

A POLITICAL HISTORY OF MURANG'A DISTRICT,
1900-1970

A STUDY OF SOCIETY AND POLITICS

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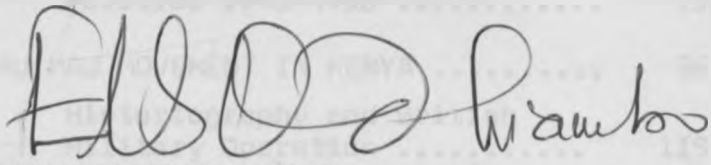


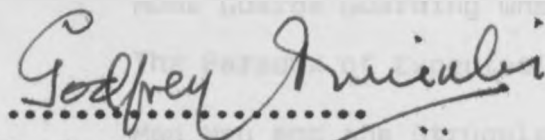
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ABSTRACT

This is a study of society and politics and the reaction of the peasantry in Kenya following the imposition of colonialism. The study seeks to effect a general survey of social-economic changes and political development (in Murang'a District) from immediate pre-colonial period to circa 1970. The study examines the socio-political structure of the Kikuyu people mainly in Murang'a District where the field work was done on the eve of colonial rule with a view to identifying the way in which means of livelihood and means of production were acquired and distributed.

The effects of colonialism on Murang'a people are examined in as a detailed manner as possible and the social and political structure of the people during and after the imposition of the Colonial rule is examined with a view to identifying the elements and strands of consent and dissent in the colonial period. The study also identifies the factors determining which individuals or groups collaborated with the colonial rulers and which did not. It seeks to press this analysis vigorously to the extent of determining gains or losses each group received even after the end of the colonial rule.

The argument of the thesis is as follows:-

In the immediate Murang'a pre-colonial society differentiation was taking place based on individual

accumulation of livestock. This individual accumulation led to the access of land as a means of production. On the imposition of colonialism, the process of differentiation based on individual accumulation continued but this time as a mechanism of excluding some members of the society from means of production and livelihood. The new accumulators - chiefs, headmen and the Athomi - became the beneficiaries of the colonial system and were engaged in production for subsistence and for the market. Some emerged as capitalist farmers depending to a great extent on wage labour. They formed a class at the level of production and also formed a class at the level of politics. Politically they collaborated with the colonial rulers. On the other hand, majority of the peasants, who continued to be exploited by the Colonial capitalist system offered resistance in one way or another. Between 1920 and 1952 they offered resistance against measures aimed at excluding them from means of production and livelihood. This resistance continued through the Mau Mau period. During the Independence period, political conflicts taking class and ideological dimensions continued, with the Loyalists or those who had benefited from the capitalist system emerging still as victors. The emergence of the Loyalists dates back to 1920s,

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although their formal acceptance as a political class was during the Mau Mau struggle. The emergence of Loyalists as an economic class also dates back to 1900s although they were consolidated as a socio-economic class during the Mau Mau period. By the Independence period they had already been consolidated into a socio-economic and political class.

It is hoped that this study will help in bringing to light what kind of social formations took place during colonialism and how these social formations continued after the end of formal colonialism. The study by focussing on the process of social differentiation within one sector of the Kenya peasantry, rather than treating the peasantry as a whole as a monolithic and homogeneous entity, could be useful to Kenyan students in showing the kind of economic and political inequalities that have emerged in the rural areas and the specific historical origins of these social formations.

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PREFACE

There has been no single major study on the political, socio-economic History of Murang'a focussing on the society and politics in Murang'a especially covering the period 1900 - 1970.

Jeanne Fisher has written a thesis on The Anatomy of Kikuyu Domesticity and Husbandry and as she says, it is intended primarily for "all those Europeans who work for and among the Kikuyu".¹ The thesis is mainly concerned with Kikuyu traditional systems. Geoff Lamb has written a book entitled Peasant Politics which concentrates on Murang'a District. This book concentrates on the Murang'a Political conflicts of the 1960's and mainly focuses on Bildad Kaggia and Kandara politics. Moreover it concentrates mainly on the Co-Operative Development in Murang'a. In short, the book just dwells on the post-Independent period. D.R.F. Taylor³ has written a thesis on Murang'a but his area of study was Geography and not really a socio-economic and political study of Murang'a. Wangire⁴ also has written a

1. Fisher J. : The Anatomy of Kikuyu Domesticity and Husbandry. Department of Technical Co-Operation, p.1 (London 1964) p.1

2. Lamb, Geoff: Peasant Politics, (Julian Friedmann Publishers 1974).

3. Taylor, D.R.F. : Fort Hall District, Kenya; A Geographical consideration of the progress of a Developing Area, Ph.D. Thesis, Edinburgh 1966.

4. Wangire, N. : Urban Geography of Murang'a B.A. Dissertation Department of Geography, University of Nairobi, 1972.

dissertation of Murang'a but this was also a geographical study. D. Fieldman¹ made an attempt to research into the political Economy of Murang'a (1895 - 1935) but he left before he completed the research. However, his research concentrated mainly on one area, Kahuhia, in Kiharu Division. Kimani and Taylor² have also carried out research on the Role of Growth Centres in Rural Development. They have been mainly interested in Growth Centres but not in a socio-economic and Political History of Murang'a. P.M. Miracle³ has also worked on the Economic change among the Kikuyu centering on the whole of Central Province but his work only covers the period up to 1905.

Marris and Somerset⁴ have written a Book - The African Businessman mainly concentrating on Mahiga Location in Nyeri District although touching on some various parts of Central Province.

There is no major work that can be called a Social and Economic History or Political History of Murang'a (1900-1970) that has been done by anyone. It is the purpose of this project to fulfil this task by looking into the socio-economic and political historical development of the Murang'a Society from 1900 (1895) to 1970.

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1. Fieldman, D. : Political Economy of Fort Hall District (1895 - 1935) uncompleted research work.
 2. Kimani, S.M. and Taylor, D.R.F. : The Role of Growth Centres in Rural Development IDS Working papers Nos. 116 & 117 University of Nairobi.
 3. Miracle, M.P. : Economic change Among the Kikuyu 1895 - 1900 IDS Working Paper, 158, University of Nairobi.
 4. Marris, P. and Sommerset, A. : African Businessman (E.A.P.H. 1971).

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To my wife Lucy Mukaru who typed the drafts and the thesis, I am indebted. Special thanks go to Hon. J.J. Kamotho, M.P. Kangema who took pain to introduce me personally to some "difficult" informants. Thanks to all the informants, the officers of Murang'a Farmers Co-Operative Bank, Thika, and to the committee members of Coffee Co-Operative Societies in Murang'a.

Sources

Information for this thesis was collected from District annual reports, official and unofficial reports and records, land registration records, District Local Native Council Minutes, Loan Application forms, records from Farmers Co-Operative Societies and records from the Kenya National Archives. Oral interviews were used and many people were interviewed who included the oldest people in the area, leading local notables and elders, pioneers of various works such as missionary establishments, participants in various activities such as Kikuyu Central Association, Kenya African Union, oath giving, Mau Mau Movement and cash crops growing. Where necessary the information was tape recorded and in all other cases information was written down.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

1. D.C. District Commissioner
2. E.A.A. East African Association
3. H.M. Home Guard
4. K.A.S.U. Kenya African Study Union
5. K.A.U. Kenya African Union
6. K.C.A. Kikuyu Central Association
7. K.G. Kikuyu Guard
8. K.H.T. Kikuyu Historical Texts
9. K.K.M. Kiama Kia Muingi
10. K.N.A. Kenya National Archives
11. K.P.A. Kikuyu Provincial Association
12. K.P.P. Kikuyu Progressive Party
13. T.P. Tribal Police
14. T.P.R. Tribal Police Reserve

CHAPTER ONE

MURANG'A DISTRICT : BACKGROUND

Murang'a District is the traditional centre of the Kikuyu Plateau and is one of the main administrative divisions into which the plateau has been divided. The District covers an area of 520 square kilometres and has a population of about 500,000 people. It is bordered by Nyeri District to the North, Kiambu District to the South, Kirinyaga and Machakos to the East and Nyandarua to the West. Administratively, Murang'a is divided into 5 divisions namely, Kandara, Kiungu, Kangema, Kiharu and Makuyu. Each division has 5 locations except Makuyu which has 4 locations only. There are 124 sub-locations in the District.¹

This section will deal with (1) the topography, climate, geology and the ecology of the District² and the way these effect human activities, (2) the pre-Colonial Kikuyu society and (3) the imposition of the colonial rule.

The topography of the district is hilly and dissected. From the Nyandarua range of mountains, hundreds of streams run eastwards. These streams form part of the headwaters of the Tana river. The main streams are the North and South Mathioya, the Gondo, Irati, Maragua, Thika and Chania. These streams have deeply dissected the volcanic plateau into a series of parallel ridges and valleys running West-east. The valleys have very steep sides and in places are over 400 feet deep.

1. Murang'a District Development Plan 1974-1978
(Government Printer Nairobi) p.2

2. For topography, climate, geology and ecology see the Murang'a District, Ministry of Agriculture Library, 1962.

As a result of the tilling of the plateau, many of the streams show signs of rejuvenation. River terraces run down both sides of some of the large valleys and there are numerous waterfalls and rapids many of which probably mark nick points. The positive identification of nick points is made difficult by the geology of the region. The area is underlain by basalt which is marked by differing depths of volcanic soils. In places the streams have exposed the basalt rocks and water-falls often occur where a resistant band of rock outcrops. An idea of the break of gradient in the streams is given by the distribution of the numerous small water mills which have been constructed where there are rapids or small falls in the stream courses.

The whole District is extremely broken and consists of comparatively narrow ridges running East and West from the Foot-hills of the Nyandarua Mountains to the Tana River. These ridges, in some places only just wide enough for a road, are separated by deep, steep valleys in the bottom of which run permanent or semi-permanent rivers and streams.

As the land rises towards the West, more rolling country under thick bracken is reached but the valleys become steeper, that of the Maragua River being about 800 feet below the ridge. From East to West, the District rises from about 3,400 feet at the Tana to about 7,800 feet at the forest edge, a distance of approximately 35 miles. Nearly 70 per cent of the land is on slopes of 35 per cent or more, much of it being 60 per cent whilst little more than 5 per cent has less than a

12 percent slope. Due to its topography, there have been undertaken soil conservation measures of a greater magnitude than in use in other Districts in Kenya.

The District has two main rainy seasons; the long rains in March/April/May and the short rains in October/November. Rainfall increases with altitude and as there is considerable variation of altitude in the District, it is possible to discern three climatic altitudal zones. Above approximately 6,300 feet, the average annual rainfall is about 70 inches rising rapidly with altitude. In the high zones there are two main rainy seasons but because of the orographic effect of the Nyandarua Mountains, rain falls in every month of the year. In addition there is a misty season known as the "gathano" in July and August. The Gathano is thought to be due to the pile of moist on stable air against the orographic barrier of the Nyandarua Mountains. The mists rarely extend below 6,000 feet. During the Gathano rainfall totals are not high, rarely reaching more than 0.05 inches per day, but thick mists and a light drizzle can persist for several days without a break. The temperature in this zone decreases with altitude. The mean annual temperature is about 54⁰F and the annual temperature is not great.

Between 5,000 feet and 6,300 feet there is little or no Gathano and the orographic effect of the mountains is much less. Rainfall tends to be much more seasonal in nature and temperatures are higher as the area is lower. The rainfall intensity tends to be much greater and during the

long rains, very heavy localized storms occur, when 5 inches per hour intensities have not infrequently been recorded. The long rains are fairly reliable but the short rains are less so, being likely to fail completely or to be very poor one year in every three. Below 5,000 feet the climate is very similar to that of the zone above but the rainfall is less and the temperature generally higher.

It is not very easy to draw an annual climatic calendar, but the following would be a good example. Between mid-October, and November, there are the short rains which may or may not fall in the lower zones, while they are usually adequate in the upper zone. In early December, the climate is cool and rain comes from the North West. December, is usually hot and dry in all areas. January, is a harvesting period of Gathano and short rains crops. February, is particularly noted for dust.

In mid-March, the long rains begin. Heavy rains accompanied by local storms are frequent. In April, there are heavy rains which turn the February dust into continuous mud; storms become less intense in May, and this is followed by a period of warm and fine weather with occasional showers in June. From mid-July, there are Gathano rains in the upper zones with thick mists. The mists continue to a diminishing effect in the lower areas where there is little actual rain. August, is followed by September and mid-October, which is a period of fine cool weather.

Now we can move from the climatic regions to the

geology of the District. The soils of the District are almost all volcanic in origin although in the lower area the volcanic soils merge with soils derived from basement rocks. The soils lie in varying depths over the basalts, in places being over 100 feet deep. There are three broad types of soils; strong brown loams above 6,300 feet, dark red friable clay between 5,000 feet and 6,300 feet, and red friable clays about 5,000 feet merging into basement soils below 4,000 feet. Within the lowest zone there is considerable variety according to situation. Soils on the ridge tops are thicker and contain more humus than the valley side soils. There are fairly black alluvial soils in many of the valley bottoms.

The strong brown loams of the high zone are ando-like soils and have a very high humic content. They are derived from volcanic rocks with a high ash content and have a tendency towards a peaty condition.

The dark red friable clays are latosolic and have a fairly deep humic top soil. They are acid, though less so than the brown loams, have a fairly high humic content, and are derived mainly from rocks.

The red friable clays are also castosolic, being derived from both volcanic and basement complex rocks. There are medium humic, acid soils. Within this zone there are several areas of vlei soils which are derived from the colluvium in low lying areas. The vlei soils tend to be waterlogged during the rains. In the lower areas of this

zone, below 4,000 feet, basement complex soils are found. These are low humic soils which are derived from basement rocks and are generally very thin with many outcrops of granite.

As the ecology of an area is a reflection of the soils and climate, there are also three broad ecological zones in Murang'a District; the high bracken zone, the star grass zone with a zone of Kikuyu grass in the higher parts and the wooded grassland zone. Originally the whole area was under evergreen mountain rain forest, dominated by East African campher and podocarpus in the higher, moister areas. The forest has been almost entirely cleared and this clearance of forest resulted in the herbage zones which at present are prevalent.

Human activities were greatly influenced by the topography of the District. Each man's land tended to run from the ridge top land, valley side land and valley bottom land. The ridge top land was fairly fertile and easy to cultivate. The valley side soil was thinner and liable to erosion, whereas the valley bottom land had heavy alluvial soils which, although liable to flooding during the rains, were most suitable for sugar cane and arrowroot.

Climate regulated the agricultural activities of the people. Both perennial and seasonal crops were planted following the rainfall of the area. The chief cereal crops were millet, maize and various other pulses. Millet was by far the most important and was planted during the short rains.

The short rain season was called millet season; (Kimera kia Mwere). Bulrush type of millet was planted in the lower areas while foxtail millet was planted in the higher areas. Early types of maize, both the yellow and black were planted during long rains. However, the chief long rains crop was the bean (Njahi, *Dolichos lablab*) which gave its name to the long rains - "Njahi Season - Kimera Kia Njahi".

The population density also roughly follows the climatic and ecological zones. The optimum conditions for the development of a dense population in Murang'a District are provided by the 5,000 - 6,000 feet zones. In these zones the population may exceed in density 1,100 persons for the square mile. Below 5,000 feet and above 6,000 feet there is a falling of population density which becomes most pronounced at below 4,000 feet.¹

The density of family holdings also follows the soil and climatic zones. In 1950 holdings varied in size from 13 acres in the under 4,000 feet zone, to about 4 acres in the middle zones and rising to about 8 acres in the high altitude zone. The population pressure was greatest in the middle zone 5,000 feet to 6,000 feet. The high zone is generally an "importer" of foodstuff from the middle areas largely owing to the poor yields of maize on poorer soils at the higher altitudes. The lower zone is mainly for grazing purposes due to its high temperature and irregular rainfall. Even as a grazing area it is not quite suitable for its stock carrying capacity is about 10 to 15 acres for a beast.²

1. KNA: File DC/FH5/1

Having examined the main topographic, ecological, geological and climatic features of the District, we can turn to the social, political and economic organisation of the pre-Colonial Kikuyu Society in Murang'a District.

The main Kikuyu clans are thought to have been formed before the Kikuyu entered Murang'a District. When the first Kikuyu families arrived they found a densely forested area occupied by the Gumba, who were hunters and collectors. There were likely no Dorobo in the District.^{1*} It may be that Gumba retreated into the forest when the Kikuyu began to clear the land extensively for agriculture. The area first cleared is known to have been the favourable belt between 5,000 feet and 6,000 feet, the middle zone. The Kikuyu spread north and south along this belt, forcing the Gumba to retreat into the forest.² Land acquisition was influenced by the ridge and valley topography of the District. The immigration and settlement of the Kikuyu was spearheaded either by individual pioneers or small family groups.

The process of the clearance of the forest was probably a slow and gradual one. For instance it is possible that Metumi, that part of Murang'a District north of the Maragwa River, was fully occupied by 1750 and that Kariua,

1. Evidence given by the assembled elders of Murang'a District in a baraza (meeting) of 7-10-29, published as appendix A to the report on "Native Land Tenure in Kikuyu Province" November, 1929).

2. Orde Brown, The vanishing tribes of Kenya. London 1925 pp.32

* However, Dr. G. Muriuki maintains there were Dorobo in the in the District. (Personal communication 18th April, 1978).

the area of Murang'a District between the Karagwa River and the Chania River was fully occupied by 1900.¹ Routledge, who visited Murang'a District in the first decade of this century observed that in the heart land of the Kikuyu, except for a sacred grove here and there, scarcely a tree remained for as far as the eye could reach in all directions, spread one huge garden.² How much land a household needed to support itself would depend on the size of the family.

Mainertzhagen's map of a githaka near Mbiri (Fort Hall) in 1902 showed eight households of these holdings and the land they cultivated. Measurements of these holdings gives an acreage under cultivation of 3.675 acres, the individual holding sizes being 2.42, 1.1, 4.43, 4.25, 3.48, 4.85, and 5.06 acres respectively.³ Within the Kikuyu social and political system which was the family at the lowest level and the mbari at the highest level. The core of the Kikuyu society was the nyumba, the elementary family. This consisted of a man, his wife or wives and their children.. Several nyumba traced their origin to a common male ancestor several generations back and formed a mbari, which may have numbered anything from a few to several thousands. The various mbari traced their ancestry to the original ten

1. H.E. Lambert "The Systems of Land Tenure in the Kikuyu Land Unit" quoted in Taylor D.R.F. op.cit p.32.

2. Routledge, W.S. With a Prehistoric people The Kikuyu of British Africa, London, 1910 p.6

3. Mainertzhagen, R. Kenya Diary 1902-6 London 1957

mihiriga (clans). As well as the nyumba being the primary unit in the social framework, it was the immediately operative political unit. Each nyumba formed a mucii (pl.micii) the homestead, and the various homesteads were grouped together into an itura (pl.matura), a collection of dispersed homesteads. The itura was the focus of the social and political interaction in every day life, and was in many ways a closely knit community. The matura were, in turn, linked together to form a bigger administrative unit, the mwaki, which in turn would be part of a rugongo (pl.Ng'ongo), a ridge. The ridge was by far the largest administrative unit under normal circumstances but in times of crisis, mutual need or country-wide ceremonies, an ad hoc alliance of several ridges might emerge and act in concert. A particular mbari or even clan might have been predominant in one administrative unit, such as an itura or ridge, but this was not always the case since the various clans and mbari were widely dispersed.¹

Consequently land was occupied ridge by ridge by the pioneers, who were later joined by their kinsmen, or alternatively attracted diverse elements into their sphere. In principle, land was owned by the mbari and its administration was entrusted to a muremati (guardian or custodian) who was the nominal head of the mbari.² However, there were people who did not have kinship relationships

 1. Muriuki, G. A History of the Kikuyu 1500-1980, Oxford University Press, 1974 p.35-36

2. Ibid., p.34

with the founder of the land or did not belong to a certain mbari. These people included the ahoi, singular Muhoi tenants-at-will ndungata (voluntary servants). Ahoi were those people without land but who were given land by the land owners. As long as the whole piece or part of the piece of land extended to ahoi was under cultivation, their position was not endangered. They were not required to offer their labour as a condition but they did so on voluntary basis. As for the ndungata, they stayed within rich men's land and became as these men's own children, taking part in all the activities and receiving in turn all that they needed even including wives. They received land which was inheritable just like the landowners' sons.

Apart from the above relationships - kinship, ahoi and ndungata - all which led to the access of land, there were other mechanisms at work which led to the acquisition of land. These included the agencies of raiding, looting and trading which led to the accumulation of livestock. Raiding and looting played an important part in the process of accumulation. Raiding regiments were set up as the only form of institutional labour and was secured by the surpluses of all households for the purpose of protection. Individual reproduction of the loot stock, secured the principle for individual appropriation of the loot each according to his deeds.¹

Here we can follow the process through which the accumulation of stock led to the control or acquisition of land by the accumulators. The notion of private or individual ownership of land derived from rights of first clearance of land (kuuna). This first clearance could obviously be established by migration of individuals or house-holds. Therefore the control over land was set within a process of migration. To propel the process of migration, surplus labour was to be secured. The forms through which this surplus labour was secured was governed by the relations of production. Occupation of unoccupied land gave effect to individual ownership and this was established by different forms of socialized labour.¹

This socialized labour was necessary for clearance of agricultural land and for cultivation. When new land was acquired, labour-power was necessary and this labour-power depended on the availability of young men to cut and clear the forest and women to cultivate. The acquisition of this labour-power then became dependent upon the acquisition and accumulation of livestock which rested upon raiding, looting and trading. In turn the more stock reproduced the more land for arable and agriculture was required, and this called for migration. To increase labour-power for this migration, it was necessary for the sons of the richer polygamous landowners to marry early and widely. As the number of fragments which could be put under cultivation was directly dependent upon the number of wives, there was the need to

1. Cowen, cit.

augment the family labour power through marriage and of course the ability to marry many wives was again dependent upon the rate of increase of livestock which provided the basis for widewealth.¹

While the process of land acquisition was going on people were engaged in other modes of occupation which included the engagement in local industries, exchange and trade. There were iron industries in areas consisting of iron-bearing rocks of decomposed granite. People living in those areas used to winnow the ore, for the extraction of magnetite ore (muthanga). This consisted of quartz grain and pure magnetite, which after further processes of winnowing, was passed for smelting in the smelters lodges. This magnetite ore, was then exposed to a furnace or hearth in the smelter's lodge. The furnace was constantly kept alive by the use of bellows (miura) worked by the smelters assistants. These assistants bore the responsibility of constantly regulating the heat in the furnace, through the application of the bellows. In this way the temperature was kept at the required degree, which reduced the magnetite ore into metallic ore. It was from this metallic pig iron, or gikama, that various iron articles were fashioned. Iron articles from Ikama included spears, swords, knives, tweezers, tongs, rattles, cow bells, arrow heads, and ornamental wires. Smiths were scattered in the country and iron smith was safeguarded and protected by strict socio-magical sanctions and symbols and only certain clans could become smiths.

1. Cowen, M.P. op.cit

Another industry was that of basketry, woodcraft and pottery making. Basketry was found in areas where vegetation and raw materials were available for weaving Kikuyu baskets and winnowing trays. Pottery was practised in areas where there was abundance of red clays suitable for pottery-making. There were areas which were richly endowed with this clay and the pottery sand (riumba) which consists of quartz grains, felspar and mica flakes from disintegrated granites. Pottery making was exclusively the work of women who were also responsible for the marketing.

The other important industry was that of salt making. Salt making consisted of burning of papyrus rush which produced a type of ash which was used as salt. This type of papyrus was common in all water-logged and loamy depressions common in the lower zone of Murang'a rivers. Towards the end of 19th century, the traditional way of producing salt was passing into oblivion largely because of incursions by the Kamba and the coastal traders.

The other main economic activity in Murang'a was trade. Trading centres and trade routes were situated where there was availability of trade articles and markets. Crops like yams, small maize, sweet potatoes, and other foodstuffs were exchanged in barter markets. Other articles such as earthenware, pots, swords and pig iron were exchanged for livestock and foodstuffs

between the Kikuyu on the one hand and the Kamba and Maasai on the other. Later, due to the long distance trade by the Arabs and Swahilis, the list of trading articles expanded and included cattle, ornaments, copper wires, brass wires, salt and cowrie shells which were offered by the Arabs and Swahilis in exchange for ivory and foodstuffs.

There were trading centres at Gikoe for maize, Kanorero for yams, sweet potatoes, earthen ware, swords and pig iron, Mukangu for swords, njahi, spears and cloaks, Gilitwa for swords and njahi, Gikoe for red ochre, and njahi, Githembe for goats, Gaichanjiru for foodstuffs and for licking salt for livestock.

In addition to these local trading centres, there were established travellers' routes (Njira cia agendi) which cut across the present Murang'a District and joined it with Njabini on the other side of Nyandarua Mountains, Nyeri District to the North and Kiambu District to the South. There were two main travellers' routes. One passed through the northern side of Kangema centre to Weithaga, South of Kigumo, Gatharaini, Ngirigacha, Thika, Kiama, Kiriri, Karimiru (Chania, Gatukuyu) where it joined the one from Ngararia on to Mukinyi, Mabanda and to Mukuyu. The second travellers route started at Gatukuyu on to Ngararia, Kairu, Makindi Kabuku, Goita, Saba-Saba, Mathangeini, Mugoiri and on to Mbiri.¹

1. O.I. Mbui Muhia, 20th April, 1976.; Muriuki G., Kikuyu Historical Texts (KHT) 1969, unpublished p.257-260.

The trade in general led to individual accumulation and differentiation. Local trade, which was through the direct exchange of use-values was mainly in periods of local drought and or famine conditions. Inter-regional trade, which coexisted with and was contemporary to the agency of raiding, provided for the acquisition of stock through unequal exchange and congealed surplus labour to propel migration. Stock was exchanged with agricultural products and the individual accumulator acted upon the expanded production of surplus commodities as was the case in the acquisition of loot through raiding. Those who emerged as a class of indigeneous accumulators were mainly warrior-raiders, traders, and elephant hunters at different points during the course of their lives.¹

In the long distance trade, two groups of people were involved, one the hunter-trader and the other the trade-farmer. In the case of a hunter-trader, he trapped elephants for tusks and was hosted by the landowner who required the eradication of beasts for cultivation. The hunter-trader sold ivory tusks to Swahili traders for cows or later for cash. Cows were then exchanged for sheep or foodstuffs. The trader-farmer cleared land to plant crops like njahi which he sold for ochre, knives, spears and tobacco. These were exchanged with the Maasai for sheep. Thus the two kinds of traders were able to accumulate stock through which they could acquire many wives

1. Cowen M.P. Capital and Peasant Households, July, 1976. Ngumo, D.D.M. "Trade during the Pre-Colonial Time in Nyeri District", Department of History, B.A. Dissertation, University of Nairobi, 1972.

and also migrate to acquire land for themselves.¹

However, this trade had a general effect on all the people in the district. The coastal traders created a demand for foreign, imported goods and ruined the local technology and industries. These traders also introduced new means of exchange through cowrie shells and beads which assumed monetary role. Later money was introduced as the medium of exchange by the colonial administration ushering in an era of cash economy.

Imposition of Colonialism and the Penetration of Capitalism In Murang'a 1900 - 1920

We have up to this stage dealt with the pre-colonial Murang'a District looking into land, local industries, trade, process of accumulation and then land acquisition up to the imposition of the colonial rule in about 1900. The next section will examine the process through which the area was penetrated by the invaders, first the foreign traders and secondly by the British forces in the early 1900s.

The imposition of colonial rule in Murang'a District was preceded by the activities of adventurers like John Boyes. In June, 1898, John Boyes who was nicknamed Karianjahi (the eater of Dolichos Lauhab) entered Tuthu in Murang'a District. Boyes had seen a good chance of making a fortune by trading in food for Kabete, the chief source of food for caravans and the railway party, was affected by famine.² He started supplying Naivasha with provision and

1. Cowen, M.P. op.cit

2. Boyes, J. King of Wakikuyu, edited by G.W.L. Bulpett, London, 1911 pp.74-5

later started dealing in ivory.¹

Karianjahi found a strong ally in the person of Karuri wa Gakure. Karuri was born around 1849 of Dorobo parentage. He inherited a piece of land near Kigumo in Murang'a District. Karuri earned his living by selling red ochre and acting as a medicine-man in Kiambu. He had begun to organise armed trading caravans of his age-mates who conveyed yams and red ochre to Kabete, Kikuyu and Naivasha where these were exchanged for coastal items like cloth, beads, bracelets, metal leg-bands, and sea-shells, which he brought back to his home area and sold to the people at huge profits. During these trading expeditions. Karuri had come across Kinyanjui wa Gathirimu who had already made friendship with the white man. Karuri also wanted to make friendship with a white man. He paid several visits to Francis Hall and Ainsworth and by 1898 had visited Machakos and Fort Smith. Karuri's wish to have a white man at his home was met when in one of his caravan trips to Kabete he met Karianjahi with whom they started trading together.²

Karianjahi and Karuri started interfering in local affairs and Karuri encouraged Karianjahi to hammer at his enemies, or those who objected to their joint activities. This happened to Kariara, who objected to Karianjahi's presence in Tuthu and was for this raided on several occasions, as were Karuri's other neighbours.³

1. Boyes op.cit., pp. 85-9

2. Muriuki op.cit., p. 158

3. Boyes op.cit. pp. 85-7

Karianjahi used a uniformed private army of Swahili and Kabete askeri, and he flew the union Jack during all his expeditions. He called himself the "King of the Wakikuyu." He was arrested by Hall on 19th November, 1900 and during his arrest he had acquired three Kikuyu wives and had looted cattle, sheep and goats from his joint raiding expeditions with Karuri.²

After Karianjahi left, Karuri was appointed a chief by Hall and he was made the first Paramount chief of the Northern Kikuyu Land Unit in 1912. He remained so until his death in 1916.

The work of establishing colonial rule over Murang'a District was carried out by Francis Hall. In August, 1900 Hall left Machakos with some 40 armed porters and a company of East African Rifles to found a station in Murang'a District. A quarter of a mile from the Mathioya River and 300 feet above it, on one of the wooded summits of Mbiri a name given to three adjoining hills near Murang'a town, he commenced to build a fort, later nicknamed Fort Hall. He started 'pacifying' the inhabitants and he received resistance and opposition in many areas especially from Ngararia, Ruchu, Gatanga, Kihumbuini, Kariara and Muruka.

