HISTORY OF THE EAST AFRICAN POSTS AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS ADMINISTRATION 1837 TO 1967

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" The Post Office is properly a mercantile project. The government advances the expense of establishing the different offices, and of buying or hiring the necessary horses or carriages, and is repaid with a large profit by the duties upon what is carried. It is perhaps the only mercantile project which has been successfully managed by, I believe, every sort of government. The capital to be advanced is not very considerable. There is no mystery in the business. The returns are not only certain, but immediate.

Princes, however, have frequently engaged in many other mercantile projects, and have been willing, like private persons, to mend their fortunes by becoming adventurers in the common branches of trade. They have scarce ever succeeded. The profusion with which the affairs of princes are always managed renders it almost impossible that they should. The agents of a prince regard the wealth of their master as inexhaustible; they are careless at what price they buy; are careless at what price they sell; are careless at what expense they transport his goods from one place to another. Those agents frequently live with the profusion of princes, and sometimes too, in spite of that profusion, and by a proper method of making up their accounts, acquire the fortunes of princes."

Adam Smith, The Wealth of Nations,
London, 1776-1778

CONTENTS

page

118

121

137

140

149

156

158

160

171

185

187

190

202

212

227

228

235

239

257

270

284

page

286

289

304

320

334

346

348

351

371

385

401

403

405

415

424

426

435

439

449

page

SUMMARY

The East African Ports and Telecommunications Administration enjoyed a privileged constitutional position. Responsible to a Central Legislative Assembly and raising its capital by commercial loan, the Post Office suffered little government control over its political or financial policies. This structure had no precedent. It developed out of the problems inherent in the operation of an inter-territorial service. Until 1925, the principal difficulties lay in the balance between the level of business and the administrative organisation. Between 1925 and 1949, the Post Office faced a variety of financial and technological problems. After 1949, the Administration, designed to avoid political troubles and to secure adaptable policies, defined its responsibilities so narrowly that it lost touch with political development in East Africa. In 1967, under the provisions in the Treaty for East African Co-operation, the national Governments of Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania imposed their control upon the Administration.

The organization of the Posts and Telegraphs Department before 1925 suffered from conflicts between Uganda and the East Africa Protectorate, restyled Kenya Colony in 1921. Dispute focused upon financial arrangements which seemed inequitable

to both Governments. The situation was further aggravated because the telegraph engineering services in both Protectorates operated largely without reference to the Postmaster General before 1912. The two postal services amalgamated in 1901 and absorbed telegraph operation during 1904. From 1912, the Posts and Telegraphs operated as a unified Department in the East Africa Protectorate but telegraph engineering remained an autonomous branch in Uganda. The Governments agreed to a complete administrative amalgamation only in 1924, arranging that each participating state should retain sole control over its finances. The structural changes reflected the volume of business, which almost doubled between the years ending 1902 and 1912, and then rose three fold by 1924.

Technological change upset the amalgamation. The development of wireless telegraphy, motor and air transport, and telephony demanded heavy capital expenditure if services were to keep pace with public demand and economic development. Even during the 1920s the Posts and Telegraphs Department suffered from Government reluctance to invest capital. When the international economic depression of 1929 affected East Africa, capital became even more scarce. A further complication came in 1933 when the Post Office of Tanganyika Territory joined

the Kenya-Uganda amalgamation. This extension produced economies of scale and represented a considerable achievement for the management of the Posts and Telegraphs Department. However, responsible to three Governments pursuing differing economic policies, the Post Office found its administrative and financial initiative further circumscribed. During the Second World War business further expanded and by 1949 had trebled the 1938 volume. Rising business proved a sufficient problem for the Department's administrative circumstances. However, the additional strains of the Second World War coupled with the needs to finance new communications techniques formed an almost insuperable burden.

On 1st January, 1949, the Posts and Telegraphs Department attained the status of a self-financing, self-accounting service of the East Africa High Commission. This reorganization promised to free the Post Office from Government supervision over trivial administrative matters and to allow the Department to plan its own development priorities according to its revenues. By raising its own loan funds, the Post Office would be able to develop its telecommunications network without absorbing Government capital. The scheme proved a highly effective answer to the problems of finance and technology. While postal traffic doubled between 1949 and 1966, the volume of telephone business rose five fold. The Department, restyled the East African Posts

and Telecommunications Administration in 1951, widely extended the availability of its services and the sophistication of its equipment. However, the self-financing structure did not define the nature of Post Office responsibility to either its consumers or the Governments. The Administration, a political institution by its inter-territorial organization, became remote from the political realities of East Africa. Unable to respond effectively to the challenges posed by the emergence of African nationalism, the Posts and Telecommunications became subject to increasing public criticism for its irrelevance to the changing conditions of East Africa.

In 1967, the Governments of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania attempted to reconcile their own differences upon the nature of inter-territorial organization, introduce a measure of control over Post Office policy, and preserve the evident advantages of a self-financing structure. The East African Treaty for Co-operation acted as the instrument of change.

LIST OF STATISTICAL TABLES IN APPENDIX

ABBREVIATIONS

B.E.A.B.C.	British East Africa Broadcasting Company
B.I.S.N.	British-India Steam Navigation Company
C.L.A.	Central Legislative Assembly
C.O.	Colonial Office
C.S.	Chief Secretary
DSM	Dar es Salaam
E.A.C.S.O.	East African Common Services Organisation
E.A.P. & T.	East African Posts and Telecommunications Administration
E.A.P.	East Africa Protectorate
E.A.R.	East African Railways Corporation
E.T.C.	Eastern Telegraph Company
EBE	Entebbe
E.S.A.	Entebbe Secretarial Archives
F.O.	Foreign Office
F.O.C.P.	Foreign Office Confidential Print
G.P.O.	General Post Office
I.B.E.A.	Imperial British East Africa Company
KLA	Kampala
K.L.C.	Kenya Legislative Council
K.N.A.	Kenya National Archives
MSA	Mombasa
NBI	Nairobi
P.M.G.	Postmaster General

P. and T.	Posts and Telegraphs
SMP	Secretariat Minute Paper
T.L.C.	Tanganyika Legislative Council
T.N.A.	Tanzania National Archives
U.L.C.	Uganda Legislative Council
U.P.U.	Universal Postal Union

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Alan Smith

Kingswear,
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Chapter I

THE POST OFFICE AND GOVERNMENT

The technical Departments of the British Colonial Governments in Africa occupied a privileged constitutional position. ~~Because~~ Public Works, Railways, Harbours, Airways, and Posts and Telegraphs represented substantial state investments. The reputation of individual Governments depended upon the profitable operation of these services and the interests of Departmental expansion often accounted for the adoption of particular economic policies. Civil service interests dominated the Executive and Legislative Councils, in which the administrators of the technical departments strongly represented their obligations. Railway General Managers, Port Controllers and Postmasters General were not merely the servants of Governments, but also the initiators of policy and an integral part of the political structure in their Colonies.

The technical Departments rapidly increased their capital indebtedness, powers, and responsibilities. In 1967 the Post Office, the fourth largest employer of labour in Kenya, owned assets valued at £25,750,000.[1] The East African Posts and Telecommunications Administration, financed through its own capital accounts, was part of the common services operated jointly by the Government of

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[1] Who controls Industry in Kenya?, report of a Working Party, Nairobi 1968.

Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. Independent of national budgetary policies, its responsibilities lay to a non-political and powerless Central Legislative Assembly. These curious constitutional circumstances enabled the Post Office to determine operational policies without reference to the national interests or aspirations of the East African States.

The Administration, designed to achieve efficient and profitable services, failed to operate upon criteria of cost-effectiveness. The mere raising of charges to cover costs produced profits because there was no check upon economy in the Post Office. In the absence of competition, efficiency gained two contradictory interpretations that appeared most clearly in staff policy. The employment of Europeans in the technical departments rested upon the premise that white labour possessed an inherently superior productivity. This assumption overlooked the issue of cost-effectiveness because African and Asian staff did not demand overseas leave, contract gratuities or accommodation in the costly European residential areas. Efficiency, a high quality of service, proved expensive. In 1967 the Administration employed some 560 expatriates supported by 17,000 Africans and Asians, to operate a small system of 100,000 installed telephones and to handle some 75,000,000 postal items each year. The volume of traffic did not require either such a large staff or the employment of so many Europeans for supervisory and administrative duties. However, the Administration saw efficiency as an ideal condition quite divorced

from commercial principles.

The structure of the Posts and Telecommunications offered the East African governments significant advantage in the reduction of their precise administrative and financial responsibilities. The ability of the Post Office to produce profits and raise its own capital limited the liabilities contingent upon government loan funds and obviated the need for state subsidies.

Influences on the East African Post Office

East African conditions promoted the development of the Post Office into a self-financing institution, but its traditions as a public service and as a Department of State came from overseas. Great Britain, India and the regulations of the international postal and telegraph unions provided the framework for the operation of East Africa's communications. The expansion of commerce and shipping during the nineteenth century accompanied a wide extension of international communications, regulated through Conventions amongst the Powers. Overseas communications soon acquired diplomatic significance that became important for East Africa after 1870, when ocean steamship services and submarine telegraph cables influenced the European occupation. The Posts and Telegraphs Departments in East Africa were outgrowths of the agencies opened earlier in the nineteenth century to handle the external postal and telegraph traffic of the coastal towns.

The General Post Office of the United Kingdom exercised the

greatest influence upon the operating practices of the East African Posts and Telegraphs Departments. British experience established the custom that the staff of the postal service should be permanent professional employees while the Department should also have a political head in the Postmaster General. The concepts of monopoly operation and public service developed into cheap postage rates as a vehicle for broadening the economic, social and political life of the country. Furthermore, the General Post Office set the precedents for diversification into such businesses as parcels post, banking, remittances and telecommunications. These services not only competed with private enterprise but were also used by the state to subsidise particular businesses or national interests. United Kingdom precedents embraced the concepts of state ownership and business operation which were applied in East Africa, partly because most of the senior staff had been trained in the General Post Office.[2]

The professional nature of the British Post Office developed from its original purpose of carrying state communications. Although the Government formally organised a postal system under the supervision of a Master of the Posts during the early sixteenth century,

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[2] The principal sources for the history of the General Post Office are: J.C.Hemmeon , The British Post Office, 1912; H. Joyce, The History of the Post Office, 1893; H.R.Meyer, The British State Telegraphs, 1907, Public Ownership and the Telephone in Great Britain, 1907; Sir Evelyn Murray, The Post Office, 1927; H. Robinson, The British Post Office, 1949; R.C.P.Selborne, Post Office Reform, 1932.

public services began only a hundred years later. The Post Office passed through a number of unsatisfactory administrative phases based upon the grant of monopoly charters to enterprising individuals. In 1657 an Act of Parliament for the first time regulated the postal system and endorsed the principle of a state monopoly. The Post Office became a means of taxation. Although the primary purpose of the system remained official service, its revenue surpluses expanded from £96,339 in 1724 to £513,350 in 1797.

Only in the early nineteenth century did the Government consider the Post Office as a means of popular communication. The official character of the business established the Postmaster General's responsibilities to the Crown and, with the rise of representative democratic institutions, his office developed into a political function. However, the employees of the service remained outside politics, partly because they were servants of the Crown but also because extravagant expenditure and corruption at the close of the eighteenth century prompted the Government to appoint a professional Secretary. Between 1837 and 1910 there were thirty three Postmasters General, whereas between 1797 and 1909 there were but eight secretaries. Administration was substantially divorced from political policy. This condition never applied in East Africa where the Posts and Telegraphs exercised political power from their inception.

When the institution of 'Penny Postage' in the 1840s turned the General Post Office into a means of popular communication, the

operating monopoly of the Postmaster General became a tool for social engineering by the state. Cheap postage rates quickly gained the reputation of contributing to economic growth, the spread of literarcy, and the effectiveness of electoral reform. However, the change reduced the Post Office profit of £1,633,764 in 1840 to £500,789 in 1841. The number of letters handled rose from 82 million in 1839 to 347 million in 1850. Increased traffic suggested that communication by post benefited society and encouraged further rate reductions in 1865, 1871, 1884 and 1897. In the year 1900_1901 the traffic of the General Post Office amounted to 2,323 million letters producing a financial profit of £3,930,567. Rate concessions required little capital expenditure. The Post Office incurred its principal costs in administration and delivery; even in 1839 the carriage of a letter from London to Edinburgh cost only 1/36 of 1d. Losses from rate reduction could be easily recouped by an expanding volume of traffic. These conditions applied in East Africa only when interior communications had been properly organised and when a considerable literate population had been created.

The experience of the General Post Office with the postal service encouraged diversification into telecommunications with less fortunate results. Telegraphs required considerable capital expenditure and the efficient management of specialised personnel. In 1868 the Government nationalised the service and subjected it to the Postmaster General's legal monopoly. The Post Office rapidly extended telegraph

facilities, The 95 offices operating in London during 1869 rose to 334 in 1870. By September 1873 the Post Office had erected no less than 46,000 miles of additional wire. Although the private companies hardly paid their way before 1868, between 1870 and 1874 the telegraph revenue increased by 81°/o while operating expenses rose by 110°/o, without allowing for the payment of any interest upon the capital investment. The nationalisation measure had even less desirable effects when the telephone was introduced to the United Kingdom in 1876. Because the telegraphs lost money, the Government hampered competitive telephone services, while refusing to risk further capital in another speculative business. One effect of this policy, encouraged by the Post Office administrators, was that in 1906 one person out of 125 in the United Kingdom possessed a telephone; whereas in the United States of America, under conditions of unlimited competition, one person in twenty possessed an installed telephone in 1907. During 1912 the Government nationalised the British telephone system and placed it under the control of the Postmaster General, but even in the 1930s telephones remained something of a novelty. East Africa inherited the concept that the Post Office should also control telecommunications which until 1965 were subsidised out of profits on the postal service.

The General Post Office also diversified its operations into areas that competed with private enterprise. The parcels post was singularly unfortunate because uniform rates proved unsuitable.

Although the Post Office suffered competition for profitable traffics, it was left a virtual monopoly in serving remote areas or handling individual long distance parcels. The service proved useful and met with popular approval, but it amounted to a subsidy for rural areas and long distance small consignments. The banking and remittance operations provided a means for the poor to accumulate savings and transfer monies without having to use the more sophisticated and expensive facilities of commercial banking houses. These services succeeded commercially because the banks, disinterested in small accounts, could not rival the convenience of post offices. East Africa's experience with the parcel post was comparable to that of the United Kingdom, excepting that distances and Departmental expenditures were rather greater. The banking services failed to gain popularity, partly because Africans could gain greater profits from investment in land or stock than from Post Office Savings Bank interest. Remittances, principally used by the expatriate communities and by migrant labourers working on estates, proved profitable but even these services would only be of real value when an urban, landless working class developed.

The General Post Office also became involved in the administration of schemes for social welfare. The Post Office dispensed annuities, old age pensions, licenses of various types, bond issues, revenue stamps, unemployment insurance and other devices for popular well-being because it possessed a great network of offices. In East Africa,

for the mass of its people, the Posts and Telegraphs Department did not posses the resources for similar activities.

These widespread activities gave the General Post Office immense power in British political and economic life. Until 1923, when the United Kingdom Government compulsorily amalgamated the railways into four large companies, the Post Office was Britain's largest employer of labour. Its gross revenue of £38,457,226 yielded the Treasury an operating profit of £5,512,113 in 1925.

The General Post Office cated as a major source of state subsidy and patronage to British industry and commerce. During the nineteenth century Post Office revenues informally subsidised strategic railways at home and fostered British navigation. Mail contracts contributed to the commercial success of such concerns as the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company, the Union Steamship Company, Castle Mail Packets, and the British India Steam Navigation Company. The Post Office gained some influence over the management of industry and an involvement in British political, strategica and econpmic interests. Thus, in 1873 £10,000 could be spent on an East African mail contract convenient to the British Foreign Office, which would yield a postal revenue of but £250. During later years Post Office receipts were applied to the development of wireless telegraphy and air mails under state sponsored monopoly companies. These precedents, with their implications for official power and prestige, were faithfully imitated in East Africa.

The influence of the General Post Office aroused speculation upon its nature as a business, a public service, a Department of State, and a regulator of the British economy. The General Post existed as a state authority participating in the economy as a source of Treasury revenues, while operating as a business and enjoying civil service privileges. These anxieties became criticisms during the 1920s and 1930s.

The British Government increased postage charges during the First World War to supplement its revenue. The four ounce letter admitted for the penny postage was reduced to one ounce, while the newspaper rate of a halfpenny applied to each six ounces as opposed to the old charge of one halfpenny for five pounds. In June 1918 the Post Office raised the penny postage to $1^1/2$d and introduced other changes. Although it seemed that the Post Office was reverting to its eighteenth century role of a taxing machine, the issue proved more complicated. For the first time in eighty years the service had to adjust to inflationary circumstances for which its management structure was unsuited. The Postmaster General was subject to both Treasury control and Parliamentary criticism and in this process the professional administrators lost influence. The practice of using the letter mail charge to subsidise parcels post, newspapers, printed matter and telecommunications attracted even more strident animosity.

During 1931 the House of Commons appointed a Select Committee to study the organisation of the General Post Office . The ensuing

Report recommended that the service should remain under state ownership, with a decentralised administrative structure controlled by a Director-General and a policy making board under the supervision of the Postmaster-General. The Report also suggested some measure of financial reform, ~~each year~~ advising that £10,750,000 each year should be contributed from Post Office profits to the Treasury. Any excess would be divided equally between the two authorities, the Post Office share being re-invested in the service. Even this arrangement proved unsatisfactory because capital shortage restricted development and control remained a political problem. Even before the Second World War, British Government studied the possibility of commercial organisation. The conversion of the East African Post Office to self-accounting status related to the problems of the home service. In 1967 the East African precedents in turn influenced the reorganisation of the General Post Office as a self-contained corporation.

The Indian influences upon the Posts and Telegraphs Department proved less significant.[3] The Post Office of British India only began public service under a state monopoly in 1837 and obviously absorbed many United Kingdom practices and procedures. The Indian service exemplified the operational problems inherent in transfering the concept of popular communication to a non-western society under

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[3] Indian practice is best discussed by: G. Clarke, The Post Office of India, 1921; I.G.J.Hamilton, An Outline of Postal History and Practice with a History of the Post Office of India, 1910.

colonial rule. The complexity of regulations surrounding money order transactions, the senders right to recall inland correspondence from the post, elaborate provisions for censorship, and the ruling that employees should be debarred from political and industrial rights were important adaptations of British practice. India also provided East Africa with the precedent that the administrative head of the Post Office could engage in politics.

The adjustments of British practice to Indian conditions embraced the separation of posts and telegraphs. This policy developed out of the British habit of ruling through indigenous states. The local authorities operated their own postal systems but for the purposes of security, the British administration rigidly enforced the direct control of telecommunications as a separate service until 1913. The men who erected and administered the Uganda Railway telegraphs carried the concepts of separate posts and telegraphs services to East Africa. Only in 1925 were the aspirations of these officials for recognition as an independent service finally rejected, after bringing the inter-territorial organisation of the Posts and Telegraphs Department into question.

Nothing peculiar existed in the application of the international postal and telecommunications agreements to East Africa.[4] These Treaties fostered international communications, effective operating

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[4]J.F.Sly, The Genesis of the Universal Postal Union in International Conciliation, 1927, and Robinson, Clark, Hamilton, op.cit.

standards, and uniform postage rates. The Universal Postal Union, formed in 1874 by the agreement of twenty countries to operate as a single postal territory for the exchange of correspondence, survived upon understanding that it would not limit the political rights of any participating country. The Union was created by the pressure of the United States Postmaster General, Montgomery Blair, who experienced much trouble from the multiplicity of weights, rates and routes specified for trans-Atlantic mails by the individual European states. The Union represented a significant innovation in international co-operation. It acquired importance in diplomatic relations when the 1878 Congress laid down the rules governing the operations of postal agencies, which European Powers used to assert diplomatic privileges in Africa, the Middle East and Asia. Moreover, by insistence upon certain standards of service, the Union effectively prescribed the degree of autonomy that any African or Asian Post Office would be allowed. The International Telecommunications Union, formed in 1868, exercised similar operational and political influences.

The mainland Post Offices of East Africa were created in the later nineteenth century to service overseas communications by mail steamship and submarine telegraph. In 1837 the Post Office of India opened its first overseas agency at Aden, situated on the steamship route between Bombay and the Isthmus of Suez. The agency system spread throughout the Indian Ocean region. In 1870 the British Government's interest in the area led the General Post Office to subsidise

a steamship route linking Aden, an Indian Post Office at Zanzibar and Delagoa Bay. Ten years later a submarine cable was laid between Aden, Zanzibar and Durban. These developments accompanied increasing European interest in East Africa and the postal agency system extended further along the coast as the rivalry inherent in the Partition became more intense.

After mainland occupation the interior postal and telegraph services operated primarily to service overseas communications. The emphasis of East African communications could be moved from the Coast to the interior but the most profitable markets lay overseas until African literacy and purchasing power had been increased. Overseas services were not an East African nor even a Post Office affair. They furthered British political, commercial, strategic and humanitarian purposes in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. However, services kept East Africa in touch with innovations in the technology of communication.

The African influences upon the Posts and Telegraphs Department were more diverse. The environment imposed restrictions upon the service while low levels of purchasing power and literacy prevented a sharp growth of traffic. However, European rule did not introduce long distance communication to Africa. Rather, the establishment of postal services came from the successful absorption of African communications systems into a European technological and administrative framework. The recruitment of staff from other colonies introduced a

further African influence upon Departmental policy, although individual officers rarely possessed a sufficiently high rank to have access to the making of policy in one territory and the ability to implement their experience in another. In East Africa influence from other parts was broadly limited to developments in staff policy particularly as it affected the non-European employees. Only in 1936, after the institution of the Cape-to-Cairo air mail, did the Post Offices of Africa south of the Congo, Uganda and Kenya even think it worthwhile to organise a local postal union to co-ordinate rating policy. The extent of Africa, the paucity of its population, and the low level of purchasing power restricted the volume of availabl traffic, and precluded innovation and the spread of ideas between different territories. The East African Posts and Telegraphs Department, an integrated service responsible to three territories that pursued different political, social and economic policies, diverged from this pattern.

The East African Posts and Telegraphs Departments

The development of the East African Post Office as a self-contained, self-financing administration, nominally responsible to three governments, was conditioned by three basic historical problems. Before 1925 the Postmaster General's attempts to establish an administrative hierarchy to control the rapidly extending mainland services were severely strained by the individual ambitions of relatively

junior officers. These troubles caused the governments to grant the Post Office a wide mezsure of administrative autonomy. The solution of the problems of internal structure was followed by financial difficulty when the First World War led to the adoption of air transport and wireless telegraphy as normal means of communication. These innovations required capital investment, which the Governments allocated reluctantly. As the rate of innovation increased during the Second World War, it became clear that the Post Office would either have to be given considerable access to state capital or its financial autonomy. The latter solution was chosen, creating a new problem of responsibility. The Post Office moved beyond political control at a time when the internal balance of power was being re-negotiated between the African peoples, the expatriate communities and the civil service.

The slow and spasmodic expansion and organisation of the mainland Posts and Telegraphs Department from 1890 created a decentralised administrative structure. Until 1925 the principal difficulty of the Post Office was the establishment of a bureaucratic hierarchy. In 1900, two post offices and three telegraph systems served British East Africa, the modern states of Kenya and Uganda. Administrative duplication proved expensive and caused political complications which were not commensurate with the volume of traffic. During 1901 the Post Offices were amalgamated and in 1905 the Postmaster General gained control over telegraph operation, but engineering remained

a separate inter-territorial service with autonomous accounts for the two states. Although this arrangement maintained the agreed privileges of serving officers and minimised dispute, by 1910 it proved inadequate because the two British territories in East Africa seemed to be developing different economic policies and the financial arrangements of the Department were too loosely defined. An attempt to integrate the Posts and Telegraphs failed in 1912, to be followed by lengthy recriminations between the Postmaster General, the Governments of the East Africa Protectorate (renamed the Kenya Colony and Protectorate in 1921) and Uganda.

After the First World War, with a greatly increased volume of business and the growing sophistication of telegraph and telephone equipment, the personal interests that depended upon decentralisation hampered Post Office efficiency. In 1925, after three years of pressure by a newly appointed Postmaster General, the two Governments acquiesced in a complete amalgamation of Posts and Telegraphs under a common administrative structure while maintaining separate accounts for each territory.

Even then administrative reorganisation inadequately served the operating requirements of the Posts and Telegraphs because the introduction of sophisticated equipment depended upon the ability of the Department to determine its own investment priorities. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s the Post Office sought to introduce new equipment and to extend such potentially profitable services as the telephone

network. Although the allocation of capital from Government loan funds suffered severe delays, this problem proved less serious than the difficulties of financing inter-territorial communications. Although the construction of a telephone trunk line between Nairobi and Kampala was first considered in 1926, the service opened only in 1940. Such uncertainties hampered Departmental investment and certainly hindered the provision of effective services. In broad terms, the reluctance of the Governments to allocate capital for the improvement of Post Office services meant that equipment and procedures in the postal system changed little while the extension of telephone facilities was unreasonably curtailed. Only in the sphere of wireless telegraphs for overseas and government communication did some innovations occur. In 1929 a direct wireless telegraph was instituted between Nairobi and London through the political initiative of the Postmaster General and the participation of private investment capital.

The Second World War caused unusual operating strains and emphasised that financial procedures required reform. As from 1st January 1949 the Posts and Telegraphs was converted into a self-financing administration so that it might raise its own capital for the further development of services. The altered financial constitution produced a further problem related to the undefined nature of Post Office responsibility to the Governments, the peoples, or indeed, itself.

Before 1910 the principal loyalties had been personal, founded on antipathy or enthusiasm for Departmental leaders. Then the responsibilities of the staff and the service moved to the territorial governments. Only in 1925 were Departmental obligations firmly established, Within the Post Office, employees were subject to the direction of the Postmaster General who was responsible to the Governments of Kenya and Uganda. After 1933, when Tanganyika entered the postal amalgamation, ~~in 1933,~~ the structure of obligation simply became more elaborate. Under a joint Department the problem of responsibility focused on matters that were the prerogative of local civil servants. The reorganisation of 1949 changed this pattern as the Posts and Telegraphs separated from the supervision of the Colonial civil service. The Post Office became an autonomous and self-perpetuating body responsible to an East African Legislative Assembly subject to popular control over its operations. In fact the Assembly proved so powerless that the mechanism of official secrecy became inscrutable. The Post Office was for practical purposes responsible only to itself.

The pattern of decolonisation in East Africa strengthened administrative autonomy. Politicians quickly realised that the practical return from the East African Assembly was very small, and the body lost its little reputation and influence. Meanwhile, the Post Office adjusted to changes in the East African constitutions by

maintaining a discreet silence. In 1961 even the consumers consultative committee was abolished, ostensibly on the grounds of cost. This policy, inspired and conducted by expatriate staff, did not gain the approval of the Governments, but it proved difficult to devise an alternative arrangement satisfactory to the three participating states. After several years of discussion upon the financial and constitutional issues, the Governments of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania agreed in the 1967 Treaty of East African Co-operation that a limited measure of state control should be reimposed upon the self-financing inter-territorial technical departments. The treaty recognised the ineffectiveness of Departmental responsibility to the national states, but public supervision remained an irrelevant issue.

Administrative structure, financial organisation, technological change and the problems of responsibility preoccupied the attention of the Posts and Telegraphs Department. In addition, the Post Office faced other political and administrative difficulties. Its status as an inter-territorial authority serving three Governments was threatened by divergent policies and separate national identities. The Department conflicted with the Governments over development priorities and the payment for state traffic. Such matters occasioned much official dispute but were quite insignificant when compared to the widespread bitterness over Departmental staff policy in societies clearly divided by race. Under these political liabilities, the Posts and Telegraphs had of course to perform its basic duty of maintaining and operating

a communications service.

The inter-territorial factor exercised a deep influence upon the constitutional and financial history of the Posts and Telegraphs Department. Rivalry and antagonism between Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika made the Post Office take political initiative and develop new administrative forms to ensure its own survival. The inter-territorial structure developed out of early needs for economical operation; clearly it would be less expensive, if perhaps less efficient, to maintain but one administrative hierarchy. This arrangement was tacitly recognised throughout the 1890s and gained official sanction in 1901.

White settlement, already a formal policy in the Highlands, challenged the concept of co-operation after 1906. In Uganda it seemed that local revenues subsidised European immigration while the settlers in East Africa had little wish for their Government to be shackled to an African Protectorate. By 1910 the only remnants of inter-territorial services were the Railways and Harbours, Posts and Telegraphs and the King's African Rifles.

The survival of the Post Office as an inter-territorial service was remarkable in the light of the political disagreements upon its organisation. Senior officers conspired for the creation of separate branches in each state and the Governments resented the expenditure of considerable effort in arguing over the affairs of a troublesome department. The 1925 reorganisation represented a political

victory for the Postmaster General against very considerable opposition. By 1930 efficient operation and equitable financial arrangements clearly showed the advantages of co-operation. So much so, that under the influence of the depression the Post Office of Tanganyika was incorporated into the amalgamated service. The success of this reorganisation was an even greater tribute to the political skill of the Postmaster General. The Indian community in Tanganyika, who feared their subordination to the settlers in Kenya, organised a substantial protect as a result of which the League of Nations debated the question, on the pretext that Tanganyika was a trust territory administered by the United Kingdom under international mandate.

The formation of an inter-territorial Posts and Telegraphs Department responsible to the Governments of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika created an unwieldy and complicated political structure. The Department lost its political initiative because it had no freedom of administrative action. The staff were responsible to both the Governments and the Post Office, each state had to endorse expenditure on 'common facilities, while rate changes and the other matters of Post Office policy became effective only upon the approval of all three Governments. During the Second World War this situation showed itself to be absurd. The conversion of the service to a self-financing authority failed to take over the Post Office out of politics but rather freed it from daily supervision /

operating and administrative matters. The reform restored the political influence of the Department with the consequence that senior staff, who were European, gained the opportunity to thwart the policies of the national governments. Only the East African Treaty for Co-operation in 1967, partly restored the balance between inter-territorial Government rivalries and the administrative authorities.

The Department maintained political negotiations with the Governments on questiona aside from the inter-territorial complications. Until 1949 the Post Office submitted separate annual Estimates of Expenditure to each Legislative Council and the States maintained their internal control over the service. The Governments viewed the Posts and Telegraphs revenues as a supplement to taxation and a means of financial policy. The public use of postal services defrayed departmental costs, subsidised Government communications which were carried free of charge, and contributed to the general revenues. The Posts and Telegraphs operated primarily as a service to other Departments of State. The Post Office first challenged this concept during the 1930s when it instituted the principal of payment for official telecommunications messages despite severe opposition. Free communication, an advantage to other departments, obviated many accounting procedures but it also reduced the level of Posts and Telegraphs profits. In 1949 the principle of payment forall state services was introduced not merely as a matter of departmental investment

or income, but as a positive stimulus to the efficiency of the colonia, governments. Civil servants would have to weigh the advantages of speed against the provision in their Votes for Posts and Telegraphs services.

The Governments took considerable interest in Post Office staff policy because the operation of the service required a large non-white labour force. The nature of Posts and Telegraphs operations demanded numerous officesin relatively isolated places and a consequently large staff. The Department had little choice but to progressively increase the size of its non-European and particularly African staff, since white men were too expensive to employ in remote areas or menial positions. Government and unofficial European opinion accepted this fact but became uneasy when non-Europeans acquired skills and were promoted either for economy or because it proved difficult to recruit staff from overseas. In 1933 the European staff comprised 46°/o of the Deparrmental establishment. Under the stress of expanding business and the Second World War this proportion fell to 13.5°/o in 1948 although the total staff rose from 460 in 1933 to 2,547. Although the number of European employees trebled during this period, non-white responsibility and authority increased substantially. The changed balance met opposition. European opinion attributed inefficiencies to the 'dilution' of post office staff, nor did the Department give unqualified support to the extension of African employment. Theoretically, the commercial

approach gained by the Department in 1949 should have stimulated the employment of non-Europeans on the grounds of cost. This did not occur because the Posts and Telegraphs was beyond political criticism, maintained political initiative in the cause of efficiency, and enjoyed monopoly privileges.

The political power of the Posts and Telegraphs was such that the Department could initiate Government policy. By its administrative decisions, the Post Office could deeply influence the pattern of East African co-operation, set patterns of finance and staff policy that could be emulated by other services, and yet seem to stand aloof from the economic and social life of East Africa. The political autonomy of the Post Office came from its obligations as a public service. Constitutional and financial changes were seen and revealed only as devices for efficiency.

The East African Posts and Telecommunications Administration

The East African Posts and Telecommunications Administration developed its unique financial and political constitution through the expediencies of East African politics, guided by United Kingdom precedent. The Administration, a political entitypossessing a wide measure of administrative autonomy was placed beyond political manipulation. The conversion in 1949 was more influenced by considerations of political survival than by knowledge of difficulties in the outside world. The growing power of the central government in

the United Kingdom, the United States and Western Europe during the 1950s and 1960s caused a search for ways to control the efficiency, responsibility and political powers of state departments that were managing monopoly businesses. The political and financial constitution of the East African Posts and Telecommunications Administration offered a possible solution to these problems.

East African practice became a model for international emulation. In 1968 the United Kingdom Government reorganised the General Post Office as a self-contained Corporation, basing its constitution heavily upon East African precedent and recruiting a former East African Postmaster General, Sir Ronald German, as an adviser. Less directly, the experience of East Africa influenced proposals for the reform of the United States Post Office Department into a self-financing corporation, free from political influence.

Part One

PROBLEMS OF ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

1837 TO 1925

PROBLEMS OF ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE 1837 - 1925

An expansion of scale in the political and operating problems of the Post Office governed the development of an administrative bureaucracy for the Department's services in the East Africa and Uganda Protectorates. Before 1873, overseas communication depended on the chance sailings of steamers in ordinary commercial traffic, but in that year a private company established a monthly mail service under contract to the General Post Office. In 1880 a costly submarine telegraph cable between Aden, Zanzibar, and Durban supplemented the steamship route. Only in 1890 did the volume of traffic warrant the opening of a post office at Mombasa. The British Government appointed a Postmaster General who had received professional training in 1904. The permanent establishment of the Department, then totalling thirty-five persons of whom one was European, handled a letter mail traffic of some two million items. The autonmous telegraph authorities dealt with but thirteen thousand messages in 1904 and employed a rather larger staff. The Department expanded rapidly and in 1925 a staff of 1,200, of whom 103 were European, handled more than nine million letters and half a million telegrams.

The nature of the Department's administration depended upon the volume of business. The increase in traffic and staff between 1904 and 1925 demanded the introduction of more sophisticated procedures

to ensure the effectiveness of the service. It also introduced questions of efficiency in both the Departmental sense of the expeditious discharge of commitments and the public interest in economic operation. The quality of administration was determined by the volume of traffic, the financial condition of the service, and by the Department's definition of its own effectiveness. These criteria proved insufficient without a clear Departmental hierarchy which defined the pattern of discipline and responsibility. However, until 1925, all attempts to centralise authority were ineffective. Between 1900 and 1913, administrative policy emphasised the creation of a unified inter-territorial Posts and Telegraphs Department. Official rivalry for position and power partially undermined constructive changes. Then between 1913 and 1925, when attempts were made to create a unified bureaucratic hierarchy, the Department suffered from insubordination.

East Africa's overseas communications developed during the nineteenth century, primarily as a result of British interest in India and the commerce of the Indian Ocean. Between 1870 and 1895 the United Kingdom Government expanded its post communications services in the Indian Ocean to counter the competition of other countries, to influence the political problems of South Africa, and to fulfill a number of humanitarian and strategic purposes. These services required almost no mainland handling outside local distribution and could be administered quite effectively from the General Post Office in London.

The Imperial British East Africa Company, which occupied the coastline of Kenya under a Royal Charter, established the first mainland postal services. However, its system functioned as an outgrowth of local distribution systems designed to ensure the effective handling of overseas mail.

The assumption of British government in the East Africa Protectorate during 1893 and in Uganda during 1895 led to the organisation of more systematic services under decentralised control. The Protectorates maintained autonomous Post Offices until 1901, but this arrangement proved unsatisfactory during the construction of the Uganda Railway when many thousands of immigrant Indian labourers found considerable difficulties in sending letters or remitting money overseas. In 1901 the Governments approved a unification of the postal system under central direction from Mombasa. The centralisation of the telegraphs caused greater problems, because the erection of wires demanded heavy capital expenditure which neither Government wished to carry against its loan funds. In 1901, the Uganda Railway and the Uganda and East Africa governments maintained and financed their own telegraph services. This arrangement demanded expensive administrative talent. In 1904 the Governments agreed that a common Telegraph Department should be operated, maintaining separate accounts for each Protectorate.

Separation of Posts and Telegraphs Departments was the Indian tradition from which most telegraph employees were drawn. The Postmaster

General, trained in the British Post Office, entertained contrary ideas and contrived the transfer of the telegraph traffic branch to the Post Office in 1905. However, he proved unable to gain control over the engineering services. In 1912, an arrangement for the amalgamation of Posts and Telegraphs was drawn up to amalgamate the two services without prejudicing the status of any serving officers.

In spite of this complicated series of official rivalries, posts and telegraphs expanded throughout East Africa between 1895 and 1912. From an inland mail runner route between Mombasa and Kampala, the postal system was extended even to such remote places as Serenli on the Juba River and Gondokoro on the Nile. The Uganda Railway provided an artery of service from which routes of relayed mail runners served outlying communities. Although the telegraph system grew more slowly, by 1912 it served most important administrative centres. During the first decade of the twentieth century the whole emphasis of the service moved inland from the coast. In 1912 the construction of a headquarters Post Office in Nairobi recognised the new pattern of services.

The arrangements for the amalgamation of the posts and telegraphs branches in 1912 failed because the two Protectorates adopted different economic policies. While Uganda relied upon peasant production, the East Africa Protectorate encouraged white settlement and in 1908 allowed the settlers representation on its Legislative Council. Financial co-operation between the two countries aroused criticism.

The East Africa Protectorate disliked its financial liability for inter-territorial services, while Uganda considered that its profits subsidised white settlers. The Post Office was identified with the Government of the East Africa Protectorate because its headquarters were situated in Nairobi and its revenues and expenditures were carried on East Africa's Annual Estimates. The Uganda Government was dissatisfied with this arrangement and Departmental officers in Uganda constantly advised the creation of an autonomous service. The Post Office ineffectively asserted its authority over subordinate officers stationed in Uganda. ~~but~~ Only in 1925, did an agreement between Governments under the pressure of both the Department and the Colonial Office, establish a clear inter-territorial bureaucracy to administer both the posts and telegraphs services.

The creation of a Departmental hierarchy became an urgent necessity after the First World War if operating efficiency were to be maintained. The War had greatly increased the volume of traffic. During the year 1916-1917, the Uganda letter mail traffic doubled that handled in 1912-1913. The ending of the War and the ensuing economic slump produced only a temporary decline in business. In 1925, the traffic exceeded even the wartime demands for Post Office services. Moreover, the War had furthered the development of such communications techniques as the telephone, wireless and air transport. The Post Office had to develop a formal administrative structure to handle increased traffic and exploit the economies of scale latent

in inter-territorial organisation.

The Governments approved a full administrative amalgamation of the Posts and Telegraphs in 1925, but maintained a separation of accounts. This arrangement justified itself in the efficiency of both services and finance. By 1930 the Post Office maintained 2,811 installed telephones while trunk lines connected the principle centres within Kenya and Uganda, although there was no link between the territories. Both countries had access to a short wave wireless telegraph service for communication overseas. In financial terms, the Department's operating surpluses totalled £37,055 in Kenya and £2,890 in Uganda, with a smaller volume of traffic. The 1925 amalgamation proved most effective in reducing administrative expenses. The headquarters charges on the Kenya-Uganda Department were less than the headquarters charges of the Tanganyika Posts and Telegraphs Department, which handled a letter mail traffic of some four million items in 1930. The administrative changes ~~tht~~ that took place in the Posts and Telegraphs Department between 1870 and 1925 resulted from developments in technology and increased business.

