed. British policy-makers wholeheartedly committed to reinforcing this neo-patrimonialism, privileging their personal connections at private meetings. These two plans also indicate the degree of British commitment to Kenyatta and Kenyan stability, which would also be beneficial in other areas such as investment and the Cold War. These military plans confirmed the idea among both the British and the Kenyans that Kenya was 'special' to Britain, and that the British military could be prepared to reinforce this.

The other major concern for the British government during these years was Asian migration. The threat of the Asians gave Kenya a specific bargaining chip which again allotted Kenya a 'special' position in British thinking, as officials had to contend with criticism from Britain and Kenya.

There was no grand plan of designed British influence, but the policies which emerged over these years converged to make Kenya appear particularly important as somewhere Britain had distinctive commitments. There was no single British interest, but a combination of interests, focused on the value of British trade and investment, the European and Asian populations, Kenya's strategic importance in the Cold War and military relationships. Together, these made British decision-makers particularly involved and invested in Kenya. This was also self-reinforcing; as the British put more into Kenya and made greater commitments, they had more to lose and Kenya became increasingly significant. In this way, multiple British decisions were both made because of the view, and created the impression, that Kenya was 'special'.

Notes

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14. Stanley to Walsh Atkins, 5 January 1965, TNA DO 213/73/3.
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17. Memorandum by the Minister for Economic Planning and Development, 'African Socialism and its application to Planning in Kenya', 10 April 1965, KNA AE/28/4.
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41. Chadwick to Wright, 7 April 1965, TNA PREM 13/1588.
42. Annex B, 'Options for provision of British military assistance to Kenya', 8 April 1965, TNA DEFE 25/121; Lapsley to VCDS, Head of DS 11, 8 April 1965, TNA DEFE 25/121. This kind of 'gunboat diplomacy' was not new: see Percox, *Imperial Defence*, 160–167.
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CHAPTER 6

1970–1973: Negotiating Benefits and Challenges

The early 1970s brought changes to British foreign policy. In 1970, Edward Heath's Conservative government was elected, bringing a renewed commitment from Heath personally to Europe.[1] A third application to join the European Economic Community (EEC) was quickly submitted, and negotiations over entry were crucial to the politics of these years. With de Gaulle no longer in a position to block Britain's entry, this application was successful, and Britain finally joined at the start of 1973. This was described by Hill and Lord as 'a turning point in Britain's international position',[2] and has often appeared as the final demise of an empire- or Commonwealth-focused role. But foreign policy had long focused upon multiple areas—of which Europe was always one—and British officials still hoped to project this image. Benvenuti has highlighted 'British policymakers' lingering reluctance to cast Britain's post-imperial role in purely European terms', with Heath attempting to maintain some form of limited military role in Southeast Asia even with the withdrawal from east of Suez which occurred during these years.[3] In terms of the British relationship with Kenya, British membership of the EEC made remarkably little difference to policy choices.

One site of Anglo-Kenyan relationships was the Commonwealth, and this faced particular difficulties during these years. The Commonwealth was by 1970 less economically important to Britain, with under one-quarter of British exports going to the Commonwealth, much lower than in previous decades.[4] The Sterling Area was wound up in 1972, ending one of Britain's long-term financial benefits of empire. In 1970, the new Conservative government planned to resume arms sales to apartheid South Africa,

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despite previous sanctions. This created tensions within the Commonwealth, and particularly in Africa, as Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia threatened resignation from the Commonwealth if Britain did sell arms.[5] The 1971 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting was for the first time held outside of London in Singapore, and established the pattern that these would no longer be held in London—a sign that Britain was no longer in charge.[6] This meeting also led to some of the most intense criticism of Britain from Commonwealth members. With Kenya, however, despite some public criticism, private relations between leading officials remained cordial and close. Kenyatta was not going to jeopardise his relations with Britain over these issues, and never threatened to leave the Commonwealth.

By 1970, Kenyatta's primacy was assured. There was some British recognition that he was becoming 'increasingly autocratic, detached and preoccupied with considerations of personal enrichment … He remains however Kenya's undisputed leader and people fear the consequences of his eventual departure.'[7] The uncertainty around Kenyatta's succession, which continued to fascinate British decision-makers, meant that criticism of Kenyatta was tempered by the belief that he was still better than the alternatives. Moi and Mungai were the two main succession candidates, and British views on both were varied but generally negative. Unwilling to commit to supporting either, they hoped that the two would agree between themselves to some kind of power-sharing agreement.[8] British diplomats thus aimed to foster connections with both and looked to cement relationships at multiple military and political levels rather than backing a single successor.

The relationship had stabilised so that British concerns were essentially conservative and defensive, aware of the strength of the Kenyans' position, particularly with the Asian population as a bargaining tool. This was a period of multiple negotiations and the British were not, nor did they feel themselves to be, in control of these. Chikeka has argued, partly focused upon Britain and Kenya, that 'donors are able to manage and manipulate the decision-making processes in the new African states'.[9] But although Britain might appear to be in the stronger position, this was not always the case, and Kenyans were able to shape the negotiations and their outcomes. British civil servants, diplomats and politicians felt themselves constrained both by their ideas of the possible and by the demands of Kenyans, and there were issues on which they clearly did compromise. Many continued to view Kenya as something of a tutelary relationship and this attitude did

not assist negotiations; nor did a lack of recognition that the Kenyans did not always want to be publicly associated with Britain. This chapter uses different negotiations—the Bamburi Understanding in 1970, aid in 1970–1971, Asians and arms from 1972 and general talks in 1973—as a way to explore this negotiated relationship and where power rested at various points, internally within the British government, as well as with the Kenyans.

The Bamburi Understanding Renewed

Since it had been made in 1967, the Bamburi Understanding had become a key part of the relationship. The Understanding lay largely dormant, and became a concern only when Kenyatta asked for renewals, which occurred with successive prime ministers coming to office. When Heath took office in 1970, McKenzie—once again the most significant person in this—called on Peck, the former High Commissioner who had originally given the Understanding but who no longer worked directly on Kenya, suggesting the importance of these personal connections. According to McKenzie, Kenyatta 'hoped that now that a Conservative Government is in power the understanding could be renegotiated'.[10] Peck told McKenzie that this was unlikely, but McKenzie 'considered it most important that from the presentational point of view' ministers should be received and obtain 'a warm and friendly message'.[11] Peck recommended renewal as 'a reasonably cheap price to pay … but I would certainly not advise any strengthening'.[12] There was no desire from within the British government to extend this commitment, which had been given in the full knowledge that it was 'deliberately vague and non-committal'.[13]

This was an occasion when the benefits Britain received from Kenya were linked to obligations. In preparing for the prime ministerial meeting, the new government was anxious not to appear less 'friendly' than the previous—just as had been the case when the so-called Sandys Understanding had led to the creation of the Bamburi Understanding.[14] McKenzie 'hinted in typically McKenzie fashion that of course we still enjoy facilities for the Royal Air Force (RAF) in Kenya and that the Army hold training exercises three times a year; he did not actually mention naval facilities at Mombasa but he might well have done so.'[15] The Understanding had been made without direct reference to British military benefits and Le Tocq, head of the EAD, argued that the 'various defence facilities which we enjoy are not of course granted to us in the context of Bamburi and it is quite wrong for McKenzie to suggest that they

are'.[16] Although he wanted to pretend that these were not connected, most civil servants were more candid about the reality of this exchange of benefits and explicitly linked the Understanding to military benefits as 'a price worth paying… [to] help to safeguard our present defence facilities in Kenya and be a useful card to play in the matter of our own defence interests around the Cape'.[17] There was a clear sense of bargaining here: giving the Kenyans what they were asking for in return for maintaining British interests and keeping the support of Kenyatta. The Bamburi Understanding was 'a useful card to play' for the British in other negotiations. On 8 September 1970, McKenzie and Njonjo met Heath, who confirmed the Understanding.[18] The Bamburi Understanding had become an important part of the benefits exchanged and would have been difficult to remove without giving offence and potentially putting British military benefits at risk. However, it was such a limited commitment that it was not difficult to continue.

Aid Negotiations

British resources were more engaged on the question of aid, and in 1970, the British and Kenyan governments organised a new aid agreement (Tables 6.1 and 6.2). This negotiation revealed key dynamics in the relationships between Kenyan and British policy-makers and involved the ODM, the FCO and the Treasury, as British officials found themselves reluctantly forced to compromise and change their position. These were striking as they began as very formal, bureaucratic negotiations—unlike many other aspects of the relationship—but the difficulties were resolved by more informal and personal contact. Britain was an important aid donor to Kenya, though her predominance had diminished from providing over 80% of Kenya's total aid in 1964 to under 50% in 1972, with the increasing prominence of America, West Germany, Scandinavia and the World Bank.[19] In 1964, the independence settlement had been £34.2 million, with an additional £4 million in August 1964, followed by aid in 1966–1970 of £18 million (see Table 6.3).[20] Table 6.1 shows that Britain was Kenya's largest aid donor in both grants and loans over these years, and although their proportion of total loans decreased, Britain remained the largest bilateral donor. Table 6.2 shows the place of Kenya within Britain's broader aid framework. As this indicates, British aid was mostly bilateral and spent within the Commonwealth. East Africa received a substantial portion of the aid to Africa; and of this Kenya received by far the largest

Table 6.1 External finance raised for the development budget (K£m)

	1963/4	*1964/5*	*1965/6*	*1966/7*	*1967/8*
Grants					
UK	4.41	3.47	2.35	0.50	0.17
China	–	1.07	–	–	–
Others	0.33	0.26	0.18	0.14	0.04
Total grants	4.74	4.80	2.53	0.64	0.21
UK as percentage of total grants (%)	93.04	72.29	92.89	78.13	80.95
Loans					
UK	5.86	6.34	3.95	2.38	3.29
International bank for reconstruction and development (World bank)	0.27	0.27	0.13	0.36	0.08
International development association (World bank)	–	0.03	0.51	1.42	1.47
US	–	–	2.22	0.70	0.61
Germany	0.73	1.22	0.20	0.53	0.54
Others	–	0.12	0.24	0.23	0.30
Total loans	6.86	7.98	7.25	5.62	6.29
UK as percentage of total loans (%)	85.42	79.45	54.48	42.35	52.31

Source 'Aid policy in one country: Britain's aid to Kenya, 1964–1968', 23 March 1970, TNA FCO 31/609/48

Table 6.2 The British aid programme and Kenya's place in it (£m)

	1964	*1965*	*1966*	*1967*	*1968*
Total gross aid programme	191.2	194.8	207.2	200.8	202.8
Of which: bilateral	175.5	176.2	187.4	181.8	184.2
Of which: commonwealth countries	156.1	155.8	163.6	161.3	163.7
Of which: Africa	72.1	71.1	57.7	57.7	63.2
Of which: East Africa	32.3	30.8	24.3	17.9	17.9
Of which: Kenya	14.4	16.7	10.5	7.6	9.7
Kenya as percentage of East African aid (%)	44.6	54.2	43.2	42.5	54.2
Kenya as percentage of African aid (%)	20.0	23.5	18.2	13.2	15.4
Kenya as percentage of gross aid programme (%)	7.5	8.6	5.1	3.8	4.8

Source 'Aid policy in one country: Britain's aid to Kenya, 1964–1968', 23 March 1970, TNA FCO 31/609/48. This data was compiled by the British government in 1970 in preparation for aid negotiations

Table 6.3 British aid to Kenya, 1964–1980 (£m)

	1964	*1965/6*	*1966*	*1970*	*1973*	*1975*	*1976*	*1979*
Total aid	34.2	4	18	11.5	22	2.5	49.7	80
New aid	34.2	4	18	11.5	17	2.5	37.3	65
Carryover from previous					5		12.4	25
Pension loans	13.6							
Land transfer	12	1	6.3	3.75	7		9.5	
Land consolidation			3	2.75				
General development	8.55	3	8.7	5	15		33.6	65
Programme aid						2.5	6.6	15
Tied proportion of general development (%)		42	60	75	50	100	50% (programme aid 100%)	50 (programme aid 100%)

Source Kenya country policy paper, 1975, TNA FCO 31/1898/1; Kenya country policy paper 1978, August 1978, TNA OD 67/29/101

share. Kenya also received a significant proportion of Britain's total overseas aid: 8.6% at its height, although decreasing. This indicates the particularly high priority accorded to Kenya within Africa and more widely.

At initial aid discussions in February 1970, Kenyan officials made their requests. These totalled over £43 million, as well as requests for £12 million of previous loans to be written off—considered 'far in excess of what HMG could provide'.[21] Between the official meetings in February and ministerial meetings in April, the Treasury and the ODM agreed on an offer of £10 million over 4 years, with half for general development, a quarter for land transfer and the remainder for agricultural reforms.[22] Frank Brockett of the ODM (having previously worked in the BHC) thought this likely to 'be a reasonably acceptable offer from their point of view, even though it is far below what they are asking for'.[23] High Commissioner Norris, however, disagreed, arguing that 'aid on the scale which is at present envisaged will come as a shock to them and could develop into a coldness and a positively anti-British approach'.[24] This was

indeed substantially less than the previous British aid package. Partly, this was because of the reduction in land transfer funds and because the British government had taken over the pensions costs of previous colonial officials; partly, it was because of the low level of Kenya's aid disbursements, which meant that there were leftover funds; and it was also owing to British estimates of what Kenya needed and Kenya's success at receiving aid from others.[25]

As well as the overall amount of aid, a key consideration for British planners was the proportion of the loan to be tied to spending on British imports.[26] The 'general development' part of the 1966 loan had been 60% tied and this was the starting point for debate. Le Tocq and the EAD wanted this to remain tied at 60%, arguing that any increase would be 'ill-received' by the Kenyans.[27] The ODM favoured increasing the tied proportion to 75%.[28] The view from the Treasury and Board of Trade, however, was that 'this is still an extremely generous and unusual proportion' and they wanted a tied proportion of 85%.[29] The economic departments of the British government intended to gain as much as possible back from the loans given. The Treasury also wanted Kenya to be treated more in line with other countries; whereas for the EAD, Kenya had particular importance, and they did not want to potentially prejudice relationships by attaching too stringent conditions. The ODM sought to mediate. Brockett argued to the Board of Trade that 'whilst an increase in the tying proportion over that for the current loan was certainly justified, to take it beyond 75% would be unreasonable … and might well prove counter-productive'.[30] Nonetheless, the primacy of the Treasury was clear and the starting point for the talks was to be 85% tying, though with the intention of 'some flexibility'.[31]

Ministerial negotiations took place in nine meetings during 6–14 April, led by Kibaki as Kenyan Minister of Finance and British Minister for Overseas Development Judith Hart.[32] The meetings themselves were 'tough'.[33] After the opening statements, the British laid out their offer, to immediate disappointment from the Kenyan delegation.[34] On the question of tying, the proportion of 85% was, unsurprisingly, rejected by the Kenyans, who immediately raised the threat of Eastern bloc funding.[35] British negotiators were evidently uncomfortable at the Kenyan response. Kibaki was not playing along with the British idea that they knew what was best for Kenya. Hart complained of 'slow progress … caused by the Kenyans raising fresh difficulties at each meeting'.[36] This proved an effective tactic since the Treasury came 'under considerable pressure to improve

on this offer'.[37] By the eighth meeting on 13 April, the ODM had arranged new conditions: the loan would be increased to £11.5 million, including a £2.75 million grant, and would be 75% tied.[38] Had they not made concessions, as Hart wrote after the negotiations were concluded, it could 'have led to a breakdown, which was something we all wanted to avoid provided that the price of doing so was not unacceptably high'.[39] She was not prepared to allow the talks to fail, even at the cost of additional finance. The Kenyan response was not what the British had hoped for. Kibaki immediately reiterated his demand for only tying 60% and wanted a different division of the money, though he 'appreciated' the grant proportion.[40] Kibaki seemed unappreciative despite—as the British saw it—their generous concessions, and civil servants described his response as 'most ungracious'.[41] Nonetheless, they did change the division of funds to be closer to the Kenyan request so that a memorandum could be signed by Kibaki and Hart.[42] This demonstrates the negotiated nature of this relationship; even on an issue such as aid, where the British were those with the resources to distribute, the Kenyans were able to substantially alter and reshape policy, here gaining additional finance and better conditions than the British government had wanted to give.

Following the conclusion of ministerial talks, there was reflection within the British government on their negotiating tactics. One Treasury official grudgingly acknowledged that 'Mr Kibaki's negotiating method has been very successful'.[43] William Rogers, also from the Treasury, drafted a letter to Hart 'to raise with you the unsatisfactory nature, which these talks have highlighted, of our negotiating methods … it was very disturbing to us to be faced with making a series of concessions'.[44] From the perspective of these officials, Kibaki had forced them into a series of hasty compromises. Before sending his letter, however, Rogers was thanked by Hart for agreement on the terms.[45] Rogers' reply was more tempered than his draft, asking instead 'whether you thought our present negotiating procedures were entirely satisfactory'.[46] Hart agreed they were not and that 'we really must try to avoid such a situation occurring again … I need to have a substantial degree of flexibility in the position agreed inter-departmentally before aid talks begin so that it is possible to negotiate.'[47] Negotiation was crucial, and the Treasury's initial inflexibility, coupled with extensive Kenyan demands, had not made this easy. As Table 6.3 illustrates, these were the aid negotiations at which Britain offered the least money with the greatest tying of project aid.