The Muruka people started by ambushing a Swahili caravan. They killed Haslam the leader of the caravan and

1. Muriuki op.cit. p. 158, KHT pp.276 and 291.

2. R. Meinertzhagen, Kenya Diary, 6 November, 1903

3. KNA: "History of Fort Hall 1888-1948" FH/6/1

his mail runners. A certain Matano's caravan who had attacked a man at his shamba was attacked and all the members but two were killed. In another incident in August, 1901 the Muruka people killed three porters and a policeman and also attacked McLlellan's camp. A punitive raid was embarked upon under S.L. Hinde and Harrison just to be followed in 1902 by the Muruka people attacking and killing five Indian traders and a settler.¹ A strong punitive expeditions was sent to Kihumbuini in 1902. The Kihumbuini and Ngararia people had been involved in attacking whitemen and robbing them.² On one occasion they captured a whiteman and undressed him only to find he was uncircumcised. The man was tied lying down facing upwards. As warriors could not kill an uncircumcised man, women were invited to urinate in his mouth until he died.³

A strong expedition, consisting of five British Officers, 115 askaris, and three hundred Maasai levies plus some Kikuyu levies were dispatched under the command of captain Maycock with Mbuthia Kaguongo as a Kikuyu guide. The forces scoured the area from the vicinity of Thika to Kihumbuini from 2 September, to 25 October, 1902. They killed 200 Kikuyu and captured 300 heads of cattle and 2,000 sheep and goats. The government losses were reported, as one killed and thirteen wounded. On 8 September, 1902

1. Muriuki op.cit., p.162

2. Muriuki G. Kikuyu Historical Texts (unpublished 1969 p. 236).

3. Meinertzhagen op.cit., p.51

Meinertzhagen had given an order that in Kihumbuini "every living thing except children should be killed without mercy. Every soul was either shot or bayoneted, we burned all huts and razed the banana plantations to the ground".¹

The year 1902 was seen by the colonial administration as the year of pacification and entrenchment of colonial rule. The government posted Lt. Swire with government troops and Maasai levies permanently at Thika and Fort Hall town was put in the hands of the Assistant District Commissioner with members of the King's African Rifles and policemen.² It was reported that the Muruka people had deserted their country while the Kihumbuini people had opened negotiation with the colonial government in Nairobi and the people of Gatari made peace. Hall himself had led an expedition to crush the people of Gatari who resisted against his rule.³

One would ask why this era of active resistance was so shortlived. One reason is the superiority of the European weaponry. The Murang'a people relied on traditional weapons- arrows, bows and spears. These weapons were mainly effective in a hide and seek warfare when the Kikuyu climbed on trees and shot at their enemies or when they lay ambushes in thickets and river valleys.

1. Meinertzhagen op.cit., p.51-52

2. KNA, "History of Fort Hall. (1888-1944)"

3. Muriuki op.cit., p. 162

The Kikuyu also did not have a good picture of the Whiteman and his technology. When the Whiteman attacked Kigio and Gatanga the Kikuyu called the Anjiru clan members to come and bewitch them as they had done to the Gumba.¹ The raiders used to burn huts and plantations during their expeditions. The Kikuyu reacted by putting off fire in every homestead in the belief that the raiders could not get access to fire.² Many warriors were also killed because they confused the shotgun with the arrowroot stock, mutuma, (pl-mituma). They at first thought their enemies were only carrying 'mituma' and before they realised how deadly the 'mituma' were many had been killed.³

The other reason why the period of active resistance was so shortlived was natural disasters which had affected Kiambu even more. A series of natural disasters had weakened the Kikuyu before the imposition of colonial administration. Between 1894 and 1899 there were intermittent invasions of locusts which caused extensive damage to the crops. Swarms of locusts descended on the country again in 1895 and 1896 to be followed by a severe drought in 1897/98, a cattle plague in 1898, a serious famine in 1898/99 and an outbreak of smallpox simultaneously. Murang'a had to accommodate a number of Kiambu people who sought refuge in their original homeland to escape from the acute food shortage in their area mainly caused by the taking away of foodstuffs by the

1. KHT op.cit., p.288

2. OI: Gakanga Gathige, March, 23rd 1976

3. OI: Wainaina Gitukui, June, 5th 1976

IBEA Company. The mortality rate of the Kikuyu was very high and estimates range from 50 to 95 per cent of the population.¹

Resistance was also weakened by collaborators such as Karuri Gakure and his chiefs like Karanja Njiiri, Njiiri Karanja, and Kibarabara who helped the Whiteman to establish his rule.

After "pacification" the White settlers began to farm on land which was alienated from the Kikuyu. We shall examine the process of the White settlement and its impact on Murang'a District and people especially up to 1920 when Kenya was declared a Crown Colony.

The first original settlers in Murang'a arrived circa 1902. They attempted to cultivate rubber vines and they failed. They tried to experiment on cotton in 1904 which also failed. The average rainfall over years in this area was 44 inches and although this was quite high amongst the records of settled areas, it was not well distributed and the area was mainly suitable for sisal, coffee and maize.² The settlers had to change for sisal which could grow under such climatic conditions.

In 1903 the first settlement in Thika area had been started and sisal was introduced in 1907. The first bulbils were planted at Punda Milia. However, the German authorities in Tanganyika, realising the dangers of British East African

1. Muriuki op.cit., p. 155

2. KNA, "History of Fort Hall" 1888 - 1944

competition put a stop on further export of the bulbils. The settlers planned to introduce stock cattle but this did not materialize due to epidemics of cattle diseases. They attempted to plant wheat but they also failed.

It should be realised that the settlers were occupying land alienated from the Kikuyu. Before the end of the First World War, the total amount of land in Murang'a District was estimated to be 1,090 square miles. This was divided into 210 square miles of unalienated land, 120 square miles of Forest Reserve, 160 of farm area and 159 square miles of Native Reserve.¹

However, despite the failures mentioned, some settlers were able to progress. Swift and Rutherford had a factory in full working order and a large sisal estate in Thika. Sisal Limited erected a factory and increased their area under cultivation. Coffee estates were started by Cunningham and Trotter, Foncus, Elkington, and Gooch and Tayeer and Posho Limited put in a large area of beans and erected machinery for dealing with their crop.²

By 1914 the settler economy had made some progress. In April of that year there was a total acreage of 7,015 acres under cultivation divided between sisal 4,600 acres and coffee and rubber 2,415 acres. In all there were 61 settlers including owners and employees.³

1. KNA - History of Fort Hall.
2. KNA - History of Fort Hall (1888 - 1944)
3. KNA - History of Fort Hall (1888 - 1944)

The White settlers, apart from land, had to get labour so as to survive. The labour was to come from the neighbouring "reserves" around Kihumbuini, Kiunyu, Kandara, Muruka, Gaichanjiru, Kagunduini, Muthithi and other areas for it was easier to recruit from the areas near their farms. The problem that faced the settlers was that of obtaining cheap and voluntary labour for without cheap labour they could not make much profit from their enterprises. It is the colonial administration which at first came to the capitalist settlers' aid.

The administration enacted a number of measures aimed at forcing people to go and work in Kenya. To start with taxation was aimed at forcing people to look for money with which they were to pay tax. Livestock and foodstuffs were not accepted as payment of tax and the immediate source of money was selling labour. The first tax introduced was the hut tax which was levied on each hut in a homestead. The aim was to get money from a husband and all his wives plus all the mature dependents living in different huts within a homestead. This necessitated the husband, his wives and the dependents to look for money to pay tax with. Failure to pay tax resulted into a raid by the Thabari and the defaulters' huts could be burned down while their cattle, goats and sheep could also be carried away.¹

Money which became the medium of exchange began to

1. OI: Karanja Kamau, 3rd February, 1976.

affect the traditional barter system therefore making money part and parcel of the daily way of people's living. People were induced to work for money to buy European and Indian merchandise which had made appearance in Murang'a and the urban areas.

In spite of the introduction of taxation and money as measures to force people to supply labour to the white settlers, labour remained insufficient for various reasons. For those people who had no alternative but to sell their labour, they avoided working for the settlers in Murang'a District.¹ The Fort Hall settlement had started late and the settlers were not wealthy men and the poor returns shown by their land did not warrant the same rate of pay as afforded by other areas. What labour was available in Murang'a was tempted away by higher wages, and it was with the utmost difficulty that local farms could be run. In 1910, while shamba workers in other districts received up to Rs 5/= per month and posho, those in Murang'a District were paid Rs 3/= per month. In that year, 9,000 men left Murang'a District in search of work and this figure, which was shown by the Road Pass Book only, represents a small proportion of temporary and permanent emigrants.²

There were other disincentives such as diseases contracted by people who left the reserve to go and work. Stories of hunger, brutality, flogging, overworking, dangers of wild animals were brought back to the reserve

1. OI: Wainaina Gitukui, 7th July, 1976

2. KNA - History of Fort Hall (1888 - 1944)

and many would-be workers refused to leave the reserve. Most of these stories were true as shown by the evidence given to the Native Labour Commission of 1912-13.¹

The settlers and the colonial administration had their own explanation of why the Africans had refused to work despite the introduction of taxation and money economy. The African was seen as being so lazy that he would often prefer to starve rather than work and it was only by civilizing him a little that new wants would be created for him so as to make him raise more than was necessary merely to keep himself alive. In addition increased wages would not tend to induce more labour into the market, because the majority of the boys (African labourers) only worked for tax. Then it was pointed out that the African would always run away as soon as he had earned his hut tax.²

If graphed economically, the behaviour of the African worker results in a backward-bending labour supply curve showing that as wages are raised the amount of labour supplied increases up to a point, then declines, giving the labour supply curve first a positive slope upto the bend then a negative slope thereafter. The Africans were characterised as not being economic men as they were not interested in wages.

The settlers and the administration then began to look for ways and means of getting the Africans to work. But

1. KNA: (History of Fort Hall 1888 - 1944)

2. See Miracle, M.P. "Myths about the Behaviour of Kikuyu Labourers in Early Colonial period". University of Nairobi IDS Working paper, No. 157.

an opportunity presented itself when the 1st World War broke out. The administration issued orders to the chiefs to get people to join the military services. Two groups of people were to be exempted from military conscription.¹ These were the mission boys and those working on European farms as well as the squatters. Many people started running to the missionary posts for asylum.² Others became labourers and there was gratifying increase of labour for the farms with approximately 18,000 young men signing on to become labourers to avoid military service.³

When conscription for military services stopped, many people who had signed on to avoid conscription deserted. By 1918 a serious crisis in the labour supply occurred. The District Commissioner asked the settlers to "economize" labour and keep their demands for "boys" (adult house servants) to the lowest margin. Those who were in the reserve had completely refused to go to work for the settlers, saying they were the sole male representatives of their families,⁴ (the others being in the war or dead due to the war and the 1917-1918 famine). The district administration warned the settlers that nothing short of physical force would move those who intended to stay. The district administration pointed out that it was politically a mistake to make further efforts to turn the male population out, but efforts

1. OI: Karanja Kamau, 4th February, 1976

2. OI: Rev. Mutaaro, 10th March, 1976

3. KNA, History of Fort Hall (188 - 1944)

4. Ibid.

would not be relaxed in the future to endeavour to keep the labour supply of the district at its normal level.¹

The settlers had engaged in recruiting labour from "friendly" chiefs. This friendliness was often founded on money (bribery and corruption), and during this time they began to use other means such as force to obtain forced labour. Some leading settlers worked hard and brought pressure which resulted in the Native Labour ordinance No.9 of October, 1919, a measure that was interpreted by some settlers as an advance to slavery which would have made them overcome the labour problem.²

The end of the war was marked by a great famine in 1918. This was the second great famine since the coming of the Europeans, the first one being in 1900. This famine is commonly known as "Kimotho Famine" (Ng'aragu ya Kimotho). People died in large numbers to the extent that hyenas could not clear the "area" of the dead. People ate the stems of banana stocks (cienja cia marigu). They dug these stems, dried them, ground them and made porridge with the flour so obtained. They also ate the clothes of dead people. These clothes were made of skins. After the owners died, the skins were scratched clean, then boiled after which they were eaten. The chiefs and their Ihabari collected all the food and living animals they could get hold of and took them away.³

1. KNA: "History of Fort Hall 1888 - 1944"

2. Ibid.

3. OI: Gakanga and Karanja Kamau in June, 1976

The colonial administration estimated 3,000 children to have died and estimated the death-rate in the district to have been 16 per cent.¹ The famine was also followed by a severe influenza epidemic which killed many people. The colonial administration viewing the suffering of the people had this to say:-

"The famine of this year, during which it is estimated that 3,000 children died was in one way a blessing ----- since owing to the measure of relief voted by government, a closer feeling of contact grew up between natives and administration; labour was fairly plentiful, The famine gave a stimulus to agriculture".²

The administration blamed the people for the deaths. They saw the causes of the decrease in "native" population as due to native conservatism in the matter of inoculation, unhealthy conditions, enfeeblement due to famine and consequent high infantile mortality and unwise consumption of food by a starving people leading to a virulent form of diarrhoea.³

The Indians also benefited from the famine. They had earlier bought maize from the market centres in Murang'a when the famine started. They then sold the maize to the Kikuyu and realised profits of 6 per cent. The colonial administration saw as a 'more beneficial' outcome of the famine the little difficulty in obtaining labour, as the new sisal factories erected in the neighbourhood found little difficulty in obtaining labour. The Asiatic community largely helped by the famine obtained a stronghold on the Kikuyu in trade.⁴

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1. History of Fort Hall (1888 - 1944)
 2. Ibid.
 3. KNA: "History of Fort Hall 1888 - 1944)
 4. Ibid.

The end of recruitment for the Carrier Corps had started in August, 1917 and the repatriates were found to be bringing back diseases. The administration set up a medical examination center at Thika to combat the diseases. Those who returned to Murang'a returned looking for a change in the society. Some began to adopt the European way of living and using European clothes. They also looked for ways of dealing with the administration through official channels and many were angered by the corruption of some chiefs and elders.¹

The administration had hoped that these people from the war were going to become their collaborators. The administration saw the young people who came from the war as "young natives returning from contact with civilization to find their elders still steeped in ancient law, bribery, superstition and Tembo".²

Those who returned from the war on the other hand thought they had done a lot of work in assisting the British defeat their enemies. Some thought they were the ones who had actually defeated the Germans so they expected great rewards similar to those given to the whitemen in the war.

However these people were disappointed. The White soldiers were given tracts of land in Maragua settlement scheme which meant that more land had been alienated. The

1. KNA: "History of Fort Hall 1888 - 1944".

2. Ibid.

Africans from the war were taken back to the same chiefs who had conscripted them for the war. They were later to be forced to carry a kipande. This kipande introduced the force of the criminal law into the contractual relationship of employer and employees. It was so designed that the workman could be imprisoned for simple breach of contract. The act of holding one's labour became a criminal offence. If a man abandoned his work or refused to work he was automatically considered a criminal unless he could prove his innocence. Thus the kipande was designed to force the labourer to work for the wages he had been paid at the outset.¹

The two decades had seen great suffering brought about by natural disasters such as diseases and famines, the use of military and police forces to crush those who opposed the imposition of colonial rule, the emergence of collaborators, and the alienation of African land. During this period people were forced to pay taxes, to go and supply labour to the settlers and for military services. Socio-economic changes came in existence bringing about differentiation in the society. We can examine how the socio-economic changes led to a differentiated society in Murang'a.

1. Van Zwannerberg, R.M.A. The Agricultural History of Kenya (E.A.P.H. 1972). p.37.

CHAPTER TWOSOCIAL-ECONOMIC CHANGES : TOWARDS A DIFFERENTIATED SOCIETY

In chapter **one** we examined the process of social differentiation through accumulation of livestock and acquisition of land emphasising that the main feature of the society was the access to rather than exclusion from the means of production. Now we shall examine how the social relationships hitherto existing were transformed along new lines so that people's life-chances came to be determined by their access to and exclusion from resources introduced by the colonial political economy.

We have said that raiding and looting led to the accumulation of stock and access to means of production. Raiding and looting, which took place during the Colonial period, was of a different nature. It was geared towards accumulation as a means of excluding others from both means of production and means of livelihood. Moreover, it was geared towards earning cash in the form of money. The tendency to exclude others from the means of production and livelihood coupled with the spirit to enter the cash economy were the first indicators of capitalism in the society. The mechanics of the new form of raiding and looting were aided and abetted by the capitalist Colonial economy which was implanted on the people. The agencies through which the new

mode of accumulation was conducted was that of chiefs, headmen and their hangers on the Thabari. While the looting was carried out by the Thabari the loot went to their bosses and superiors - be it the Colonial Administration or the chiefs and headmen, and not generally to the looters.

Many early chiefs were mercenary-raiders as can be observed from Dr. Muriuki's studies. Karuri wa Gakure the paramount Chief of Murang'a District up to 1916 rose from the son of a hunter-gatherer to a very wealthy personality through engagements in looting cattle, sheep, goats, ivory and foodstuffs immediately after and before the imposition of colonial rule.¹ He once placed a muhingo (ban on circumcision) until those who were involved paid Rs2. This money was collected for him in the whole of Murang'a District.²

Kibarabara (of Masai origin) another contemporary of Karuri in Murang'a, had goats and sheep pens in various places into which goats and sheep were to be collected and taken to his home.³ Kibarabara also demanded more money for tax than required, sometimes, Rs 3/= or Rs 4/= instead of the official Rs 2/=. Chief Karanja Njiiri who had been leading raids against his people in Kigumo was made chief and was succeeded by his son chief Njiiri Karanja who was constantly accused of keeping money collected for tax and court fines and was the subject of a commission of enquiry in 1936.⁴

1. Muriuki G. op.cit p.137 - 166

2. OI: Ex-chief Raphael Munyori, 25th July, 1977.

3. Ibid.

4. Fort Hall District Annual Report, 1937

The headmen and Thabari were also involved in the looting as agents of the chiefs. They received bribes and inducements especially when people wanted to avoid conscription for communal work and military services. Offenders and tax defaulters had their property looted at times by these agents, some of the loot remaining in their hands.¹

Raiding and looting continued up to 1950s and was remarkable during the Mau Mau period. Goats, sheep and cows and property of known or suspected Mau Mau followers and the fees collected were usually pocketed by the Home Guard leaders or the administrative agents. Chiefs had sheep and goat pens in every sub-location which contained livestock earmarked for them. In case of a chief's household being attacked, fines were imposed on every household which was not a member of the Home Guard Unit. Failure to pay the fine led to the looting of property.²

Trading activities came to be controlled by the chiefs, headmen and Athomi. Trade markets were established in all locations. These markets became important commercial centres. The owners of the market centres were able to accumulate and use the wealth so received for reinvestment. During the Emergency only the Loyalists were allowed to hold trading licences.

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1. OI: Nduati Gathige and Chief Raphael Munyori, June, 1977
 2. OI: Nduati Gathige and Mburu Wakaru, June, 1977

The indigenous process of accumulation was also affected by emergence of class of petty-bourgeoisie who had received some kind of education. These were the products of mission schools which were established by Missionaries to cater for their own interests. The Missionaries' work was mainly directed against the socio-economic base of the indigenous class. Their followers were not allowed to brew and drink liquor or take snuff. They were not allowed to marry many wives or keep sheep and goats which might be used for sacrifices, or to mix with the "heathens". People without strong traditional ties in the society such as the destitutes joined the missions as mission boys for after all they had nothing to lose in adhering to the mission rules.

These mission boys after receiving some elementary education and skills were employed as teachers, preachers, supervisors, clerks and court-interpreters. They used the cash they obtained from wages and their official positions to accumulate money and property and employ wage labour - a necessary condition for capitalist development.

We can now follow the process of accumulation by the petty bourgeoisie who, together with some uneducated people (chiefs, headmen and non-athomi, rich) merged to form a class of peasant-bourgeoisie.

The acquisition of land as means of production through the process of first clearance of land dependent upon migration was halted by colonial land alienation. Land alienation dealt a blow to both those who wanted to acquire

land and the indigenous class of accumulators especially those with large stocks. Those who could no longer get access to land went to look for wage labour and to become squatters on the alienated land. The stock owners went with their cattle to the white estates; each stock owner, permitted into the estate under the system of Kaffir farming, had to give two gallons of milk per day. Other groups stayed in the European estate as labourer squatters and gave 2 to 3 pints of milk each day as rent for the use of grazing.¹ It is only large stockowners who could offer this. Here we observe that the owning of livestock no longer necessarily led to the acquisition of land as a means of production. Rather the possession of stock was subordinated to the settler capitalist agriculture.

Those, who did not have stock, had to sell their labour. Raiding, looting and trading no longer acted as venues for accumulating so as to get access to the means of production. These had become tools of excluding the majority of the peasants, as did the Colonial agents, from the process of accumulation.

Access to the means of production came to be dependent upon ability to earn wages and to use the government and legal machinery. It is only the chiefs, court elders and the petty-bourgeoisie who were in such a position.

The chiefs and court elders acquired land through taking it away from their subjects or through giving judgements

1. O.I.: Kuria Kinyanjui on 20th May, 1976.

in favour of their friends and relatives. As an example we can take the famous case of chief Joel Michuki Kagwi. He was accused of mal-administration by some of the occupants of a land which had in it 25 families. He reacted by asking the occupants to vacate saying that he had bought the land. The case went through the Elders council, through the District Commissioner, to the High Court. Judgment was given for chief Michuki and he ordered the families to vacate the land. An attempt to evict the occupants was resisted and the D.C. went along to evict them, burning down their huts.¹

From 1920 there was a spate of land litigation which was associated with the petty - bourgeoisie buying land. The consequence of engaging in wage labour at low wages and without returning home was the loss of land within the reserve. Again in the 1930s and 1940s those people who had left the reserve to go to squat in the settled areas began to come back. They found their land had been either taken over by relatives or bought by other people. Some sold all what they had so as to raise money for litigation but lost the suits. As no land was available in the white areas, land was to be got in the reserve. As a result land disputes took over 75% of the Tribunal's time and thousands of shillings were used in litigation.²

1. Fort Hall District Annual Report, 1926

2. O.I. Raphael Muryori at Kandara, May, 1977.
In Kiambu District 740,000/= shillings was spent in litigation alone in 1949 and 1950. (See G. Wanjohi Classes in Kenya B.A. Dissertation, Department of Government, University of Nairobi, 1971).

By 1950 land had become a great problem. The optimum conditions for development of a dense population were provided by the zones between 5,000 ft and 6,000 ft. But in these zones the population had exceeded in density 1,100 to the square mile. The Provincial Administration was expressing doubts whether there were any known systems of agriculture which were likely to be able to increase the density.¹

The Mau Mau period served as an opportunity for the accumulation of land by the Loyalists. Land belonging to known Mau Mau followers was confiscated some of which went to reward the peasant-bourgeoisie. While the masses were put in fortified villages and the Mau Mau followers were in detention camps, land consolidation and registration was carried out and about a half of the total land was given to two per cent of the population.²

The acquisition of land by a fraction of the society - the peasant-bourgeoisie and the exclusion from the land as a means of production of other members of society was only a necessary condition for capitalist development although a sufficient condition for the differentiation of the peasantry and class formation. For there to have been a full capitalist development, land was to be made productive by planting crops geared for the market and rearing of live-stock for the market. It was also necessary to change the social relations and labour processes so as to subordinate

1. KNA: Fort Hall District Annual Report 1950

2. Odinga O.: Not Yet Uhuru (Heinemann, Nairobi 1970) p.123

them to the mode of production. The relations of production which arose from these relations will now concern us.

The first industrial crop in Murang'a was wattle.¹ From the 1880s, the growing source of mimosa products was South Africa, particularly Natal, where the industry developed as an adjunct to the mining industry, supplying pit props to both the Transvaal gold mines and Natal coal mines. From 1903 wattle was planted by settlers in Kiambu District on a commercial basis for supply to the Kenya and Uganda Railways. However, the non-rotting dry character of wattle tree logs meant that the wood fuel burned rapidly and was a form of high cost of fuel for railway traction. Rejected as a fuel, the purpose of wattle bark production on settler estates was deflected towards the production of wattle for sale, through export, as bark. As a tanning material wattle products could be exported in two forms. Bark, stripped from trees, would be dried, chopped and bagged or baled for export in a raw material form. Alternatively, the tanning materials could be extracted in plants situated near the wattle tree plantations.²

1. Wattle trees are a variety of mimosa or acacia. They provide a range of joint products. Poles for house building, fencing and pit props; logs for fuel and, with processing charcoal; bark with processing, for tanning materials employed in processing leather products. The term wattle came not from its major use as bark but from its use by Australian Colonists who used the thinning from the trees for daubing or wattling their huts. (See Cowen, M. Wattle production in Central Province (mimeo). Nairobi 1975.

2. Ibid.

The first wattle seed supply in Kenya was in Murang'a District in Karuri's location. The seeds had been brought from Natal during the adventures of John Boyes between 1898 and 1901. From this location wattle seeds spread elsewhere particularly after the demarcation of the Aberdares and Mt. Kenya Forest boundaries between 1908 and 1910.¹

In 1917 the D.C. in Murang'a instituted a wattle planting campaign and seed was issued to chiefs and heads of Matura and to anyone who wanted them.² The 'anyone' were the Athomi. (The Athomi and the chiefs and Headmen became political targets of the Kikuyu Central Association and later Mau Mau activists. During the Emergency period it was only traders who were members of the Kikuyu Home Guard that were issued with trading licences. The entire wattle trade was concentrated in the hand of the Kikuyu Guard and active loyalists and therefore all the cash from wattle went to them).

In the 1920s chiefs and the petty bourgeoisie and some rich members of the indigenous class were given wattle seeds. The seeds initially were broadcast by the masses through communal labour. When the wattle trees matured in the 1930s, labour was required for stripping, cutting and parking. The wattle owners realised a substantial source of finance while their wage costs were no more than 25% of the value of sales.³

1. Cowen, M.P. : Ibid.

2. Ibid

3. Cowen M.P.: Wattle Production in Central Province (mimeo)

The planting of wattle, mainly on the slopes to protect soil erosion, had a number of effects on the people. Wattle production was not conducive to soil conservation and to more food production for the masses. Firstly, wattle commodity reduced the extent of acreage cultivated for the home consumption of food products. The reduction of pasture and the high proportion of land planted with trees made any system of mixed farming impossible to pursue. The system of mixed farming was impossible because of the relatively small land holdings of that wider range of holdings which had planted wattle on such an expanded scale. The production of wattle as a commodity aided and abetted the process of commercialization of agriculture, a feature of capitalistic farming. But the problem did not lie in the amount of money to be obtained by the few large wattle producers, but in whether there was enough food for the people to eat. In the early 1940s a famine called "Ukaragu ya Mfanga", or Cassava Famine greatly affected the masses who could not raise money to buy foodstuffs from the Indians and the peasant bourgeois merchants.

Wattle commodity production was also the primary cause of soil erosion. Wattle trees could act as a wash stop to prevent sheet erosion and as a legume to restore soil damaged by the continuous cultivation of food crops. But in order to act like this trees were to be planted in strips across hillsides within alternate strips of grass and or napier grass and not sown broadcast within indigenous bush

and also trees were to be spaced, during early planting, and thinned during subsequent cultivation. However, spacing and thinning lowered the density of stands.

The plantation of wattle as a commodity also caused gully erosion. Planted broadcast without spacing and thinning, wattle activated sheet erosion upon hilltops and gully erosion starting above plantations, could not be stemmed by trees planted irregularly.

Therefore rather than help in preventing soil erosion or restoring soil fertility, wattle commodity production aided and abetted soil erosion and destruction of soil fertility. Wattle commodity production was carried out by a small section of the population - the peasant-bourgeoisie. The work of preventing soil erosion and maintaining soil fertility was carried out by the masses through forceful measures, as we shall see below. Wattle production also excluded the masses from having access to land planted with wattle. As goats and sheep plucked at the leaves of young wattle trees, the peasant bourgeoisie could not allow them to come near their wattle plantations. Where other cash crops like English potatoes were grown in the lower areas, the farmers fenced their gardens off in case the livestock of the masses destroyed their crops. By 1945 it had become necessary for the administration to call for a cattle census so as to decrease the number of cattle especially for the less favoured households.

From the 1930s the peasant-bourgeoisie began to enter the milk industry. This necessitated the acquisition of

improved cattle which would give a good supply of milk not mainly for consumption but for the market. In the 1930s cattle were threatened by rinderpest which broke out in 1930, and 1937/8 in Murang'a and Nyeri. The peasant-bourgeois class called for inoculation but the administration found they were too few to warrant such services. They could get inoculation services if they could join with the masses, but the masses were opposed to inoculation. But later when compulsory immunisation was introduced, the peasant-bourgeoisie opposed it after they had lost some grade cattle after inoculation. However, this compulsory inoculation had been introduced primarily to remove the threat of reinfection of the cattle in the settled areas.¹

In April, 1945 some areas were declared cattle cleansing areas and a census of cattle was carried out to determine the proportion of each owners stock to be sold as slaughter stock for meat. Included were stock owned by people who were absent, either in employment or war services, who were judged in absentia. By 1950, those who wanted to acquire cattle did so from the need to avoid purchasing milk from stock owners and to produce milk for sale. However, 50% of the families could not keep a cow and were to depend on the cow owners for milk.²

1. See Cowen M.P. Patterns of cattle ownership and Dairy production: 1900-1965. IDS working Paper University of Nairobi.

2. Ibid.

During the Mau Mau period cattle were put in bomas in the fortified villages. Many households lost their stock which was used to feed Home Guards and the security forces. The manure from the cattle was taken away by the peasant-bourgeoisie for planting coffee and other commercial crops.

During the same period many households lost their cows. This was a result of bomaing - a system of placing cows of many households into a single boma. Many cows died due to epidemic diseases, unhealthy conditions and starvation. The cattle of the Loyalists who now comprised the peasant-bourgeoisie were placed in different bomas and were guarded against diseases by the Veterinary services. Although these veterinary services were supposed to be for all the people's cattle, the peasant-bourgeois class which controlled these services utilised them as they deemed fit. In any case the peasant-bourgeoisie owned improved and grade cattle which required more attention as directed by the Veterinary Department.

There was also a catastrophic loss of goats and sheep as a result of villagisation. These were placed in common pens in the villages. They were taken out for grazing in the mornings and returned at 5 o'clock during the day. Each morning the owners of the goats (who were usually women, for many men had been detained) had to go and identify their goats before they were taken for feeding. The problem in feeding the goats arose from the fact that adults were required to do communal work every morning while children were supposed to attend schools. Many goats were left unattended.

Failure to give attention to the goats resulted into starvation and death through epidemic diseases. Many households who had gone to the villages with a good number of sheep and goats came out of the villages with none in the 1960s.¹

The development of capitalist agriculture by the introduction of commodity production for the market had a number of effects on the masses of the people as well as the productive forces, as we have hinted above. Here it remains to examine the mechanics through which labour was acquired to fulfil the requirements of the white settlers, the administration and the peasant-bourgeoisie.

It is known that capitalist agriculture requires labour-power throughout the year not only during harvesting or planting as is commonly stated. Labourers in such a situation are never freed any time of the year. Labour is supplied during the working period which is the period when labour is being supplied to the product. Labour is also used to the product during the time of production which is the time during which the product is in production, including the period in which labour is not applied to it. Working period especially in agriculture does not necessarily coincide with the time of production.

We have stated elsewhere that the peasant-bourgeois class required labour. Labour was also required for the white settled areas engaged in capitalist agriculture. At the same time, labour was required for the maintenance of land as a means of production in the reserve. We now turn to examine the mechanics used to obtain labour for these purposes.