Chapter II

OVERSEAS COMMUNICATIONS AND THE MAINLAND POST OFFICES

East Africa's overseas communications served political purposes throughout most of the nineteenth century. Before 1870 the chance sailings of vessels to Aden, Bombay and Durban sufficed for the postal needs of East Africa. Increasing foreign interest in the area and the humanitarian cause of the slave trade led the General Post Office to subsidise a monthly mail steamer service to further British commerce and shipping along the coast. In 1879, political complications in South Africa and the occurrence of the Zulu War occasioned further British subsidies to secure a submarine telegraph service from Aden to Zanzibar and Durban. This infrastructure gave rise to postal agencies, branches of metropolitan post offices intended to secure the satisfactory handling and distribution of overseas mail. When further competition for the trade of East Africa occasioned the occupation of the mainland, the postal agency structure was simply extended inland.

The interests of Indian trade induced British investment in communications along the East African coast. From 1837, mails between India and the United Kingdom travelled by way of the Red and Mediterranean Seas with transhipment across the Isthmus of Suez. After the occupation of Aden by the Indian army in 1838, the United Kingdom controlled commercial and political developments throughout

the Indian Ocean. From bases at Cape Town, Aden, Bombay, Trincomalee and Singapore British warships guaranteed the overseas trade of India. The extension of ocean mail services along the East African coast by a British company registered in India, and the laying of the submarine telegraph under subsidies from both India and the United Kingdom, represented a British and Indian interest in maintaining the established pattern of Indian Ocean trade.

The occupation of the East African mainland and the assumption of British Government undermined this joint enterprise. A British authority replaced the Indian postal agency at Zanzibar in 1895. The new organization proved more interested in developing the East African interior than in continuing the traditional coastal commerce. Three years later, the British Government established ~~separate~~ autonomous postal services for Zanzibar and the East African mainland. The development of the East African interior undermined established Indian trade and reduced the importance of overseas communications. The political challenges that had produced innovation and investment in the services lost their relevance. The new system created a balance amongst the East African and the United Kingdom Governments and the shipping and cable interests. In 1912, a direct mail steamer service was established between London, Suez, Mombasa and Cape Town. In 1913, British Government discontinued the Aden-Zanzibar route and amalgamated its operating company with the Peninsula and Oriental

concern that had dominated communication between Britain and India since the 1840s. The whole context of Indian Ocean trade had become superfluous in the administration and development of the British Empire in Africa.

Origins of the East African Ocean Mail Services 1800-1875.

The East African ocean mail steamship services developed as a branch of British communications with India. Although the British Government only considered the possibilities of a mail service through the Red and Mediterranean Seas during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, by the 1830s this route seemed vital to British and Indian interests. Political changes in Egypt, the growth of articulate commercial interests after the overthrow of the East India Company's trading monopoly in 1813, and the development of steamships drew Britain into the Indian Ocean. The extension of British influences along the East African Coast began in the 1860s through the needs of Indian commerce, agitation against the slave trade, the communications problems of South Africa, but above all the competition of European rivals for the trade of the Indian Ocean.

When the first steamship reached India in 1826 the British community in India concluded that mails should be carried in steamships to the Red Sea or the Persian Gulf for onward transmission to Great Britain via the Mediterranean sea routes. During the early 1830s the East India Company ordered an evaluation of the Syrian route by

Captain F.R.Chesney. His failure to develop a satisfactory mail service by 1836 coincided with the successful opening of an overland transport system across the Isthmus of Suez. Although Syria and Iraq maintained their international political significance and their importance in Indian Ocean trade, the Red Sea proved a superior route for communications.

During 1837 a British Select Committee studied the possibilities of developing steamship communications with India. The Committee approved the measures already taken to improve the Indian mail service: the Egyptian transport system was in operation and specially designed steamships had been ordered in 1836.[1]

The full benefits of a steamship service would only be realised if British involvement in the western Indian Ocean increased and in 1838 the Court of Directors of the East India Company resolved that the Indian Navy, which had been used mainly for surveys and local punitive expeditions since 1803, should be based upon steam power and its operations expanded to include the carriage of mails and passengers.[2] The British Government awarded a Mail Contract to the Peninsula Steam Navigation Company in 1837 for the transport of Indian mails between Britain and Gibraltar and in 1840 the Company,

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[1] Hoskins, H.L., British Routes to India, London, 1928, 178-9.

[2] Ibid., 193-9.

reconstituted as the Peninsula and Oriental Steam Navigation Company with increased government subsidies, began to supersede East India Company ships on services east of Suez.[3]

British commercial involvement led to strategic innovation. In 1838 the Indian Army occupied Aden, a readily defensible coaling station, on the pretext of ship-wrecking. Aden dominated the trade routes of the western Indian Ocean and seemed likely to develop into a significant commercial centre for South Arabia and the East African Coast.[4] The development of mail transport across Egypt, the operation of government and contract mail steamships, and the political obligations of the Bombay Presidency involved Britain in the commercial pattern of the Indian Ocean. The steamship route to Bombay ensured British participation in the wider ramifications of Indian commerce.

The development of a British political policy in the Indian Ocean and the establishment of postal services to East Africa came in the late 1860s when the Ottoman Empire feared Egyptian conquests in Arabia. In 1869 the Suez Canal was opened. Although it had little commercial significance and mails were carried across the Isthmus until 1888, the Canal "brought Arabia many thousands of miles closer

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[3]Robinson, Howard, The British Post Office, Princeton, 1948, 391.

[4]Hoskins, H.L., op.cit.. 193-9.

to the arsenals and naval dockyards of Constantinople".[5] Turkish rule in Arabia became a realistic possibility. The British Government determined to secure Indian trade and acted in defence of the traditional pattern of Indian Ocean commerce.

The development of postal and telegraphic communications seemed likely to centralise trade upon established routes and therefore proved important to British political policy. The Indian Post Office opened an Agency at Aden in 1839 to service the garrison but development was spasmodic. French steamers carried the mails for Mauritius and the Seychelles, and the Bombay Presidency established a steamer service to Zanzibar only in 1863.[6] The service proved unprofitable and was suddenly withdrawn in September, 1864, thereby dislocating Admiralty communications.[7]

The existence of communications became more important than financial considerations during the late 1860s. In 1868 Indian postal agencies opened in Zanzibar and in the Persian Gulf and by 1875 were linked with Aden and Bombay through network of subsidised ocean mail services. Meanwhile the interest of informed English public opinion was directed to the Indian Ocean partly by the commercial possibilities of the Suez Canal but especially by the humanitarian obligations

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[5] Gavin, R.J., The Historical Journal, Vol. V, No. 2 (1962).

[6] G.P.O. to Admiralty, 3.ii.65, Unnumbered G.P.O.: 534W-1871; Post: 29-167.

[7] G.P.O. to Admiralty, 28.ii.65, Unnumbered, and Postmaster, Aden to G.P.O., 1.vii.68, No. 353, G.P.O.: 534W-1871: POST: 29-167.

exposed in the 1870 Report of the Committee on the East African Slave Trade. The Committee emphasised the inadequacy of East African communications and the Admiralty, which established a preventive squadron at Zanzibar, saw as clearly as merchants and philanthropists that an East African mail service would be a political advantage. The British Government urged Germany, France, the United States and Portugal to join in the cooperative financing of an East African mail steamer service "in the cause of humanity and civilisation."[8] Finance had less political significance than the control of the post offices that actually handled the mail. These already operated under Indian auspices. When this scheme met with little support, the British Government relied upon its own resources. During 1871, the Postmaster General obtained estimates for a monthly service along the East African coast. The Union Steamship Company sought a seven years contract with an annual subsidy of £29,000, while the British-India Steam Navigation Company offered a similar service for £27,365 p.a. on a ten year contract. Although the General Post Office forwarded its information to the Treasury, the tenders lapsed.

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[8] Gavin, R.J., op.cit.

The character of British communications along the East Coast of Africa depended primarily upon commercial factors, influenced by the political requirements of South Africa. The Cape seemed a strategic necessity to support the route to India before the opening of the Suez Canal, although transhipment across the Isthmus of Suez prevented mail services from operating profitably. In 1857 a former collier operating concern, the Union Steamship Company, took over the South Africa service and in 1862 opened a feeder route from the Cape to Durban. The British annexation of Griqualand West and the development of the Kimberley diamond fields gave the Union Company a solid financial basis, but in 1872 also introduced a competitive service by the Castle Mail Packets Company.

The establishment of a mail service from the Cape to Aden offered the Imperial Government distinct advantages. A letter could be sent from the Cape to Britain in three to four weeks by the Atlantic service but a message, telegraphed from Aden, should be delivered in only seventeen days. When the Union Steamship Company offered to work between the Cape and Aden in 1871 on the condition that their Atlantic Contract would be renewed, the Castle Mail Packets Company proposed an Atlantic service at a rate no less than 50% below the Union Company's subsidy.

In August 1872 the Colonial and Foreign Offices persuaded

the Treasury and the Postmaster General to support an Aden-Cape mail contract, which would be jointly operated by the British-India and Union Companies with a total subsidy of £25,000. The Contracts were/let in December despite the opposition of the Postmaster General, who saw no reason why the Post Office should so heavily subsidise a service that would produce a postal revenue of some £50 each year.[9] The establishment of the East African contract also required the renewal of the Union Company's Atlantic Contract for an eight year period as from 1st January, 1873. The Government of Cape Colony feared that the Union Company would maintain high postage rates and wished, in any case, for some control over its external mail services. Its pressure obliged the British Treasury to abandon the Atlantic renewal, without which the Union Company refused to operate the Zanzibar route for a subsidy of £15,000 p.a. A new contract, signed in May, 1873, provided for a Cape-Zanzibar service with an annual subsidy of £26,000 ~~and~~ In June the British Government appointed a Parliamentary Committee to investigate the problems of African mail contracts. A public scandal developed when the Committee discovered that in 1871 the British-India Company agreed to operate the Zanzibar-Cape service for a subsidy of £16,315, and that the offer had been overlooked. A £20,000

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[9] Memo. by Edward Francis (G.P.O.), 1.ix.98. The B.I.S.N. Company was allocated £10,000 p.a., and the Union Company £15,000 p.a. G.P.O.: 257I-1908; POST: 29-1001. See also G.P.O.: 534W-1871; POST: 29-167.

contract was signed on 1st August, 1873, for the Union Company's East African service, which seemed to honour both the public desire for economy and the Government's obligation to the Union Company.[10]

The solution of the problem of renewing the Atlantic Contract and achieving a satisfactory service between Delagoa Bay and Zanzibar came from Sir John Molteno, the Prime Minister of the Cape Colony. Judicious negotiation persuaded both the competing companies to provide a fortnightly service by the Atlantic route, thus giving the Colony a weekly mail despatch to Britain. The postage rate was reduced to 1/6d per half ounce, and the Companies retained the entire postal charges in place of a subsidy.[11] The negotiations represented a significant victory for Molteno and the interests of the Cape Colony. Imperial influence over the mail services to South Africa had been effectively cut away.

The Union Company determined that the quality of its East Africa service should only approximate to the standard demanded by its Contract. Although the Molteno Agreement made the retention of the Zanzibar feeder service theoretically desirable, the Union Company had only undertaken the route to increase its competitiveness for the Atlantic contract. The East African South Coast of Zanzibar had never been integrated into the trading pattern of the Indian Ocean

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[10] Ibid.

[11] Robinson, Carrying British Mails Overseas, op.cit., 181-182.

and, in the absence of adequate commercial opportunity, the Union Steamship Company allowed its Contract to lapse in 1881. Although the British-India line was not prepared to operate a service to the Cape, ~~but~~ its route from Aden to Zanzibar proved so profitable that it remained the focus of British interest in East Africa until the end of July, 1913.

East Africa, The Indian Ocean Telegraphs and the Ocean Mail Services 1875-1895.

Telegraph communications developed during the 1840s for the purposes of railway signalling and for the exchange of political and commercial information. Outside Europe overland telegraphs proved susceptible to incidental and malicious damage. The development of submarine telegraph cables largely overcame the problem of security. The United Kingdom laid an extensive network of cables in the Indian Ocean and bound the pattern of British communications even more closely to established trade routes. For strategic reasons it seemed desirable to route the principal cables from Britain to India by way of the Isthmus of Suez which was under firm British influence. Aden became the principal distribution point of the Indian Ocean cable system as well as the primary focus of the ocean mail services.

War in Persia and the Indian Mutiny caused the development of the Indian Ocean cable system. The British Government realised that

fast steamships were inadequate for conditions of emergency.[12] In 1856, the formation of the Indian Junction Telegraph Company provided a route through the Euphrates Valley but, partly because the East India Company refused a financial guarantee, its initial impetus was soon dissipated. Another Company sought to develop the Red Sea route where political problems were relatively few and naval power might be used decisively in the defence of Imperial communications, but the British Government favoured a telegraph via the Euphrates Valley. The Prime Minister, Palmerston, feared the expansion of Russian interests in Arabia and regarded the Syrian telegraph routes as an assertion of Britiah political influence. It was for this reason that he opposed the construction of a canal across the Isthmus of Suez.[13]

Between 1856 and 1860 two proposals for Red Sea telegraphs failed after a combined expenditure of some million pounds. The distrust of the investing public prompted the appointment of a Committee on Submarine Telegraphs in 1859, which [redacted] advocated the use of better quality cables. The Malta-Alexandria Cable was successfully laid during 1861, the Indian Government contributing 2/5 of the cost. During the same year the Turkish financed Pera-Baghdad overland telegraph [redacted] opened.

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[12] Hoskins, op.cit., 373-8.

[13] Graham, G.S., The Politics of Naval Supremacy, Cambridge, 1965, 87.

Pressure for the further development of telegraphic communication and the agitation of Col. Patrick Stewart, the Director-General of the Indian Telegraphs, led to the construction of the 1,450 mile Persian Gulf cable between 1862 and 1864, "the first instance of any greath length of cable being a complete and lasting success".[14] The cable led to the construction of additional land routes connecting with the European and Turkish telegraph systems under the provisions of the 1864 Indo-Ottoman Telegraphic Convention. The Convention authorised the establishment of a British Telegraph Station at Fao and insisted that all Ottoman stations should have staff, "possessing a knowledge of the English Language sufficient for the perfect performance of that service".[15] Although the Overland Telegraph system opened in March, 1865, the problems of foreign control and the errors of telegraphists encouraged the British Government to seek a nationally financed route independent of foreign territorial control. The Persian Gulf cable marked the end of the experimental period in submarine telegraph construction, but the problem of effecting efficient communications between India and Britain remained.

The commercial utility of the Indo-European telegraph was rapidly apparent despite the higher charge of £5.10.0. for twenty words. Improvement alone could not overcome the difficulties inherent in a

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[14] Bright, Sir Charles, Submarine Telegraphs, London, 119-20.

[15] Hoskins, op.cit., 380.

multiplicity of telegraph administrations. Each demanded a share of the charges, and precedence for national messages, but often did not ensure secrecy and efficiency. However, telegraphic communications with India were a commercial and political necessity. The Select Committee of the House of Commons on Postal and Telegraphic Communications between Britain and the East Indies in 1866 advocated improvements in the Persian Gulf cable and the construction of new cables under British control. During 1869 a British company laid a cable between the Italian telegraph system, Malta and Alexandra. In the following year, Falmouth, Gibaltar and Malta were also connected, giving a British-controlled communications system between England and India. Originally it seemed that the Indo-European telegraph would become an alternative route. However, the British Government, anxious to reinforce its political position in Iraq and ensure a return upon the Government of India's investment in the Persian Gulf cable, discriminated against the Suez route for a number of years.

John Fender, a significant Manchester cotton spinner who invested in British telegraphs before the nationalisation of 1868, speculated upon the possible dividends of an amalgamated cable system. During June, 1872 Fender amalgamated the British cables to India into the Eastern Telegraph Company. During 1873 the

Company absorbed a number of Far Eastern Lines, and in 1874 established the Black Sea Telegraph Company. In addition, Pender created two trust companies to guard against serious market fluctations in cable shares.

The news of the British defeat at Ishandlwana by Zulu regiments was not known in England until some weeks had elapsed.[16] South African telegraphic communications could not support British policies of expansion. The United Kingdom paid the Orange Free State £90,000 for the Kimberley Diamond fields in 1876 and her Governments pursued uncertain policies towards the Boer Republics. In these circumstances the stimulus of a native war proved sufficient to launch a cable company, with the grant of government subsidies.

The Eastern Associated Telegraph Companies floated a new subsidiary, the Eastern and South Africa Telegraph Company, to lay a cable between Aden and Port Natal, connecting with Cape Town by land line. The British, Cape and Natal Governments agreed to subsidise the system for twenty years with an annual payment of £55,000.[17] On 27th December, 1879, the cable opened to Zanzibar,

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[16] Defeat occurred on 22.i.79. A cable, sent from Cape Verde, reached England on 11.ii.79.

[17] Britain: £35,000; Cape: £15,000; Natal, £5,000.

the centre of Britain's East African influence and the primary entrepôt on the coast. Sir John Kirk, the British Consul, persuaded Sultan Seyyid Barghash that cable communications would assist the administration of his dispersed Empire. Barghash accordingly granted the Company such land as would be required and a fifty year monopoly of "landing Ocean Telegraph Cables from foreign countries to places in our Dominions which extend from Warsheikh on the Somali Coast to Jungi near Cape Delgado."[18]

The British Post Office never displayed marked enthusiasm for the Aden-Zanzibar mail subsidy and strongly canvassed the opinion that the mail service had been rendered superfluous by the construction of the cable. The postal revenue for 1881 amounted to £250 while the subsidy cost £10,000.[19] Although the Treasury and the Postmaster General recommended termination of the British-India Contract, Kirk feared that its abandonment would lead to an increase in French political influence. In 1882 S.B.Miles, who replaced Kirk as Consul General at Zanzibar, warned the Foreign Office that

> "... the French are our active rivals in these parts and are watchful to take advantage of any means to

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[18] Seyyed Barghash to Sir John Kirk, 1.vi.79, E.A.P. & T. 2434/14.

[19] Treasury to F.O., 2.i.82, F.O.84/1657.

advance their trade interests. They are not ignorant of the fact that the possession of the Post Office is one of the causes that has given us our present commanding position at Zanzibar and they would not be sorry to deprive us of it."[20]

The United Kingdom Government did not allow the mail contract to lapse. During the Supply Debate on 5th May, 1882 the House of Commons continued the steamship subsidy against the wishes of the Postmaster General. Further dispute led the Government to announce on December 7th that the Foreign Office had allocated £5,000 from the Slave Trade Vote to ensure the extension of the contract for an additional six months. By implication the Postmaster General dissociated himself and his Department from unremunerative postal services. The Government gave time for the mobilisation of public and parliamentary opinion under the sponsorship of Kirk and Sir William Mackinnon, who had philanthropic interests in East Africa and owned the British India Steam Navigation Company. The contract was extended for a further three months in April, 1883, while tenders for a five year contract were examined. The British-India line retained its influence along the East African coast partly because no other company submitted an estimate. The costs of the East African mail subsidy were charged to the Slave Trade Vote of the

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[20] S.B.Miles, Consul General, Zanzibar, to F.O., 24.vi.82, No. 55, F.O.84/1657.

Foreign Office until April, 1890. The inauguration of the submarine telegraph enabled the British Post Office to dissociate itself from overseas adventures.

Barghash had believed that the development of Zanzibar as a cable station would intensify the island's influence within the Indian Ocean. He was as surprised as Kirk when the British Government proposed to withdraw the British-India line's contract, and his successors watched the cable contribute to the decline of Zanzibar's commercial influence. The cable office at Zanzibar soon became a relay and service station. During the 1890s the Eastern Company laid cables to Mombasa, Dar es Salaam, Mozambique, the Seychelles, Mauritius and Madagascar. Although messages from these places were retransmitted from Zanzibar, the island lost its importance as an entrepôt.

The British India Steam Navigation Company's Contract had been renewed in 1883 for a five year period, and served Lindi in addition to Zanzibar. The extension of the Contract in 1888 was complicated by the European political rivalries in East Africa which would culminate in the Heligoland Agreement.

The Postmaster General invited tenders but the documents so deserved lengthy Treasury consideration that the service continued temporarily upon the terms of the 1883 contract. The British-India Company submitted a variety of possible tenders offering services between London, Aden, Bombay and the East Coast of Africa. No other

Company deigned to tender and the Treasury persuaded the Government that the least expensive alternative, a monthly 7 1/2 knot service from Aden to Zanzibar costing £7,000 annually, would prove sufficient although the British Consul at Zanzibar insisted that only a direct service between the United Kingdom and East Africa could maintain, "British mercantile and national political interests".[21] In 1888 and 1889 the political future of East Africa formed a prime diplomatic problem. Mackinnon strongly supported an East African mail contract routed to London rather than Aden, and reduced his Company's quotation for a 10 knot service between London and Zanzibar from £22,000 to £16,000. The Government accepted Mackinnon's revised tender as a generous contribution towards British policies while the Treasury observed that

> " The British Mail Service to Zanzibar was established in 1873, and has since been continued, not merely with the object of providing a regular Postal service, but even more for the purpose of facilitating communication with Her Majesty's Naval and Consular Establishments on the East Coast of Africa, and affording a useful auxiliary in the repression of the slave trade, in addition to the blockade maintained by Her Majesty's naval forces."[22]

Although the Treasury disliked the increased expenditure upon the Slave Trade Vote, Foreign Office influence proved paramount. The new Contract, which was to last for two years, provided for a four

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[21] Euan Smith, Consul, Zanzibar, to F.O., 25.i.89, Telegram No. 33, F.O. 84/1984.

[22] Treasury Minute, 14.iv.90, G.P.O.: 374R-1891: POST: 29-553.

weekly service by 1,500 ton ships at an average speed of 10 knots, except during the South West Monsoon, calling at Naples, Aden, Lamu, Mombasa and elsewhere as the Postmaster General might direct. The Contract provided that only British mails, or mails approved by Her Majesty's Government might be carried.[23] The increasing sophistication of communications between the United Kingdom and East Africa showed when the Imperial British East Africa Company established a connecting service between Mombasa and Zanzibar.[24]

The triumph of Mackinnon and the Foreign Office proved to be short-lived. The Government was challenged in the House of Commons as early as 25th April, 1890, upon the use of the Slave Trade Vote as a means to extent British commerce. The Treasury therefore instructed the Postmaster General that his Department should accept financial responsibility for the service.[25] The General Post Office, however, felt that the Aden-London service was superfluous because it merely duplicated the Peninsula and Oriental Company's service between Aden and the United Kingdom. The question again devolved upon the Treasury, which was aware that the London-Zanzibar Contract

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[23] B.I.S.N. Contract, 5.ii.90, London and Zanzibar Mails, and Minutes thereon, G.P.O.: 374N-1891: POST: 29-553.

[24] Service introduced for mails 20.viii.90, G.P.O.: 374R-1891: POST: 29-553. It was withdrawn during March, 1891, after the coaster had been run aground on Pemba Island.

[25] Memo. by Edward Francis, 1.ix.98, G.P.O. 257I-1908: POST: :29-1001.

would expire on the 1st November 1892, and that the route had even been unprofitable to the Company. The General Post Office took the opportunity to emphasise that, "the expenditure involved is not warranted by postal considerations" and restated its antagonism towards subsidised mail services along the coast of East Africa.[26] The Messageries Maritimes, Deutsch Ost-Afrika and Portuguese lines provided an East African service three times each month and the British Post Office was convinced that the payment of ship-letter gratuities would, in the absence of a Slave-Trade subsidy, prove more beneficial to postal revenues than the maintenance of an expensive mail contract.

Although it seemed that the international problems of East Africa had been solved by 1892, English opinion still focused upon the operations of the Imperial British East Africa Company in Uganda. Only the British-India Steam Navigation Company tendered for an East African service. However, it raised the London-Zanzibar terms to £25,000, upon which the Post Office observed:

> "... that but little importance is attached to this service and that this Department has not regarded it as proper to be borne upon the Packet Service Vote."[27]

It suggested that the Company's offer to provide a 1,100 ton ship for an annual subsidy of £11,000 at a speed of 10 knots seemed the most economical. The Treasury, under Foreign Office pressure, approved

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[26] G.P.O. to Treasury, 5.ii.92, No. 362,250 R, G.P.O.: 257I-1908; POST: 29-1001.

[27] G.P.O. to Treasury, 18.vii.92, No. 261923, G.P.O.: 257I-1908; POST: 29-1001.

a subsidy from postal revenue and the new service commenced in November, 1892.[28]

Alien Postal Agencies and European Involvement in East Africa, 1860-1900.

Ocean mail services furthered commercial and political ends, but their less important postal function required machinery to distribute correspondence at the various ports. At first this task fell to consular officers or private individuals, but as the traffic increased it became necessary to appoint trained salaried officials to administer the postal agencies.

Postal Agencies formed a characteristic aspect of the extra-territorial rights asserted by European nations.[29] The principles that governed their operation were largely determined by experience in the Ottoman Empire and China. In 1878 the system received the approval of the Paris Congress of the Universal Postal Union, which decided that agencies could be represented under the provisions for Colonial participation. This decision enhanced their political value and implied that recognition indicated the interests of a European Power within a particular region. The primary motive for the institution of postal agencies on the East African coast lay in the political

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[28] G.P.O.: 2T-1893: POST: 29-551.

[29] e.g. Bushire Conference, 1922. G.P.O.: 133F/1905: POST: 30/870 and G.P.O.: 160K/1919: POST: 29/1028.

ambitions of the European nations. The only exception to this rule was the Indian postal agency at Zanzibar.

Indian overseas post offices followed trade, which increased after 1860 through internal prosperity and reduced American competition after the Civil War. The Indian Government established a postal agency after the occupation of Aden in 1839. Although Aden never fulfilled the commercial anticipations of the East India Company, it developed as the focus of the Indian ocean mail services and acted as a diffusion centre for both communications and commerce. It administered all the Indian Postal Agencies on the East African coast and the Persian Gulf under the general supervision of the Bombay Presidency.

The possibilities of East African trade interested the Government at Bombay and during the 1860s a mail steamship service operated to Zanzibar. When the route proved unprofitable, the steamship was withdrawn and in 1869 the postal agency closed.[30] The British India Steam Navigation Company's East African contract emphasised the need of Zanzibar for an internal postal service that would supersede the unenthusiastic co-operation of consular officials. In 1874 the British Government opposed the establishment of a Post Office because it appeared as an unreasonable charge upon United Kingdom postal revenues. The mercantile community in Zanzibar therefore

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[30] Robson Lowe & Co., Encyclopedia of British Empire Postage Stamps, London, 1948, 219.

approached the Post Office of India which, although anxious for economy, supported the expansion of Indian commerce. An agency opened on 1st October, 1875, after the Post Office of India agreed to pay Rs. 30 per month to the British consular official in charge of mail services and undertook to supply adhesive postage stamps in return for the postal revenue. This arrangement proved inadequate, partly because the staff of the British Consulate considered post office duties relatively unimportant. During 1878 the Government of India opened a professional post office which proved so successful that in 1880 it became a permanent arrangement. Unlike European postal agencies, the Indian office operated money order services in addition to postal facilities. The Zanzibar agency made possible the remission of cash surpluses to India and even in 1879 it had "become of the greatest importance in a place which does not enjoy the usual facilities offered by a bank."[31] During one month alone the office issued money orders worth Rs. 56,000.

The Post Office of India abolished its Zanzibar agency on 10th November, 1895, after the establishment of the British East Africa and Zanzibar Post Office. The new authority at first continued to exchange money orders through the Indian Post Office at Aden with the effect that co mission charges increased. Consequently, the German Post Office exerted

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[31] John Robb, "Report on Zanzibar Post Office", 1879, FOCP: 4659.

pressure upon the General Post Office during 1896 and 1897 to re-introduce a direct money order exchange. The British Foreign office instructed T.E.C. Remington, the Postmaster General, to adopt a 1% commission charge although the service would lose money when this tax had been divided between the postal administrations. However, the United Kingdom Government considered it political inexpedient to increase remittance charges while the French maintained a separate Post Office in Zanzibar.[32]

European political rivalries introduced a further type of postal agency to the Indian Ocean region during the 1880s. These offices secured control of territorial area and its commerce for the benefit of a European country.

The opening of a French post office at Tamatave between 1882 and 1884 marked the first attempt in the Indian Ocean area to challenge British political authority by the operation of a competitive communications service. The British naval squadron off Madagascar could only communicate inland through the French authorities, who seemed unlikely to respect the secrecy of such correspondence. The regulations of the Universal Postal Union prevented the British from opening their own postal agency unless an ocean mail service were already in existence. It was then suggested that a small steamer might be based at Mauritius to operate a service with Madagascar and Zanzibar.[33]

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[32] G.P.O.: 144X-1897: POST: 29-610.

[33] Cmdr. Johnstone to Rear-Adml. Sir W. Hewett, 2.vii.83, FOCP 4840.

The Foreign Office rejected this scheme on the grounds of cost.

The International Bureau announced the opening of the Tamatave office for stamp sales and money order transactions on 22nd December 1882. The Office, like the Indian Agency at Zanzibar but unlike the French service at St. Marie, was situated in a foreign country. The British Government had either to acquiesce in the assertion of French influence or find some valid reason for opposing recognition. The British Postmaster General suggested "that the entry of Madagascar into the Postal Union could provide a way out of the difficulty", but this required that the island should operate a satisfactory postal service of its own.[34] The Foreign Office then proposed that Britain should seek privileges in Madagascar identical to those enjoyed by the French, but the General Post Office opposed such a drastic solution because there was no justification "for hesitation to accept the Agency as belonging to the Postal Union."[35] The United Kingdom Government decided to ignore the French agency and effectively deferred international recognition for a sufficient time to permit a diplomatic solution to be found for both the territorial and postal problems. The Foreign Office withdrew its objections to the recognition of the Agency early in 1884, and as from 2nd June Britain and her Colonies accepted mail

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[34] G.P.O. to F.O., 23.ii.83, G.P.O. 141K-1884: POST: 29-356.

[35] G.P.O. to F.O., 5.vii.83, G.P.O. 141K-1884: POST: 29-356.

for transmission to Tamatave.[36] The British Post Office effectively applied similar tactics against the Italian Post Office at Assab in 1887.[37] However, the procedure faced its strongest test at Lamu.

During 1888 the International Bureau of the Universal Postal Union issued a circular letter advising member administrations that the German Post Office intended to open an agency at Lamu and asking whether recognition would be granted. The General Post Office sought Foreign Office advice, suggesting delay, "until the restoration of peace and good order on the Zanzibar coast".[38] In accordance with the Tamatave precedent, the British Government withheld recognition of the Lamu Office by ignoring the Bureau's Circular. In addition a technical breach of procedure was found in the opening of the Office, "without the promised notice as to the date from which it would commence to operate".[39]

Early in 1889 Mackinnon learned that British India ships carried mail to the German Post Office at Lamu. He telegraphed the information to the General Post Office, who learned that authorisation had been given by the Post Office of India at Simla.[40]

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[36] F.O. to G.P.O., 10.iv.84, G.P.O.: 141K-1884: POST: 29-356.

[37] G.P.O.: 198K-1884: POST: 29-357.

[38] G.P.O. to F.O., 8.x.88, Unnumbered, G.P.O.: 212P-1889: POST: 29-481.

[39] G.P.O. to F.O., 24.i.89, Unnumbered, G.P.O.: 212P-1889: POST: 29-481.

[40] G.P.O.: 212P-18891 POST: 29-481.

A telegram was therefore sent to the Post Office at Aden overruling the instruction of the Indian Government.

The International Bureau announced on 14th March 1889 that, since 33 of the 35 member administrations recognised the adhesion of the Lamu Office to the Union, its admission could no longer be deferred.[41] The British Government still insisted that mails carried on British ships should be passed firstly to the British Consular agent and then to the German Post Office.[42] The German Government protested strongly, but ineffectively, and the Lamu Post Office proved unable to influence political development by the control of communications.[43] The Lamu question, which was larger than a postal dispute, was submitted for arbitration in 1889. Recognition continued to be withheld from the German post office, despite its Union membership, until the negotiations were completed.[44]

Frustrated by obstruction, the German Post Office protested that the Captain of a British-India steamer refused to accept mail bags from the German postal agent. The General Post Office recognised that such a policy would normally constitute a breach of Union regulations and suggested that perhaps the Foreign Office might consider such restrictions invalidated by the arbitration procedures.[45]

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[41] Circular U.P.U. to G.P.O., London, No. 900/37, 14.iii.89, G.P.O.: 212P-1889: POST: 29-481.

[42] Post Office of India to G.P.O., 4.ii.89, No. 8523, G.P.O.: 212P-1889: POST: 29-481.

[43] Reichs Postamt to G.P.O., 19.iv.89, No. I/10859, G.P.O.: 212P-1889: POST: 29-481.
The Lamu P.O. was only part of the rivalry. Even offensive postal

The Foreign Office ruled that British ships could only carry German mail collected from the British Consular Agent.[46]

The International Bureau accepted the British contention that political solutions must precede any postal settlement. The Arbitration Committee submitted conclusions opposing German influence in Lamu and the German post office was suppressed on 1st April, 1891. In diplomatic defeat, the German postal administration announced that it would seek to revise Article XXXII 1 (a) of the Universal Postal Union conventions at the following Vienna Congress.[47]

The Heligoland Agreement established European influence upon the East African mainland without political embarrassments in Europe. Britain therefore fully supported the institution of German post offices at Dar es Salaam, Tanga, Lindi and Bagamoyo in 1890 and 1891. These offices were the origin of a territorial postal service founded upon the concepts of commercial autarchy.[48]

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action was considered, e.g. F.O. to G.P.O., 12.iv.89, "a letter had been received from the India Office stating that copies of the correspondence ... relative to the establishment of Post Offices at Lamu and Mombasa under the Post Office of India, have been forwarded to the Government of India."

[44] F.O. to G.P.O., 4.iv.89, G.P.O.: 212P-1889: POST: 29-481.

[45] G.P.O. to F.O., 25.iv.89, G.P.O.: 212P-1889: POST: 29-481.

[46] F.O. to G.P.O., 6.v.89, G.P.O.: 212P-1889: POST: 29-481.

[47] U.P.U. Circular to G.P.O., 5.v.91, No. 804/37. G.P.O.: 212P-1889: POST: 29-481.

[48] G.P.O.: 269R-1891: POST: 29-515.

A French post office was established in Zanzibar during January 1889 and the General Post Office endorsed its recognition as a part of the Universal Postal Union. The French agency, although a political inconvenience, was tolerated until the international status of the British postal administration in Zanzibar had been determined by amalgamation with the East African service. Its abolition had however been formally agreed on the understanding that the British Consular mail services established in Madagascar during 1884 would also be suppressed.[49] Although the British Government endorsed and gave effect to this arrangement, the French government considered the future of its agency to be one of the issues arising from the proclamation of a British Protectorate over Zanzibar.

The British Government regarded the existence in a British Protectorate of an internationally recognised French Post Office, operating its own postal service and participating in the arrangements of the International Bureau, as an extremely inconvenient anomaly. The Foreign Office wondered whether the agency might "be entirely set aside", and enquired

> "... to what extent, for instance, is it incumbent on the Postal Administration of this country and of Her Majesty's colonies and possessions to recognise

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[49] cf: Ambassador, Paris (Monson), to F.O. (No. 126, Africa). 1.iv.98, FOCP 7077.

the prepayment of postage affected at Zanzibar by means of French stamps."[50]

The Postmaster General replied that defiance of the Article XL (Section 5) of the detailed Regulations of the Washington Convention might not be justified on postal grounds and continued to advocate the use of diplomatic pressures.[51]

In 1899 the Foreign Office considered the suppression of the French postal agency in Zanzibar a remote contingency. The agency survived partly because of political intransigence but especially because it fulfilled a commercial purpose. Although it did not exchange direct mails with the British Empire, the agency received mails from France by the ships that served the French Indian Ocean colonies.[52] The letter rate from Britain to Zanzibar was fixed by the Imperial Post Office at 5d per ounce. By transmitting letters through Paris, where they were readdressed, letters travelled from Britain to the French postal agency at Zanzibar for $3^1/2$d per ounce.[53] British commercial interests were therefore as reluctant as the French Government to see the abolition of the Zanzibar postal

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[50] F.O. to G.P.O., Confidential, 8.xii.98, FOCP 7159.

[51] G.P.O. to F.O., 17.ii.99, FOCP. 7400. G.H.Murray observed "... if the vote [for abolition] were gained; it would not be without its value to the Ottoman Government which is always on the watch for anything useful to it in agitating for the suppression of Foreign Post-Offices [sic] in Turkey, though of course, it would scarcely be conceded by any other country that the two cases are on the same footing."

[52] G.P.O. (G.H.Murray) to F.O. 17.ii.99. FOCP. 7400.

[53] T.H.Mackay: A Plea for Liberty. London, 1891.

agency. The United Kingdom Government saw that this situation offered a possibility of rendering French extra-territorial rights in Zanzibar a commercial irrelevancy. The influence of the legal authority of the British Postmaster-General occasioned the participation of Zanzibar in the Imperial Penny Postage Scheme. Unable to compete commercially, the political significance of the French postal services in Zanzibar diminished considerably. The office was suppressed in June 1904 partly because Britain and France had begun to recognise a mutual political interest in opposing Germany and Austria-Hungary. Moreover, the emphasis of the East African economy had moved from the traditional entrepôt of Zanzibar to the mainland ports; it had become impossible to control political and economic developments upon the East African mainland from Zanzibar.

The mainland postal services of East Africa grew out of the agency system. The Imperial British East Africa Company opened post offices at Lamu and Mombasa in 1890 for letter mails. Having made the necessary investment and appointed Postmasters, the Company then sought additional revenue from parcels post and money order facilities. Money Order services operated through the Zanzibar agency of the Post Office of India. However, the General Post Office closely controlled parcels post which seemed to help British trade, but operated unprofitably, absorbed large subsidies, and proved inconvenient to handle. During February 1890 postage rates focussed the

negotiations between the General Post Office and the Company upon an exchange of parcels.

The Company sought identical rates with those applied to the Indian post office at Zanzibar. The General Post Office decided that East Africa was an autonomous postal administration and initially agreed to an exchange with a rate of 1/1d for the first and 8d for each succeeding pound up to a total of 11 lbs. Approval was withdrawn because the provisional agreement of 5th June 1890 not only specified charges but also stipulated "that the Company is not bound to deliver parcels outside the towns of Mombasa and Lamu."[54] The General Post Office could hardly imply that the East Africa post office might surcharge mail for all other destinations.

The Imperial British East Africa Company demonstrated the demand for parcels post facilities by despatching five parcels to England on the contract mail steamer in January, 1891, "due to a misapprehension on the part of the Company's Post Office."[55] The British Post Office undertook delivery of the parcels without gaining any revenue and resumed negotiations for an agreement with the Company. Before the end of January, arrangements had been made for the regular exchange of parcels between London, Lamu and Mombasa as from 1st May, 1891.[56] The inauguration of the parcels exchange with

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[54] Notes of discussion, F.D.Vincent (I.B.E.A.) to Baines (G.P.O.), undated Feb. 1890. G.P.O.: 97R-1891, POST: 29-503.

[55] Secretary, I.B.E.A. Company (F.D.Vincent) to P.M.G., 9.i.91, G.P.O.: 97R-1891: POST: 29-503.

[56] Parcels Post Agreement, 30.i.91, G.P.O.: 97R-1891; POST: 29-503.

the United Kingdom led the Post Office of India to seek similar facilities. The General Post Office sanctioned negotiations and the service opend during 1892.[57] The Post Office of India also opened parcels services between Zanzibar and German East Africa and from Zanzibar to Mombasa in 1894.[58]

The Company maintained only rudimentary interior mail services. The Church Missionary Society at Freretown operated the Mombasa-Taveta route, while other services were contracted to trading companies or depended upon the chance pasaage of caravans. In 1895 the Postmaster at Mombasa controlled only the interior service to Kikuyu and coastal routes to Vanga and Lamu. The Company lacked the resources to develop inland postal services, for there was little prospect of immediate revenue. The postal authorities in Mombasa became a coordinating and supervisory body presiding over communications services that wee already operating in the interior. The Company only regularised procedures for the overseas shipment of mails.