This was not the end of the process, highlighting that although ministers played a key role in negotiations, embassies remained critical in 'settling, or tidying up, the details', as British diplomats now had to.[48] From 3 to 11 June, two ODM staff went to Nairobi for official talks 'to put some flesh on the skeleton agreement' and held eleven meetings over 9 days.[49] These talks were less obstructive than those held in London, but still not positive; Brockett recorded that 'the Kenyans were very intransigent and were reluctant to concede any points … I have no illusions that the further round of talks will find the Kenyans any more amenable, and if I am to take part in them, I shall not look forward to the task with much enthusiasm.'[50]

As Brockett predicted, subsequent negotiations saw further British frustration. In November, Norris sought to meet Kibaki but he proved elusive, postponing two appointments Norris had made and not rescheduling. Norris was clearly frustrated by Kibaki's behaviour, and argued that 'we have reached the limit of how far it is desirable for me to chase Kibaki waving a cheque book'.[51] Deputy High Commissioner Robert Munro could 'only speculate as to why they are so reluctant to agree to reasonable conditions'.[52] This clearly indicates a continuing sense of tutelage—that the British knew what 'reasonable conditions' were and could not understand why the Kenyans did not recognise their own interests as the British did. Munro compared this to previous talks led by expatriates: 'reasonable people who knew just how far they could go in safeguarding the interests of the Kenyan Government to the maximum extent, without pushing so hard as to reach a deadlock.'[53] The implication was that Kibaki was 'unreasonable' and not acting in Kenya's best interests. It seems that the internal dynamics of elite Kenyan politics caused some of the behaviour which so annoyed the diplomats—something they do not seem to have entirely realised. Contact with the British could be useful for Kenyans in internal factional politics, but it could also be problematic to be seen as too close. This was the situation on this occasion, with Kibaki choosing to delay as part of his negotiating tactics.

The final resolution of these negotiations in January 1971 stresses again the importance of personal and informal means of conducting politics. It also reiterates Norris's frustration. Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Finance, Philip Ndegwa, asked for a meeting but Norris did not want to attend without Kibaki, which Ndegwa 'hope[d] that you will re-consider', suggesting a date and time.[54] Norris in reply overreacted; he could 'reply in kind, but do not propose to do so, at any rate for the present, because I do

not think this is the right way for you and me to conduct our business'.[55] Norris copied the letters to the ODA, with a justification for his response:

> it is not my normal practice to insist on talking to Ministers only, but in present circumstances here it seems clear that Kibaki is the only person with whom we can strike the sort of bargain that is clearly necessary if we are to bring these apparently endless talks to a satisfactory close. I am certainly not going to let myself in for another round of useless wrangling at a slightly higher level. As you will see, Ndegwa's letter to me is quite astonishing in its bland impertinence … I clearly could not accept it, however charitable an interpretation one might put on it.[56]

Norris was obviously frustrated with the progress of the talks and not being able to meet Kibaki as he wanted. He reacted sharply and personally to a much less accusatory letter than his response would suggest. The ODA recognised his overreaction. Walter Lamarque, who had been involved in policy-making towards Kenya in the CRO before being seconded as head of East Africa Department in the ODM, thought that 'Sir E Norris is, of course, much nearer to all this than we are, and no doubt has good cause for exasperation, but his reaction to Mr Ndegwa's letter seems unduly sharp. Is it really so impertinent?'[57]

However, this communication was also central to the process of resolving the negotiations. Norris's letter to Ndegwa additionally suggested 'a private talk on where we go from here, what about a beer and a sandwich by my swimming pool next Tuesday[?]'.[58] It is unclear whether their meeting did take place over 'a beer and a sandwich', but this was certainly taken out of the formal context of earlier negotiations which had occurred with large delegations over multiple meetings. The two men met informally and had a 'very useful conversation' at which the remaining points were settled.[59] The ODA and Kibaki confirmed these and the agreement was signed.[60] Norris described the meeting as 'cordial and Ndegwa had the grace to admit that he ought not to have written as he did'.[61] This had moved from the official to the personal, at a high enough level with two men empowered to make decisions. There was a mutual decision that informality would prove most useful, driven by a lack of consensus on the Kenyan side and the British belief that this would secure agreement—though Norris had wanted to talk directly to Kibaki. Kenyans, particularly Kibaki in this instance, were able to shape both the terms of the aid agreement and the forms of negotiation used to achieve it.

The 1971 Coup Plot

In 1971, rumours of a coup plot circulated in Kenya. By contrast to 1965, there was some evidence of a real plan, although a different British response. Of more interest here than details of the plot itself, which have been covered elsewhere,[62] is the 'UK eyes only' paper written by Norris on 21 April considering the 'possibility of a coup in Kenya'. The paper followed discussions in the BHC when 'we drew on secret sources, well placed expatriates and in short all the information available to us. Even so I need not emphasise that much remains speculation.'[63] It is questionable how much Norris and his 'secret sources' knew about the realities of the coup plot which became public knowledge later in the year, and it seems rather that much of this was speculation unaware of the actual plan. The British Defence Adviser in Kenya expected that, without change, 'the Army will "have a go" within 2 years–probably sooner'.[64]

Norris thought there was a real threat, particularly because of 'the growing corruption, nepotism and inefficiency of Government (although not yet particularly remarkable by current African standards) and the increasing domination of the Kikuyu'.[65] Kenya was still compared favourably with much of Africa, but this was in part because of the negative views of the continent, and Norris was aware of problems. Chief of Defence Staff Ndolo was viewed as the potential coup's leader, although with some scepticism. Regarding its chances of success, Norris considered that 'an attempt at an Army coup in the near future with Kenyatta still alive and the country not ripe for a coup would probably end in failure' and be 'almost certainly damaging to our interests'.[66] Thus far, it was unsurprising, although he did imply that in future Kenya might become 'ripe for a coup'. In certain circumstances after Kenyatta's death, however, Norris argued that a coup 'would be virtually certain of success' and 'would be likely to produce a Government which would be at least as well disposed towards HMG as the present Kenya administration'.[67] This was a startling admission that the British government might favour a coup. This was written only months after Amin's successful coup in neighbouring Uganda, which the British at first welcomed, and this example perhaps encouraged a more positive assessment of a possible coup than had been apparent previously. Norris's responses to this possibility were somewhat contradictory. He recommended 'discreet advice … [to] the Kenya Government to institute reforming measures to make a coup less likely'.[68] But he also did not recommend working too hard against a coup. The SAS was training the

Kenyan General Service Unit (GSU), 'the para-military arm of the Police which has been built up to oppose an Army coup',[69] and Norris argued that 'if any Army coup should produce, as seems likely, a pro-Western Government, why should we help the force that will oppose them? My present view is that we ought not to strive officiously to help the GSU.'[70] It was thus not entirely clear whether he thought the best course was to prevent or allow a coup, but the implication was that the British government would not object.

Even more revealing were ideas about potential coup leaders and their British connections. Norris suggested Brigadier Jackson Mulinge and Colonel Peter Kakenyi as possible coup leaders. Mulinge was the Army Commander, his background was in the King's African Rifles, he had undertaken a course in Britain in 1968 and was described as 'very pro-BATKEN (British Army Training Team, Kenya) and pro-British'.[71] Kakenyi was Deputy Commander of the Kenya Army, had attended Staff College in Britain and in 1971 was attending a Royal College of Defence Studies course in Britain. Norris believed that 'Mulinge and Kakenyi are already well aware that we are well disposed towards them, and if they did mount a successful coup, their subsequent relations with HMG should be good'.[72] Norris felt that he knew and understood them, and if there was to be a coup, continued British military connections made this a potentially beneficial outcome. This indicates a successful British investment to build up a cadre of officers who could be trusted. This had not been the case in 1964–1965 but seemed so by 1971. In a subsequent consideration of 'Kenya after Kenyatta', the BHC argued that Britain's 'first priority is to seek to stay close to the Army … By so doing we seek to ensure that any military government would turn naturally to us for support and advice on its assumption to power.'[73] Sending Kenyans on military courses in Britain was therefore to be encouraged, although keeping this 'entirely within the boundaries set by Kenyan Government wishes'.[74] This response to the idea of a coup was part of the broader disillusionment with potential successors: without someone to support in the political sphere, British officials were willing to consider backing military leadership if this would secure British interests.

When details of the actual plot emerged a few months later, head of the EAD Le Tocq was initially 'not inclined to attach too much significance to it'.[75] Within weeks, however, the plot was 'revealed to have been a possibly serious threat to stability in Kenya', with Ndolo's resignation, although not prosecution.[76] In Norris's Annual Review he wrote that the plot 'came as a

considerable shock, inept and ill-conceived though it was'.[77] As he had been speculating about a coup at the time, this perhaps suggests Norris's 'shock' at realising that he had not been as knowledgeable as he had assumed. Norris's letter was another misreading by British officials of the Kenyan situation—indeed, another by him after his overreaction to Ndegwa's letter on aid. British diplomats thought that with their 'secret sources' they knew and understood Kenya, but in fact continued to misunderstand and make inaccurate predictions without full comprehension or awareness of Kenya's internal politics.

Norris continued to paint 'a slightly more gloomy picture' in a despatch at the end of the year.[78] In it, he gave his 'own tentative view … that while the army is still most likely to act effectively against a breakdown of law and order, they might conceivably step in earlier to "save" the nation from corruption, tribalism and the general disrepute of the present régime'.[79] He had not ruled out the possibility of a coup. The response from the EAD was an attempt to secure British interests. New EAD head Dawbarn suggested actively trying to shape events, wanting greater certainty and stability for the future. He questioned the BHC on:

> what scope you see in the coming months for a positive policy aimed at bringing about in due course a transfer of power, preferably an orderly one, into the hands of people who are likely to use it in a way that benefits HMG's interests in Kenya and in the wider area. Please do not conclude, on the strength of that sentence, that I am under any illusions as to our power to shape events, I realise that it is very limited and must be used with extreme discretion. Still, it cannot be negligible … Can we use them to help shape events? If so, in which direction? Can we – should we? – pick our runner now and back him positively? Mungai? The Army?[80]

This is one piece of correspondence which appears profoundly neo-colonial, with the suggestion that British policy-makers try to decisively determine the succession in their favour. But this is in fact conspicuous because it is so unusual, with limited support from the BHC, and really demonstrates continued uncertainty. Dawbarn had no favoured succession candidate—strikingly Moi was not mentioned—and officials were wary of trying to pick one. British diplomats felt unable to predict how the succession would develop or to choose their favoured candidate. Thus they intended to keep connections open to all possible political and military successors.

Arms and Asians

For British officials, Kenya's Asians continued to be the most problematic concern in their relationship in the early 1970s, with the potential to cause major domestic issues. The position of Asians became entangled in 1972 with the sale of arms to Kenya, and British fears about Kenyan action over the Asians encouraged their consideration of more generous terms. Different parts of the relationship thus became interdependent, with negotiations occurring simultaneously. The crucial moment came when, on 4 August 1972, Ugandan President Amin announced the expulsion of 'the over 80,000 Asians holding British passports who are sabotaging Uganda's economy and encouraging corruption'.[81] The Ugandan Asians were given ninety days to leave the country and, as the British press reported, this 'sparked fears that Britain will face a dangerous and unwanted flood of new immigrants'.[82] An editorial in the *Daily Mail* argued that the British government 'should make clear that they can be let in only at the cost of keeping all, repeat all, other British passport holders from East Africa and all other would-be Commonwealth immigrants to this country out'.[83] This kind of reaction, if followed, could have seriously damaged relations with Kenya, as any reduction of the UKPH quota would be very badly received. This also indicated a public dislike of continuing immigration. However, Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary Douglas-Home 'accept[ed] a special obligation' to allow them into Britain.[84]

There followed a large influx of Ugandan Asians into Britain, as well as some other countries which allowed entry to a certain number. Over the next three months, 'all but a few hundred' left Uganda.[85] As Callaghan had admitted at the time of the 1968 Commonwealth Immigrants Act, if people were made stateless, Britain would have to accept them. The British government accepted and allowed in many more Asians than they had planned or wanted to. This seriously damaged Britain's relationship with Uganda, and with Amin in particular. He was described by the EAD as 'probably too power-drunk and muddle-headed to analyse his motives. But even he must have some idea of the effect this is bound to have on Anglo-Ugandan relations.'[86] In reaction, the British government withdrew its aid programme from Uganda.

Immediately after Amin's announcement, the BHC sought to understand Kenya's position. The Deputy High Commissioner saw Dawson Mlamba (Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs) who informed

him that 'Kenyans understand on very good authority that Amin means business about expulsions and is not prepared to negotiate'.[87] This suggests that, uncertain of how serious Amin's pronouncement was, the British consulted the Kenyans. Using the Kenyans as an intermediary in their relationship with Amin made Kenya significant as a regional ally. The BHC also spoke to Njonjo—always one of their interlocutors—who said that Kenyatta would not intercede with Amin.[88] Njonjo was also concerned to protect his own interests and, despite these private conversations with BHC staff, was 'strongly opposed to there being any visible contact between British and Kenyan ministers'.[89] The Asians were a difficult issue, and leading Kenyans did not want to publicise their British connections. This was an indication of the difference between the Kenyan elite's private cooperation with the British and their public desire for distance. By mid-September, British officials 'have had little direct contact with Kenyan Ministers. They have avoided talking to us about the Asians for fear that the contact would be misinterpreted.'[90]

Initial British concern centred on 'the chances of Kenyatta and Nyerere in fact copying Amin?'.[91] MP Geoffrey Rippon was sent as a British envoy to East Africa and in Kenya 'found a relaxed and sympathetic atmosphere … they would not be likely to take a lead from President Amin'.[92] The BHC recognised, too, that 'the Kenyans are not going to adopt an Amin policy. But there are ways in which they can and probably would make life increasingly difficult for us.'[93] This was key; even without an expulsion, Kenyan leaders were in a powerful position to dictate terms and make demands, and the British government was in a weak position to reject them. The Kenyans held a direct threat over Britain. Indeed, very quickly, Moi asked for an increase in the quota, predictably refused by the Home Office, but showing that Moi was aware of Kenya's powerful bargaining position.[94] Moi also said this publicly, proclaiming in an 'exclusive interview' with the *Financial Times* that Kenya 'wants British passport holders to go. They should see this and speed the process up.'[95]

Immigration was an issue of British public and parliamentary concern. Douglas-Home was keen to confirm in parliament that 'we have had no indication from the Kenyan Government that they wish to expel such British nationals'.[96] To other MPs, however, this was not so apparent: 'everyone knows that a similar problem will arise at some time in the future with regard to the Kenyan Asians … let us prepare to help the Kenyan Asians when they come, as they will.'[97] In private, Heath seems to have agreed, anticipating the possibility of another expulsion and arguing that

'we should speedily decide what political, administrative and legal action we take when the next expulsion is announced'.[98] Clearly, he thought this was something the British government needed to make contingency plans for, including trying to encourage the Indian government to take responsibility for the Asians in any future expulsion.[99] Nonetheless, a fairly balanced interpretation was generally taken by the British press, and when a 'new batch of quit notices' was issued to Kenyan Asians, this was judged in both *The Times* and the *Financial Times* as not marking any real change to Kenyan policies.[100] Bridget Bloom wrote in the *Financial Times* in December that 'there seems no possibility that the present Kenya Government will, "do an Amin"'.[101]

The reaction of Kenya's leaders was the key issue. Duff suggested that many Kenyans 'give instinctive and unthinking support to any form of Asian bashing'.[102] One example was a press conference by Assistant Minister for Home Affairs Martin Shikuku, who supported Amin's actions and announced that 'all non-citizens in Kenya would have to leave the country unless they stopped sabotaging Kenya's economy'.[103] Duff later described Shikuku as 'notorious and insubstantial',[104] although it is interesting to consider whether he would have been viewed in this way prior to his pronouncement, which was so obviously distasteful and potentially damaging. However, Kenya's inner elite, although publicly encouraging Africanisation and minimising contact with the British, wanted to limit pressure. The BHC 'understand from secret sources that as soon as Vice President Moi heard of Shikuku's press conference he warned all news media to suppress the item'.[105] This gives a sense of how Kenyan politics was organised, and the BHC offered no comment on this suppression of press freedom—which was of less significance to them than Shikuku's comments. Shikuku continued to make similar remarks in parliament over the following months, and while heckled as 'General Amin!' by other MPs, he stated categorically that 'we should follow the way which has been taken by General Amin in Uganda'.[106] MP James Kitonga made similar statements, lending his support to both Enoch Powell and Amin, whom he described as '100% right'.[107] Most Kenyan MPs, however, did not support Amin's actions.

Simultaneously, and making clear that different aspects of British policy were connected, arose the question of arms sales. In October 1972, Kenya desired to purchase from Britain six Hunter aircraft and other equipment totalling £10 million. The issue was less the purchase itself—although it is notable that in 1964 Sandys had rejected selling Hunter aircraft to Kenya—

than the terms of the deal, since the Kenyans were hoping for a loan. The Kenyans specifically linked this to wider geopolitical threats from Somalia in the north-east and Ugandan bombings of Tanzania.[108] The key person in the arms negotiations was McKenzie, even though by 1972 he was no longer in government, suggesting once more the importance of his British relationships and the trust Kenyatta placed in him. The arms deal highlighted the limited number of those within Kenyatta's kitchen cabinet who were kept abreast of decisions. British negotiators were informed 'that a complete ban had been imposed upon any discussion about the project at any level', including with the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Defence, Jeremiah Kiereini.[109] Like the Bamburi Understanding, this was a private negotiation made with a few leading politicians and not going through official civil service channels.

One key Kenyan negotiating tactic—as so often—was the possibility of turning to other suppliers if British assistance was not forthcoming. Munene has argued that 'as long as Kenya sided with the West in the Cold War struggle, Britain was unperturbed by Kenya's diversifying its foreign relations'.[110] However, this was not just a question of the Cold War. Since the rejection of Soviet arms in 1965, Eastern bloc military support was unlikely while Kenyatta was president, especially while this was linked with Odinga, and the major competitors were elsewhere. By 1972, other countries including France, Germany, Pakistan and Canada had increased their military supplies to Kenya. British suppliers hoped to preserve their dominant influence above other Western allies. Norris's concern about Kenyatta's death was less 'an anti-Western regime' than 'a change of emphasis, of direction within the West, and our present influence could be replaced by that of, say, West Germany'.[111] A key example of the growth of other influence, about which British officials were unhappy, was the French sale in 1971 of Panhard armoured cars. This was organised by Gichuru, who the BHC reported was 'thought to have had £10,000 credited to his bank account in order to "oil the wheels"',[112] and about whom they were increasingly critical: he was a 'pathetic wreck' answering questions on this in parliament.[113] This was a clear example of individuals pursuing their own advantage through military and political deals. Gichuru's deal with the French almost certainly encouraged increasingly negative British assessments of him. Meanwhile, France had 'successfully broken into what was previously a British military equipment monopoly'.[114] This seemed possible again over the supply of aircraft, with the French keen to supply Mirage V aircraft, and McKenzie argued that France was 'poised to offer an

arms package'. British policy-makers thought he was exaggerating, although 'obviously the French would be happy to move in'.[115] This competition helps to explain the British willingness to sell aircraft they had rejected supplying to Kenya in 1964.