1. O.I. Kaniaru Karanja, 24th August, 1977

The peasant-bourgeoisie especially the petty-bourgeoisie had no alternative but to depend on wage labour. Being absent in other employment, many being monogamous, and their wives also employed and their children attending schools, they could not manage to engage their labour in their agricultural activities. Other people could engage in wira, a system of members of the society helping one another by working together for a certain project, or ngwatio, a system of groups helping groups alternatively. As this system of supplying labour was based on reciprocity, members of the society who were not present were excluded and so they had to look for other ways of obtaining labour - hence employing cash wage labour.

The soil conservation measures required a lot of labour power. The Local Native Council passed many regulations to force the masses to terrace the land and plants to stop soil erosion. Also grazing was banned from slopes. Initially force was used but this was resisted by the masses. They were supposed to terrace land that did not belong to them. The administration turned to conscription of young people to form communal gangs to work on soil conservation projects. Many young men fled to the towns

1. The District Agricultural Officer, Fort Hall had this to say on soil conservation:-

"If the government is not prepared to support the policy of communal unpaid work, are they prepared for it to be dropped and to pay for soil conservation in the Reserves? I estimate, from experience ----- that it would require something like 5,000 permanent labourers ---- and how great would be the cost of organisation required to run such a force. It is, unlikely that young men in sufficient numbers could be recruited unless conscription is used".

letter from Department of Agriculture Fort Hall to Ag. Senior Agriculture office, Central Province, 24/11/45, KNA/RECOND/3/1,

while others grouped together and offered active resistance.¹
 An attempt was made to use the ngwatio system, but as some of the land to be marked on belonged to the absent petty-bourgeoisie, this was resisted. Another method was devised that of giving power of soil conservation to the indigenous clan elders.

Sub-Location and Locational Councils were formed. These were composed of the elders in these areas. They were required to direct the activities of their kinsmen in soil conservation. The elders were to report to the chiefs, through headmen, those who refused to work. Those who refused were not allowed permission to brew liquor for ceremonies, to hold any trading licences and were not allowed to buy such commodities like sugar. Many elders refused to report their kinsmen and many young people resisted. The administration responded by giving instructions that every individual was to carry out soil conservation measures on his own piece of land and failure to do so would lead to prosecution.²

During the 1950s the masses were forced to do communal work for the peasant-bourgeoisie. This communal work included bench and terrace digging, shamba cultivation and planting of coffee. The peasant-bourgeoisie as a result obtained free labour which enabled them to accumulate more wealth. Soil conservation work was now carried out by the masses.

At the same time the white settled areas

1. O.I. Chief Ignatio Mural, Ng'ang'a Kairu, 1572 & June 1976 Fort Hall. District Annual Report 1947

2. Fort Hall District Annual Report 1947

required labour. Formerly, labour recruiters were assisted by the chiefs and headmen. However, during this period, another method of supplying labour to the white settled areas was devised. Every morning people were placed in pens outside the villages. Selection was done of who was to go to whose farm and then they were escorted or put in lorries belonging to either the settlers or hired from the peasant-bourgeoisie.

The emergency period in Kenya saw the emergence of a coherent political class called the loyalists.¹ This political class was consolidated into a rural, landed gentry through land consolidation and registration which placed over one half of the best land to about two percent of the population. During the consolidation, which was carried out when most of the people were in detention camps or prisons, land was divided into economic and uneconomic holdings. Holders of uneconomic units were to subsidise their subsistence by engaging in wage labour, while the landless were to survive by selling their labour power to the peasant-bourgeoisie.

We have seen how the social-economic changes during the colonial rule had brought about socio-economic differentiation in Murang'a. By accumulating through raiding and looting, trading, wage employment and production of cash crops, some members of the society had acquired land and other forms of wealth.

1. Loyalists were those people issued with certificate of Loyalty. These were mainly chiefs, headmen, teachers and government employees. In 1958 they were no more than 4,000. Certificates of Loyalty enabled the holders to acquire trading licences, motor-vehicle licences, plant coffee, obtain loans and school bursaries and scholarships for their children.

While this process of accumulation and differentiation was going on, political organisations were being formed and resistance was being offered. This is the subject of our next chapter.

CHAPTER THREEPOLITICAL REREACTION IN MURANG'A 1920 - 1950

By 1920 various social changes had taken place in the Kikuyu society. Missionary education had helped a small group of people to gain literacy. This group of educated people were required to do various jobs in the mission posts, schools, administrative offices and white settled areas. During the First World War many were engaged as Carrier Corps. Those who came from the war expected rewards for the part they had played while all those who were educated expected to be awarded better jobs and privileges and also to be liberated from the "old and illiterate" chiefs. The administration described these people as "young natives returning from contact with civilization to find their elders still steeped in ancient law, bribery, superstition and Tembo".¹

Perhaps the elders, mainly the chiefs, felt threatened. The immediate response to this threat was the search for unity among themselves. In 1919 they formed the Kikuyu Association which was basically an association of the chiefs. The association looked for co-operation with the Colonial administration. This association was founded in Southern Kiambu and was not strong in Murang'a District.

In response to the European Associations and also the Kikuyu Association, the young, educated group formed the

1. KNA: "History of Fort Hall"; 1888 - 1944 FH/6/1

Young Kikuyu Association under Harry Thuku in 1921. The Young Kikuyu Association changed its name to East African Association in July, 1921. The earlier name could always be confused with the Kikuyu Association. The name also portrayed the association as a Kikuyu organisation and as such could alienate other ethnic groups. The East African Association had a good following in Murang'a under the leadership of such people like Joseph Kang'ethe, Job Muchuchu, Henry Gichuiri and Jesse Kariuki. The District Commissioner observed that "the Nairobi Association numbered many adherents amongst Fort Hall Christians, and used its funds to ferment and initiate unrest and tribal disloyalty, with secret meetings held and considerable sums contributed for political propaganda".¹

By 1922 E.A.A. had begun to have a political impact in Murang'a. Members made violent anti-European speeches at the same time stressing a number of arguments. It was stressed that the African troops had won the First World War in Africa, and that, in spite of that, they were being unfairly treated by the new settlers; that wages had been cut with the introduction of the new coin, which the settlers exploited owing to its similarity in appearance to the florin which was twice as much; that tax had been raised to 16 shillings and that oxen were being compulsorily sold to the Fort Hall Butcher at less than current rates.²

1. KNA: History of Fort Hall (1888 - 1944)

2. Ibid

Harry Thuku, the President of E.A.A., was arrested on 14th March, 1922. His arrest was followed by the African workers in Nairobi calling for a general strike in protest against the arrest. They demonstrated at the Police lines, where Thuku was detained and demanded his release. On Thursday, the 16th March, 1922, the Government brought troops who fired at the demonstrators killing 27 people and wounding 24 according to the official figure.¹

After Thuku was arrested, E.A.A. activities continued in Murang'a. In 1924, the leaders of the E.A.A. held a meeting. They elected the detained Thuku as the President, Joseph Kang'ethe Secretary and Job Muchuchu Treasurer - both of these from Murang'a. In November, the same year the E.A.A. officials presented a memorandum which was presented in Murang'a calling for among other things - the release of Thuku; the return of the alienated land; the abolition of Kipande; the abolition of tax for women; for the cases to be heard by elders and not by chiefs and finally for the creation of independent schools instead of Missionary schools.

The E.A.A., as a pressure group had been successful in a number of ways. Due to its agitation amongst the squatters, the Colonial Secretary was compelled to disallow the new Masters and Servants Ordinance, 1924. The British declaration accepting the paramountcy of African interests in Kenya was a great achievement for the E.A.A. At the

1. Singh, Markhan: History of Kenya's Trade Union Movement 1952, (E. I. N. 1969) p. 10.

same time Hut and Poll Tax was reduced from 16/= to 12/= and the proposed reduction of African wages was stopped and in 1923 wages began to increase.¹

The E.A.A. was succeeded by an organisation called the Kikuyu Central Association - K.C.A. In 1925 a meeting was held at Muriranja's in Murang'a attended by delegates from Kiambu, Nyeri, Embu and Nairobi. As a result of the meeting, Joseph Kang'ethe who had been the Secretary of E.A.A. was arrested on a charge of holding the meeting without the chief's permission. He was taken to Embu for trial but the case was withdrawn when a protest was made to the Deputy Chief Native Commissioner, Col. Watkins. Watkins told the E.A.A. leaders that the Government was not prepared to allow activities of the association as it was an organisation of all tribes in East African territories. He added that if they formed an association for the Kikuyu alone the Government would be prepared to allow their activities.²

A meeting of the committee members of the E.A.A. was held in Nairobi to consider the matter. Murang'a people had thought of forming their own District association to cater for their interests and the interests of the other Kikuyu Districts. Although this idea was dropped the name of the new association brought some problems. The initial name suggested was the Central Kikuyu Association. With the name "central", Murang'a still could interpret the association

1. Singh, Markhan: op.cit. p.16

2. Ibid.

as a Murang'a association for Murang'a District was the Central District of the Kikuyu Province.¹

The association still retained a heavy district bias. Joseph Kang'ethe was elected President; Job Muchuchu Treasurer, Jesse Kariuki Vice President and Henry Gichuri Secretary - all of them from Murang'a District. The K.C.A. Headquarters were to be at Kahuhia in Murang'a. In spite of this, K.C.A. stressed that its policies and fighting spirit were to remain those of the E.A.A. and the change was by name only. K.C.A. was to continue to mobilise people on such issues as land, labour, representation in the Government and other issues which affected the people.²

The administration had this to say about the K.C.A.:-

"The uprooting of the hotheads led by Harry Thuku was followed by the growth of a body, less noisy but, probably, more effective under the title of K.C.A. A body relying largely on propaganda, it was composed of the young Kikuyu who for many years had been growing more dissatisfied with conditions in their homes. The Local headquarters was situated at Kahuhia Mission. The Secretary was Joseph Kang'ethe. As far as could be ascertained it was a loose organisation of several hundred disenchanted young men chaffing under any form of authority, possessing a smattering of education -- A sound antidote to this political abortion was the Local Native Council which was growing daily in weight and importance".³

The Local Native Council was definitely supposed to be an antidote to K.C.A. political activities. In Kiambu,

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1. O.I.: Many informants - James Beuttah, Mbuli Muhia, Louis Kangaca and Musa Mureithi, between March, and August, 1976 all of them K.C.A. Office bearers for a long time.
 2. Ibid
 3. KNA: Fort Hall District: Annual Report 1926

the Kikuyu Association had served as an antidote to political activities while in Murang'a there was to a large extent no such a body. It then became necessary for the administration to have in the L.N.C. collaborative elements such as chiefs and court elders. Therefore out of the 25 members of the L.N.C. 13 were nominated while 12 were elected. The summary of the elected members was as follows:-

- 4 pagan chiefs
- 4 mission boys
- 1 pagan
- 1 mnyampara (Over seer) and
- 1 Government interpreter.¹

The result was that the majority of the members were chiefs who numbered 17. K.C.A. put forward its candidates and Joseph Kang'ethe was among those who were elected. However, Kang'ethe was dismissed within a short time for "misbehaviour". Prominent K.C.A. leaders such as Job Muchuchu and James Beuttah were returned to the L.N.C. in almost all the elections. The L.N.C. rather than strictly acting as a political antidote became a platform on which grievances were voiced and chiefs attacked. Chief Njiiri, especially, was attacked in many occasions and his motion to the effect that sons of chiefs should succeed their fathers automatically was defeated mainly due to K.C.A. opposition.²

1. KNA: Fort Hall District: Annual Report 1926

2. Fort Hall District Local Native Council Minutes 1926.

The Fort Hall L.N.C. was not quite effective as a political antidote to K.C.A. because K.C.A. was not only operating in Murang'a District but also in Nairobi. The K.C.A. leaders had opened an office in Nairobi at Pumwani. The Nairobi office was supposed to be a correspondence office, Kahuhia remained as the headquarters. The D.C. writing on the K.C.A. after the formation of the L.N.C. had this to say:-

"The Local Headquarters is situated close to Kahuhia Mission, but the real center is Nairobi. Unrest was shown by the younger men in various ways chiefly at the instigation of the K.C.A. The three chief manifestations were (1) opposition to the planting of Government maize, (2) the hostility of Kahuhia mission to a Government hygiene enquiry and (3) continued hostility to the domination of chief Njiiri.¹

The purpose of moving K.C.A. headquarters to Nairobi was to recruit more members from other Districts and to be out of reach of the chiefs who were making it difficult for the K.C.A. to organise. The administration had taken firm measures to strengthen the power of the chiefs, to prohibit unauthorised meetings and collection of money.

The K.C.A., perhaps to outwit the District Commissioner and the chiefs, began to devise methods of presenting their grievances directly to the representatives of the British Government, in Kenya and in Britain. In 1926, the K.C.A. had opposed a move by the settlers who demanded, from the Government that instructions be issued to officials that they should compel the chiefs to forcibly obtain supplies of labour

1. KNA: "History of Fort Hall 1888"- 1944 FH/6/1

for the settlers. In January, 1928, the Hilton Young Commission arrived in Kenya under the Chairmanship of Sir Hilton Young to consider Federation and other East African problems. The K.C.A. presented a comprehensive memorandum voicing the people's grievances in land, exploitation of labour, taxation and representation. In 1928 the K.C.A. opposed the amendment of the Native Authority Ordinance. The amendment provided for imprisonment to be imposed in case of evading call for communal labour and for expelling unlawful squatters. However, the bill was passed by the Legislative Council, to the disappointment of the K.C.A. and the conclusions of the Hilton Young Commission ignored the demands presented in the memorandum. The K.C.A. decided to send a representative directly to London to meet the Secretary of State for the Colonies.¹

At first the problem arose of who was to be sent. The suitable candidate was obviously to have a good knowledge of English and was also to be a member of the K.C.A. Joseph Kang'ethe the President and Job Muchuchu were not highly educated. No one from Murang'a had a good knowledge of English by then. The only suitable candidate for the purpose was James Beuttah. Beuttah turned the offer down on the grounds that he had 'family commitments' and could not go. Then the only alternative was Jumo Kenyatta. Kenyatta had been recruited into the K.C.A. by Joseph Kang'ethe who was his agemate. He was helping in editing

1. O.I.: Joseph Kang'ethe and James Beuttah recorded by Wango, 1972.

the vernacular newspaper MUIQUITHANIA and was the secretary of K.C.A. by then. He was sent with a memorandum for the Secretary of State. The memorandum was dated the 14th February, 1929 and was signed by 31 officials and leading members of the K.C.A.¹

By 1929, it can be said, the K.C.A. had become a strong political organisation to reckon with especially having been successful in sending its representative to England. During the same year an event occurred which made K.C.A. even more influential. There arose the issue of female circumcision. The Missionaries wanted to stop female circumcision. Dr. Arthur of C.S.M. at Chogoria passed a resolution requiring all native staff of mission schools to take an oath repudiating circumcision of girls. Also before being admitted into mission schools, they had to answer 'Yes' or 'No' to a declaration which denounced the rite. The declaration asked:-

"Do you say with truth you have given up the matter of circumcision and that you are not a member of K.C.A. and will not become a member unless the mission allows you to do so, should the association come into agreement with the Mission? Yes or No".

Members of various religious denominations such as the Prebysterian Church of East Africa, African Inland Church, Anglican Church and the General Missionary Society were required to take this oath and sign or put their

1. O.I. : James Beuttah, op.cit

2. KNA: Native Affairs File on Female Circumcision
1928-1930

fingerprints on pieces of paper. These people came to be known as Athomi (students of religion) or Andu a Kirore, people of finger prints, as opposed to the real Kikuyu. Muthirigo, a dance with strong abusive wording against the Athomi became very popular. There arose a schism between the Athomi and the other Kikuyu who referred to themselves as Kikuyu or Independents. The Independents took their children out of Mission schools and many of these schools had to close down. The D.C. describes the situation as follows:-

"The activities and influence of the K.C.A. increased considerably, largely as a result of the agitation about clitoridectomy. The political agitation which had arisen out of the clitoridectomy controversy subsided during the early months of this year (1926), as a result of the firm measures taken to strengthen the power of the chiefs, prohibiting unauthorised meetings and collection of money, and to suppress the seditious muthirigo song. In the Southern part of the district the educational position of large number of African Inland Mission adherents as a result of the circumcision controversy was greatly affected. About 20 A.I.M. outschools were closed down. As the malcontents refused to return and no other schools were provided a large number of half educated agitators was formed, and a strong movement was started for the establishment of outschools, independent of the missionary societies".¹

Therefore K.C.A. was joined by more people and had achieved one of its objectives listed down in 1926 - that is the starting of schools independent of the missionary control. K.C.A. had also taken a more central and

1. KNA: Fort Hall Annual District Reports 1929 and 1930

national outlook especially by recruiting followers from other districts such as Kiambu, Nyeri and Embu. But the decade that followed was full of problems for the K.C.A. and once again the task of keeping it alive was left to the Murang'a District.

The K.C.A. represented the elements within the Kikuyu that psychologically did not fully accept European dominance. They were from the start "incipient nationalists" with a militant approach to political change, and their attitudes reflected more the influence of a levelling egalitarianism, expressed in part through the new Western values of the Kikuyu.¹

In contradistinction to the K.C.A. other organisations were formed in the other Kikuyu district. The Kikuyu Association, whose leaders were the chiefs and headmen dominated the affairs of Kiambu. In Murang'a the need for an organisation like the Kikuyu Association had been removed by the establishment of the Local Native Council in 1925. About 1928 the Kikuyu Association changed its name to the Kikuyu Loyal Patriots to avoid confusion with the Kikuyu Central Association and to indicate its loyalty to the Government.

In Nyeri District the Progressive Kikuyu Party was formed to counteract the activities of K.C.A. there.

1. Rosberg G.C. and Nottingham J. The Myth of Mau Mau EAPH Nairobi 1966 p.86.

2. Ibid.

The members pledged loyalty to the White administration. According to its constitution the P.K.P stood for fullest progress of the Kikuyu people and expressed desire for active co-operation with men of all races.¹

K.C.A. was further weakened by the activities of Harry Thuku. After Thuku came from restriction he was elected the President of K.C.A. defeating Joseph Kang'ethe. The fact that Kang'ethe had opposed Thuku would show that there was still the anti-Kiambu feeling or that Thuku, was no longer considered the undisputed leader of K.C.A. which had succeeded E.A.A. However, before long there emerged a conflict. Thuku refused to stay at the K.C.A. office at Pumwani and shifted to Eastleigh. He was accused of refusing to send money to Kenyatta in England for he felt he was the one who should have gone instead of Kenyatta.² Thuku was accused of misusing K.C.A. money and he filed a libel suit against the Vice-President of K.C.A., Jesse Kariuki. The conflict took a Kiambu-Murang'a dimension with Kariuki being supported by the K.C.A. old guard. Thuku lost the suit and also the K.C.A. presidency and subsequently broke away from the K.C.A.

Thuku's breakaway strengthened the colonial anti-K.C.A. forces already at work, among them the chiefs, the Kikuyu Loyalist Association, the Progressive Kikuyu Party

1. Rosberg G.C. and Nottingham J. op.cit p.86

2. O.I. James Beuttah and Job Muchuchu. US recorded by Wango 1973.

in Nyeri and the Athomi. Thuku launched the Kikuyu Provincial Association and sought co-operation with the Government. The K.P.A. also required its members to pledge loyalty to "His Majesty the King" of Great Britain and the established Government; to be bound to act in a constitutional manner according to British traditions and to refrain from anything which was calculated to disturb the peace and good order and Government.¹ The K.P.A. was not popular in Murang'a. In actual fact the K.P.A. received no help from the people of Murang'a.²

After this time the Kiambu-Murang'a political cleavage seemed to deepen. As a result of Carter Land Commission of 1933, the "Native Reserves" had been extended further into the forest areas. In 1935 a joint meeting of the Murang'a and Kiambu Local Native Councils was held under the Chairmanship of the Provincial Commissioner. Kiambu spokesmen stressed the view that their people should be given land around Tuthu in Murang'a. K.C.A. representatives opposed the move while the P.C. showed the need for reaching an agreement. The Murang'a chiefs agreed to allow the Kiambu people to occupy the area in question but indicated that their Kiambu brothers would be more welcome if they became blood-brothers. Chief Koinange on behalf of the

1. Thuku H. : An autobiography of Harry Thuku, O.U.P Nairobi, 1970 p. 63.

Kiambu people rejected this suggestion, for in his view the Kiambu people could lose their identity.¹

It appears that the Murang'a-dominated K.C.A. was afraid of losing leadership even at the time Kenyatta was sent to England. Kenyatta came back to Kenya in September, 1930 and he left again in April, 1931. However, this time the K.C.A. sent Mukiri Githendu from Murang'a along with Kenyatta. The intentions of the K.C.A. (Murang'a) are shown by a letter written by Joseph Kang'ethe on the issue. The letter goes:-

THE KIKUYU CENTRAL ASSOCIATION

HEADQUARTERS OFFICE -NAIROBI
(MONTHLY JOURNAL: MUIGUTHANIA.)

Telegrams:
'KAYSEEAY' NAIROBI,
GENERAL SECRETARY
JOHNSTONE KENYATTA.

PUMWANI 24TH MARCH, 1933

We send as many greetings as the leaves in the bushes or the sand in the sea and after the greetings, listen to the following. We ask you kindly to spare sometime so that we can be together with you there at your place in Gathukeini on Sunday 2nd April, 1933. We have thought it wise that those three KCA branches Viz - Kahuhia Wethaga and Gathukeini which were the most concerned in the sending of Perminas Githendu Mukeri to England in 1931 should have a brief meeting and think how we should bring him back. You very well remember that during the 'hey' days of KCA, these three branches were working hand in hand.

If we dont join and think of how to bring Mr. Githendu back home it means that we are abusing the oath that we took at Pumwani. You should get all the people who took the K.C.A. oath at Pumwani so that we shall never forget you. Think the words carefully as this will be the subject on that day. This is the reason of the coming there.

1. Fort Hall District Local Native Council Minutes, 1935

You should remember the oath we took together at Pumwani and the words we recited that we shall not let you go hungry and rot up in that foreign country and also that we shall never forget you. Think about the words carefully as this will be the subject on that day. This is the reason of the coming there.

You remember Kiambu people suggested Kenyatta to go to England as their representative and so it is up to them to bring him back home while on the other hand it is our responsibility to bring Githendu back home. That is why we in the H/Offices have decided to call this meeting so as to think how Githendu will come back.

We hope that we shall find you waiting for us.

We are yours together with you in the work of the country.

Joseph Kang'ethe

James M. Karoki

Chrisp N. Keiro

Job G.C. Muchuchu"

The inter-district political suspicions and conflicts which infested K.C.A. continued when the Kenya African Study Union (- K.A.S.U.) which was succeeded by the Kenya African Union (- K.A.U.) were formed. For a long time Africans had no representative in the Legislative Council. Since 1924 Africans had been represented by two European missionaries or retired Government Officials. In 1944, the Government agreed to put an African representative in the Legislative Council. The problem arose of who was to be the first African representative. Joseph Kang'ethe who had led K.C.A. for many years was in detention. There was once again no one from Murang'a who had a good education such as would have been required in the Legislative Council. Then it became clear that Kiambu was likely to produce the suitable candidate.

The two likely candidates were Eliud Mathu and Mbiyu Koinange. Mbiyu had spent eleven years in America and Mathu had attended Balliol¹ College at Oxford after getting a degree from South Africa. The main candidates emerged as Mbiyu Koinange and Eliud Mathu both from Kiambu and Joel Omino and Paul Mboya both from Nyanza. However, Eliud Mathu was accepted by the Governor as the First African Representative.

1. For a detailed account of K.A.S.U. and K.A.U. see, J. Spencer, James Beuttah: Kenya Patriot - University of Nairobi Department of History, Staff Seminar Paper 1971/72

In November, 1944, the hope that the Government would consider the banning of K.C.A. and release of the detainees so as to allow K.C.A. revive its political activities dwindled. The Government approved the formation of the Kenya African Study Union therefore killing any chance of the revival of the K.C.A. The election of the K.C.A. 'enemy' Harry Thuku, as the President of K.A.S.U. was seen as the continuation of the K.P.A. into K.A.S.U. K.C.A. followers refused to join K.A.S.U. and in Murang'a K.A.S.U. failed to have following. Thuku was replaced by James Gichuru as the President. Gichuru made an effort to spread K.A.S.U. in Murang'a and assisted by James Beuttah K.A.S.U. under Gichuru began to gain ground.

In February, 1946 K.A.S.U. changed its name to K.A.U. and with James Beuttah as the Vice-President in Central Province K.A.U. gained more ground in Murang'a. But at the centre K.A.U. had problems especially of leadership. Many K.A.U. top officials were busy in other fields. Gichuru was a teacher and he could only work half time. Khamisi with his newspaper Mwalimu could not devote enough time. Muchohi Gikonyo was a representative on the Nairobi Municipal Council and so he was more in the council than in K.A.U. W. Awori, the party's Vice-President, lacked the necessary self-discipline for the party leadership.¹

1. J. Spencer : Ibid

Apart from the problem of central leadership the K.C.A. leaders who had by now come out of detention saw K.A.U. as an elitist party dominated by other tribes. The K.C.A. leaders wanted to control K.A.U. if they could not be allowed to organise as K.C.A. But Murang'a District had no one apart from Beuttah and Joseph Keng'ethe to challenge the elitist leaders in K.A.U. So they fell back on their Secretary, Kenyatta, who was in U.K. Jesse Kariuki, James Beuttah and Job Muchuchu began to raise money to bring Kenyatta back. They sent Kenyatta 5,000/= which they had borrowed signing their names as guarantors. Kenyatta wrote back and said he was willing to come but the money was not enough. They borrowed another 6,000/= and sent it¹ and Kenyatta came back home. It was the K.C.A. rather than K.A.U. which organised his coming back. He did not get the K.A.U. leadership immediately until six months later when Gichuru gave way. Under Kenyatta's leadership K.A.U. became popular in Murang'a for to many people Kenyatta ceased to be a Kiambu man and became a Kikuyu leader.

But Kenyatta's impact in Murang'a cannot be said to be very great. The masses had for a long time resisted the Colonial administration in soil conservation measures, misrule and authoritarianism of the chiefs, and labour recruitment. This resistance had gone on in the 1930s

1. J. Spencer op.cit.

when K.C.A. was active and in the 1940s after K.C.A. was banned. This resistance continued up to the time of Mau Mau Emergency. So it can be said that although K.A.U became strong as a political movement under Kenyatta, it could only accommodate itself to the prevailing political conditions in Murang'a at this time - for, with or without K.A.U., political resistance was continuing and would have continued.

However, Kenyatta's leadership in K.A.U continued to make it a party of the elite and the conservatives. Chiefs and other wealthy people who had been the targets of anti-Government elements found K.A.U. to be a "respectable organisation".¹ Kenyatta on a number of occasions attacked the activities of the militants especially those against the soil conservation measures, which were highly opposed by the masses. The militants were surprised by his speeches which appeared to have been pro-government. Kenyatta in an attempt to draw a distinction between Mau Mau and K.A.U. pointed out that K.A.U. was a good legally registered union unlike Mau Mau which was an unknown, illegal and unregistered movement which used force to achieve its goals unlike K.A.U. which relied on justice in dealing with difficult situations. To him K.A.U. despised thieving, robbery and murder for such practices would ruin the country. Thieves, robbers and

1. O.I.: Chief Ignatio Murai, as recorded by Wango, 1972.

murderers, according to him would have been wrecking the chances of advancement and were likely to prevent the country from getting freedom.¹

About the land question he pointed out that there was the need for a commission to inquire into the land problem, as the Europeans, he thought, understood the genuineness of the land grievance. His appeal to the people was to demand for their rights justly not forcefully. He pointed that when the Royal Commission came, people should show that Kenyans were a good and peaceful people and not thieves and robbers and the weapons with which they fought were justice and brains.² To quote Kenyatta at length:

"I want you to know the purpose of K.A.U. It is the biggest purpose the African has. It involves every African in Kenya, and it is their mouthpiece which asks for freedom. If we unite now, each and every one of us, and each tribe to another, we will cause the implementation in this country of that which the European calls democracy. True democracy has no odour distinction; it does not choose between black and white. We are here in this tremendous gathering under the flag of K.A.U. to find which road leads us from darkness to democracy. In order to achieve it, we Africans must achieve the right to elect our own representatives. This is surely the first principle of democracy. We are the only race in Kenya which does not elect its own representatives in the Legislature and we are going to set out rectifying this situation. We are not worried

1. Jomo Kenyatta: Suffering Without Bitterness. The Founding of Kenya Nation, EAPH, 1968 p.49

2. Ibid pp.50-51

that other races are here with us in our country, but we insist that we are the leaders here. We want our cattle to get fat on our land, so that our children grow up in prosperity; we do not want that fat removed to feed others. K.A.U. speaks in daylight. He who calls us the Mau Mau is not truthful. We do not know this thing Mau Mau We want to prosper as a nation, and as a nation, we demand equality, that is equal pay for equal work. Whether you consider a chief, a headman or a labourer, he needs in these days increased salary. He needs the salary that compares with that of a European who does equal work. We shall never get our freedom unless we succeed in this issue. Those who profess to be just must realize that this is the foundation of justice. It has never been known in history that a country prospers without equality. We despise bribery and corruption, those two words that the European repeatedly refers to. Bribery and corruption are prevalent in this country, but I am not surprised. As long as people are held down, corruption is sure to arise, and the only answer to this is a policy of equality. -If we work together as one, we must succeed. Our country today is in a bad state, for its'land full of fools, and fools, in a country delay the independence of its people. K.A.U. seeks to remedy this situation, and I tell you now it despises thieving, robbery and murder. These people are wrecking our chances of advancement. They will prevent us getting freedom. We want a commission in this country, a Royal Commission to inquire into the land problem. I think the Europeans here realise in their heart of hearts that our grievance is true. I will never ask you to be subversive, but I ask you to be united, for the day of Independence to the day of complete unity. K.A.U. is a good union, and we do not want divided people. I think Mau Mau is a new word. Elders do not know it. K.A.U. is not a fighting union that uses fists and weapons. If any of you think that force is good, I do not agree with you. Remember that old saying that he who is hit with a club returns, but he who is hit with justice never comes back. I do not want people to accuse us falsely, that we steal and that we are Mau Mau. I pray to you that we join hands for freedom, and freedom means abolishing criminality. Whatever grievances we have, let us air them here in the open. The criminal does not want freedom and land; he wants to line his own pocket. Let us therefore demand our rights justly.

When the Royal Commission comes, let us show it that we are a good and peaceful people, and not thieves and robbers. There are more than 100,000 people in the United Kingdom who have supported our land petition. The weapons with which we will fight are justice and brains".¹

It is not quite clear what impact Kenyatta had on the Kikuyu political inter-district unity which for a long time was lacking. Kiambu had taken the lead in organising the oathing ceremonies in Kiambaa Parliament at Senior Chief Koinange's home. Without disputing the role played by Kiambu District between 1946 and 1951, one observation can be made. When the Government banned the K.C.A. in 1940, the K.C.A. in Murang'a continued underground. Its meetings were sporadic and locally controlled. After the detainees' release, they automatically became once again the leaders of K.C.A. in Kiambu, when the Government banned the K.C.A. and detained its leaders, those who remained in Kiambu joined forces with the Kikuyu Land Board Association, known as the "Mbari" because it had been formed to present the land claims of various Kiambu "Mbari" - sub-clans, to the Kenya Land Commission in 1932-33. Its headquarters was at Senior Chief Koinange's farm at Kiambaa. It is from here that the oath taking was directed and organised. Oath administrators from all the Kikuyu country were recruited here. Later the oathing was spread to all parts of the Kikuyu country and Nairobi mainly by the militants in K.A.U. who included Bildad Kaggia, Fred Kubai and John Mungai.