The Uganda postal service developed solely to serve missionary enterprise and at first had little commercial or administrative significance. The service operated arbitrarily and a systematic coastal route was only established under Foreign Office pressure. Independent caravans often carried letters in return for a minimal payment while urgent despatches merited the employment of special runners. Apart

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[57] Director General, Post Office of India (Fanshawe) to Secretary, Finance and Commerce Dept., Simla, 15.i.92, No. 10822. G.P.O.: 67S-1892; POST: 29-531.

[58] T.E.C.Remmington, MSA, Postal Notice, 1.i.94, K.N.A. PC/MSA, 109/90.

from the supply caravans the system proved irregular and unreliable.

Sir Gerald Portal, commissioned to report upon the advisability of maintaining British presence in Uganda, arranged with Boustead, Ridley and Company in 1894 that mail should be carried at the rate of 40 dollars for each 55 lb load between Zanzibar and Uganda by way of Tabora. The Boustead Ridley Company acted as mail contractors for the Government of German East Africa and, with the Smith Mackenzie concern, virtually monopolised the carriage of missionary supplies.[59] Portal's report on Uganda emphasised the problems of communication and insisted that a railway must be built to Uganda if British rule were to have any effect.[60]

Foreign Office rule and Portal's recommendations made little difference. Internal and special mails travelled by runner while the general correspondence lay at the mercy of contractors. The Boustead Ridley Company insisted on one occasion that their caravans must not remain longer than seven days in Kampala and requested the Administration to co-operate because it would "greatly facilitate the despatch of further caravans".[61]

A mail service subject to central direction rather than local improvisation was established only in 1896 as a result of Foreign

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[59] Sir Gerald Portal (Zanzibar) to Colville (Uganda), 31.xi.93, No. 250, ESA. A31-1.

[60] Reports relating to Uganda by Sir Gerald Portal, Africa No. 2 (1894), March 1894C-7303, enclosing: Sir Gerald Portal to Rosebury, 1.xi.93, No. 140 Uganda.

[61] Boustead Ridley & CO. (J.R.Boustead) to Acting Commissioner KLA, 21.v.94, ESA A1-1.

Office advice. The attention of the Commissioner and Consul General, E.J.L.Berkeley, was drawn by a private note to the practice of officers in the Uganda service arranging that relatives and friends should send parcels care of the Foreign Office. The private note requested firstly that Berkeley should cause that practice to cease and secondly pointed out that some properly constituted postal service ought to be opened, at least between Uganda and Mombasa.[62]

The Mainland Post Office and Overseas Communications 1895-1914

The European occupation of the mainland and investment in railway construction drew East Africa into trading relationships that extended beyond the Indian Ocean. Although the submarine telegraph and shipping companies readjusted slowly to the changing pattern of commerce, the post office of the East Africa and Uganda Protectorates, serving a largely immigrant public with substantial European interests, was more interested in the development of services to countries beyond the Indian Ocean. From 1895 the overseas communication companies and the Post Office served different priorities. The Eastern Telegraph Company tried to maintain the extra-territorial rights it had enjoyed when the Coast was under the sovereignty of the Sultan of Zanzibar and the Imperial British East Africa Company. When the

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[62] Commissioner KLA (E.J.L.Berkeley), Private Circular of 26.iii.96, ESA. A5-2.
Compare: Tucker, Alfred R., Eighteen Years in Uganda, London, 1908, Vol. II, 119.

Postmaster General regarded the cable company's claims as an infringement of his statutory monopoly, rate reductions ceased to be the subject of serious discussion. The Post Office lay between a vociferous public opinion and an inflexible monopoly company that served the strategic purposes of the British Government. The shipping companies, faced with strong German and French competition, proved more adaptable, but only in 1912 did the Union-Castle line begin a direct service between East Africa and the United Kingdom.

After 1895 the Eastern Telegraph Company maintained its advantageous status in Zanzibar, where it secured a freehold for its cable landing station.[63] The Government of the East Africa Protectorate refused to grant a similar concession and forbade the Company to deal directly with the public, a privilege exercised before 1895. The Company responded by advertising the cable rate from Mombasa to Europe at shgs. 2/6d., with an additional Post Office delivery charge of 6d.

Public criticism unfairly focused upon Departmental inflexibility and led the Postmaster General, J.T.Gosling, to canvass the development of a competitive service. During 1909 the Department resolved to erect a land line to Tanga and construct a wireless station at Mombasa for communication with German East Africa. The

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[63] e.g. J. Denison-Pender (E.T.C.) to W.Lloyd Mathews (Treasurer, Zanzibar), 17.v.00, E.A.P. & T. 2434/14.

Company, threatened with a revenue loss of £2,000, conceded an addition of 4 cents per word to the Mombasa terminal charge. Although the new rate dissuaded the Post Office from competition, public charges were not reduced.

In 1907 the introduction of a cental currency in the East Africa and Uganda Protectorates caused a further readjustment of cable rates. The Company and the Post Office agreed that while terminal rates should be levied at Mombasa and inland offices to cover Protectorate costs, the Company would pay no charge for telegrams passed to its own office. The Company also undertook to introduce a uniform terminal charge for the whole of British East Africa at a later date.[64]

The Colonial Office approved some revision of the Protectorate-Company relations but recognised that concessions in East Africa might lead to a world-wide readjustment of the Eastern Telegraph Company's political influence. The Company's Board of Directors quietly approved the revision of its relations with the East Africa Post Office, without compromising the larger issues of policy. The Eastern Telegraph Company aimed to deal directly with the public, to secure the abolition of the Post Office terminal charge, and to hold its property by freehold title.

Inaction characterised the relations between the Cable Company

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[64] Traffic Accountant, E.T.C. (W.Hibberdine) to P.M.G., NBI (J.T.Gosling), 20.xii.06, E.A.P. 7 T. 700/14.

and the Post Office. The two institutions, mutually dependent, both lacked the power to determine communications policies. Competition could disturb the established pattern, although it seemed as unrealstic for a mainland government monopoly as for the world's most powerful cable combine. Only the development of wireless telegraphy during the First World War provided the Post Office of the East Africa and Uganda Protectorates with a potential means of undermining the cable company's control of East Africa's external communications.

The ocean mail steamship services proved even further beyond the control and influence of the East African authorities. The Government of the East Africa Protectorate hoped to increase its revenues by the operation of a direct steamship service to the United Kingdom. Envisaged as an advantage for the export trade, such a service would also provide competition for European shipping lines and encourage white settlement. The British-India Steam Navigation Company's service between Aden and Zanzibar no longer seemed adequate for East Africa's requirements. It suffered competition from the German East Africa Line, the Messagerie Maritimes, and the Austrian Lloyd Company. Transhipment at Aden proved not merely inconvenient but a disincentive for traders to ship cargoes in British vessels.[65]

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[65] Inter-Departmental Committee Report 1904, Confidential, Appendix A, G.P.O.: 257I-1908: POST: 29-1001.

A number of commercial houses working on the East African Coast shipped by the Continental Lines because it seemed that the British-India and Smith-Mackenzie concerns co-operated to control much of East Africa's trade.[66]

The British-India Company faced severe competition. Although Hamburg corrugated iron was dearer than British manufacture, in East Africa it cost less on a cost-insurance-freight basis. Because the sea freight for corrugated iron was the same whether by the British-India Company or the German East Africa line, and the price of the commodity was higher in Germany, it seemed that the German Railways must be heavily subsidising both the shipping company and German industry. This arrangement, the so-called "East Africa Tariff", was established in 1895 and covered the German Railway system as well as the Netherlands Railway to Pretoria and Johannesburg. Despite such favourable arrangements and a Government subsidy, the German shipping line failed to pay a dividend between 1890 and 1894, then reached a maximum of 8°/o before collapsing in 1901 to 2°/o and failing to pay again in 1903.[67] The British India Company tried to meet the problem in 1902 by supplementing their Aden mail contract service with direct steamers from London to East Africa.

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[66] Inter-Departmental Committee Minutes of Evidence, J.M.Boustead, 22.xi.04, G.P.O.: 257I-1908: POST: 29-1001.

[67] Inter Departmental Committee Report Appendix G (VI) Enclosure No. 2, 'Brief History of the German East Africa Line', 8.vi.04, GPO: 257I-1908: POST: 29-1001.

The service commenced against strong opposition from British companies/serving South Africa.[68]

A Select Committee of the House of Commons, appointed in 1902 to consider Imperial Steamship subsidies on a world wide scale, sought an inexpensive way to preserve the commercial supremacy of the British mercantile marine from the competition of Continental lines which received heavy government subsidies. Only East Africa, they felt, merited special consideration and expressed surprise that, although the B.I.S.N. Company operated a direct service from London, mail was still transhipped at Aden. The report led to the appointment of an advisory Inter-Departmental Committee to consider the East African problem.

Ship owners provided most of the evidence submitted to the Inter-Departmental Committee. Although the British-India Steam Navigation Company and the Union Castle combine were the only two British concerns with an East African interest, representatives of the Houston line, Bucknall Steamship lines and the Clan line gave evidence by virtue of their Companies' interests in South Africa, while the Elder Dempster Company submitted an account of its experience with German competition in West Africa. Consular and official reports constituted the rest of the evidence.[69]

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[68] Inter-Departmental Committee Evidence, J.L.Mackay, 12.xi.04, G.P.O.: 257I-1908: POST: :29-1001.

[69] Inter-Departmental Committee Report 1904, G.P.O.: 257I-1908; POST: 29-1001.

The Majority Report counselled that one favoured shipping line should receive a Government subsidy for a direct service to encourage competition between British and Continental lines, and develop East African trade. This recommendation became effective only in 1910 and then because of pressures for European settlement in East Africa Protectorate. The Report made little immediate difference to East Africa's communications. The British India Steam Navigation Company's contract was subject to annual renewal, and their Indian and United Kingdom direct services continued to operate without subsidy. The Messagerie Maritimes and Austrian Lloyd Company's services also continued to transport East African mails. Between 1905 and 1910 the most significant change of the pattern came from the revision of the German East Africa Line's timetable.

The Heligoland Agreement of 1890, which divided East Africa into British and German spheres of influence, stimulated the establishment of a German shipping line to East Africa. The Company at first operated a four weekly service to Durban which, with state assistance, was later extended into a fortnightly service. The Company began with two steamers totalling 4,394 tons. By 1903 nineteen vessels were operated, with an average of 3,730 tons.[70] The frequency and quality of the service proved the line quite important

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[70] Inter-Departmental Committee Report, Appendix G (VI), Enclosure No. 2, "Brief History of the German East Africa Line" by William Ward, Consul, Hamburg, 8.vi.04. G.P.O.: 2571-1908: POWT: 29-1001.

for the carriage of mail between Britain and East Africa.

The German East Africa line rearranged their timetable in 1907. The fast passenger steamers were to operate a three weekly service while the cargo boats would leave every six weeks. The British Post Office forwarded mail for British, German and Portuguese East Africa by the main line packets from Genoa, and parcels were carried from Aden. The new timetable introduced a call for the passenger vessels at Dover, in order no doubt to solicit the custom of intending British settlers, and substituted Naples for Genoa as a postal port of call for the cargo vessels. The revised timetable introduced a clash between German and British India sailings from Aden on every alternate despatch.[71] The revised timetable enabled an 'overland' service to Aden and thence by German packet for the same cost as despatches sent by sea to Aden and thence by German packet. The use of the revised German service for postal purposes was undertaken by the British Post Office with almost no thought of the British India line's contract. British India sailings continued to be used when there were no German vessels, or when the dates of departure from Aden coincided, but the postal purpose of the B.I.S.N. Contract had been rendered obsolete.

The East African economy did not change significantly between 1904 and 1910. Exports from the East Africa Protectorate amounted

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[71] GPO: 290H-1907, POST: 29-1050.

to a mere £157,000 in 1909, but the Inter-Departmental Committee's Report became the model for the reorganisation of overseas mail services. The revision of the German East Africa line's timetable made the British India Company's contract from Aden to Zanzibar irrelevant and it also seemed that a service between Durban, Mombasa and the United Kingdom would open new markets and attract South African settlers to the Highlands of the East Africa Protectorate.

The British India Company's mail subsidy in 1910 cost £9,000 and yielded a postal revenue of £1,800. During May 1910 the Union-Castle Steamship Company proposed to operate a four weekly service in both directions from Britain to Port Natal via Suez and East Africa. The Company naturally wished for some assistance in the payment of the Suez Canal dues, estimated at £30,000 to £40,000 per annum. The British Post Office suggested that the subsidy for the Aden-Zanzibar contract should be reduced to an annual payment of £4,500, the balance subsidising the new Union Castle service.[72]

Meanwhile the Crown Agents entered into an Agreement with the Union-Castle Company without making any reference to the Post Office. The Company was guaranteed all Government passengers and freight at specified rates but its timetable clashed with the British India Contract, so that the Union-Castle service seemed "practically useless

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[72] G.P.O. to Treasury, No. 355671 of 6.viii.10, GPO: 105L-1910: POST: 29-1050.

for mail".[73] However, deprived of Government traffic, and with an insignificant mail subsidy the British-India Company ceased to operate regular service from Aden to Zanzibar after July, 1913 and early in the following year amalgamated with the Peninsula and Oriental Steam Navigation Company. East Africa gained a direct mail and passenger steamship service but only foreign competition prevented monopoly control over its overseas postal services.

Overseas Communications and the East African Mainland.

The partition of East Africa secured British commercial and strategic interests and extinguished the inter-national political significance of overseas communications. The great depression of the late nineteenth century, political difficulties in South Africa, and increasing competition from France and Germany transformed Britain's preoccupation with Indian trade, although the initial British support of Indian Ocean trading patterns had effectively determined the position of the United Kingdom in the partition of East Africa. The development of the interior was encouraged because mail steamer services drew attention to ports that would serve the interests of worldwide strategy while cable landing stations needed security from foreign control.

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[73] G.P.O. Memorandum of 26.viii.10 on Agreement of 12.viii.10, Crown Agents and Union-Castle Mail Steamship Company, GPO: 105L-1910; POST: 29-961. See also: P. and T. Annual Report, 1910-11.

Mainland occupation in East Africa transferred initiative from the shipping and telegraph companies to the United Kingdom and colonial governments. Posts and telegraphs services in the interior seemed essential not merely for effective government, but also to stimulate commercial and agricultural enterprise. The scale of East Africa's communications expanded dramatically between 1890 and 1905. Much official endeavour until 1925 absorbed itself in the creation of a Departmental bureaucracy that could handle a rising volume of traffic, extend facilities, and operate economically.

Chapter III

THE CENTRALISATION OF COMMUNICATIONS 1895-1912

The Imperial and East African Governments regarded centralised administration of posts and telegraphs as economical and efficient because the small volume of traffic did not justify the creation of several competing bureaucracies. Between 1895 and 1912, the Governments and the Post Office devised a variety of structures for administrative control. They sought effective authorities that could function with a minimum of reference to the Governments of either the East Africa or Uganda Protectorates. Rivalries between the two Governments and the senior officers of the Department frustrated the attempts to organise a coherent bureaucracy. The interests of the Governments conflicted while the two principal branches of the posts and telegraphs service had evolved from the different traditions of the United Kingdom and India.

The postal service developed out of the Indian agency at Zanzibar, the system of the Imperial British East Africa Company, and the Uganda mail routes. In 1895, the East Africa and Zanzibar services were amalgamated. Two years later the two post offices were separately constituted because the construction of the Uganda Railway had greatly increased the volume of business on the mainland. The evident failure of separate authorities to handle mail

safely and expeditiously forced the East Africa and Uganda Governments to amalgamate their postal systems in 1901. The reorganisation only became operationally effective in 1904 when J.T.Gosling, a professionally trained official, was appointed Postmaster General. As the only European in the postal service, he found little difficulty in asserting his authority and in maintaining his position. His relations with the Governments were satisfied by his effective operation of the service and strained only by his consistent advocacy of efficiency.

The centralisation of the telegraph service proved a less acceptable process. Telegraph lines represented a heavy Government capital expenditure and there was a consequent desire to see operating profits pay for the interest and sinking fund charges. An even greater obstacle to centralisation was the staff. The employees of the telegraph service included a high proportion of Europeans, partly because it was felt that engineering was somewhat beyond African capabilities but also because the telegraphs were the principal channel for state communications in time of emergency. The European employees had a clear self interest in a decentralised telegraph service, because local control multiplied the available senior positions. The expatriate telegraph staff founded their claims upon the precedents of the Indian system, in which most of them had been trained. In 1901, there were separate telegraph authorities for the coastal line between Mombasa and Lamu, the Uganda Railway Telegraph,

and the East Africa and Uganda Protectorates' lines. In 1905 this overlapping arrangement brought about the reorganisation of the telegraphs under financially separate engineering services for each Protectorate with a common headquarters at Nairobi, the control of traffic being transferred to the Postmaster General. In substance, the East African Governments abandoned the Indian system of a separate telegraph service and, from deference to the established positions of personnel, authorised a separate engineering branch. The operation of the Posts and Telegraphs under divided control caused constant friction between the Governments and the two branches of the service. However, it proved impossible to reconcile the interests of the operating and engineering authorities.

In 1912, the Governments decided that the persistent rivalries between the postal and telegraph authorities should be curbed by an amalgamation. The organisation of the services was incompatible with the volume of traffic and caused the British Colonial Office much trouble. The reorganisation amounted to the merging of the senior staff in both branches so that no established officer would lose position, prestige or benefit. Although some inefficient personnel would be retained, it was hoped that a coherent bureaucracy would minimize the delays and the vexatious problems of inter-departmental conflict. The Postmaster General became the responsible head of both services and the Chief Telegraph Engineer gained the rank of Deputy Postmaster General. Although salaries and positions were unified into a coherent structure, no attempt was made to define

the financial relations between the Department and the two Governments.

The Indian practice in the administration of Posts and Telegraphs ended in 1912, but the amalgamation functioned as a Government convenience. It had less relation to the volume of traffic than to the embarrassments of the inter-departmental recognition that the Posts and Telegraphs should be a unified inter-territorial service under a management responsible for efficient operation.

The Centralisation of the Postal Service

The Governments of the East Africa and Uganda Protectorates centralised their postal services in response to an increasing volume of business. Although during the administration of the Imperial British East Africa Company the mainland posts had been under a common authority, in 1895 the Governments decided to give a large measure of autonomy to the inland service while merging the Zanzibar and Mombasa Post Offices. When the construction of the Uganda Railway greatly increased the volume of business on the mainland, it became inefficient to leave administration in charge of a Postmaster General who spent a considerable amount of time in Zanzibar. During 1899 the Governments terminated the Zanzibar amalgamation so that the Post Office would improve its service to the staff of the Uganda Railway and reduce inland postage rates. In 1901 the Governments of the East Africa and Uganda Protectorates

amalgamated their postal services as a matter of administrative convenience and within two years established uniform rates of postage.

The 1894 Committee on the Administration of East Africa advised the amalgamation of the mainland and Zanzibar Post Offices as a means of maximising the profits of both postal services. In effect, the large revenues of the Zanzibar service would be reinvested along the coast and in the interior. The British Postmaster General, the Duke of Norfolk, considered that there should be separate administrations under unified management issuing separate stamps to increase philatelic revenue and suggested that both territories would enter the Universal Postal Union in order to achieve full benefit of transit rates although their finances would be kept quite distinct.[1] Thomas Remington, who acted as Postmaster for the Company, was offered the position of Postmaster General in the joint service. He strongly advocated the amalgamation in the interests of economy and simplicity because the external arrangements of the Zanzibar Post Office would not need to be duplicated; the Indian postal agency would be extinguished without embarrassment; and considerable savings could be made in staff costs. Sir Arthur Hardinge, the Commissioner of the East Africa Protectorate, had no hesitation in

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[1] G.P.O. (S.Walpole) to F.O., 13.vii.95, FOCP 6761.

supporting Remington's proposals, anticipating that Uganda "might eventually be brought" into the scheme.[2]

The new structure promised an annual revenue of £1,000 in return for an expenditure of £730, but its economies soon proved superficial. The Department merely fused the Zanzibar and East African coast postal services, for the cost of the interior route to Kikuyu was charged to the Transport Vote. The amalgamation terminated on 1st April, 1899 because the construction of Uganda Railway increased the Department's duties on the mainland and in the year 1897-1898 caused the actual revenue to exceed the Estimate. The postal service produced a sizeable profit and even the costly inland runner route showed a surplus of £266 over the expenditure of £581. The 1899-1900 Estimates for the mainland Post Office anticipated that although expenditure would increase by £1,583, revenue would rise by £2,080.

When the British Post Office required East Africa to participate in the Imperial Penny Postage Scheme, affecting some 80°/o of the external traffic, the service faced an immediate revenue loss of Rs. 17,19,5. Expenditure also increased because the opening of the railway to Nairobi led the Department to establish post offices under trained postmasters at Mazeras, Kibwezi, Voi and Makindu and to allocate Rs. 4,500 for clerical staff.[3] In addition, Money Order

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[2] Hardinge to Salisbury, 6.vii.95, No. 122, enclosing: Remington to Hardinge, 6.vii.95, FOCP. 6761.

[3] Remington-Hardinge, 10.xi.99, ESA. FOCP.

revenue during the year ending 1900, totalling Rs. 1,853,971, would be lost when railway construction reached the Uganda frontier. Government investment in the Uganda Railway had completely altered the financial basis of the postal system and the East Africa Protectorate possessed only two alternative policies. It could either follow a policy of retrenchment in 1901-02 or extend the East Africa Protectorate Post Office into Uganda.

The Governments of the Uganda and East Africa Protectorates realised in 1899 that some form of postal fusion would be in their mutual self-interest. Uganda would gain the advantages of a properly constituted service and Universal Postal Union membership, with all its implications for postage rates, while the expenses would be smaller than those required for the creation of an autonomous Department. The East Africa Protectorate would retain railway postal revenue and thus prevent the Post Office from incurring a deficit.

The British Government suggested an amalgamation of the East Africa and Uganda mail services in 1896. When the East Africa and Zanzibar Post Office applied for Universal Postal Union membership, the French Post Office enquired upon the status of Uganda. The British Foreign Office found this interest a good opportunity to impose some system into the communications of East Africa but Uganda possessed only a rudimentary postal service hampered by the costs of transport. The Governments chose to maintain two autonomous systems

and to defer Uganda's entry into the Union because there seemed no justification for incurring a heavy expenditure by subsidising the carriage of private mails.[4]

Remington, however, strongly urged that a postal system should be introduced in Uganda under the auspices of the East Africa-Zanzibar administration. He advocated that Uganda should issue seperate stamps for the sake of philatelic revenue and claimed that an efficient service would assist in the development of the Protectorate. However, the Governments postponed amalgamation of the Post Offices pending the construction of a railway to Lake Victoria because transport costs by porterage would be too great. The Church Missionary Society reintroduced the question of amalgamation in 1897 and again in 1899. The Uganda Government rejected the scheme on grounds of cost in 1897 and deferred the proposal in 1899 pending the arrival of Sir Harry Johnston, who had been appointed as Special Commissioner for the Protectorate to establish an economical administration.[5]

Johnston accepted the idea of postal amalgamation for both efficiency and economy, and as "... a step towards the eventual fusion of the two Protectorates". He submitted a scheme for Post Office reorganisation to the Foreign Office during November, 1899, after discussions with Remington and Craufurd, the Acting Commissioner at

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[4]Consul General, Zanzibar (B.S./Cave) to Berkeley, 28.iv.96. ESA A31-4.

[5]Oliver, R.A., Sir Harry Johnston and the Scramble for Africa, 1957.

Mombasa. Johnston suggested amalgamation of the two services under the Postmaster General in Mombasa, giving Uganda automatic membership of the Universal Postal Union. The East Africa Protectorate would assume financial responsibility for the carriage of mails to Naivasha, where they would be taken over by Uganda Protectorate runners. Revenue from the sale of the existing stock of Uganda postage stamps would defray the costs of the internal mail service and the East Africa Protectorate's post offices in Uganda.[6]

This scheme more closely represented Johnston's outrage at the established practices of the East Africa Post Office than any detailed future plan. The Uganda Estimates allowed for the cost of internal mail carriage but made no allowance for the charge of 50 rupees levied by East Africa on mail bags weighing 30 lbs., in return for which the bags were forwarded by train to Naivasha. Moreover, the East Africa Protectorate retained all profit from affixing its own stamps to inward and outward Uganda mails at Mombasa, and also charged Rs. 150 each month for clerical expenses. However, amalgamation would enable the Indian coolies employed upon railway construction to send money orders to their families, for Uganda had no postal organisation capable of dealing with remittances.

Craufurd accepted Johnston's scheme with the reservation that Rs. 1 per lb. should be levied for the carriage of parcels to

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[6]Johnston to F.O., 11.x.99, Uganda No. 8, ESA. A34-8.

Naivasha if mails were transported free of charge. He felt that the retention of Uganda's postal revenue would cover the costs of the postmasters and the external transport of mail. In effect, Johnston and Craufurd agreed to merge the postal accounts under the East Africa Protectorate Treasury. Johnston abandoned the scheme when he realised that the equally informal Customs Agreement operated unfairly against Uganda. He therefore drew up a new and more specific draft providing for Uganda to contribute towards the Postmaster General's salary, and pay £400 each year to defray the cost of transporting Uganda mails between Mombasa and Naivasha in addition to meeting all internal mail carriage costs. The East Africa Protectorate would be required in return to appoint and pay postmasters at Naivasha, Fort Ugowe (Kisumu), Kampala (Mengo) and Entebbe (Port Alice).[7]

When Hardinge, the Commissioner of the East Africa Protectorate, learned that the probable deficit on the Uganda Postal service in the year ending 1901 would amount to some £280, he suggested that Uganda should either be obliged to make up the difference when its service showed a deficit and receive a payment when a surplus was produced, or that the finances should be entrusted solely to East Africa. Hardinge was also quite rigid upon parcels rates: he noticed that the railway charge from Mombasa to the Kedong totalled $3^1/2$ annas per lb. and asserted that East Africa would be obliged to charge

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[7]Johnston to Hardinge, 25.iii.00, ESA. A32-8.

5 annas to cover its expenses. An alternative put forward was that the Uganda Transport Department should take responsibility for their carriage while the East Africa Post Office would levy a handling charge of 1d per lb.[8] Although the British Treasury ruled that East Africa should provide all the necessary monies and recoup itself out of revenue, the main difficulty, as Johnston realised, was that the Uganda service would not pay, at least for some years to come. On the Treasury's calculations the carriage of Uganda mails, external and internal, would cost £3,380. The anticipated total revenue for the year ending 1901 amounted to £2,830 obliging the East Africa Protectorate to seek a supplementary Grant-in-Aid. Johnston considered that the urgency of establishing effective postal services outweighted the minor details of finance. He therefore not only accepted Hardinge's proposal to charge 5 annas per lb. for parcels carried to Uganda but even agreed that an additional 3 annas should be levied to cover the entire cost of transport within Uganda.[9] Johnston and Hardinge approved the revised scheme of complete amalgamation under the East Africa Protectorate at the end of June. During the following month the East Africa Protectorate extended the Railhead post office into Uganda.

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[8] Hardinge to Salisbury, 30.iv.00, No. 140. GPO: 220H-1907: POST: 29-944.

[9] Johnston to Hardinge, 7.vii.00, Unnumbered, ESA. A32-8.

In July 1900 the two Governments deferred postal amalgamation because they were already considering the Estimates for the year 1901-1902. However they agreed to recruit three postmasters from India avoiding a supplementary vote by informally transferring the financial responsibility and profits of the Railhead Post Office to the East Africa Protectorate. The Governments decided that as soon as the United Kingdom authorities approved amalgamation, Remington would send his Postmasters to Uganda and that in the meantime he would train suitable employees in the Mombasa Post Office.[10] Difficulty ensued late in 1900 when Sir Charles Eliot succeeded Sir Arthur Hardinge as commissioner for the East Africa Protectorate. All that remained was to bring postal amalgamation into operation once the Estimate was sanctioned but the scheme almost foundered because Eliot knew nothing of the agreement and its terms had to be renegotiated.

Sir Charles Eliot had been in East Africa for just over a month when Johnston took the opportunity to recapitulate the terms of the postal fusion. Johnston's complaint remained the surcharge on parcels. He assumed that the draft agreement and the establishment of East Africa Protectorate Post Offices at Earthworks and Railhead had secured the reduction of the 50 rupee charge on parcel bags sent between Mombasa and Railhead as from 1st April, 1900, although the

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[10] Hardinge to Johnston, 30.viii.00, No. 40 ESA A31-9.

Government of Uganda had paid the charges down to 19th January, 1901. Johnston, prepared to continued his Protectorate's payment of the charge, anticipated that it might be necessary for all revenue from the railway post offices to be credited to Uganda, save for a deduction for the costs of the Postmasters. The dispute was referred to the Foreign Office.[11]

Neither the British Government nor the East Africa Protectorate administration sympathised with the Special Commissioner's opinions. East Africa carried Uganda's postal service on its Estimates, while the Foreign Office noticed that the scheme would convert East Africa's postal profit into a deficit of £2,405.[12] The British Government strongly believed that amalgamation should be accompanied by the abolition of the parcels surcharge. The General Post Office, for example, complained that "such a charge would be directly opposed to the stipulations of the Convention governing Union countries" and would preclude Uganda from participation in the Universal Postal Union, which insisted upon the prepayment of postage.[13] On 23rd March Eliot wrote to Johnston fully endorsing the amalgamation, but he refused to refund the amount of the surcharge already paid by Uganda. Although even the 8 anna per pound surcharge approved by Johnston and Eliot technically contravened Postal Union

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[11] Johnston to F.O., 14.ii.01, Unnumbered, ESA A38-4.

[12] F.O. (Cranborne) to Treasury, 19.ii.01, FOCP 7690.

[13] F.O. (F. Bertie) to Johnston, 15.ii.01, No. 33, enclosing G.P.O. (G.H.Murray) to F.O., 9.i.01, No. 2770, ESA. A35-1.

agreements, the British Post Office was persuaded to give reluctant approval. Johnston was not satisfied. He had hoped to retain control of the Uganda internal postal service for a further year until completion of the railway, feeling that communications were inadequate for the satisfactory control of Uganda's mail runners from Mombasa. Johnston never really aspired to introduce a true postal amalgamation but rather sought favoured treatment for Uganda's external communications, while retaining full control of local services.

The amalgamation of April, 1901, merged the postal accounts at the expense of Uganda's direct control over its service. Nevertheless, suspicions that East Africa profited at Uganda's expense proved persistent. In the short term, however, public and government opinion in Uganda devoted itself to destroying the eight anna surcharge on parcels.

The East Africa Protectorate Post Office had no legal existence until 17th August, 1899, when implicit recognition had been given by the application of the 1866 Indian Post Office Act, in so far as it prescribed offences against the Post Office. During 1900 the Foreign Office strengthened these provisions by applying the 1898 Indian Post Office Act to East Africa.[14] In addition the Act laid down rates and

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[14] F.O. to Johnston, 3.iv.00, No. 86, G.P.O. 220H-1907: POST: 29-944.

conditions for the carriage of mails. Although the mail services amalgamated in 1901, the Governments did not clarify the legal position of the Post Office. When the Indian Post Office Act of 1898 was applied to Uganda on 17th April, 1900, the schedules attached to the Act specified different inland postage rates for each Protectorate. G.F.M.Ennis, the Principal Judge of Uganda, then submitted that, because each Protectorate had its own laws, the 1901 "amalgamation could only be for Administrative purposes... the Inland system of each remaining intact."[15]

The legal status of the post office in Uganda was determined primarily because Johnston, Hardinge, Eliot and the Foreign Office had all approved of the eight anna per lb. surcharge on parcels for Uganda. Resentment increased considerably when, on 5th November, 1901, Sir Charles Eliot ceased to levy the surcharge on parcels for the eastern side of the Lake, after that territory had been transferred to the East Africa Protectorate. The Government of Uganda admitted that the payment might have been desirable before the railway established public services to the Lake but considered that in 1902 the charge was unreasonable, particularly because most parcels did not travel beyond Entebbe or Kampala. The Government could not understand why residents in Entebbe should pay an additional Rs. 5-8-0 for an 11 lb. parcel, particularly when Uganda Government vessels carried the mail

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[15] Principal Judge, Uganda Protectorate (G.F.M.Ennis) to Commissioner, EBE, 25.ii.03. No. 5, GPO: 220H-1907: POST: 29-944.

between the two stations free of charge. When Ennis was asked for his opinion upon the legality of the 8 annas surcharge, he reported that the Indian Post Office Act, 1898, had been brought into force in Uganda on 20th May, 1900, and that Schedule 7 specified 4 annas as the maximum postal rate for parcels.[16] This Act established the Postmaster General's monopoly of carrying mail under specified charges and meant that the Post Office technically contravened the Laws governing its operation. At the end of 1902 the Foreign Office approved the abolition of the eight annas surcharge.[17] The surcharge problem drew attention to the need of Uganda for comprehensive postal legislation. In 1903 Ennis drafted a 'Uganda Post Office Ordinance' in complete conformity with East Africa Protectorate Legislation, and turned the 1901 postal amalgamation from a legal fiction into reality.

The Centralisation of the Telegraphs

The Governments placed the telegraph system under centralised control in 1904, vesting the operation in the Postmaster General and creating an inter-Protectorate engineering authority. Telegraphs presented far greater problems than the postal service because they carried urgent government communications, were expensive although not highly efficient, and employed a substantial proportion of European staff. Governments took considerable interest in telegraph

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[16] G.F.M.Ennis to Commissioner, EBE, 22.ix.02, No. 174, ESA A32-9.

[17] Acting Commissioner (MSA (F.J.Jackson) to Commissioner, EBE, 3.x.02, No. 34, ESA A31-11.

administration and at first concluded that decentralisation guaranteed official responsibility.

Decentralised control also originated in the circumstances of construction. The Uganda Railway telegraph was created as an entirely separate organisation to the Mombasa-Lamu line, which had been erected in 1890 by the Imperial British East Africa Company and passed to the direct control of the Postmaster General in 1895. The Uganda Protectorate acquired the railway wires beyond Kisumu in 1901 and established an autonomous authority. The transfer of Uganda's Eastern Provinces to the East Africa Protectorate in 1902 complicated this arrangement when the telegraph between Kisumu and the Siyo River passed into Post Office management. In 1902 four separate authorities handled telegrams sent from Lamu to Entebbe.

Sir Harry Johnston concluded that a centralised control of the telegraphs would correct some of the deficiencies in the service. Although including telegraph amalgamation in his larger schemes for the fusion of the two Protectorates, Johnston wished to reduce Uganda's payments to the Railway for telegram transmission. He even complained to Hardinge that it seemed "humiliating that our two Protectorates should be held in tutelage by this Railway."[18] Johnston suggested that Uganda might make an annual contribution towards the

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[18] Johnston to Hardinge, 21.iii.00, Unnumbered. ESA: A32-8.

cost of the telegraphs, which would be financed by East Africa, receiving free transmission of Government messages in return. However, the Railway wished to retain control of their telegraph, which really existed for railway operating purposes and the East Africa Protectorate felt that the transfer would lead to a further expensive liability. In 1900 the Governments decided that Uganda should be responsible for its own telegraph construction costs, and for future operation under the general supervision of the Railway Telegraph Superintendent.[19] On 1st April, 1901, the Uganda Protectorate assumed responsibility for the telegraph wires beyond Kisumu. The Uganda Estimates for the year ending 1902 provided a sum of £4,342 for maintenance and a capital payment of £19,435 for the temporary telegraph built by the railway. Uganda became a party to the International Telegraph Convention, as part of the British delegation, and the telegraph offices at Naivasha, Nakuru, Eldama, Ravine, Fort Ternan, Port Florence and Kisumu, Mumias, Iganga, Jinja, Kampala and Mengo, and Entebbe opened for international traffic.

There seemed no alternative to decentralised control. Railway management had not given satisfaction in Uganda and it appeared likely that the Postmaster General in Mombasa would be too remote to exercise effective supervision. Local control appeared to be the only solution to indifferent construction and the unsatisfactory behaviour of the

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[19] F.O. (C. Hill) to Treasury, 24.viii.00, FOCP: 7675.

staff.[20] However, the structure proved expensive because it produced inflexibility in staff allocation, led to the creation of three separate and expensive unallocated stores for telegraph material, and ran counter to the development of common services between the two Protectorates. The inefficiency and expense of the telegraph services formed an interesting comparison with the increasingly integrated Post Office. There was neither co-ordination of development policy nor centralisation of technical procedures. By the beginning of 1902 the Government realised that further reorganisation was necessary.

Reorganisation became an urgent matter when Uganda transfered its Eastern Province to the East Africa Protectorate on 1st April, 1902. East Africa gained control of the Kisumu-Siyo River telegraph and the Londiani-Eldama telephone lines. The Governments appointed Edward Stallibrass, who built the Railway Telegraph lines, General Superintendent of all telegraphs in British East Africa to co-ordinate maintenance work. Even so, the Postmaster General still retained complete control over the Mombasa-Lamu telegraph during the year ending 1903. The Kisumu-Siyo River line passed immediately under Stallibrass' control for maintenance purposes and its operation was transferred to the Postmaster General on 1st August, 1902.[21] Stallibrass' work as General Superintendent came down to the problem of finance.

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[20] Johnston to F.O., No. 13 Uganda, 15.i.01. ESA: A38-4.

[21] Treasurer MSA (C.C.Bowring) to Commissioner MSA, 24.v.04, No. 68, ESA SMP. 290/06.

He recognised the unsatisfactory nature of construction and therefore recommended the introduction of iron poles and the replacement of copper wire by iron, which weighed between three and four hundred pounds per mile. He defended his staff from criticism by observing that "From the natives of the country, I fear very little is to be obtained."[22]

Stallibrass strongly advised the amalgamation of the various telegraph operating authorities, but his real interests were technical rather than administrative. In 1899 he considered the use of the Marconi system of wireless telegraphy in East Africa and later carried out experiments by instruction of the Uganda Railway Committee. Wireless Telegraphy seemed an admirable solution to the difficulties of using the Uganda Protectorate telegraph wires to communicate shipping instructions between Kisumu and Entebbe. Although the Uganda Telegraphs were unreliable and the Railway had to pay for messages transmitted, innovation was discouraged by the slow speed of all wireless telegraph apparatus at that time as well as by the probable effects of atmospheric disturbance.[23]

By the end of the first half of the financial year 1902-03 telegraph maintenance in both East Africa and Uganda Protectorates had been placed under a central authority. The Uganda, New Provinces,

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[22] General Superintendent of Telegraphs (E. Stallibrass), to F.O., 2.xii.01, FOCP 7868.

[23] Superintendent, Uganda Railway Telegraphs (E. Stallibrass) to Acting Commissioner MSA, 10.x.99, No. 1884, KNA: PC/MSA: 66/12.

Railway and Coast Telegraphs, financially separate and operated by different authorities, were subject to a General Superintendent who exercised limited responsibilities and powers.

Towards the close of 1902 Stallibrass was replaced by Lionel Caine, who graduated to the supervisory position by way of the Railway, and later the Uganda Protectorate Telegraphs. Caine, an ambitious man who served in the Indian Telegraph Department, could see no reason why a system of divided authority should be allowed to survive in East Africa. He promoted amalgamation of the telegraphs as an autonomous inter-territorial department, but the Postmaster General wished to control all telegraph traffic. The Government of the East Africa Protectorate resolved that the Telegraph Department should arrange all technical matters, the Postmaster General being responsible for the conduct of the traffic branch.[24] The maintenance of the railway wires was transfered to the Protectorate on 1st May, 1903, and the operation of the public wires passed to the Postmaster Genral on 1st June. In East Africa the Post Office operated the Protectorate lines while the two wires rented to the railway remained the responsibility of the Railway Traffic Manager. In Uganda engineering and traffic were both controlled by the Telegraph Department but the Uganda accounts were administered separately by the East Africa Protectorate Treasury.[25]

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[24] Treasurer MSA (C.C.Bowring) to Commissioner, MSA., 24.v.04, No. 68, ESA SMP. 290/06.