Arms sales were explicitly linked to the Asians by both sides. McKenzie 'let it be known that whether or not we are helpful over the arms deal will be a factor which would be likely to have considerable significance for the Kenyan Government in considering their future policy over the Asian UKPH'.[116] It is probable that this was why the Kenyan approach on arms purchases took place at this time; they knew they were in a strong position and held a lever over Britain. British officials took McKenzie's advice, delivered in these arms negotiations, that the prime minister write a personal message to Kenyatta about his handling of the situation.[117] The BHC encouraged 'any opportunity that offers to instil some warmth and a sense of special treatment into our relations with Kenya'.[118] Heath wrote 'to thank you for keeping the temperature down … I am afraid that the blunt political fact is that, whatever the rights and wrongs, public opinion here would simply not stand for the arrival of another contingent of Asians on the same scale as the Ugandans.'[119] When given the letter, Kenyatta 'showed at once his pleasure that the Prime Minister should have chosen to write to him personally … He seemed also to understand fully the effect of General Amin's measures on the British political and social situation.'[120] Personal relationships remained crucial to ensure political priorities. For British planners preparing the arms sale, their concern about Kenya's Asians encouraged consideration of softer terms: 'Kenya is at present uniquely placed to harm us and we must do all that we can to persuade her not to do so.'[121] Ten-year credit was suggested, but the Treasury was concerned about setting a precedent, so Dawbarn suggested a partial grant, which was accepted.[122] As the Kenyans and McKenzie had intended, the British government saw Kenya as requiring special treatment and was prepared to offer more than usual because of their concern about Kenya's Asians.

In January 1973, British Defence Secretary Peter Carrington had a brief layover in Nairobi. This was intended to foster communication at a high level, with Asians and defence sales the main topics of discussion. Carrington had an initial meeting with Moi, where Moi indicated that he wanted the quota to be 'substantially raised', which Carrington rejected.[123] Passing comments from Duff on Moi's 'usual rather obscure and muddled self' offer a reminder of British doubts about his capabilities.[124] Carrington

met Kenyatta on the following day and made the British offer of a £2 million grant towards the £10 million total cost.[125] Carrington emphasised 'the generous and exceptional nature of this offer'.[126] He was therefore 'disappointed' by Kenyatta's reply in which Kenyatta 'appreciated the gesture' but 'wondered whether something more could not be done'.[127] Kenyatta's response made clear that he valued his relationship with Britain but was always keen to gain the greatest amount possible from it. As the BHC recorded: 'our reading is that Kenyatta is probably quite gratified by the arms offer, but would certainly wish (in a typically kikuyi [*sic*] way) to press for more.'[128] Ideas of 'natural' Kikuyu characteristics again shaped their assessments.

McKenzie specified what was desired: £300,000 additional to the £2 million to pay for the costs of training. Carrington also raised the question of the Asian population, and Kenyatta stated that 'Kenya would not press for more' than the current quota.[129] McKenzie clarified after the meeting that 'the cost of the conversion training was the price taken on Kenyatta's assurance' on the UKPH, and Carrington recorded that: 'I must say that the assurance looks reasonably cheap to me at this price.'[130] The BHC agreed, 'inelegant as this squeeze technique may be',[131] and when reported to the prime minister, Heath, too, accepted 'that it would be well worth paying the additional cost … in order to keep the Kenyan Government satisfied with the present quota arrangements for the entry of UKPH'.[132] This made explicit the way benefits and obligations were linked to form a mutually beneficial relationship. The Kenyans received substantial support for their military spending, using the Asian population as a bargaining tool to get as much as possible. It seems probable that in fact the Kenyans could have asked for—and received—more than this additional sum for training. From the British perspective, Kenyatta's assurance was worth far more than they paid for it. Heath sent a personal message to Kenyatta, thanking him for his assurance, and highlighting that the military deal was 'a generous one, as befits the close friendship between our two countries, and our mutual interests'.[133] The guarantee on Asians came to guide British thinking, and the first Hunter aircraft arrived in Kenya in mid-1973.

General Relationship Talks

Concern over the Asians continued to affect the relationship into 1973, when this formed part of broader talks on the Anglo-Kenyan relationship. In September 1972, Duff saw McKenzie, who passed from

Kenyatta a request for an invitation to send a minister to London 'to discuss how Britain might help Kenya'.[134] Other Kenyan officials reiterated the idea and 'emphasised that what the Kenyans were hoping for was an informal, relaxed, friendly and thorough discussion of Kenyan-British relations, in which each side would state its own self-interest, and explore the other's points of view and policies'.[135] Duff was 'aware that all this will fall with a fairly dull thud' when the Asians remained a concern; 'nevertheless, life must go on.'[136] The British government agreed, prepared to hold these talks despite the problems and with limited pressing need for them.

Part of the explicit reason for the talks was to encourage connections between British and Kenyan ministers. For British officials, this was about relationships with potential future successors, with Kibaki and Mungai leading the Kenyan delegation. Duff recommended that the talks 'would give a good opportunity to begin to establish the sort of relationship we must have with two men who … represent an important part of the establishment with which we shall have to continue to do business'.[137] It is notable that Moi was not included—indicative of the internal factional politics of the moment. Around the time the talks were proposed in late 1972, there were multiple rumours that Kenyatta might nominate Mungai as his successor.[138] McKenzie, too, was absent, although he had made the initial approach to Duff. By this time, he was not a minister and had no formal position, which might explain why he was not included, as Kibaki and Mungai were Ministers of Finance and Foreign Affairs, a more official rather than informal choice. This seems to have been an attempt by one faction in Kenyan politics to develop better personal relations with Britain, and to exclude McKenzie, Njonjo and Moi—although those British involved do not entirely seem to have understood this.

For British policy-makers, the key question of the talks was the 'price' they would have to pay for future Kenyan friendship. Dawbarn highlighted that:

> We can probably secure a continuation of our privileged position in Kenya, and count on Kenyan cooperation for example with the Asian problem, if we are prepared to pay the price: a fairly steep increase in aid. It seems clear that we stand no chance of maintaining our position into the post-Kenyatta era, in which Kibaki and Mungai, and people who think like them, will be in key positions, unless we are prepared to pay for it. How much, will be a matter for negotiation.[139]

The implication is that the British government had decided in advance to use the talks to 'buy' Kenyan goodwill. These were not simply aid talks, but those in the EAD sought to use aid to secure the relationship. The ODA, although accepting the idea of talks, resisted this: 'we should frankly not be willing to negotiate aid in an atmosphere in which we were being looked to not only by the Kenyans but by other Whitehall departments to "pay the price" for securing "continuation of our privileged position in Kenya".'[140] Despite initial ODA objections, a new aid package was planned. The internal discussions were contested, with tying again the key battleground. The ODA argued that there was a case 'for doing something very special' and wanted to reduce the tied proportion to one-third of the total loan, including land transfer (using this calculation the previous loan had been 48% tied).[141] For this, policy-makers in the Treasury could 'see no justification at all'; they preferred 65% tying, but would offer 50% 'on the clear understanding that it … will not be quoted against us in discussion in other contexts'.[142] Treasury officials argued that spending had to be kept within the overall aid framework, so that 'if you regard it as essential to do something special for Kenya, you must be prepared to do something less in some other quarter'.[143] This was a very clear trade-off that treating Kenya as 'special' meant giving comparably less aid elsewhere. With limited resources, the British government was having to decide its 'special' cases. Tying was still under debate at the time of the talks.

Plans for the talks made clear British objectives in the relationship. Initial briefs drawn up by the EAD and the BHC advised that:

> the purpose of the talks should be to convey to the Kenya government the general impression of a British government which values our keeping in touch and is very willing to be helpful to Kenya on the basis of mutual self-interest … We think that what the Kenyans want from this visit is to be treated, and be seen to be treated, as old and trusted friends and important members of the international community.[144]

Clearly, these talks were part of the policy of encouraging positive personal relationships, with this taking precedence over substantive goals. Policy-makers listed British 'objectives in Kenya over the next 12–18 months', including aid, trade and investment, defence connections and land transfer. The top two priorities were:

(i) To help the Kenyan Government to resist the pressures for expulsion of Asian UKPH.
(ii) To use our still considerable influence to help the Kenyans prepare for, and effect, an orderly transfer of power when Kenyatta goes.[145]

Although the issues had not changed significantly from the previous decade, the greater priority afforded to the Asian population was crucial, and this had moved to the top of the list. This list highlighted, too, the sense of both continued British interests and continued influence.

Mungai and Kibaki attended talks from 4 to 9 March. Duff was keen to 'be as generous as we can' over hospitality, highlighting that 'the Kenyans will set great store by the seniority of the British Ministers taking part'.[146] Consequently, the programme included a dinner hosted by Heath, and another by Douglas-Home, as well as meetings with the Commonwealth Secretary-General, Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, Minister for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Parliamentary Under Secretary for Trade, Minister for Overseas Development and Minister of State at the Treasury.[147] The delegation was being entertained at the highest level of government and meeting people from multiple departments with the aim of encouraging connections. Issues discussed included EEC entry, trade, aid, Kenya's UN Security Council membership, Rhodesia, South Africa, and Portuguese colonies.[148]

Asian UKPH were the key British interest and had the largest potential domestic impact. Prior to the delegation's arrival, the *Daily Telegraph* predicted 'hard bargaining' over this, and suggested that London officials would 'ask Kenya to slow the flow of Asians'.[149] The issue was not on the official agenda but was ubiquitous; British officials expected it to be raised and prepared accordingly. However, when this was discussed, 'Mr Kibaki's remarks at Tuesday's meeting show that the responsible Ministers in Kenya view the problem of Asian non-citizens rather differently from what we had thought'; the Kenyans wanted to quickly remove small shopkeepers rather than 'professional people or industrialists, whom they cannot replace yet'.[150] This was another occasion of British officials thinking they knew Kenyan attitudes, but in fact not understanding exactly what Kenya's elite really thought—even on an issue of particular importance to them. This also suggests that the talks had been successful without the need for an agenda item. After the visit, *The Times* reported that 'British fears that large numbers of Kenya Asians with British passports might be compelled to seek sanctuary in

Britain, before they can be properly accommodated, have been allayed'.[151] When MPs sought assurances in parliament, the response was that 'our arrangements with the Kenyan Government are as before. They are proceeding perfectly smoothly and with the greatest possible friendliness.'[152] This issue was not being allowed to damage the idea of a positive relationship.

The aid package for 1973–1976 was announced by ODA Minister Richard Wood at the talks. This was an offer of £22 million over 4 years, of which £17 million was 'new money': £7 million for land transfer and £10 million for general development.[153] This was substantially more than the 1970 package of £11.5 million. This was influenced by political considerations of 'buying' Kenyan goodwill, but was also due to an increased rate of Kenyan aid disbursements—previously, there had been criticism of Kenyan underspending. M. P. J. Lynch of the ODA argued that unless they increased the amount of aid, 'we shall not be able to undertake our proper role in Kenya', and it is notable that he believed Britain to have such a role.[154] The Kenyans had asked for £28 million over 3 years, and although offered less, this was closer to their request than had been the case in 1970.[155] British planners thought the proposals 'likely to be ill-received';[156] but when offered this, Kibaki 'expressed gratitude for the assistance given by HMG towards Kenyan development. He expressed disappointment in particular that the loans were not on easier terms.'[157] This was still critical, but was a more positive response than he had given in 1970, and the EAD's sense was that 'the aid talks, incidentally, seem to have gone very well'.[158]

Overall, the talks were viewed from within the British government as successful. In parliament, the Under-Secretary of State at the FCO described that 'the visit provided an excellent opportunity … to exchange views with the Kenyans on a wide range of international and bilateral issues in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere'.[159] Privately, too, officials viewed the talks as a success: 'we were able to give the Kenyans what they wanted—a lot of flattery and rather more money than they probably expected.'[160] This was very different from the previous aid negotiations when the Kenyans had received much less money than they had wanted. Dawbarn argued that the relationship contained 'a substantial degree of self-interest on both sides … There is a fair balance of interests here and no reason, therefore, why we should not continue to have a mutually profitable relationship.'[161] This was not a relationship that the British controlled or dictated, but one in which, as Dawbarn suggested, policy-makers felt that what they could gain about equalled what they put in, and this made it worth investing in. British officials formed particularly positive impressions of Kibaki, and while

uncertainties about Mungai remained, he 'put up a good performance and maintained (with almost complete success) a sober and statesmanlike manner'.[162] Future succession prospects remained the concern and Dawbarn highlighted the need 'to consolidate our personal relations with Dr. Mungai, Mr. Kibaki and other prominent members of the leadership—in particular Vice-President Moi'.[163]

Conclusion

During the early 1970s, there were substantial and substantive negotiations regarding Kenya across multiple departments. The detail of these makes clear the fallacy of any simple neo-colonial analysis which exaggerates British dominance and does not adequately reflect the nuance and detail of these relationships. In the multiple and varied discussions which took place between Kenyans and different parts of the British government, there was real negotiation, of which British policy-makers did not feel in control and certainly not in a position to entirely dictate terms. British officials aimed to achieve the most beneficial outcome for themselves without prejudicing their wider relations with the Kenyans. For the British government, the Bamburi Understanding was an easy sign of support to offer, while in arms sales and aid negotiations they had to compromise. The threat of turning to other suppliers was a negotiating tactic the Kenyans frequently deployed, aware of the British desire to maintain their position in Kenya. The Asians were the main threat from Kenya during these years, and an issue that British officials sought to manage by offering favourable terms elsewhere. Kenyan responses to British offers were often more negative than British civil servants, diplomats and politicians were hoping for, as they typically saw themselves as being generous to Kenya as a 'special' relationship. Dawbarn wrote that Kenyans 'have a reputation as hard bargainers. But unlike many other countries they are genuinely and publicly appreciative of the aid we give them, and repay our assistance in tangible ways.'[164] Both sides had things to gain from their relationship, and this was central to why it persisted.

Personal relationships remained significant. Nonetheless, those British involved seem sometimes to have simply not understood that although Kenyan politicians evidently valued their relationships with Britain, which they could use in their own factional intrigues, no one wanted to be seen as too close to the former colonial power, and so sometimes they avoided contact. The label of neo-colonialism was one all wanted to avoid. British

policy-makers continued to favour and focus upon Kenyatta, with the position of the Asians thought stable while he was in power, and the Bamburi Understanding significant to him personally. With the expectation of Kenyatta's death at potentially any time, the succession remained crucial and, with this, the need to know potential successors. Norris's speculations about a coup in 1971 highlighted the absence of any political candidate favoured by the British—if they had had this, they surely would have been less sanguine about a coup—and that they valued and trusted their military connections as much, if not more, as those with Kenyan politicians and civil servants. There was thus a conscious effort by the British to embed relationships at multiple military and political levels as a corollary of a refusal to pick and back a single successor. Kenya was still often viewed as a special case of a close British relationship in Africa, but with a sense that this was potentially fragile; upon Kenyatta's death, the future for British interests did not seem assured.

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139. Dawbarn to Smedley, 18 September 1972, TNA FCO 31/1201/4.
140. Thomas to Smedley, 22 September 1972, TNA FCO 31/1201/5.
141. Lee to Thomas, 2 March 1973, TNA T 317/1939.
142. Ibid.
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145. Their emphasis. Ibid.
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CHAPTER 7

1974–July 1978: Waning Relationships and Interests

In early 1974, a British Labour government was elected. Wilson regained the premiership and began renegotiating Britain's membership of the EEC. Commonwealth issues, such as New Zealand butter, featured prominently in this renegotiation. Wilson's attitude towards the EEC was one of 'pragmatic calculation rather than deep-seated commitment' and the party was divided.[1] The 1975 referendum gave a two-thirds majority in favour of continuing membership.[2] In 1976, Wilson resigned and Callaghan replaced him as prime minister. Also in these years, decolonisation finally occurred in southern Africa, with the Carnation Revolution in Portugal leading to independence for Portuguese colonies. This left the problem of Rhodesia unsolved, and there were multiple British efforts to deal with this. According to Lane, Rhodesia was 'totally dominating' the Callaghan government's foreign policy.[3]

This was a period of further economic difficulties for Britain. In 1973, the rise in oil prices caused problems across the global economy. In Britain, inflation rose from 7% in 1973 to 27% in 1975.[4] Blank has argued that, by 1974, Britain appeared 'at the very edge of economic chaos … due primarily to efforts of successive British governments to maintain an international role which was beyond the nation's capacity'.[5] In the defence field, the 1974–1975 Mason defence review planned to reduce defence spending as a proportion of Britain's gross domestic product from 5 to 4.5% over 10 years.[6] Dockrill has described the 1970s as 'years of relative stagnation in Britain's defences'.[7] In 1976, the British government turned to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for support.[8] In large part because of

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this financial and military weakness, the British relationship with Kenya appeared to be slipping. There was greater uncertainty among British decision-makers and they no longer had the money or military ability to pursue their former policies.

This was particularly apparent in the military alliances, plans and understandings on which the relationship had previously been built. These had largely been premised on Sandys' 1964 argument that Kenya should not purchase expensive military equipment but rather rely on British military support if necessary. This was already being challenged, and in 1974, British policy became one of supporting an arms build-up in Kenya and turning the Kenyans away from potential reliance on direct British intervention. In 1974, as in 1970, the Bamburi Understanding was renewed with little debate or dissent, but in 1978 the idea of ending the Understanding was for the first time seriously contemplated, with gradual disengagement favoured. The key event, however, was Britain's failure to supply Kenya with ammunition following the Israeli raid on Entebbe. This made explicit the global military and financial weakness of Britain, with the emptiness of British commitments and abilities laid bare. From 1974 until Kenyatta's death in 1978, the direct and tangible benefits which had made Kenya such a useful partner for Britain and vice versa seemed to be in decline. Although neither was willing to break this entirely, both sides were reassessing the terms of the security alliance.