1. Comm. Kenyatta, op.cit p.49

The K.A.U. militants were opposed to the conservatives who were mainly represented by the older elements and elite under Kenyatta. This opposition led to a division and this division once again took a district dimension - something quite common in the K.C.A. as we have seen earlier. A meeting of Murang'a people living in Nairobi had elected a committee to ask K.A.U. national Headquarters for permission to start a Murang'a sub-branch in Nairobi. Led by Eliud Mutonyi, Mbugu Mugwira, and Lawrence Karugo the committee spoke to Mbotela, and Katithi. Both rejected the ideas but said that the committee could form a large branch for the whole of Nairobi. This branch was formed with Karugo as Chairman and Mwangi Nyingi as the Secretary both from Murang'a District.¹

The Nairobi Branch later took over control of the K.A.U. activities and under Keggia, Mutonyi, Kubai and other militants of the K.A.U. When K.A.U. was banned and the leaders detained, the Central Committee was changed into the War Council under Harrison Njoroge Kwera, Gichohi Githua, Enoch Mwangi, among others, from Murang'a with representatives from Nyeri among them Ndirangu Kabebe.²

1. Spencer, John: K.A.U. and "MAU MAU" : Some connections, mimeo: Trinity College, Cambridge, 27th June, 1975.

2. O.I. Kabue Macharia on 20th August, 1977 and Enoch Mwangi on 10th May, 1976.

These inter-district divisions continued during the struggle for Independence. The administration writing on Mau Mau observes:-

"Kiambu district still remains the great enigma of the Emergency. All the Mau Mau high command come from Kiambu, but investigation has shown that only six per cent of the gangs come from the district. It would appear that the Mau Mau in Kiambu district are more interested in trade, litigation, corruption, intrigue, and politics than receiving rewards of martyrdom. It is typical that most of assassinations in Kiambu have been carried out by imported Fort Hall gun men".¹

Karari Njama, a leading Mau Mau figure in the forest from Nyeri District had this to say on Kiambu:-

"Why did Kiambu become the originator of the oath and people like Kenyatta and Koinange and yet could not produce fighters? Kiambu District having started the struggle left when it was red-hot. It had the most educated people who could act as leader but these did not play any active role. The educated people had collaborated with the colonial enemies. What did Kiambu people want? Did they want to leave the illiterate peasants do all the work and later come and enjoy the fruits? Or did they not want independence? Instead of supplies passing through Kiambu the nearest District to Nairobi, they had to pass through Murang'a".²

These inter-district feelings were also expressed in the war Council. The Murang'a people had resolved that Kikuyu from the other districts were going to pay for the expenses incurred by Murang'a District in drugs, fighting materials, food, clothing etc. which were supplied mainly from contributions made by the Murang'a people. Perhaps

1. Central Province Annual Report 1953

2. Barnett, D. and Njama, Karari: Mau Mau from Within
N.Y. Monthly Review Press, 1966. p.298.

this could explain why the Mau Mau fighters when they sued the Kenya Government for compensation of the sufferings incurred during the struggle for Uhuru were represented by Murang'a people.¹

Political Resistance 1930-1950

Throughout the 1930s, K.C.A. remained active in Murang'a. When the Land Commission visited Murang'a in 1933 "the people showed uneasiness and nerves in connection with matters concerning land in the reserve."² K.C.A. leaders explained to the people the meaning of the term reserve which meant that the Reserves were there reserved for the settlers who would occupy them any time they required more land. Investigations were carried out by these leaders to determine which mbari or muhiriga had occupied any of the alienated land. Where no adequate claim could be made, the leaders wanted to know where salt-licks were and which people had used the alienated land for grazing. The purpose of this exercise was to gather enough evidence to prove to the Land Commission that the alienated land was still needed by its owners.³

1. O.I. Nahashon Ngugi, Andrew Ng'ang'a Munyua, and Kabue Macharia in June, 1976.

2. KNA: Fort Hall Annual Report 1934

3. O.I.: Raphael Munyori, 20th June, 1977

On 31 July, 1933 the Acting Governor, Mr. Moore, was to preside over the opening ceremony of the East African Power and Lighting Company's at the Maragua and Tana junctions. K.C.A. had been alert of any move to alienate more land around Maragua and Joseph Kang'ethe had requested James Beuttah, a strong K.C.A. supporter, to buy a piece of land at Maragua so as to halt land alienation. During the preparations for the opening ceremony, temporary shelters were erected on the "African Land" near the plant. This was interpreted as a move to alienate more African land. People in the area had been asked by the administration to go and dance for the Governor. The dance was sabotaged and even the food provided by the company was boycotted; for dancing and eating there would show that the people were acquiescing in the alienation of their land.¹

In 1935 the D.C. accused the K.C.A. of agitating against the Produce and Inspection Rules and Native Marketing Ordinance. Also in 1936 when the Taxation Collection Commission visited Murang'a, the K.C.A. accused chiefs of corruption and bribery and chief Njiiri was specifically charged. Although cases of corruption were brought to light, the commission concluded that it was the case of "free presents to gladden the heart which were natural in the present state of native society".² This shows how far the administration could go to protect its agents even in criminal offences.

1. KNA: "History of Fort Hall 1888 - 1944" FH/6/1

2. Ibid

The K.C.A. continued to harrass the administration on the taxation issue. The administration began to find difficulties in collecting tax. People were told by K.C.A. agents that the Commission on Taxation had exempted all the widows from paying tax and this reduced the amount of tax revenue and also caused difficulties in collection. In addition to the widows refusing to pay tax, the young men also refused to pay. The administration observing the situation wrote:-

"Many strapping young men have no money and they make not the slightest efforts to earn it when the opportunity is offered. Many of them went to the detention camp in default of payment of their taxes with complete indifference".¹

The settlers were complaining that the Kikuyu labour was shy of any but the easiest work such as coffee picking and light weeding preferring day to day contracts so as to avoid an entry on their registration certificate.

1939 was a difficult year for the administration due to K.C.A. activities. The year started with the visit of the Chief Native Commissioner, Dr. Wilson. On his tour in the Northern part of the District, the Chief Native Commissioner was warned that he was wasting his time in touring when all questions regarding the Akikuyu could be answered by the K.C.A.²

In September, the K.C.A. accused the Agricultural Instructors in Kandara of uprooting people's crops wantonly.

1. KNA: "History of Fort Hall 1888 - 1944" FH/6/1

2. Ibid

The agricultural officer denied this accusation and the D.C. accused the K.C.A. of spreading rumours that the government was preparing to seize porters for the carrier corps. In some parts of Kandara some people had taken to the Aberdares forest so as not to be conscripted for the military service for the Second World War.¹

The D.C. in 1939 thought that Fort Hall District was far behind North Kavirondo. Comparing the two he wrote:-

"North Kavirondo is a long way ahead of Fort Hall. The reason for this appears to be that the Kavirondo if less clever is also less suspicious than the Kikuyu, and more ready to adopt a helpful suggestion without waiting for years to find out what 'hila' lies behind it".²

This situation was seen by the administration to have been brought about by the K.C.A. agitators. The D.C. supported Chief Michuki's view of the K.C.A. members. Michuki had described a K.C.A. member as the louse in the Government blanket, which made "us allitch".³ Many chiefs including Njiiri were the target of K.C.A. activities and were always urging the administration to arrest K.C.A. leaders and ban the organisation. The K.C.A. was banned in 1940 and the leaders were detained. The impact and influence of K.C.A. in Murang'a can be shown by the way the D.C. viewed the situation after the banning of the association. He had this to say:-

1. HNA : "History of Fort Hall 1888 - 1944".

2. Ibid

3. Ibid

"Trying to administer a District infested with the Kikuyu Central Association was rather like driving a motor car with a brake binding. The intermittent (sic.) of some of the leaders has had the effect of releasing the brake at least temporarily, and the sudden willingness of the native to cooperate in anti-soil erosion measures, and of traders to clean up their shops and instal cement floors can be put down largely, in my opinion to the banning of the Association.¹

As an extra measure of reducing the K.C.A. influence, the administration looked for a Local Native Council propagandist to counteract the K.C.A. "malicious perversions". As most of the chiefs and government employees could not be listened to for they were believed to be collaborators, the administration picked on James Beuttah for, as a former K.C.A. member and a stern critic of Government, it was felt that his words might well sway the natives. However, Beuttah resigned and the administration could not get a good replacement and it had to rely on loyal agents such as chiefs and government employees who had to use force to get things done.

Land, Agricultural Change and Politics - 1940-1950

In this section it is important to bring to light the relationship between land and the people from 1940 when K.C.A. was banned to 1950 when the Mau Mau movement began to take root. The majority of the people were peasants and land to them was extremely important. The land question had been a long burning issue from the time of active resistance through

1. KNA: "History of Fort Hall 1888 - 1944".

organised political resistance to the Mau Mau active resistance. It then becomes important at this juncture to examine the patterns of land distribution and population distribution prior to the declaration of Emergency and after 1940. Here attention will only be paid to the land under the Africans in the so-called Native Reserve. It should be remembered here that 7.5 million acres had been taken over by the white settlers in Kenya.

In 1950 the area of Fort Hall District (Native Land Unit) was 588 square miles (376,320 acres). This area carried a population of 301,236 people with a rough density of 512 people per square mile over the whole District.¹ Administratively the District had been divided into fifteen locations, each location under a chief. The 1948 General African census was carried out on the Itura and Location basis and it is on the same basis that the density of population will be examined.

The greatest density was 815 in location number 4 of the District while the lowest density was 251 in location number 10. The density of population was not necessarily homogeneous in any of these locations and in some locations the density was in places in excess of 1,000 to the square mile.² Another thing to be noted is the fact that one location could have within it two or more ecological zones -

1. KNA: District Team, Fort Hall District 1948-1950

2. Ibid

high, middle, and low. Therefore, the significant feature of the distribution of population was not so much the variation from location to location as from one ecological zone to another. Their variations were due to altitude, soil and rainfall.

As a matter of convenience, the District's density of population could be divided into three classes - areas with above average density, with below average and with about average density.

The areas with above average density had between 815 and 758 people to the square mile. Geographically these areas lay in the South East part of the district being bounded on the South and East by the settled area (coffee and sisal estates). The soil was a uniform red loam with generally better textures in the valleys and the rainfall is between 40" and 50". This area lay between 5,000 and 6,000 feet and with such an amount of rainfall provided the optimum conditions for human activities in Murang'a.¹

The area with an average density was that with between 544 and 623 per square mile. This area did not have extremely peculiar characteristics as it shared most of the characteristics with those with above and below average areas.

The area with below average density had between 251 and 275. This area lay to the east of the District and was characterised

1. KNA: District Team, Fort Hall District 1948-1950

physically by having fairly large proportions of its available area taken up with poorer grey soils which constituted the grasslands between the main road running north to south and the Tana River to the east. These grasslands were low, hot and of poor stock and human carrying capacity but there was extensive riverside cultivation along the main rivers. In the higher areas the soil was a red loam, gradually giving place to poorer grey soil at the lower altitude with numerous rock outcrops in the river valleys, with rainfall rising from about 33" in the lower zone to about 56" in the higher areas.¹

It can be stated broadly that, so far as Murang'a District was concerned by 1950, the optimum conditions for the development of a dense population were provided by the 5,000-6,000 feet zones; that in these zones the population might exceed in density 1,100 to the square mile and that below 5,000 feet and above 6,000 feet there was falling off in population density which became most pronounced at below 4,000 feet.

The other important thing in Murang'a during this period (1940-1950) was the density of family holdings. Family holdings varied in size from 13 acres in the under 4,000' zone, to about 4.0 acres in the middle zones, rising to about 8 acres in the high altitude zone. The population pressure was greatest in the middle zones (5,000-6,000) in the southern locations.²

1. KNA; District Team, Fort Hall District 1948-1950

2. Ibid

The Colonial administration took some measures to regulate the human activity in the 1940s. The Colonial administration in Murang'a had come to be concerned with how to deal with the problem of population increase and the relative land shortage in the area. The administration realizing that the population would continue growing and it might double within a short time found they had to answer a number of questions. One question of greatest importance was for how many people could the Reserve provide food. If the District had really reached saturation point then the immediate administrative and political future was growing to be difficult, but if on the other hand the District could carry more people then it would be suggested it was important to know where effort could best be directed to bring this about.¹

It is to the second part of the answer that the administration sought refuge - that is where effort was best to be directed to solve the problem. Firstly they considered the ecological zones. The high ecological zone was obviously unsuitable for the growing of maize. However, its high rainfall and relatively higher humidity made it suited for the production of grass and animal products along with fruit and potatoes. The problem was that at least 35% of the land in this zone was bracken infested and on that account the land had a low or nil productivity. It was also found out that under the existing methods of farming the adjustment between land and population might leave little or no margin for increase.

1. KNA: District Team, Fort Hall District 1948-1950

The obvious area was the middle zone. The problem there was that density of population had already reached 1,000 to the square mile in some areas. It became apparent that no known systems of agriculture would be likely to increase that density.

The low zone was not liked by the Kikuyu because of heat. They only used it for grazing purposes and as a grazing area it had a stock-carrying capacity of about a beast to 10-15 acres. The administration after looking around considered the zone between 4,000-5,000 feet where they saw its potentiality being considerable to the tune of 50%.¹

It is clear that in the mid-1940s the pressure of population and land holding had become a great burden to the colonial administrators who were determined to continue ruling and reaping profits out of their colony. The average overall density of 512 to the square mile in an agricultural district indicates a high level of land cultivation and land productivity. There were no secondary industries of any consequence. About 20,000 male adults were continually absent from the District working in other areas leaving their families in the reserve. But by going out to work it did not mean that great pressure was taken off the land as the families left behind continued to farm the absentee's land. There was an insignificant amount of stone quarrying

1. KNA: District Team, Fort Hall District 1948-1950

in the District and only about 1,000 Africans lived in the only township.¹

The Southern locations being adjacent to the European coffee farms supplied an amount of casual labour but none of these activities ever divorced a person who had a piece of land from his land interests. Necessity, prestige and social security made it necessary for him to be a farmer whatever other kind of employment he might embrace. The meagre wages earned in employed labour were to be subsidized by the "reserve" which enabled a man and his family to exist.

The beginning of a state of Emergency saw the influx of squatters' from the white settled areas and the Rift Valley Province into the District. This worsened the problem of land but the Emergency helped the administration to solve the problem. The emergency gave the administration wide powers over all issues and as thousands of people were detained and the rest put in concentration villages, the land problem was temporarily solved.

It is with this background of the relationship of land and people that we can turn to the reaction of the Murang'a people to the measures taken by the colonial administration to improve production while maintaining a balance between land and people without giving the people more land.

1. KNA: District Team, Fort Hall District 1948-1950

It has been said that before the administration banned the K.C.A. in 1940 it had tried to use the K.C.A. members in the L.N.C. to convince the people to carry out soil conservation measures. In this endeavour the administration had picked on James Beuttah who resigned within a short time. Now that K.C.A. was banned and the leaders detained at Kapenguria, and the administration could not get a collaborator from the radical side, there was only one thing to be done and that was to use the chiefs and the Athomi to carry out the soil conservation measures.

The colonial agricultural policy in Kenya by 1940 mainly emphasised the principle of soil conservation. The administration had realised that agricultural change in the earlier years of colonial rule had in many ways disturbed the balance between men, animals and the land. Concern with problems of soil erosion first entered official policy in about 1930 and became an urgent priority towards the end of the Second War. The administration's priority was the rehabilitation of the 'native' areas and this rehabilitation was believed to be only possible when backed by legal compulsion and enforced by the agricultural field staff and the local government authorities.¹

1. KNA: Department of Agriculture. Letter from District Commissioner, Fort Hall to Provincial Commissioner, Nyeri dated 24/11/43.

The administration had obviously to rationalize its activities in using force to conserve soil and increase production. It was thought that for an African to benefit he was to be compelled to help himself. Even some loyal colonial chiefs and agents became very enthusiastic in this task of compelling "Africans" to help themselves. But the masses had a different view of the kind of help they were given. Masses usually felt that they were doing things for the benefit of the Colonial administration and not for their own benefits. We shall begin by looking into the wattle production, the only major cash crop in Murang'a before 1950, and see how the masses of the people reacted.

The colonial administration had waged a vigorous campaign urging people to plant wattle in 1920 and 1930s. However this wattle production became the monopoly of the chiefs, headmen and the Athomi. The growth of wattle bark production had a number of effects on the masses especially as it accelerated soil erosion. Most planters had sown seeds broadcast within indigenous bush so as to reduce costs of production. As such wattle trees failed to act as wash stop to prevent sheet erosion and as a legume to restore soil damaged by the continuous cultivation of crops.

The plantation of wattle as a commodity also caused gully erosion. Planted broadcast without spacing and thinning, wattle activated sheet erosion upon hill tops and gully erosion, starting above plantations could not be stemmed by trees which were planted irregularly.¹

Here we can make two observations. Firstly, gully erosion which started in the high zone continued in the lower zone. As wattle production was mainly responsible for this gully erosion, then its effects were felt on the lower zones. Secondly, to restore soil fertility and stop soil erosion, a large amount of labour force was necessary. Wattle producers who were the chiefs and the Athomi were not well disposed to carry out soil conservation measures and in any case they were not numerous enough to offer the labour power necessary. So the task of soil conservation was left to the masses.

From the high zone we can move to the middle zone where the density of population was the largest. The greatest opposition to forced agricultural change was actually in the middle zone. In the absence of any organised political resistance, the colonial administration rigorously enforced soil conservation measures. The D.C. had seen the detention of the K.C.A. leaders as god-sent and it was hoped that each month about 1,800 acres were to be terraced. This would have required about 4,000 paid

 1. On Wattle Production see M. Cowen, Wattle Production in Central Province (mimeo). IIS University of Nairobi 1975.

labourers to do the work,¹ but the administration did not want to use paid labour.

The administration in an attempt to ward off open opposition devised a method of involving the people as a whole in the terracing work. At first clan elders were allowed to make decisions and execute them with the indirect guidance of the chiefs. The effect of these elders would have been great but most of them refused to be used. Another technique was devised. This was to have the influential members of every Itura to form a sub-location council and the influential members of the location to form a locational council. These councils were to work together with the masses and carry on with the work of soil conservation.

This technique seemed to have worked for a time for by 1945 much land had been terraced as can be shown by the following table:-

	Strip Cropping Terraces		Narrow Bench	
	acres	miles	acres	miles
Forced Labour	12,755	3,292	261	62
Paid Labour	<u>795</u>	<u>106</u>	<u>112</u>	<u>13</u>
	13,550	3,398	373	75

One reason why this technique of using councillors worked was the amount of power given to these councillors.

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1. Fort Hall District Annual Report 1944
 2. Ibid
 3. Ibid

Although they had no legal powers, they nonetheless could punish opponents of soil conservation in a number of ways. Anyone who refused to join terracing was not allowed to hold any trading licences; he could not brew liquor for ceremonial occasions; he could not be allowed to buy sugar and he could also be prosecuted. These councillors were used as propagandists and overseers of soil conservation work. They had been made responsible for soil conservation, for the closure of eroded lands, for seeing that all able-bodied men and women took part in land conservation measures and they were required to supervise the sale of sugar to the people of their itura.¹ They were made responsible for the maintenance of tracts and roads. Indeed by the beginning of 1946 over 6,900 miles of terracing had been completed as compared with 3,470 miles in 1945.²

However, by the end of 1946 the work of soil conservation had begun to come to a standstill. Once again organised resistance started and all the efforts of the colonial administration to make people work were almost frustrated. This organised resistance can be explained in three ways.

One reason was the coming back from detention of the K.C.A. leaders who immediately began to agitate against terracing. As we have noted the detention of the K.C.A.

1. KNA: Fort Hall District Annual Report 1944

2. Ibid 1947

leaders at Kapenguria was seen by the administration as god-sent. The administration's feeling about the release of the leaders can be shown by the way they reported of them:-

"Old friends who had been constrained to spend their war effort drawing pictures on the walls of Kapenguria were once again in evidence."¹

The other factor was the coming back of the soldiers from the Second World War. There were 4,018 returning soldiers and many of them had been overseas. They had been accustomed to individual attention from their officers and to a standard of living which they were unable to maintain and moreover they were returning to a District which was short of food following the famine of cassava (Ng'aragu ya Mianga).²

The ex-soldiers started by holding two big baraza demanding not less than three seats on the Local Native Council and three representatives on each Tribunal. They did not wish to pay the Local Native Council rate and they refused to take part in soil conservation work demanding that this should be done by labour paid from the Colonial Development Fund.³

The other factor was the emergence of a group of young men calling themselves the 40 group "Tumwana twa Forty".

1. KNA: Fort Hall District Annual Report 1944

2. Ibid

3. Ibid

Their slogan was that they were born, circumcised, married and got rich in 1940. Their mothers and fathers and fathers were also born, circumcised, married and got rich in 1940. The 40 Group agitated openly against the soil conservation work, payment of tax, the rule of chiefs. The 40 Group which drew its membership from the whole of Murang'a and which had in it ex-soldiers, taxi-drivers, robbers, politicians and some 'criminals' became such a strong group that it was even capable of fighting openly with the colonial armed forces.

1947 can be seen as the beginning of open crisis in Murang'a. The D.C. reported that the year "which came like a lamb went out like a lion".¹ On 20th July, a meeting was held in Fort Hall station attended by about 10,000 people. It was resolved that there was to be no women terracing in future. Women constituted about 50% of the terracers and on the following day no woman turned up for terracing. By August, even men had stopped going out for terracing. The D.C. issued an order that all land of individuals was to be measured and dug within 15 days, after which prosecutions would ensue.² The measurement was to start with the land of the wealthy men so as to set an example. But by September, only 187 acres had been terraced. The administration authorised the allocation of

1. KNA: Fort Hall District Annual Report 1948

2. Ibid

£ 4,330 to purchase shovels and to pay wages for conservation work in the worst affected areas.¹ Then they encouraged the chiefs to use all necessary measures to force people to terrace their land.

One chief who went quite far in enforcing the soil conservation measures was chief Ignatio Murai of Location 8. He issued orders that everyone was to terrace his land and that no young man was allowed to loiter around the market places. He imposed a ban on all traditional dances and started arresting the dancers who were usually the 40 Group members.

In a meeting of the Local Native Council on 21st August, 1947 Ignatio Murai received a letter requiring him to attend a meeting at Kahuro near his home. Ignatio attacked James Beuttah and Isaac Gathanju who were councillors and said there was no meeting to be held. The meeting was held with the main purpose of getting Ignatio removed.²

Askaris were sent to the meeting to disperse it and to arrest the leaders. A fight ensued and James Beuttah, Isaac Gathanju, Samuel Mwangi, Thomas Thuta and Mwangi Macharia were arrested. They were each fined 100/= and Beuttah and Gathanju were sentenced to six weeks hard labour in addition to the fine. Over 3,000 people had

1. KNA: Fort Hall District Annual Report 1948

2. Oral: Ng'ang'a Kairu, June, 1977

followed the arrested people to the station and the gathering turned into a political meeting which was peacefully dispersed.¹

Meanwhile threats to the life of chief Ignatio Murai had been voiced and the administration stationed an armed guard at his home. On 23 September, the D.C. and chief Ignatio Murai called a meeting at Kahuro. Members of the 40 Group got hold of the chief, took off the emblem from his hat and got hold of the D.C. demanding from him to take the emblem and dismiss the chief. The meeting broke up and the chief was escorted home. On the night of Sunday 28 the people attacked the guard stationed to protect Ignatio Murai. The guard fired at the crowd and killed a number of people. A commission of Inquiry appointed by the Governor found that the firing was justified. The administration stationed a European Police Inspector with a levy force of 44 Kenya Police at Kahuro to maintain law and order² and to protect Ignatio Murai.

The active political resistance of 1940s continued into the 1950s. Between July, and November, 1951, there were organised riots in some parts of the District. The riots began with the women of Kahuro trying to stop inoculation of cattle in their area. The Government had forced people to take their cattle for inoculation as a

1. Keiru, Also Fort Hall District Annual Report 1948

2. Ibid

result of an outbreak of rinderpest in areas adjacent to the Central Province. It is likely that the Government wanted to prevent the disease from spreading to the European farms. The people were suspicious of the Government move and thought that the Government wanted to reduce their cattle. The suspicion increased when many cows died after the inoculation. Finally in early, November, 1951 there was an eruption of violence. In a series of demonstrations, thousands of women stormed into the inoculation areas and burned the cattle crushes, the pens into which the cattle were driven for inoculation. The Government arrested 140 women in order to stop the riots.¹ A committee of Inquiry was set up to look into ways and means of dealing with riots and those involved. However, in 1952 a state of Emergency was declared in Kenya, and the Government henceforth used Emergency Powers to deal with the Mau Mau active resistance which is the subject of the next chapter.

1. Kairu, Also Fort Hall District Annual Report 1951

CHAPTER FOURMAU MAU MOVEMENT IN KENYA : HISTORIOGRAPHY AND
BRITISH MILITARY OPERATIONS

Mau Mau has been the subject of a number of debates at both academic and political levels. It would be worthwhile to put down some of the descriptions given to the movement called "Mau Mau" before attempting to analyse the movement. The campaign against Mau Mau was in a number of cases influenced by the image created of the movement. The historical value of the movement has also been influenced by the way the movement has been portrayed by various people - scholars, academicians, politicians, administrators and nationalists.

In 1954, Sir Philip Mitchel, Governor of Kenya from 1944 until June, 1952 expressed his feelings on Mau Mau in the following ways:-

"That persons of some education ----- should describe this monstrous, nauseating wickedness as a "resistance movement" is intolerable - unless of course they mean a resistance movement against God and decency and morality and indeed everything that distinguishes man from carrion-eating reptiles".¹

Mau Mau was seen to be a result of a profound mental instability springing from the abrupt collision of two civilizations. The psychologist, J.C. Carothers, felt that the Mau Mau movement arose from an anxious conflictual situation in people who, from contact with alien culture,

1. Buijtenhuijs, Robert, "Mau Mau Twenty years after". The Myth and the Survivors, The Hague, Mouton & Co., 1973) p.43.

had lost the supportive and constraining influences of their own culture, yet had not lost their "magic" modes of thinking. The Official Parliamentary delegation to Kenya concluded in its report to the Secretary of State for the Colonies that "Mau Mau" intentionally and deliberately sought to lead the Africans of Kenya back to bush and savagery, not forward into progress. Sir Michael Dundell described Mau Mau as an atavistic desire to get rid of civilisation, with all its restraints and discipline.¹

To Margery Perham, an "expert" on African Affairs, Mau Mau was a revival of a corrupted savagery while to social scientists, like J.D. De Roock and M. Stanley, Mau Mau was a "Counter-acculturation" movement, the result of a failure of the Kikuyu to adapt themselves to Western Civilisation.²

The Missionaries saw the fight against Mau Mau as a crusade to win back the Holy land which the Missions had planted in Kikuyu-land, a fight that produced its own saints and martyrs. The churches prayed that the leaders and members of Mau Mau under arrest may be released from the power of darkness and see their faces towards the light (God).³

1. Buijtenhuijs R. Cit. p.44

2. Ibid., p. 45

3. Ibid p.45

Mr. E.W. Mathu, leader of the African Unofficial Members in Kenya Legislative Council, was attacked by Mau Mau members on Saturday 19th March, 1955 and he was accused of being a traitor. He had also supported the surrender terms. Speaking on Mau Mau he observed:-

"I say to myself at least thousands of lives must not be lost for the sake of hanging a few madmen who have chosen to live in forests away from civilisation".¹

This description of Mau Mau fighters as "a few madmen" had been used by many loyalists during their campaigns against Mau Mau.²

The description of Mau Mau by Jomo Kenyatta is rather confusing. For a long time he had been acclaimed the leader of Mau Mau to the extent that if a detainee denounced Kenyatta and Mau Mau, he was released. During his trial at Kapenguria he still denounced Mau Mau but this was supposed to have been for political and legal expediency.

However, at a meeting in Githunguri in September, 1962 he was recorded to have said:-

"We are determined to have Independence in peace, and we shall not allow hooligans to rule Kenya. We must have no hatred towards one another. Mau Mau was a disease which had been eradicated and must never be remembered again".³

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1. East African Standard, 21st March, 1955
 2. I.O. : Nduati Gathige on 10th August, 1976.
 3. Buijtenhuijs op.cit., p. 49

Kenyatta when asked in 1961 why oath-taking had gone on in Kenya even after he had condemned the practices replied that many people respected the Queen but nevertheless there were still gangsters in Britain and that did not mean that the Queen was responsible for what they were doing.¹

During the Uhuru celebration on December, 12 1963 Mr. Kenyatta felt the need for paying tribute to those people of all races, tribes and colours who over the years had made their contribution to Kenya's rich heritage, administrators, farmers, missionaries, traders and others and above all the people of Kenya themselves. Not a word was said about the Mau Mau freedom fighters.²

On Kenyatta Day, 1967 President Kenyatta indirectly attacked the Mau Mau freedom fighters who usually thought they were the ones who fought for Uhuru by saying:-

"Sometimes I hear of freedom fighters described as those who brought Uhuru. But I have to emphasize that freedom could not have been brought up by one person or by a single group of people.----- We were all seeking freedom together, and therefore it is not right to discriminate, saying that one man served to bring freedom while another man did something else".³

Mr. Ngala Mwendwa in 1967 complained in Parliament that many of those who were detained during the Emergency had since been rewarded --- but the other class of people,

1. Buljtenhuijs op.cit p.49

2. Ibid, p. 50

3. Ibid, p. 52

such as himself who had taught in a school, and who had also been rewarded, could not be regarded as **distinct** from the freedom fighters. Every one, he said, had equally contributed to the Independence struggle.¹

Harry Thuku's description of the Mau Mau movement should also be mentioned. Thuku was a staunch loyalist and his view of Mau Mau was shared by many loyalists. For example in a letter to one of his friends in England dated December, 21, 1954 he wrote:-

"You may be interested to hear the state of affairs in Kikuyu country today. The evils of devil have for three years tried to shake the good work done by the churches. But I am glad to say that Christians of all denominations stood firm with their faith in Christ".²

Thuku's view was also shared by many Christians who formed the Home Guard establishment which so vehemently fought against the Mau Mau movement.