[25] Treasurer EBE (G.D.Smith) to Deputy Commissioner, EBE, 17.v.06, Memorandum No. 35, ESA: SMP 290/06.

When John Thomas Gosling succeeded T.E.C.Remington as Postmaster General in April, 1904, he found the organisation of British East Africa's postal and telegraphic communications quite chaotic. Opportunism seemed the only policy applied to the political liabilities, finance, or development of the service, while the construction, maintenance, finance and much of the working of the telegraph system was independent of the Postmaster General. Moreover, Caine, anxious to establish a Telegraph Department serving both the East Africa and Uganda Protectorates, wished for sole responsibility over all telegraph construction, maintenance and operation. During the year ending 1905, Gosling began a complete reorganisation of the telegraph system. His task was made more difficult because changes appeared as a threat to the personal ambitions of the European engineering staff, who argued that an independent service guaranteed efficiency. Friction between the Post Office and the Telegraphs was almost unavoidable.

L.E.Caine's Report upon the work of the Telegraph Department during the year 1903-04 claimed that an autonomous telegraph department would benefit both Uganda and East Africa.[26] During that year a temporary arrangement had been inforce in the East Africa Protectorate whereby the Postmaster General controlled traffic and the Superintendent of Telegraphs controlled the engineering services. The

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[26] Superintendent of Telegraphs (L.E.Caine) to Commissioner EBE, 2.iii.04 enclosing Annual Report of East Africa and Uganda Telegraph Dept. 1903-1904, ESA: A6-7.

future organisation of the telegraph system in East Africa and Uganda rested upon Gosling, whose training and experience had been in the British Post Office. His prejudices against the separation of postal and telegraph services had been developed by his British Post Office service and confirmed by his experience of post office relations with the African Transcontinental Telegraph Company in Nyasaland. If Gosling were to make the telegraph service efficient he had to reduce the administrative power of the engineering authorities and create a unified Posts and Telegraphs Department.

Amalgamation would produce economies because the pressures of postal and telegraph work in East Africa rarely coincided. Gosling anticipated that the dual control promised by the adoption of the Indian system of separate Posts and Telegraphs Departments would cause the under-employment of staff in both branches. Amalgamation would also save salaried time on inspection salaries and reduce building expenditure, as in the case of Entebbe where the erection of separate offices was proposed although two-thirds of the cost would produce a perfectly adequate joint establishment. The diffused pattern of settlement in East Africa caused high capital expenditure on telegraphs and the unprofitable carriaze of letters for 1d. over long distances. Economical operation was of primary importance.

Caine, and the telegraph authorities, countered that the Indian

system had developed to ensure efficient staff, only omitting to mention that schools of the Indian Telegraph Department were established because the staff had been found to possess inadequate technical skill. The real object of the Indian system, Gosling noticed, lay in the political constitution of British India. The rulers of Protected States maintained their own postal systems but the Government of India, for primarily strategic reasons, had determined that all telegraphs should be retained under its own control. The system originated in political factors which were irrelevant in East Africa and over a large part of India where, at the end of 1903, 1,800 combined postal and telegraph offices operated while separate telegraph offices existed at only 245 places. Moreover, the Indian system had not been adopted in either Ceylon or the Malay States.

Defective maintenance and inefficient operation caused dispute in 1904. Gosling, concerned for the management of traffic, attributed his difficulties

> "... to the action of the Railway Company, which at the time of transfer made over a whole lot of very indifferent telegraphists to this Department. Or as it was put to me 'the rubbish was shunted onto the Post Office'."[27]

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[27] P.M.G. (J.T.Gosling) to Acting Commissioner EBE, 14.vii.0x, Memorandum. Enclosing Superintendent of Telegraphs to Treasurer, 24.v.04, No. 68, and Minutes thereon, ESA SMP. 290/06.

The transfer of the Railway Telegraphs also complicated the relative position of thesenior Posts and Telegraphs staff. Gosling deplored the failure of the Government to subordinate the Telegraph authorities to the Postmaster General, producing a situation that "is practically one which time alone can cure."[28] Pending the natural wastage of Colonial Officials, it seemed that the purposes of East African communications might be immediately furthered by some readjustment of duties. Gosling, a skilled and practised electrical engineer, gained his reputation for efficient postal work. Caine resented this knowledge and competence.[29]

Gosling proposed that, in the East African Protectorate, Caine should be regarded as the sole telegraph engineering authority, although he would be subordinated to the Postmaster General and personally responsible for the satisfactory maintenance of Post Office wires. Caine's responsibilities to the Post Office and the Railway would be identical. In Uganda, the principal anxiety was that control from Nairobi might lead to ineffective supervision of construction work. Adamant that Uganda should retain control of the engineering branch the Commissioner, J. Hayes Sadler, saw no objection to transfer and amalgamation of the postal and telegraph operating branches.

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[28] P.M.G. (J.T.Gosling) to Commissioner MSA, 14.v.04, No. 14, E.A.P. & T. 220/04.

[29] Superintendent of Telegraphs (L. Caine) to Treasurer, NBI, 25.v.04, Minute No. 68, ESA. SMP. 290/05.

As early as 1903 Caine recognised the issue involved was "whether I hand the control of the Telegraph Traffic in Uganda to the P.M.G. or whether ... he hands the control of the Telegraph Traffic in East Africa to me."[30]

Recognising the strength of Government support for Gosling's policy, Caine finally agreed to surrender traffic control in Uganda on the understanding that he should be given the final decision regarding technical matters in both Protectorates.

The reorganisation of the East African postal and telegraph departments became effective on 1st October, 1904. L.E.Caine, as Superintendent of Telegraphs, became the sole telegraph engineering authority in East Africa and lost control of the Uganda Telegraph Traffic branch. He became nominally responsible to both the Postmaster General and the Government of Uganda for the satisfactory conduct of the Uganda Telegraph Engineering Service.

Divided Control and the Amalgamation of 1912.

The 1904 amalgamation of the Posts and Telegraphs failed because it did not clearly define the powers exercised by individual officials. The Governments made their first attempt to secure an integrated Department in 1912 by adjusting the salaries and titles of senior employees. During the intervening years dispute racked the

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[30] Minute by Caine on Commissioner EBE (J.Hayes Sadler) to Commissioner MSA, 8.viii.04, No. 33, E.A.P. & T. 220/04.

service. The issues in 1906 focused upon development priorities and the control of the telephone system. In 1909 the telegraph engineering authorities made a further attempt to create an autonomous inter-territorial service but even then the two Protectorates had defined their own interests. Common services came under challenge between 1906 and 1908 when the East Africa Protectorate refused to finance the erection of a telegraph from Mumias across the Uganda border to Mbale. In 1912 the Governments and the Departments did not recognise that economic development created interests which transcended Departmental rivalries. A mere rationalisation of the senior bureaucracy failed to provide an incentive for operating efficiency, the effective control of junior personnel, or a balance between two states anxious to apply their revenues for local purposes.

The work of the Department increased considerably during the year 1905-1906 and in Uganda alone the telegraph revenues rose by 20°/o. However, the temporary nature of the telegraph lines led to interruptions in the service and the traffic branch suspected that the Maintenance Department was ineffective. During 1906 the Postmaster General advocated the erection of a telegraph between Nimule and Gondokoro to give a land route between Mombasa and Alexandria. The engineering authorities prefered to delay this work until the temporary telegraphs in Uganda had been rebuilt. The Uganda system suffered frequent failure and, if it were opened for

through traffic, the International Telegraph Union would have to be advised of every interruption to the service. The Postmaster General concluded that the engineering branch was simply justifying the inferior quality of its work.

Telephone services opened for Government use at Entebbe and Kampala during 1906. The system proved unsatisfactory through technical difficulties, staff shortages, and the claim of both the postal and telegraph branches to control the traffic. The trunk telephone line between Kampala and Entebbe suffered from induction with the telegraph wires. The quality of conversation so declined that the engineering authorities converted the telephone line into an additional telegraph wire. The change caused a greater volume of clerical work costing £120 per annum chargeable to the Postmaster General's Vote. Gosling suggested that from a financial point of view it would have been preferable to overlook technical niceties and simply spend £300 building a further wooden pole line on the other side of the road. The induction problem would then have been solved and if the new line had lasted for only six years, a considerable economy would have been realised.[31]

The failure of communication between the constructional and operational authorities prevented the opening of a public telephone

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[31] P.M.G., NBI (J.Gosling) to Deputy Commissioner, EBE, 21.ii.06, No. 216/06, ESA: SMP 885/06.

service. When an Indian trader named Allidina Visram applied for his shop in Kampala to be connected to the telephone system, Gosling was quite prepared to establish service. However, the telegraph authorities countered that Uganda's capital expenditure would merely pass into the Postmaster General's revenues.[32] Although the East Africa Protectorate supported the operating deficit on the Uganda telegraphs, the Government at Entebbe decided that telephone services should be treated as a purely local concern.[33] Visram gained a telephone in 1906 and was then disconnected in the following year because "satisfactory working" could not "be absolutely guaranteed".[34]

The engineering authorities made their last attempt to create an autonomous inter-territorial Department during 1909 when the Assistant Superintendent of Telegraphs, J.K.Creighton, proposed a reorganisation. He suggested that the Superintendent of Telegraphs should be restyled 'Director General of Telegraphs for East Africa and Uganda Protectorates' with two Assistants responsible for the satisfactory conduct of services in the territories.[35] This scheme

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[32] Assistant Telegraph Superintendent, EBE, to Commissioner, EBE, 10.v.06, Minute ESA: SMP. 256/06.

[33] Commissioner EBE to Deputy Commissioner EBE, 26.v.06, Minute, ESA: SMP 256/06

[34] Commissioner, EBE to Deputy Commissioner, EBE, 7.vii.06, Minute, ESA: MSP 480/06.

[35] Superintendent of Telegraphs NBI (L.E.Caine) to C.S. EBE, and C.S., NBI, 28.i.09, No. 1/56 enclosing Assistant Telegraph Superintendent NBI (J.K.Creighton) to Superintendent of Telegraphs, NBI, 27.i.09, ESA: SMP 183/09.

threatened to raise the whole question of the relationship between the Post Office and the telegraphs, as well as a demand for increased emoluments. In rejecting the proposal as unnecessary the Governor of Uganda found, "That a subordinate in a Dept. should write recommending that his superior officer should be raised in rank is rather a remarkable step."[36] The Executive Council of the East Africa Protectorate, less sympathetic to the proposed alterations, resolved, "that the proper solution would be to place the Telegraph Department entirely under the Postmaster General wherever the present Supt. vacates his Office."[37]

The Governments recognised that development would emphasise separate Departments for each Protectorate. In 1906 the Post Office proposed the erection of a telegraph line between Mumias and Mbale jointly financed by the East Africa and Uganda Protectorates. The line from Mumias followed an established trade route, avoided costly construction across the Mpologoma Swamp, and formed a satisfactory alternative trunk line between Uganda and the coast. However, late in 1908 the newly established Legislative Council at Nairobi still refused to contribute any funds towards the construction of a line which promised to give greater benefit to Uganda.[38] Eventually

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[36] Governor, EBE., to C.S., EBE, 13.iv.09, Minute, ESA: SMP.183/09.

[37] East Africa Protectorate, Executive Council Minutes, 13.ii.09.

[38] P.M.G., NBI (Gosling), Minute, 12.xi.06, No. 1992/08, ESA: SMP 543/06.

Uganda built a line between Iganga and Mbale from directly granted Imperial funds.

The Governments of British East Africa also questioned the benefits of centralisation on financial grounds. The amalgamation of the postal system and the telegraph traffic branches under the control of the Postmaster General had not been accompanied by any revision of inter-Protectorate accounting. The 1904 arrangement provided that, although the East Africa Protectorate would continue to pay all the expenses and appropriate all the revenues of the Uganda Post Office, it would also be credited with Uganda's telegraph traffic revenue and a contribution in respect of the costs of telegraph traffic staff. This arrangement proved unsatisfactory to both Governments because the Uganda Post Office failed to pay its way and had to be subsidised from East Africa's revenues. However, the Uganda Government felt that its heavy capital expenditure on telegraph lines merely yielded revenue to the East Africa Protectorate. By 1906 the informality of the procedures proved a source of grievance.

G.D.Smith, the Treasurer at Entebbe, therefore proposed that telegraph traffic finance, carried on the Uganda Estimates, should be transferred to East Africa Protectorate funds, and be balanced by an annual contribution in respect of Uganda's telegraph revenues. The Governments approved this arrangement but it only applied to the

distribution of economies upon Departmental Votes and excluded the postal accounts.

The question of financial procedures reasserted itself in 1909, in connection with the 1910-11 Estimates. The Uganda telegraph system had been extended to Toro and a line was being constructed to Mbale. The former contributions in respect of telegraph traffic staff had become insufficient because the new lines would be unprofitable. A further reorganisation of inter-Protectorate finances ensued and in the year 1911-1912 the Uganda Government for the first time supported the losses on its postal services and was credited with the excess of telegraph revenue over the estimates.

In 1912 the Governments contrived an administrative reorganisation to accompany the altered financial procedures. The operating and engineering branches were amalgamated to correct the deficiencies of decentralised authority. Before 1912 administration largely depended upon the tact of the Postmaster General who, responsible for telegraph services, had no control over the policies of the engineering branch. Amalgamation also promised a uniform staff policy, correcting the difficulties of a Department in which the postal employees came from the British Post Office whilst the engineers were "drawn from every available source".[39] Unificiation promised centralised control and a common pattern of training.

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[39] Governor, NBI (E.P.C.Girouard) to C.O., 8.xi.11, EAP. Confidential No. 104, C.O. 533/92.

The British Government appointed Sir Percy Girouard Governor of the East Africa Protectorate in 1910 with the express instruction to establish efficient administration. Girouard resolved in 1911 that the posts and telegraphs of the East Africa Protectorate should be amalgamated. He suggested that the Superintendent of Telegraphs, who had continued to deal directly with the Secretariat and Heads of Departments after the 1904 reorganisation, should be subordinated to the Postmaster General by the creation of a new post styled Deputy Postmaster General and Chief Telegraph Engineer. The Colonial Office supported the principle of reorganisation with the reservations that the Department should be an inter-territorial service and that Uganda should pay half of the Deputy Postmaster General's salary.

Girouard instructed Gosling to draw up a scheme for an amalgamated Department. Gosling concurred in the subordination of Caine, who would retain his right to wear a 5th Class Civil Service uniform and receive a Duty Allowance of £50 p.a. The Post Office would establish Assistant Postmasters General in East Africa and in Uganda, in the latter Protectorate also being responsible for telegraph engineering. A Telegraph Engineer would be appointed in East Africa while a new post of Assistant Telegraph Engineer would be created in Uganda. This officer would be responsible to the Assistant Postmaster General. The opportunity of establishing common postal and telegraph inspection services and of amalgamating the accounts branches would,

Gosling suggested, lead to economy.[40]

The Governments approved the creation of a clear hierarchy for the Posts and Telegraphs Department. However, the arrangement contained two major defects: it did not revise the accounting system between the two Protectorates; and the Uganda telegraph engineering staff, unlike the postal officers, remained under the disciplinary control of the Government. The reorganisation only amalgamated the postal services of East Africa and Uganda with the telegraph engineering branch in the East Africa Protectorate.

The Colonial Office approved amalgamation as a satisfactory solution to personal issues and referred it to the Treasury with the 1912-1913 Estimates. The Lords of the Treasury did not question that the amalgamation would be desirable, but they rejected the establishment of the new post of Assistant Telegraph Engineer which seemed merely to provide technical knowledge not possessed by serving officers. Reorganisation seemed an unreasonable excuse, "... for permanently increasing the strength of the Department or for raising emoluments of existing officers".[41] Treasury protests obliged the Colonial Office to instruct Girouard that the unauthorised local recruitment of technical officers should cease.[42] The revised amalgamation scheme,

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[40] Governor NBI (E.P.C.Girouard) to C.O., 8.xi.11, E.A.P. Confidential No. 104 enclosing Memorandum, 'Proposed Amalgamation of Telegraph Engineering Department with the Post Office and Telegraphs under the Control of the Postmaster General.', C.O.: 533/92.

[41] Treasury (R.Chalmers) to C.O., 5.i.12,No. 159/12, C.O.: 533/112.

[42] C.O. to Girouard,19.i.12, Confidential. C.O.: 533/112.

approved by both the Colonial Office and the Treasury, came into effect on 1st April as "a step which it is confidently believed will lead to greater smoothness of working".[43]

Gosling faced serious difficulties in the organisation of the Uganda service when one of the Assistant Postmasters General, J.J.Killingbeck, whose attitude was insubordinate, refused a transfer to Uganda on medical grounds. The amalgamation made Killingbeck's position superfluous and Gosling suggested that his retirement might be desirable. The Colonial Office approved Gosling's suggestion of invaliding as much more humane than a reprimand and dismissal, noticing that, "We seem to be particularly unfortunate with the Postal Dept. of E.A."[44] Gosling then reorganised the Uganda postal service under Captain Wallace, the Assistant Superintendent of Telegraphs, whose knowledge of postal practices was limited. Gosling anticipated that Wallace, who wished to "feel his way", would remain dependent upon guidance from Nairobi. The delegation of administrative power took place as a temporary measure and Wallace's powers were severely limited. He could not alter procedures or change mail arrangements without reference to the Postmaster General, especially with regard to the expansion of the service or delivery facilities. The stamp supply remained the responsibility of the Postmaster of

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[43] H.A.Smallwood (Treasurer) K.L.C.: 27.v.12.

[44] A.C.C.Parkinson to H.A.Butler, 5.vi.12, Minute. C.O.: 533/104.

Entebbe and staff policy, like the petty cash, would be controlled from Nairobi. Wallace's principle duty proved to be in the nature of public relations by reducing friction between the postmasters, the public, and the Government.[45] For this purpose Wallace was empowered to inspect offices operated by European staff, although

> "In the case of offices under the local charge of coloured sub-Postmasters .... More frequent inspection ... was undoubtedly desirable; at the same time duties of this nature were probably rather beyond the calibre of a certain proportion of the European Engineering staff in Uganda."[46]

Gosling subordinated the entire Posts and Telegraphs organisation to his personal authority but he failed to integrate the Uganda engineering branch with the remainder of his service. He also neglected to establish any coherent sequence of departmental responsibilities and procedures. Gosling had solved the old problem of rivalry between the inter-territorial authorities controlling operation and engineering but he made it possible for officers in Uganda to contrive the establishment of an autonomous territorial department. The removal of Killingbeck meant that Wallace's position would be unchecked. In 1913 Wallace contrived the withdrawal of Uganda from the amalgamated Posts and Telegraphs Department and defeated the whole purpose of the amalgamation.

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[45] "Notes of Interview", Wallace to Gosling, 4.vi.12, E.A.P. & T.: 346/12.

[46] L.E.Caine, NBI (for PMG) to Acting C.S., NBI, 22.iv.12, E.A.P. & T.: 346/12.

Posts and Telegraphs under Divided Control

The 1912 amalgamation represented a direct response to the personal rivalries that dominated the administrative history of the Posts and Telegraphs from 1895. As such, no provision was made for a revision of the Department's relations with the Governments or for the enforcement of centralised policy upon officers who were partly responsible to their local Governments. The amalgamation was a purely administrative device intended to reduce the need for the Governments to intervene in the routine management of Posts and Telegraphs services and in the personal antagonisms of its servants.

The amalgamation failed because it took no account of the rising volume of Departmental traffic. The scale of the Posts and Telegraphs had expanded to a level that made administrative organisation irrelevant in merely personal terms. Unification was meaningless if it simply meant the fusion of two senior staffs in such a way that no serving officer would lose either power or prestige. Although the questions of rivalry had been eliminated, a new and potentially more dangerous question had been introduced: that of insubordination.

Insubordination occurred on territorial lines. Departmental officers in Uganda claimed that their service would be more efficient if it were not administered from Nairobi thereby reflecting the differences in economic policy between the East Africa and Uganda Governments. However, administrative costs in Uganda seemed unduly high in

relation to the small volume of traffic. In 1912, the Posts and Telegraphs began to move from the concept of efficiency in personal terms to effectiveness in operation. This circumstance largely resulted from a rising volume of traffic over an expensive, inefficient and unprofitable infrastructure of services.

Chapter IV

THE EXTENSION OF SERVICES 1895-1912

The extension of Posts and Telegraphs services to centres of administration, commerce and settlement caused, in some measure, official rivalries over the organisation of the Department. Principles of economy guided operating policy until the local Governments, released from British Treasury control, could determine their own investment priorities. The Governments recognised the strategic and political importance of telegraphs and were prepared to concede operating subsidies to ensure an effective service. The Post Office was in a more difficult position. In the United Kingdom cheap letter rates and mass literacy had produced a popular and profitable service. In East Africa, it proved hard to reconcile profit with the development of postal services in remote areas. Between 1895 and 1912, conflicting local circumstances forced the Posts and Telegraphs Department to formulate its own standards of public service and financial policy.

The first duty of the Department lay in the development of an effective postal service throughout the mainland of East Africa. Only in 1901, with the completion of the Uganda Railway and the establishment of a centralised direction, did such a policy even become practical. The organisation of the postal service as an instrument of regular communication with coherent operating policies began in 1904. Remarkable innovations followed the appointment of John Thomas Gosling, a

professional postal official who had gained experience in the United Kingdom and British Central Africa. He introduced relayed mail runner services, a programme for the training of clerks in all Departmental duties and replaced house letter delivery by a system of post office boxes. Gosling also sought efficiency. In 1905, he began to import subordinate expatriate officers from the British Post Office for supervisory duties and to extend postal services to more remote areas. During the year ending 1911, the postal system in the East Africa and Uganda Protectorates handled four million letters and operated ninety-two post offices and postal agencies.

The extension of remittance services to Uganda for the benefit of Indians employed upon railway construction was one of the principal causes for the amalgamation of the East Africa and Uganda postal services in1901. Until the introduction of commercial banking facilities, remittance services by money order were crucial for economic development. By 1908, however, the remittance service could not compete in either time or cost with bank operations and became simply a means of transmitting small amounts of money.

The extension of telegraph services demanded heavy capital expenditure. The two hundred miles of wire erected by the Imperial British East Africa Company between Mombasa and Lamin 1891 cost £10,000 ~~pounds~~ and the operation of the line failed to pay any interest

upon the capital. The construction of the Uganda Railway and a mutiny by Sudanese troops in Uganda in 1897 brought the rapid if unsatisfactory erection of wires to Entebbe. Even in 1904, the interruptions over the wires between Mombasa and Lamu, Mombasa and Entebbe, and Nakuru and the Eldama Ravine totalled 4,798 hours. The inefficiencies and expenses of the telegraph service preoccupied the Governments and the Departments until the subordination of the telegraph authorities to the Postmaster General in 1925.

The expansion of Posts and Telegraphs services made the determination of staff policy an important issue. The system of employing untrained men proved wasteful although it had sufficed for the requirements of traffic during the 1890s. By 1904, expediency seemed an inadequate criterion for the recruitment of Post Office employees and the capital expenditure on telegraphs demanded efficient engineers. In practice, the recruitment of qualified men proved effective only where supervision was available. The telegraph authorities used this fact to demonstrate the advantages of decentralised management. Under these circumstances the recruitment of Africans for service in the telegraph branch became rare while inefficient European personnel gained powers out of all proportion to their qualifications. When educated Africans became available for Departmental service in the nineteen-twenties they faced a colour bar devised in the interests of a high-cost and inadequately trained European staff.

The Posts and Telegraphs Department extended its services throughout East Africa between 1895 and 1912 as the volume of traffic increased. Although expansion was a considerable achievement, the Post Office sacrificed an effective staff policy, commercial management, and administrative harmony.

The Postal Service

The Department's first duty between 1895 and 1912 was to organise the operation of an effective postal service. In 1895 the British Governments in East Africa realised that communications were inadequate even for the requirements of administration. The informal arrangements of postal agencies, missionary societies, and the Imperial British East Africa Company could scarcely support any form of economic development. The British Government assumed administrative responsibility for Uganda in 1893 and for the East Africa Protectorate, then defined as the region between Naivasha and Mombasa, in 1895. The establishment of a definite British commitment on the East African mainland provoked efforts to regularise the postal services.

T.E.C.Remington, the Postmaster of the I.B.E.A. Company, gained the status of Postmaster General, a salary increase of 15°/o and the task of amalgamating the Indian Post Office at Zanzibar with the Company's services.[1] During the financial year 1896-1897

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[1] Hardinge to Salisbury, 6.vii.95, enclosing Remington to Hardinge, 6.vii.95; G.P.O. (S.Walpole) to F.O., 13.viii.95. F.O.C.P. 6761.

this postal system produced an operating surplus of only Rs. 568. Although the new organisation was intended as a basis for expansion into the interior, its duties focused upon the coastal services. Its Estimates for the year ending 1897 merely described the Mombasa-Kikuyu route in terms of administrative convenience while seriously advocating a service between Lamu and Kismayu.[2] Local Government officials had a different set of priorities. John Ainsworth in Ukamba emphasised the need for properly constituted communications and instituted "an internal two weekly postal service".[3]

Government dissatisfaction with conduct of the interior mail service caused the separation of the Zanzibar and East Africa postal services as from 1st April, 1899. British investment in the Uganda Railway and the increasing importance of mainland development made it seem unwise to entrust the postal system to an official resident in Zanzibar. The railway promised that East Africa and Uganda would participate more fully in international trade while the construction and operating staff required adequate postal services and some system to arrange payments overseas.

The Uganda postal service opened for public use through the pressure of the British Government in September, 1896, providing three scales of charges based upon the distance and the type of

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[2] Hardinge to Salisbury, 19.xii.95, No. 288, F.O.C.P. 6827.

[3] Hardinge to Salisbury, 12.iv.96, No. 123 enclosing J. Ainsworth (Ukamba) to Hardinge, 10.i.96. F.O.C.P. 6849.

mail.[4] The service operated on an amateur basis. C.W.Hobley, the officer commanding Mumias, suggested the provision of a Post Mark stamp suitably engraved to his own design for the cancellation of letters but such sophistication was beyond local resources. Government officers operated the mail service with such supervision as their other duties allowed. The postal service soon proved politically useful. A complaint by Asadullah Erami Afghan that his letter had been delayed produced enquiries from the Acting Commissioner as to why his name had been omitted from an official list of Indians in Uganda. George Wilson, the District Officer in Kampala, used the internal mail service less discreetly togather, "... intelligence regarding local districts hitherto beyond the range of our immediate influence."[5]

The Uganda mail service faced its most serious problem in the carriage of parcels. In 1898 the local Auditor discovered that many officers paid nothing for their parcels. By the end of 1898 the mail party had almost become a four weekly caravan. When a mail contained no fewer than nine loads of parcels for one person, each package weighing less than the permitted maximum of 11 lbs., the Government considered introducing a further postage charge,

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[4]Commissioner, Uganda (E.J.L.Berkeley), Circular, 30.ix.96, ESA.: A5-2.

[5]District Officer, KLA (G. Wilson) to Commissioner, Uganda, No. C125, 16.iv.97, ESA. A4-8.

levied according to the overall weight of parcels for any one person. At the end of 1898 the Government instead doubled the frequency of the service.[6] The mails operated with an absence of formality and expedition. The journey between Kampala and Masindi occupied twelve days in 1899, although special messengers undertook the same journey in four days.

During 1896-7 the mail service cost £660, and in 1899-1900 the expenditure rose to £2,177.[7] However, financial considerations were largely irrelevant to the establishment of the Uganda mail service. Postal facilities were necessary for government, an undoubted convenience for officials, and an assistance in the development of the country by missionaries and pioneer traders. E.J.L.Berkeley, the Commissioner in Uganda, expressed the Government's attitude towards the costs of the service, arguing that

> " There being no native correspondence to develop, the main argument for cheap postage would, I imagine, not apply. It is simply a question of whether, so far as this Administration is concerned, the resident in Uganda shall pay for the expense of carrying his letters and papers 400 miles by porters himself or whether the Administration shall pay for it."[8]

The operation of a service of mail runners over some 700 miles of route with scarcely any supervision tended to cause dispute

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[6] Commissioner Uganda (E.J.L.Berkeley), Circular, 8.xii.98, ESA. A5-4.

[7] F.O. (M.Gosselin) to Commissioner Uganda, 5.ix.99, No. 152, F.O.C.P. 7402.

[8] Commissioner Uganda (E.J.L.Berkeley) to F.O., 28.xi.98, No. 161, F.O.C.P. 7400.

between the authorities at Mombasa and Entebbe. The two Governments attributed inefficiencies to the receiving stations and each felt that the postal service operated to its own exclusive financial disadvantage. This conflict came from the different origins of the services. The Uganda missionaries and administrators always considered that the Imperial British East Africa Company gained revenue at their expense. They transfered this accusation to the successor government although the conduct of the mail service was the prime cause of dispute. When the I.B.E.A.Company's sovereignty covered Uganda and East Africa, a coherent central administration controlled communications services. In 1893 Uganda passed under Foreign Office rule while East Africa remained under the Company but, because I.B.E.A. associates generally gained mail contracts, disputes seldom occurred. Under divided administrative responsibility the quality of the service declined and in 1899 the British Post Office issued a notice warning that mails were accepted for Uganda only at the sender's risk.[9] Remington meanwhile found that the Uganda Government had appropriated no fewer than 528 mail bags during 1898. He warned that his office could not be held responsible if Uganda Government officers continued to open postal despatches between stations.

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[9]Rev. Ernest Miller to District Officer, KLA, 4.i.99, ESA.: A4-15.

Trevor Ternan, appointed Commissioner and Consul General of the Uganda Protectorate, attempted to establish some method in the postal service. On 6th July, 1899, he issued Regulations under Article 99 of the Africa Order-in-Council of 1889 prohibiting the unauthorised opening of mail bags and prescribing a maximum penalty of 3 months imprisonment, or a fine of Rs. 1000/- or both if the Order were contravened. His methods certainly imposed some security on the mail service but he could do little for its efficiency. Sir Harry Johnston found the service "maddening" and reported that "I [illegible] long to behead somebody."[10]

The problem of parcels carriage came to the fore in 1897, when the opening of the Uganda Railway from Mombasa to Ndi made the rates based on porterage charges seem quite extortionate. A new rate of Rs. 30 from Ndi to Eldama Ravine was negotiated but in addition the railway charges had to be paid. In 1899 the Governments agreed that Uganda should continue to bear the costs of mail carriage to the Eldama Ravine by the East Africa Protectorate. A charge of Rs. 50 would be levied on each 30 lb.s mail bag; size would be limited; and no unstamped outgoing mail would be allowed. This arrangement proved "prejudicial to the finance of Uganda".[11]

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[10] Special Commissioner (Johnston) to Jackson, Demi-Official, 18.iv.00, ESA: A5-9.

[11] Special Commissioner (Johnston) to F.O., 11.x.99, No. 8, F.O.C.P. 7403.

Besides the problems of administration there remained one reason for the unsatisfactory postal relations of the East Africa and Uganda Protectorates: the Uganda mail service did not enjoy any international status. The Post Office of the East Africa Protectorate, a party to the conventions of the Universal Postal Union and therefore bound by its Regulations, levied surcharges on Uganda with impunity. In 1898 Bishop Tucker of the Church Missionary Society insisted that Uganda should seek Union membership, and thereby achieve reasonable transit rates.[12] Later in the year, as a result of Foreign Office initiative, Uganda joined the Imperial Penny Postage Scheme giving a cheap rate for correspondence from Uganda to most of the British Empire.[13] This arrangement held its own disadvantages, and Uganda's Chief Accountant felt that if

> "... we lose by not being in the Postal Union and gain nothing by not being included as the Penny Postal Union debars us from charging from Kikuyu onwards, would it not be as well to join?"[14]

The construction of the Uganda Railway precipitated the organisation of an effective interior mail service, and made the East Africa Protectorates' rating policies untenable. It also provoked an attempted reorganisation of Government under the inspiration of Sir Harry Johnston, who advocated the amalgamation of the two Protectorates. His scheme led to the reorganisation of the postal system under a

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[12] Bishop Tucker to Berkeley, 27.vi.98, ESA: A6-5.

[13] F.O. (F. Bertie) to Berkeley, 11.xi.98, No. 183, ESA: A33-7.

[14] Chief Accountant, Uganda (A. Boyle) to [illegible]

unified management.

Railway construction caused few problems when the railhead was close to Mombasa because the Postmaster travelled up the line whenever a mailboat docked.[15] This informality became impractical after the construction works had crossed the Taru Desert, sixty miles from Mombasa. The Railway authorities wanted a railhead post office. At the end of February, 1898, the Railway was 130 miles long and without any permanent mail facilities. The Chief Engineer protested directly to the Government against "the inconvenience, delay and loss to the Railway through the Postal Department not keeping pace with the requirements of the country."[16] Such protests brought no response and in the following year the Railway authorities considered forwarding a Petition to the British Post Office attributing the difficulties to the amalgamation of the East Africa and Zanzibar postal services.[17] Towards the close of 1899 the Post Office introduced mail vans, established agencies at railway stations, and opened Post Offices at "Earthworks" and "Railhead". Similar problems seemed likely to arise when construction work passed beyond Naivasha into the Uganda Protectorate where there was no professional Post Office. It seemed clear that the establishment of an inter-territorial Department would overcome this problem

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[15] Chief Engineer, Uganda Railway (G. Whitehouse) to Commissioner, MSA, 7.viii.96, No. 914/7, K.N.A. PC/NSA: 66/8.

[16] Chief Engineer, Uganda Railway (G. Whitehouse) to Sub-Commissioner, MSA, 21.ii.98, No. 1377/15, K.N.A.: PC/MSA: 66/11.

[17] Chief Engineer, Uganda Railway (G. Whitehouse) to Managing Member, Uganda Railway Committee, 20.iv.99, No. 122 E.A.R., Letter Book 4.

and the Rs. 50 charge per 30 lbs. of parcels levied on the rail transport of parcels between Mombasa and Railhead. This reorganisation became effective only in 1901, when the railway was nearing completion.. In the meantime, an inadequate postal system based upon a series of ill defined accounting agreements served the construction gangs and residents in Uganda.

Even after the amalgamation East Africa continued to levy a surcharge of eight annas on each parcel forwarded to Uganda until G.F.M.Ennis, the Principal Judge of the Uganda Protectorate, found that the Indian Post Office Act, which had been brought into operation in Uganda in May 1900, specified a maximum charge of 4 annas per lb. on parcel post.[18] The Post Office could only lower its charges or operate in defiance of the Law. With the creation of a common postal service between the Uganda and East Africa Protectorates, the Department had to apply identical rates to all internal mail in both Protectorates. In effect, Uganda turned the 1901 amalgamation, which was a matter of administrative convenience, into an almost irreversible postal fusion to eliminate the burden of transit charges.

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[18] G.F.M.Ennis to Commissioner, EBE, 22.ix.02, No. 174, ESA: A32-9.

An administrative structure for an inter-territorial post office had been created by 1902 but the service operated inefficiently and restricted its activities to the Coast, the Railway line, Kampala and Entebbe. Only in 1904 with the appointment of a trained Postmaster General, J.T.Gosling, did an effective communications structure develop. Gosling had to rationalise the functions of the postal department in East Africa and determine the relationship between services and finance. He considered that his Department ought to charge commercial rates, ~~and~~ produce revenue, and agreed with Sir Charles Eliot, the Governor of the East Africa Protectorate, that "... the utility of the Postal Department had always been attested by the amount of revenue which it has produced."[19] A policy of charging the highest rate that the traffic would bear proved unpopular but it justified the reorganisation of the postal service. In Uganda, where the Department operated only three post offices, the Government claimed that the service "more than pays its way".[20] In answer to this suspicion Gosling's reorganisation in 1904 led to an immediate decrease of £650 in the receipts and £1,735 in the expenditure of the Uganda Protectorate.[21] The changes principally

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[19] Commissioner E.A.P. (Sir Charles Eliot) to F.O., 18.iv.03, East Africa Confidential: enclosing "Report on the East Africa Protectorate", ESA: A31-12.

[20] Commissioner, Uganda, to F.O., 13.viii.03, No. 234, Uganda, enclosing "General and Trade Report on the Uganda Protectorate...", ESA: A38-8.

[21] Treasury (V. Cavendish) to F.O., 24.ii.04, Unnumbered, ESA: FOCP.

affected operating procedures. The Governments erected new buildings for the Department while the Post Office instituted effective services in areas away from the Coast and the Railway line.

Post Office buildings needed urgent attention. At Mombasa three separate offices accommodated telegraph operation, mail sorting, and counter work. The Post Office employed five clerks at three separate counters although, with a combined counter, the work offered could have been adequately handled by three clerks. The Postmaster General's Office, a recess in the sorting office, offered no security for Departmental papers. The Nairobi Post Office lacked covered counter space, conducting business in full view of passers-by in the street. Land was already reserved for a new building but Gosling insisted that £1,000 must immediately be provided for the first phase of construction. Buildings in Uganda were superior to those in East Africa, but a sum of £1,800 had been already inserted in the estimates for their improvement.

The delivery of mail caused both expense and administrative difficulty to the Post Office. Remington had initiated house to house deliveries. At Nakuru the Department paid £25 per annum for the delivery of letters to four Europeans and some fifty Indians who lived "within 300 yards of the post office and could quite conveniently call for their letters." The total expense of delivery was £250 p.a. and the system was insecure because,

> "... the men engaged (Indians and Swahilis) cannot read English perfectly .... The postmen are practically at the mercy of any dishonest white man who makes false representations to them in order to obtain another person's correspondence, and they are unable to check the signatures given to them for registered letters."[22]

As an economy measure the Department adopted a system of 'post-office boxes' used in South Africa, and familiar to many settlers. Because these boxes were rented from the Department, a side effect lay in the saving of some £200 in delivery costs and an immediate income of £100 p.a. from box rentals.

The organisation of the mail runner services required more elaborate attention. During the year 1903-1904 the Kampala and Entebbe offices handled 92,000 letters. Daily mail runner service operated between Kampala and Entebbe, twice-weekly between Kampala and Jinja, and weekly from Kampala and Mbarara, Fort Portal, Hoima, Masindi and Mombasa.[23] The Post Office instituted runner relays in Uganda during 1904 on the 130 mile route between Kampala and Hoima.[24] Under the old system, there were usually 4 men on the road and 4 resting. The change meant that the eight men, placed at regular intervals, operated fixed beats cutting the time of mail transport over this section from 5 days to 2 days 3 hours. In November, the Government requested that the system should be applied throughout

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[22] Sir Donald Stewart, Commissioner, E.A.P., to F.O., 21.xi.04, No. 663, enclosing: Gosling to Stewart, 15-30.ix.04, No. 33 ESA: F.O.C.P.

[23] N.A.Flacke (Postmaster KLA.) to C.S. EBE, 30.v.04. ESA: AG-17.

[24] Sir Donald Stewart, Commissioner E.A.P., to F.O., 21.x.04, No. 683, enclosing Gosling to Stewart, 15-30.ix.04, No. 33. ESA: F.O.C.P.

the Protectorate. Gosling planned a relay system based upon Entebbe which would bring all Government stations in Uganda within a maximum postal time of twelve days from the seat of Government. The scheme was quickly introduced and by June 1906, "excepting for delays arising from occasional insurmountable obstacles, flooded rivers, man eating lions etc." letters travelled from Mombasa to Gondokoro in fourteen days.[25] The relay system proved so advantageous in Uganda that by September, 1907, only the Jinja-Mbale and Kampala-Toro mails remained to be converted. The reorganised service proved reliable. During the year 1908-1909 only twenty seven unregistered letters and packets were reported as failing to reach their destination, five of the items were subsequently traced and in the majority "of cases it transpired that the missing letters had been entrusted to native servants to post."[26]

The East Africa Protectorate made less use of relayed mail services because the Uganda Railway provided a convenient artery to serve the principal settlements and areas of white agriculture. Moreover, the more remote government stations normally made their own arrangements and white farmers undertook contracts for mail transport. In 1909 the Posts and Telegraphs Department attempted to establish a relayed

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[25] P.M.G., NBI (Gosling) to C.S., EBE, 29.vi.06, Unnumbered enlcosing P. and T. Annual Report 1905-1906 (Uganda), ESA: SMP 663/06.