The relationship was also slipping because of Kenyatta's decline. Kariuki's murder in 1975 encouraged British doubts about the Kenyan elite. This was by no means the first political assassination in Kenya, but British officials were particularly affected. The murder showed that they were not as knowledgeable as they thought, and that they were less in touch with events and individuals than they had believed. Kenyatta had for so long seemed to offer security for British interests, but from the mid-1970s he was seen less positively. This led some British diplomats, notably High Commissioner Duff, to be particularly pessimistic, and more inclined to criticise than many of his predecessors. Criticisms included Kenyatta's lack of focus and ability, the growth of corruption, Kikuyuisation, 'an increasingly autocratic style of government', and the possibility that these issues might 'seriously reduce the chance of an orderly succession and will become a major threat to the country's stability'.[9] Kenya had previously been compared positively to other African states on issues such as corruption, but by 1975, 'Kenya loses her status as a shining example of democracy in the African gloom'.[10] This was also, as Duff

bluntly stated, a time in which 'everyone is waiting for the old man to die'.[11] After so long looking apprehensively to a future without Kenyatta, Duff even came to welcome the prospect. In December 1974, his 'considered conclusion is that it would now be in Kenya's best interests that his Presidential term should not extend beyond 1976'.[12] However, not all had abandoned the idea that Kenyatta was still beneficial and that the greatest threat was from the succession. Ewans, head of the EAD, had 'long-standing misgivings about the country, where there are perhaps more British interests at risk than anywhere else in Black Africa'.[13] He described British policy as one of 'hoping for the best'.[14]

Military Policies

In 1974, two aspects of the Anglo-Kenyan military relationship were considered, one highlighting continuity, the other a change which would come to characterise British policy thereafter. The first was the renewal of the Bamburi Understanding under the second Wilson government in 1974. In July, Duff reported a request for Njonjo and McKenzie to be received by the prime minister.[15] As they had been so many times before, these two men were the key figures. One official noted that 'we would not of course wish to take up the Prime Minister's time with a matter such as this, were it not for the fact that this is President Kenyatta's chosen method of doing "sensitive" business'.[16] The Understanding was linked by McKenzie and Njonjo to 'the threat to Kenya and the supply of defence equipment', which they also wanted to discuss.[17] Duff recognised that 'the Kenyan Government are increasingly anxious about being surrounded by countries which are better equipped militarily, whose intentions are uncertain, and who are under apparently increasing Soviet or Chinese influence'.[18] The Kenyans again raised the suggestion of turning to other suppliers and Duff considered this, unusually, a realistic threat: it may have 'began as an ill-considered suggestion, and/or as a possible negotiating tactic. My assessment now is that in Kenyan eyes it is becoming a genuine option.'[19]

McKenzie met Wilson on 5 August and passed on Kenyatta's request for confirmation of the Bamburi Understanding.[20] Wilson 'said he hoped that there was no possibility of any shock decisions on the expulsion of Asians from Kenya'; again, different issues were being linked, with the implicit suggestion that this could influence the British response.[21] Internally,

British officials appreciated the different interpretations placed on the Understanding:

> It may be that the Kenyans have come to read more into the Understanding than it contains. We see no advantage however in spelling out its limited nature … On the other hand, any suggestion that we intended to water down the 1967 commitment could have a seriously prejudicial effect on our relations with Kenya.[22]

The British government was keen to maintain the benefits the Understanding offered in the relationship with Kenyatta himself, with 'little doubt that President Kenyatta regards the Understanding as a touchstone of Kenya's "special relationship" with us'.[23] From the perspective of British officials, this was an easy part of the exchange which made up the relationship; it was not difficult to agree to something which 'only commits us to consultation'.[24] Wilson sent a formal letter to Kenyatta, stating categorically that 'my colleagues and I stand by the assurance'.[25]

When meeting Wilson, McKenzie also asked, rather than for expensive military equipment, for 'the British Government to send two military advisers (in civilian clothes) to Kenya to advise the Kenyan Government'.[26] McKenzie and Kenyatta still looked to Britain for this kind of support, and British policy-makers encouraged the request. They recognised the influence they would gain by being in a position to advise on the direction of Kenya's military future. A two-man team led by Major General Rowley Mans went in September 1974. The terms stipulated that this was not a 'sales drive', although there were hopes it would lead to sales, but that 'the prime object of the exercise is to assist the Kenyans in planning a sensible re-equipment programme and to reassure them that HMG is actively concerned in helping to improve their military capability'.[27] Mans' report concluded that Kenya's defence forces 'are NOT capable of deterring an overt Somali attack … I am therefore convinced that you should expand your armed forces'.[28] He recommended a three-phase, 9-year plan costing 'between £38 M and £55 M at 1974 prices'.[29] This was clearly a very different recommendation from a decade earlier, when a more limited Kenyan military had been encouraged to potentially rely on British intervention if necessary. The British financial and military ability to provide this kind of intervention was no longer assured, and nor would the international climate encourage it. This was also about getting the Kenyans to pay more for their own defence; an expanded Kenyan military could be

beneficial for British defence sales, and encourage the Kenyans to resist Somalia themselves rather than relying on Britain. Encouraging a Kenyan arms build-up, as the Mans Report did, was the new British approach to Kenyan military policy.

Aid Policies

In aid, too, some British officials hoped not to have to pay too much for their relationship, despite increased economic problems in Kenya. In the years immediately after independence, the economy had been one of Kenya's strengths, with almost 7% growth rates during the period 1964–1972.[30] From 1972 to 1982, however, this decreased to an average of 4.8%, and while 'high in comparison to much of Africa, it was a significant decline',[31] with a deficit in Kenya's balance of payments close to K £41 million in 1974.[32] Cooper has argued that the 1973 oil shocks were a more profound economic turning point in Africa than independence.[33] Kenya was thus in greater need of support.

The focus on aid again revealed the differing views within the British government about Kenya's importance to Britain. Once again, the FCO argued for more aid while the Treasury and the ODM looked to limit this, and throughout 1974 the ODM was reluctant to offer further aid despite the FCO's political arguments.[34] In December, the ODM agreed to a programme loan for Kenya. Normally, project aid was given, linked to mutually agreed specific projects; by comparison, programme aid was meant for essential imports from Britain.[35] As well as offering immediate financial assistance to its recipient, it was thus also 100% tied. The ODM would offer these loans to both Tanzania and Kenya, and initially proposed £2.5 million for Tanzania and £2 million for Kenya.[36] However, Duff argued that Kenya's loan should equal Tanzania's as 'in the current low state of Kenyan/Tanzanian relations, the Kenyans would be even more ready than usual to complain at being treated differently'.[37] It certainly seems likely that leading Kenyans would have complained about this, and, as was recognised here, the Kenyan response to aid was often to request more. Giving the same, or more, aid to Tanzania hints, however, that aid was not purely a political instrument given only to pursue the closest relationships, with ideas of development also significant. Accordingly, on a visit to East Africa, Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary Callaghan offered £2.5 million each.[38]

During 1974, some British press reporting caused friction within the relationship. This showed the problems with Kenyatta that British officials were increasingly recognising, and their concern over how to protect their relationships nonetheless. In March, Lord Chalfont, a journalist and former Minister of State at the FCO, was banned from Kenya after writing a BBC documentary about Kenyatta.[39] Several critical articles followed, highlighting corruption and with more negative portrayals of Kenyatta himself.[40] The article which had most impact was one from the *Daily Telegraph* in November 1974, which accused Kenyatta and his wife, Mama Ngina, of being 'at the centre of a growing controversy over corruption in the Kenyan establishment', highlighting Mama Ngina's alleged role in ruby smuggling and that 'Kenya is today rife with stories of graft and wheeling and dealing in high places. There is growing talk of abuse of power by leading figures within the country's political establishment.'[41] Kenyatta reacted angrily, summoning High Commissioner Duff and complaining that he was 'very angry', that the articles 'contained a great deal of stupid nonsense all of which was quite untrue' and that 'he was considering whether to "deal with" these men'.[42] Duff urged restraint, and pointed to British press freedom which meant that they could not just do as Kenyatta encouraged and 'get hold of the man who wrote the Daily Telegraph article and tell him to stop it'.[43] Duff reported to London that the British press was 'a growing threat to these relations'.[44] In the EAD, Ewans believed that these stories 'are becoming a serious irritant to our official relations … The main difficulty is that most of the criticisms are justified.'[45] British officials were increasingly recognising problems with Kenyatta, but did not want press criticism to damage the otherwise good relationship. In the news department, however, there was less sympathy for the Kenyan viewpoint: 'the Kenyans are over-sensitive to criticism by the British media. This is understandable in a young nation. But it does not call for an apologetic attitude from HMG … Kenyans have got to learn to live with a reasonable amount of criticism by the media.'[46] Press criticism of Kenyatta was increasing in these years.

Arguments about the next aid tranche continued into 1975. Although the FCO argued for Kenya's specific importance, the ODM was less convinced and planned to decrease aid. The FCO resisted and Peter Rosling of the EAD argued that:

> There is almost nothing which we cannot discuss with them [the Kenyans] pretty openly, in the knowledge that our views will be listened to with

> sympathy and respect. Our influence is strong. There are not so many countries in the region, or more widely, of which one can say that.[47]

In this negotiated relationship, British civil servants knew that the Kenyans were willing partners. Ewans argued that 'it would be tragic if, as has happened in Uganda, we were to see the dissipation of all our efforts and interests'.[48] He clearly saw a direct correlation between the amount of aid given and Britain's influence. Showing the extent to which aid was a matter for internal negotiation, Desmond Wigan in the EAD lamented that 'it will become ever harder to put forward political grounds as the UKPH threat diminishes'.[49] His revealing comment hints that, despite the problems Asian immigration had caused, it had been a useful internal bargaining tool for EAD staff to use with the ODM and the Treasury. The EAD wanted to maintain the relationship and tried to manoeuvre the Treasury into paying to support it. Table 7.1 shows the British contribution to Kenya's total aid, a proportion which clearly declined over the years around this discussion—though it should be noted that this relative decline was largely owing to an increase in other bilateral aid, which increased by 175% over the years 1972–1976. British officials additionally hoped to encourage Kenya's leaders to look elsewhere and not rely solely on Britain. Duff argued that 'it is in the long run to our advantage to help them help themselves, especially if we can do it with other people's money'.[50] As this makes clear, the British government was not able to spend as much on their relationship with Kenya as they had previously been able to, but hoped to maintain the relationship nevertheless.

The BHC was also keen to protect British investments and business interests. Though Holtham and Hazlewood argued in 1976 that there was 'precious little contact between the British High Commission in Nairobi

Table 7.1 Total Kenyan aid by sources, 1972–1976 (US$m)

	1972	*1973*	*1974*	*1975*	*1976*
Total	72.10	95.70	119.40	128.90	162.70
UK	21.11	21.56	29.63	13.94	29.40
Other bilateral	39.49	54.14	69.77	92.56	108.60
Multilateral	11.50	20.00	20.00	22.40	24.70
UK as percentage of total (%)	29.29	22.53	24.82	10.81	18.07

Source Kenya country policy paper 1978, August 1978, TNA OD 67/29/101

and most British businessmen in Kenya',[51] the recollections of those who worked in the BHC in these years suggest otherwise. Goodall, Head of Chancery 1968–1970, had 'a great deal to do with' the British business community.[52] Peter Wallis, commercial first secretary 1974–1979, recalled that 'the task was mainly to meet and assist visiting British businessmen and to advise them on the Kenyan market'.[53] The BHC's role was one of providing advice and encouraging the interests and persistence of British firms in Kenya. This was not entirely successful, and in 1975 the 'old established British trading companies of MacKenzie Ltd., and Mitchell Cotts (EA) Ltd., both sold control to the Kenyatta family'.[54] Clearly there was less British confidence in the Kenyan economy, and this also hints at the increasing acquisitiveness of the Kenyatta family. Wallis recognised in 1975 that 'the competition for the market will intensify and British suppliers will be tested … it will require a considerable effort to regain lost ground and to hold our share of a static or shrinking market'.[55] The British predominance in Kenya was being challenged, as Tables 7.2 and 7.3 make clear. Across the 1970s, the British share of Kenyan imports and exports decreased by around 8%. The year 1976 was the first year in which Kenyan exports to West Germany surpassed those to Britain.[56]

Table 7.2 Kenyan imports

	Japan (%)	*US (%)*	*West Germany (%)*	*UK (%)*
1971	10.5	8.9		30.5
1972	10.1	6.7		28.5
1973	12.7	8.2		25.0
1974	10.9	5.7		17.5
1975		7.1	7.8	20.0
1976	11.0	5.8	10.4	19.2
1977	12.3	6.0	10.8	17.9
1978	10.3	6.2	13.3	22.1
1979	8.5		9.5	24.4
1980	10.3		9.4	21.6

Source Based on figures from *A year book of the Commonwealth*, series 1973–1982. Includes all figures given for these countries

Table 7.3 Kenyan exports

	Japan (%)	*US (%)*	*West Germany (%)*	*UK (%)*
1971	3.6	6.7		20.2
1972	2.2	5.8		21.4
1973	4.3	6.3		17.5
1974	2.3	3.7		8.7
1975		3.8	8.6	10.2
1976	1.9	5.4	12.7	10.9
1977	1.1	5.6	17.5	12.9
1978	1.0	4.7	14.4	14.5
1979	2.0		14.0	20.3
1980	0.8		12.8	12.3

Source Based on figures from A year book of the Commonwealth, series 1973–1982. Includes all figures given for these countries

J. M. Kariuki's Assassination

In March 1975, the assassination of Kariuki shook British confidence in Kenya. Kariuki had gained popularity as a vocal critic of Kenyatta. Duff described him in 1973 as 'a rogue politician, a professional enfant terrible of boundless energy, muddled ideas but formidable charisma'.[57] After his disappearance, the BHC informed London that 'Kenyan authorities have assured us that they know nothing. Neither we nor the Americans have any information so far to contradict this.'[58] British diplomats placed a level of trust in their Kenyan associates and this would be proved false. While what had happened was still unknown, MPs Charles Rubia and Dr Muriuki visited Christopher Hart of the BHC. This was not an official meeting at the BHC or with the High Commissioner, but with a second secretary at home. Hart reported that Rubia:

> was very nervous about being overheard and checked on the reliability of our servants (both JM fans) first. It is vitally important that our various links with the present regime do not enable the Kenyans to discover anything of Rubia's visit … I think that he preferred to make it at the lowest level because senior officers might feel more compromised in their dealings with Government leaders. He also knows me socially and had been to the house recently.[59]

This makes clear the importance of private and social relationships which were not always at the highest level but which encouraged contact. The

concern to keep this private also demonstrates the factionalism of Kenyan politics. Rubia had been thought complicit in Mboya's murder,[60] but in this instance, was visiting to 'warn the British that the Kenyan Government's version of the JM disappearance appeared to be false … If JM is killed then Rubia expects the President to be killed by an outraged populace.'[61] While this proved wildly overstated, it encouraged British unease.

On 12 March, Kariuki's death was revealed. Rubia was correct that there had been deliberate government misinformation, and when exposed this, too, was part of the shock for British policy-makers. They had believed that they understood Kenyan politics and politicians, and this was challenged—as either their Kenyan contacts were lying to them or they, too, were not in complete control when Kariuki went missing. The knowledge of British diplomats was always dependent upon what they were told, and now their interlocutors kept them misinformed. Duff reported likely government culpability and Kenyatta was widely believed to have been involved; he was not just the benign 'Father of the Nation' that British observers had come to imagine.[62] There was criticism from Kenyan university students who called on the government to resign, and references to Kenyatta at the funeral were booed.[63] This was recognised in the British press, too, as a potential crisis moment for Kenya, with the *Financial Times* asking 'what is going wrong in Kenya?'.[64] The murder shocked the British into a new understanding, in which Kenyatta was a problem rather than a solution; yet they were aware that there was no ready replacement. Duff suggested that the murder might encourage the Kenyan government 'to realise that they must begin to take things gradually out of the President's hands (and it will be our constant endeavour to encourage this)'.[65] The extent of the impact this had on British policy-makers' ideas about Kenya was hinted at by Barry Holmes in the BHC, who argued that 'whatever the truth of Kariuki's murder it could still turn out to be the longterm [*sic*] catalyst, which ensures that Kenya will never be quite the same again'.[66] The Nairobi correspondent at *The Economist* opined that 'if the government does not act, the public will lose some confidence in the forces of law and order—a dangerous state of affairs in the inflammable African context'.[67] There was a sense that this could be a moment of crisis from which the government would struggle to recover. British diplomats and civil servants became acutely aware that they did not know all—perhaps most—of what was occurring in Kenya.

Kariuki's death encouraged the idea that the government lacked legitimacy and had inherited the behaviours and assumptions of the colonial state; it thus led people to reflect on the relationship with Britain. This was revealed in Kenyan (and also Ugandan) criticism of the presence of British troops in Kenya. In March, MPs were 'implying that they were numerous and that [the] Kenyan regime depended on foreign troops'.[68] MP Waruru Kanja asked publicly: 'are we unable to defend our own country so as to seek reinforcement from foreign troops[?] … We have already been under British rule, when those soldiers were a common sight, but we no longer want to go back to that kind of rule.'[69] A total of 207 British servicemen were in Kenya at the time.[70] Duff reported that 'we are regarded by the critics as a sinister eminence grise and by some members of the Establishment as a kind of scaffolding that keeps the building intact'.[71] Many Kenyans believed that the British had substantial power in Kenya.