There were others who felt that the British were just kind to give Independence to Kenya and the Mau Mau movement had nothing to do with it. One member of Parliament representing this view of Mau Mau had this to say:-

"I believe we obtained our Independence in a very nice way at the instigation of the British Government but not through fighting in the forest".³

1. Buijtenhuijs, R. op.cit p.53

2. Ibid.,p. 62

3. Ibid.,p. 63

With this background we can now examine the Mau Mau movement in its proper historical perspective as a freedom movement. We shall examine the Mau Mau as an organised and coherent movement and then the great pains - financial, military, political and economic - which the colonial government took in an attempt to defeat this movement. However, all said and done, no one can pretend now that the Mau Mau movement was not a strong and important movement. By 1955 the British Government was offering the Kenya Government £ 14,000,000 for the Emergency cost and this was expected to rise to £ 16,000,000. By 1956 the Emergency expenditure was running at about £ 1,333,000 a month.¹

The Mau Mau movement caused over 90,000 Kikuyus to be detained and imprisoned. Up to April, 1956 an official estimate of Mau Mau fighters killed by the security forces was 10,000 plus 1,086 executed. According to the official estimates, Mau Mau killed 63 and wounded 102 Europeans in the security forces, killed 3 Asians and wounded 12, and killed 524 and wounded 465 Africans - all in the security forces. Civilian casualties attributed to Mau Mau numbered 1,817 Africans killed and 910 wounded, with figures of 26 and 36 for Asians, and 32 and 26 for Europeans respectively.²

1. East African Standard, 24th February, 1976.

2. Buijtenhuijs, op.cit., p. 105

To defeat Mau Mau the Colonial administration decided to make use of intensive military operations and campaigns. Operation Jock Scott on 20-21 October, 1952 involved the arrest of Jomo Kenyatta, Fred Kubai, Achieng Oneko, Bildad Kaggia, Kung'u Karumba, Paul Ngei and other political figures, leaders of the Independent schools and publishers of vernacular papers and removed from the scene the most effective and vocal African political voices. Further arrests at local levels followed, together with the banning of public meetings, imposition of collective fine and stock confiscation in areas unwilling to co-operate, the closing down of independent schools and the opening of detention camps.

The defeat of Mau Mau appeared to many, including General Erskine, a simple task of containing and capturing some 12,000 guerrillas operating without links to any friendly bases, armed with nothing but home-made gun at the best or in most cases, just a sharp machet.

Before the declaration of a State of Emergency there were two battalions of King's African Rifles (K.A.R.) in Kenya and no British troops. After the declaration, a British battalion from Egypt and three K.A.R. battalions were brought to Kenya. At first the Army limited itself to supporting the police, with battalions divided into small sub-units scattered around the affected areas in a variety of defensive tasks. In 1953 more British battalions

arrived and General Erskine's command was established. By May, 1953 the purely Military Forces had increased and included 39 Brigade (two, sometimes three battalions) of British troops, 70 Brigade (five, sometimes six battalions) of K.A.R.; the Kenya Regiment, and armoured car squadron and an artillery battery (both of African Soldiers) and two R.A.F. squadrons of elderly bombers, four Harvards and nine Lincolns, together with radar "blind bombing" aids. In September, 1953 a second British brigade (49 Brigade) was flown out. The R.A.F. made bombing raids in the forest while the mobile column of cars and the guns operated in open country. The brigade of K.A.R. battalions was in general kept in Kikuyu land or the White settled areas, clearing them by turn. The two British brigades (less one battalion retained in Nairobi) were used for prohibited areas, forest patrolling and also in certain selected areas of Murang'a and Nyeri Districts.¹

In 1954 Erskine turned his attention to Nairobi. An operation, named "Anvil", carried out by five British battalions, police General Service Units and teams of administration and Labour Department Officials lasting a month caught about 16,500 Kikuyu in an attempt to clean up the City of Nairobi. The wiring-in of the African Locations and scrub and maize shamba clearance had not prevented the assassinations and

1. Clayton, Anthony, Counter - Insurgency in Kenya, A Study of Military operations against Mau Mau - Historical papers No.4, Transafrica Publishers Ltd., Nairobi 1976 pp.23-24

intimidation organized by Mau Mau cells in the City and the Anvil operation was designed to remove all the Mau Mau adherents from Nairobi. After Anvil, the pressure of three British and two K.A.R. battalions was applied to Thika, Murang'a and Kiambu Districts, with the remainder of the armed forces thinly spread over the settled areas, the Mt. Kenya region and Nairobi. By the end of 1954 operations were extended to Embu and Meru and the Royal Engineers had begun extensive track and road building in the forest areas with a view to continue operations in 1955.

The colonial administration found that it was faced not by a simple ill-armed and un-organised resistance. Various measures to defeat Mau Mau were devised. These measures included big military operations, detentions, rehabilitation, restrictions, communal punishments, screening, villagisation and torture.

In 1952 a state of Emergency had been declared in Kenya. Sir Evering Baring arrived in Kenya on 30th September, 1952 and within a fortnight declared the state of Emergency and called for British aid. The Governor was the commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces and he had the advantage of Nairobi which was the seat of an Army command Head-quarters covering all East and Central Africa.¹

1. Clayton, A. op.cit. p.24

This command Headquarters was a military backwater and its commander and staff proved unable to cope with the problems posed by Mau Mau. In January, 1953 Major-General W.E. Hinde was sent out as Personal Staff Officer to the Governor and later as Director of Operations.

In May, 1953, General Sir George Erskine was appointed as Commander-in-chief with full command of military units but operational control only over police and artilleries and a third general, Hey, was appointed as Erskine's chief-of-staff. Erskine remained until May, 1955 and was succeeded by Lieutenant-General Lathbury.

At the outset of the violence, operations were co-ordinated by an adhoc body known as the 'Sitrap' (Situation Report) committee of administration, police and military officials in very varying numbers. This body **did not** have sufficient authority or efficiency to fight Mau Mau.

In 1953 this body was replaced by the Colony Emergency Committee (comprising the Governor, Deputy Governor, a representative of the G.O.C., the Chief Secretary, the members for Finance, Agriculture and African Affairs and for most meetings, the European settler leader Michael Blundell); to this committee worked a second one called the Deputy Director of Operation's committee, presided over by General Hinde as D.D.C. and including officials of Secretary/Head of Department level and another leading European Unofficial member of Legislative Council. The Colony Emergency Committee initiated policy, the D.D.C.'s committee initiated the action and submitted material for

policy decisions.

At district level (and later also at both provincial and divisional levels) a local system of Emergency Committee had evolved on the lines of the system of integrated control used in Malaya. These local committee included the District Commissioner, and the Senior Police and Military Officers of the area with also perhaps one or two Departmental Officers.¹

In 1954 a War Council was established, consisting of the Governor, the G.O.C. and Blundell as Minister without Portfolio. The War Council normally met twice weekly and was served by an executive officer, a **secretary** and an Emergency joint staff. The First War Council was attended by the Colonial Secretary, Lyttelton, and the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, General Sir John Harding and later meetings were often attended by other senior colonial officials. The War Council deliberations covered a very wide range; Military operations, the Kikuyu Independent Schools, manpower (white) and labour (black), rehabilitation and the economic restructuring of Kikuyu land and land consolidation.²

In addition to the formation of the War Council in fighting the Mau Mau the character of Sir Evelyn Baring was also contributory to the way the struggle was carried out. He was a staunch Christian, having a room in Government

1. Flayton, A. op.cit. p.8

2. Ibid p. 10

House made into a small chapel for him, and the prominent Christians who considered Mau Mau activities as the work of Satan were able to influence him easily. Baring also usually acted under the advice of the anti-Mau Mau archaeologist and anthropologist, Dr. L.S.B. Leakey. Leakey argued that Mau Mau was not a political and economic protest so much as a Kikuyu Civil War between modernists and debased traditionalists of religious fervour, the debasement justifying severe corrective treatment.

It is with this background in mind that we can examine the extra-military methods applied in fighting against Mau Mau.

Apart from the Military presence in Kenya there were other measures used by the Colonial Administration to fight Mau Mau. The declaration of a State of Emergency had given the Government wide powers to invoke and use the aid of the military and the very widest powers over legislation of every type. The security forces could always open fire in self-defence. Areas, normally uninhabited forest and mountain, were in time declared "prohibited areas" within which the Army and Police could use weapons freely and without a preliminary challenge, a straightforward war basis. The prohibited areas included a strip one mile wide along the eastern edge of the Aberdares and a similar strip on the South and East sides of Mt. Kenya, both strips

being surveyed by police posts, army camps and patrols. Most of the remaining areas of Kenya were designated Special Areas within which Army and Police activity was directed against the Mau Mau fighters and their supporters. Within the Special Areas anybody could be called to halt and if he refused fire could be opened.¹

The government also issued detention orders for the arrest and detention of the Kikuyu suspected of Mau Mau involvement but against whom no case could be prosecuted with success. Initially each of these was signed by the Governor, but as the Emergency proceeded powers were delegated to Provincial and District Commissioners who acted on Local Police, Loyalist or Junior Officials' recommendations. Emergency regulations controlled movement of property and communal punishments (initially stock levies but later cash fines), the possession of offensive weapons, censorship or closing down of publications and enforced villagization.

The death penalty was introduced for sabotage, the illegal carrying and obtaining of arms, ammunition or explosives (or consorting with people illegally armed), certain types of oath administering, and for the supplying and aiding of insurgent groups.

In prisons, the prisons ordinance permitted beating for a number of prison disciplinary offences. Under the Emergency (Detained Persons Regulations) of 1953 a wide

1. Clayton, A. op.cit p.13

variety of detention camp offences (e.g. spitting, malingering, shouting, disrespect and abuse and the bringing of false accusations against the staff camp) were made punishable by solitary confinement and a reduced diet; major offences such as mutiny or attacking prison staff were made punishable by twelve strokes, or solitary confinement on bread and water. These punishments could be authorised by prison commandants. The Regulations also gave the Government powers to order detainees to work in the interest of ending the Emergency or of the public as a whole.

To enforce the Emergency measures the Army was assisted by the Police force whose inspectorate increased by nearly 700 men recruited mainly in England on short term contracts, and further supplemented by a call up of local Kenya Europeans as Reserve Police Officers in the Kenya Reserve Police. In December, 1953 there were some 2,000 full time and 4,800 part-time European K.P.R. Officers. The locally raised unit included the Police (African) General Service Units of 20 units, each of some 35 men, mostly Turkana or Somali; the K.P.R. Air wing, which flew over the forests; a detachment of Tanganyika Police on loan; local Europeans recruited into the administration as temporary district officers (Kikuyu Guard) and a greatly expanded prisons department.¹

1. Clayton, A. op.cit p.18

Other forces which helped the Colonial Administration were the Kikuyu Tribal Police and the Kikuyu Guard. By the end of 1954 there were 25,000 Guard members in the country. By 1956 the official figures of the Mau Mau fighters killed showed a total number of 10,400 people. Of these 4,663 fighters were reported to have been killed by Tribal Police and the African Home Guard Units. The Tribal Police and the Home Guards were reported to have captured 4,511 terrorists in action in the Kikuyu, Embu and Meru land, while in the Rift Valley the Tribal Police, the Home Guards and Special Farm Guards killed 137 terrorists and captured 126. The arms recovered by loyalists included 258 precision weapons and 1,478 home-made guns in the Rift Valley. In Central Province Loyalist casualties were reported to have been 63 Tribal Police and 686 Home Guards dead, with 409 wounded.

The story of the Emergency period in Kenya is full of shocking, brutal treatment of the Mau Mau followers by the British Military Forces, K.A.R.; Police, Prison Warders, Tribal Police, Kenya Police Reserve and Kikuyu Tribal Police and Home Guard Units. These colonial forces caused a great deal of suffering to the Mau Mau followers in all aspects of life.

At the beginning of the Emergency, the Kikuyu in Nairobi were put together in Bahati and they were wired in

1. KNA: Statistics on the Kikuyu Home Guard

and their movements were highly regulated. They had to walk to their places of work to the City with their hands on their heads. This was a distance of about 7 miles return. Later all the known nonloyal Kikuyu were picked by the security forces and were taken to detention camps and others were imprisoned.¹

In the detention camps and prisons many were tortured and killed. Many also died as a result of unhygienic conditions. Many police and prison officers believed that the Mau Mau oath had turned men into animals who needed to be beaten to return them to sanity. A similar view was shared by many colonial agents such as the administrators, Government advisers and high church officials. Again most of the 14,000 prison guards were virtually untrained. Many warders were military pioneer labourers brought back from Egypt. The training of warders only began in 1955 and was very rudimentary until 1960.²

The police and the African soldiers were mainly uneducated. The Colonial Government had employed these soldiers from tribes which were "anti-Kikuyu" and these soldiers were indoctrinated into believing that Mau Mau was such a terrible thing that it had to be wiped out. The British soldiers were also taught about the evils of Mau Mau when they arrived in Kenya. All British battalions on arrival were issued with copies of publication called "The Kenya Picture". On a loose sheet which had to be

1. O.I., KiMara Njuru, September, 1976.

2. Clayton, Anthony op.cit., p. 18

returned were details of Mau Mau Oaths of the crudest type. The British and K.A.R. Units killed and tortured any suspected Mau Mau by brutal methods that are unparalleled in other Emergency situations. After killing suspects they simply plucked hands off the bodies of the dead suspect, and carried the hands with them sometimes for finger print record purposes. The soldiers also shot indiscriminately any one found in or near the Special Areas.¹

Some battalions kept scoreboards recording 'kills'. The practice included a £5 reward to a sub-unit capturing a particular Mau Mau and also a £5 reward for the first sub-unit to kill a Mau Mau and various monetary awards at sub-unit level.

Apart from these "kills", there were other monetary awards which were paid by officers to soldiers after a Mau Mau was shot. A good example would be Captain G.S.L. Griffiths' action. Griffiths who owned a farm in Kenya, was charged with the murder of one or two Africans found dead. In the court his British Company Sergeant Major said that he had been told by Griffiths that he could shoot at anybody he liked so long as they were black, he also paid Kshs 5 for each "insurgents" killed and claimed that other officers paid more.²

1. Clayton, A. op.cit p.18

2. Ibid

Several other cases came to light which included those of 18 year old Brian Hayward of the K.P.R. convicted for burning Mau Mau suspects eardrums with lighted cigarettes, for which he was sentenced to three months hard labour (spent in fact in an hotel on minor clerical work) and a fine of £100; his brother Barry fined £25 for ordering paraffin to be poured on a suspect; Assistant District Commandant Howel fined £20 for participating in burning a prisoner in the same case; Reserve Police Officer Mass, fined £50 for inflicting illegal and heavy **floggings**; Sergeant Kitts and Reserve Police Officer Rubens fined following their conviction for beating an African to death; Reserve Police Officers Pharazyn and Sawyer charged for torturing a prisoner over a slow fire; and several other cases. Indeed young men in the K.P.R. were reported to have been heard boasting of the way they had beaten up their prisoners.¹

The White Settlers in Kenya, many of whom had joined the K.P.R. expressed their dislike for Mau Mau in every possible way. In one meeting their spokesman remarked that he thought 100,000 Kikuyu should be put to work in a vast swill-tub.² The more "charitable" settler leaders spoke of the Kikuyu as erring children, to be corrected by hard work and corporal punishment; other harsher views demanded

1. Clayton, A. op.cit pp.44-45.

2. Ibid

an extention of the list of offences carrying the death penalty, a special Kikuyu tax and confiscation of Kikuyu property. Indeed of these harsher demands the first three were conceded by the Government (a tax initially of Shs 22 later Kshs 25 being imposed on Kikuyu, Embu and Meru), collective fines were used and the detention and rehabilitation systems provided some features of the reconstruction camps.¹

Some settlers advocated three years of slavery of the Mau Mau Kikuyu from dawn to dusk, on a ration sufficient to keep him alive and working and no more, powers to prison officials in charge to cut rations and inflict corporal punishment of a severe nature for misdemeanours. These measures were thought to be a more effective deterrent than ten or twenty years of an ordinary sentence.² One settler advocated the shooting of 50,000 Kikuyu as a warning.³

The Colonial Administration itself carried out various measures against Mau Mau and Mau Mau suspects. These measures included the creation of fear in would be Mau Mau sympathisers and followers. One such measure was the introduction of the gallows. The gallows were intended to be placed in a place where prisoners could see it in prison camps. The gallows were to be erected in a sentenced man's home area the day before execution. Condemned men were given sedatives before execution and several devoted priests spent nights up with condemned men before dawn.

1. East African Standard, 23 April, 1953
2. East African Standard, 23 April, 1953
3. Clayton, Anthony op.cit., p.54

Apart from the threat of death a number of executions were carried out. The number of executions of the death penalty between 20 October, 1952 and 12th November, 1954 was 756, of which 290 were for the unlawful possession of arms and ammunition and 45 for administering unlawful oaths. A further 140 were executed in the last month of the year.

Indeed the Colonial security forces could not defeat the Mau Mau movement for a long time with the resources at their disposal were it not for the detentions and restriction and villagization of all the Kikuyu Mau Mau sympathisers. The Colonial security forces were mainly motivated by monetary rewards and they were fighting a people with determination and who were motivated by the will to survive or win the freedom. The security forces were fighting a movement which was supported by the majority of the population¹ and this, plus the fact that the people were full of determination rendered most of the activities of the security forces ineffective.

The colonial administration tried a number of **psychological** measures to boost the morale of its mercenary forces. The security forces were informed of the atrocities of Mau Mau which included drinking human blood and eating human bodies especially heads. The Mau Mau picked on this

1. Lamb, Geoff, Peasants Politics; Julian Friedmann Publishers 1974 p.13

Clayton, A. p.7 General Erskine states that the "terrorists" had the moral support of 90 per cent of the tribe. Geof Lamb has also the same estimate.

and to frighten the already convinced and half-convinced colonial forces, took to the practise of cutting the body of any colonial security force especially whites, into small pieces which were then displayed on the top of sharpened sticks to warn the security forces. Heads were usually chopped off their bodies by the Mau Mau and at times such heads were placed on sticks with letters addressed to the commandants and generals of the Colonial security forces. So, rather than make their forces stronger in morale some of the psychological measures tended to demoralise them and acted as an advantage to the Mau Mau.

The protective and warfare measures taken by the Colonial forces tended also to have opposite effects. At first the security forces used to parade with their sophisticated armoury and perform military exercises before the people. The Mau Mau leaders picked on this to influence their followers of how powerful the Mau Mau was to warrant the bringing of so many security forces and this action of the forces made many people realise that what the leaders had told them of the determination of the foreign forces to dominate them for ever was quite true. The security forces were there displayed for everyone to see and it was the duty of everyone to help the Mau Mau heroes in every way to save their country from the invaders.

It should be remembered that before Operation Anvil and Overdraft and the villagization programmes, the security forces had thought of bringing to an end the contact between the Mau Mau followers in the "Reserve" and those in the forest

by digging a big furrow at the edge of the forest. Apart from time and human effort wasted in such activities, it appeared foolish that a furrow could be used to separate people of the same tribe and feelings. Most of the battles were waged inside the "Reserve" across ridges and along river valleys away from the forest.

As the furrow itself was found to be an ineffective measure, for it was also difficult to guard it all along, the security forces devised the method of electrifying the edges of special and prohibited areas. This measure to a great extent helped the Mau Mau for rather than killing human beings, it was animals which became victims. These animals became a source of food supply to the Mau Mau much to the dislike of the security forces.

The action of using aircraft for bombing Mau Mau in the forest and forest edges was not without an advantage to the Mau Mau. The bombers usually picked as their targets smoke on the ground in the belief that the Mau Mau were residing in such areas, but usually the smoke was just a decoy. Financial and human efforts so spent by the security forces achieved little and the Mau Mau leaders were able to point out to their followers how weak the Colonial security forces were, for even after using the most sophisticated weapons in desperation they could still not beat them.

These bombers could also pick on other targets such as elephants (mistaken for a group of Mau Mau) and waste a lot in terms of military and financial resources bombing the

wrong target. Obviously the bombing killed many wild animals and helped in supplying the Mau Mau with skins, tusks and horns plus meat, of course. Whenever an aircraft fell to the ground for any reason, the Mau publicised this greatly for it was always believed that such an aircraft had been shot down by one section of the Mau Mau soldiers.

It dawned on the leaders of the Colonial forces that it was very difficult to defeat people full of determination and supported by majority of the population and who were waging a guerrilla warfare taking the advantage of the landscape with military and other restriction measures as applied before the end of 1954. Other measures such as wholesale detentions and restrictions, villagization, creation of a strong, loyalist establishment and Kikuyu Guard, using various promises to make some weak Mau Mau fighters **surrender** and using these as "pseudo-Mau Mau" to advise them on how to fight Mau Mau, using religion as a psychological weapon to prevent "violence" became important in defeating Mau Mau.

This now leads us to the Mau Mau counter-British military operations in Murang'a District. We shall focus on the way Mau Mau activities were coordinated and on the main Mau Mau battles in Murang'a.

Mau Mau Operations

We have seen that the declaration of a state of Emergency in October, 1952 was preceded by a long period of resistance in Murang'a. There had been the resistance to

the soil conservation measures and to inoculation of cattle which had culminated in open conflicts between the masses and the Colonial agents. The declaration of Emergency rather than reduce the magnitude of resistance, helped to intensify it. We shall here concentrate on the Mau Mau activities in the battle field in Murang'a between 1952 and 1955.

The year 1952 opened with the holding of an inquiry regarding the riots of November, 1951, over rinderpest inoculations. A fine of six shillings per male was imposed on the local inhabitants.¹ The year also opened with serious outbreaks of crime in many areas in the reserve and in the white settled areas. A safe in the government offices at Nyakianga in Kangema was broken into and eight thousand shillings was stolen.²

The year ended with what is commonly known as muito wa Kirwara or Kirwara Massacre in Kandara near chief Ndung'u Kagori's home. The Kirwara episode was the first of its kind in Murang'a and the administration was baffled by the way the people were determined to defy it despite the Emergency regulations. The incident occurred on the 24th November, 1952 and the administration observed:-

1. KNA: African Affairs Department Annual Report 1952 p.33.
2. Ibid.

"On this day, an alleged mute, Nguge Wainaina had a vision and began acting in a queer way, starting by beating his mother over a trivial quarrel about water. Nguge in his vision, had a message from God, that all shops would come into one line with the front doors facing Mt. Kenya, that all bridges would fall down and all aircrafts fall out of the sky. People began to listen to Nguge because his vision was on the lines of Dini ya Kristo, a religious sect, whose activities culminated in the tragic murder of European and African Police Officers at Gatundu. Nguge arrived at the market on the 23rd at 3 a.m. By 8 a.m large crowds had gathered round listening to Nguge and one Phyllis Wanjiru. They were told by the above to fear no police and remove European clothing. At 10 a.m. a police corporal and seven constables went to the scene; about 2,000 people had gathered. The crowd advanced and fire was ordered. At the first volley three persons were hit and two at the second, the crowd lay down and 'rejoiced'. After firing again, one person was hit, the crowd adopted the same attitude and pounced on the police who managed to evade them and to run away to Thika for assistance. Four Europeans and one African Inspector and twenty African ranks under the command of an Inspector forcibly arrested him, behaving in a hysterical manner and placed him in the lorry. The crowd then rose, parked in a small area. The police were constrained to fire and since the rioters endeavoured to overwhelm the police more firing was necessitated; the majority then ran away, but 412 persons were arrested, 207 of who were females. Twelve males and four females were killed and seventeen male and seven women were wounded.¹

This Kirwara incident ushered in a period of open battles between the colonial forces and the Mau Mau fighters. Through oath taking, people had been encouraged to prepare for warfare and to die for the struggle which was coming. The people had decided to gather in public near chief Ndung'u's home. They went further in defying the Emergency regulations and also the soldiers. From this

1. KNA: African Affairs Department Annual Report 1952

time on there was great opposition and the colonial security forces had a difficult time in destroying the Mau Mau movement especially up to 1954 when the Mau Mau fighters in Murang'a received the assistance of the Mau Mau War Council (Kiama Kia Mbaara) based in Nairobi.

After the restriction of the K.A.U. Leaders in 1952, the Mau Mau leaders changed the Mau Mau Central Committee into a War Council. This War Council was to direct the course of the fighting in all ways. The War Council, whose headquarters were in Nairobi consisted of about 30 representatives drawn mainly from Murang'a, Nyeri and Kiambu and later the Rift Valley, Embu and Meru - but Murang'a had more representatives. There were representatives from every District answerable to the War Council. There was in every District a District War Council which coordinated the fighting process in all the locations and divisions of every District. For instance from Murang'a there were 30 members of the District War Council 2 from each of the 15 locations.¹

The War Council was composed of two wings, the Elders Council and the "Warriors Wing". The Elders Council (Kiama Kia Athuri) dealt with the day to day running of decision making, making laws and regulations, passing judgements etc. and it met daily while the warriors' wing

1. O.I. Enoch Mwangi (Enoch Mwangi was called "General" He was the head of the warrior council). June, 1976

Nahashon Ngugi Kariku and Kabue Macharia - between April, and June, 1976.

(Kiama kia Anake) dealt with the execution of the Elders Council's decision. The warriors wing in Nairobi was composed of 5 to 10 askaris from every location. The locational members were placed under a Divisional Commandant and these were under a District Commandant. There was an overall Commandant called 'General' who sat permanently in the Council of Elders. In every District in the Reserve there was a similar arrangement of a War Council with askaris and representatives from sub-location, location, division up to the District Level. It is this wing which obtained guns and ammunitions, eliminated the traitors, executed sentenced people, and recruited fighters in Nairobi and other towns such as Thika, Murang'a, Nyeri and Nakuru and also in the Reserve and in the forest.

The War Council raised money through contributions for war efforts. Every adult in every location was required to pay a minimum of 20/= a month but the wealthier people paid as much as 500/=. This money was used for buying food, medicine and drugs, clothing and for bribing government agents when need arose.¹

The War Council also controlled fighting events. After the Council reached decisions of where to attack the information was dispatched by the leader of the warriors council through his scouts and Mau Mau soldiers were directed to act accordingly.

1. O.I: Kabue Mcharia, Ngahu Wanjohi between April, and June, 1976.

The War Council dealt with all legal, government and police matters. It hired advocates, especially during the Kapenguria Trial, it destroyed incriminating evidence to its members by eliminating hostile witnesses and destroying exhibits.

The War Council, which was active after the declaration of a State of Emergency in Kenya, evolved a strict network of receiving and sending information. The police special branch, the military intelligence, the loyalists and informers were always on the track. The colonial government used all possible methods to get people who would help in informing on where the Mau Mau wanted to attack, how to defeat Mau Mau and who to arrest. Informers were set on Mau Mau committees but when they were discovered they were immediately executed.¹

The colonial administration used some people commonly called 'Moscow' to counteract the work of the war council. These people went around telling people that Mau Mau was a communist movement which wanted to rob people of all what they had. They urged people not to contribute money to the war council. Many 'Moscos' had taken the oath and they knew many secrets of the Mau Mau movement.²

A number of prominent people were found to have been betraying the Mau Mau course and attempts were made to

1. O.I.: Ngugi Kariku and Enock Mwangi

2. Ibid.

eliminate them. Such people included Senior Chief Waruhiu who was eliminated before the Declaration of the Emergency, Chief Hinga, Chief Nderi, Chief Ndung'u Kagori, Chief Njiiri Karanja, Mr. Muchohi Gikonyo, Mr. Ambrose Ofafa, Mr. Walter Mbotela and others.

As soon as a person was found to have been an enemy to the freedom course the war council sent out its intelligence personnel to follow his activities and report back. When the necessary information was received by the war council a judgement to the effect that such a person was to be executed was passed and the leader of the warriors wing was asked to see to it that the judgement was carried out.

One person so eliminated was Walter Mbotela. He was considered a traitor. One full night he met with the Europeans and White Settlers at Norfolk Hotel. He was covered by War Council Agents. A meeting of the war council resolved he had to be eliminated. Four cars with two people each were kept on the move covering him day and night until he was caught and killed.¹

Chief Hinga was accused of torturing and beating up women and men badly. A decision was reached that he was to be eliminated. He was shot but he survived. He was taken to Kiambu Hospital and the Hospital was guarded by the security forces. Two Askaris kept watch at the bed on which he slept. The war council agents went ahead to make

1. O.I: Ngugi Kariku and Enock Mwangi

arrangements of eliminating him. One day two agents left their car in white hospital overalls and went close to him. One fired a pistol in the air which was supposed to be a warning to the Mau Mau sympathisers in the hospital, most of whom had been oathed. The other agent shot him dead. However, the driver of the car was later arrested for the car had been noticed. The war council tried to get him released but his father who was a loyalist came to the High Court and defied the advice of the war council and he declared his son a terrorist. Maina was sentenced to death and hanged.¹

Among those who survived were chiefs Njiiri Karanja and Ndung'u Kagori and Mr. Muchohi Gikonyo all from Murang'a. Ndung'u's houses were burnt down and this resulted in a lot of suffering by the people of Gatanga Location in Kandara. A fine of 9/90 was imposed on every non-Home Guard, and this money was supposed to be compensation to chief Ndungu. Cows, sheep and goats were confiscated by the headmen and Home Guards and many houses were burnt down. Many people were heavily tortured and prosecuted. Later a section of the 4th E.A. Battalion under Idd Amin was stationed in Kihumbuini to deal with any possible attacks on Chief Ndungu and the Loyalists.²

1. U.I.: Mwangi Ciuri, December, 1976.

2. U.I.: Mwangi Thabuni and Mburu Wakaru on 22nd March, 1976.

Senior Chief Njiiri Karanja was the most Vocal Anti-Mau Mau Chief in Murang'a. Njiiri had formed the first Home Guard in Murang'a. He used to fly in an aircraft telling all people in Murang'a to realise they were like ants before the might of the Whitemen. He vowed to see to it the last of the Mau Mau "terrorist" was to be hunted down. Njiiri's area was among the worst areas as far as the anti-Mau Mau campaign was concerned. It was decided by the war council that Njiiri was to be eliminated as a traitor to the course of freedom.

However, the Murang'a District Wing of the war council argued that if Njiiri was eliminated very many innocent lives would be lost for Njiiri was the greatest favourite of the Colonial Government. Njiiri was not eliminated and the agents concerned were galled by the war council to show course why they were not to be executed for failing to eliminate Njiiri as directed. They defended their action and finally the war council decided not to execute them and they were released. But Njiiri's son Thigiru was later shot dead as a lesson to him.¹

It was unusual, for anyone to defy the instructions of the war council. In any case everyone had taken an oath that he was to do all what he was asked to without fear of death or imprisonment. The oath had bound everyone to fight for freedom's course to the end. One instance of how strict the war council was in people who failed to carry out

1. C.I. Mwangi Thabuni, 10th March, 1976.

their assigned tasks can be shown by the case of Nahashon Ngugi Kariku and Mr. Ngugi the "Medical Officer" in the Nyandarwa area in 1953.

The "Medical Officer" had left the forest for Nairobi after very many people had been killed in a bombing raid. Nahashon Ngugi who was the leader of the Nyandarwa battalions by then also left the forest for Nairobi and he accused the "Medical Officer" for having been irresponsible and of deserting the fighters who had been wounded. "The Medical Officer" was however found guilty of not attending wounded fighters and he was sentenced to death. The leader of the warriors council directed those who were to shoot him not to kill him but to shoot him in the leg and leave him. The "Medical Officer" went to Kenyatta Hospital (by then King George Hospital) but he was denied treatment until he gave the names of those who shot him but he refused completely to betray his people. The warriors wing agents took him out of Hospital and gave him 150/= to go to Tanzania.¹

Up to 1954 most of the fighting activities were directed by the war council in Nairobi and in the Districts. There were grassroot representations up to the Murang'a District Section of the War Council from every sub-location

1. O.I: Enoch Mwangi, on 25th May, 1976.

and every section of the sub-location. There were representations from every Mbari (House or sub-clan) and all the clans in every sub-location and location upwards to the Division and the District. Most of the population was kept alert and most of the resources - financial, food, clothing, transport and fighting men could be obtained at a moment's notice.