[26] Acting P.M.G., NBI (S.B.Gosling) to C.S., EBE, 19.vii.09, No. 1771/08, enclosing P. and T. Annual Report 1908-1909, ESA: SMP. 1391/09.

mail between Mombasa and Tanga. The service was discontinued in 1910 partly because the frequency of steamers increased but also because of a lack of administrative enthusiasm. Officers of the East Africa Protectorate were simply not aware how rapidly a mail could be carried. One District Commissioner protested that

> "The P.M.G. appears to think there is a straight and well macadamised road between Ramisi and Jasin, to judge from the shortness of time he has allowed runners to traverse that section, where there only exists a rough track winding through bush and swamp, and during the heavy rains, which are due now, this track becomes a running stream of a foot or more in depth."[27]

Government offices understood neither the technicalities or organising runner mail services nor the volume of traffic handled by remote offices. When Government officers in Uganda protested against the volume of postal work, the Department arranged to hold a count of correspondence. It found that the Koba Post Office handled 7,000 items each year, although the European population of the town comprised just one man.[28]

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[27] Commissioner Shimoni-Vanga District (C.W.Haywood) to Provincial Commissioner, MSA, 3.v.09, No. 26/09, KNA: PC/MSA. 62/53.

[28] Commissioner, Uganda, to Deputy Commissioner, 19.iii.08, Minute, ESA: SMP. 57/08. The statistics were given in: S.B.Gosling (for P.M.G.) to Deputy Commissioner, EBE, 8.ii.08, No. 152/08, ESA: SMP.17/08.

Office	Posted	Delivered	
Hoima	44,616	78,512	
Masindi	5,044	5,044	
Mbarara	8,060	11,128	
Masaka	10,930	12,064	
Ft. Portal	10,504	13,156	NB. Koba had been opened to replace the office a Wadelai.
Mbale	13,104	7,800	
Nimule	7,826	18,252	
Koba	2,500	4,888	
Gondokoro	3,016	3,120	
Kakumiro	2,236	2,2028	

Correspondence which could be neither delivered nor returned to the sender constituted a major Departmental problem. During the year ending 1908 no fewer than 21,540 items proved to be undeliverable, of which 4,558 could not be returned to the senders through insufficiency of address. The Annual Report noticed that Africans posted most non-deliverable items and feared serious effects upon "the confidence which it is desired that natives should have in the Post Office".[29]

During the year 1911 the Post Office handled three million letters in the East Africa and Uganda Protectorates at ninety two post offices and agencies. The development of British East Africa led to inflated costs and in 1911 the Department anticipated that its costs would rise unless either the difficulty of recruiting special porters eased or vehicular transport were introduced.[30]

The problem of transport costs was particularly acute in the case of parcels because the rail transport charge of Re 1 per ton mile exceeded the postage rate.[31] The parcel post rate from the United Kingdom to Uganda was lower than the rail charge from Mombasa. During the year ending 1911 the Department dealt with a total of 45,131 parcels. The service subsidised remote communities while competing

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[29] P. and T. Annual Report 1909-10.

[30] P. and T. Annual Report 1910-1911.

[31] Hill, M.F., Permanent Way. Vol. 1, pp. 239-240.

with private carriers. The Department received the unprofitable traffic while its tariff calculations took no account of the costs on individual routes. The service was so cheap that the European population in Uganda virtually subsisted upon imports by parcels post from Britain, even to the extent of grociers.[32] The service also had commercial significance and was used by Indian traders to send, "Wholesale consignments of trade goods".[33]

An increasing volume of traffic emphasised the problem of operating an uneconomic parcels service. In 1907-08 the Post Office received 11,559 parcels with a dutiable value of £12,308 from the United Kingdom. During the following year the totals rose to 15,085 and £16,574 respectively. Gosling saw two potential solutions to the 'unfair' public use of the service: the extension of the Postmaster General's monopoly to parcels transport or rate revision. Neither of these alternatives met with the approval of the East African Governments or the British Post Office. Although rural services were uneconomic, the post office maintained extensive facilities in remote areas.[34]

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[32] Workman, A. (pseud. George Perry Lewis), A Colonial Postmaster General Reminisces. London 1937, 65.

[33] P.M.G., NBI (Gosling) to Acting Deputy Commissioner, EBE, 6.ix.08, Unnumbered enclosing P. and T. Annual Report 1907-1908 (Uganda) ESA: SMP.1117/07.

[34] P. and T. Annual Report, 1909-1910, P.M.G., NBI (Gosling) to G.P.O. 9.i.09, G.P.O.: 97R-1891: Post: 29-503.

Similarly Gosling's efforts to curb official abuse of the free parcel post service were frustrated although he anticipated that "... the work of the Post Office becomes rather more of the character catered for by 'Carter Patterson' than that contemplated by Rowland Hill."[35] The Governments, as public opinion, virtually ignored Gosling's protests for the proper financial organisation of his Department.

Remittance Services

Post Office remittance services competed directly with commercial banking houses. Commission revenues undercut banking charges because of the flexibility inherent in a widespread postal service with a large network of offices. The service contributed towards the maximum utilisation of Departmental staff and seemed to be a useful stimulus towards the development of trade. In areas where commercial banking facilities were not available or unreliable, public opinion saw the advantages of remitting funds through Post Office money orders.

The operation of remittance services on the mainland only became important during the construction of the Uganda Railway when Indian labourers clearly required some means of sending money to their families.[36] In 1904 the East Africa Protectorate's Post Office handled money orders at Mombasa, Kilindini, Voi, Makindu, Kiu, Nairobi,

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[35] P.M.G., NBI (Gosling) to Acting Deputy Commissioner, EBE, No. 2085/07, 16.ix.07, ESA; SMP. 1197)07.

[36] Hardinge to F.O., 18.ix.98, No. 367, FOCP 7159.

Escarpment, Malindi and Lamu. Other offices at Takaungu, Wassein, Rabai, Machakos and Taveta were too remote to justify the administrative costs. The Department outstripped commercial banks in the provision of remittance services because the inducement of large, profitable transactions was not yet available.

In financial terms the Department could not justify a remittance service because the low rate of commission charged and the complexity of different money order systems for United Kingdom or Indian remittances made the operation uneconomic.[37] In 1904 only one Rupee was payable on a £10 order, and the service became a clearly unprofitable one when the Governments adopted an exchange rate of Rs. 15: £1. In fact, money order commission rates had always been unduly low in East Africa largely because of Indian commercial interests and the need to encourage Indian labourers to work on the Uganda Railway. Gosling attempted to adjust the rates in 1904 but only the stabilisation of the Rupee under the East Africa Protectorate Currency Ordinance of 1906 gave him the necessary opportunity. He proposed that a more favourable rate of exchange should be granted on sterling money orders paid, while charges on orders issued should be increased. Anticipating public criticism of increased charges, Gosling arranged an astute bargin for his Department at the

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[37] Workman, A., op.cit., 28.

expense of the Protectorate Treasury.[38] The Uganda Government, opposed a revision of commission rates because its banking facilities were not yet developed. In addition, the operation of the post office on a quasi-commercial basis reduced Uganda's control over its communications. Thus the Treasury lost by the altered commission rate without a compensating departmental revenue gain. The new money order rates, introduced on the sole approval of the East Africa Government, elicited Uganda's protest to Nairobi that,

> "Since uniformity in postal arrangements is a sine qua non in these two Protectorates, Your Excellency's sanction of Mr. Gosling's proposals left me no other course than to approve of them also, whatever my views on the subject might be..."[39]

The money order service proved of crucial economic importance to Uganda. During the year ending 1906 the facility extended only to Kampala and Jinja but the orders issued totalled Rs. 74,453 while those paid amounted to Rs. 282,423.[40] The money transmitted lubricated the cotton trade and commercial firms found the service more efficient than those provided by the one commercial bank in Uganda. The popularity of Departmental remittances led Gosling to advise the introduction of a telegraph money order service, with the qualification that such an innovation might prove difficult if the telegraphs were

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[38] P.M.G., NBI (Gosling) to Commissioner, EBE, 6.vii.06, No. 1306/06, ESA: SMP 693/06.

[39] Commissioner, EBE to Commissioner, NBI, 17.vii.06, No. 693/1906, ESA: SMP. 693/06.

[40] P.M.G., NBI (Gosling) to Deputy Commissioner, EBE, 29.vi.06, Annual Report 1905-06. ESA: SMP. 633/06.

not clearly under Post Office management.

The increased charges introduced in 1906 coincided with the expansion of commercial banking in Uganda and a famine in Busoga. The 'trade money orders' duly declined in value by £17,000 but such was the rate of economic development that the money order returns showed an overall increase of £2,000.[41] The service became an instrument merely for the transmission of small amounts of money. Without a telegraph money order arrangement the Post Office could not compete interms of time with the expanding commercial banks, who also had the advantage of providing other useful financial services. Money orders had lost commercial relevance. In 1909 the introduction of the much simpler remittance system by British Postal Order further undermined the popularity and revenues of the money order service.

The Telegraph Service

The telegraph and telephone services, unlike the postal branch, required heavy capital expenditure to yield a small initial revenue. These facilities were clearly unprofitable unless used intensively. Investment in telecommunications demanded an economic gamble on future development, except in sofar as the Governments required these services.

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[41] P.M.G., NBI (J. Gosling) to Deputy Commissioner, EBE, 20.vii.08, No. 525 /08 enclosing Annual Report 1908-1908, E.S.A.: SMP. 1380/08.

The Imperial British East Africa Company built the first mainland telegraph in 1891 between Mombasa, Takaungu, Malindi, Witu and Lamu at a cost of £10,000 as a preliminary to the construction of an interior line. The line produced a revenue surplus. During 1894 expenditure amounted to Rs. 5311:5:0, giving a profit of Rs. 373:4:0 1/4.[42] The telegraph was important for security. In 1893 the Company offered a £100 reward for information leading to the conviction of persons who wilfully damaged the line, prescribing a maximum penalty of one year's imprisonment for offenders.[43]

Financial restrictions precluded interior construction. While there were advantages in establishing an inland route, a more logical development lay in an extension to Kismayu. The British Government periodically revived this idea after 1895, especially when punitive campaigns were necessary. As late as 1901 the Foreign Office requested a report upon the costs of a telegraph line to Kismayu because military operations were in progress in Jubaland.[44] However, Government resources were by then fully occupied in the development of the interior.

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[42] Hardinge to Salisbury, 22.xi.95, No. 252, Enclosure No. 2, Remington to Hardinge, undated, "P.O.Revenue, 1894", FOCP: 6805.

[43] Acting Administrator, MSA (J. Pigott), Notice, 4.x.93, K.N.A. PC/MSA: 109/90.

[44] F.O. to Charles Eliot, 25.i.01, No. 25 Telegraphic, FOCP: 7890.

The building of an inland telegraph required heavy capital expenditure that seemed unjustified unless it coincided with railway construction. Both these projects were too expensive for the I.B.E.A. Company. Even when the Uganda Railway was under construction, the Superintending Committee in London regarded the telegraph as an unreasonable charge on its funds. They felt that an unguarded interior telegraph would be liable to interruption, but agreed that along the railway the constant passage of construction trains and the large number of workmen employed would discourage wire thefts.

The third meeting of the Uganda Railway Committee resolved to construct a telegraph and appointed a superintendent in March, 1896. Equipment was ordered and by July, 1897, the telegraph had reached the railhead. Such a systematic approach to the construction of the telegraph did not endure because a mutiny by Sudanese soldiers in Uganda threatened not only European missionary activities but also the headwaters of the Nile. In December the Secretary of State instructed the Railway Committee to advance the construction of a temporary telegraph to Uganda. The route reached Kikuyu in July, 1898, but the suppression of the Mutiny removed the need for rapid construction. The line reached Entebbe, 200 miles from Mombasa, on May 18th, 1900.[45] Although primarily constructed to serve the Government of Uganda, it ran along the future railway route to Ugowe Bay before turning

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[45] Final Report of the Uganda Railway Committee. Africa No. 11 (1894) Cd. 2164.

northwards. The line proved unsatisfactory. Beyond Railhead it was worked by telephone, with false transmission of messages by Indian operators, who possessed an inadequate command of English. Sir Harry Johnston found even the work of telegraph construction unimpressive and in December 1899 wondered,

> "... why the telegraph should not long ago have reached Mumia's instead of being still a fortnight from Ugowe Bay ... in many cases the wire is simply stretched from tree to tree..."[46]

A further trouble, wire theft by Africans, met with strong action. When three men from Mutanda's in Busoga were caught in the act, Sir Harry Johnston ordered the complete destruction of the village as a warning against such misdemeanours in future. However, the character of telegraph construction encouraged wire theft. Even between Entebbe and Kampala the poles were mere sticks, so low that herdboys could reach up and remove the wire.[47] Although recognising that the true cause of wire cutting lay in the absurdly exposed character of construction, Johnston imposed strong severe penalties as a deterrent.

Legislation and the punishment of known offenders was sufficient in Uganda and the East Africa Protectorates, excepting the area inhabited by the Nandi people.[48] In 1900 the telegraph maintenance

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[46] H.M. Special Commissioner (H. Johnston) to Chief Engineer, Uganda Railway (G. Whitehouse), 2.xii.99, ESA. A7-5.

[47] H.M. Special Commissioner (H. Johnston) to Acting Collector, Busoga (C.W. Fowley), 15.v.00, ESA. A5-10.

[48] Manager and Chief Engineer, Uganda Railway (G. Whitehouse) to Managing Member, Uganda Railway Committee, 10.vii.01, No. 220, E.A.R. Letter Book 7.

parties could not proceed between Fort Ternan and Molo without armed escort which was a Protectorate responsibility. Liaison between the telegraph authorities and the Government proved ineffective and the Railway Administration protested to the Foreign Office. The Government of the Uganda Protectorate despatched hurried instructions to the military forces in the Eastern Province but, meanwhile the telegraph authorities began to advise the Government of their intended movements.[49]

Until 1901 the East Africa Protectorate Government controlled only the I.B.E.A. telegraph line between Mombasa and Lamu. Incorporated under the postal department in 1896 so that it could be operated by Departmental clerks and its deficits thus reduced, its services became increasingly unreliable and maintenance charges rose.[50] The 1896 estimates allowed for an expenditure of Rs. 8,300 upon the line, which would produce a revenue of Rs. 2,500. It was expected that, during the same year the postal service would produce Rs. 20,000 revenue for an expenditure of Rs. 4,500. As a result, the Department operated the route on a care and maintenance basis until 1899, when the number of telegrams handled increased by 15,197 and the revenue by Rs. 1810:5:0. Profitable operation encouraged investment. A considerable rise in the cost of telegraph repairs ensued in the

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[49] H.M.Special Commissioner (H. Johnston) at EBE, to F.O. No. 212, 25.x.00, ESA. A38-2.

[50] Hardinge to Salisbury, 30.x.95, No. 217, enclosing Remington to Hardinge, 6.vii.95, FOCP 6781.

belief that efficiency would make the line pay. When this view proved false, amongst other remedies proposed, the officer in charge of the Malindi District suggested that if charges were halved local traders could afford to use the line more frequently.[51] The economic potential of the district did not justify subsidy, a policy invalidated for the coastal ports by the concentration of activity within the interior of East Africa.

In 1903 the main telegraph lines ran between Mombasa and Kisumu, and Kampala and Entebbe with branches from Mombasa to Lamu and from Nakuru to the Eldama Ravine. The system suffered from an indifferent quality of construction and maintenance. During the year ending 1904 there were 234 interruptions to service, amounting to 4,798 hours. L.E.Caine, the Superintendent of Telegraphs rationalised the failures in terms of the "... number of animals, especially monkeys, which can cause interruptions and also the half-civilised countries through which the wires pass;".[52]

Two authorities controlled the telegraph network in British East Africa. The Postmaster General, responsible for operation, had no authority over the construction and maintenance branch.

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[51] Eliot to Lansdowne (No. 13 Mainland), 22.ii.01, Inclosure No. 2, Macdougall to Tritton, 14.i.01, FOCP 7690.

[52] Report of the East Africa and Uganda Telegraph Department 1903-04, in Superintendent of Telegraphs (L.E.Caine) to Commissioner, EBE, 2.iii.04, ESA Ac-17.

In 1907 control was even further decentralised when the two Protectorates divided their financial responsibility for construction because of the high capital and recurrent expenditure. In 1903-04 telegraph revenue in the East African Protectorate totalled £3,074, while operating costs and maintenance charges, excluding capital expenditure, amounted to only £1,750. The condition of the Uganda service was not comparable partly because of inefficiency, but especially because that Protectorate lacked the large European and Indian population who had accumulated in East Africa as a result of the construction of the Uganda Railway. The control of the Uganda telegraph traffic branch passed to the Post Office on 1st October, 1904, but its operation depended upon engineering efficiency.

During the year ending 1905 there were 203 interruptions totalling 2,549 hours on the Mombasa-Lamu, Railway, and Kisumu-Entebbe lin in addition to the recently opened route to Wadelai. The railway telegraph erected upon tall iron poles, suffered little interruption. In contrast, the bulk of the failures lay in Uganda where the lines had been crudely constructed in 1899 and 1900. During the year ended 1908 there were 145 interruptions in East Africa totalling 4,863 hours and 58 in Uganda amounting to 1,037 hours.[53] The operation of the

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[53] Superintendent of Telegraphs NBI (L.E.Caine) to Deputy Commissioner, EBE, No. 2/123, 22.v.08, enclosing Annual Report 1907-1908, ESA. SMP. 925/08.

system depended upon the good humour of the telegraph engineers and required the co-operation of both the public and the government. During the year ending 1909 the Uganda telegraphs handled 32,158 messages, an increase of 5,291 over the previous year, but more than 50°/o of the traffic passed on government account.[54]

The telephone was introduced to East Africa as a device for public use in local communications during the years 1906-1910 but the shortage of government investment capital discouraged much development. In 1910 the Department operated only two exchanges for public use because Government financial reserves were too slender to purchase equipment. However, sufficient finance seemed available to equip three telephone exchanges for exclusive Government use, while the Postmaster General's monopoly prevented private individuals or companies from establishing telephone services. During the year ending 1911 the total telephone revenue amounted to £884:9:1. No less than £736:14:5 accrued from the rentals of private lines and fees for conversations over telegraph wires in the East African Protectorate. In 1906 a small switchboard was installed in Nairobi for Government use and connected for public subscribers in 1908. The Department took over the Mombasa switchboard of the Uganda Railway in 1906 admitting public subscribers two years later. In 1907

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54 P and T. Annual Report 1909.

exchanges also operated at Kisumu, Entebbe and Kampala.

The telephone was a novelty. During December, 1909, the Kisumu exchange handled 261 calls from its eight instruments at the railway station, the prison, the hospital, the doctor, the police station, the town magistrate and the District and Provincial Commissioner's offices. Only in 1912 was there an application for a private telephone from Allindina Visram, a prominent Indian trader who learned that the exchange was too congested to allow for additional subscribers.[55] A European officer was stationed at Kisumu between 1908 and 1925 to maintain the telephone exchange serving eight Government subscribers.

Only in Mombasa and Nairobi were telephone services economically viable. The Nairobi system, for example, extended rapidly and in 1909 a new Post Office was opened, equipped with a telephone tower capable of receiving 800 wires. During the year ending 1911 the Nairobi and Mombasa exchanges, with 53 and 34 private subscribers respectively, handled 55,028 and 14,741 telephone calls. The problem, of course, was to determine a rating policy that would encourage use of the service. After considerable discussion, the public was offered a choice between measured and flat rates.

During the year ending 1911, the two Protectorates dealt with 141,282 telegrams and registered 363,092 telephone calls. Although

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[55] L.E.Caine (for P.M.G., NBI) to Postmaster Kisumu, undated, but 6-12.xii.12. E.A.P. & T.: 1265/09/1.

the Uganda telephone system handled 100,874 of these calls the Department received a mere £180 from trunk line fees. The Government, which refused to invest capital in a public service, still monopolised the telephone exchanges.

Staff Policy

Before 1904, the criteria of expediency and improvisation governed the recruitment of staff. The interior mail services depended upon chance caravans of porters or the initiative of local Government officers. The Post Office exercised little authority over its operations and personnel outside the Mombasa Office, the coastal telegraph line, and the mail route to Uganda. Although the volume of traffic increased substantially under the expansion of Government authority, white settlement, and the penetration of traders and missionaries, the Department reluctantly increased its expenditureupon staff because in the 1890s even an informal and decentralised service was barely profitable.

The Mombasa Post Office began operations in 1890 under T.E.C. Remington, the Postmaster of the Imperial British East Africa Company, who until his death in 1903, formed a large part of Post Office staff policy. Through the various administrative reorganisations of the Department, he contrived to increase his annual salary from £180 in 1890 to £550 in 1900. In 1895 his salary of £250 represented no less than one-third of the Deparment's costs and even in the

financial year 1901-02 this charge accounted for more than one-sixteenth of the total operating expenses.[56] The Mombasa Office was supervised by a European Postmaster, who took control after Remington's death only to be relieved of the duty quite quickly because "he gave way to drinking habits which resulted in the delirium tremens".[57] The local recruitment of staff, who had no knowledge of post office work and had often been dismissed from other appointments, paralleled the quality of management. In 1904 the Post Office employed twenty six untrained men at Mombasa to deal with business that sixteen experienced clerks could easily have handled.[58]

The operation of the interior mail routes caused considerable dissatisfaction. Sir Harry Johnston, for example, found that mail arrived at Kampala, "in a state of horrible wet foetid pulp" as a result of maltreatment by mail runners".[59] The unpopular task of carrying mail devolved upon conscripted labourers who were often overloaded and liable to be requisitioned by itinerant Europeans in need of servants.[60] The porters, with no effective redress

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[56] Hardinge to Salisbury, 6.vii.95, No. 122, F.O.C.P. 6761; Johnston to Hardinge, 26.iii.00, E.S.A. A32-8; Johnston to Remington, 8.v.00, E.S.A. A7-6.

[57] Gosling to Stewart, 15-30.ix.04, No. 33, in Stewart to F.O., 21.xi.04, No. 663, E.S.A. F.O.C.P.

[58] Ibid.

[59] Johnston to Remington, 8.v.00, E.S.A. A7-6.

[60] e.g. Akida Salim bin Seyyid Lahosmi, Takaungu to Pigott, MSA., 30.iv.94, K.N.A.: PC/MSA: 67/14.

against abuse, had little incentive to treat their work with respect. They naturally sought their own profits and by 1895 were "a great source of trouble in Busoga" because they forcibly demanded food and gifts.[61] In contrast the Post Office directly administered the coastal mail runner routes to Vanga and Lamu which caused little trouble.

The unreliable and unprofitable coastal telegraph suffered from the absence of a qualified engineer. In 1895 Remington suggested the recruitment of a "native Jamadar from India" who could patrol the line and undertake minor repairs. When it proved impossible to attract an experienced Indian because the salary offered was only Rs. 100 per month, the position passed to a locally recruited European. His entire staff consisted of three non-European telegraph operators whose monthly wages varied between Rs. 20 and Rs. 50.[62]

The construction of the Uganda Railway emphasised the shortage of skilled men in East Africa. Employment opportunities expanded and the Post Office, like other Departments and commercial companies, competed in a restricted labour market that encouraged employees to re-negotiate their salaries and conditions of service. Salary

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[61] M. Grant (Lubwas) to Commissioner, Uganda, 2.ii.95. E.S.A.: A4-1.

[62] Hardinge to Salisbury, No. 152, 23.viii.95, FOCP 6761.

levels on the Uganda Railway Telegraph were out of all proportion to efficiency. Sir Harry Johnston commented that the Railway Telegraph construction displayed, "... the same languor in the matter of daily work which affects so many servants of the Uganda Administration".[63]

The operation of the railway telegraph aroused even stronger criticism. The staff often failed to observe the Regulations enjoining secrecy but the Government could do little but issue warning notices. At the end of 1900 Johnston decided that the basic trouble lay in the "want of an efficient European personnel".[64] The expatriate staff attributed failings in the service to the poorly trained Indian and African telegraphists recruited by the Government. The Railway Superintendent of Telegraphs, Edward Stallibrass, complained as early as 1898 that his juniors "were unreliable and lazy", and felt it unwise to entrust "such important work" as telegraph operation "to uneducated and irresponsible natives".[65] The Government, mindful of the need for economy, refused to change its recruitment policy and suggested that an indifferent quality of construction caused the poor telegraph service. At the end of 1898 the service had so deteriorated that important despatches to Uganda travelled by special messenger because a loss

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[63] Johnston to Whitehouse, 2.vii.99, ESA: A7-5.

[64] Johnston to F.O., 14.xi.00, ESA: A38-3.

[65] Superintendent of Telegraphs (E.Stallibrass) to Chief Engineer, Uganda Railway, 25.iii.98, No. 577, K.N.A. PC/MSA 66/11.

of time seemed preferable to the receipt of an unintelligible message.[66]

The Government concluded that the difficulties of supervising telegraph operating and maintenance staff could be overcome by decentralised authority. Between 1900 and 1903 a variety of administrative arrangements were contemplated and introduced to ensure effective operation. Rivalry between the telegraph and postal authorities as well as the problems of financing inter-territorial investments conditioned the organisation of the service. The Post Office took over responsibility for operating the system, but the Governments established financially autonomous telegraph engineering services in Uganda and in the East Africa Protectorate. This scheme, partly aimed at the efficient control of personnel, achieved the employment of an increasing proportion of European staff.

Local Government officers increasingly complicated Departmental control of staff. State officials only reluctantly deputed their clerks for telegraph work and also asserted their authority without consideration for the Post Office. For example, the flogging of a Swahili telegraphist by the Commissioner for Toro District exasperated the Postmaster General, because between 1904 and 1908 he had only managed to train four African telegraphists out of thirty

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[66] C.H.Craufurd, MSA, to E.J.L.Berkeley, Uganda, 9.ix.98, No. 13, K.N.A. PC/MSA 65/5.

applicants, most of whom were 'unpromising or unsatisfactory'. Government disregard of the Postmaster General's authority and departmental disciplinary procedure threatened the small effort spent upon the training of Africans.[67] More rewarding openings existed for mission-educated men in education, religion and the other government departments while the Europeans considered that communications ought to be controlled by the immigrant races. The King's school at Budo in Uganda only began to train telegraphists as late as 1909 because of the fear that Africans might use their knowledge "against us at some later date".[68] Even then the Post Office restricted tuition to only six Ugandans each year, although the theoretical knowledge was of small value without practical experience.

The telegraph engineering service suffered more serious staff problems because its recruitment policies rested upon technical mystique. The increase of European personnel in this service was only interrupted by financial difficulties in 1907-08.[69] As the position of the European staff became entrenched, they became increasingly troublesome. Different staff regulations governed the East Africa and Uganda Protectorates and employees naturally resisted attempts at inter-territorial transfer which might reduce

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[67] P.M.G., NBI (Gosling) to C.S., EBE, 20.xi.08, No. 2053/08, ESA: SMP 1801/08.

[68] Provincial Commissioner, KLA, to C.S. EBE, 14.i.09, No. 6/09, ESA. SMP 38/09.

[69] Superintendent of Telegraphs, NBI (L.E.Caine) to Acting C.S., EBE,

their seniority or privileges.[70] By 1910 the inflexibility in staff policy seemed a sufficient reason for dismantling the inter-territorial telegraph engineering department.

The telegraph authorities recruited staff in East Africa on smaller salaries than would be appropriate for qualified men brought from the United Kingdom. This system was challenged in 1909, when R. Osborne, a locally recruited Assistant Telegraph Inspector, had his porters flogged in direct contravention of Uganda Protectorate Regulations. The local Assistant District Commissioner protested strongly that such infringements would hamper recruitment for Government works but the Superintendent of Telegraphs, L.E.Caine, defended his selection of staff on the grounds of economy. He explained that the establishment of a professional staff recruited overseas,

> "... would lead to discontent among our present staff through getting out new men on larger salaries than they are drawing, and who would be less useful until they had acquired some knowledge of the language and natives."[71]

The engineering staff caused sufficient embarrassment without adding to their grievances. They insisted that their position should be superior to the four competent African linesmen and the Indians. In 1910 the subordinate Europeans even demanded the introduction of racial segregation on the Lake Victoria Steamers either by

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[70] Electrical Mechanician, Kampala (W.E.Moore), to Assistant Telegraph Superintendent, 11.vi.10, ESA: SMP 1006/09.

[71] Superintendent of Telegraphs, NBI (L.E.Caine) to C.S., EBE, 1.xii.09, Unnumbered, ESA: SMP 1599/07.

partitioning the Second Class Cabin or by arranging that all white men should travel First Class.[72] Technical experts in the United Kingdom, as Preece and Cardew, Consulting Engineers to the Crown Agents, advised that recruitment to technical positions in the Colonies should be limited to men with good education and proper technical training.[73] The Governments did not establish a professional engineering service of qualified men because it seemed unlikely that the initial cost would be justified by increased efficiency.

Services, Administration and Traffic

The extension of the Department's operations between 1904 and 1912 was not paralleled by any comparable development in its administrative structure. Staff policy, governed by local expediency, remained weak and ineffective. Financial control was still decentralised. The Posts and Telegraphs Department had no clear system of priorities and was unable to balance its resources in terms of manpower, finance or administration between its various activities. The central problem of the Department remained an administrative organisation.

In 1912, it still seemed that the mere imposition of a unified directorate would produce economy and effective operation. It was

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[72] Superintendent of Telegraphs, NBI (L.E.Caine) to C.S., EBE, 10.iv.10, No. 3/26, ESA: SMP 766.

[73] C.O. (Crewe), Circular, 20.v.09, enclosing Preece and Cardew to Crown Agents, 21.iv.09, ESA 1051/09.

in this belief that in 1912 the senior staffs of the postal and telegraph branches had been amalgamated without any consideration of the inter-territorial relations of the Department or the need for coherent policies. The Department needed an administrative structure that would be able to develop established services into a profitable entity and exercise control over personnel, finance and equipment.

Chapter V

THE CREATION OF A DEPARTMENTAL HIERARCHY 1912-1925

The 1912 amalgamation proved the first practical move towards the creation of an administrative hierarchy for the Posts and Telegraphs Department. The reform, intended to reduce the frictions between senior officers in the service and to allow for the more satisfactory conduct of business, failed because it overlooked the operating problems of the service and did not consider the relations between the Governments and the Department. It also failed because the interests of the East Africa and Uganda Protectorates had begun to diverge quite sharply. Rivalry between the two civil services and the conflicts that developed between economic policies founded upon white settlement and African peasant production strained the inter-territorial administrative Departments. These circumstances transformed the problems of the Post Office from questions of official rivalry into insubordination and turned the arguments upon the separation of Posts and Telegraphs into demands for autonomous territorial services.

Insubordination proved the Department's principal administrative problem between 1912 and 1925. The Uganda Government saw little advantage in inter-territorial organisation. The East Africa Protectorate retained all postal revenues and carried all operating

costs in Uganda but the latter state held the burden of telegraph finance. The suspicion that East Africa benefited from the profits of the Uganda postal service gave undue influence to officers stationed at Kampala, who were responsible both to the Department and to the Uganda Government. During 1913, the postal officer appointed to the rank of Assistant Postmaster General and Assistant Telegraph Engineer in Uganda took advantage of the Postmaster General's absence to advise the creation of a separate Department. This official, who caused considerable misunderstanding between the two Governments, was transferred to the Gold Coast Colony. His departure was followed by the separation of posts and telegraphs in Uganda. In effect this meant that the Nairobi headquarters of the Department had no control over the finance or policy of the telegraph branch in the Uganda Protectorate. Friction between the Postmaster General and the Assistant Telegraph Engineer in Uganda developed in 1914. By 1920 Uganda desired to operate its own Posts and Telegraphs Department.

Insubordination caused a complete reorganisation of the Department in 1925. By 1922, the absence of an official hierarchy and the confused state of inter-territorial accounts proved incompatible with financial efficiency. Although the slump at the end of the First World War made retrenchment in staff and services essential, the Department in Uganda obstructed attempts to secure economies. Financial stringency and a decline in wartime levels of traffic

forced the adoption of a centralised, inter-territorial bureaucracy for both branches of the service. In 1923, the Colonial Office appointed Thomas Fitzgerald as Postmaster General. Fitzgerald had reorganised the several Post Offices of the Federated Malay states into a single administration and held the East African position of Deputy Postmaster General. On gaining his substantive authority, Fitzgerald refused to allow the continuation of divided Departmental control. He drew up a scheme whereby administrative control would be responsible to the two Governments for the satisfactory conduct of the Department and the behaviour of its employees. The vexed question of finance would be handled by maintaining separate accounts for each territory. Within, the common administration it would be possible to allow for the differing operating policies that seemed to be required by the divergent patterns of economic development.

The Governments reorganised the Posts and Telegraphs Department upon Fitzgerald's scheme as from 1st January, 1925. Thirty years after the formal establishment of the service on the mainland of East Africa a unified responsible bureaucracy had been created to give coherent direction to policy and investment.

The Failure of the 1912 Amalgamation

Friction between the Posts and Telegraphs officials in Uganda and their administrators in Nairobi became increasingly

serious after 1912 and by 1920 emerged into an unpleasant inter-territorial dispute. Although the 1912 Amalgamation recognised the growing administrative autonomy of the two British Protectorates in East Africa, it did not reorganise inter-territorial accounting arrangements. During 1913 the Department separated the telegraph engineering branch from the Post Office in Uganda and in 1914 abandoned a system of precise accounting as unduly complicated. The only lasting effect of the amalgamation was that the Chief Telegraph Engineer had been subordinated to the Postmaster General so that the Posts and Telegraphs Department in the East Africa Protectorate operated with a minimum of official rivalry.

Gosling proceeded on leave in 1912 before the amalgamation of the Departments' senior staffs became effective. In his absence the Assistant Telegraph Engineer in Uganda, W.T.Wallace, contrived to establish a separate Posts and Telegraphs Department. Long dissatisfied with the policies of the Chief Telegraph Engineer, Wallace opposed a reduction of telegraph charges to six cents per word, which would lose revenues of £1,000 and increase staff costs by £225. He claimed that administrative centralisation was merely a part of a broader arrangement by which the East Africa Protectorate manipulated the finances of the Department and appointed unsuitable officers to the Uganda service.[1]

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[1] Assistant P.M.G. and Assistant Telegraph Engineer (W.T.Wallace) to C.S., 14.xi.12, T.18/313, E.S.A.: SMP. 2904/1.

The Uganda Government displayed an indiscreet interest in Wallace's allegations, seeking further detail. Wallace thus gained the opportunity to canvass the autonomy of Uganda's communications services. He calculated that between 1912 and 1914 the overall Uganda deficit on the Department would amount to £15,043, while East Africa stood to gain £14,496 as profit on the operation of the Protectorate's postal service. However, Wallace overlooked East Africa's expenditure of £6,994 upon staff stationed in Uganda and such other items as working expenses, accounts supervision, transit postal and money order work, and the expenses of sorting mail; while including telegraph construction costs as a part of the Uganda deficit. Under the control of a financially dependent Department construction works were properly an expense of the territorial governments, particularly when the engineering and postal accounts had been kept separate at the express wish of the Uganda Government. Wallace, working on the 1913-4 Estimates, concluded that the establishment of an autonomous Post Office in Uganda would cause an increase of only £190 in the annual deficit. When he made allowance for free services to the Government, his proposed Department promised a profit of £3,627.[2]

Wallace saw overwhelming advantages in a separate postal administration. He hoped that "reciprocal arrangements" could be

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[2] Ibid.

made between East Africa and Uganda to cover mail sorting and transit charges, and proposed that each Protectorate should retain its own collections on 'through' telegraph messages. Gosling noticed that a reciprocal arrangement required Uganda to undertake mail sorting and transit work for East Africa and be able to forward through telegraph traffic. Because Uganda's external mail service lay through Mombasa and its telegraphs connected only with the East Africa Protectorate system, Wallace's argument demanded that East Africa should subsidise an independent Uganda Post Office. Gosling attempted to strengthen the amalgamated Department. He arranged for Wallace to be transfered to the Gold Coast Colony and apologised to the Uganda Government because "There has been a great deal of misunderstanding in this matter. It is obvious Captain Wallace did not understand the finance and arrangements of the Post Office."[3] In 1913 the Uganda Government approved the revised telegraph rates, but the outbreak of war in 1914 precluded any change in rating policy.

The dispute between Wallaee and Gosling led to the separation of the postal and telegraph branches in Uganda. The Government of Uganda realised its financial control over telegraph engineering, while the Postmaster General distrusted the power vested in ambitious

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[3] P.M.G., NBI (Gosling) to C.S., EBE, Minute, 17.v.13, Travelling No. X ESA: SMP. 2904/1.

subordinate officers. Therefore, Gosling divided the position of Assistant Postmaster General and Assistant Telegraph Engineer into its component parts. The postal branch remained dependent upon Nairobi in both administrative and financial matters, while the engineering authorities passed under the Uganda Government. The administrative subordination of the Uganda Department to the Postmaster General soon became merely nominal.

The absence of a coherent financial structure for the Posts and Telegraphs aggravated the problems of insubordination and brought the Governments into conflict. The 1901 Postal Fusion provided that East Africa would assume complete financial responsibility for Uganda's Post Office and receive all postal revenues. When the telegraph traffic branch was added to the Postmaster General's responsibilities in 1904, the Protectorates agreed to divide the costs of the telegraph traffic staff employed in Uganda. This informal arrangement became increasingly complicated as the volume of traffic rose.

When the East Africa Protectorate realised in 1910 that the Uganda postal service operated at a deficit, Gosling proposed that Uganda should pay 3/7 of the costs of European engineering staff because East Africa received none of Uganda's telegraph revenue.[4]

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[4] P.M.G., NBI (Gosling) to C.S., EBE, 10.ix.10, No.1368/10; Treasurer EBE (G.D.Smith) to C.S., EBE, Memorandum, 21.ix.10, ESA: SMP 1000.

The Uganda Government opposed any reorganisation of accounts and insisted that "... what we want to ensure is that we do not pay more than our share of the expenditure and that we receive our due share of the revenue."[5]

The Department introduced a system of precise responsibility for telegraph traffic finance in 1912, based upon fixed contributions estimated each year by the Postmaster General and adjusted at the end of each financial year in accordance with the actual revenues and expenditure. This arrangement, approved quite independently of the administrative reorganisation, severely strained the Department's accounting branch. The Governments soon agreed that the work involved seemed, "totally incommensurate with the result attained."[6] Although the system of precise accounting was abandoned after the First World War, the inaccuracy of the contribution system led Uganda to again consider the separation of its Posts and Telegraphs service.

The Uganda Railway, which the East Africa Protectorate "used as a taxing machine" focussed the financial problems.[7] A surcharge, and later a supercharge, were levied upon all imports into East Africa and Uganda and collected by the Railway. The East Africa

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[5]Treasurer EBE (C.D.Smith) to C.S., EBE, 4.x.10, ESA: SMP 1090.

[6]Deputy Treasurer, NBI (J.P.Espie) to Treasurer EBE, 9.i.14, No. 133/5, ESA: SMP 3708.

[7]Hill, M.F. Permanent Way. Vol. I, Nairobi, 1955, 403-404.

Protectorate thereby gained some £200,000. In addition, railway rates deliberately favoured East Africa's produce, while the Mombasa-Uganda freights formed the railway's most profitable traffic. The difficulties that accompanied the reorganisation of the railway into a truly inter-territorial institution were then complicated by the change in the constitutional status of the East Africa Protectorate in 1920. Its renaming as Kenya Colony created both confusion and suspicion. The establishment of the Kenya Protectorate along the old coastal dominions of the Sultan of Zanzibar; the Kenya Colony between that boundary and Uganda, and the maintenance of the Uganda Protectorate caused uncertainty. The British Post Office wondered,

> "... whether the status of Uganda will remain that of a Protectorate, and whether its postal arrangements will continue to be under the control of the Postmaster General, Nairobi."[8]

The General Post Office concluded that the two Protectorates had no postal existence save as part of Kenya Colony.