This criticism led to some internal British reassessment of military training. Philip Mansfield in the BHC questioned the MOD:

> We have been given the impression by certain visiting senior officers from the UK that they are desirable because Kenya is a pleasant country which gives the troops an agreeable break, but that they are certainly not of vital importance for training purposes. It would be helpful if we could know precisely what value MOD put on the present facilities.[72]

For the FCO, if training was just 'an agreeable break', it was likely not worth such criticism. The MOD, however, argued that they 'placed a very high value on Kenya as a training area. Its importance had, if anything, increased.'[73] It was obviously in the MOD's interest to portray training in this way as they wanted it to continue. The BHC recommended cancelling the planned exercise Lorimer and, despite the MOD's desire for this to go ahead, the BHC arguments succeeded.[74] Cancelling training exercises directly threatened one of the pillars of the security alliance which had been sustained since independence. By August, the MOD and the EAD were keen to resume training exercises, with the BHC still most cautious, but judging this 'a calculated risk we could take' on condition of 'greater emphasis on joint training'.[75] Mansfield also noted that Kiereini 'would like the training programme to be resumed'; clearly this was not wholly unpopular with the Kenyan leadership.[76] Nonetheless, some in the BHC remained sceptical throughout 1976, arguing that existing training

provisions were 'anachronistic' and would be unable to continue after Kenyatta.[77]

Kariuki's assassination had shocked British policy-makers, and the subsequent criticism of the British military presence called into question some of the relationship's benefits. Ideas about Kenyatta had been especially challenged. Duff's valedictory despatch in August 1975 was pessimistic, and he wrote of his

> belief – which was no doubt held also by my two immediate predecessors – that during my term of office President Kenyatta would die and that one would assist at the uncertain and interesting beginning of the next period of independent Kenya's history. I do not know whether my predecessors were disappointed that they left the country with Kenyatta still in the saddle. I am; not because I crave excitement, but because I believe it is bad for Kenya that he has lingered so long.[78]

Duff's frustration with Kenyan politics was apparent. Yet not all British officials looked forward to Kenyatta's demise; as Wigan in the EAD recognised, 'Kenyatta has been Kenya, Kenya is Kenyatta, since Independence'.[79] He displayed a more common and enduing concern: that there was no viable replacement to the president.

Arms Supplies and the Entebbe Raid

Confidence in the relationship was further shaken in 1976, when the changed military strategy that the British government had advocated since 1974, as well as British weakness, was laid bare. The context was the Israeli raid on 4 July to rescue those held hostage at Entebbe, during which the Israelis were allowed to land at Nairobi airport. McKenzie was involved in organising this—encouraging the idea that he was an Israeli spy.[80] Relations between Kenya and Uganda were at a particular low in the following months, with rumours of troop movements on the border. Relations between Britain and Uganda were also strained, with the British government deciding on 28 July to break diplomatic relations: 'the first time that we have severed relations with a Commonwealth country.'[81] The tension between Uganda and Kenya meant that the FCO 'received from secret sources a request from the Kenyans for some form of British military presence in Kenya to demonstrate visibly our support for them'.[82] This was reminiscent of the requests in 1964 and 1965 for British military support.

The Kenyan who passed on the message—exactly who this was is unclear—hoped that the MOD 'could send a British warship to Mombasa urgently, or, preferably, a squadron of British fighter aircraft to Kenya immediately, ostensibly for joint exercises with the Kenyan air force'.[83]

It was not only the British who were approached as a potential military ally—a change from the early 1960s. The American government was asked and agreed to send a ship, and the Israelis 'promised military assistance'.[84] British officials were informed not by the Kenyans but by the Americans of their involvement, hinting at the multiple diplomatic channels of contact being used. American military presence was quickly apparent, with a frigate and aircraft heading to Kenya.[85] However, Ewans considered that 'the Kenyans would however prefer help from the UK. They take the view that this would not be regarded as provocative or embarrassing since they reckon that Amin already believes that British forces are present in Kenya more or less permanently.'[86] This was an interesting use of Ugandan arguments of British neo-colonialism which a year earlier had encouraged the suspension of British training exercises in Kenya. A few months previously, High Commissioner Fingland highlighted a contradictory attitude between Kenyan

> sensitivity about any possible criticism by other African countries of the facilities given to British troops in Kenya … [and] the Kenyan fear of the greater military capability of some of their near neighbours, which from time to time tempts them to let it be known in various ways to these neighbours that Kenya has arrangements with powerful friends, such as Britain, who would help her if she were threatened.[87]

This evidences the shrewd use made by leading Kenyans of their British relationship—choosing both to distance themselves and to evoke this as benefited the situation.

The British government considered the Kenyan requests. The MOD informed the FCO that it would take seven to ten days for an air squadron to be in position or 15 days for a ship.[88] Ewans therefore recommended refusing as 'provision of a naval vessel to Mombasa could be presented as unprovocative, but it is physically impossible to get one there in reasonable time', while if they sent aircraft 'the Ugandans, but other African governments as well, could regard such an act as provocative, which in the circumstances would not we think be helpful to Kenya'.[89] The MOD agreed that this was 'the right response'.[90] This was in some ways a

reduced commitment since 1964 when intervention in the mutiny had been quickly initiated, and this may also have been partly about avoiding the cost of military action. Nonetheless, had a ship been nearer and the logistics more feasible, it seems that the MOD would have at least seriously considered sending this.

The Kenyans also requested military equipment, particularly ammunition as their supplies were low, and British civil servants recommended that this be provided as a seemingly easier and less provocative commitment. Earlier in 1976, the British had agreed to credit for Kenyan arms purchases totalling £39 million.[91] In response to this new request, a Defence Sales representative flew to Kenya to determine what was required, and by 14 July, had received 'a letter of intent in respect of the supply of the ammunition and a payment of £40,000 as a first instalment'.[92] The British government was thus prepared to sell ammunition, but not to bear the cost of an intervention. The MOD was immediately willing to supply this and 'provisionally booked two RAF Hercules aircraft'—which the Kenyans would also have to pay for—to transport the supplies.[93] However, overflight clearance was needed to fly ammunition over each country and Turkey refused to grant this, as did other countries on alternative routes, owing to the international climate in the aftermath of the Entebbe raid.[94] The transport was put off with hopes of rescheduling, but the problem of overflight clearance remained. In early August, Kiereini came to London to meet Foreign and Commonwealth Minister of State Ted Rowlands, who 'wished to emphasise that there was no lack of political determination on HMG's part to help Kenya in every way we could'.[95] Kiereini said that 'previously Kenya had expected British assistance in times of trouble'.[96] This hints at the extent to which leading Kenyans felt militarily reliant on Britain, and made their plans accordingly. Rowlands' comments show, too, that British policy-makers did not wish to deny this sense of commitment. But the British government remained unable to organise air transport and the ammunition was sent by sea, arriving in October.[97] This prompted a broader assessment of the British ability—or lack thereof—to face a similar situation elsewhere, with recognition of 'the rundown of the worldwide British military presence'.[98] This was a sign to both British and Kenyan leaders of the limit to Britain's abilities and her declining global military capability.

British politicians, civil servants and diplomats quickly sought to limit the damage caused by letting the Kenyans down at a time of apparent crisis. Philip Weston in the FCO recognised that 'we have lost a good deal of

prestige in Kenya and we are no longer regarded there as a foul-weather as well as a fair-weather friend'.[99] Although this had not been a conscious policy choice of disengagement, Ewans wrote that 'some even believe that our failures are a deliberate act of policy and that we are trying to ease ourselves out of any obligations to assist Kenya when she is in trouble with her neighbours'.[100] This sense of support had been part of what the relationship was built on, and if members of Kenya's elite now doubted British commitment, this could be damaging. Fingland, however, questioned the lesson they should encourage leading Kenyans to draw, arguing that 'there were obvious limitations on what we could do at short notice' and Kenya should therefore maintain a stockpile of armaments.[101] Fingland was making explicit what had been becoming British military policy: Kenya should not rely on British intervention. Fingland's argument was adopted, and Ewans suggested that there was 'an opportunity to introduce greater realism in Kenyan expectations'.[102] British decision-makers thus reacted pragmatically and sought to alter Kenyan expectations to be more 'realistic' about what Britain would or could provide militarily.

However, Ewans was still concerned 'to reassure the Kenyans of our continual goodwill'.[103] The EAD argued that reaffirmation of the relationship was best done through a ministerial visit, making clear their awareness of the importance of high-level submissions to the Kenyans. ODM Minister Reg Prentice was planning a trip for a UN conference in Nairobi, but Fingland did not think Prentice best placed to address questions of defence, and his visit focused on aid.[104] The MOD suggested a visit by Defence Secretary Fred Mulley, but Ewans was initially concerned that 'it may not really be in the Kenyans' best interest (of which the Kenyans are not necessarily always the best judges) to have such a public demonstration of Anglo-Kenyan defence solidarity'.[105] This superior attitude hints again that British policy-makers still saw themselves as those who knew Kenya's 'best interests' better than the Kenyans. Mulley did visit in January 1977, and had meetings with Kenyatta, Gichuru, Kibaki and Munyua Waiyaki (Minister for Foreign Affairs, 1974–1979), as well as a lunch hosted by the government.[106] His visit was described by Ewans as a success, 'particularly in reaffirming the warm Anglo-Kenyan relationship, in disabusing Kenyan suspicions that the ammunition episode of last summer was due to a lack of will on our part, and in encouraging the Kenyans to take a more realistic view of our relationship'.[107] By January, 'bitterness has largely passed … nevertheless Kenyan faith in the British defence connexion has been bruised'.[108] The British position as leading military

supplier had been undermined and the security alliances which had been so significant in underwriting the relationship were less automatic. The confidence of leading Kenyans in British support and military backing had been dented. Notably, the next time the Kenyans wanted a review of their defence forces in 1978, similar to Mans' 1974 study, they turned to the Americans rather than the British.[109]

The Moi–Njonjo–Kibaki–McKenzie Group

With Kenyatta ever ageing and seen less positively, his succession continued to cause British speculation. The failure of the 1976 Change-the-Constitution movement, spearheaded by Mungai's supporters, established Moi's primacy over Mungai. From then on, British assessments tended to view Moi as the front runner. By early 1978, British diplomats believed that he would succeed, and so were more willing to be seen to cultivate him. In January of that year, Kenyatta planned for Moi to lead a delegation to London. In 1973, when Kibaki and Mungai had been guests of the government for general talks, Moi had not been included, but was now to lead the delegation, a clear sign of his increased position over Mungai. The EAD immediately suggested offering government hospitality as 'a valuable gesture, as a demonstration of the importance we attach to our relationship with Kenya and to discussions with Kenyan Ministers'.[110] This suggests the emphasis they now placed on personal relations with Moi himself and that they still, despite growing pessimism, viewed Kenya as a particularly significant relationship. Moi was now 'expected to succeed' by the EAD; after so long speculating, they had finally picked the most likely successor and decided to throw their weight behind him.[111]

A 'large and impressive' Kenyan delegation visited in March 1978 as official guests of the government, including 'all those whom we would expect to be influential in a future government led by Vice President Moi', including Kibaki and Njonjo.[112] Prime Minister Callaghan hosted a lunch at which he highlighted the reciprocity and 'special' nature of the relationship:

> that spirit of co-operation and mutual support which lies at the heart of the close friendship between Kenya and Britain. This will I am sure continue to be a hallmark of our friendship. Be assured that our close relationship with Kenya is very important to us.[113]

This speech was clearly designed to encourage Moi to continue a close British relationship after his anticipated succession. The Kenyan delegation met the prime minister and Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary. Moi and Callaghan also had a meeting, at which Moi claimed that 'he now enjoyed the support of 90% of the Kikuyus as President Kenyatta's successor'.[114] Although an unlikely proportion, Moi was looking to secure British backing for his succession. In this, it seems that he was reasonably successful; after the visit, Callaghan 'had a clear impression that Vice President Moi was fully in command of the situation, despite his tendency to allow his colleagues to do the talking (the Prime Minister commented that this could in itself be a sign of confidence)'.[115] Though Callaghan's final point perhaps indicates some wishful thinking, it appears that British officials were now actively looking to make a more positive assessment of Moi.

The focus of the visit was regional politics and the Ogaden war between Somalia and Ethiopia which had begun in 1977. This was a key Cold War battleground and the British were concerned following the switching of Soviet support from Somalia to Ethiopia.[116] For Kenya, 'geopolitical logic outweighed ideological considerations', and they continued to back their Ethiopian ally against Somalia for regional rather than Cold War reasons.[117] The British government was considering supplying arms to Somalia, hoping to benefit from Somalia entering the Western sphere of influence. However, the British aim of the talks was to highlight that 'our links with Kenya remain our first priority in the area'.[118] Kenya was still the closest and most useful regional ally, although 'there is a limit to how far we can tailor our policy towards Somalia to Kenyan susceptibilities'.[119] Moi also requested arms finance and argued that 'Kenya wished to improve her military capacities so that she could stand on her own feet. Kenya recognised that the United Kingdom could no longer come to Kenya's aid at 48 hours' notice, as she had once been able to do.'[120] Moi thus displayed recognition of the policy that British officials had been seeking to promote since 1974, and particularly following Entebbe, which encouraged Kenya to build up her military capability and not to rely on Britain. As well as encouraging, the British also enabled this policy: in June 1978, they offered £27 million for arms purchases, 'which we understand was well received'.[121]

On 24 May 1978, McKenzie was killed returning from a mission to Amin when his aircraft was destroyed by a time bomb. Fingland wrote to Njonjo and McKenzie's wife 'expressing my personal condolences' and

planned to attend the funeral.[122] The EAD thought that although McKenzie had no longer been a minister, 'some official expression of regret would be appropriate'.[123] The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary sent condolences, and Callaghan sent a personal message to Kenyatta in which he was 'profoundly shocked … I know he was an invaluable guide and trusted friend of yours, and a good servant of Kenya. I was very glad to have been a friend of his for 25 years.'[124] Clearly, politicians and civil servants felt that the British government needed to officially acknowledge this at the highest level, and to focus on the personal. At McKenzie's London memorial service, Foreign and Commonwealth Minister Rowlands represented the government.[125]

British observers were immediately keen to assess how and why the plane had crashed and the 'rumours of sabotage'.[126] In a sign of how close technical relationships remained, the Kenyans turned to the British for assistance. A UK Civil Aviation Authority official was already working within the Kenyan Department of Civil Aviation and assessed the crash site.[127] Nairobi Criminal Investigation Department also asked the British for 'assistance in determining the type of explosive device employed'.[128] The British government displayed a willingness to help—provided that the Kenyans would pay.[129] A British official visited and evidence was taken to Britain for analysis, with the report concluding that the crash 'resulted directly from the detonation within it of an explosive device', but not explaining where this had come from.[130] Rumours were rife and potential assassins included the Israelis, Palestinians, Amin, Obote, Ugandan communists, Mungai's group and other Kenyans; the Ugandan government has typically been blamed.[131]

The key issue was the impact that McKenzie's death would have on Kenyan politics. A leading intermediary, his death might have been expected to herald a change in British opinion or policy. Fingland believed that 'whatever his faults and controversial activities in recent years, [McKenzie] had made a considerable impact on the Kenyan scene'.[132] His business interests had been central and 'although McKenzie's commercial activities were not always to our liking or advantage there is no denying that he was instrumental in promoting some major export deals by British firms'.[133] He had played a key role as a 'high level interlocutory' in many countries, often with British diplomats, and in this 'he will be difficult to replace … McKenzie's death will leave a vacuum which it will take some time to fill.'[134] Fingland also thought that McKenzie's position in the group around Moi was significant: 'this is not to suggest that the grouping

will fall apart; but it may be less effective, particularly should a crisis arise in the near future.'[135] In fact, this was revealed to be an overstatement of McKenzie's impact, and his death made remarkably little difference to British or Kenyan policies.

The Bamburi Understanding Reconsidered

The Bamburi Understanding had long demonstrated the particular value of the Anglo-Kenyan relationship, and had been further reconfirmed by the new prime minister, Callaghan, to Njonjo orally on 14 May 1976.[136] But in 1978, the British government posed serious questions about the viability and continuation of the Understanding for the first time since it had been made over a decade earlier. These questions were prompted by the MOD, whose defence plan 'requires revision … [B]efore initiating such a review it seems appropriate to question the concept of armed intervention'.[137] Captain George Hayhoe viewed it as 'hardly conceivable that we would allow ourselves to become involved in a war in East Africa'.[138] This discussion occurred shortly after Moi's visit, and Moi had encouraged policy-makers in their belief 'that the Kenyan authorities wish to stand on their own feet militarily and are under no illusions as to our willingness or ability to assist them with forces in the event of a Somali attack'.[139]

This opened debate within the FCO on the very existence of the Understanding. Fingland favoured finding ways to withdraw, arguing that:

> If we had to explain the limitations on action open to us only when the Bamburi Understanding were to be invoked by the Kenyans, we would appear in their eyes to be letting them down at the most difficult time, when they were under a real threat, and this could bring about a crisis in our relations … however difficult the process of disengaging from the Bamburi Understanding I would suggest that this is a position towards which we ought consciously [and] deliberately to be moving.[140]

This was part of changing British geopolitical and military realities; it was increasingly obvious to British decision-makers that there would be no military intervention under the terms of the Understanding. Despite this, Colin Munro of the FCO Defence Department argued that some Kenyans 'must believe that our troops are training to meet some specific contingency in Kenya' and would still expect intervention.[141] Thus, he 'agree[d] generally that we should seek to disengage', but not 'that we should now

… [which] might cause a country that is supposed to be one of our best friends in Africa to conclude that far from stepping up our effort we are planning to abrogate an important existing commitment'.[142] The possible damage to the relationship was his priority, with the Understanding part of what made Kenya 'one of our best friends in Africa'.

Other considerations were also raised by head of the EAD Munro. He argued that policy-makers could not 'dismiss entirely' the possibility that Kenya might turn to the Soviet Union for an alternative commitment, and he thought that the Understanding was significant to Kenyatta personally, who 'might take our changed line particularly hard'.[143] Actively seeking change while Kenyatta was alive was therefore likely to damage the relationship. Munro suggested rather that policy-makers should 'aim at a situation where the Understanding is increasingly down-graded in Kenyan eyes, ideally to the point where it may not be necessary formally to terminate it'.[144] The BHC considered that Moi, as incoming president, was likely to ask for a renewal, 'if only for reassurance … Our response will have to be carefully worded.'[145] In one sense, this would be the ideal time to move away from the Understanding, as British officials were reluctant to do so while Kenyatta was alive, but the British government would also want to establish support for Moi, and not to suggest a more limited relationship.