The geographical position of Murang'a put the District at a very advantageous position. One side of Murang'a bordered the Thika District which was a White Settled area from which meat supplies were obtained. Again Thika Town acted as a base for the Urban Fighters. From the White settled area to the forest (Nyandarwa) is a distance of about 50 miles. Most of the battles were fought in this area between the settled areas and the forest. The fighters also took advantage of the deep river valleys which separated hilly ridges which are found in the whole of Murang'a District. Most of the battles were either fought along these valleys or across the ridges. The colonial forces who mainly relied on tracks and vans for transportation found these vehicles of little use and the Mau Mau fighters could evade them easily or ambush them with ease.

While the fighting was usually across the ridges, the transportation of war materials was along the ridges and along the river valleys. Between the settled areas and the forest were a number of routes along which war materials

were carried. These routes were carefully chosen and strictly guarded. These routes entered various stopping centres which acted as temporary stores for war materials. Usually these stopping places were in the settled areas, mid-way to the forest and at the edge of the forests. These routes and the stopping centres were called "Muirigo" or the hedge.

The main muirigo started from Nairobi. Fighters, drugs and war materials were dispatched from Bahati and Mathare areas in Nairobi. The next stopping place was Kasarini and from Kasarini, Ruiru, Ndarugu and Thika Town. From Thika the members of the war council dispatched these materials through Gatanga Location and Muruka and Kagunduini Locations. The materials were transported to Location 16, 2, and 9 which served as the depots. From here the materials were carried in shifts. The people who carried them from, let us say, Kasarini to Ndarugu were to return after reaching Ndarugu and the war council representatives were to make arrangements to get the materials to Ndarugu. The same process went on up into the forest.¹

Sometimes war materials were carried by vehicles or trains to Thika, Murang'a and Nanyuki after which they had to reach the forest through the usual routes.

1. O.I.: Mbutia Ritho on 20th August, 1976

Apart from the muirigo there were the camping areas called "Bush" where the Mau Mau fighters were stationed and from where they operated. In February, 1953 the war council sent Nahashon Ngugi* with about 1,000 fighters to enter the forest. The first Bush was established in Kandara District in February, 1953 and was called Kakuyu "Bush". Other Bushes¹ were established in all the divisions - Irati "Bush" in Kigumo, Icice in Kiharu and Karuri in Kangema.¹

The Murang'a people composed the Ituma Iregi Army which operated on the Eastern side of the Nyandarua. They were also the majority of the fighters in the 3rd Blue Valley Army which operated on the other side of Nyandarua forest. But we shall concentrate on the Mau Mau fighters' activities in Murang'a District.

*Nahashon Ngugi was born at Thuita in Gatanga Location, Kandara Division in 1923. He attended Gakarara and Kihumbuini Primary schools and then went to Kambui. He joined Kenya African Rifles in 1942 and went to India and Ceylon and he left as a sergeant. After the war he joined Jeans school training for Community Development and worked as a Welfare Officer in Kangema. During the Emergency he joined the war council and he was detained during the Anvil Operation. When he was released in 1958 he became the secretary of the Fort Hall District Democratic Party. He was detained again in 1960 and came out during Independence. He and others collected money to sue the Kenya Government for the damages incurred by the Mau Mau during the liberation of Kenya. He was arrested and temporarily detained with his friends. When they were set free they then sued the Kenya Government for illegal detention in 1974.

1. U.I.: Mbugua Njuguna on 6th April, 1976

The main fighting in Murang'a started in April, 1953. At this time Gitau Matenjagwo* and his lieutenant Kago* unleashed the Batuni Oath and administered it mainly to all young men and girls.¹ Before the end of the year Mau Mau fighters had waged a number of successful battles. On April, 29 1953, the Home Guard Post at Ruathia, 18 miles from Murang'a town which was manned by Headman William and 16 Kikuyu Guard, 5 Tribal Police and 5 Ma sai trackers was successfully attacked and raided. On 13th July, the Mau Mau fighters attacked and captured the Kigumo Guard Post killing most of the entire guard. On 24th December, the Mau Mau killed two European officers and two askaris in a bitter engagement at Thika. These were a company commander, Major Earl Wavell, a Kenya Police Reserve Commandant, Peter Humprey Dene, who was deputy to the Superintendent of Police at Thika, a Kenya District Commandant, Colonel R.C. Samuels, and an Assistant Inspector. Two other men were

*Kago was born Kariuki Chege at Ruathia in Location 12 of Murang'a District probably in 1920. He attended St. Peter Clavers' Catholic Mission in Nairobi. After the breakout of the Second World War he joined the Kenya African Rifles and fought abroad and he became a corporal. After coming back he joined K.A.U. When the Mau Mau movement broke out he went to the forest sent by the war council".

*"Gitau Matenjagwo came from Location 5 (now Gaichanjiru Location), in Kandara Division. His body was displayed in public places in the whole district. Gitau Matenjagwo was considered a prominent fighter and a number of Mau Mau songs were sung praising him as a servant of the people.

1. KNA: Fort Hall Annual Report 1953

wounded.¹

Before the end of this year the Mau Mau fighters under Gitau Matenjagwo had attacked Chomo and Ndakaini Home Guard Posts, they had overrun Kanderendu, they had waged two big battles in Mununga, they had attacked Kigumo and had killed many members of the Colonial forces. They had waged successful battles in Kangema where they were engaged by the 4 Kenya Regiment soldiers. At the end of the year they turned to Gakurwe and Mununga ridge where the biggest battles were fought. These two areas were immediately declared prohibited areas.²

1954 opened with fierce battles being waged by the Mau Mau fighters. After the death of Matenjagwo in December, 1953 at Kariti in Location 5 in Kandara, Kago quickly emerged as the overall leader of the Murang'a fighters. He turned to the forest in January, and re-organised the southern fighters into an efficient force. They started with Chief Njiiri's area Kinyona where they attacked and burned 95 huts belonging to the Home Guards and Home Guard Posts. In February, a powerful Mau Mau battle took place opposite Mununga ridge. The fighters received supplies from the supply areas on the Fort Hall Thika border. Funds and fighting materials were collected and sent through Miirigo in Location 4, and 5.³

1. See Maina P. Six Mau Mau Generals Gazelle Books 1977 p.41
2. KNA: Fort Hall District Annual Report 1954
3. O.I.: Enoch Mwangi and Kabue Macharia, on 25th May, 1976 also KNA: Fort Hall District Annual Report 1954

The Mau Mau fighters then turned their attention to Kandara Divisional Centre. By then Ihura Kareri was the second in command and he brought with him about 150 fighters mainly recruited from Nairobi by the war council. A force of 400 Mau Mau fighters attacked Kandara D.O.'s and Police Lines, set most of the houses on fire, drove away the police and military forces and released the prisoners. The D.O. asked for help and reinforcements came from Nyeri, Murang'a and Thika on road and by air. It was officially reported that at least 123 Mau Mau fighters were killed and 15 captured.¹

During the same time other Mau Mau fighters attacked Kangema Divisional Centre. They overran the Headquarters and killed most of the Askaris including the District Officer, Candler, on 5th March, Kago received about 150 fighters from the war council in Nairobi and with a force of about 600 fighters attacked and overran Kiriaini Kikuyu Guard Post in Location 16 with an intention of proceeding to Kandara Divisional Headquarters for a second time. On 31st March, Mau Mau forces contacted the Colonial forces at **Marlira** and after a fierce battle D.O. Peterson was killed. It is during this engagement when Kago was shot dead and Ihura Kareri took over. By April, the Mau Mau fighters had once again overrun Kangema where they killed a number of Colonial forces together with the D.O. Mr. Wood White.

1. KNA: Fort Hall Annual Report 1954

2. O.I.: Mbugua Njuguna and Munyua Ngoci: 26th July, 1976

However, from March, 1954, the Mau Mau fighters began to lose ground fast. Police and military forces followed them and were joined by men of the 156 Battallion, East African Artillery. The fighters were tracked down by the security forces who were guided by phosphorous marker grenades dropped from Police Reserve aircrafts. In addition five hundred men (mostly members of war council) were removed under operation "Overdraft" which resulted from the failure of the "CHINA" negotiations. The operation "Anvil" in Nairobi seized thousands of Mau Mau followers in Nairobi among them all the members of the war council. It became very difficult for the movement to obtain the necessary war materials including guns and recruits. It was as if the fighting had come to an end in Murang'a.

However, fighting continued and on May, 11th a fierce battle was fought in the West of Location 16 in Kandara with Ihura Kareri at the head. The Mau Mau fighters under Ihura, Long Murage Muriithi Manyeki and Ali Mutwe started engaging on a hide and seek battles and raids.

As it was not possible to get any more fighting assistance from the war council in Nairobi and in Murang'a as a result of operations Anvil and Overdraft, the fighters began to recruit from the Reserve. A new fighters unit called the Kikuyu Young Men's Fighters Unit was formed with Ali Mutwe as the leader. However, before this unit could take an effective root the colonial administration introduced "villagization" whereby all the population was put in villages

surrounded by a big furrow with sharpened sticks planted at the bottom and sides of the furrow. These villages were heavily guarded by Tribal Police and Home Guards and they had only one entrance. A 24-hour curfew¹ was imposed and the people were escorted to their gardens to collect food for only one hour and anyone who was found in the gardens at any other time was shot. This villagization was followed by land consolidation both of which were methods of defeating and punishing Mau Mau. (These are discussed in chapter 5).

By the end of 1955 the official figures of the "terrorists" killed was 622 and the Kikuyu Guard accounted for 202 "terrorists". The official records are silent on the casualties on the other side. But in memory of the loyalists who died "defending their country" a building was built in Murang'a near the Old Cemetery where Lieutenant Hall was buried. This building was the Fort Hall Memorial Church and the foundation stone of the Memorial Church was laid by Archbishop of Canterbury on May, 18th 1955.²

However, there were still fears of Mau Mau in Murang'a in 1956 as evidenced by the speech of the President of the Fort Hall Local Native Council in 1956 which read:-

"The campaign against Mau Mau is not over. There are still terrorists abroad in the district and in the forest. No one must rest

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1. KNA: Fort Hall District Annual Report 1955
 2. Fort Hall Annual Report 1955

until that task has been completed. There can be no half measures. Certain security restrictions are still necessary and these will be continued until our task has been achieved. It is essential that all should be on the watch for agitators who wish to corrupt the minds of the people and continue the work of various ways. Everyone whether he be chief, headman, councillor or villager must watch for these men and report their activities".¹

It is true that although Mau Mau fighters had been to a great extent defeated by the Colonial Security Forces and the Kikuyu Guard, the Mau Mau activities and aims continued. By the end of 1956 a number of ex-detainees and prisoners had begun to come back to the villages. Most of these started reviving the Mau Mau activities and agitating against the Loy-
alists, villagisation, communal work and land consolidation. By 1958 a strong revival of Mau Mau emerged under Kiama kia Muingi - K.K.M. (Council of the Masses) which was just another form of the Mau Mau War Council. The Emergency measures were imposed on the followers of the K.K.M. and many people were re-detained and imprisoned. By 1960 it had become necessary to have another operation called operation HAMMER in order to arrest and send to restriction in Lamu and other areas most of the former Mau Mau leaders who were also members of the K.K.M.

However, "criminal" activities similar to those carried out by the Mau Mau fighters in the first half of 1950s became widespread. This time the target was the white settled areas. Organised gangs attacked employees in the

1. Fort Hall District Local Native Council Minutes 1956.

farms and made away with cows. These cows were driven to the Reserve especially in Nguthuru, Ng'araria, Karimamwaro, Muruka and Gatitu, and were slaughtered. Meat was distributed to the villagers who were forced if necessary to consume it at a payment of five shillings or so for a piece -(meat was not weighed). Payments could be made any time later but the most important thing was that the consumers would never betray the "distributors".

The settlers and the Kenya Police were unable to stop the cattle stealing and at times battles were fought between them and the raiders. The last battle was fought by the riot police and G.S.U. and police on one hand and the raiders and the villagers on the other inside the Reserve. Many people were arrested and prosecuted. The areas mostly affected by the raiding were put under a District Security Committee. Such areas included the Maragua Ridge Farm and Samar Estate Ltd. and the Police patrolled the area. A Luo Headman, with Tribal Police under the control of the District Officer Kigumo, were stationed in Samar Limited to reduce the incidence of "crime" both in the settled area and the adjacent Reserve.¹

1. KNA: Fort Hall District Annual Report 1961

CHAPTER FIVETHE MAU MAU AFTERMATH : MAU MAU, LOYALISTS AND POLITICS

One major phenomenon of the Mau Mau movement in Murang'a was the emergence of two warring groups of people. One group, composed of the majority of the people, supported the Mau Mau movement. These people were called the "Mau Mau" and many of them had been detained by 1954.

The other group of people became resisters to the Mau Mau movement. These people were used by the Colonial administration to fight against the Mau Mau. Many of them joined the Tribal Police, Tribal Police Reserve and the Kikuyu Home Guard Unit. There were 4,700 Home Guards stationed in 80 Home Guard Posts in Murang'a by 1956, armed with 467 rifles and 677 shotguns. In addition, there was a force of 400 armed Tribal Police, and by 1955 another force of 1,700 armed men called the Tribal Police Reserve had been founded.¹

Most of the works on Mau Mau throw very little light on the Loyalists, especially what they did to defend their rights or as collaborators, what rewards they got from the Colonial Government, their role in politics vis-a-vis the Mau Mau fighters immediately before and after Kenya's Independence; their economic power vis-a-vis that of the Mau Mau activists and the ups and downs in their lives. This chapter will attempt to focus on the Loyalists in Murang'a and shed some light on these questions.

 1. KNA: Fort Hall District Annual Report, 1956

In 1957, the Home Guards, Tribal Police and Tribal Police Reserve members together with many government workers and teachers were issued with certificates called Loyalty Certificates and were all known as Loyalists.¹ A person with a Loyalty Certificate could not usually be prosecuted for any action against a non-Loyalist; he could be exempted from paying school fees; he could travel without a pass and he could become a member of land consolidation, school, church and other committees. This certificate also enabled the holders to plant coffee and other cash crops, to obtain trading licences, to own trading plots in market areas and to obtain vehicle licences.

The colonial administration, in giving the Loyalists these concessions, was rewarding its allies. The Loyalists formed a landed class which was to uphold and perpetuate the Colonial and neo-Colonial interests during and after the Emergency.

We shall first examine how the campaign to wipe out the Mau Mau was carried out by the Loyalists up to 1958, when most of the ex-detainees started to come out of detention. Then we shall discuss the political conflicts in Murang'a between 1958 and 1963. We shall focus here on the expectations of each group and the resources at their disposal to achieve these expectations. Then we shall see how such groups tried to survive after Independence with the resources at their disposal then.

1. KNA: Fort Hall District Annual Report 1950

Home Guards Guarding What?

The words Loyalists and Home Guards have been used in Murang'a politics to refer to a group of people who helped the Colonial administration to fight against the masses. For a long time they have been accused of many evils they committed during the Emergency. To a great extent, memories of the way the Mau Mau followers suffered under the Loyalists have contributed to the Murang'a Political conflicts of the period 1952-1970.

We can begin with examining some of the methods used by the Kikuyu Guard, Loyalists or Home Guards, to deal with the freedom fighters. The Loyalists freely used their powers to accumulate wealth or to settle old scores. If a Home Guard wanted to have the wife of someone, he could accuse the husband of being a Mau Mau follower after which the husband could be tortured to obtain a confession and then detained or imprisoned. There were cases of mothers being assaulted before their children and even daughters being assaulted before their parents. The Home Guards ransacked the businesses and homes of suspected Mau Mau adherents and carried off all they wanted. They usually fed themselves on meat and the goats, sheep and cows of non-loyalists which were captured. Chiefs and headmen and Guard Commanders obtained free labour in their farms and homes. They used non-loyalists to plant coffee for them, cut stones and build houses. Chiefs in particular had a cow boma and sheep and goat pen in every market centre.

It is here where the headmen and their assistants (kapiten) were to keep the cows and goats to be taken to the chief's camp. The headmen and the captains in turn followed their superiors in collecting cows and goats.

There were several ways which were used to torture Mau Mau followers so as to obtain forced confessions or to frighten suspects. Men's testicles were often pressed with pliers while bottles with hot water were pushed into women's genitals. Some individuals, hands were tied together and their fingers were burned with cigarettes. Sometimes Mau Mau suspects were forced to sit on a heated karai (basin). Men were threatened with snakes which were put on their genitals.¹

Sometimes Mau Mau suspects were tied to a landrover with a rope and pulled for long distances until they died. Sometimes also, the fingers of Mau Mau suspects were cut off the hands. Mau Mau followers were often killed in particularly cruel ways. A person could be ordered to bend down and shot from behind. A condemned person was often ordered to dig a hole for his own grave and then was shot while standing in the hole. After a man was shot other Mau Mau followers were ordered to take the corpse to the home of the dead man's parents. The father and the mother of the deceased were ordered to carry the corpse for public display. They had to carry the corpse around the area and uncover it when audiences came and left. There were incidents of men or

1. U.I., Mwangi Biuri, and Njuguna Mbugua, April, 1976.

women being ordered to sleep naked with their children after which they were shot dead. Any time a famous Mau Mau leader was arrested, women suspects were ordered to slash such a Mau Mau leader to death and later burn him.¹

To obtain confessions suspects were thrown into holes full of safari ants or frogs and forced to spend the night there. Others were placed in holes full of water and ordered to sleep there, while others were hanged with a rope at intervals until they became unconscious.²

Some Home Guards took this opportunity to enrich themselves. They could make false accusations against others who were not Home Guards who would be imprisoned or detained and their property such as sheep, goats, cows and iron sheets from their houses, would be carried away.

Fines or stock confiscations were sometimes imposed upon individuals whom the government would have preferred to prosecute but lacked the evidence to do so. In the three-month period of September, to November, 1954, 250 persons in Kenya had 1,072 cattle and 2,061 sheep confiscated and sold, and also under the forfeiture ordinance, the land of 4,000 people was confiscated.³

1. O.I., Muniya Ngoci and Karanja Waweru in April, 1976
2. O.I., Nahashon Ngugi and Mbugua Njuguna in April, 1976
3. A. Clayton op.cit., p. 14

The colonial administration used villagisation and land consolidation as effective measures to fight Mau Mau. These two measures were usually carried out through the agency of the Loyalists who were thus able to enhance their own social, economic and political position in Murang'a.

Many other examples of the way the people suffered at the hands of the Loyalists could be given. Next we must explain why these people behaved in such a way. To offer a satisfactory explanation, it is necessary to look into the origins of these people and why they became Home Guards. The first 1,000 people to become Home Guards were missionary adherents.¹ They were opposed to terrorism and the "heathen" ways of the Mau Mau. Between 1950 and 1952 there had arisen a kind of religious fanaticism among the followers of the African Inland Church and the Presbyterian Church of East Africa. These people came to be known as "Ahonoki" or those who are saved. They became extremely hostile to anything "satanic" and they became conspicuous by the way they sang in groups and kissed in public with the slogan "TukutendeReza". They isolated themselves from the other people. These people refused to take the oath and were willing to die for Christ's sake.

When the Mau Mau War started, the white Missionaries convinced these people of the evils of Mau Mau which was depicted as Satan working through the Mau Mau followers.

1. KNA: Fort Hall District, Annual Report 1954

They said a crusade should be carried out by the "people of Jesus" against Satan on earth. Those who became Home Guards were given a symbol with a sword and cross and they were exhorted to see that the cross won. Holding a gun or spear in one hand and a Bible in the other hand, they became very active fighters against Mau Mau.¹ Some people who became Home Guards were those who were wealthy and educated and who had become the beneficiaries of the Colonial administration. These included the chiefs and their children, traders, "enlightened" farmers, teachers, and other Government servants. Some of them did not see what was wrong with the Europeans whom they saw as very powerful and kind. Many of these people belonged to the same religious denominations as the Ahonoki, while others were Roman Catholic followers. These people got new opportunities to increase their wealth, and they did all they could to ally with the Europeans, mainly for economic reasons. Others were those who were Mau Mau at heart but Home Guards in appearance. It had become necessary for some Mau Mau followers to "surrender" and become Home Guards. In doing so they could protect their property or their lives. These were usually old people who could not run away to the forest to fight and who also had something to protect. They supplied the Mau Mau fighters with materials and information. However, some of them seized the opportunity to take the property of their relatives whom they believed were dead or would never return. They also betrayed the Mau Mau fighters at times.

 1. O.I. Kaniaru Karanja, 6th August, 1976
 Karanja Waweru, 18th May, 1976

But all in all some loyalists played a positive role in the struggle and they are proud of what they did.¹

One more group who became Home Guards were educated and semi-educated young men. These allied with some freebooters who had nothing to lose in the way of dignity or social prestige. This group committed the worst atrocities. They were used by the wealthy group to loot and torture people. Having opportunity to take beautiful girls from their homes and to take goats and sheep for their meals without being answerable to anyone, they formed a band of rogues. Some of them became the Tribal Police and were issued with rifles and shot guns.²

The behaviour of the Home Guards can also be explained by the impression given to them by the Colonial administration. The administration had convinced the Home Guards that the "terrorists" would never return. Those in the forests would ultimately be killed and those in detention camps would never come back to the reserves. Those who believed this story could behave in any manner without any fear of reprisals. The administration, by giving the Home Guards rewards and promising such things as free education and loans, turned the Home Guards into a ruthless force to carry out the administration's orders, especially in eliminating the Mau Mau adherents.

The Colonial administration used villagisation as another technique for defeating Mau Mau. This was a

1. O.I.: Kaniaru Karanja and Karanja Waweru

system of putting all the people in a sub-location into one area surrounded by a long furrow five feet wide. The furrow was filled with sharpened sticks planted at the bottom with the sharp ends pointing upwards. A mass of barbed wires was also put all along the furrow. The villages had one entrance which was located at the Home Guard post so that people coming in or going out had to pass through the Home Guard posts. An all night curfew was imposed. All able bodied adults reported to the post at 6 o'clock when they were driven away to communal work which continued up to 5 o'clock. They were then taken to the gardens to collect food and after six o'clock the gate to the village was locked and no one could go in or out. There was great suffering endured by the young and the aged who were left helpless in the villages during the day.

These villages served various purposes. By putting people together, the administration was able to prevent the Mau Mau fighters from getting food and shelter from a scattered population. If the freedom fighters attempted to get into the villages, they could be captured. Also if their sympathisers tried to go out and pass information or materials, they could be easily captured.

Villagisation was also used for military purposes. The freedom fighters could be noticed and identified more easily for there was no question of confusing the "terrorists" with "non-terrorists" because all these were in the villages closely guarded. Some areas were declared special areas

where there was an order to shoot anyone on sight. These special areas had been formerly inhabited by those people who were moved to the fortified villages.

Another purpose of villagisation was to protect the loyalists. Before, there had been constant attacks on Home Guard Posts by the freedom fighters. The Home Guards usually retaliated by searching people's homes looking for the "terrorists". These homes were burnt down and the occupants severely beaten and the men either shot or detained. But when the people were moved to villages the freedom fighters had to become careful in attacking the Home Guard posts which were at the entrance of the villages. In case of an open fight, the villagers would suffer greatly for the Home Guards would simply go into the village for cover and fight from there. In many cases successful attacks were launched on Home Guard posts which were not very close to the villages. Within the villages, areas were classified. The Home Guards lived in the posts and their part of the village was called the "Loyal Area" where their relatives lived, beyond this areas were the semi-loyal people, and at the other end lived the masses - all those whose loyalties were suspected.

Another purpose of villagisation was to obtain "immediate obedience". When a whistle was blown, all the villagers had to gather at the post. Some were taken for communal work and land terracing, furrow digging, and cultivation. Sometimes they could be summoned to go

and hunt for the "terrorists". In this case villagers were to lead the way into areas where the "terrorists" were suspected to be, therefore acting as a cover for the Home Guard and security forces. Without villagisation it would have been very difficult to summon widely scattered people with a whistle, for some would be reluctant and others would run away. Sometimes villages were established on the land of a clan which was involved in Mau Mau; the purpose was to punish the clan members by taking away their land. Although this was not very widely practised, when ever it was possible it was common. Also villagisation was used to evacuate people from their land so as to begin land consolidation and registration. While people were in the villages, land was to be demarcated and consolidated more conveniently, and as most of the political leaders were in detention camps, no political opposition was expected. People evacuated from villages which were demolished after the Emergency were to go to new homes on new land.

Land consolidation meant that an individual's fragmented plots were gathered into a single holding and then registered under a title deed. In 1951 the Governor of Kenya, Sir Phillip Mitchell, was of the opinion that the major problems in Kenya were social and agrarian and not nationalistic. Therefore he recommended land reform, which he felt would end discontent among the peasants. As a result, the East African Royal Commission of

1953 - 1955 was set up, charged with the investigation of the problem, and a plan to intensify the development of African agriculture was proposed by way of the Swynnerton Plan.¹

The Swynnerton Plan was adopted in Kenya in 1954 and it recommended the destruction of customary tenure for the improvement of agriculture in the Tribal reserves; the East African Royal Commission supported the move. The plan argued that free-hold tenure would enable energetic or rich Africans to acquire more land from poor farmers, therefore creating landed and landless classes. It was hoped that members of the landed class would each be able to employ about five workers, and thus solve the problem which would be brought about by the influx of the detainees once they were released.²

Land consolidation was also regarded by the Colonial administration as part of the anti-Mau Mau crusade. Consolidation was under the control of Loyalist elders who had the power to reduce the holdings of active Mau Mau adherents and to increase those of the Loyalists. The land of many known "terrorists" was legally confiscated and their houses and shops pulled down.³ Land consolidation became a policy of rewarding the Kikuyu Loyalists in the Mau Mau War. Thus the Colonial administration seized the opportunity to punish the people who had been restricted in camps because

1. M.P.K. Sorrenson, op.cit., p. 175

2. Ibid

3. Rosberg and Nottingham, op.cit., p.296

of their participation in the Mau Mau movement and to reward the Loyalists. The consolidation was rushed through in the Kikuyu area with/result that over half of all Kikuyus present became landless and more than half of the land was given to less than 2 per cent of the population.¹

Land consolidation greatly affected the determination of the freedom fighters. Messages were sent to the forest and the detention camps to notify people that if they did not surrender they would lose their land. Every time a freedom fighter's land was confiscated this was published so that others would realise that they could lose their land also. This broke the morale of many and some intended to surrender.²

Land consolidation afforded the Loyalists an opportunity to enrich themselves. There was a land consolidation committee composed of the chief or headman, a registrar and local elders to adjudicate ownership. As only those people who were not in prison, detention camps or the forest were available to determine ownership, this task was left to the Loyalists.

The land was usually categorised as good and bad land in an agricultural sense. The Loyalists were able to get the good land for their land was consolidated first. They had another advantage, in that a farmer could not be

1. O. Odinga, op.cit., p. 123

2. O.I., Nahashon Ngugi Kariku 4th March, 1976

moved from land which he had developed. If he had planted coffee or had a permanent building he had to remain there. Coffee trees and other cash crops and permanent building were the property of the Loyalists, and so they stood to gain.

Land consolidation also became the subject of family quarrels. In the absence of a man's relatives he could consolidate all their land in his name if he had the support of the committee members. At times the relatives were present and all agreed to register the land in the name of one relative or brother. In Murang'a there were 3,000 to 4,000 such cases where land was registered in the name of one legal owner.¹ One interesting result of this situation was that demarcating clerks and other people who had little or no land emerged with many acres after the consolidation. Land acquired in this way was commonly known as migunda ya wabici or office land. It meant that this land had been bought and sold in the office.

The demarcating officers used to cheat people by recording fewer feet than the actual measurements. A person's land for instance, could be 200 yards by 400 yards on the ground, but the official could record 150 by 350. The person's land would then be demarcated at a smaller size while the official would have in "office" a plot of 50 yards by 100 yards which he could sell. When this demarcation on the ground was compared to an aerial survey, there was so much variance that a complete re-demarcation was called for in most of the locations in 1960.

1. Sorrenson, op.cit., p. 177

By 1958 the Loyalists had emerged as a class wielding social, economic and political power in Murang'a. When coffee was introduced as a cash crop in the early 1950s only the Loyalists were allowed to plant it. The senior Loyalists such as chiefs and headman were able to get free seedlings, free manure, and as the returns from coffee were high these people received a lot of income.

Hand in hand with coffee growing, there came the Coffee Growers Co-Operative Societies. These Societies were formed for marketing the coffee grown by members, and they also served as financial institutions through which members could get loans and advances. These loans and advances were used by the recipients to educate their children to advanced levels both in Kenya and Overseas. They were also used for buying more land, erecting buildings and establishing businesses.

The societies also served as platforms from which political ideas could be disseminated to the members. They seemed more or less as Loyalist "Political Clubs" and a number of decisions on how to deal with the ex-detainees were reached in these meetings. Similar decisions were reached in the Churches - Presbyterian Church of East Africa, Anglican Church, and African Inland Mission.

In areas where coffee was not grown due to unsuitable climatic conditions, the Loyalists entered the dairy industry. They were given loans and advances by the Colonial Administration to buy grade cows and fencing materials. The

dairy farmers also had their societies which served the same political and economic purpose as the coffee growers societies.

The Loyalists had emerged as a well defined political class. Voting in the Local Councils and in the Central Government. was confined to people holding Loyalty Certificates. Again the British were to gain in the long run from the existence of this class.

The Paradox of Expectation

The creation of a class of landed gentry was to serve the British Government primarily in two ways. First, this class was to act as a buffer between the British administration and the masses and as a counter-revolutionary political antidote to the Mau Mau detainees once they were released. Secondly, this class was to be groomed to take over the Government administration once the British left. The British had done a great deal to spell out their intentions, explicitly or implicitly, and the Loyalists had formulated their own long-term expectations accordingly.

It is not surprising that the Loyalists emerged as a Political force to be reckoned with in Murang'a upto 1958, largely because they were the only people allowed to vote. In 1956, 3,869 voters had been recorded in Legislative Council elections. The first election for the Central Province Constituency took place on the 10 and 11 March, 1957 and 3,671 votes were recorded in 19 polling stations, or 95 percent of the registered voters. Mr. Bernard Mate of Meru won the seat. The part played by the Murang'a loyalists is not clear this time as no

Murang'a candidate stood among the five candidates for election. In 1958 the Central Province African Constituency was divided into three separate constituencies, which necessitated the holding of a by-election in Central Province (Southern) which consisted of Fort Hall, Kiambu and Thika Districts.¹ Dr. Kiano and Mr. E.W. Mathu campaigned for the seat. Voting took place at 10 polling stations in the District on 24 March, 1958 and Dr. Kiano won 6,684 votes against Mathu's 3,926.²

Here it is important to note that although Dr. Kiano was not a Loyalist per se, he became a representative of the Loyalists. Kiano, who had come from a poor family had attended Alliance High School, Kikuyu, before he went to the U.S.A. and he was the first Kenyan African to obtain a Ph.D. In his campaigns he had to dance the Loyalist tune. He was later to be used by the Loyalist camp to defeat the ex-detainee leaders. It was largely to him that the Loyalists owe the defeat of people such as Bildad Kaggia, James Beuttah, Chege Kabogoro, Henry Kagika and other detainee leaders.