The problem of the railway surcharge merged into a political problem which led to enquiries into the apportionment of post office revenues and expenditure. During the First World War the Government altered the inter-territorial accounting arrangements so that Uganda carried the costs of a fixed proportion of the staff, irrespective

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[8] G.P.O. (F.H.Williamson) to C.O., No. 163809/20.4.viii.20. G.P.O.: 220H/1907: POST: 29-944.

of their territorial allocation. Similarly, East Africa paid the estimated telegraph revenue of Uganda whether such revenue proved to be in excess or in deficit.[9] After the war, Gosling sought "a reversion to the old arrangement by which Uganda paid its share of expenditure actually incurred because the differences between the fixed contribution system and the actual revenues caused unnecessary misunderstanding between the two Protectorates.[10] Moreover, a 50 cents clearance fee levied on all foreign parcels delivered in Uganda caused suspicion that this revenue was appropriated by the East Africa Protectorate.

Public and Government opinion in Uganda again considered the possibility of separating the two services. Gosling insisted that separation would cost Uganda £36,000 each year but the Treasurer of Uganda cited the Nyasaland Post Office estimates, which showed a surplus on postal operations.[11] Both the Chief Secretary and the Governor opposed separation and they arranged for Gosling to address the Chamber of Commerce. Gosling had spent six years as Postmaster General in Nyasaland which, unlike Uganda, was served by international waterways and therefore suffered no transit changes.

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[9] P.M.G. NBI (Gosling) to C.S., EBE, 14.x.15, No. 2087/15, ESA: SMP. 3143/1.

[10] P.M.G., NBI (Gosling) to Treasurer EBE, 4.xii.19, No. 1244/19, ESA: SMP 6179.

[11] "Notes 'for' and 'against' Separation", Treasurer, EBE, 1.vii.20, ESA. SMP 6179.

Moreover, the Nyasaland Department was largely run by District Commissioners and had no telephone service. Nevertheless a strong body of opinion in the Chamber urged that the 1901 fusion should be abandoned because,

> "... they thought they would get a more efficient service with a purely Uganda Post Office ... the root cause of the movement was resentment over the Railway question... The Post Office had apparently committed no special offence beyond the fact that from their point of view it was an East African Institution."[12]

Gosling drew the attention of the Chief Secretary in Entebbe to the advantages of postal fusion. Under amalgamation postal matter and telegrams paid only a terminal charge, but if separate Departments were created, East Africa would be entitled by the international conventions to surcharge communications using the route from Uganda to the sea. Moreover, Uganda would have to recruit a Postmaster General, establish its own headquarters, provide housing, pensions and so forth. Gosling estimated that separation would cost Uganda a minimum of £15,000, meaning that the public would have to pay more for postal services. A comparable anxiety lay in the possibility that a separately constituted East Africa Protectorate post office would be under a Postmaster General, responsible to purely local interest which might see little justification for

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[12] P.M.G., NBI (J.T.Gosling) to C.S. EBE, Travelling No. 8, 21.viii.20, E.A.P. & T.: 765/21/1.

expenditure on new wires and similar facilities that would mainly benefit Uganda.[13]

The Government of Uganda concluded that amalgamation represented an undoubted economy in the operation of its postal services. Moreover, Gosling had presented his arguments to the Chamber of Commerce so well that they even advised the Uganda Government to retain "the present Inter-Protectorate Postal arrangements".[14] The amalgamated postal service with its peculiar financial arrangements survived, but would clearly be subject to complaint at the first sign of any financial difficulty.

The structural problem of the Posts and Telegraphs Department encouraged insubordination by the engineering staff in Uganda. When the posts of Assistant Postmaster General and Assistant Telegraph Engineer were separated, the British Post Office failed to recruit a candidate competent for the combined post, but suggested that W.G. Tucker, a 32 year old Engineering Assistant, might master the postal side with a little practice.[15]

Early in 1913, soon after his arrival in East Africa, Tucker protested that his title of Assistant Telegraph Engineer was false, for he possessed executive responsibility in Uganda. His opinion was dismissed as premature although he supervised a staff of twelve

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[13] Ibid.

[14] Uganda Chamber of Commerce to C.S. EBE, 11.ix.20, ESA.: SMP. 6179.

[15] G.P.O. (E. Crabb) to C.O., No. 97385/13, 30.vi.13, ESA: SMP 3143/1.

Europeans and 120 Africans, maintained 1,277 miles of telegraph and 293 1/2 miles of telephone lines, and controlled the expenditure of some £10,000 each year. The situation became worse in 1916 when the Postmaster General attempted to assert his authority over the Uganda Telegraph Department, E.B.Jarvis, the Governor of Uganda, informed the Postmaster General,

> "... that the constant friction which exists is directly attributed to the absence of Departmental rules ... The Telegraph Engineer, as things are at present, gropes about in the dark and, if his actions do not entirely coincide with your views, he is immediately jumped upon for exceeding his powers."[16]

Despite the administrative and technical advantages of a united telegraph department, it seemed in 1920 that continued centralisation would only exacerbate friction. The failure of the 1912 amalgamation inconvenienced both the Department and the Governments. The incoherent administrative and financial structure survived partly through the occurrence of the First World War but also because it seemed that inter-territorial bodies were liable to problems of management. Reform and reorganisation only came from the post-war economic crisis that placed a premium upon operating efficiency and retrenchment.

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[16] Governor, Uganda (E.B.Jarvis) to P.M.G., NBI, Demi-Official, 15.xii.16, ESA: SMP 3143/II.

The Re-organisation of the Posts and Telegraphs

During the early 1920s the needs of economy and efficiency could no longer be reconciled with an ill-defined official hierarchy. Central direction and a clear financial policy seemed essential innovations if the Department were to keep pace with the economic development of Kenya and Uganda. The financial crisis of 1921-1922 heightened the urgency of reform because a centralised authority could retrench staff while minimising reductions in services. The reorganisation also was influenced by bureaucratic factors. In 1921 T. Fitzgerald was appointed Deputy Postmaster General in place of L.E.Caine, who retired. When Gosling was appointed Treasurer of Kenya Colony, Fitzgerald attained the substantive rank of Postmaster General. Fitzgerald's experience lay in the Post Office of the Federated Malay States, where the Department was centrally controlled and organised on a commercial, self-accounting basis. He found the East African Post Office "very unusual" and was surprised by its complicated financial procedures as well as by the independence of the Uganda Telegraph Construction and Maintenance Department.[17] On his appointment as Postmaster General in 1923, Fitzgerald initiated a thorough reform of the Department.

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[17] P.M.G., NBI (T. Fitzgerald) to C.S., NBI, 22.v.23, Memorandum on Amalgamation, 22.v.23, E.A.P. & T.: 706/21/2.

Fitzgerald formulated his attitudes towards the organisation of the Department in 1921 and 1922. Acting as Postmaster General, he assumed that the abolition of the rank of Chief Telegraph Engineer had made the deputy engineering officers directly responsible to the Postmaster General's office.[18] W.G.Tucker, the Telegraph Engineer in Uganda, countered that his responsibilities lay primarily towards the Protectorate Government and maintained that any reduction in his powers would lead to the development of Kenya's services at the expense of Uganda.[19] Fitzgerald realised that the Department would be unmanageable unless there were a clear hierarchical structure and objected strongly to "direct representations, over the Head of a Department, from officers in charge of branches".[20]

The Uganda Government recalled its earlier troubles with the Railway and, encouraged by insubordination in the Post Department concluded that the inter-territorial co-operation only benefited the revenues of the East Africa Protectorate. In 1920 Uganda suggested that actual telegraph revenues should be credited in place of the contribution system. Fitzgerald agreed that this arrangement would be appropriate but expanded it so that Uganda was also responsible for all expenditure on its posts and telegraphs service. The Uganda

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[18] Acting P.M.G., NBI (T. Fitzgerald) to C.S., EBE, 6.viii.21, No. 1545/21. ESA: SMP. 3143/II.

[19] Telegraph Engineer EBE (W.G.Tucker) to C.S., EBE, 12.viii.21, No. 88/233, ESA: SMP. 3143/II.

[20] Acting P.M.G., NBI (T. Fitzgerald) to C.S. EBE, No. 2182/07. Confidential, ESA: SMP. 3143/II.

Government formally accepted this scheme, but when it refused to admit liability for the salary of the Assistant Postmaster General at Kampala, the possibility of agreement collapsed. Fitzgerald's proposals covered the maintenance of separate telegraph engineering departments and an administrative fusion of the telegraph traffic and postal services, with each state paying all costs and receiving all revenues within its own territory, while certain charges of a common nature would be divided between the two states in agreed proportions. C.K.Dain, the Acting Treasurer of the Uganda Protectorate, suggested that such an arrangement would practically amount "to Uganda having her own postal services" and wondered whether it might be preferable to establish an autonomous Department independent of policies determined from Nairobi.[21]

In 1922 the Department and the Governments determined to reorganise the Posts and Telegraphs. The ensuing negotiations required an evaluation of inter-territorial cooperation and the status of the autonomous Telegraph Construction and Maintenance Department in Uganda. These questions focused upon financial matters, particularly retrenchment and the apportionment of revenues and expenditures.

During the year ending 1921 Uganda gained £1,098 through financial contributions from East Africa in respect of telegraph traffic.

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[21] Acting Treasurer, EBE (C.K.Dain) to C.S., EBE, 7.iv.22, Minute, ESA: SMP. 1179. See also Uganda Executive Council Minutes 30.vi.22.

The financial arrangements that disturbed the Uganda Government produced a profit for the Protectorate Treasury. Fitzgerald drew this curious condition to the attention of the Uganda Government, suggesting that it might be advantageous to abandon the notion that the Post Office needed reorganisation. However, Uganda faced serious economic difficulties, resulting from fluctuations in the cotton market. The estimates for 1922 anticipated a deficit of £3,889 in the operation of the Uganda telegraphs, without allowing for engineering expenditure.[22] Fitzgerald advised that a suitable programme of retrenchment could substantially reduce the deficit without impairing efficiency.

During July, 1922, Fitzgerald, now appointed Postmaster General, visited Uganda to discuss the necessity of "drastic staff retrenchments" through "the co-ordination of all branches of the Department under the definite and direct control of the Postmaster General."[23] Fitzgerald's discussions led to a draft agreement for the full amalgamation of the Kenya and Uganda postal and telegraph services. Each state would maintain its own Post Office buildings and undertake capital expenditure while maintenance charges and extensions, such as new telephone subscribers lines, would be met from common funds.

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[22] Acting P.M.G. NBI (T. Fitzgerald) to Acting Treasurer EBE, 20.v.22, No. 766/21, E.A.P. & T. 766/21/1.

[23] Acting P.M.G., NBI (T. Fitzgerald) to Acting Chief Secretary, EBE, 15.vii.22, E.A.P. & T.: 766/21/1.

The staff of the Uganda Engineering Branch would become officers of the Department carried on the Kenya Estimates whose pensions charges would be divided between the Kenya-Uganda Treasuries according to the length of service in each territory. Uganda agreed to adopt Kenya franking regulations and to pay for all official services, save letters, telegrams, and telephone calls between Entebbe, Kampala and Jinja which the Post Office commuted to a fixed annual payment of £100. The Uganda unallocated telegraph store would, until exhausted, be used for construction and maintenance in Uganda. The Uganda Transport Department would grant the Post Office the rebate of 25°/o on the public charges for mail transport that was also given by the Uganda Railway. The value of free services would be excluded from calculations of departmental profit and the cost of the headquarters, the accounts staff and the salary of the Assistant Postmaster General in Kampala would be divided between Kenya and Uganda in the proportion 23/30;7/30. Departmental rates and charges remained subject to the approval of both Governments.[24]

Although the Governments approved the amalgamation proposals, Uganda disputed the pensions provisions, stipulated that the agreement should be revised after two years and claimed the right of appeal to the Secretary of State against the Department's financial

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[24] "Basis of Agreement for the Full Amalgamation of the Kenya and Uganda Postal and Telegraph Services", in Acting P.M.G., NBI (T. Fitzgerald) to Acting Treasurer, EBE, 29.vii.22, E.A.P. & T.: 766/21/1.

arrangements.[25] Fitzgerald rejected these conditions because they would limit his powers of administrative initiative. Colonies always referred their disputes to the Colonial Office for adjudication, but Uganda's insistence upon explicit provision imputed dishonourable motives to the Department and the Government of Kenya. In addition, Uganda had not reconfirmed its willingness to invest £29,000 in telegraph reconstruction and clearly wanted to retain the revenue of the line between Irumu and Fort Portal, built under subsidy from the Belgian Congo. The Uganda Government realised that reorganisation would deprive the Protectorate of subsidy from Kenya and abandoned the draft proposals at the end of 1922.[26]

Fitzgerald accepted the decision of the Uganda Government. The Posts and Telegraphs Department, although condemned by Uganda, operated at the expense of Kenya. During the six years ending 1922 Kenya's contribution to Uganda exceeded the actual revenues by more than £5,000 and Kenya's loss for 1923 seemed likely to amount to £5,000.[27] On 16th December, 1922, Fitzgerald informed the Government of Uganda that the Protectorate could choose between operating its own service or participating in an amalgamated Department with a fair

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[25] G.W.Ryan for Acting C.S., EBE, to P.M.G., NBI, [redacted] 29.viii.22, No. 6179 E.A.P. & T.: 766/21/2.

[26] C.S., EBE (E.C.Eliot) to P.M.G., NBI, [redacted], 8.xx.22, No. C 673 E.A.P. & T.: 766/21/2.

[27] Chief Accountant NBI (F.E.Balmer) to P.M.G., 19.iv.23, Minute E.A.P. & T.:766/21/2.

distribution of revenues and expenditure. Fitzgerald also announced that he intended to submit a memorandum to the Colonial Office.[28]

Fitzgerald copied his memorandum on amalgamation to the Governments during May, 1923. Concentrating upon the related problems of co-operation and the status of the Uganda engineering branch, Fitzgerald showed that the Post Office of Kenya and Uganda operated under two major defects. Finance formed the principal difficulty because Uganda insisted that out-payments should continue on a fixed contribution system, while being credited with the actual telegraph and telephone revenues. Thus, Kenya's estimated loss for the Uganda service in the year 1923 amounted to £3,278 after allowing for the payments due from Uganda and excluding headquarters charges. Moreover, Uganda opposed any retrenchment on the postal side because that expenditure was entirely met by Kenya. Uganda, Fitzgerald recorded, had declined to modify the system. The autonomous Uganda Telegraph Engineering Branch was not merely a defect but also caused Fitzgerald considerable embarrassment because its affairs were, "arranged in Uganda directly between the Telegraph Engineer and the Uganda Government." Fitzgerald refused "to act merely as a figurehead" and insisted that to avoid trouble and waste, he must exercise ~~full administrative~~ full administrative control and

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[28] P.M.G., NBI (T. Fitzgerald) to Acting C.S., EBE, No. 766/21, 16.xii.22, E.A.P. & T.: 766/21/2.

responsibility over the Department.[29]

Fitzgerald suggested that the Department could separate the Uganda Post Office, provide for the unified control of financially separate authorities, or establish a complete amalgamation. He particularly advocated complete amalgamation under Kenya control. Although integration would not be politically embarrassing, "It would be a step towards placing the Department on a commercial basis and give an opportunity for rate reductions."[30] The Government of Kenya, on the advice of its Treasurer, preferred complete separation. The Uganda Government belatedly accepted Fitzgerald's scheme for the administrative amalgamation of two financially separate Post Offices and suggested the memorandum should be studied by an inter-territorial committee.[31] Early in 1924 a Conference at Entebbe unanimously agreed that the territorial self-accounting scheme suggested in 1922 should be introduced on 1st January, 1925.

The amalgamation proposals provided for the compete separation of Post Office finances in the two territories with the division of common expenditure in the proportions of the respective revenues. The whole staff would be borne on the Kenya Estimates, but Uganda would reimburse the Colony for staff actually employed in the Protectorate. The main innovations of the Agreement provided for the Treasurers of Kenya and Uganda to inspect Departmental accounts;

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[29] P.M.G., NBI (T. Fitzgerald) to C.S., NBI, 22.v.23, Memorandum on Amalgamation, 22.v.23, E.A.P. & T. 766/21/2.

[30] Ibid.

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the establishment of uniform rates, and the definition of common revenue, which should be divided in the same proportions as the common expenditure, in terms of the receipts from the coastal wireless station and stamp sales to philatelists. The agreement enjoined that all franking privileges would cease, save for letter mail, the charging of exchange telephone lines at a flat rate, and free calls from official telephones over the Entebbe-Kampala-Jinja trunk line. All expenditure should be held in common save for major construction works, which would include any additional staff employed, internal mail carriage apart from the railway services, money order commission and parcel posts payments to other governments, and such equipment as motor vehicles.[32] The eight retrenchments from the Uganda Engineering Branch were to be carried by the Protectorate alone. Four of these could be immediately absorbed into the Kenya service, and another could be employed in the Uganda Public Works Department, while two supernumerary officers could revert to the Home service. The most difficult problem was that of Captain Tucker, the Telegraph Engineer, Uganda. Fitzgerald bitterly resented Tucker's independence and refused to appoint him Chief Telegraph Engineer because of financial irregularities.[33]

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32 Governor's Deputy, Kenya (E.B.Denham) to C.O., 15.v.24, Kenya No. 639, enclosing: "Minutes of Meetings held in the Office of the Chief Secy. Entebbe on the 9th and 10th April 1924", C.O.: 533/311.

33 P.M.G. (T. Fitzgerald) to C.S., EBE, 15.iv.24, Confidential, E.A.P. & T.: 625/24.
The travelling allowance for the Telegraph Engineering Department in Uganda for the year 1923 amounted to £750. Tucker personally used

The Secretary of State for the Colonies quickly expressed his approval of the amalgamation scheme. The Colonial Office felt that alterations would stir up further bitterness and summarily dismissed the arrangement as "More steps towards amalgamation in E. Africa".[34] Fitzgerald had already proved his administrative ability in the reconstruction of the Federated Malay States' postal system and the Colonial Office followed C.J.Jeffries' advice that

> "... As it [the amalgamation] is agreed by both Governments - or 'States' as they call themselves in the Agreement - it will be as well to tamper with it as little as possible."[35]

The amalgamation came into operation as a bureaucratic expedient blending the greatest degree of harmony between official and unofficial feeling in Kenya and Uganda with the lowest scale on which an amalgamated Posts and Telegraphs Department could operate effectively.

In 1924, the governments and the public opinion of Kenya and Uganda accepted an equitable amalgamation of the Posts and Telegraphs. Kenya no longer subsidised the postal service in Uganda while the Post Office seemed to have an opportunity to concentrate its efforts upon operating efficiency. Uganda, determined to reduce

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£415.14.07 to drive the Chief Electrical Mechanician between Kampala and Entebbe, and the rest spread between 9 officers. Tucker retired from the Uganda service as from 1st January, 1925, on abolition of post terms. The Colonial Office reappointed him to the Post Office of Tanganyika Territory. E.S.A.: SMP 1161, 1161M, P.3638.
See also: Uganda Executive Council Minutes, 1.xii.22, 12.i.23, 23.xi.23.

[34] E.J.Read to Lord Arnold, 25.vi.24, Minute, C.O. 533/311.

[35] C.J.Jeffreis, 21.vi.24, Minute, C.O.:533/311.

Government expenditure even at the cost of the Kenya Treasury, accepted the amalgamation because the establishment of an autonomous Posts and Telegraphs Department would lead to new administrative problems. Tucker's financial indiscretion meant that the Uganda Government could no longer rely upon his judgement and the whole concept of postal separation had been re-examined. The confidence of the Uganda Government in its Posts and Telegraphs servants had been undermined and when Fitzgerald obtained Colonial Office support for the revised amalgamation, the Uganda Government acquiesced in the agreed scheme.[36]

The Kenya Government viewed reorganisation as a matter of bureaucratic convenience. Fitzgerald expressed his "appreciation" of the assistance given by both Governments and their "helpful Manner".[37] However, the unofficial members of the Kenya Legislative Council preferred Lord Delamere's analysis that the postal reorganisation,

> "... is a most excellent arrangement. It leaves Kenya as the centre, and the Hon. Postmaster General as a controlling factor and the other party to this agreement simply votes intheir Legislative Council a contribution towards the Post Office Department..."[38]

Control centred upon Nairobi, but it was no more vested in the Kenya

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[36] Uganda Executive Council Minutes, 23.viii.23, 17.iv.24.

[37] T.Fitzgerald (Postmaster General), K.L.C., 16.ix.24.

[38] Lord Delamere, K.L.C. 16.ix.24.

Legislative Council than in the Uganda Government. Control lay in the Departmental bureaucracy. At the beginning of 1923 a revised accounting system had been introduced so that the Department should become "more definitely self-accounting".[39] The significance of autonomous bureaucracies was not yet appreciated in East Africa but the unofficial members of the Kenya Legislative Council did resent the fact that the Agreement had not been submitted for their approval. Delamere regarded this lapse as a characteristic feature of Crown Colony administration under a Government majority.

Unofficial opinion in Kenya proved disinterested in postal administration. In 1923 and 1924 their attention focussed more closely upon railway control. The discussions upon the Post Office rehearsed the debate on the Railway Control Bill which established the Uganda Railway and the Port of Mombasa as a self-accounting authority operating upon semi-commercial lines. Settler opinion in Kenya could not assent to the removal of the railway to a sphere beyond their political control and by December, 1924, the Post Office reorganisation seemed even more clearly an example to be emulated. J.E.Coney correctly analysed that the railway became subject to Colonial Office regulation. He felt that once control

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[39] P. and T. Annual Report, 1923, E.S.A.: SMP. 861L.

had been lost, it might never be recovered and in contrast pointed

> "... to the Post Office Agreement. I do not yet understand the agreement between the Government of Uganda and the Government of this Colony, with regard to the Post Office, but apparently a satisfactory working arrangement has been come to, and surely something of that kind could not have been arrived at with the whole of the Railways being run as one unit."[40]

However, the political control of the Posts and Telegraphs Department had been as surely lost as the control of railway policy. There was no constitutional means by which the Legislative Councils of either Kenya or Uganda could determine the policies or procedures of the inter-territorial authorities.

The reorganisation of the Posts and Telegraphs Department became effective on 1st January, 1925, subject to review at the end of its first year of operation by a committee of the Postmaster General; S. Marston, the Acting Treasurer, Uganda; and H.C.Bayles, the Deputy Treasurer, Kenya. The Committee reported that the scheme "should be continued indefinitely", providing that either Government might request revision at the close of any financial year. It recommended that each territory should bear expenditure on staff directly employed and that local travelling costs ought to be considered a territorial charge. Audit costs formed the main item of dispute. Uganda agreed to contribute a fixed annual charge

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[40] J.E.Coney, K.L.C., 16.xii.24.

for the service, for the small difference did not seem to justify the expense of calculation. The amount, after much discussion, settled at an annual payment of £175. The Postmaster General's suggestion that Uganda should pay a proportion of the cost of transhipping mails at Mombasa was, however, postponed in the absence of sufficient information. The Uganda Government accepted the Report with the proviso that they were not responsible for the cost of handling mail at Mombasa because it did not appear that the Kenya government was put to any additional expense. By 1926, economic revival in East Africa reduced Government concern for their revenues. Sir Edward Grigg, the Governor of Kenya, observed that

> "... I am of the opinion that Kenya's claim for a direct contribution by Uganda is justified and does not infringe the spirit of the existing agreement, but in order to maintain the smooth working which has so far characterised the scheme, I am prepared to waive this claim."[41]

Uganda benefited from the reorganisation. Its deficit on Posts and Telegraphs of £11,109 in 1924 improved to a surplus of £6,530 in 1925, a creditable performance, although the 1925 figure included £3,996 for state services which had not been charged in the previous years. However, the true comparison lay with Tanganyika. In 1925 the Tanganyika Territory's Department produced a revenue

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[41] Governor, Kenya (E.Grigg) to C.O., 16.viii.26, Kenya No. 710, C.O.: 533/348.

of £30,630 for an expenditure of £55,131. The comparable Uganda figures were £43,022 and £56,492.[42] The Colonial Office saw no reason for disallowing the 1925 amalgamation.

Centralised Administration

The centralised administration of the Posts and Telegraphs Department, introduced by Fitzgerald in 1925, remained in force for twenty-five years. The system demonstrated its effectiveness in the circumstances of prosperity and depression, of peace and war. It marked the recognition of the Department as a political entity controlling an important public service and handling a large colume of state finance. This structure was invalidated only by the occurrence of technological innovation, which demanded that the department should gain a greater financial autonomy if it were to maintain its effectiveness as an inter-territorial institution.

The reorganisation came into effect as a measure of economy. After the First World War, Departmental operating surpluses fell from £41,880 in the year ending 1921 to £10,282 in 1922. Centralised administration made retrenchment possible with a minimum curtailment of public service. The survival of the centralised bureaucracy did not depend as much upon economy as on its ability to handle rising

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[42] Acting Treasurer, EBE (S.Marston) to C.S., 8.vi.26, Minute, E.S.A.: SMP 8196.

volumes of traffic and extend the availability of services. The post-war slump was over in 1924. In the following year Departmental traffic reached a record volume. Administrative centralisation, therefore, had to demonstrate its flexibility in varying financial circumstances, its receptiveness to new conditions, and its tolerance in adjusting to Government policies. The amalgamated Posts and Telegraphs Department functioned effectively under officials who were competent in political relations and negotiations.

Chapter VI

THE PROBLEMS OF INCREASING BUSINESS 1912-1930

The traffic handled by the Posts and Telegraphs Department increased greatly between 1912 and 1930 so that almost any administrative structure could justify its efficiency in terms of rising traffic. The postal service underwent little change in these years, but the introduction of telephone and wireless services elaborated and expanded the telegraph system. Although the problems of financing technological innovation did not directly effect the Department until the 1930s, the question of future development aroused some speculation. The remittance and savings bank facilities became important aspects of Post Office activity. The general increase in business and in the complexity of Departmental operations had a further consequence. Staff policy, which had functioned on the principles of expediency and coincidence, became determined by clear rules of promotion and duty.

The postal service faced two principal problems between 1912 and 1930. The first was that of sub-economic offices in rural European settlement areas. Although costly and unprofitable, closure of these services was politically unrealistic. The introduction of a cash on delivery service provoked the second difficulty. Departmental suggestions that the service would fill a useful social function met with opposition from retail traders who anticipated

new and unwelcome competition. After considerable debate, the Post Office instituted a cash on delivery parcels service in 1925.

The telegraph service faced somewhat greater problems. The system was so severely strained by the exceptional traffic of the First World War that additional routes had to be constructed by staff recruited from South Africa. This branch of the service first used new developments in the technology of communication in 1915 when a wireless telegraph station opened at Mombasa for communication with shipping. The Post Office bought further apparatus for a chain of wireless stations in the Northern Frontier District but abandoned construction when further developments rendered the equipment obsolete. Although introduced to East Africa in 1905, the telephone became a device for popular communication only during the 1920s. The service, which competed with the telegraphs, was initially restricted to urban areas as Nairobi or Mombasa until there was a sufficient volume of local traffic to justify the erection of trunk lines. Only in 1930 did the Department open a trunk route between Nairobi and Nakuru and two years later extended the line to Mombasa.

Although the remittance and savings bank operations extended during the period 1912-1930, they faced severe problems. The service was so unprofitable that the volume of transactions could not cover administrative costs, The African peoples, who alone could provide

the necessary volume of business, enjoyed little purchasing power, found the authorised offices for financial transactions too few in number, and discovered more profitable ways of using or remitting their money. Only between 1917 and 1920 did the financial services of the Department develop when the wartime fluctuations of sterling and rupee currencies meant that monies remitted to the United Kingdom and South Africa benefited from the favourable exchange rate.

The formulation of a racial staff policy proved the most influential development. The rising volume of traffic and administrative centralisation gave new opportunities for specialisation and the employment of overseas experts. Similarly the revised administrative structure gave opportunities for devising the career patterns that helped determine the loyalties of personnel. By far the greatest stimulus to the regulation of non-white opportunities came from the junior European employees, who feared economic competition from Africans and Asians.

Between 1912 and 1930, the Department's business increased sixfold but facilities were hardly extended. The most noticeably innovation proved the development of a defined staff policy. However, the expansion of the Department and the economy of headquarters charges demonstrated the effectiveness of the 1925 amalgamation.

The Communications Services

The amalgamation of 1925 affected the administrative efficiency and the profits of the communications services. The Department, an integrated unit, employed its staff economically and reduced bureaucratic duplication. Recurrent expenditure minimised, Post Office revenues benefitted substantially from an increasing volume of traffic. Although the Governments encouraged some investment, particularly in telephone services, the Department's profits were included in general state revenues. Thus the expansion of facilities failed to keep pace with economic development in Kenya and Uganda Although the Posts and Telegraphs Department, as public opinion, found this situation irksome, restricted investment proved an advantage when the international depression of 1929 affected East Africa. The Post Office then faced fewer problems of retrenchment than any other Department.

The postal service handled a progressively increasing volume of traffic. The three and a half million items dealt with in the year ending 1911 doubled by 1917-1918 and rose to more than seventeen million letters in 1930. Almost one-third of the wartime traffic consisted of official or soldiers' letters exempt from postage charges. Thus, the increased commercial activity of the 1920s quadrupled the Departmental business.

The First World War did not at first make much difference to the conduct of the internal mails. The runner, railway and steamship

services operated regularly, even if offices became more congested. During 1916 the pre-war service actually improved when the Uganda Railway introduced a daily passenger train service. Generally the services operated with unprecedented regularity and, for the first time, the Department used its staff efficiently and effectively. Difficulties came in 1917 when, from 15th October, the Railway reduced its passenger train frequency to four each week. The Department experimentally forwarded mails by goods trains and then introduced Sorting Carriages between Nairobi and Kisumu. These vehicles, placed in service between Nairobi and Nakuru on 27th November 1917 and between Nairobi and Kisumu during February, 1918, enabled the Post Office to sort up-country mails en route and thus save delays at intermediate centres.[1] This service proved so effective that it continued after 1st March, 1920, when the Railway reinstated the daily passenger train.

Increased white settlement and commercial activity after the First World War made little contribution to the Department's operating procedure, save in the introduction of motor lorries for the conveyance of mails in urban centres. However, traffic increased and the public continually criticised postage rates. In 1924 W. MacLellan Wilson informed the Kenya Legislative Council that the

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[1] P. and T. Annual Report 1917-18.

Post Office "is not altogether a business proposition," and complained that "Kenya's postage rates were among the highest in the world".[2] The steady increase in the Departmental revenue surplus fostered criticism of rating policy. The Post Office was out a tool of government finance and in 1926 the Governor of Kenya, Sir Edward Grigg, firmly rejected a reduction in overseas postage rates which would "... entail the estimated loss of £20,000 [Kenya £16,000; Uganda £4,000] in the Post Office revenue".[3] The use of the Post Office as a Government taxing machine could not be discontinued. The Department maintained its postage rates, which seemed "extra ordinarily inequitous ... when a large number of letters are merely transferred to other people's private boxes."[4]

Outside the urban and closely settled areas the postal service remained informal. At Kakamega the Government performed the duties of postal agent as late as 1929, although Kaimosi had a post office to serve seventeen European farms.[5] The increase in African literacy and the expansion of migrant labour in the 1920s threatened to change the operational basis of the Post Office. In 1927 a group of Africans, renting a private box from the Department, established a mail service to the African suburb of Pumwani where the

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[2] W.MacLellan Wilson, K.L.C., 16.xii.24.

[3] Sir Edward Grigg (Governor), K.L.C., 12.x.26.

[4] T.A.Wood, K.L.C., 15.xi.28.

[5] North Kavirondo Annual Report, 1929, K.N.A.: DC/NN 1/10.

'Native Memorial Hall' became an informal post office.[6] However, neither the Department nor the Government yet realised the African wish to communicate. Even in 1932 a Provincial Commissioner's meeting decided that the absence of African complaint showed the adequacy of rural services.[7] The Government was far more preoccupied by its liability to handle mail at many stations. In 1928 R.W.Hemsted, the Provincial Commissioner of the Northern Frontier District, reported that "The Department assists with neither funds nor staff... the mails ... are put on to any car or lorry proceeding in the direction required."[8]

Parcels post business almost doubled to 204,193 items between 1922 and 1929. Although the parcels service had lost much importance through the expansion of retail trade, the introduction of a cash-on-delivery service with the United Kingdom in 1923 caused considerable alarm. This service, first proposed in 1907, met with the approval of the British Post Office in 1919 although Gosling feared, "that the settler who receives by 'Cash on Delivery' say a brown hat instead of a black one will want to make trouble with Sub-Postmasters, mainly Indians."[9] The Chambers of

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[6] Habari, September, 1927.

[7] Minutes of Provincial Commissioner's Meeting, 5.vii.32, K.N.A.: 4/1/4/3.

[8] Northern Frontier District Annual Report, 1928 (R.W.Hemsted) K.N.A.: PC/NFD 1/1/3.

[9] P.M.G. (J.T.Gosling), "Confidential Memorandum", 12.vii.19, "Cash on Delivery Service with the United Kingdom", G.P.O.: 31-1920: POST: 29-1402.

Commerce proved a more serious problem. They represented retail trade and opposed United Kingdom competition, although they were anxious for an inland service so that they might undercut up-country stores. Out of consideration for the Nairobi Chamber, the Post Office found in May, 1920, that staff shortage prevented the establishment of the service. Further discussion ensued until November, 1922 when the Joint Standing Committee of the Associated Chambers of Commerce and the Convention of Associations approved the establishment of a cash on delivery service as from 1st July, 1923 thus giving traders a sufficient time to readjust their prices.[10]

The service was appreciated by the African population, but the Department's fears "of cheapjack advertisements" and African ordering with intent to evade payment proved unfounded. In 1926, however, the magazine East Africa claimed that

> "... despite official reticence many people here [Kampala] are aware that piles of parcels sent on the C.O.D. principle and addressed to Natives have had to be returned because the consignee could not or would not fulfill the conditions necessary."[11]

This allegation provoked a quick response from the Uganda Government because, in the six months ending October, 1925, the Post Office received 1,922 C.O.D. parcels from the United Kingdom of which ninety-eight had been returned to the senders but only thirty returned parcels had been addressed to Africans.[12]

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[10] Governor's Deputy, Kenya (C.C.Bowring) to Acting Governor, Uganda, 12.i.23, Kenya No. S. 19810/33, E.S.A.: SMP 1201/07.

[11] East Africa. 16.ix.26.

[12] Acting C.S., EBE (P.W.Perryman) to Editor, East Africa, 15.xi.26, ESA: SMP. 1201/07.

The telecommunications services expanded rapidly under the stimulus of war and innovation. In the year ending 1916 the Post Office handled almost 400,000 telegrams in the two Protectorates. A comparison with the 1913-1914 returns showed an increase of 71.2°/o for East Africa and 52.9°/o for Uganda. These statistics included work undertaken for the armed forces free of charge, which probably accounted for half the Department's traffic. In addition, the Post Office handled more than 100,000 messages over military telegraph lines.[13] In order to cope with the congestion thirty one European telegraphists and linesmen were recruited from South Africa.

During the year 1917-1918 the telegraph service handled more than 600,000 messages and the engineering branch erected a second post office wire along the Nairobi-Naivasha railway, although staff shortages and United Kingdom restrictions on exports precluded other construction works. The Post Office operated 637 official and 284 public telephones in the East Africa and Uganda Protectorates, with a total exchange traffic of some 900,000 calls.[14] During the year ending 1919 the Department opened the wireless stations at Mombasa and Kismayu for public traffic and completed a telegraph line from Mjanji to Mbale. The large volume of uncharged state traffic rendered the telegraph system uneconomic and the Post

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[13] P. and T. Annual Report. 1915-1916.

[14] P. and T. Annual Report. 1917-1918.

Office increased the charge for inland telegrams from 75 cents for 12 words to Rs. 1/- for 10 words on 1st April, 1918.

The end of the War caused telegraph traffic in the year 1919-1920 to fall to just over 400,000 messages. However, the telephone service maintained its business. The telegraphs, built for Government convenience rather than public need, demonstrated their irrelevance and inability to operate profitably after the First World War. Even in 1920 it seemed likely that wireless or telephone services would replace the overland telegraph lines although technological change required large capital investment. Expense precluded the installation of wireless equipment, except in the Northern Frontier District, but the Department encouraged the extension of telephone services as a commercial risk.

The Department handled only 200,000 telegrams in 1923, but this traffic more than doubled by 1929, to fall to 300,000 messages in 1932. The letter post and the telephone increasingly replaced the telegraph service, partly because the system had not improved since the early 1900s. In 1930 J.H.Clive, the District Commissioner at Lamu requested the installation of a wireless station because

> " On my arrival here at the end of May, the officer of the Post Department who had just completed a 'thorough overhaul' of the [telegraph] line, was about to leave, and his departure coincided with a record period of telegraphic interruption lasting 6 weeks. Communication was established again in June, and has carried on with maddeningly

frequent interruptions ever since."[15]

Wireless telegraphy offered the only practicable alternative to expansive reconstruction. Before the cession of Jubaland to Italy the Government intended to build a chain of stations in the Northern Frontier District. Under the stimulus of war the first of the series opened at Mombasa in 1916. The Department built a further station at Kismayu, from prefabricated parts supplied by the Marconi Company, in the remarkably short time of sixty nine days during 1917. The equipment became outdated during 1920, but the Post Office erected a further station at Lamu in 1922. Undertaken as a security against interruption of the Mombasa station, the Lamu Wireless worked with a smaller transmitter on a farm south of Nairobi.[16] The Lamu station never came into public or formal government use and closed in the early 1930s.

The value of wireless telegraphy during interruptions to the cable between Mombasa and Zanzibar led to experiments with short wave transmission. The Department built a wireless set using power ranges from 1/4 to 1/2 kw and in 1927 suggested that a programme of rural wireless construction could "if necessary be established to comparatively little cost so far as the installations themselves are concerned". The Governments, reluctant to risk capital,

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[15] Lamu District Annual Report. 1930 (J.H.Clive), K.N.A.: DC/LMU.1/2.

[16] Compare: W. MacGregor Ross, Kenya from Within, London, 1927.

allowed the proposal to lapse. Only in 1930, when wireless stations became necessary for the purposes of air traffic control, did the Department renew its experiments. East Africa proved slow to develop wireless services when compared with the Belgian Congo which even in 1925 operated an internal network of forty-two wireless stations.

The telephone service developed through public pressure. During the 1914-1918 war the volume of telephone business doubled and the number of instruments in use quadrupled although the system was inadequate. Colonel Tucker of the Uganda Telegraphs reported on the development of the Nairobi telephone system in 1920, advocating the replacement of overhead lines by underground cables and the establishment of an automatic exchange.[17] Although the Government even refused to finance development in Nairobi, the Department realised "that there are many unsatisfied requirements for general telegraph and telephone development - trunk lines, etc."[18] In 1922 the telephone system of Kenya and Uganda consisted of exchanges at Mombasa, Nairobi, Kisumu, Entebbe, Kampala and Jinja with trunk lines between Nairobi and Kiambu and from Entebbe to Kampala and Jinja.

Telephone policy attracted public criticism when the Governments

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[17] "Report on Nairobi Telephones", W.G.Tucker, 13.x.20, E.A.P. & T.: GW.208.

[18] P.M.G., NBI (J.T.Gosling) to Treasurer, NBI, 27.v.21, No. 1003/21, E.A.P. & T.: GW.207.

of Kenya and Uganda unified their charges on 1st January, 1925 replacing the flat rate by measured charges according to the number of conversations. The alteration met strong opposition. Lord Delamere anticipated a vast increase in accounting expenditure and warned that most people overlooked petty bills. The commercial community was even more alarmed because the measured rate system threatened to load installation charges upon the larger users of the service, whereas the flat rate charged all subscribers an equal amount. The introduction of the measured rate directed public criticism to the inadequacies of the telephone system. At the beginning of 1925 the Kenya Legislative Council considered the appointment of a Committee to study telephone policy. Fitzgerald felt that the public exaggerated its criticisms but fully agreed that the telephone system suffered from obsolete plant, poor maintenance and bad operation. He noticed that Tucker's 1920 report placed the effective further life of the Nairobi system at five years and urged the Government to use funds from the Imperial Public Utility Loan Scheme for reconstruction in Nairobi and the building of a trunk line between Nakuru, Nairobi and Mombasa.[19] Criticism temporarily lapsed.