The Bamburi Understanding was an issue where politicians had substantial involvement. On 18 August, Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary David Owen gave a clear recommendation:

> I do not disagree with the burden of the argument but now is a bad time. I believe the understanding will wither at the vine … I see no need to rid ourselves of all commitments. Meanwhile, the MOD should relax. They do not need to plan anything either. The vital issue is our relationship with Kenya. Now is not the time to tamper with this issue.[146]

Rowlands agreed, arguing that 'the Bamburi understanding is a part of our special relationship. It hasn't been "onerous"!'[147] Despite potential problems, the Understanding remained a significant part of the relationship and a sign of British commitment. Because it was likely never to be acted upon, it was also inexpensive. Munro reported to Fingland that: 'we now have clear ministerial endorsement for seeking to let Bamburi gradually lose significance, but without our taking any initiative.'[148] This meant that the British government would continue to encourage the Kenyans to build up their own military and not rely on Britain—as policy had been for the

previous few years. The Defence Department replied to Captain Hayhoe that: 'I doubt very much if you need maintain anything like the detailed 1973 plans'; but there was a need for some military planning while the Kenyans were potentially relying on this.[149] This was the only time the Understanding was seriously debated since it had been created. The renewals had proceeded fairly easily, with little questioning of the premise itself. British decision-makers had always thought it unlikely that they would have to honour the Understanding. But this reconsideration did not aim for a substantially changed relationship. The view of all involved was that the British military would not intervene, and the question was really one of whether to actively try and move away from the Understanding in case it proved embarrassing, or whether to do nothing definite as the Understanding was useful and there was little risk of any real commitment. The latter was the course recommended by ministers.

Conclusion

This was a period of greater British pessimism about Kenya. Personal relationships remained significant but less secure. Kenyatta still symbolised, as he had since independence, the close Anglo-Kenyan relationship, but decreased confidence in him meant that long-standing uncertainty about British interests under a future successor was coupled with pessimism about Kenyatta and the current situation. Duff's unusual hope for Kenyatta's speedy demise highlighted this change and the pessimism which had come to the BHC. Diplomats increasingly believed that Moi would succeed, and the group around him contained many of Britain's 'friends' within Kenya. Moi was no longer seen as an unintelligent compromise unlikely to last long, but increasingly as a viable future president who should be cultivated with visits and personal contact. British policy-makers encouraged him to keep looking towards Britain as Kenyatta had done, hoping to maintain their interests through his succession. Views were minimally affected by McKenzie's death. But diplomats and civil servants were uncertain and remained unable to predict how the succession would in fact play out. These years did not fundamentally challenge British paternalism, or their sense that they best understood what Kenya's interests were and how to achieve them. But Kariuki's murder did shake British self-confidence, bringing the realisation that they did not have as much knowledge or awareness as they had previously thought, and that their relations with Kenya's leaders were not as open as they had believed.

It seemed to policy-makers that what had made the Kenyan relationship so 'special' in earlier years—the close personal contacts and military relations—was slipping away. The military relationship was crucial for British policy-makers. With this declining, it was more difficult to envisage such a positive future relationship. The failure to deliver ammunition swiftly, or to provide an obvious show of military support, and the brief cancellation of British training, made it clear to all involved that things had changed. The relationship had been built on these military connections; the MOU had been the first major agreement with independent Kenya and was thereafter referred to and relied upon. But this was becoming less certain, and British abilities were hampered by changed circumstances and their geopolitical weaknesses. The British government could not afford to maintain the military assets which had underwritten their intervention in the mutiny or the plans for Operation Binnacle. Military policy would now encourage the Kenyans to spend money on British equipment, thus bringing money into the British economy, rather than relying on interventions. British politicians, civil servants and diplomats no longer wanted Kenya's leaders to rely on them in the same way—although they did not want someone else to replace them. Their hope was to maintain influence without bearing the costs.

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127. Telegram, Fingland to FCO, 26 May 1978, TNA FCO 31/2555/2.
128. Telegram, Nairobi to EAD, 31 May 1978, TNA FCO 31/2555/8.
129. Telegram, FCO to Nairobi, 1 June 1978, TNA FCO 31/2555/10.
130. MOD, 'R.A.R.D.E. branch memorandum 56/78 (EM2/EM4): An investigation into the loss of Piper Aztec aircraft 5YACS, which occurred over Ngong, Kenya on 24 May 1978', July 1978, TNA FCO 31/2555/36.

131. See for examples: telegram, Fingland to FCO, 26 May 1978, TNA FCO 31/2555/2; Fingland to Munro, 31 May 1978, TNA FCO 31/2555/9; Ewans to Airad, 12 June 1978, TNA FCO 31/2555/16; Le Breton to Rosling, 18 July 1978, TNA FCO 31/2555/29.
132. Fingland to Munro, 31 May 1978, TNA FCO 31/2555/9.
133. Ibid.
134. Ibid.
135. Ibid.
136. Background note: The Bamburi Understanding, [1978], TNA FCO 31/2317.
137. Hayhoe to Yarnold, 31 March 1978, TNA FCO 46/1582/1.
138. Ibid.
139. Rosling to Byatt, 14 April 1978, TNA FCO 46/1582/2.
140. Fingland to Munro, 17 May 1978, TNA FCO 46/1582/4.
141. Munro to Carter, 19 July 1978, TNA FCO 46/1582/7.
142. His emphasis. Ibid.
143. Munro to Mansfield, 27 July 1978, TNA FCO 46/1582/8.
144. Ibid.
145. Mansfield minute, 1 August 1978, TNA FCO 46/1582/9.
146. His emphasis. Owen minute, recorded in Wall to Munro, 16 August 1978, TNA FCO 46/1582/14.
147. Rolwands minute, recorded in Temple to Stephen, [1978], TNA FCO 31/2325/9.
148. Munro to Fingland, 18 August 1978, TNA FCO 31/2325/14.
149. Munro to Hayhoe, 14 September 1978, TNA FCO 46/1582/16.

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CHAPTER 8

August 1978–1980: Succeeding with a New President

In the final two years of the 1970s, both Britain and Kenya witnessed changes in leadership. In Britain, Margaret Thatcher was elected prime minister in May 1979. Thatcher's premiership brought changes to British policies, including foreign policy priorities. Thatcher focused upon the Cold War and close relationship with America and less on the Commonwealth. Munro, head of the EAD, recalled that 'the different style and mood came with Mrs Thatcher, who didn't have as much time for Africa, or sense of engagement'.[1] Her 'ideology of economic liberalism' did not always fit with a strong emphasis on aid.[2] According to Sharp, in this early period of Thatcher's government she was less focused on foreign policy, a concern which would later come to the fore over the Falkland Islands and Cold War.[3] Her key foreign policy success in these years was the final resolution of the Rhodesia/Zimbabwe problem which had plagued British governments since 1965. In December 1979, a ceasefire was agreed, the Lancaster House agreement was signed and 'was a diplomatic triumph. It was also a surprise.'[4] This was a major success for Thatcher and ended a long-standing difficulty for the British government. As before, Kenya was helpful towards Britain over this, and contributed to the Commonwealth Monitoring Force.

In Kenya, after so long speculating and waiting, Kenyatta died in August 1978 and Moi at once succeeded to the presidency. British diplomats, politicians and civil servants had long harboured anxieties for the post-Kenyatta future and what this would mean for their interests. But rather than the feared instability, political in-fighting and chaos, Moi

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consolidated his position quickly and without serious challenge. This alone did not secure British interests. Kenyatta had chosen to pursue a close relationship with Britain; as High Commissioner Fingland argued, 'the British, who imprisoned him, remained those to whom he turned first for friendship and help'.[5] This relationship had been based on personal relations and deals negotiated with Kenyatta's elite, and it was the fear of losing these which so concerned British observers. They could not be assured of the benefits of the relationship if Kenya's leaders sought to deny them. Moi's attitude would thus be crucial. The years immediately prior to 1978 were characterised by the sense of a declining relationship, and with the deaths of both Kenyatta and McKenzie in 1978 two of the key individuals who had sustained the Anglo-Kenyan relationship were gone.

In fact, Moi's constitutional succession at Kenyatta's death and his choices in the immediate years thereafter reinvigorated the relationship. Khapoya suggested in 1979 that 'Kenyans and others who were contented with the previous regime will find much to rejoice about with Moi's regime'.[6] This certainly appeared to be true from the British perspective. Moi recognised, as had Kenyatta and other Kenyan politicians previously, the potential benefits he could gain from a close relationship with Britain. Negative and derogatory British assessments of Moi had not disappeared, but Moi seemed much more assured and shrewd than British policy-makers had previously imagined him. His biographer, Morton—who notably received assistance from Moi himself, and whose biography was intended in at least some measure to rehabilitate Moi from his 1998 image of 'a dictator as corrupt as he is malevolent'—argued that 'for much of his life he has survived by disguise'.[7] If it was a 'disguise', he certainly convinced the British prior to his succession, and it is clear that British officials had underestimated Moi, who was quickly able to take control of Kenya's leadership.

The British were not king-makers; they had not foisted Moi onto Kenya, and they came to back him with some hesitation. But the idea that the British had this role, coupled with Kenyan ideas such as those in 1975 that the British army was in Kenya to back up the state, could encourage the idea among Kenyans that Moi was the chosen British successor and had their—potentially military—backing. Moi sought to use this to his advantage, cultivating this image with a series of visits to Britain. These followed his successful visit in March 1978 as vice president. Barston has argued that personal diplomacy and visits 'may facilitate political transition' and this was Moi's aim.[8] Kenyatta had rarely travelled abroad, and had

preferred to work through intermediaries such as McKenzie and Njonjo who would transmit his messages to foreign governments. Moi chose to visit himself. He made a series of overseas visits during the period 1978–1980, including to France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Iraq, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, China, America and Britain, as well as multiple visits within Africa.[9] The new president was clearly keen to cultivate the image of himself as a world statesman with international support. As Musambayi has argued, for Moi, 'foreign policy has been used as a means of regime consolidation and entrenchment'.[10] Moi's use of his foreign policy meant that British interests were sustained through the transition.

Succession

On 22 August, Kenyatta died and Moi was immediately sworn in as president by Njonjo. Kenyatta's succession was seen in the years thereafter as positive and stable compared to elsewhere. Tamarkin argued that 'few African countries can boast Kenya's outstanding record'; Khapoya described it as 'stunningly smooth'.[11] This raises the question of why this was so 'smooth', particularly as peaceful leadership transitions in Africa were uncommon during the 1970s and 1980s when, as Hughes and May have argued, these were often viewed 'as a "crisis" of stability and survival'.[12] The potential for 'crisis' was what British policy-makers were so concerned by in the years preceding Kenyatta's death. Hodder-Williams has suggested that the succession 'hid considerable internal divisions and, indeed, an abortive coup in the making'[13]; although the head of the EAD does not recall viewing this as a threat at the time.[14] According to Karimi and Ochieng, Mungai had planned a purge of the Moi faction to be carried out upon Kenyatta's death, with lists of an initial fifteen and total of around 300 to be killed; but Mungai was taken by surprise by Kenyatta dying in Mombasa rather than Nakuru, and Moi's supporters acted immediately to propel him to power.[15] Although it is unclear quite how exaggerated some of this may have been, some sort of plotting was clearly occurring.

On the day of Kenyatta's death, which was carefully announced on the Voice of Kenya state radio, Fingland described 'an atmosphere of rather stunned calm'.[16] Fingland also immediately telegrammed the MOD to inform them that 'visits by military personnel to Kenya at this time should be avoided', and the planned recce party departing the next day should be suspended, with troops in Kenya for an exercise to remain in their base.[17]

This suggests concern that the presence of British troops could be misinterpreted, or that they could be exposed to a potentially volatile situation if stability was not maintained. Communication over the immediately following days between the BHC and London took place via flash telegrams, with speed the priority in sharing information. Rosling in the EAD considered that 'the immediate aftermath of Kenyatta's death was one of the potential danger periods. And the first indications are therefore encouraging.'[18] A cautious optimism emerged, but British officials were still uncertain about an uncontested succession. In the following days, Moi gained multiple declarations of support from key political figures, including previous opponents, and by 11 September, 'the pro-Moi bandwagon is now rolling at full speed'.[19] Moi was described by the BHC as having 'perceptibly come to personify a widespread longing for stability' among Kenyans, although probably also among British policy-makers, who had come to see Moi as the candidate of stability and continued benefits, and thus to support his succession.[20] Moi adopted a philosophy of 'Nyayo' (footsteps) with the idea that he was following Kenyatta's.[21] Publicly, he highlighted continuity: 'foreign policy … has served us well in the past. It will therefore continue unchanged.'[22] Moi was consciously intending to portray an impression of continuity, stability and support.

Kenyatta's funeral was the first occasion when the post-Kenyatta British relationship with Moi would be exhibited, both to Moi and to a wider public audience.[23] In preparing for the funeral, which the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary and Prince Charles would attend, civil servants expected that 'the Kenyan Government, and indeed Kenyan opinion generally, will doubtless see the British presence and attitude as evidence of our wish to maintain the friendliest of relations'.[24] British officials were now optimistic about their relationship: 'if as seems likely, they [the Moi–Njonjo–Kibaki group] continue to hold the reins of Government, Anglo-Kenyan relations will prosper.'[25] In the British press, Kenyatta was remembered positively as 'the father figure of modern Africa'.[26] Nonetheless, his Mau Mau associations were not forgotten; as one paper described, 'it is one of the ironies of politics that Britain is now paying court to the memory of Jomo Kenyatta'.[27] Another journalist wrote that Kenyatta had 'turned from Mau Mau leader to a moderate elder African statesman who was receptive to Britain's African policy and one of its best salesmen'.[28] References to this 'transformation' suggested the difficulties of reconciling colonial ideas of Kenyatta with the positive relationship after

independence—something policy-makers generally preferred not to address.

The Anglo-Kenyan relationship was immediately reinforced at the highest level with messages between Callaghan and Moi. The prime minister's condolence letter offered that: 'if there are matters in which you think Britain can be of assistance to Kenya during this transitional period, I am sure you will not hesitate to inform me either directly or through our High Commissioner.'[29] This was a striking declaration of support. This message was sent on the day after Kenyatta's death, and makes clear how quickly and definitively the British government sought to back Moi. Callaghan and Moi had met multiple times and seem to have had a good political friendship.[30] Moi wrote personally to Callaghan in reply that:

> The assistance and understanding we have received from Britain, in the traditional style of a good old friend, was particularly welcome. I have no doubt that as we face the difficult years ahead, the people of Kenya can rely on such trusted friends for assistance when needed. I hope to pursue further the areas of co-operation already so well established between our two nations.[31]

In his first official presidential communication, Moi was aiming to assuage British fears of a change in policy with his presidency and highlight the close relationship; while simultaneously conveying that he would look to Britain for continued 'assistance'. Although not specifying details, Moi was making clear that the British government would have to continue putting resources into Kenya to maintain the relationship. This personal, high-level communication was continued in the prime minister's congratulatory message after Moi was elected president in October: 'for a long time I have thought that your succession was inevitable and right', wrote Callaghan, in a particularly selective remembering of British ideas.[32]

In November, Moi planned an informal trip to London following a visit to Brussels, saying that this was about shopping, but that 'he hoped it would be possible for him to see "his friend Mr Callaghan"'.[33] Moi was looking to demonstrate his British connections. Fingland suggested that 'President Moi himself seems pleased that [the] opportunity has arisen of coming to London on his first overseas visit since becoming President'.[34] London was informed of this trip only ten days prior to it, but head of the EAD Munro argued that 'in view of the importance we attach to our relations with Kenya it is clearly desirable that we should meet President

Moi's expressed wish to see the Prime Minister and Secretary of State if at all possible'.[35] The briefing for this visit suggested that Britain had 'long enjoyed good relations with the new President and his principal associates'.[36] Although more true of his 'associates'—Njonjo and Kibaki were among those visiting—by this point, uncertainties about Moi were being conveniently overlooked in favour of pragmatically focusing on the positive relationship British officials hoped to maintain.

Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary Owen met Moi at the airport and they discussed regional foreign policy, with Owen commenting that it 'was a useful opportunity for contact'.[37] Callaghan was in Cardiff, but 'would like a personal message from him, conveying his regrets, and making any political points which may be appropriate, to be handed to President Moi on his arrival'.[38] This letter read: 'your many friends here have admired the way in which you have led Kenya since the sad death of Jomo Kenyatta … Your assumption of the highest office is an encouragement to us all.'[39] Callaghan, and by extension the British government, was cementing support for Moi. British policy-makers privileged these personal connections, and politicians were particularly involved in meeting Moi during the transition period. A lunch hosted by the Lord Chancellor was arranged, and his speech stated that 'the closeness of our relationship has brought great benefits to both sides'.[40] The idea of a mutually beneficial relationship had long been important, and was highlighted here to encourage Moi to continue this.