However, something happened which disturbed the political expectations of the Loyalists. By the end of 1958 it had been made clear by the administration that all the detainees were to be released. The chiefs reacted sharply in opposition, but the D.C. asked them to go to the restriction camps and bring their people out. The D.C. said

1. KNA: Fort Hall District; Annual Report 1957

2. Ibid.

that the Government had no money to feed all these people. The chiefs pleaded with the administration to at least keep the hard core detainees in, but by 1960 even the "hard core" had come out.¹ These included Isaac Gathanju, the Secretary to the Mau Mau War Council, Enock Mwangi, the Chairman of the Youth Wing of the Mau Mau War Council, Nahashon Ngugi Kariku, the Deputy Secretary to the Mau Mau War Council and others such as Mwangi Macharia, Chege Kabogoro and later Bildad Kaggia. The land and property of Nahashon Ngugi and other detainees had been confiscated, and they began by filing civil suits against the people who had done so. When the Murang'a Democratic Party was formed, Kiano became its President and Nahashon Ngugi became the General Secretary, Land complaints were widespread in the District and Nahashon Ngugi, Enock Mwangi and other leading hard core ex-detainees were arrested and taken back to detention in Lamu in 1960.² The Loyalists appeared to have won the first battle by excluding leading ex-detainees from active political life.

When KANU was formed in 1960, the Loyalists expected the party to be on their side. This proved true to some extent, especially during the election of 1960. Three candidates stood in Murang'a, namely Dr. Kiano, Kariuki, son of chief Njiiri who had fought continuously against the Mau Mau, and Daniel Mbarathi an ex-detainee. Dr. Kiano and Kariuki Njiiri were voted in, while Mbarathi lost even his deposit.

1. O.I., Karanja Waweru, and Kahinga Wachanga, June, 1976

2. Fort Hall District Annual Report 1960.: O.I., Enock Mwangi and Kabui Macharia in August, 1977.

Mbarathi was accused by the ex-detainees of having betrayed them in Manyani.

Within a short time, however, a number of ex-detainees joined KANU in all fields and some of the Mau Mau forest leaders such as Mbugua Sherifu Njuguna became the Commandants of the KANU Youth Wing Groups. Songs which were sung during the Mau Mau struggle were revived. These songs accused the Loyalists of all kinds of things. Even Kiano and Njiiri in their meetings vehemently condemned colonialism and the Europeans and called for freedom and land. When it was announced that all detainees were to be released, the Loyalists felt they had been betrayed by the British Government for whom they had fought so hard to crush Mau Mau. When the people they had voted in as representatives began to join with the ex-Mau Mau fighters in asking for the release of Kenyatta and other prominent Mau Mau leaders and also for the revision of land consolidation, the Loyalists felt their representatives had also betrayed them. In despair, many turned to the Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU) under Ronald Ngala. Others, in fear of what might happen, bought both KANU and KADU party tickets hoping to wait and see.¹ KADU was dissolved after Ngala joined KANU and the Loyalist dilemma increased, particularly since men such as Bildad Kaggia were out of detention and quite influential in KANU.

The Loyalists expected that the Colonial regime would continue for a longer period and that they would govern in

1. D.I. Jason Mburu Wainaina, 25th March, 1976.

association with the Europeans until a time when the Europeans would leave; that their children would receive free education in Kenya and Overseas; that they would be given agricultural assistance in the form of aid or loans; that they would retain any property they had acquired during the Emergency; that honours and awards would be given to those who fought Mau Mau; that rewards would be given to their children in the form of jobs, and businesses; and that leading Mau Mau leaders would be kept away, especially Kenyatta, for they had signed statements, that he should never come back.¹ The Loyalists naturally feared a future under Kenyatta and Mau Mau leaders. They could not understand why the British had betrayed and cheated them.

In the words of one former Loyalist and Headmen:-

"The Mzungu (European) promised us everything. Land, free education, jobs for our children... everything. Some of us acted as small "gods". Imagine someone allowed to go and pick your goats or daughter and no one will ask him. But the D.C. called us and told us in 1956, 'Mau Mau people will come back. If you are not careful they will rule you. You are still enjoying yourselves and the Mau Mau people left their money in the banks. They will come and employ you. Go and get licenses for shops and businesses and loans immediately'. I was not very much worried for my brother was a leading Mau Mau and people knew I had joined this side to help them. Others became extremely frightened. They kept on asking what to do and if it was really true that the Mzungu could betray us. Some were so annoyed that they said if there was any more fighting they would definitely fight the Mzungu".²

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1. Mwangi Thabuni, 31st March, 1976
 2. O.I. Mr. X. 18th September, 1976.

These people waited for the time of Independence when judgement would be passed. They expected the worst from Kenyatta whom they had all fought against, but they were pleasantly surprised by the speeches which followed stating that Mau Mau was a disease, that all fought for Uhuru and people should forget what had happened in the past. The big question was whether Kenyatta was on their side or whether the British after all had not betrayed them. Events after 1963 had to prove what was meant by "we all fought for Uhuru".

We can now turn to the expectations of the Mau Mau activists. The Colonial administration began to release the detainees slowly; by 1956 a total of 14,481 detainees had been released.¹ These were usually the "soft cores" who were thought to have responded favourably to rehabilitation. The administration by this time had become willing to release anybody who said he had taken the Mau Mau oath or who said Mau Mau was evil. The great willingness displayed by the administration in releasing people made them feel they had won the war. They came out determined to carry on and achieve what they had fought for - land and freedom.

The chiefs were greatly opposed to the release of the "hard cores". The administration pointed out that it had no alternative and a rehabilitation programme for hard core detainees was started in Mariira Camp in January, 1957.

1. KNA: Fort Hall District; Annual Report 1957

The capacity of the camp was only 400, but a total of 1,098¹ "hard core" detainees were filtered through it in that year.

When detainees were released they were taken to their chiefs and headmen. Most of them returned to find all their property and land had been taken away. Instead of going back to their land they found they were to go to the village, where they were to obey the Home Guards and the headmen to whom they had to report for roll call and for communal labour. Some of them refused to leave the Government vehicles which had carried them to their 'homes' and demanded they be taken back to detention. They pointed out they had not reached their homes yet and in any case they had not begged anyone to release them. Most of them refused to take part in communal labour. They defied the headmen and began to prevent their wives from participating in communal labour. Others refused to report to anybody and went to Nairobi without passes. Within a short time the Mau Mau followers began to organise themselves.²

By 1958 the Mau Mau followers had formed a secret society called the Kiama Kia Muingi (Council of the Masses) - K.K.M. - which was to serve as a War Council to continue where the Mau Mau Council had left off.³ Every member had to subscribe 2 shillings but more was to be paid as the

1. KNA: Fort Hall District Annual Report 1957

2. O.I. Ndaba Karomo, 11th May, 1976

3. O.I. Nahashon Ngugi and Enock Mwangi, 14th November, 1976

need arose. The K.K.M. reunited the ex-detainees and cells on the pattern of the Mau Mau organisation were set up all over Murang'a. Objectives similar to those of Mau Mau were formulated. In addition, members aimed to get back their land which had been stolen by the Loyalists.¹

The administration reacted to K.K.M. as it had reacted to Mau Mau. The known leaders were immediately detained and the full force of the Emergency Regulations was brought to bear in the most seriously affected areas. A 24-hour curfew was imposed and all local markets closed.² Movements of suspected members were severely restricted.

It had become apparent to the administration that the penetration of K.K.M. was widespread throughout Kandara and Kangema, and accordingly screening teams were established in every village in the two divisions. By September, the leading members were prosecuted - 401 members in Kandara, 314 in Kangema, 184 in Kigumo and 166 in Kiharu - 186 persons were detained under the Emergency Regulations.³

During the screening, the K.K.M. members received the same treatment they had received earlier during the Mau Mau screening. They were tortured, persecuted, beaten and their cows, goats, sheep and land confiscated until they paid whatever fines were imposed. Women, young men and old men were beaten publicly while all the people in the villages watched. One of the aims of the Loyalists and the administration in doing this was to cow the people into obedience

1. O.I. Nduati Gathige, 18th July, 1976

2. KNA: Fort Hall District Annual Report 1958

3. Ibid.

obedience.¹

When they found it difficult to organise secretly, the ex-detainees started joining the legally established political parties. Nahashon Ngugi Kariku is a good example. As he was the Secretary of the Murang'a Democratic Party he could recruit many Mau Mau members. The Murang'a Democratic Party waged a strong campaign against land consolidation. The Loyalists were accused of stealing land and property, and the administration found it difficult to turn a deaf ear. To the annoyance of the Loyalists, the Colonial administration agreed that land was to be re-demarcated. Dr. Kiano spoke openly in meetings supporting the move to re-demarcate the land.

The Mau Mau saw this as a great success. The Loyalists felt betrayed by the British as well as their representatives such as Dr. Kiano. Some ex-detainees started to go back to their old plots and claimed whatever they found there - coffee, houses, etc. The administration assured the more recent owners that they could not be moved if they had already developed the land by planting cash crops or building permanent houses. However, all agricultural development loans were suspended pending re-demarcation.²

1. O.I. Kinuthia Kang'ethe, 20th April, 1977

2. KNA: Fort Hall District Annual Report 1960

During the second phase of land consolidation the demarcation committee were made up of people from the Mau Mau group. Cases came to light where people who did not have land before the first consolidation had big land afterwards. Some detainees reclaimed some of their lost land, but others found their land had been sold by relatives. In most cases they were not in position to raise the money to redeem their land. The Mau Mau group had another disadvantage in that the demarcation and consolidation officers were the same people who had carried out the first consolidation. The Loyalists emerged with the best land once again, for their land was allocated where they had planted cash crops after the first consolidation. It can be said that although the Mau Mau group had won the political battle it lost the economic battle to the Loyalists, while the British administration just watched the two camps struggling.

When the KANU elections took place, the Mau Mau group did not fare well. Dr. Kiano and Kariuki Njiiri who had the support of the Loyalists won the seats. The Mau Mau group had unleashed a big campaign against Daniel Mbarathi who was accused of betraying his fellow detainees at Manyani detention camp. To a great extent, the Mau Mau group had fallen to Dr. Kiano's political machinations and manoeuvres and they had helped Kiano's ally, who was also on the Loyalist side, to get a seat in parliament.

The Mau Mau group was determined to have strong representatives. It started by recruiting Youth Wingers and active Ex-Mau Mau forest fighters. The young group started

spreading a lot of propoganda against the Loyalists and the Europeans. KANU became a party of the "have nots" and the Loyalists kept away from its offices and meetings. They were accused of being KADU followers and thieves and traitors. The problem with this Kanu organisation was that Dr. Kiano and Kariuki Njiiri were still the leaders. These two were most effective in destroying all the active leaders in the Mau Mau group.

During the 1963 elections, the first election for Independent Kenya, the Mau Mau group put forward three of their leaders, Bildad Kaggia for Kandara, James Beuttah for Kigumo and Stanley Kagika for Kiharu. Chege Kabogoro stood against Kiano but he later withdrew. All these leaders were to face tough opposition from the Loyalists.

Beuttah, one of the oldest veterans of the struggle and a leading fighter for Independence, stood in Kigumo against the son of Senior Chief Njiiri, Kariuki Njiiri. But because of repeated KANU attacks and slander, not only did Beuttah lose the election, but his good name was greatly damaged. His political carreer was almost finished. He was called "KADU" and accused of being against the freedom fighters and of being a Colonial agent. Stanley Kagika who stood in Kiharu was slandered in the same way.¹

1. Kaggia Bildad, : Ronts of Freedom 1921 - 1963 The Autobiography of Bildad Kaggia, (E.A.P.H. 1975) p.193.

In Kandara, Kaggia's name was removed after being nominated as the KANU candidate. The Loyalist group supported two people, Johnson Muigai Ndungu and George Mwicigi the son of Senior Chief Ndung'u Kagori. After Kandara threatened to elect Kaggia as an independent, J.N. Muigai was dropped. He was supported by the Loyalist camp as an Independent but was defeated by Kaggia by 25,193 votes to 8,474.¹

As of Independence in 1963, the Mau Mau group had not achieved its expectations. These included the control of the land for which they had fought and the land stolen by the Loyalists, compensation for all the people killed and maimed during the struggle, compensation for property confiscated and stolen, rewards for orphans and widows, free education for these orphans, dismissal of Colonial chiefs and headmen and their prosecution where necessary, honours and recognition for the leading fighters and leaders and many other expectations.

The people in the Mau Mau group waited patiently for the time of Independence, speculating as to how their expectations were to be fulfilled. They had put all their hope in Jomo Kenyatta whom they considered to be their hero and for whom they had suffered so much at the hand of the Colonial administration and the Loyalists. When Kenyatta announced that Mau Mau was a disease, that there were no

1. O.I. Bildad Kaggia, 14th June, 1976

free things and that people should forget what had happened, these people were shocked. They felt very much betrayed. Later as we shall see, they resorted to suing Kenya Government in the High Court for the damages they had suffered in liberating Kenya.

Mau Mau and the Struggle for Survival

After Independence each group appeared to have a number of advantages. The Loyalist group enjoyed several advantages. They had money from cash crops such as coffee and from the Co-operative Societies which acted as financial institutions as well as political platforms. Some members had increased their income by 2,000 per cent.¹ Many had benefited from the £10,800,000 given to the Reserve under the Swynnerton Plan.² The churches and other religious congregations also served as political platforms for them. The people in the Mau Mau group had not been allowed to plant coffee and the independent churches to which most of them belonged had been closed during the Emergency. Another advantage of the Loyalists group was to be found in the government machinery itself. Most of the civil servants and chiefs were in their camp, and as such the administration could be used by the Loyalists for their own ends.

1. Taylor, D.R.F., cit. p.222

2. D.R. Buijtenhuijs, op.cit. p.116

On the other hand the Mau Mau group had some advantages which were not enjoyed by the Loyalists. The majority of the population were on their side, and in the event of a free general election this group would be bound to win. They had an added advantage in that Bilddad Kaggia who was their champion, enjoyed the support of Mr. Oginga Odinga who later became the Minister for Home Affairs and also the Vice-President of Kenya. The Mau Mau group under Kaggia used its majority position to replace all the Colonial chiefs in Murang'a. A campaign was waged against the Loyalists which culminated in an open election of chiefs and sub-chiefs. Most were replaced by people from the Mau Mau group. At the same time a campaign of "let us grow coffee" was started. The government had indicated that no more coffee should be planted, and this would have made coffee growing a monopoly of the Loyalists. However, everyone was allowed to plant coffee from 1964, and this coffee was referred to as Kahua ka Oginga - that is, Oginga's coffee. Thus the replacement of the Colonial chiefs and sub-chiefs and the permission to plant coffee were seen as a great success for the Mau Mau group which had also started to look for ways of controlling the KANU and KANU offices.

The Mau Mau group had another success during the Murang'a KANU Branch elections in August, 1964 when Kaggia was elected Chairman, James Beuttah Secretary, Kamau Mweru Treasurer, and "Field Marshall" Mbaria Keniu Vice-Chairman. These were among the strongest leaders of the Mau Mau group.

Dr. Kiano challenged the elections as being unconstitutional and to have been rigged and claimed that all those elected were not office bearers. Two KANU factions emerged, one called KANU KIFAGIO (sweep) under Kiano whose aim was to sweep KANU clean of all "destructive" elements. Kaggia became the leader of the KANU KANO (Kano means Centre of core).¹ This division led to political alliances which had a basis in class and ideology.

The Loyalists had formed a small group called the Group of Andu Agima (Group of the rich or the powerful). Kiano went into alliance with some leading ex-detainees among them Mwangi Thabuni and Taddeo Mwaura and a new group called Atiririri Bururi or Ndiririra (supporters or the pillars of the Nation). It was stated that while the country was under the Emergency some people were imprisoned and others detained while others had been left in the country to "support the nation".²

In opposition to the Ndiririra there emerged an alliance of people called Mitarukire (those in rags or "havenots"). In this group were most of the hard core ex-detainees, the landless, non-coffee growers and many others who felt dispossessed in one way or another. They were accused by the Ndiririra of demanding such things as free education, land and treatment, and they were branded as communists who wanted to share people's homes, cows and daughters.³

1. O.I. Mwangi Thabuni, aidad Kaggia in April, 1976

2. Ibid

3. Ibid

The Mau Mau group began to lose to the Loyalists group in mid 1964. In June, 1964 Kaggia was dismissed from his government post as the Assistant Minister of Education. On 10 April, 1965, Mzee Kenyatta visited Kandara and openly attacked Kaggia and his policy.¹ This was followed by a rally organised by the Ndiririra on 2 May, which visited Kenyatta at Gatundu requesting the removal of Kaggia from the Parliament. But Kenyatta pointed out that Kaggia was not elected in Gatundu but in Kandara.²

The delegation went back and organised a coup which threw out the Mau Mau group from KANU offices in Murang'a on 15 May, and the leaders of Ndiririra took over. Kiama was declared Chairman, Kariuki Njiri Treasurer, Jesse Gachago Secretary and Taddeo Mwaure Branch Executive. Kaggia and his group reacted sharply but before they could go any further the administration banned political meetings in Kandara.³

The Ndiririra's political power was threatened by the formation of the Kenya Peoples Union (K.P.U.) in 1966. With Kaggia as the Vice-President, K.P.U. gained the support of the Mitarukire and many Mau Mau hard cores. Offices were opened in Kandara and Murang'a and it appeared K.P.U. was going to be very strong. KANU under Ndiririra claimed that the K.K.M. - Kiama Mia Muingi had been revived by Kaggia's followers, and that the main aims of the K.K.M. were to kill all the Loyalists with their families with knives from

1. C.I.: Muangi Thabuni, Bildad Kaggia in April, 1976.

2. Ibid

3. Ibid

Communist Russia, to destroy all the coffee and grade cows, and to make Kenya a Communist State. Leading ex-Mau Mau figures were paraded before the public in Market places and tortured for days until they confessed that they had taken an oath to kill the Loyalists and achieve their aims through violence. Others were killed in suspicious circumstances.¹

Just before the 1966 Parliamentary elections, the President of the Party addressed a rally at the Kandara Stadium and accused Kaggia publicly and KANU urged the people to vote for JOGOO.

During the campaign, K.P.U. supporters were harrassed in many ways. Kandara in particular became very unsafe. Lorries and vans full of KANU Youth Wingers roamed the division beating people at market places and forcing them to shout "JOGOO". Many suspected K.P.U. supporters were usually arrested by the police and many were convicted and sentenced to prison terms. Kaggia lost to Taddeo Mwaura the leader of Ndiririra in Kandara.²

From this time onwards a number of political slogans emerged, all aimed at discrediting the Mau Mau. Followers of Kaggia and his policy were referred to as "Andu a Rubia" (Members of 2 shillings - contributed for K.K.M.) and "Andu a Muthotho" (Rumour Mongers). These people were labelled as socially irresponsible villains who just wanted to cause chaos and wait for things to be given free. Many

1. O.I. Kinuthia Kang'ethe and Dan Kaguura, 20-12-76 and Mr. Y.

2. O.I., Bildad Kaggia, 20th June, 1977

people who were Mau Mau supporters could no longer even use the words "Mau Mau" or "Fighters for Freedom" in case they were labelled "Andu a Muthotho". People were urged to forget about the past and let bygones be bygones. During the 1969 and 1974 General elections, when George Mwicigi the son of Ex-Senior Chief Ndungu Kagori won, Kaggia's supporters just remained quiet and had to pretend they were not supporting Kaggia since they feared possible repercussions.

However, this does not mean that the ex-Mau Mau fighters stopped organising. They had for a long time (since forming the K.K.M.) continued to find ways and means of pushing their cause, but the Kenya Government had acted swiftly to stop them from organising. At the beginning of 1969, the Kenya Government banned a number of Mau Mau organisations. These were the Kenya War Council, the Ex-Freedom Fighters Union and the Waliolete Uhuru Union (Union of those who brought Uhuru). The Attorney General, Mr. Charles Njonjo, who banned the associations claimed that they were considered dangerous to the good government of the Republic.¹

Some ex-forest fighters tried to find a publishing house with the intention of giving more publicity to Mau Mau in the struggle for Independence, but by the end of 1971 they had abandoned this.²

1. Daily Nation of 14-12-69

2. Ibid 11-10-71; Andrew Ng'ang'a Munyua November, 1976

The Mau Mau ex-fighters tried to organise through an association called the Kenya Old Mau Mau Company. A meeting was called in September, 1971 in order to raise funds. In October, the Provincial Commissioner of Nairobi warned the leaders not to use the name of Mau Mau as a commercial name and to change the name of the company. The Chairman of the company retaliated by saying that the company was not political and its main aim was to write books and make films on the Mau Mau movement which fought for Kenya's Independence.¹ In actual fact, the Kenya Government had agreed to make a film on Mau Mau and film makers from Yugoslavia had made preparations. The ex-Mau Mau fighters had begun the necessary arrangements, but somehow the government cancelled the film and no explanations was given. An argument had arisen concerning who was to act in the film and the representatives of the government wanted the Kenya Army and the General Service Unit to act. The Mau Mau leaders wanted the ex-Mau Mau soldiers to act.²

The name of the Kenya old Mau Mau Company was changed to the old Matigari Enterprise.³ The word Matigari means remainders (here of bullets), and this obviously meant the Mau Mau survivors. But whatever the name meant the enterprise was declared dangerous to the good government of the Republic and banned in February, 1972 by the Attorney General.⁴ Also banned were two other societies, the Kenya

1. Daily Nation 11-10-71

2. D.I. Bildad Maggia and Enock Mwangi in August, 1976

3. Daily Nation 5-11-71

4. Ibid

Old Mau Mau Traders, Farmers and Miners Company and the Kenya Ex-Detainees Traders and Farmers Company.¹

The associations were accused of holding meetings collecting subscriptions, and undertaking activities unconnected with their business.² They were accused of being political organisations in disguise, and it was reported in the press that "certain irresponsible elements in these companies" had tried to encourage members to take sectarian oaths,³ and this implied that these associations were attempts to continue with the Mau Mau activities.

After the ex-Mau Mau fighters found they could not organise, they resolved to take legal action against the Kenya Government. They then collected money to hire advocates and sue the Kenya Government in 1972 for compensation for the torture, loss of lives and property they had suffered during the struggle for Uhuru.⁴

The Government reacted by arresting the leaders, who were detained in different places for periods ranging from one month to three months. Later the leaders were released, and began making arrangements for suing the Kenya Government for illegal detention.⁵

1. Sunday Nation of 6-12-72

2. Ibid

3. Ibid

4. O.I., Nahashon Ngugi and Andrew Ng'ang'a Munyua December, 1976.

5. Ibid.

The judgement of the first suit was given against the Mau Mau fighters. As it was reported:-

"A civil suit filed by 65 veteran Mau Mau fighters seeking compensation from the Kenya Government for the torture, loss of lives and property they suffered during the struggle for Uhuru, was dismissed with costs by the Court of Appeal for East Africa. The Court held that plaintiffs claim was barred under the limitation of Action Act which provides that an action on Tort may not be brought after the end of three years when the cause of action occurred. A Kenya High Court judge dismissed the suit last year after being satisfied that the plaintiffs' claim must fail under Indemnity Ordinance, and that it was statute barred under the Fatal Accident Act Public Protection Act. It was subsequently taken to the Court of Appeal for East Africa.¹

The plaintiffs included Andrew Ng'ang'a Munyua, Nahashon Ngugi Kariku, Hiram Mwangi Wamuthuita, Wamutitu Turo, Gakere Mukuo, Warui Mweru, Mrs. Wanjiku Karongoi, Mrs. Wairimu Mwaure, Mrs. Muthoni Kimata and Njoroge Kahindo - all leading figures in the Mau Mau struggle.

At the beginning of 1970s most of the Mau Mau leaders in Murang'a had been thrown out of KANU and GEMA offices. These offices, it appeared, came to be filled by the Loyalists and their descendants, to a great extent.² The Mau Mau group had lost the political, economic, social and above all legal battle in a country which they believed they had liberated.

1. The Standard of 11-3-76

2. Prominent GEMA members include George Mwicigi, son of ex-Senior Chief Ndung'u and J.N. Michuki a former District Assistant.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

One of the major features of this study is the place of Murang'a District in the politics of the Central Province of Kenya. This is especially demonstrated by the role the people of Murang'a played in the East African Association after Harry Thuku was detained and later in the Kikuyu Central Association. The significance of this role can only be realised when we examine the continuity of the resistance to colonialism and colonial agents from 1900 to 1950s. This shows us that the Mau Mau movement as a resistance movement had its base on the pre-Emergency resistances.

It is obvious from the study that there were Murang'a-Kiambu inter-district conflicts mainly based on the political leadership. These inter-district conflicts weakened the resistance to colonialism, for there were always suspicions among the leaders as can be evidenced by the way the Murang'a K.C.A. viewed Kenyatta and Thuku first and foremost as Kiambu men. During the Mau Mau movement the same inter-district feelings are evident, now with Nyeri and Murang'a on one side.

However, as the study was not designed to show why Murang'a District played a certain role in the politics of Central Province of Kenya, we can broadly conclude from the study that on its own right, Murang'a District played an important role worth the attention of historians. This is why a large part of the study has

concentrated on the historical development of the political history of the district. All what can be done here is now to give some conclusions on the society and politics in Murang'a as a result of the implantation of colonialism and colonial capitalism on the African peoples.

The account of Murang'a society and politics in the preceding chapters has emphasised three related themes; the divided character of the society as it developed in response to colonial conquest; the emergence of social classes as a principle in political collaboration and dissidence; and the development of political conflicts which at times took class and ideological dimensions.

The imposition of colonial rule and colonial capitalism had a number of profound effects on the people. In the pre-colonial Murang'a society various mechanics were at work which gave access to the means of production and means of livelihood to different members of society. The acquisition of land by the founder of the clan did not exclude his kinsmen from having access to the land. On his death a communal form of title was created and his off-spring, who became his mbari, became the land owning unit. The ahoi and ndungata had also access to land.

Raiding, looting and trading as agents for individual accumulation of livestock also led to access of land. Through these agencies, stock was accumulated, and the more the stock reproduced the more land was

required and this called for migration to new lands. With stock, more women were married giving rise to the availability of young men to supply the necessary labour-power for cutting of the forest and for the riddance of wild animals.

The imposition of colonialism was followed by land alienation. As a result, the acquisition of land as a means of production through the process of first clearance of land dependent upon migration was halted.

The imposition of colonial rule also encouraged the social classes in the society. Access to the means of production came to be dependent upon the ability to earn wages and to use the government and legal machinery. It was only the chiefs, court elders and some Athomi who were in such a position. Raiding, looting and trading no longer acted as venues for accumulating so as to get access to the means of production. The chiefs, their thabari and the petty-bourgeoisie utilised these agencies for individual accumulation and used them as tools of excluding the majority of the people, from the process of accumulation.

The introduction of cash crops served as a means of accumulation for the chiefs and the Athomi, who were mainly the only people allowed to grow cash crops. The introduction of these crops made it necessary for the growers to 'fence' their shambas in case goats and cows

of the "masses" destroyed their crops. The masses were at times forced to work for these growers without payments. When there was no forced labour available, the growers used paid wage labour - a necessary condition for capitalist agriculture. The proceeds from the cash crops were used for re-investment in either agriculture or trade.

During the Mau Mau period, the process of accumulation and class formation was accelerated. There came into existence a political class called the Loyalists. The Loyalists were given various opportunities to accumulate, therefore becoming an economic class. They were allowed to engage in cash crops especially coffee and some obtained free labour **initially**. They were given trading permits and controlled all the trading activities in Murang'a. Through land consolidation, they were able to accumulate land. Through raiding and looting, they were able to accumulate property. So the process of accumulation through raiding, looting, trading and land acquisition which was set in motion on the eve of the imposition of the colonial rule, and which continued all through to the Mau Mau period, was **actually accelerated** during the Emergency period.

On the eve of Independence the Murang'a peasantry had been differentiated on class lines to a large extent. Between 1954 and 1962, the farmers (mainly Loyalists) had exported agricultural products worth Kshs 70,421,112/= ¹ Out of this coffee accounted for Kshs 20,206,338/=. This coffee had mainly been produced by 699 growers, ² and as

1. Calculated from the Recorded Agricultural Exports Fort Hall District 1954-1962.

2. KNA: Coffee Growers Fort Hall L.49 4/31

it was only Loyalists who were allowed to grow coffee, and other cash crops then they retained the revenue.

Again between 1954 and 1962 the cash crop growers benefited from agricultural credit facilities issued by the Government to selected farmers who had been "confirmed as loyal Kikuyus"¹. The credit facilities were mainly through the Land Development Board and Barclays Bank and the National and Grindlays Bank Corporation. The finance so received had among other things been used to buy buses (34 buses costing between 14,000/= and 20,000/= each), to construct stone built shops (1,000 shops each costing at least 4,000/= each) and buy cars and lorries. Land consolidation had increased their income greatly, some receiving up to 2,000 per cent.²

The loyalists had also been recipients of Emergency loans and in 1956 the district had 40,000/=. These loans were to be given to farmers with not less than 6 acres at the rate of 200/= to 300/= per acre. There were also special Emergency loans which were interest free and were repayable in 20 years.³

Before land was consolidated there were problems in allocating the loans due to lack of individual title deeds. Also before one was given a loan he had to show

1. KNA: Department of Agriculture, File Loan/2/1, 4/228

2. Taylor D.R.F. cit., p.222.

3. KNA: Department of Agriculture, Director of Agriculture to District Officer Fort Hall 1-10-1956.

that he would be able to increase productivity and that his land was consolidated and if not consolidated whether his largest fragment would have been considered as an economic unit.

However, by 1966 the process of land consolidation had been completed. This process also acted as a mechanism of class consolidation based on the amount of land that someone had in possession. A landed class had emerged with clear class distinctions and class interests.

In Murang'a District, there was on average .603 of an acre of arable land and .39 of an acre of grazing land, available per person¹ by the time of Independence. There were many people who did not have land of more than one half an acre. These were supposed to occupy plots of .25 of an acre in the former villages. But many of these people did not own these plots. This is because the people who had land had allocated to their children a number of plots in the villages. Again many people who owned these plots sold them to the landed people and migrated to other areas in search of settlements or employment. Many of these enrolled themselves as landless and joined the 40,000 or so landless people.² This 40,000 constituted about 10 per cent of the population and therefore the population of those who were completely landless was much higher. The village plots continued to be mainly the property of the landed people. The plots which were costing

1. Taylor, D.R.F. cit., p. 100

2. Ibid

around fifty shillings during the land demarcation continued to rise in value and in the 1970s their price had risen to between 3,000/= and 8,000/=. Therefore the landed people found it more profitable to sell them now to a different group of people - the landless who were in good salaried employment.