The Government then determined that the further development of the telephone system required profitable urban areas which could

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[19] T. Fitzgerald (Postmaster General), K.L.C. 20.ii25.

subsidise trunk lines and rural services. The Government sanctioned an exchange for Nakuru, where there was a demand for five official and thirteen private lines in 1924. The capital cost amounted to £580, the Department estimated the initial revenue at £210, while the salary of the African telephonist cost £60 per annum. The exchange opened on 1st December, 1925, and served a total of twenty three telephone subscribers. The problem of development lay partly in a shortage of government funds but especially in reluctance to risk capital. The Department completed the installation of the Nairobi cable system and the erection of an automatic telephone exchange only in 1932.

The development of rural telephone schemes and short trunk lines proved less satisfactory than urban construction. Although rural telegraph lines were often cheaply built with the help of a settler contribution such as wooden poles, telephones demanded much higher standards of construction and more sophisticated equipment. In the 1920s the Department resolved that contributions in kind would have to be superseded either by finance or by a guaranteed revenue. This development met with immediate settler opposition. When the Ngong and Mbagathi settlers applied for telephones in 1924, the Department insisted upon a £60 revenue guarantee. Rural telephone schemes developed slowly under a Postmaster General who considered that "If the business is not there,

then I feel it is only right that those who want the service should contribute to any loss".[20] Capital or revenue contribution remained the basis of rural telephone development. The Department built a trunk line between Endebess and Kitale in 1929 only on the understanding that Messrs. Barbour, Winter, Fowles and Hoey would guarantee a minimum revenue to the Department of Shgs. 800/-. Two years after the line opened the shortfall of revenue totalled only Shgs. 53/80 and thereafter the line paid its way.[21] As Departmental revenues increased, the Post Office came under increasing pressures to subsidise rural telephone services on the party line system. Special rates were introduced "on a basis which just make them self-supporting" and the settlers could further reduce the cost by supplying free poles, labour and transport. However, the Department realised that "In sparsely settled areas the length of line required makes the cost of the service rather beyond the means of the average settler."[22] In 1929 the Post Office opened a rural telephone system at Molo, where seventy miles of wire served twenty four subscribers. Such schemes proved so expensive that the Government appointed a Committee on Rural Telephones which reduced the subscribers' burden substantially.

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[20] T. Fitzgerald (Postmaster General), K.L.C., 16.ix.24.

[21] E.A.P. & T.: 1620/28.

[22] P. and T. Annual Report, 1928.

The development of telephone trunk lines also proceeded slowly. During 1927, the Chief Telegraph Engineer drew attention to the importance of long distance telephone lines, particularly between Nairobi and Nakuru. The absence of this route had not only discouraged connections to the Nakuru exchange but had also precluded any development at Naivasha and Gilgil. However, the Department opened Kenya's first major trunk line between Mombasa and Tanga for political reasons. The service proved unprofitable and in 1930 the public made only fourteen calls each day over the line. In June, 1930, the Department opened a trunk line between Nairobi and Nakuru, and on 2nd February, 1932, established telephone conversation between Nairobi and Mombasa. This work, undertaken largely to relieve unemployment, enabled the communications of the Kenya Highlands with Nairobi, Mombasa, Tanga and Dar es Salaam. It was the last major departmental work to be undertaken in the Depression and brought the telephone system up to the level suggested by Tucker as a desirable standard for the year 1925.

The Financial Services

Public demand for financial services during the First World War almost doubled the volume of remittances sent through the Post Office. The business continued to increase after the War, when members of the public found they could use the money and postal order services to profit from currency fluctuations. When

these abnormal circumstances ended in 1922, with the establishment of a Shilling currency in East Africa, the volume of remittance traffic returned to its pre-war volume and the service fulfilled a small function in the pattern of East African payments overseas. Post Office Savings Banks, despite a temporary wartime prosperity, developed more slowly. Unable to compete effectively with commercial banking houses for the savings of the expatriate communities, the Savings Banks also proved unable to attract much African investment.

During the year ending 1912 the Department handled more than 40,000 money orders valued at £255,000 and dealt with 16,000 British Postal Orders worth £10,000. The Uganda share of this business amounted to approximately one-fifth, in terms of both volume and worth. The First World War disturbed this pattern only in the year 1916-1917, when South African and Indian armies began the conquest of German East Africa.[23] The volume of traffic doubled in one year. When the War ended, payment by post office remittance continued to be popular, as a result of currency fluctuation.

Great Britain withdrew her currency from the gold standard when war was declared in 1914. The Indian Rupee, the currency of British East Africa which had been stabilised in 1907 at a fixed ratio of Rs. 15 to the gold sovereign, remained fully convertible

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[23] P.&T. Annual Reports 1911-1912; 1916-1917.

and therefore began to appreciate relative to sterling. The first indications of serious fluctuations appeared in 1917 when sterling developed an unfavourable exchange against the rupee. During the year ending 1918 the amount withdrawn from the East Africa Protectorate Post Office Savings Bank exceeded the amount deposited, because the public remitted surplus monies to Britain and South Africa thereby taking advantage of the Bank rate of exchange. The Department itself gained a profit of £772 from the exchange because its Money Order Accounts with India were liquidated by sterling bank drafts drawn on London.[24]

During the year 1919-20 the Department issued an abnormal number of remittances for payment in countries having a sterling currency. In May, 1919, Shgs. 1/8d sterling formed the exchange equivalent of a rupee. By December the rupee was valued at Shgs. 2/4d and in February 1920 the exchange rate again rose from Shgs. 2/4d to Shgs. 2/9d. The Department suspended the issue of all foreign rupee money orders on 21st February, 1920 because the settlement of rupee currency money orders, effected on a sterling basis on London, now caused a heavy loss to the Protectorate.

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[24] P. and T. Annual Report. 1917-1918.

[25] P. and T. Annual Report. 1919-1920.

During the year ending 1919 the value of Money Orders issued rose to £402,230 from £320,697, while the value of paid orders declined from £217,702 to £187,119. The Post Office cited these figures as evidence of the difficulties and opportunities created by exchange fluctuations, with the explanation that remittances by Asians to India were the root cause of the trouble. However, the issue of postal orders for payment in sterling area countries increased by no less than £25,625.1.2. or 88.26°/o. The conflicting values caused the establishment of an East African Currency Board and the abandonment of the financial connection between East Africa and India in 1922.

During July, 1920 the Government established a florin coinage with a nominal exchange rate of two shillings sterling or one Indian rupee. The new coinage was not immediately available for circulation and Indian currency remained in use. Large scale farmers and traders suffered considerable loss when Indian money began to depreciate in terms of sterling, which was not mitigated by a further change to a shilling currency in January, 1922. The African population also suffered and lost confidence in currency and such institutions as Savings Banks.

The East Africa and Uganda Protectorates maintained separate savings banks because the security of deposits was a liability upon Government revenues. The Uganda Bank began operations in 1907 under the management of the Treasury, paying a $2^1/2^0$/o interest rate.

On 31st March, 1908 forty five depositors held a credit balance of £567.3.8. Three years later, 322 depositors maintained accounts totalling £3,502.[26]

Although the Uganda Bank was founded to serve Africans, it operated only in those places where Uganda Treasury Offices operated: Entebbe, Kampala, Jinja and, from 1910, Fort Portal. Only those Africans in semi-skilled employment and posted to specific towns benefited from the service. Men of the King's African Rifles and the Police Department, whose wages formerly accumulated on pay-sheets, proved the most enthusiastic for savings bank facilities. Only in 1910 did the Baganda begin to use the Savings Bank and, when a branch opened in Fort Portal, the Wa Toro found that their savings could be more profitably invested in cattle and goats, or in loans to local traders who paid a higher rate of interest.[27]

The Government of Uganda made repeated efforts to induce Africans to open accounts but at the end of 1908 the service was clearly unpopular.[28] The branch opened in Busoga had not even been used by July 1909, and the District Commissioner at Jinja was instructed to

> "... urge on the Kakunguru and chiefs that they are getting left behind in this matter by the Baganda.... All the Abamasoga should open accounts in the interests of their people to prove to them that they are aware of

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[26] Uganda Protectorate Blue Books, 1908,1911.

[27] C.S., EBE (Russell), to C.O. Uganda No. 379, 29.xi.10. ESA: A39-10. Compare C.W.Hattersley, Uganda in Transformation 41.

[28] Acting Treasurer EBE to C.S., EBE, Memorandum No. G.193/111, 26.vi.09. enclosing: Accounts of Uganda Treasury Savings Bank 1908-9,

its advantages ... Otherwise I shall be ashamed of having praised them up to His Excellency."[29]

Beyond giving effect to such instructions, Government officers reluctantly assumed the additional duties of operating savings banks unless they gained an increased allocation for clerical assistance.[30]

The Bank hardly developed and in 1909 two of the more important chiefs in the Toro kingdom possessed accounts with commercial banks, which paid a higher rate of interest. In 1922 the Fort Portal branch held thirteen accounts totalling Shgs. 6272 cents 78. Five of the owners could not be traced in 1923, while one depositor held no fewer than three accounts. Despite the District administration's reluctance to operate the service, the Savings Bank constituted the only means of transferring money between Fort Portal and Kampala without undertaking the risks of porterage.[31] The experience of the Fort Portal branch typified the difficulties of operating a Treasury savings scheme by using Government officers. By 1910 the Uganda Treasury Savings Bank no longer exercised any effect upon the Uganda economy.

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[29] C.S., EBE, to District Commissioner, Jinja, 7.vii.09, Minute, E.S.A.: SMP 1086/09.

[30] District Commissioner Toro (F.H.Leakey) to Treasurer, EBE, 11.x.09, No. 832, T.6/6/09, ESA.: SMP. 1509/08.

[31] ESA: SMP. 1509/08.

The Posts and Telegraphs Department managed the East Africa Protectorate savings bank. Ceremonially opened on 1st April, 1910, by Gosling's wife, it held no fewer than 1,231 accounts by the end of the year. Although services were confined to Nairobi, Mombasa, Kisumu and Nakuru, the Department arranged that withdrawals could be made at any Money Order Office. The First World War caused a temporary set back when, "there was a run on the Savings Bank".[32] In 1916-1917 the Department seemed to be making substantial progress when the askaries of the newly formed King's African Rifles Battalions were instructed to maintain accounts. In that year the number of new accounts rose by 65°/o but the War prevented the extension of facilities to further centres of population and the Government did not really appreciate which African communities might be best placed to use the service. Thus, F.E.Balmer, the Acting Chief Accountant, felt in 1918 that savings banks services would not fill any African requirement for many years to come. He recalled that in 1913 an office had been opened at Ngongo Baggas in the Southern Nasai Reserve without much success, and closed under the pressure of wartime staff shortages.[33]

The abnormal nature of the savings bank's wartime prosperity first appeared in the year ending 1918 when the excess of withdrawals over deposits totalled Rs. 33,214. The Bank's working expenses amounted

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[32] P. and T. Annual Report 1916-17.

[33] Acting Chief Accountant (F.E.Balmer) to Acting P.M.G., 17.viii.18, Appendix 2 of P. and T. Annual Report 1917-18.

to Rs. 5,000, an average cost for each transaction of 27.52 cents of a rupee. In 1910-11 the United Kingdom Post Office Savings Bank undertook 29 million transactions, which cost 30.70 cents each. However, if deposits fell while the number of depositors increased, the expenses of the bank would soon outweigh the interest from investments. During the year ending 1919, 3,000 accounts held by askaris closed when the 2nd King's African Rifles was transferred to Nyasaland and the 3,186 accounts held by Africans fell to 429. The number of European accounts also declined from 1,007 to 883, but the accounts held by the Indians increased slightly in value. At the same time each transaction cost 52.88 cents of a rupee. The excess of withdrawals over deposits amounted to Rz.249.810.[34]

The East Africa Protectorate Savings Bank became an uneconomic investment because commercial banks offered a higher rate of interest on small deposits. Only in 1923 did Savings Bank deposits in Kenya exceed withdrawals, for the first time since 1916-17. Moreover, the working expenses amounted to shgs. 1.94 cents per transaction as against the 1922 costs of shgs. 2.37 cents. The Department succeeded in administrative terms but failed in its investment policy. During 1923 the earnings of the savings bank decreased from

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[34] P and T. Annual Report 1923.

shgs. 27,777.79 cents to shgs. 14,419.50 cents because investments worth £15,000 were sold on unfavourable terms, when public use of the bank increased.[35]

The terms of the 1925 amalgamation provided that the Uganda Savings Bank, although the financial responsibility of the Uganda Government, should be transferred to Post Office management and established on the same basis as the Kenya Post Office Savings Banks. The transfer took place in July, 1926, when the Department promptly claimed that "the greater facilities which the Department is in a position to provide is having an influence on the use made of the Bank."[36] During that year 36 European, 219 Asian and 735 African depositors held a total credit balance of £15,187 in Uganda. By 1929 the number of depositors had risen to 58, 592 and 1,262 respectively, their total balances amounting to £32,532. The European accounts contained an average deposit of £22.11.0. and the Asian accounts £25.5.0. but African depositors only held an average credit of £11.13.0. African accounts, more expensive to administer and subject to more frequent deposits and withdrawals, caused the Post Office a maximum of administrative work with a minimum of apparent return. Nevertheless, Fitzgerald admitted in

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[35] P. and T. Annual Report 1923.

[36] P. and T. Annual Report 1927.

1929 that

> "... the Uganda branch of the Bank continues to expand at a fairly rapid rate, and is obviously gaining in popularity and winning the confidence of those who it is intended to benefit."[37]

The Kenya Post Office Savings Bank depended more heavily upon the support of immigrant communities. At the end of 1925 there were 1,380 European, 2,408 Asian and 693 African accounts with a total balance of £64,721. By the end of 1929 the amount standing to the credit of depositors had increased to £120,375. The prosperity of the 1920s proved limited for the purposes of the Savings Bank. While the number of Indian accounts increased to 3,709, there were but 1,825 European and 985 African accounts. The European accounts held, on average, £16.6.0., the African deposits averaged £10.1.0. while the Asian accounts contained an average balance of £21.1.0. Primarily, the Kenya European relied upon commercial banking houses while Africans invested in such securities as cattle. The Savings Bank in Kenya served the purposes of Indian trade.

The Depression stimulated public use of the Post Office Savings Bank. In 1930 87 European, 678 Asian, and 1,540 African accounts controlled the Uganda deposit of £35,123. At the end of 1931 the total number of account holders had risen to 116,758 and 2,026 respectively with a total balance of £38,814. Similarly, the users of the Keny

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[37] P. and T. Annual Report. 1929.

Savings Bank had risen by 1932 to 2,363 Europeans, 4.737 Asians and 1,890 Africans. The total Kenya deposit in 1932 reached £133,341.[38] The Depression showed the financial advantages of savings banks. The banks provided a place for the deposit of money, no more affected by devaluation than the commercial banking houses, without the burden of account charges. The service proved more flexible for it permitted immediate withdrawal of small sums at most departmental post offices in Kenya and Uganda. By 1932 the preservation of overdrafts drawn on commercial banks had probably become Kenya's principal pre-occupation. The Post Office Savings Bank offered immediate advantages for the deposit of unexpected income and accounts were not attachable for debt. During the early 1930s the Post Office Savings Banks offered facilities competitive with commercial banks.

The creation of a Departmental Staff Policy

The increased volume of departmental traffic led to the development of a formal staff policy. The British and Indian Post Offices began to second trained men to East Africa in 1905. The Department established uniform terms of service and clearly defined the salaries, privileges and authority appropriate for locally recruited non-European staff who were quite widely employed in senior

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[38] P. and T. Annual Reports, 1930, 1931.

postal duties. After the 1912 amalgamation the Post Office developed a staff policy based upon racial preferences primarily as a concession to the interests of the European telegraph staff. These men, supported by the British postal workers unions, refused to associate with non-Europeans in any but a master-servant relationship. Faced by Departmental indecision, the Governments acquiesced in the limitation of non-European opportunities.

The cost of recruiting staff in the United Kingdom led Gosling to introduce a policy of 'Europeanisation' in 1910. The Department employed qualified people from the British Post Office to train local Europeans. The scheme proved only a partial success because in 1911 eight female telegraphists from the United Kingdom instructed only twelve settlers' daughters.[39] The Europeanisation programme also aimed to expand rural postal services through agencies operated by individual settlers. Gosling suggested that small traders in Britain should transfer their businesses to East Africa where, as a sideline, they could also run postal agencies. The British Post Office pointed out that the income from postal agencies was hardly a source of livelihood, and the Colonial Office squashed the scheme on the grounds that the British "shop-keeper" class could not compete with Indian traders.[40]

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[39] H. Currie (for Governor) to C.O. , 7.vii.11, East Africa Protectorate No. 368, C.O.: 533/89.

[40] H.A.Butler to H.J.Reed, 25.x.10, Minute, C.O.: 533/82.

Europeanisation replaced expatriates by local residents but it did not preclude the employment of Africans. In 1911, for example, the Department opened a post and telegraph office at the Rabai Station of the Church Missionary Society to act as a training centre. In January, 1912, Gosling reported that the tuition had, "been successful to an extent far beyond my experience with native Africans".[41]

The subordination of the telegraph engineering service to the Postmaster General in 1912 gave an opportunity to re-examine European terms of service. The Department realised that engineers in Uganda received higher salaries than their counterparts in East Africa. Generally there was inadequate supervision of subordinate staff, and a high turnover of officers. Many of existing staff proved unsuited to their positions and it seemed that "the policy of engaging untrained men" led to the inexperienced using "the Department as a mere temporary convenience".[42]

The Department found itself so short of qualified men in 1912 that an Indian learner and an African lineman maintained the Nairobi-Nakuru telegraph. Gosling then instituted the training of competent African telegraphists in engineering with the incentive "that on their proving themselves efficient... they should be given a certificate

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[41] P.M.G., NBI (J.T.Gosling) to Provincial Commissioner, MSA, 22.i.12, No. 1826/10, K.N.A.: PC/MSA 1/16/1912.

[42] Assistant Superintendent of Telegraphs Uganda (W.T.Wallace) to C.S. EBE, 26.x.10, E.S.A.: SNP 1611.

signed by the Telegraph Engineer".[43] Although the recognition that practical skills could be taught to Africans, who already possessed some rudimentary knowledge, represented a significant advance, European opinion was already vociferous and prejudiced against Africans with practical ability.

African acquisition of skill coincided with the consolidation of the position held by the more junior European staff. The 1912 amalgamation agreement provided that there should be no competition in the Posts and Telegraphs between men of different races. The grades for European District Postmasters and District Telegraph Engineers were unified so that "the coloured staff on both sides would be subordinate to the Europeans".[44] However, in 1912 the Governments and the Department had not defined the upper levels of African employment.

During 1913 the Department began to replace the Indian inspectors in the Uganda construction branch by Europeans. The Indian staff failed to give satisfactory service, partly because some European engineers did not give proper instruction, resenting their own classification with Indians under the general rank of 'inspector'.[45]

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[43] Assistant Superintendent of Telegraphs, East Africa (J.K.Creighton) to P.M.G., 8.ii.12, E.A.P. & T.: 346/12.

[44] Governor (E.P.C.Girouard) to C.O., 8.xi.11, East Africa Protectorate, Confidential No. 104 enclosing Memorandum: 'Proposed Amalgamation of Telegraph Engineering Department with the Post Office and Telegraphs under the control of the Postmaster General", C.O.533/92.

[45] Deputy P.M.G. and Chief Telegraph Engineer (L.E.Caine) to P.M.G., No. S.88/457, Confidential, 28.i.13, ESA: SMP 1101/B.

European staff, even if they were expensive, had become a priority in the engineering branch. It was necessary that they should be efficient and in 1913 Gosling insisted that all future appointments to the subordinate engineering staff should be filled by trained and qualified men.[46]

The Department was understaffed when war broke out between Britain and Germany. In an attempt to reduce staff losses to the military forces and keep the services in operation, the Post Office formed a Telegraph Section to take over the military lines in South West Uganda giving "all our Male European telegraphists ... a brief spell of military service and so obtain medals."[47] Gosling's suggestion that his staff problem could be solved by the award of Honorary Military Ranks to his Engineering Officers met with disapproval from the military authorities. A grievously reduced and somewhat discontented staff maintained the telegraph system and it proved impossible to obtain further men from Britain.[48] A partial solution was found in the recruitment of South Africans. At the same time, fears of secondment to the military reduced the recruitment of mail runners and porters.

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[46] P.M.G. NBI (Gosling) to C.S., EBE, 14.v.13, Unnumbered ESA: SMP 3143/1.

[47] P.M.G., NBI, to Assistant P.M.G., EBE, 13.iv.16, No. 187, Telegraphic E.S.A.: SMP. 4628.

[48] Crown Agents (E. Warde) to C.O., 15.ii.17, Uganda 8159, enclosing Preece, Cardew, Snell and Rider to Crown Agents, 10.ii.17. E.S.A. SMP. 3143/II.

After the War, the public expected an immediate improvement in post office services although the necessary staff were not available. The influenza epidemic of 1918-19 aggravated this situation for during one month almost half of the operative staff did not report for duty.[49] The First World War led many female staff to return to Britain but in 1915 Gosling resisted much expansion of African employment. Although capable telegraphists could be trained in two years, it seemed that a manipulative skill should not "be taken as indicating a civilised standard of honesty, probity and sense of responsibility."[50] The Posts and Telegraphs Department therefore recruited trained non-Europeans from Mauritius, the Seychelles, and Ceylon for postal duties.

The Mauritians soon became dissatisfied with their terms of service, complaining that their salaries did not afford "sufficient means of keeping our social rank".[51] The Postmaster General merely advised the clerks to adapt to East African conditions. The absence of redress against their treatment by the Posts and Telegraphs Department led the Mauritians to petition the Governor in 1918.[52] The Department

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[49] P. and T. Annual Report, 1918-19, E.S.A.: SMP 861 H.

[50] P.M.G., NBI (J. Gosling) to Provincial Commissioner NBI, 7.v.15, No. 885/15, K.N.A.: PC/MSA 1/16/1912.

[51] M. Furlong and others to P.M.G., NBI, 4.iii.18, E.A.P. & T.: 527/17.

[52] Mauritian Clerks to Acting P.M.G., NBI, 6.iii.18, enclosing Petition to Acting Governor, NBI, 6.iii.18, E.A.P. & T.: 527/17. The clerks were

reported that the clerks' work was promising but it seemed unfair to give them a salary in excess of their teachers, although they "have undoubtedly attained to a higher standard of education than most of the Indian clerks."[53] The Nairobi Secretariat approved a small increase in salary.

The Mauritian clerks, and particularly one named Mark Furlong, remained discontented. Furlong resigned from the Department in 1919 and sent a further petition to the Governor. He asserted that the Mauritians were treated as Indians, although "there being a world of difference between his style of living as a whole as compared with that of an Indian".[54] Furlong's resignation and petition forced the Department to define its attitudes on matters of race. Although official recognition of Mauritian education and social position might lower the status of the European, the Postmaster General drew the Government's attention to cases of settler assaults upon Eurasians in charge of small post offices and asked, "... if one departs in the slightest degree from the true white men where is one to find a natural barrier between white and coloured?"[55] During 1928 the Post Office recruited a further two Mauritian clerks

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M. Furlong, M. Naydoc, A. Legrand, R. Dabadie, A. Dullec and J. Gironde.

[53] Acting P.M.G., NBI, to Acting C.S., NBI, 12.iii.18, No. 527/17, E.A.P. & T.: 527/17.

[54] M. Furlong, NBI, to Governor, Kenya, 26.x.19, E.A.P. & T.: 527/17.

[55] P.M.G., NBI, to C.S. NBI, Confidential, 1.x.19, E.A.P. & T.:527/17.

as members of, "the non-European staff under the general conditions in force for the Asian clerical service".[56] The men proved less forthright in their opinions. In 1930, vacancies were found for a further six, two of whom later became founder members of the Uganda Asian Postal Association.

The Post and Telegraphs Department established a rigid system of racial employment prefrence by 1925. It originated in the recruitment of unqualified engineering staff whose occupations and skills were hardly different from manual labour. Skilled non-Europeans only threatened the position of the better trained postal staff when the Department recruited competent Mauritian clerks. The junior white officers then feared isolation from the wealthier settler society, particularly because a non-racial staff policy seemed conducive to both economy and efficiency. In 1922, for example, the Department's experience with night telephone operators in Nairobi suggested that Asians, Africans and Europeans were equally likely to be "overtaken by sleep with the result that the object for an all night service is defeated."[57]

The junior European employees regarded a secure social position as their primary objective. They sought identity in Kenya society. In 1920 the British Union of Post Office Workers organised a boycott

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[56] W.G.M.MacDonald for P.M.G., to Acting C.S., NBI, No. 'E' 527/17, 9.ii.29, E.A.P. & T.: 527/17.

[57] P.M.G. NBI (T. Fitzgerald) to C.S. EBE, 25.iv.22, No. 29/1920, E.S.A.: SMP. 7252.

of East Africa because the salary scales seemed inadequate and, as J.W.Bowen of the Union informed the Colonial Office,

> "... a more serious ground of complaint was that a social barrier existed between the subordinate officials, including the Postal Clerks, and the superior officers. The subordinate officials were debarred from social intercourse with their Superiors and they were not admitted to the Social Club. As a result they found themselves in a position which was both isolating and humiliating. The distinction in status was apparent to the natives and influenced their attitude..."[58]

The Colonial Office did not understand the social barrier and insisted that distinctions must depend upon "the personality of officials and the general tone and feeling in the Colony".[59] The Union withdrew its boycott when the Department raised the salary scales, but money did not alleviate the social strains experienced by the junior technical officers. As late as 1923 the Sub-Telegraph Engineers in Uganda petitioned against their terms of service, which compared unfavourably with those given to Junior Postmasters. They partly attributed their inferior position "to the use of the prefix 'sub', which was normally restricted to non-European ranks.[60] Such details, matters of mere administrative action, hardly disguised the fact that non-Europeans formed a competitive

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[58] Minutes of a Meeting at the G.P.O., 25.xi.20, Memorandum, "Conditions in the Postal Service in Britain E.Africa", C.O. 691/42.

[59] Ibid.

[60] Sub-Telegraph Engineers, Uganda to Telegraph Engineer, EBE, 5.xi.23, E.S.A.: STP 3143/1.

labour force. While the African acquisition of skill might be delayed, it could not be prevented because the settler community like the Imperial Treasury demanded economical government. African labour was cheaper than European, and the small number of poorer whites failed to impose their political and racial will upon the Government.

The reorganisation of the Department in 1925 produced no innovations in staff policy because the level of East African technology did not yet require the employment of highly qualified Europeans. Social pressures remained as powerful as the need for economical operation. Consequently, the newly developed staff policy represented a combination of political and financial expediency.

Political expediency in the 1920s hinged upon the replacement of Asian staff, who aroused white resentment, by Africans. The Department systematically recruited Africans and paid subsidies to mission schools which taught telegraphy. By 1926 there seemed "little danger of the African losing his place as the backbone of the manipulative side of the telegraph service".[61] However, the effect of increasing African prosperity upset Post Office calculations and at the end of 1925 the Uganda Government had to be advised that such men "can obtain

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[61] P. and T. Annual Report. 1926.

equally good and to them more attractive employment with private firms as lorry drivers, etc."[62] Rather than improve conditions the Department determined to raise the standard of recruitment. In December, 1927, a class of telegraphists completed their training at Makerere College, Kampala, but Post Office work proved unattractive and the scheme was withdrawn in the next year because only two candidates sought training. Similarly, no progress was made with the training of African engineers. The salary scales paid by the Governments and their Departments to educated Africans were sufficiently low to dissuade the acquisitive from a career in government service.

The European staff of the Posts and Telegraphs Department, like most of the white population in Kenya, refused to admit that Africans would respond to economic incentives. They felt that, since educated Africans came from a subsistence economy, salary levels should offer rewards comparable only to the profits of small-scale agriculture and that it would be unfair to encourage economic divisions within African society. This argument implied that African advancement would be limited and subject to suitably restrictive regulations. The African clerical service was, for example, allowed one and a half days leave for each completed month of service, which

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[62] P.M.G. (T.Fitzgerald) to C.S. EBE, 10.x.25, No. 1116/25, E.S.A.: SMP 1733/09.

seemed

> "... sufficiently generous for indigenous officials who are unaffected by climatic conditions or by prolonged separation from their families or private affairs."[63]

The Departments' attitudes discouraged African employees. There seemed no prospect of promotion when even the junior branches of the supervisory grades were reserved for "local European youths and girls".[64] The work was also insulting to African men. The Department maintained segregated post offices and European customers were always given precedence. When the Chief Telegraph Engineer proceeded on inspection tour in 1926 he found part of the apparatus at Soy out of order because it had been damaged by lightning and "The Postmaster stated that he was afraid to report it since it had so recently replaced for a similar fault." The Engineer found that the efficiency of outdoor labour could be increased by consolidating travelling allowances and suggested that Africans should be replaced by Europeans for maintenance of telegraph wires because "very few of the existing linesmen earn their wages." Cost-effectiveness was not a matter to trouble a Department of the Kenya Government. In Uganda, however, there was some African resistance which the Engineer saw as

> "... a general slackness in the labour of the Protectorate which was evidenced while I was in Masindi. A pole had to

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[63] Acting Governor, Kenya (A.G.Denham) to C.O., 14.iv.27, Kenya No. 260, C.O. 533/365 (10057).

[64] Governor, Kenya (R.T.Coryndon) to C.O., 14.x.24, Kenya No. 1344, C.O.:533/314.

be replaced within the township. The Hamali cart was not on the spot, not having returned from a country repair. The boys, 12 of them, refused to carry the 25 ft. pole for the town repair. Mr. Donaldson reported them to me and after a harangue they carried the pole."[65]

During the early 1920s, the Department underwent its first experience of an organised trades union, the Posts and Telegraphs Asian Union. The Union, formed largely for political reasons, held its first meeting on 19th August, 1921, at the height of the Kenya Indians' political argument with the European settlers.[66] The Union opposed the refusal of Government to consider the Posts and Telegraphs as a technical department and resented unequal allowances given to Europeans. A further source of grievance lay in the East African practice that Asians who supervised the work of other Indians should come from a different community. This policy led to rivalry and to intermediate ranking officers overlooking the complaints of their subordinates.

The Asian Postal Union achieved official recognition only in 1924, when the Department received a copy of the Rules and Regulations. The Union described its objectives as the improvement of conditions of service, the offering of advice to members, and the representation of grievances to the Department.[67] The Union issued its first

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[65] Memorandum, Chief Telegraph Engineer, 26.iv.27, E.A.P. & T. GW.211.

[66] Secretary, Asian Postan Union, NBI (J.G.D.D'Souza), Recruitment Circular, 31.viii.21, E.A.P. & T.: 1731/21.

[67] Asian Postal Union, NBI (P. D'Costa) to P.M.G., NBI, Unnumbered, 2.ix.24, enclosing: Rules of Asian Postal Union of Kenya and Uganda E.A.P. & T. 1731/21.

officially recognised protest during 1925, when it opposed the Departments' refusal to delegate the fining of recalcitrant employees to the Asian Civil Service Association, but abandoned the complaint when the Postmaster General threatened to withdraw recognition.

The Asian Postal Union won its first partial success in 1929, when it protested that Departmental instructions to Postmasters seemed to augur the abolition of overtime payments and that the off-duty time offered in lieu of payment might be granted at inappropriate times for recreation. The Union proposed that overtime payments should be given only for duties undertaken on Sundays, holidays, or after 6 p.m., off duty in lieu being allowed for the other times. During September, 1929 the Department instituted payment for dusk to dawn attendance and for Sunday and holiday work, with the stipulation that the staff in attendance should be "reduced" to the lowest possible minimum". W.G.M.MacDonald of the Postmaster General's office told the Union that no better terms could be offered, but a circular to controlling postmasters also observed that the effect of overtime payments

> "... on certain members of the staff is definitely harmful as tending to habitual spending in excess of substantive salary in the usually incorrect assumption that overtime earnings will enable the debts so incurred to be met."[68]

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68. W.G.M.MacDonald for P.M.G., NBI, to Asian Postal Union, NBI, No. 1731/21, 24.ii.28, enclosing Circular to Postmasters, 24.ix.28, No. 1334/22, E.A.P. & T.: 1731/21.

The Asian Postal Union's last formal protest, before the Second World War would enable them to push their case more vigorously, came in 1930. The Postal Union was alarmed by the Kenya Asian Civil Service Association's resolution, "that all non-technical special posts should be filled by selection among the general staff".[69] In the opening days of the Depression Post Office employment seemed a desirable security but the Union had no cause for alarm. Fitzgerald resolutely promised that all promotion in his Department would be an internal matter and thereafter the Union became quiescent. Regular monthly meetings were held until 1939 but the Union's members realised their privileged position as employees. The depression not only discouraged Union protest but also encouraged the Department to economise by the employment of Africans. This threat exacerbated basic financial problems. A Regulation of 1924 provided for the discontinuance of subscriptions and without financial involvement the Union's membership lost enthusiasm. Its leadership proved unable to determine whether the organisation should act as a pressure group or as an instrument for collective bargaining. Indecision and financial weakness made the Union powerless. Its members, threatened by both European and African competition, sought to preserve the differential wage scales that operated against African staff.[70]

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[69] Asian Postal Union, NBI (W.P.Miranda), to P.M.G., NBI, 15.ii.30, Unnumbered, E.A.P. & T.: 1731/21.

[70] e.g. Jeremiah Kokaka, Kisumu to Editor, 29.vii.31, East African Standard, 8.vii.31.

Traffic and Centralised Administration

Centralised administration had few effects on the operation of the Department. The routine work could not be changed by re-ordering the structure of the bureaucracy. Reorganisation primarily influenced matters of policy, notably in the selection and employment of staff, and in the reduction of tensions within the service and between the Post Office and the Governments. The Posts and Telegraphs used its almost autonomous status after 1925 to maintain its autonomy from Government pressure. This policy, practised during increasing prosperity in East Africa, reflected each year in rising volumes of traffic, revenues and operating surpluses.

Between 1925 and 1930, the Department faced no challenge on either its operating or adminitrative policies. It devoted most of its efforts to solving the difficult problems of overseas telegraph communication by contriving the establishment of a wireless telegraph service. Dufing the early 1920s, the Post Office applied innovations developed during the First World War to international communication. During the 1930s, in spite of the depression, the Department adapted these developments for use within East Africa. Technological innovation and the difficulties of financing new developments raised a new series of problems that were unconnected with administrative difficulties.

Part Two

PROBLEMS OF TECHNOLOGY AND FINANCE

1925 TO 1949

PROBLEMS OF TECHNOLOGY AND FINANCE 1925 - 1949

A new series of problems followed the establishment of a coherent administrative structure for the Kenya-Uganda Posts and Telegraphs Department. During the First World War, air transport, wireless telegraphy and telephony became practical means of communication, which were clearly adaptable for Post Office use. These innovations demanded great flexibility in the Department, the adoption of new techniques, and the recruitment of personnel qualified in specialised trades. Above all, the introduction of these new devices raised financial problems that required either a [redacted] reform of the Department or able political management.

Technological innovation only became a serious problem in the 1930s. Previously the new techniques used principally for overseas communication were outside Departmental managerial or financial interest. Overseas communications introduced new techniques to East Africa, but at the same time the rising level of internal business encouraged Departmental experiment. During the 1920s, the Post Office extended and reequipped the urban telephone systems. In 1930, it opened the first major telephone trunk line between Nairobi, Mombasa, Tanga and Dar es Salaam. As early as 1926, the Government of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika subsidised an experimental air mail service from the United Kingdom. In 1931 a series of regular internal air mails operated under local subsidy.

The Depression of 1929 effected sharp changes in the pattern of Departmental operations because the Governments curbed capital expenditure, reduced services and retrenched personnel. In 1933, as an economy of scale, the Posts and Telegraphs Department of Tanganyika Territory amalgamated with the Kenya-Uganda service. The Post Office usually produced a revenue surplus even during the Depression, but the states appropriated its profits for their general revenues. The consequent financial difficulties became so pronounced in the emergency of the Second World War that in 1949 the Posts and Telegraphs Department was reconstituted as a self-contained body, maintaining its own capital account with a responsibility for public service.

Between 1918 and 1939 the adoption of wireless telegraphy, the introduction of air mail services, and the establishment of a radio-telephone circuit between Nairobi and London vastly improved East Africa's overseas communications. Early experiments in wireless telegraphy and disputes over rating policy between the Department and the Eastern Telegraph Company led, in 1928, to the licensing of the British East Africa Broadcasting Company. This concern established a wireless telegraph link with the United Kingdom and demonstrated the advantages that would accrue from competition between two companies anxious to handle East Africa's overseas traffic. Although the B.E.A.B.C. soon amalgamated with the international Cable and

Wireless Company, a monopoly formed to limit the world-wide competition between wireless and cable telegraphy, the astute negotiations of the Postmaster General maintained East Africa's favourable rates. The colonial governments had for the first time achieved some measure of control over external communications. Local supervision proved less prevalent in the development of air transport, which began largely as a strategic British interest in 1931.

The Posts and Telegraphs Department of the Tanganyika Territory developed out of the German East Africa Post Office. After the First World War, military precedents formed the basis of the civil Post Office as German influences were limited to fixed installations. So complete was the change that the British postal service even refused to employ German trained African staff. The civil post office of Tanganyika was properly a Government Department, designed to provide communications for the state. The Government did not subject the Department to commercial pressures and obliged it to provide uneconomic services for practically the sole convenience of the local administrations. Investment capital was scarce in the Territory; the volume of traffic was low; and the Department expanded its recurrent expenditure to the level of its income. The depression of 1929 placed the Post Office, like many other Departments of Government, in a rather invidious position. Revenues fell sharply causing insistent pressures for retrenchment, but a reduction in the range of available services met only with protest from other branches of the civil service.

As the depression deepened, the only solution seemed to be the amalgamation of the Tanganyika Posts and Telegraphy Department with that of Kenya and Uganda. Amalgamation took place in 1933, despite severe political protests in East Africa, Germany, the United Kingdom and the League of Nations.

The Posts and Telegraphs Department of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika was formally constituted as from 1st January, 1933. In that year the service handled nineteen million letters, producing a total revenue of some £280,000. A Postmaster General, whose authority depended upon three Governments, administered these responsibilities. The annual estimates had to be approved by three states, separate statutes determined operating procedures, and staff disliked transfer between the territories. In the event of dispute between the Governments, the inter-territorial services experienced severe difficulty in financing common facilities. The Department needed astute political management if it were to survive as an effective authority. The strains became pronounced during the Second World War. Between 1940 and 1942, postal traffic increased by one-third and doubled again by 1945. The failures of the Governments to invest in the Department and the absence of inadequate inter-territorial communications hampered military arrangements. Active warfare in Kenya and the overseas operations by East African troops increased the Department's problem. Considerable disputes ensued upon the award of concessions in postage rates

to soldiers and on the usefulness of extending such benefits to African troops. The arguments between the Governments became so complex that the Postmaster General resolved to oppose all alterations in policy rates and procedure.

Between 1933 and 1945, the Department did not seize the opportunities of technological innovation. The unwieldy constitution of the Post Office raised financial problems which were increased by political suspicions that inter-territorial co-operation developed to bring East Africa under the control of the Kenya settlers. The inability of the Post Office to satisfactorily finance the development of its services emphasised the need for a further revision of its constitution.