One of the few substantive issues raised during this visit was political detentions. Human rights and democracy had rarely been British priorities in Kenya so long as British interests were protected. The specific concern was due to 'considerable public concern in this country, especially over the case of the writer, Professor Ngugi [wa Thiong'o]'.[41] Fingland argued that 'the Kenyan whose views really matter about detention is Njonjo', and recommended that the Lord Chancellor talk informally to him rather than Moi, although doubtful of the impact, having already raised this with Njonjo.[42] This suggests the continued informal and personal nature of the British relationship with Njonjo; they felt they could approach him on this issue, even if not expecting him to take their advice. Njonjo was an intermediary British policy-makers had access to, as well as being a close advisor of Moi, accompanying him on all his visits to London. With the deaths of both Kenyatta and McKenzie, Njonjo had become even more significant as a British ally. The brief for the Lord Chancellor was: 'we fully recognise that this is a matter for the Kenyan Government to make its own

decisions, that detentions are very few and strictly constitutional … If there is anything the Kenyan Government can do to reassure opinion, it would of course be very welcome'; however, 'the government has ruled with much greater restraint than elsewhere in Black Africa'.[43] This was a very mild brief, and does not suggest that officials intended to put any real pressure on Njonjo or Moi. As before, positive personal relationships with Kenya's leaders were more aligned to British interests than pressure on human rights. The impact of British influence is debatable; however, it is notable that less than a month later Moi did announce the release of political detainees.[44]

State Visit

In January 1979, only months after his succession and previous informal visit to Britain, Moi was keen to organise another trip. He hoped for a formal visit and 'wishes to be able to let it be known soon that he has an official visit to the UK pending'.[45] As this suggests, for Moi, a key consideration was not just to have discussions with British ministers, but to publicise in Kenya that he would be doing so. Moi recognised the benefits of using widespread Kenyan assumptions of British influence to his advantage. The FCO 'welcome[d] Moi's desire to demonstrate the priority he attaches to relations with us', and the BHC was to inform Moi that 'he is always welcome here'.[46] As British civil servants recognised, 'it has been and still is in our interests to encourage the Kenyans in the value they attach to their special relationship with us'.[47] The FCO suggested that, because of a scheduling gap, Moi was 'an excellent candidate' for a state visit.[48] Kenyatta had never made a state visit and this would clearly fulfil the role both Moi and FCO staff wanted of publicising British support for Moi. Moi was invited and 'obviously delighted', and planned to delay his visit to China until after this.[49]

As well as demonstrating personal relationships, tangible issues would be discussed at the state visit, and British officials sought to prepare their policies in the months leading up to it. Aid was always a key part of the relationship, and by 1979, 'the Kenyan Aid Programme is Britain's largest in Africa'.[50] At aid talks in Nairobi in October 1978, the British aid offer was £80 million for the next three years.[51] Although at first sight this appears a substantial increase from the 1976 aid package, inflation meant that it was the same amount in real terms, and in fact a smaller proportion of the overall aid budget.[52] The ODM planned this because of the difficulty

of getting Treasury approval for an increase.[53] They were not so willing as they had sometimes been before to argue for additional aid for Kenya. Still, this remained a negotiated relationship, and the strength of the Kenyans as aid negotiators was clearly recognised. Hart, in the FCO research department, argued in a consideration of Kenya's balance of payments that:

> The long term trend seems to be towards increasing trade deficits and an insatiable appetite for aid. The Kenyans know how to operate their give and take relationship with us in which we give them more aid per head than any country except the Seychelles and they take it and come back for more.[54]

The wry feeling apparent in his comments was part of his more negative assessment of Kenya's economy.

Economic concerns were tied into Kenya's armament programme, as Kenya's 'military expenditure rose from less than 1% of [Kenya's gross national product] in 1973 to 4.6% in 1978'.[55] This coincides exactly with changed British military policy towards Kenya in 1974, when they committed to supporting a Kenyan arms build-up. As Tables 8.1 and 8.2 show, it was after 1976—when Britain did not supply ammunition or a ship following the Entebbe raid—that Kenyan military expenditure dramatically

Table 8.1 Military allocations as percentage of central government budgets

Year	*1970*	*1971*	*1972*	*1973*	*1974*	*1975*	*1976*	*1977*	*1978*	*1979*
Percentage of budget (%)	4.9	4.4	5.4	6.1	6.4	6.5	5.7	10.8	13.7	15.6

Source Paul B. Henze, 'Arming the Horn 1960–1980', Working Paper No. 43, International Security Studies Program, The Wilson Center (1982), 22

Table 8.2 Size of Kenyan armed forces

Year	*1970*	*1971*	*1972*	*1973*	*1974*	*1975*	*1976*	*1977*	*1978*	*1979*
Size	7,000	7,000	7,000	8,000	9,000	9,000	9,000	13,000	13,000	13,000

Source Henze, 'Arming the Horn 1960–1980', 18

increased as a proportion of her budget, and that the size of her army increased. By 1979, Britain had offered support for 'the massive military re-equipment programme which amounts to some £425 million over the next 7 to 10 years, of which nearly half is for contracts placed in the UK largely financed by credits on favourable terms'.[56] British policy-makers had supported this Kenyan arms build-up, yet were now left with the difficulty that the Kenyans could not afford it—as, incidentally, the British had argued in 1964. Debt was increasing, and Kenya's debt service ratio almost doubled from 4.0% in 1976 to 7.9% in 1978.[57] Whitehall estimated Kenya's 1978 deficit at US$539 million.[58] British projections of Kenya's economic future were not optimistic.

Because of financial difficulties, in May 1979, the Kenyans requested programme aid of £30 million, preferably in addition to the £80 million already offered, although they would delay some projects to enable funds to be transferred if necessary.[59] Deputy High Commissioner William Watts suggested that the Kenyans were 'not expecting a lot but they will be disappointed if they do not get some additional assistance'.[60] Yet again, this caused inter-departmental debate. The FCO argued in favour of switching £15 million of the aid already committed to programme aid, but, despite 'very strong political arguments', the ODA was hesitant because the general aid budget was to be cut by £50 million.[61] This was owing to the new Thatcher government's 'relatively low regard for aid'.[62] Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary Carrington, however, wrote to the Treasury that 'this is a clear example of aid, not as an exercise in charity or a dubious operation in support of exports, but as an essential instrument of British foreign policy in the real world of today'.[63] This followed a 1978 government report which had argued that British policy should 'focus our resources on those countries where our interests are greatest and where our efforts will pay the greatest dividend'.[64] Kenya was clearly one of these countries, and this was a very explicit acknowledgement that aid was intended to serve British interests. The £80 million agreement had previously been 'ready for final signature'[65]; but Nigel Lawson, financial secretary to the Treasury, was 'sure it would be wrong to sign a formal agreement … before we have completed that [spending] review'.[66] This was an occasion when British politics at the highest level had an impact on policy towards Kenya. The offer of £80 million had already been made, and Lawson's implicit suggestion that Britain might renege on this would surely have damaged the relationship. Others in the Treasury 'did not envisage that we should go back on this pledge', but did not want this to

be signed at the state visit.[67] As a compromise, there was authorisation to offer £15 million of programme aid and £65 million of project aid, making up the £80 million and following the FCO's preference—although a long way from the Kenyan request.

Another issue which came under scrutiny in preparation for the visit was the Bamburi Understanding. Following debate earlier in 1978, the consideration was how to address this during Moi's presidency. Before Kenyatta's funeral, EAD officials hoped not to have to renew it, but argued that 'it would undermine Kenyan confidence in their relations with us and run counter to our interests if we were simply to say that the Bamburi Understanding died with Kenyatta'.[68] Thus policy was simply to 'hope the Kenyans will not raise the subject'.[69] In preparation for the state visit, however, officials considered whether the Understanding should be pre-emptively raised and explicitly removed. The FCO Defence Department saw this as 'a unique opportunity to get this matter clarified' and to end the commitment.[70] The EAD and the BHC were more cautious of this 'for fear of damaging Anglo/Kenyan relations' which were their priority.[71] Fingland agreed with the EAD that 'the Bamburi Understanding should not be discussed with Mr Moi unless he takes the initiative … on balance, it seems likely that Mr Moi may not seek a specific renewal of the Understanding. It is impossible to be sure, of course.'[72]

Civil servants agreed that they would not raise this, and would hope that the Kenyans did not. If Moi did ask, and if pushed, they would explain that it was now 'unrealistic to assume that direct British military intervention in a situation in Africa could be part of our response'.[73] Although not intending to simply deny the Understanding, they would emphasise that Moi should not rely upon it. Head of the EAD John Robson suggested that 'if the subject is not raised by either side in the first meeting between new leaders in both countries, this could justifiably be taken as an indication of tacit acceptance by the Kenyans that the Understanding in its present form had lost much of its relevance'.[74] Moi and his delegation did not raise the Understanding. But there is, of course, another explanation for Moi's choice not to discuss this: he thereby avoided the possibility that it might be cancelled, and if a situation arose in future when he wished to call upon it, he would truthfully be able to say that it had never been revoked.

The state visit itself consisted of large amounts of ceremonial: inspecting the RAF Guard of Honour, a welcome from the Lord Mayor and state banquet, talks with the prime minister and lunch with the government.[75]

The Kenyan delegation was extensive, consisting of twelve in the official party, an unofficial party of thirty, five officials, a security detail, presidential escort and thirteen journalists.[76] The visit was written up in a Kenyan booklet on Moi's overseas visits to be circulated to missions abroad, and was described as 'a living testimony of our friendly relations with Britain'.[77] This kind of reaction was clearly part of the reason for bringing so many journalists, and shows Moi's shrewd use of this visit to cement his position. The *Daily Nation* described the relationship as 'mature, relaxed, frank and positive … close and friendly'.[78] *The Standard* highlighted that Moi had been 'welcomed with pomp and pageantry' by the British Royal Family.[79] In the British press, too, the reaction was positive. Bruce Loudon in the *Daily Telegraph* was emphatic, describing Moi as 'rated by many as one of Africa's most successful leaders … one of the great surprises of the post-colonial era in Africa … he has injected a dynamism into public life in Kenya'.[80] This was also the view of many British policy-makers.

British officials were increasingly recognising Moi as an ally. A briefing for the Queen described Moi as 'a sincere, intelligent but rather modest man'.[81] This second quality is particularly interesting given earlier views of Moi as unintelligent, and the 1979 Annual Review did still highlight 'his intellectual limitations'.[82] But limitations were now overlooked. Moi's meeting with Thatcher highlighted the close relationship. Thatcher commented that the 'relationship between Kenya and the U.K. was a very special one'.[83] Moi agreed that 'Kenya's long relationship with the U.K. had a special character; the two countries belonged to one family. He was very grateful for what the U.K. had done for Kenya in the past.'[84] Both leaders were explicitly highlighting the 'special' nature of the relationship and seeking to convey that this had survived the succession. This was also a way of using the relationship to their advantage from both sides: it cost nothing to describe this as 'special'.

At his meeting with Thatcher, Moi frankly reiterated his desire for additional aid: 'I need your assistance.'[85] He requested grants to repay British loans for military expenditure. Thatcher 'thought that the British Government should do what it could to help President Moi … [and] suggested that, if necessary, the financial help which we are giving to less friendly countries in Africa should be diverted'.[86] This was a continuation of the idea that Kenya had a particular significance to Britain which was worth preserving and paying for. Another suggestion made by Thatcher was 'the possibility of using additional UK assistance of this kind as a means of encouraging Kenya to be helpful over Rhodesia'.[87] The idea of aid as

part of an exchange was very clear, with the suggestion that this could be used to 'buy' Kenyan support over Rhodesia/Zimbabwe, which was then the main concern of Britain's Africa policy. The British press also reported that 'Kenyan sympathy and understanding for British policies is regarded as an essential pre-requisite for success'.[88] The issue on which the British government needed Kenyan support was Zimbabwe Rhodesia, declared under the leadership of Bishop Abel Muzorewa, with the British government looking to recognise this but concerned that other African governments would not. Moi's initial statements at the state visit indicated that he would not support it, but he then publicly stated that Thatcher '"will not go it alone" in recognising the new black majority Government of Bishop Muzorewa'.[89] This suggested that Moi would offer diplomatic support to Britain and thereby help Britain in her broader African policy.

Following the state visit, Moi's requests for aid were considered. Robson argued that there 'would be a good case' for additional programme aid 'were it not for the constraints on the aid programme'.[90] Those in the Treasury and the ODA were opposed, and Treasury officials remained reluctant for the aid agreement to be signed, although as Thatcher had committed to giving £80 million when meeting Moi it was 'not at risk'.[91] The Treasury won the argument, and the decision was taken not to offer further aid, nor to change the terms of military loans.[92] The British had encouraged the Kenyans to expand their military, yet were not prepared to offer further assistance. Additionally, because of the spending review, Treasury officials suggested that disbursements of project aid be slowed to allow for programme aid to be offered without too much additional British spending.[93] Watts in the BHC argued strongly against this: 'our offer of £65 m project aid is little more than pie in the sky if … we can spend only £2.3[m] of this before April 1981.'[94] High Commissioner Williams argued that 'the Prime Minister made the offer of programme aid personally … We would not wish to expose her to a complaint from President Moi.'[95] This was intended as an internal negotiating tactic to encourage a response from the ODA and the Treasury, as diplomats in the BHC argued for Kenya's continuing importance. Britain's weak economic position and more limited commitment to aid were apparent.

Thatcher personally conveyed to Moi that Britain would offer no further aid when they met again in Lusaka in August 1979 for the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting. At their bilateral meeting, Thatcher told Moi that she:

> wished very much that the UK could have done more: but the most that could be done was to accelerate the £15 million in programme aid which had already been agreed. The UK had massive debts of her own and, despite all her own efforts, the British Government could not possibly do any more.[96]

Moi did not seem to react too negatively, saying that an acceleration 'would be of great assistance to Kenya. It might be that, in time, additional resource could be made available.'[97] As this suggests, he had not entirely given up on the prospect of further aid. Robson commented that 'the Kenyans were no doubt disappointed but had decided to roll with the punch'.[98] For Moi, securing his position and building up personal relations were still his key concerns.

In February 1980, Moi made another visit to London, again with little notice, and between visits to Germany and America.[99] As on previous meetings, he met the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary and prime minister. Moi was clearly still seeking to use this connection to his advantage, and the fact of the meetings was more significant than their substance: 'the President would like a tour d'horizon with the Prime Minister but has no specific problems to discuss.'[100] The conclusions sent from Robson to the BHC were that 'the arrangements went well, and that nothing of great substance emerged'.[101] This visit was not intended as a means of working out substantial developments in the relationship, but was rather to highlight Moi's access and connections, something both sides were keen to encourage. Moi's succession had reinvigorated the relationship, and in a clear sign of this, a November 1979 report by Williams argued that:

> Three years ago our predecessors took the view that the United Kingdom's direct interests in Kenya would decline slowly but steadily. This has not proved to be the case. There is still a good deal of substance to the network of relationships which have been built up over the years from the colonial period onwards and in some areas, notably trade, aid and defence, the involvement is in fact greater than it was.[102]

As Williams' report makes clear, British interests in Kenya had been protected and advanced by Moi's succession.

Conclusion

British pragmatism was clear in their new-found commitment to Moi. Despite the personal nature of their relationship with Kenyatta, the benefits Britain received in terms of military agreements, economic benefits and a geopolitical ally were not substantially challenged. Moi's succession in fact reinvigorated some of the more positive assessments of the relationship as continuity and stability remained. Indeed, there were reasons to be positive about Moi following the stagnation of Kenyan politics in Kenyatta's final years: Moi released detainees, wanted to visit Britain and made some attempts—though recognisably focused on his enemies—at combatting corruption.[103] This was a negotiated relationship, and prior to Kenyatta's death British officials had been concerned that any future president would fundamentally transform this. But Moi chose not to, and rather, 'the new Government of President Moi has stressed the priority it attaches to good relations with the UK'.[104]

British diplomats, civil servants and politicians had consistently underestimated Moi as vice president. Until the late 1970s they had typically viewed him as unintelligent, a compromise and someone who, if he ever achieved the presidency, would have a limited term. In fact, as he demonstrated once he became president, Moi was much shrewder and more politically astute than British policy-makers had anticipated. He was able to cement his position in power and use the British relationship to his advantage. The visits Moi made to Britain were intended to convey his international support to a Kenyan audience. Lots of Kenyans believed that the British were somehow the king-makers and would back their chosen candidate. For Moi, this provided an opportunity. Uncertain of his position, he believed—rightly—that showing that the British were on his side would dissuade plotters and rivals. Even if he did not achieve much from his repeated visits to London, they were read in Kenya as a demonstration of British support. Moi thus used the relationship to his advantage, harnessing ideas of British power and influence.

Visits to Britain were crucial in these years, and both sides saw these as a way to highlight—to one another and more widely—that the relationship was still 'special'. The succession reasserted the value to the British government and Kenyan elite of the negotiated relationship. But significantly, these outward signs did not cost too much. Very noticeably, it was with America that Moi made an arms deal, offering America naval facilities and the use of Kenya's airfields, and receiving US$27 million of military

assistance and US$50 million of economic aid in return.[105] Previously, Britain had tended to be the partner of choice for Kenyan arms deals, and this was a clear sign of movement away from a predominant focus on Britain. When it came to the tangible costs of the relationship, British officials sought to move away from the Bamburi Understanding. Thatcher's incoming government also made changes to aid policy and, despite her support for this at the state visit, thereafter did not offer additional aid or credit for arms as Moi had requested. What Britain offered was therefore decreased, as they sought to maintain the relationship but limit the costs. This was to be influence on the cheap—but influence nonetheless.

Notes

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3. Paul Sharp, *Thatcher's Diplomacy: The Revival of British Foreign Policy* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997).
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5. Fingland, 'The death and funeral of President Kenyatta', 6 September 1978, TNA FCO 31/2319/196.
6. Khapoya, 'Politics of succession', 19.
7. Andrew Morton, *Moi: The Making of an African Statesman* (London: Michael O'Mara Books, 1998), 4, 8–9.
8. R. P. Barston, *Modern Diplomacy* (London: Longman, 1988), 98.
9. Musandu to Permanent Secretary Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 'The President Abroad 1978–1980', KNA AHC/18/8.
10. Musambayi, 'Regime consolidation and entrenchment', 1.
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13. Richard Hodder-Williams, 'Kenya after Kenyatta', *The World Today* 36, no. 12 (1980): 478.
14. Alan Munro, interview.
15. Karimi and Ochieng, The *Kenyatta Succession*, 157–172.
16. Telegram, Fingland to FCO, 22 August 1978, TNA FCO 31/2315/11.
17. Telegram, Fingland to MODUK, August 1978, TNA DEFE 24/1634/71.