Above the landless and semi-landless class was the class of the peasantry owning between 2 and 6 acres. This class constituted about 34 per cent of the total population by 1966. It operated about 48.8 per cent of peasant holdings.¹ This class fell under the category of the operators of non-economic land units. It was supposed to be involved in subsistence agriculture and also to sell labour to the economic units occupied by the landed bourgeoisie. A number of people in this class sold their land or left it to their relatives and enrolled themselves as landless and migrated into the settlement schemes and to other areas in search of employment and land.

The landed class operated the economic units of land. These economic units constituted individual land units which could be used for cash crop growing and on which wage labour was to be employed. Usually land of over 7 acres was considered to be economic holdings. However, the landed class, in many cases, had far larger holdings land than 7 acres. The largest land operators of the

1. Lamb, Geoff op.cit., p. 133

landed class operating 20 acres or more constituted only 1.6 per cent and operated no less than 8.1 per cent of the total land operated.¹

The distribution of land had far reaching effects on the landless and operators of the non-economic holdings. While the former had to depend on the sale of their labour-power, the latter were engaged in subsistence agriculture. They grew crops such as maize, sweet potatoes, beans and bananas and kept some few goats and cows at times. When crops failed they had to depend on cash to buy food for subsistence. To earn cash they were forced to sell their labour power. In actual fact they were always forced to sell their labour-power if they could not sell crops so as to earn money for family maintenance and school fees. They were in a state of semi-proletarianised peasants.

Whatever cash income they received was mainly for subsistence. As such they could not accumulate money for reinvestment. This excluded them from engaging in commercial activities and instead they acted as mere consumers of whatever was available from the market which was controlled by the landed class (almost all the shops were owned by this class).

The landed class further displaced the other classes through engaging in the same mode of occupation with the other classes. While the non-economic land holding class

1. Lamb, Geoff op.cit p.133

produced for subsistence, the landed class produced the same commodities for consumption and for the market. They grew maize, potatoes, bananas, beans and other crops on a wide scale. They also kept grade and improved cattle for the market. They were able to engage in commercial agriculture by accumulating surpluses and re-investing it on land. Some of the surplus was used to employ wage labour and at times wages were paid in kind in the form of maize, potatoes, milk and bananas. By 1970 there had emerged three distinct classes in Murang'a; the completely landless and semi-landless; the non-economic semi-proletarianised land holders, and the landed class which produced for subsistence and the market.

Politics and political reaction closely followed the way the society was transformed. While the beneficiaries of colonialism and colonial capitalism to a great extent collaborated with the colonial administration, the majority of the people who did not benefit became **dissidents**. The formation of the Kikuyu Association, the Kikuyu Progressive Party and the Kikuyu Provincial Association was an attempt to consolidate class interests. The formation of the Kenya African Study Union and then Kenya African Union was also an attempt for the petty-bourgeoisie to consolidate their class political and economic power.

On the other hand, the Kikuyu Central Association, whose aims and objectives included among others the return

of stolen lands and reduction of the powers of the chiefs and court elders, can be seen as representative of those who were oppressed and dispossessed by the colonialist agents in one form or another. The K.C.A. accused chiefs of misconduct and where necessary organised active resistance. Although K.C.A. was banned in 1940, there was much political opposition against colonial agents especially in soil conservation measures, taxation and inoculation of cattle. K.C.A. or no K.C.A., officially, opposition was offered in the name of K.C.A.

K.A.U. at first had little following in Murang'a, and it is only when it obtained the support of the K.C.A. elders like Joseph Kang'ethe and James Beuttah that it began to have some following. K.A.U. mainly continued to be a "collaborative" association and Kenyatta's role appeared to have been equally collaborative especially when he urged the people to continue with soil conservation measures, which the chiefs were forcing them to do.

The political conflicts took a more open dimension during Mau Mau. Once again the peasant-bourgeoisie, especially the chiefs and christian converts, refused to take the Mau Mau oath and formed themselves into Loyalists. The Loyalists controlled the political activities when majority of the people were detained. The coming out of the detainees was followed by a

re-organisation of the detainees into K.K.M. to fight for the land and property stolen by the Loyalists. When K.A.N.U. was formed, it was infested with ex-detainees therefore forcing the Loyalists out. Up to 1964 the ex-detainees controlled K.A.N.U. but by 1965 they had been thrown out by the Loyalists and coffee growers. In vain many turned to K.P.U. which was before long banned.

Briefly, we can make some observations on the society and politics in Murang'a. The peasantry became differentiated and there was a process of class formation. There came in existence some rich peasants who employed labour while at the same time working on their holdings. There emerged a class of capitalist farmers who played no part in the labour process but carried out production through wage labour. At the bottom were those peasants who relied on family labour for production and who at times sold their labour to the capitalist farmers and the white settlers.

As Mamdani observes¹, while classes form at the level of production in their relation to the process of production, they act at the level of politics. As a result, class organisation becomes political organisation, class consciousness becomes political consciousness and class conflict becomes political conflict. One would say that the political conflicts which have been in existence in Murang'a are to a large extent class conflicts. Many

1. Mamdani, M : Politics and Class Formation in Uganda (Heinemann 1976) p.11.

active Loyalists during the Mau Mau period were from the landed and wealthy classes. If we take land as an indicator of classes, we find that in Murang'a a sample agricultural census in 1960-61 showed that only above 7,000 out of some 95,000 holdings were economic holdings - that is over 7.5 acres.¹ Land distribution gave rise to political conflicts which in some cases were class conflicts. Due to political opposition, by the end of 1957, only 98,000 acres of fragments had been measured in Murang'a, compared to 200,000 in Kiambu and a similar number in Nyeri.² This political opposition forced the colonial administration to re-demarcate the land but political conflicts continued after Independence and the Kenya Government took drastic measures to destroy "communists" - mainly those who were calling for more land and for re-distribution of land.

In short we can conclude that there has been continuous open and conscious resistance to exclusion from means of production and means of livelihood at both political and economic levels from the imposition of colonialism to the time of Independence and this resistance has always been taking a political dimension.

1. Geoff Lamb op.cit pp.133

2. Central Province Annual Report 1957.

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APENDIX A.

LIST OF SELECTED INFORMANTS

1. Rev. Mutaru Njoga:
Founder of Kihumbuini General M
Missionary Society School 1913
2. Musa Mureithi:
K.C.A. representative. Employed
to vaccinate people during the 1st
World War.
3. Ex-Chief Raphael Munyori:
A teacher in 1926, a K.C.A.
representative, A court Elder
between 1934-1945 and then a chief.
4. Ex-Chief Kuria Kinyanjui:
Son of a chief, a European Farm
Assistant Manager in 1945, then a
chief.
5. Ex-Chief Karanja Kamau:
A "Captain" between 1915-1920, then a
headmen/chief and was dismissed in
1924.
6. Louis Njoroge Kangeca:
A teacher, before 1920 and a K.C.A.
representative.
7. Job Muchuchu:
Treasurer of the East African
Association and then Kikuyu Central
Association, and a prominent
councillor between 1925-1940
8. Daniel Kang'ori:
A K.C.A. representative from 1925
9. Wainaina Gitukui:
A labourer in European farm in 1913,
an Overseer for a long time.
10. Gakanga Gathige:
A labourer and an overseer in settled
areas from 1914.
11. Mwihaki Kabora:
A labourer on European farms and a
squatter from 1914. Migrated to
Njoro area in Nakuru after
Independence.

13. Kamuru Muturo:

One of the first adherents of the B.G.N.S. in 1910s. Later an elder in the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, Kihumbuini Parish. During the Emergency he became the Home Guard commander and a leading loyalist. He continued to be a church elder after Independence.

14. Mbui Muhia:

One of the first Mission boys. Left school in 1914 and became a teacher. A K.C.A. representative for a long time.

15. Mrs. Ruth Karanja:

A daughter of a clan leader and later married to a European farm overseer who became a headmen during the Emergency.

16. Karanja W'weru:

A shamba "headman" in 1940, later became a "captain" and then a headmen during the Mau Mau Emergency.

17. James Beuttah:

A clerk with the Post Office in 1920s then a councillor many times up to 1950. A K.C.A. representative and the K.A.U. Vice-President in Central Province in 1946.

18. Ng'ang'a Kairu:

A K.C.A. follower and the leader of the '40' Group in Murang'a

19. Gatundu Gatanduka:

A cook for a European farm manager in 1940s. An oath administrator, a detainee and an elder of the Independent Church.

20. Kaniaru Karanja:

An oath administrator, a hard-core detainee, and an active member of the K.K.M.

21. Jasan Muhungi:

Pioneer of the Independent Church movement in Murang'a, an active K.C.A. member, a detainee and an active elder of the Independent Church.

22. Nduati Gathige (Kigoko):
A leader during the circumcision crisis of 1929. A K.C.A. representative, a representative of the Mau Mau Central Committee and the War Council, a leader of K.K.M., and an elder of the Independent church.
23. Reuben Kang'ethe:
An elder of the P.C.E. church before 1952. Then a sub-chief and now a leading businessman and farmer.
24. Mbuthia Njuguna (Major Ritho):
Gitau Matenjagwo's lieutenant in Kandara.
25. Mbugua Njuguna:
A K.A.U. militant, a Mau Mau fighter whose land was confiscated and his wife joined him as a fighter in the forest, a captain under 'General' Mathenge, an active member of K.K.M., the Murang'a KANU Youth leader in early 1960s. Now jobless.
26. Nahashon Ngugi Kariku:
A Community Development Worker in 1940s, a sergeant in K.A.R. in India and Burma, a leader of the first group of fighters in Nyandarua forest. His land was the first to be confiscated in Murang'a District. He was the deputy secretary of the Mau Mau War Council. A detainee. The secretary of Murang'a Democratic Party in 1959. Detained in Lamu in 1960. Detained again in 1974. Among those who sued Kenya Government for compensation. Now surviving on odd businesses.
27. Andrew Ng'ang'a Munyua:
Founder of many business enterprises in Murang'a in 1940s, a K.C.A. representative. He opened the first Branch of K.A.U. in Murang'a. He was detained. Started various business organisations in 1960s. Tried to unite all ex-Mau Mau fighters by forming business organisations. Detained in 1974. Sued the Kenya Government for compensation and for illegal detention in 1972 and 1974.
28. Enock Mwangi:
A leader of the '40' group. The Chairman of the Youth Committee of the Mau Mau War Council. Commonly called 'General'. An ex-detainee. He was detained again in 1960. Now an active political participant and businessman.

29. Kabue Macharia:

In Charge of fighting materials supply under the Mau Mau War Council. Treasurer of Mau Mau money. An ex-detainee. Now a businessman and active political participant.

30. Chief Ignatio Murai: (Interview recorded by Wango)

A school teacher and supervisor of schools in 1940s. A chief from 1945. The most active chief in enforcing soil conservation measures.

31. Kamau Kiruri:

A teacher from 1945 and a primary school headmaster from 1952 to date. A leading farmer and coffee grower. Committee member of the Murang'a Coffee Union and Coffee Co-Operative Societies.

32. Gathua Kang'ethe:

Teacher from 1946. A leading farmer and coffee grower. Committee member of coffee Co-Operative Society many years. Now Treasurer of a coffee Co-Operative Society.

33. Samuel Kiragu Itongu:

Teacher from 1947 to 1965. Chairman of the Murang'a Country Council for 8 years. Active in politics and now a Councillor.

34. Muniyori Gachucha:

A businessman and councillor.

35. Mburu wa Karu:

A member of the '40' Group. An active oath administrator. Idd Amin stayed in his house in 1954 when in the East African Regiment. An ex-detainee. Councillor in Thika for many years and one time the Chairman of Thika Town Council. Now doing odd businesses.

36. Kahuthia Gachamba:

An Assistant District Agricultural Officer for a long time and then the District Agricultural Officer in Murang'a. A leading farmer.

37. Muniyua Ngoci:

Worked in the District Office, Kandara, during the Mau Mau Emergency. In charge of anti-Mau Mau propaganda through dropping

leaflets and air broadcasts. Now a leading farmer.

38. Mwangi Thabuni:

A '40' Group Activist, after leaving Burma during the Second World War. An active oath administrator in 1952. An ex-detainee. The organiser of the Ndiririra Group. Now the Secretary of the Plantations Workers Union in Makuyu and active in politics.

39. Joshua Kagotho:

A leading oath administrator during Mau Mau. An ex-detainee. A one time member of the Central Province Council. Now the Secretary of the Independent Churches, Kandara.

40. Bildad Kaggia:

41. G. Njeri Gathura:

Local elder (Kihiu Mwiri Age Group)

42. Solomon Keru Muchai:

Local elder (Kihiu Mwiri) Kabaa Secondary School 1942. Teacher and Parish Council Secretary

43. Elijah Kamau Kuria:

Court Elder up to 1952. Now a Local elder (Kihiu Mwiri).

44. Gitau Gikeri:

Local Elder (Kihiu Mwiri)

45. Kamau Kahora:

Odd businessman for a long time. Now a village elder (Nuthu Age Group).

MURANG'A DISTRICT
KIKUYU CENTRAL ASSOCIATION LEADERS

<u>NAME</u>	<u>PLACE</u>
Joseph Kang'ethe	Kandara
Henry Gichuiri	Kiharu
John Mbutia	Kiharu
Solomon Wanjohi	Location 7
Petro Kigundu	Location 10
Kimana Njuku	Location 11
Lawi Mwangi	Location 8
John Gakobo	Location 12
Daniel Kang'ori	Kangema
Nehemiah Wandari	Kahuhia
Gideon Mugo	Kahuhia
Mathew Maguta	Kahuhia
James M. Karoki	Weithaga
Simeon Ng'ora	Weithaga
William Wainaina	Kihumbuini
Musa Mureithi	Kihumbuini
Jesse Karioki	Gathukiini
Simeon Mwaura	Gathukiini
Job Muchuchu	Kagunduini
Simeon Gathugu	Kagunduini
Crispin Keiru	Githumu

Jonathan Thumbi	Location 5
Karinga Thwara	Location 6
Mburu Mugwira	Location 6
Kamau Njoroge	Location 6
Harrison Njoroge Kwera "	7 (Chairman Mau Mau War Council
Eliud Mutenyi	Location 8 (Chairman of oath administration Mau Mau in the War Council).
Ng'ang'a Kairu	Location 8 (Leader of the 40 Group).
Thoma Murimi	Location 8
Petro Njuguna	Location 9
Nahashon Ngugi	Location 1 (Deputy Secretary, Mau Mau War Council).
Nduati Gathige	Location 1
Kimotho Mcharia	Location 10
Andrew Ng'ang'a Munyua "	11
Alfred Kingaru	Location 11
Kimana Njuku	Location 11
Mwangi Nyingi	Location 11

APENDIX C.

MURANG'A DISTRICTKENYA AFRICAN UNION AND MAU MAU LEADERS

<u>NAME</u>	<u>PLACE</u>
Daniel Kang'ori	Location 13
Jothek Nderu	Location 13
Musa Muturi	Location 13
Gichohi Githua	Location 14 (He was the judge in the Mau Mau War Council).
Enoch Mwangi	Kangema (He was the Chairman, Mau Mau War Council Youth Group)
Kabue Macharia	Kangema
Gitau Thiongo	Location 15
Maselina Wambui	Location 15 (Leader of Women)
James Beuttah	Maragua.
Mbaria Kaniu	Kangema ("Field Marshal").
Macharia Kimemia	Kangema (He was a "General").
Mwangi Macharia	Kiharu
Kago Mboko	Kangema
Gitau Matenjagwo	Location 5
Ihura Kareri	Kangema
Bildad Kaggia	Kandara
Isaac Gathanju	Kangema
Manyeki	Kandara
Alphaxand Wanjingiri	Location 1
Samuel Gathugu	Location 3
Peter Karanu	Location 1
Chege Wakamure	Location 5

NATIVE MARKETS 1915 - 1920

<u>MARKET</u>	<u>OWNER</u>	<u>COMMODITY</u>
Mukangu	Chief Kimani Njama	grass, vegetable, animals
Gathugu	Chief Mwiragu	grass, vegetable, animals, weapons, earthenware, pots, etc. native shops also open every day.
Kahuti	Chief Thuku	Native foodstuffs only
Kanyanyeyini	Chief Njoroge	Native foodstuffs, European vegetables and potatoes, firewood etc.
Kanorero	Chief Kimotho	Sweet potatoes, yams and firewood
Gituge	" Muraya Njakwe	Native foodstuffs only
Kairu	" Munyuroko	Native foodstuffs, arms, tools, firewood and red earth
Kiru	" Njakwe	Native foodstuffs
Kagaa	" Muriranja	Native foodstuffs only but with a native shop adjoining
Ithewi	" Muchiri	milk, flour, potatoes
Ndunyu	" Karanja Kibarabara	Native foodstuffs and produce livestock, mats, string, hut doors, native owned shops open daily.
Kiruri	" Wakomo	Small produce only, red earth
Kagunduini	" Njuguna	small produce only
Kandara	" Kimani Thuu	foodstuffs, livestock, native doors and frames, native owned shops adjoining
Ndunyu Chege	" Kagutho	Native foodstuffs only
Kagumoini	" Reuben	Native foodstuffs

<u>MARKET</u>		<u>OWNER</u>	<u>COMMODITY</u>
Mariira	Chief	Njiiri	Native foodstuffs, livestock
Kigumuini	"	Thuku	Bananas, sugarcanes,
Kamwura	"	Muriranja	Bananas, sweet potatoes,
Kangema	"	Kimotho	Native foodstuffs,
Geitwa	"	Githua	

<u>ARTICLES</u>	<u>PRICE 1915</u>	<u>PRICE 1928</u>
Millet	3.50 per load	4/=, 5/=
Caffre corn	3.00 per load	4/=, 5/=
Beans Njahi	3.00 " "	15/=, 20/=
Beans (mbocho)	3.00 " "	5/=, 6/=
Beans (Thoroko)	2.00 per load	4/=, 5/=
Beans (Ndengu)	4.00 per load	7/=, 9/=
Bananas ripe -	/=03 per ten	/=01 each
green	/=05 - /=40	/=20 - 1/=
Sweet potatoes	/=02 per 3-6	/=20 - /=50 each
Elephant year	/=01 - /=04 each	/=20 - /=12 each
Cassava	/=10 - /=20 each	/=30/= 40 each
Red earth	1.50	3.30 per load
Mats	/=10 each	/=40 - /=50 each
Oxen	150/=, 300/= 400/=	100/= 200/=
Goats	20/=, 40/= 60/=	10/=, 20/=, 30/=
Sheep	20/=, 30/=, 40/=	20/=, 30/=
Fowls	/=50	1/=, 2/= 3/=
Firewood 3 stick	/=02	3 sticks /=04

STATISTICS AS AT 31ST DECEMBER, 1956 : CENTRAL PROVINCE

DISTRICT	STRENGTH		NO OF H.G.		NO. KILLED		NO WOUNDED		NO OF K.G. DESSERTED	MAU MAU		MAU MAU		NO OF WEAPONS	
	TP.	TPR.	POSTS	COMP.	IN TP	EMERGENCY KG.	IN TP	KG		KILLED TP.	MAU KG	CAPTURED TP.	MAU KG.	RECOVERED PRECISION	HOMEMA
Kiambu	370	699			12	119	2	82	9	1156	1072	96	472		
FORT HALL	400	1250	3500		27	234	10	55	22	1041	1966	55	144		
Nyeri	302	1061	2800	160	11	211	15	123	22	1338	1117	57	497		
Embu	334	370	700	57	5	56	15	55	19	611	131	24	229		
Meru	400	20	2660	133	6	40	6	36	11	277	227	11	72		
Thika	65	76	-	51	2	5	-	15	-	60	127	15	56		
Nanyuki	30	329	109	45	-	2 (SFG)	1	1 (SFG)	6	56	43	8	28		
Total	1901	3205	9769	444	63	667	48	385	88	4539	4685	266	1498		

Source: Kenya National Archives File No. AH46/8/1/VOLII

Key:-

- TP - TRIBAL POLICE
- TPR - TRIBAL POLICE RESERVE
- KG - KIKUYU GUARD

APENDIX F. LOCATIONAL AND ZONAL DENSITIES IN MURANG'A DISTRICT 1950

LOCATION	AREA IN SQ. MILE	POPULATION	DENSITY PER SQ MILE
I	69	29,001	420
II	68	37,169	546
III	27	16,933	627
IV	32	26,088	815
V	26	19,726	758
VI	34	21,073	619
VII	45	17,937	398
VIII	38	23,693	623
IX	23	9,280	403
X	16	11,037	689
XI	45	11,318	251
XII	51	23,155	454
XIII	34	18,612	544
XIV	32	22,260	695
XV	48	13,195	275

MB: LOCATIONAL DENSITIES: The areas population and density per Square mile of the Location - Population Density by Locations.

ZONAL DENSITIES LOC. 4 & 5

ZONE	POPULATION	AREA SQ. MC.	DENSITY SQ. MILE
Below 5,000' "A"	1461	1.30	1,123
5,000-5,000 "B"	33,014	46.78	705
5,500'-6,000 "C"	10,779	9.50	1,134
6,000-6,500' "D"	560	0.42	1,333
TOTAL	45,814	58	789

ZONAL DENSITIES - LOCS 11 & 15

ZONE	POPULATION	AREA SQ. M.	DENSITY SQ. MILE
Under 4,000 "X"	4,378	26.7	164
4,000-5,000 "A"	11,896	51.8	230
5,000-5,500 "B"	7,482	13.7	546
5,500-6,000' "C"	757	0.8	947 (Unreliable)
6,000-6,500' "D"	NIL	NIL	NIL
TOTAL	24,513	93	264

ZONAL DENSITY'S LDCS. 13 & 8

ZONE	POPULATION	AREA SQ.MC.	DENSITY SQ. MILE
Below 5,000' 'A'	3,113	6.1	510
5,000'-5,500' 'B'	14,810	19.0	780
5,500'-6,000' 'C'	11,937	20.5	582
6,000'-6,500' 'D'	5,260	9.0	584
Over 6,500'	7,185	15.4	466
TOTAL	42,305	70	604

ZONAL DENSITY'S LOCS. 13 & 8

ZONE	POPULATION	AREA SQ.MC.	DENSITY SQ. MILE
Below 5,000' 'A'	3,113	6.1	510
5,000'-5,500' 'B'	14,810	19.0	780
5,500'-6,000' 'C'	11,937	20.5	582
6,000'-6,500' 'D'	5,260	9.0	584
Over 6,500'	7,185	15.4	466
TOTAL	42,305	70	604

NYERI DISTRICT

MURANG'A

(FORT HALL) DISTRICT (1962)
ECOLOGICAL MAP
CENTRAL PROVINCE

EMBU DIST.

THIKA DISTRICT

ABERDARE FOREST

HIGH BRACKEN ZONE

KIKUYU GRASS ZONE

STAR GRASS ZONE





KANGEMA



KIHARU

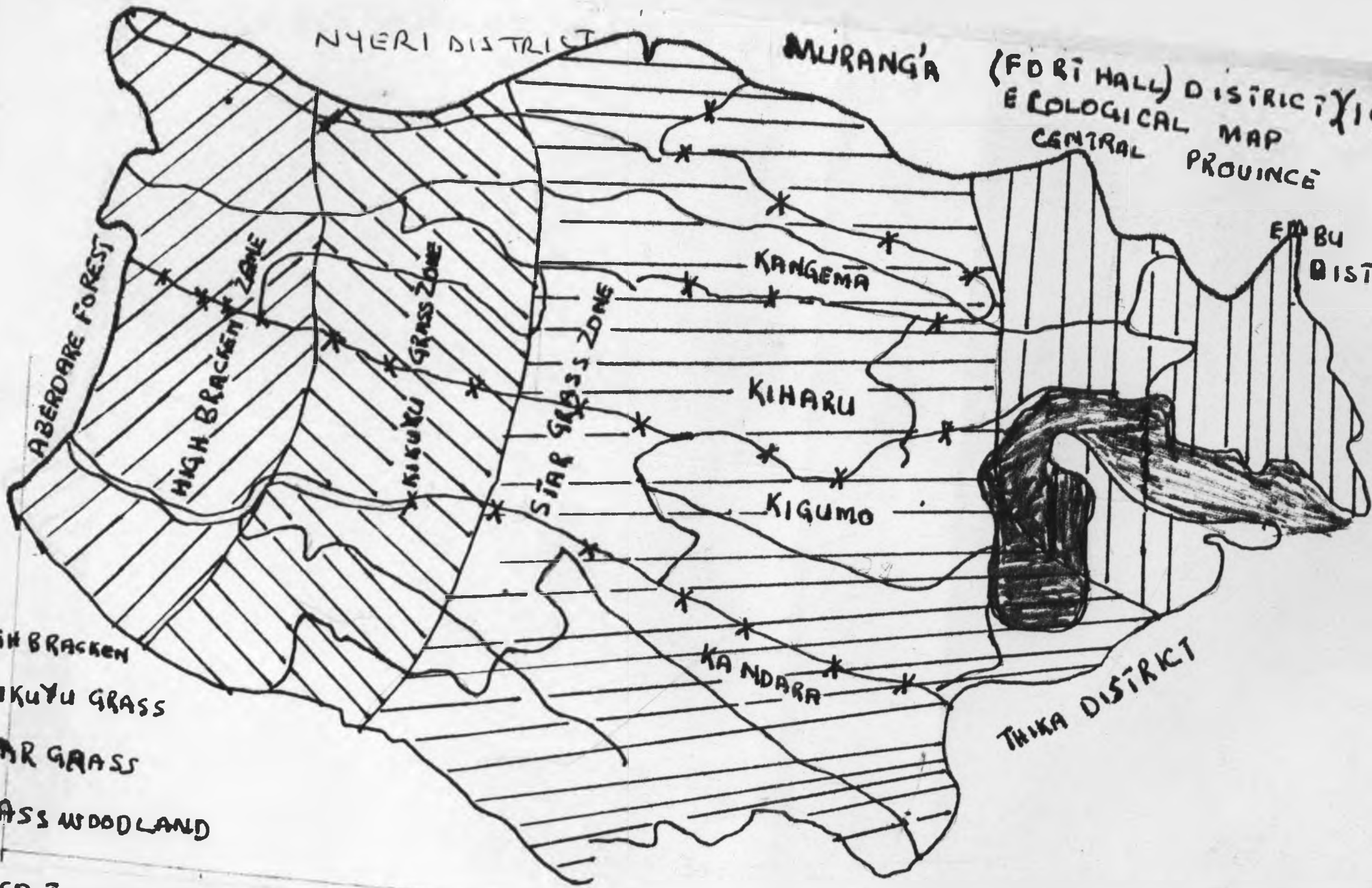
KIGUMO

KANDARA

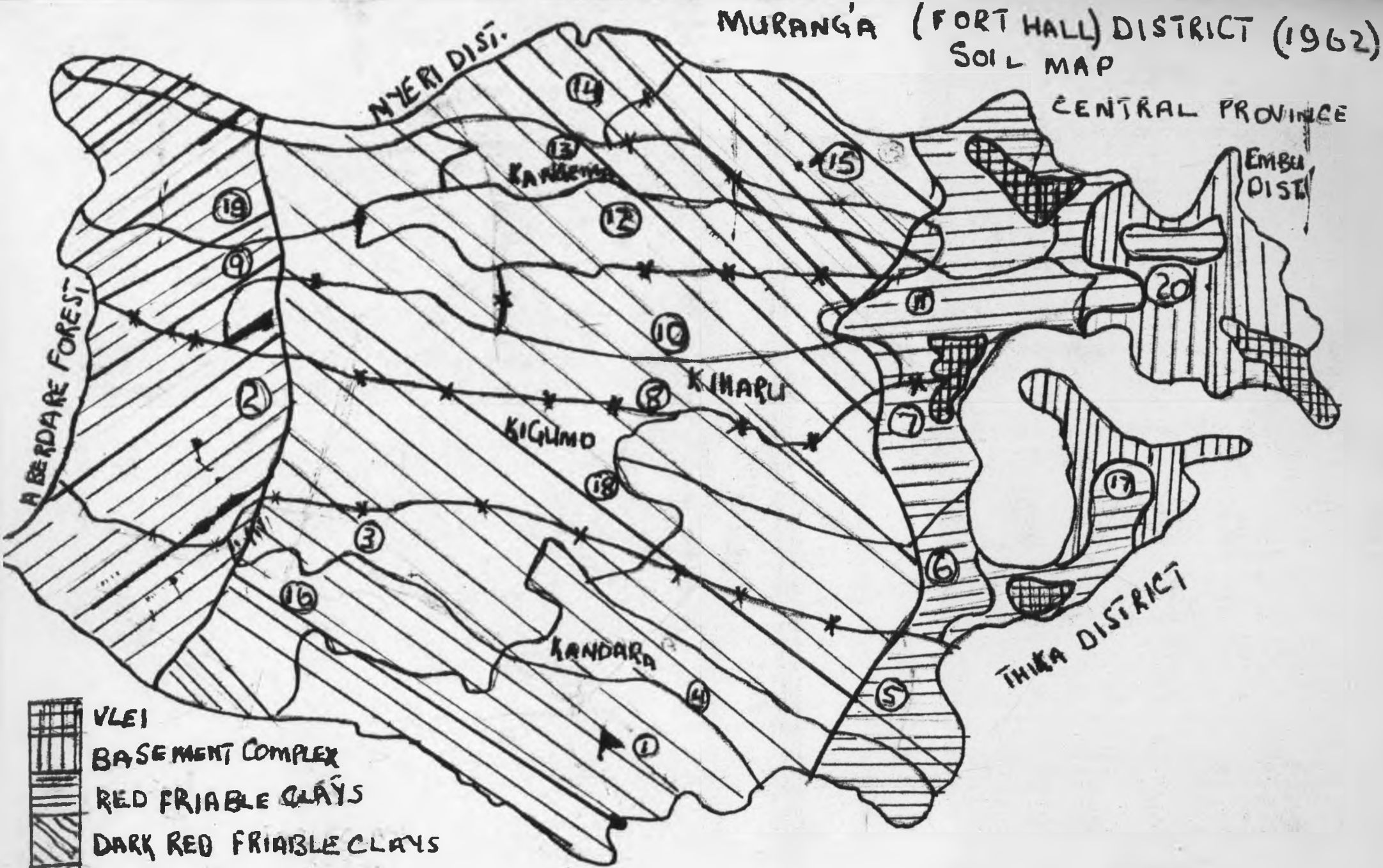
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




-  HIGH BRACKEN
-  KIKUYU GRASS
-  STAR GRASS
-  GRASS WOODLAND

 LOCAL BOUNDARIES
 DIVISIONAL BOUNDARIES



MURANG'A (FORT HALL) DISTRICT (1962) SOIL MAP



-  VLEI
-  BASEMENT COMPLEX
-  RED FRIABLE CLAYS
-  DARK RED FRIABLE CLAYS
-  STRONG BROWN LOAM
-  LOCAL BOUNDARIES
-  DIVISIONAL BOUNDARIES.