18. Rosling to Stratton, 23 August 1978, TNA FCO 31/2315/31.
19. Crabbie to EAD, 11 September 1978, TNA FCO 31/2323/53.
20. Ibid.
21. Widner, *Rise of a Party-State*, 130.
22. Speech by Moi on his installation as President, 14 October 1978, KNA KA/4/21.
23. For more details on the funeral see Poppy Cullen, 'Funeral planning: British involvement in the funeral of President Jomo Kenyatta', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 44, no. 3 (2016): 513–532.
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25. Visit to Nairobi for the funeral of President Kenyatta, Brief: 'Anglo-Kenyan relations', 31 August 1978, TNA FCO 31/2317.
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27. 'Memories of Kenyatta', *Express 7 Star*, Wolverhampton, 23 August 1978, KNA MSS/29/121.
28. Tom Arms, 'Much at Stake for Britain as Kenya looks for a new leader', *Evening Post*, Reading, 23 August 1978, KNA MSS/29/122.
29. Prime Minister to Moi, in Sanders to Turner, 23 August 1978, TNA FCO 31/2315/35.
30. See Lane, 'Foreign and defence policy', 164.
31. Moi to Callaghan, 22 September 1978, TNA FCO 31/2323/63.
32. Prime Minister to Moi, 9 October 1978, TNA FCO 31/2324/67.
33. Wall to Cartledge, 8 November 1978, TNA FCO 31/2336/7.
34. Telegram, Fingland to FCO, 7 November 1978, TNA FCO 31/2336/1.
35. Munro to Private Secretary, [November 1978], TNA FCO 31/2336/5.
36. EAD, 'Private visit of the President of Kenya to London, 17–10 [*sic*] November 1978', TNA FCO 31/2337.
37. Telegram, FCO to Nairobi, 20 November 1978, TNA FCO 31/2336/34.
38. Cartledge to Wall, 9 November 1978, TNA FCO 31/2336/8.
39. Callaghan to Moi, 17 November 1978, TNA FCO 31/2336/26.
40. Notes for the Lord Chancellor's speech at lunch for President Moi, 18 November 1978, TNA FCO 31/2336/28.
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44. Speech by Moi, 12 December 1978, KNA KA/4/21.
45. Duff to Permanent Under-Secretary, 24 January 1979, TNA FCO 31/2563/13.
46. Telegram, FCO to Nairobi, 6 February 1979, TNA PREM 16/2149.
47. Robson to Williams, 4 May 1979, TNA FCO 31/2592/21.
48. Telegram, FCO to Nairobi, 12 February 1979, TNA FCO 31/2564/25.
49. Telegram, Fingland to FCO, 16 February 1979, TNA FCO 31/2564/32.
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53. McLean to Minister, 28 September 1978, TNA OD 67/79/43.
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58. Haley to Longrigg, 2 November 1979, TNA FCO 31/2591/84.
59. Telegram, Nairobi to FCO, 29 May 1979, TNA FCO 31/2592/28.
60. Watts to Robson, [May 1979], TNA FCO 31/2591/65.
61. Preston to Hurd, 6 June 1979, TNA FCO 31/2593/40.
62. Killick, 'Policy autonomy', 674.
63. Carrington to Treasury, 'Aid for Kenya', 8 June 1979, TNA FCO 31/2593/41.
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65. Burns to Permanent-Under-Secretary to Martin Vile, 16 May 1979, TNA FCO 31/2566/113.
66. Lawson to Carrington, 12 June 1979, TNA FCO 31/2593/42.
67. Kerby to Lynch, 14 June 1979, TNA FCO 31/2593/45.
68. Visit to Nairobi for the funeral of President Kenyatta, Brief: 'Bamburi Understanding', 31 August 1978, TNA FCO 31/2317.
69. Rosling to Stratton, 25 August 1978, TNA FCO 31/2316/92.
70. Watkins to Robson, 16 May 1979, TNA FCO 31/2580/3.
71. Robson to Williams, 23 May 1979, TNA FCO 31/2580/4.
72. Fingland to Rosling, 18 April 1979, TNA FCO 31/2580/2.
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89. John Dickie, 'Maggie "won't go it alone", *Daily Mail*, 14 June 1979, 4.
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101. Robson to High Commissioner, 27 February 1980, TNA FCO 31/2834/35.

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CHAPTER 9

Conclusion: A 'Special' Relationship

Ideas of British neo-colonialism in Kenya have had considerable traction. In 2013, these were used to great effect by presidential candidate Uhuru Kenyatta. Uhuru had been indicted by the International Criminal Court for the post-election violence in 2007. His campaign, however, used the accusation of neo-colonialism to his advantage by protesting against outside interference from the International Criminal Court and against his prosecution.[1] He won the election. Uhuru's rival for the presidency was Raila Odinga; thus the 2013 election saw the sons of two of Kenya's founding leaders compete against each other. This highlights the continued importance of individuals and the growth of political dynasties in Kenya. For the British, Uhuru's victory was problematic because of his indictment. But the British government has been typically pragmatic, and the claims against Uhuru were dropped in 2014.

The darker side of Britain's colonial past in Kenya has also been brought into the spotlight as evidence about Mau Mau has been revealed. Mau Mau veterans sued the British government, which agreed to pay compensation in 2013. The details which have emerged about the extent of British torture and abuse of Kenyans make it even more striking that the post-colonial relationship was so amicable. Alongside this, positive assessments of the relationship have continued. The year 2013 was the fiftieth anniversary of Kenyan independence, and British Minister for Africa Mark Simmonds, Britain's representative at the celebrations, issued a 'Happy Birthday' message in the *Daily Nation*. His language was noticeably similar to that used in the 1960s and 1970s: 'we work together in partnership, based on

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mutual respect and shared interests … our partnership is broad, deep, and mutually beneficial. I welcome that and I am ambitious for what we can achieve together in the future.'[2] His message was designed to highlight a close Anglo-Kenyan relationship and to make clear the emphasis that British decision-makers still place on Kenya. Colonial rule is more distant, and much has changed with the end of the Cold War and democratisation, but Kenya's position as an ally in the 'war on terror' has ensured it a continued significance.

In the immediate post-colonial period, the British relationship with Kenya was often characterised by British policy-makers as 'special'. The language of Kenya being 'special' and requiring distinct treatment is one which contemporaries in the British government used with notable frequency and for multiple purposes. This could be a negotiating tool used internally to encourage outcomes—such as a greater aid proportion—that certain departments or individuals hoped for.[3] The EAD typically used this with the Treasury, with ODM officials more hesitant about whether they viewed Kenya as a 'special' case or not. This language was also used as part of a regional comparison: in 1969, 'Kenya is to some extent the odd man out in East Africa by reason of the very strength of the residual British links … we should seek to make tactful use of our special position in Kenya.'[4] The British relationship with Kenya was much closer than that with Uganda or Tanzania, where post-colonial leaders sought to limit British influence and had more difficult relationships with the former metropole. British policy-makers also used this language in direct communications with Kenya's leaders to encourage them to continue this profitable relationship, such as by Thatcher to Moi at the 1979 state visit.[5] The language of Kenya being 'special' was also occasionally used by leading Kenyans in order to gain the greatest possible advantage from their relationship; Kibaki in 1972 was 'hinting strongly at our continued special relationship with Kenya' in order to encourage extensive aid.[6]

In so often talking, to both the Kenyans and each other, about Kenya as 'special', British officials came to understand their relationship with Kenya as especially beneficial. The relationship was not conducted at the top of British politics, but was nonetheless significant to British civil servants, and sometimes to politicians, as part of their attempt to pursue a global foreign policy. In 1972, High Commissioner Norris argued that 'in so far as our interests in Africa as a whole are important, the very special position we still have in Kenya means that we have a point of advantage which we should

not lightly weaken, or still less abandon'.[7] There was no single concern which made Kenya matter to the British government, but the combination of multiple and overlapping interests encouraged them to place a high value on this relationship. Britain's broad aims towards Kenya were remarkably consistent. The overriding British concern was to cultivate 'friendly' Kenyans and thus ensure that the country stayed 'friendly' to Britain. Although this seems simple, it was a very flexible idea which could be redefined as events and pragmatism dictated. There was a self-reinforcing circularity in Kenya's importance to Britain: as the British government put more resources into the relationship, in terms of aid, military supplies and other tangible resources, they came to view Kenya as increasingly significant, and this encouraged them to invest further. By treating Kenya as a place of importance to Britain, British officials thus made it even more so. This then became part of the accepted logic of policy, as British policy-makers came to view Kenya as a 'special relationship'.

In many ways, the Anglo-Kenyan relationship in the 1960s and 1970s displayed strong continuities. Independence from colonial rule did not end British influence and, as colonial policy-makers had hoped prior to decolonisation, Britain continued to receive multiple benefits from Kenya. British diplomats, civil servants and politicians often feared changes to the nature of the relationship, typified by their concerns about the succession. Officials worried that the positive relationship they had established with Kenyatta was dependent upon him personally and would not outlast him; and they feared that any successor would challenge the British role and prominence, thereby disadvantaging British interests. This concern underwrote many of their attempts at cultivating influence. In the early 1960s, decision-makers from both countries set up agreements which protected and promoted British interests in Kenya, based on negotiation over shared concerns. The late 1960s and early 1970s confirmed these relationships under Kenyatta's leadership. It was in the mid-1970s that decision-makers, typified by High Commissioner Duff, became increasingly pessimistic about Kenyan events and even Kenyatta himself—who for so long had been highly valued as the source of stability and British influence. However, with Moi's succession and the initial years of his presidency, the Anglo-Kenyan relationship was reconfirmed and rehabilitated.

The major shift in policy was the military strategy that the British government advocated for Kenya. In 1964, they encouraged Kenya not to build up a large military and to rely on potential British intervention. This

possibility was frequently considered. The British military intervened in response to the 1964 mutiny, and planned an intervention against a possible coup in 1965, although this was not enacted. The Bamburi Understanding also raised this possibility, although the idea was taken more seriously by Kenyatta than by the British government. Policy was altered in 1974, when the British government began encourage an arms build-up in Kenya and a move away from reliance on possible British intervention. Partly, this was owing to Britain's more limited abilities, of which the failure to supply ammunition after the Entebbe raid was the clearest sign. The change in British policy was thus not simply about a declining commitment to Kenya, but an inability for Britain to maintain the military capability to intervene and a preference to sell arms instead, benefiting the British economy in the process. By 1980, Kenya was heavily indebted to Britain and other states from this arms build-up.

British attitudes towards Kenya were also shaped by a sense of self-confidence, and British officials often believed that they best understood Kenya's interests. The continued sense of superiority that they displayed was a clear part of this retained sense of tutelage. Frequently, though, their knowledge about Kenya was not as complete as they supposed. This lack of real understanding was clearest in their opinions about the men who would become Kenya's first two presidents, both of whom British policy-makers misread before they assumed office. Colonial officials lacked a realistic appraisal of Kenyatta prior to his release from detention in 1961, despite believing that they understood him, and so tried to prevent him from gaining Kenya's leadership. Once British officials found Kenyatta to be someone they could profitably work with, and who was willing to work with them, attitudes shifted dramatically, and supporting Kenyatta became a central policy goal. Their previous colonial history with him—and more widely with Kenya during Mau Mau—was conveniently forgotten. It is Moi, however, who provides the most obvious example of British officials entirely misreading someone's character. Diplomats thought that he was unintelligent, a possible but unlikely compromise, and waited for another presidential candidate to emerge, before finally coming to realise that Moi would succeed and offering support. During his decade as vice president, British observers did not ever seem to notice the political shrewdness which would enable Moi to retain the presidency until 2002; nor did they see his ability to outmanoeuvre Njonjo in 1982—whom they also thought they understood as a bastion of British influence.[8] Yet when Moi assumed the presidency in

1978 the British found that, like Kenyatta before him, he was willing to work with them, and indeed keen to highlight his British connections.

Uhuru Kenyatta's 2013 arguments about neo-colonialism echo the concerns of many Kenyans in the 1960s and 1970s that Britain retained extensive control after independence. Although many Kenyans believed this, the argument made here is that the label of neo-colonialism should be reconsidered. The agency of Kenyans to shape their British relations has been demonstrated throughout this book. This was limited to a narrow elite around the president, with certain individuals most able to exert influence. Nonetheless, their ability to alter British actions in areas as diverse as aid, Asian immigration, the Bamburi Understanding and land transfer was clear. Kenyans at times also shaped the form of negotiations, pushing these towards more informal contexts. Kenyan negotiators used threats of turning to other suppliers to encourage the British to offer the best possible terms, and the Cold War competition for influence in Africa made this particularly viable as a Kenyan strategy. The Asian population was an especially powerful bargaining chip held by the Kenyan government, and one which shaped British policy choices on multiple occasions. The British officials involved therefore did not perceive themselves to be in control of this relationship in the way ideas of neo-colonialism can suggest. They were aware of the need to keep Kenyan goodwill and support, and although they had core interests that they sought to protect and promote, they were also prepared to adapt when this proved necessary. The accusation of neo-colonialism was something British policy-makers sought to avoid, as they recognised that their interests lay in supporting Kenyan stability under Kenyatta's leadership, and that for him to be seen as too close to Britain could damage the legitimacy of his government.

The choices made by Kenyatta and his elite to work with the British were thus essential to the relationship. As High Commissioner Duff wrote in 1973:

> at this distance from the heady days of independence, the Kenyans do genuinely want our friendship and our support … The Kenyans' post-colonial façade occasionally slips to reveal the depth and strength of the relationship which they enjoy with us, and which they will occasionally confess is a special one.[9]

This was indeed why the relationship did and could outlast both independence and Kenyatta's presidency, as leading members of Kenya's elite

chose to pursue it and recognised the benefits they could gain from working with Britain. This alignment of interests meant that the relationship appeared mutually beneficial to leading decision-makers in both Kenya and Britain. Negotiation was a process in which neither side was in complete control, and both the Kenyans and British sought always to achieve the most beneficial outcome for themselves and to protect their own interests.

The British and Kenyan systems of government differed, and how these interacted was crucial to forming policies and establishing relationships. Britain's bureaucratic system was based on structure and hierarchy. Decisions may have been disputed within Whitehall and between government departments, but most of those involved were imbued with a civil service culture, ethos and 'official mind' which meant that they broadly shared their understanding of British interests. Plans and priorities could be contested, but this was always within known and adhered-to boundaries. In the British system, positions were more important than the people occupying them, and channels of communication remained largely the same regardless of who occupied the posts in the BHC or in London. The composition of the British government changed substantially in these years, covering seven prime ministerial terms and six prime ministers. Yet these changes at the highest level of British politics made remarkably little difference to policy towards Kenya. This was largely because Kenya was rarely at the top of the political agenda in Britain, and civil servants stayed in position through changes in government. This demonstrates the need to analyse foreign policy at this level, as an exclusive focus on prime ministers and ministers ignores much of the work of policy-making. Key foreign policy decisions, including leaving east of Suez and joining the EEC, also had surprisingly little impact.

By contrast, the Kenyan neo-patrimonial state meant that individuals were seeking their own benefits in a system which was fractious and in which the rules were not always clearly defined. Kenyan foreign policy towards Britain was not directed through the Kenyan High Commission in London or the Kenyan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but through personal contacts. Individual Kenyans sought power, influence and wealth, and British connections could be useful for achieving these within Kenya's factional politics. McKenzie and Njonjo emphasised their importance to the British, making themselves appear potentially more significant than they were. For Odinga, a rejection of greater British influence was part of his claim to an alternative 'radical' politics. Moi in particular saw the benefits of using the British connection and made multiple visits to London

after he became president to project an impression of British support. Although the British were not the king-makers in Kenya, the idea of British influence and power could prove beneficial to leading Kenyans, both personally and in order to project to potentially hostile neighbours the idea that Kenya had a powerful ally in Britain who might offer military support.

Despite the differences in these two systems, British policy-makers did not find it difficult to work with Kenya. Rather than challenging Kenya's neo-patrimonialism, the British helped to create and then reinforced it. British diplomats sought out those they knew and believed they understood, and those whom they viewed as favourable to their own interests. Certain individuals were privileged, assumed to have knowledge and to be passing this on in beneficial ways. Cultural connections made Njonjo and McKenzie more comprehensible, and thus British officials preferred to work with them. Those who were not so culturally similar were less advantaged in their contacts. McKenzie was the most significant example of an individual being privileged regardless of position, and losing his ministerial post made little difference to the amount of contact he had with British diplomats and politicians, or to the issues they discussed. Kenyatta's favoured way of communicating with the British was to send emissaries to Britain or to the BHC to discuss key issues. British decision-makers rarely questioned whether this was the best way of understanding Kenya, but rather congratulated themselves on their favoured and frequent access to Kenya's elite. British diplomats, politicians and civil servants were happy to collude with their Kenyan 'friends' in keeping information away from the Kenyan High Commission in London or secret from rival Kenyan factions. They were willing to meet secretly with Kenyans they favoured and to conclude private negotiations and agreements—of which the Bamburi Understanding is the prime example. By choosing to work with specific individuals rather than through official channels, British policy-makers encouraged Kenyan neo-patrimonialism.

Notes

1. See Nic Cheeseman, Gabrielle Lynch and Justin Willis, 'Democracy and its discontents: Understanding Kenya's 2013 elections', *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 8, no. 1 (2014): 8.
2. Mark Simmonds, 'At just 50, Kenya has made remarkable progress and has even more lined up', *Daily Nation*, 13 December 2013, 13.

3. See for examples: Butter to Galsworthy, 27 July 1960, TNA CO 822/2560/22; Record of meetings on future British aid to Kenya, eighth meeting, 13 April 1970, TNA OD 26/275/127; Lee to Thomas, 2 March 1973, TNA T 317/1939.
4. Tebbit to Johnston, 21 August 1969, TNA FCO 31/353/3.
5. Note of a tête-à-tête discussion between the Prime Minister and Moi at 10 Downing Street, 13 June 1979, TNA FCO 31/2587/49.
6. The EAD to King, October 1972, TNA FCO 31/1201/12.
7. Norris to Dawbarn, 2 February 1972, TNA FCO 31/1190/3.
8. See Branch, *Kenya*, 154–159.
9. Duff to Secretary of State, 'Kenya: Annual Review for 1972', 17 January 1973, TNA FCO 31/1497/1.

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Index

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