On 1st January, 1949, the Posts and Telegraphs Department of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika became a self-accounting authority, maintaining its own capital accounts. Post Office reform remained but a small part in the whole structure of East African co-operation. During 1948, a High Commission was created to administer the inter-territorial services on a non-political basis through an East African Legislative Assembly. Conversion to self-accounting status freed the Department from the difficult political conditions of the local Legislative Councils and gave it the exclusive task of providing a communications service for government and public benefit. The change was seen as a measure of financial efficiency demanded by increasing business, and an accelerating rate of technological innovation.

The administrative structure established in 1925 survived a series of changes in the technology of communication, fluctuations in the international economy, and the disputes between the East African governments. In spite of the limitations imposed upon the Department's administrative and financial initiative, the post office proved its ability to adapt to change and to operate as a responsible political body. The recurrent difficulties of finance and technological change undermined the organisation less than the large increase in its traffic during the late 1940s.

Chapter VII

OVERSEAS COMMUNICATIONS 1918 - 1939

Overseas communications constituted almost half the traffic handled by the Posts and Telegraphs Department between 1918 and 1939. This service was not only an important source of Post Office revenues but also the subject of public scrutiny. The Department consequently devoted much attention to the conduct and improvement of overseas communiaations and had every incentive to exploit new technologies. Financial considerations and the minimal control that East Africa exercised over shipping and submarine telegraph companies restricted Post Office efforts. The traffic of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika meant little to concerns with worldwide interests while technological innovations required capital to be risked in speculative investiments. Moreover, the British Government had a vital strategic interest in international communications and was reluctant to jeopardise the stability of existing subsidised facilities. The cable and shipping companies did not encourage the adoption of wireless telegraphy and air transport while the United Kingdom sought to prevent competition and price cutting between the new and the established services.

The establishment of a wireless telegraph service between Kenya and the United Kingdom was a triumph of Departmental management over the interests of the Eastern Telegraph Company and the

strategic interests of the British Government. Experiments with wireless telegraphy had been made during the early 1900s. In 1915 a wireless station opened at Mombasa for communication with shipping and Zanizbar but long distance wireless telegraphy only became practicable after the First World War. East African opinion had long felt that the cable company derived an undue profit from its traffic. The Posts and Telegraphs Department had even advocated the construction of an expensive land telegraph between Uganda and Egypt to break the cable monopoly. This project was not practicable, but the introduction of a wireless telegraph was economically feasible by 1925. During the following year, to the dismay of the General Post Office, Colonial Office, and Eastern Telegraph Company, the Government of Kenya licensed a commercial concern to establish services with Britain. This economical service opened for second class traffic in 1928.

Throughout the world, competition existed between cable and wireless services to the evident detriment of the Eastern Telegraph Company. During 1930, the imminent bankruptcy of the cable company caused the United Kingdom Government to summon an Imperial Conference. While this body deliberated upon the rival attractions of strategy and competition, the Eastern Telegraph and Marconi's Wireless Companies agreed to amalgamate into a concern called Cable and Wireless. The Conference approved the change and the British-

owned system of international communications passed under monopoly management. The Department ably represented East Africa's interests in the new organisation by securing exceptionally reasonable terms. Thereafter, the United Kingdom Government carefully balanced an equilibrium between local and company interests. Alterations in rating policy again became difficult and opportunities presented by the competing services of other nations had to be overlooked in favour of Cable and Wireless. Although the reorganisation served East Africa's immediate interests, by 1937 it had come to restrict the variety of services available. Although Belgian wireless stations in the Congo offered many facilities at cheaper rates, the people of East Africa had to send their messages by Cable and Wireless. Only when the Agreements between the Department and Cable and Wireless came up for renewal did an opportunity exist for further discussions upon the external control of East Africa's overseas telecommunications.

A monopoly company sponsored by the British Government and partly subsidised from the revenues of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika operated the East African air mail service. The company, Imperial Airways, opened the route from Cairo to Mwanza on the Tanganyika shores of Lake Victoria in 1931 and extended its service to Cape Town during the following year. The Department exercised little influence over the establishment or operation of this facility. The United Kingdom Government regarded air mail as a

means of developing British technology in the construction and operation of aeroplanes. As in the case of the mail contract steamships in the nineteenth century, the required subsidies came principally from postal revenues. The service, against most anticipations, soon proved to be profitable, because for the public the considerable savings in time outweighed additional costs. During 1937, the Empire Air Mail Scheme elaborated air mail services, providing that all first class or letter mail should travel by air, without surcharge, and that a part of the postage rate should be used to defray the additional transport costs. Although this scheme was primarily devised to develop British civil aviation and strengthen strategic concerns, it was a remarkable innovation.

During the 1920s and 1930s technological innovation greatly changed East Africa's overseas communications. Although the services were largely outside local control, the Department possessed considerable political initiative which it could use effectively only in a competitive situation. The financial risks of investment in speculative developments were irrelevant to the Posts and Telegraphs Department, but even by the mid-1930s, it seemed that external monopoly control of East Africa's overseas communications unduly restricted the flexibility of services.

The Eastern Telegraph Company and the development of Wireless Telegraph.

The reorganisation of the Kenya and Uganda Posts and Telegraphs Department in 1924 established the administrative control of the Postmaster General and clarified the relationship between the Department and the two Governments. The Posts and Telegraphs became competent to determine its most difficult operational problem: the monopoly control of East Africa's external communications exercised by the Eastern Telegraph Company. The Department overcame its strained relations with public opinion and the Company in the late 1920s, by the establishment of a competitive wireless telegraph service between Britain and Kenya. This innovation demonstrated the administrative efficiency of the reorganised bureaucracy and marked the political failure of the Eastern Telegraph Company.

Three disputes soured relations between the Post Office and the Eastern Telegraph Company during the years 1918 to 1924. The Company sought a freehold for its land at Mombasa, the right to work directly between Nairobi and its station at Kilindini, and the authority to collect and deliver telegrams in Mombasa. Because East African cable rates were high, the Post Office insisted that concessions should be balanced by either rate reductions or company payments to the Department. Thus, the pre-war conflicts between the two organisations revived.

During 1919 the Eastern Telegraph Company proposed to establish Mombasa as its principal cable landing station in the Western Indian Ocean if it were allowed to convert its existing properties to a freehold title. This scheme, nominally caused by the declining commercial importance of Zanzibar, recognised that Mombasa had become the principal British trading city in East Africa. The Company felt that the increased investment and business at Mombasa would be adequate compensation for a review of its land rights, but also observed that the alteration would help to maintain the especially favourable rates granted to Government telegrams. The Postmaster General, J.T.Gosling, recalled his pre-war disputes with the Company and argued that they would gain no advantage by moving to Mombasa, "with its notorious record for Cable failures".[1] Although suspecting that the Company's motives were self-interested, he proposed to use the issue as a lever to secure a reduction in rates. The Secretary of State for the Colonies overruled Gosling because the Company's cable landing rights in the United Kingdom were also subject to reconsideration.[2] After the freehold had been refused by the Kenya Government, the Company lost all interest in the status of its Mombasa property and abandoned

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[1] P.M.G., NBI. (J.T.Gosling) to C.S., NBI, 12.vii.19, No. 1083/19, Confidential, G.P.O. M.11096/23.

[2] Governor, Kenya (E. Northey) to C.O., 8.viii.19, East Africa Protectorate No. 124 Confidential, G.P.O. M.11096/23.

the transfer of its relay station.

The second problem, that of the Company's direct working to Nairobi, originated in the post-war shortage of Departmental staff and a considerable increase in telegraph traffic. L. E. Caine, the Deputy Postmaster General, proposed to alleviate congestion by working a direct telegraph circuit between Nairobi and the Eastern Company's Kilindini Office. The Company approved the suggestion as a temporary measure, but warned that their own staff shortage was quite acute. The service, introduced on 20th September, 1919, proved unsuccessful because the Post Office operators at Nairobi were not wholly efficient and the Department operated complex accounting machinery for paltry amounts of money.

Early in 1920 the Company's London office learned of the arrangement and immediately wished to hear when it might be discontinued. Gosling retorted that he had thought the arrangement to be one of mutual interest because, "Sooner or later there will probably be a competitive service of some sort, either overland, or wireless, or both" and then the Company might be grateful for Departmental assistance.[3] The Company was surprised at this outburst, "in view of the assistance which has been given to his Department at his own request".[4]

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[3] P.M.G., NBI. (J. Gosling) to E.T.C., MSA, 12.iii.20. E.A.P. & T. 1058/19.

[4] E.T.C., MSA. to P.M.G., NBI, 20.vi.20, No. 572. E.A.P. & T. 1218/14.

Direct working conferred no financial benefit on the Company and was withdrawn later in 1920.

The Company's claim that they should deliver telegrams to the public in Mombasa, as they had done in the days of the Imperial British East Africa Company, provided a further cause for dispute. The Mombasa telegraph terminal charges represented a Post Office revenue of £3,700 in the year ending March, 1920, some 15°/o of the total telegraph receipts. Understandably the Post Office was reluctant to see the Company competing for this business and therefore refused to allow direct dealings unless a suitable royalty were paid.

The Department's attitude on these questions was uncompromising because the East African cable rates seemed unduly high. However, its refusal to make any concessions deterred the Company from altering the rate structure and by 1920 negotiation appeared hopeless. The Post Office regarded competition as the only effective means of breaking the monopoly exercised by the Cable Company. Gosling speculated upon the merits of an overland telegraph between Nimule and Rejaf linking the Uganda and Sudanese lines, while "there is always the possibility of the long range Government wireless service... being extended to British East Africa."[5]

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[5] Acting Governor, Kenya (C.C. Bowring) to C.O. 7.i.20, East Africa Protectorate No. 10, enclosing: 'Memorandum Regarding Relations with the Eastern Telegraph Company' (J.T.Gosling, 6.xi.19), G.P.O. M11096/23.

Wireless communication had been suggested before the First World War and the 1912-1913 Estimates provided for the building of a coastal station at Mombasa. Even then the Italians operated wireless stations on the Benadir Coast, while the Germans possessed similar installations at Mwanza and Bukoba and planned to build a high power station in Dar es Salaam for communication with Europe. The First World War forestalled the various wireless schemes, but as early as 1913 a Royal Commission of the United Kingdom Government advocated the construction of a high-power station at Nairobi as part of an "Imperial chain round the world".[6] Although this proposal pleased the Posts and Telegraphs Department [redacted], the strategic importance of the ocean cables would clearly make any wireless authority more concerned for British security than for East Africa's telegraph rates.[7] In 1914, the Post Office realised that only an overland route through the Sudan would reduce charges by competition.

The various questions of overseas telegraph policy were quite unresolved in the immediate post-war years. Relations between the Department and the Cable Company progressively deteriorated, while the provision of an alternative service seemed impossible. In 1921 the Sudan Government refused to erect an overland telegraph as a

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[6] East African Standard, 15.xi.13.

[7] P.M.G., NBI. (J.T.Gosling) to Acting C.S., NBI, 2.vi.14, No. 1340/14, E.S.A.: SMP. 3941.

means of transmitting international traffic.[8] For practical purposes, Kenya and Uganda could circumvent their dependence upon the cable only by wireless telegraphy.

An Imperial Wireless Telegraphy Committee proposed in June, 1920 that Nairobi should be established as a stage on a route to Windhuk in the Mandated Territory of South West Africa.[9] Envisaged as a state-owned system because it seemed unlikely to produce a profit unless it competed with the cable companies, the Committee assumed that effective transmission of wireless telegraph messages depended upon links of between two and four thousand miles. In 1922 a Wireless Telegraphy Commission reported that stations able to communicate effectively with any part of the globe had passed beyond mere technological speculation.[10] The policy of the British Government promptly moved from direct financing to the suggestion that each part of the Empire should establish its own wireless service. However, the construction of stations in Colonies remained an Imperial responsibility. In July, the British Government postponed the construction of a wireless station at Nairobi.[11] Inaction governed British policy because wireless threatened the cable network

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[8] Acting Governor, Uganda (E.B.Jarvis) to C.O., 9.viii.21, Uganda Protectorate No. 393. G.P.O. M 11095/23.

[9] Report of Imperial Wireless Telegraphy Committee, Cmd. 777, June 1920.

[10] Report of Wireless Telegraphy Commission, Cmd. 1572, 1922.

[11] C.O. to Governor, Kenya, 14.vii.22, Telegram, G.P.O.: M8546/23.

which practically monopolised world communications. However, the older colonies resented their dependence upon an unreliable and expensive monopoly and by 1924 Canada, South Africa, India, New Zealand and Newfoundland had followed Australia's example of entering into independent contracts with the Marconi's Wireless Telegraph Company. The concept of a British communications monopoly had ceased to be practical politics.[12]

Private enterprise moved to fill the vacuum created by the absence of Government policy. Having consolidated its position in the Dominions, the Marconi Company naturally thought of exploiting the needs of the British Colonies. On 7th March, 1923, the wireless combine applied for permission to erect a high-power station in Kenya capable of maintaining a commercial service with the rest of the world. The British Post Office saw no reason to hinder the company, "in view of the recent decision of the Government that the restriction against private enterprise in wireless communication within the Empire should be removed".[13] The severe competition between wireless and cable services caused the United Kingdom Government to reverse its policy later in 1923. The Colonial Office then ruled that no assistance could be given from Kenya Government funds and in

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[12] Report of Wireless Telegraphy Committee. Cmd. 2060, 1924.

[13] G.P.O. (F.J.Brown) to C.O., 12.iv.23, No. 107766/23, G.P.O.: M8546/23.

October the British Post Office also discouraged the Marconi Company.

At the opening of 1925 the British Government felt that the question of Kenya's external communications could remain in abeyance because proposals for a government wireless station had been rejected, the Marconi scheme had been withdrawn, and the Colony had been forbidden to make the renewal of the cable landing licences conditional upon rate reductions. Cable rates could be reduced by neither competition nor coercion and the British Post Office hoped that the Department would foster "amicable relations with the Company."[14]

The British Government failed to consider the importance of Kenyan initiative. Wireless communication promised economy and it could be linked with a broadcasting service that would reduce the isolation of many settlers. In 1925 the question revived when the Government granted a transmitting licence to J.H.Haines, an employee of the Electricity Company. Haines soon lost his enthusiasm, but his application encouraged a powerful syndicate, led by Lord Delamere, to evaluate the commercial and political value of establishing a wireless station in Kenya. Carefully fostered and developed by the Government of Kenya, the syndicate enabled T. Fitzgerald, appointed Postmaster General after Gosling's retirement, to break the Cable Company's monopoly.

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[14] G.P.O. (R.A.Dalzely) to C.O., 8.iv.25, No. 97635/24, G.P.O.: M8546/23.

During 1926 Commander Leonard Mansfield Robinson, representing the local syndicate, submitted proposals to the Postmaster General for the establishment of a broadcasting service. When it became clear that broadcasting would not pay, Robinson suggested that the Posts and Telegraphs Department might hire the station for wireless telegraph traffic and thus absorb part of the operating loss. W.G.M.MacDonald, Acting Postmaster General, observed how the Imperial Government was opposed to the licensing of "further private horse companies", and refused to provide any guarantee.[15] An alternative scheme depended upon direct government subsidy, but the station would cost £20,000 and produce an annual revenue of only £4,000. The Colony of Kenya could not afford a subsidy in excess of £1,000. Although the Government was sympathetic, it realised that the ultimate charges against the Colony's revenues could not be assessed.

Fitzgerald, who was in London negotiating with the Cable Company, favoured the establishment of a wireless telegraph service because it seemed that the Colony's claims for reduced cable rates "had not been pressed as energetically as they might have been."[16] Fitzgerald therefore regarded private investment in competitive communications as a public interest and explained to the Colonial Office that

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[15] Acting P.M.G., NBI (W.G.M.MacDonald), Memorandum, 9.xi.26, E.A.P. & T. 1750/26.

[16] Memorandum of Meeting 12.viii.26 (T. Fitzgerald and Welch, Dalzell, Angurin and Crawford of G.P.O.), G.P.O.: M11096/23.

> "... there was no idea of using it [broadcasting] for political propaganda e.g. in favour of white Kenya .... the setting up of a wireless station in Kenya in connection with this scheme would enable the Government to cope better with any threat of interference with the Telegraphic communications such as was apparently intended by the settlers a few years ago."[17]

Fitzgerald suggested that the wireless company should overcome the absence of financial support from the Colony by competing with the cable and using its profits to subsidise a broadcasting service.[18] The result was a financial reorganisation of the syndicate. The Morrison family withdrew their offer of considerable financial support when the Government firmly refused a subsidy and insisted upon retaining the right of purchase.

A new source of capital came from the Conservative Member of Parliament for St. George's Westminster, James Montreith Erskine who was interested in Colonial ventures and joined the syndicate so that his "son Mr. D. Erskine should settle in Kenya and assist in the administrative side of the work".[19] The newly solicited support did not undermine Delamere's status as Chairman or Robinson's position as Managing Director. While such a scheme of family capitalism

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[17] H.T.Allen, Minute, 6.i.27, CO 533/364 (10008).

[18] P.M.G., NBI (T. Fitzgerald) to Acting C.S., NBI, 23.ii.27, E.A.P. & T. 1750/26.

[19] East African Standard, 30.vii.27.

looked delightful, it was far from reality. Erskine was actually involved in the Communications Development Company and the Short Wave Communications Company, both of which were later reconstituted as the Short Wave Communications Development Company. These concerns wished to establish wireless stations in Cyprus, the Gold Coast, Nigeria, Nyasaland, Sierra Leone, Palestine and the Rhodesias. The British East Africa Broadcasting Company was little more than an appendage of Erskine's much wider interests.[20] However, the scheme appeared to serve the interests of the public and the Government of Kenya Colony. A Licence for the broadcasting service and a Wireless Telegraphy Agreement were duly signed on 1st September, 1927.

While negotiations proceeded with the various wireless syndicates, the Department finally determined its relations with the Eastern Telegraph Company. The Cable Company was concerned in 1926 that its Landing Licences should be renewed without trouble. Early in that year the Company submitted a policy statement to the Colonial Office upon the recommendations of the Kilindini Port Commission Enquiry. They regretted that they had not been summoned to give evidence although the Postmaster General had attributed all delays in the transmission of cables to their office. The Company proposed to establish an office in Mombasa town which would deal

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[20] Memorandum: "East African Wireless" (Anon.), C.O. 822/8 (25032). G.P.O.: M8546/23.

directly with the public and be connected to the Zanzibar Cable, thereby avoiding superfluous retransmission, and a direct line to Nairobi. These were inadequate incentives for the Department to lose two-thirds of its revenue derived from terminal charges. Fitzgerald discussed the proposals with the Company's Zanzibar Superintendent, but advised the Government that the Company's share of the terminals would provide a net annual profit of £3,100 for Mombasa alone, while a free wire to Nairobi would cost the Government £1,500 per annum. Fitzgerald suggested that since the Company had at last made some definite proposals and had some public sympathy it might be a good idea if the Government were to "show that not only has it no wish to be obstructive but is willing to make some sacrifice in order to come to an arrangement."[21] He countered that the Company should be permitted to deal with the public, providing that the Department received 80°/o of the terminals, and that a wire to Nairobi should be leased for ten years at a rental of £5 per mile per annum. Even these proposals promised that Government would lose a revenue of £1,135 annually and proved quite unacceptable to the Company.

Apparently unaware of the advanced stage of negotiations between the Post Office and the British East Africa Broadcasting Company, the Eastern Telegraph Company decided to mobilise sympathetic opinion

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[21] P.M.G., NBI (T. Fitzgerald) to C.S., NBI, 2.vi.26, Confidental, E.A.P. & T. 1960/19.

in the Colony. The Mombasa Chamber of Commerce arranged for the Postmaster General to attend a meeting on July 28th, 1927, which would be addressed by the Eastern Company's Travelling Superintendent. Fitzgerald claimed that the Company's interest lay in profit rather than in public service. He drew attention to the supposedly unhonoured agreement by which cable landing rights were extended to 1944 on condition of rate revision, while omitting to mention that the Kenya terminals had been revised so that his Department received the high reward of 25 centimes per word for Zanzibar traffic. The Company's representative refused to discuss the irrelevant problems of traffic, and asserted that Gosling had implied the Company's right to undertake direct dealings in 1906. He stated that his Company would open an office in Mombasa if it were to receive 30°/o of the terminals. The Chamber unanimously resolved that the Government of Kenya should "be asked to give every facility and assistance to the Eastern Telegraph Company, Ltd., to deal direct with the public both in Mombasa and Nairobi."[22]

The East African Standard ruled that, "Judging by the resolution the Postmaster General lost" and delighted in his seeming embarrassment. Fitzgerald followed this encounter by his announcement that a wireless station would be established at Nairobi by the British

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[22] J. Cumming (President, MSA. Chamber of Commerce) to P.M.G., NBI, 28.vii.27, enclosing: "Minutes of Meeting of Mombasa Chamber of Commerce", 26.vii.27, E.A.P. & T. 1218/14.

East Africa Broadcasting Company. The Standard enthused over this new scheme which officially promised that 75°/o of the capital would be held in East Africa. It was not mentioned that the Standard and the B.E.A.B.C. proposed to exchange shares in order to control the Colony's news services. This scheme, which contravened the Company's Licence, only became known to the Postmaster General in April, 1928. In the meantime the Standard feigned surprise at the establishment of a wireless service and revised its verdict on the Mombasa meeting.

> ". Obviously Mr. Fitzgerald must have known that the Broadcasting Company was about ready to begin operations and, knowing this, preserved a front of great gravity and portentious solemnity in face of what must have been excruciatingly funny to him with his inside knowledge. Mombasa itself can now also appreciate the joke at her own expense but one wonders what the E.T.C. will think of it all."[23]

The endorsement of the Wireless Telegraphy Agreement and the issue of the Broadcasting Licence enabled the B.E.A.B.C. to undertake construction. The reconstituted syndicate was primarily interested in profit while its predecessor had been pre-occupied with the operation of a broadcasting service as a social facility for white settlers. The Company recognised that profit would come only from the wireless telegraph service and installed the necessary apparatus on schedule but found that technical difficulties hampered the inauguration of broadcasting.

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[23] East African Standard, 2.viii.27; see also, T. Fitzgerald (P.MG.) K.L.C., 14.ix.27.

The opening of the wireless telegraph service proved difficult because the Imperial Government attempted to protect the Eastern Telegraph Company. Moreover, in 1928 the Marconi Company's stations operated in the Dominions competed very effectively with the Cable Company. An Imperial Conference was being appointed to consider the whole question of competition. Kenya's Wireless Telegraphy Agreement specified that rates should be two-thirds of the cable charges and the B.E.A.B.C. could reasonably expect a large proportion of the cable traffic. The British Government viewed a further threat to the Eastern Telegraph Company with reluctance and the Treasury even suggested that, unless the Kenya Government were definitely committed, "the question of rates should remain over pending the forthcoming Imperial Conferenceon the subject".[24]

Sir Edward Grigg, the Governor of Kenya, sympathised with the Imperial point of view but the Agreement with the B.E.A.B.C. had been engrossed. Kenya, therefore, could only secure equal cable and wireless rates by taxing the agreed wireless charges through heavy terminal rates. Possibly anticipating such an occurrence, Fitzgerald had already published the information that the cable and wireless terminal rates would be identical. The Government of Kenya could either permit competition or abrogate the Agreement and risk trouble in the Legislative Council. Fitzgerald in any case resolutely opposed the

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[24] Treasury (R. Scott), to G.P.O., 14.i.28, No. E 18683, CO 533/376 (15043).

British policy of "protecting the cable interest", especially while the Government wireless stations in England and South Africa charged 1/4d per word - and the B.E.A.B.C. proposed to charge 1/6d.[25] He did however concede that a local rate-cutting war should be avoided and assured Grigg that the Kenya was not obliged to permit the B.E.A.B.C. always to charge a rate one third less than the cable company.

The British Government was shocked. It seemed that a Postmaster General in a remote dependency had limited their freedom of administrative action. The Colonial Office felt that at least the B.E.A.B.C. could be persuaded to raise its public charges and G.L.M. Ransom considered that "The P.M.G. appears to have allowed his dislike of the Cable Company to cloud his judgement." The British Government, already scheming for a monopoly communications system, felt that Kenya's policy was "creating unnecessary difficulties by killing off branches of the cable traffic."[26] While industrial reorganisation took place, the British Post Office found a discreet means of protecting the cable. Although it was not possible, under pressure from the Posts and Telegraphs Department and the Company, to claim that Nairobi's transmission was too poor to permit any traffic, it could insist that

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[25] P.M.G., NBI (T. Fitzgerald) to C.S., NBI, 22.ii.28, E.A.P. & T. 1750/26.

[26] G.L.M.Ransom, 3.iv.28, Minute, C.O.533/376 (15043).

the "... service does not seem good enough for ordinary and government telegrams."[27] The Post Office of Kenya and Uganda was well satisfied with a service for deferred and daily letter telegrams, but the Company, although willing to introduce the limited service on 15th June, 1928, felt this compromise to be unfair discrimination in favour of the Cable company. The service opened on 15th June with an inaugural dinner and the exchange of ceremonial messages, the texts of which had been transmitted in advance by cable, between the Governor and the Secretary of State.

The introduction of the broadcasting service met with even greater difficulties because the primary interest of both Fitzgerald and the B.E.A.B.C. lay in the telegraph service. The Company saw broadcasting as a technical liability and a financial obligation. Broadcasting revenues from receiving licences depended upon the level of Colonial prosperity and the B.E.A.B.C. was aware that even the Government station in Ceylon gave efficient reception for only forty miles around Colombo while the public had been reluctant to purchase receivers and even less enthusiastic to acquire licences.[28]

The Broadcasting Licence of 1st September, 1927, provided for transmission from 7 p.m. until 10 p.m. each evening on wave lengths between 50 and 100 metres and the Postmaster General assumed responsibility for the collection of Licence fees. Fitzgerald had displayed

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[27] G.P.O. to P.M.G., NBI. 7.vi.28, Telegram, E.A.P. & T. 1750/26.

[28] P.M.G., Colombo, Ceylon to Acting P.M.G., NBI, 13.ii.26, No. D98/30, E.A.P. & T. 765/23/B.

no enthusiasm for the broadcasting service but when the Company applied for a two-months delay in the opening date prescribed by the Licence, he could no longer escape his duty. He demanded adequate substantiation of the Company's claim that the delay was occasioned by circumstances beyond their control. Fitzgerald was not wholly convinced by the explanation that the Company was establishing the world's "first regular Short-Wave Broadcasting service", that the equipment was being especially constructed, and that the British contractors had been unable to satisfactorily fulfill the orders.[29]

An official opening of the broadcasting service had been included in the Prince of Wales' tour of East Africa, but regular services were due to commence on 1st July. Fitzgerald found the company so troublesome that he refused to permit the use of any interim description for the regular programmes required by the Licence, pending the official opening, and thus deprived the Company of valuable publicity. By September 1928 fewer than 100 Receiving Licences had been issued and the income produced barely covered the costs of one month's transmission.

The B.E.A.B.C. saw only one possibility of remunerative operation: it wished for "a reasonable percentage of the Asiatic community ... to take in the service".[30] The Colonial Secretary referred the matter

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[29] L.M.Robinson, NBI to P.M.G., NBI, 9.ii.28, Unnumbered, E.A.P. & T. 1750/26.

[30] L.M.Robinson, NBI to C.S., NBI, 26.x.28, Confidential, No. M.D.31, E.A.P. & T. 1750/26.

to Fitzgerald who reported that even in India, "... Only educated Indians appear to be interested and ... a good English programme has, probably, more appeal than an Indian one".[31] The Company maintained its established programme structure. European and Indian dissatisfaction with the service mounted and the Company's financial position deteriorated.

Cable and Wireless

Competition between the Eastern Associated Telegraph Companies and the Marconi's Wireless Telegraph Company caused difficulties throughout the British Empire in the late 1920s. Although the cable service was more expensive than wireless, it offered greater security against the interception of messages and atmospheric disturbances. Wireless seemed more flexible, and demanded a far smaller capital investment. The United Kingdom Government recognised that cables were essential for defence and encouraged an amalgamation of the two concerns so that strategic interests should not be compromised by competition.

The Eastern and Associated Telegraph Company under-estimated the potential of wireless communications before the First World War and even in the early 1920s discounted the possibility of serious

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[31] P.M.G., NBI (T. Fitzgerald) to Acting C.S., NBI, 3.xi.28, Confidential, E.A.P. & T. 1750/26.

competition. The rapid development of Marconi's Wireless Telegraph Company caused the Pender dynasty extreme concern during 1927, when Eastern shares declined in value from a high of £185 to £136. Neither the Pender family nor their group of Companies willingly courted financial collapse. Early in December, 1927 the Cable Company advised the British Post Office that it proposed to redress technological change by manipulating the Stock Exchange. The Company deferred action pending consultations between the British and Imperial Governments.

The British Government summoned an Imperial Wireless and Cable Conference under Sir John Gilmour, the Conservative Member for Pollock, Glasgow. The Conference did not publish its proceedings and seemed to depend upon the outcome of company negotiations.[32] The Companies published their provisional arrangements for amalgamation on the 14th March. The Eastern Company gained 56.25°/o of the voting interest in a holding company, a subsidiary of which would operate the communications services, and within two days its shares appreciated by £1,860,000. The House of Commons displayed a comparable interest when Stanley Baldwin, the British Prime Minister, admitted that the Conference had not been advised of the Companies' proposals before their publication.[33] The Conference produced a

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[32] East African Standard, 13.11.28 (Reuters Report, London, 10.ii.28).

[33] East African Standard, 24.iii.28 (Reuters Report, London, 22.iii.28).

unanimous report which approved the decision of the Stock Exchange and appointed a Committee to "protect public interests and control rates".[34] Walter Baker, a leader of the Post Office Workers Union who represented the Parliamentary constituency of Bristol East, interpolated that the Eastern group "had threatened to the Imperial Conference that they would pay out their Shareholders and scrap their cables".[35] The political parties of Great Britain felt monopoly essential to preserve strategic cables but dispute centred upon the morality of a private ownership.[36] The Dominions supported the amalgamation, which was authorised by the Imperial Telegraphs Act.

A holding company entitled Cable and Wireless Limited was registered on 9th April 1929 to acquire the stocks, shares, obligations and securities of the Eastern Group and Marconi's. It possessed a nominal capital of £100 which might be increased to £53,700,000. Simultaneously an operating Company styled Imperial and International Communications was registered with the same directorate to acquire and operate the communications properties of Cable and Wireless as well as the Cables and 'Beam' radio stations owned by the Imperial Government.[37] The shareholders endorsed the change

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[34] East African Standard, 10.vii.28 (British Official Wireless Service, Rugby, 7.iii.28).

[35] Daily Express (London), 22.v.28, citing Commons Debate, 21.v.28.

[36] G.P.O. (H.B.Lees-Smith) to J.W.Bowen, M.P., 19.ix.29, unnumbered, G.P.O.: M57/30.

[37] East African Standard, 11.iv.29 (Reuters Report, London, 9.iv.29).

on 29th May, when the agreement between the Communications Company and the Imperial Government was engrossed.

The amalgamation met with general relief that a difficult problem had been overcome but Sir Charles Bright, whose father perfected the submarine cable, observed that invention had not characterised cable company operation in the days of their monopoly.[38] The questioning of private monopoly extended beyond political debate. Under the coordination of Imperial communications, the merger company took over the cables and wireless stations owned by the British Post Office. A mere two years before the Post Office had aspired to absorb both the competing companies and it yielded to the Cable and Wireless group with great reluctance.

Kenya occupied a uniquely favourable position under the cable and wireless merger. The B.E.A.B.C. was independent of the two competing companies, the United Kingdom end of its service was provided by the British Post Office, and the Company enjoyed the political support of the Government of Kenya. The Marconi group, through its South African subsidiary, displayed interest in the British East Africa Broadcasting Company late in 1927, but the Kenya enterprise survived as a competitive force in the vacuum created by the rivalry of the Cable and Marconi Companies. The reorganisation of communications in

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[38] Bright, Sir Charles, Britannia, 19.iv.29.

Britain, allied to inadequate apparatus and unprofitable operation, forced the Company to reconsider its future. The Imperial Conference in 1928 took the view "that this long distance wireless service should be co-ordinated with the complementary cable service of the Communications Company".[39] The merger Company acquired the entire share capital of the B.E.A.B.C. by 22nd July, 1929, and in August gained Colonial Office approval because the British end of the service had already passed under company control. The Colonial Office saw no reason to disallow the transfer of ownership, dismissing Kenya's fears that monopoly rating policies would be imposed as groundless because the Conference had established an Imperial Communications Advisory Committee to supervise rating policies and services.

Opposition to the transfer came from Kenya. It was apparent by November, 1928 that the prospective merger Company was interested in the B.E.A.B.C. but competition provided Kenya with favourable rates for its external communications. Fitzgerald even feared that Cable and Wireless might acquire the Nairobi station and then cease to work it for the sake of economy.[40] However, the British East Africa Broadcasting Company was bankrupt. On 14th June the Association of Chambers of Commerce of Eastern Africa could only hope that the negotiations

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[39] G.P.O. (H.G.G.Welch) to C.O., 22.v.31, No. 109880/29; enclosing: G.P.O. (G.E.P.Murray) to Treasury 18.v.31, No. 109880/29, C.O. 533/406 (17021A).

[40] Acting Governor, Kenya (J.W.Barth) to C.O., 13.xii.28, Kenya No. 704; enclosing: P.M.G., NBI (T. Fitzgerald) to Private Secretary, Government House, NBI, 29.xi.28, G.P.O. M57/30.

regarding a change in the ownership of the Nairobi Wireless station would not prove prejudicial to the Colony.[41] The gravity of the problem facing the B.E.A.C. appeared in the Directors' Report of 31st August,1929. Broadcasting services had occasioned a loss of Shgs. 55, 298/65 cts. and had absorbed the profit on the wireless telegraph service. Director's fees, depreciation charges and debenture interest were not met. The Company unfairly attributed its difficulties to the Postmaster General, who had not sanctioned the introduction of full rate traffic which might have made "a considerable difference in the Company's revenue and chances of earning a profit".[42]

Fitzgerald, anxious that the reorganisation should not create a new monopoly empowered to impose high rates, also wished that the amalgamated company should take over and operate the unprofitable departmental wireless station at Mombasa and the wireless stations operated for air traffic control purposes. The Company quite naturally did not regard the acquisition of these properties with enthusiasm.

The Company and the Government of Kenya reached agreement at the end of 1929 after Fitzgerald had forced the issue. When the Company became reluctant to endorse the draft agreement, he let it be

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[41] East African Standard, 14.vi.29.

[42] B.E.A.B.C. Director's Annual Report, 31.vii.29, E.A.P. & T. 1818/29.

known that "If there are any more delays on their part I shall feel like advising the Government to buy out Kenya Radio and enter into competition good and proper with the cable side. That may open their eyes."[43] This was an idle threat. In November, the Engineer in chief had reported against nationalisation of the plant, "owing to its being non-standard, difficult to maintain or work efficiently".[44] Fitzgerald's threat nevertheless proved effective and agreement was quickly reached upon all points save for the question of Government purchase. As from 1st January, 1930 the operation of all Kenya's external telecommunications was again vested in a monopoly company which continued to use the trade names and licences of the Eastern Telegraph and British East Africa Broadcasting Companies. Although the Colonial Office viewed Fitzgerald's negotiations with apprehension, his success produced commendation from Passfield, the Secretary of State, and an observation from R.V.Vernon that,

> " Mr. Fitzgerald has done very good business for Kenya in his discussions with the Company and has in fact, I think, driven a rather hard bargain with them. He deserves every credit for this".[45]

The Kenya Agreement with Cable and Wireless depended upon further negotiation between the Company and the British Post Office.

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[43] J.H.Allen to G. Eastwood, 24.xii.29, Minute, C.O.: 533/395 (16020).

[44] Crown Agents to P.M.G., Kenya/Uganda at Llandudno, U.K., 13.xi.29, No. O/Misc.74, forwarding correspondence from Acting P.M.G., NBI, E.A.P. & T.: 1218/29/13.

[45] R.V.Vernon (C.O.), 19.xii.29, Minute, C.O. 533/389 (15736).

The British postal authorities never favoured the transfer of their external services to private enterprise and even attempted to obstruct the transfer. The General Post Office gained an annual profit of £4,900 by providing the British end of the Kenya service at wireless stations also used for other routes.[46] The Company had to compensate the Post Office for the loss of future revenues. The General Post Office claimed £35,000 for the "goodwill" of the business but this charge proved unacceptable to the Company, which had already been empowered by Government legislative action to operate a wireless service with Kenya. In March, 1930, the Company offered to pay £35,000 only if the Post Office undertook not to offer a competing service and approved the introduction of a radio-telephone service.[47] Agreement was not reached and the British Post Office therefore refused to allow the Company to operate a 'full rate' wireless telegraph service. By 1931 the merger company, required to reduce rates and erect and maintain expensive new wireless plant by the Government of Kenya, also faced British demands for an overall reduction of cable revenue and a payment of £35,000. The Company considered the compensation provisions most unreasonable.

The Company signed an agreement with the British and East African Post Offices on 28th September, 1931, when operations formally

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[46] F. Strong to Secretary, G.P.O., 28.i.29, Minute. G.P.O. M57/30.

[47] Edward Wilshaw, Imperial & International Communications, to Secretary, G.P.O., 21.iii.30, G.P.O. M57/30.

passed into Cable and Wireless control. The agreement established a new monopoly control of Kenya's external telecommunications. Although the new company was empowered to deal directly with the public and to rent a land telegraph line between Nairobi and Mombasa, the political victory lay with the East African Postmaster General. He had established an equilibrium between his internal monopoly and the Company's exclusive control of external communications, founded on the Department's own financial terms and subject to a closely defined agreement.

The Department's relations with Cable and Wireless proved generally satisfactory because the Imperial Government and the Communications Advisory Committee balanced the equilibrium of the East African Post Office with the external communications company. During the 1930s the science of telecommunications developed further and the most notable advance in East Africa's external links came in 1936 with the introduction of a Radio-Telephone connection to the United Kingdom. However the problem of competition was by no means solved. East Africa depended heavily upon the external telegraphs. Rate reductions had been secured for messages exchanged with the United Kingdom but the patterns of international trade had changed. The Depression meant that a decreasing proportion of East Africa's trade lay with Europe and the position of Cable and Wireless was challenged by Belgian wireless stationsin the Congo. These installations

charged lower rates because they were not obliged to support an expensive cable network and threatened to undermine the British network of international communications.

The establishment of a radio-telephone service with the United Kingdom was formally proposed in 1934 allowing for a charge of £2 per minute with a minimum length of three minutes. Orders were placed for the equipment in the hope that the link could be tested in May, 1935. In fact, shipping delays prevented the apparatus from reaching Kenya and testing commenced on 2nd January, 1936. The service opened for public traffic on 6th March, 1936 after an exchange of messages between the Governor of Kenya and the Secretary of State at the Colonial Office, and between the Postmasters General of Great Britain and East Africa. The service was initially limited to Nairobi, Mombasa, Nakuru and Eldoret, and Great Britain and Ireland. On its first day of operation, three 'effective' public calls were made.[48]

Further development of the service rested upon the Post Offices rather than Cable and Wireless. Although all telephone exchanges in Kenya connected to the main trunk system could arrange calls to Britain during 1938 the public traffic totalled only 850 minutes. At the end of 1938 the radio-telephone service extended via London to the Dominions, the United States and the Continent of Europe but

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[48] E.A.P. & T.: 644/34/1.

the inadequacy of the East African telephone trunk line system precluded extension of the service to either Tanganyika or Uganda.

During 1933 the Belgian authorities opened a wireless station for international traffic at Leopoldsville in the Congo. It caused some concern because the Irumu-Fort Portal telegraph, constructed in 1924 and thereafter operated at Belgian Government expense, seemed to offer the Belgian wireless access to Kenya and Uganda traffic. Two communications services, one of which was not British owned, competed for East Africa's telegraph traffic. The Governments therefore decided that, while incoming traffic would be accepted via the Irumu telegraph in accordance with the International Telecommunications Union Treaty, no outgoing traffic would be accepted for the Belgian wireless station. The Kenya Government even refused to allow the Belgian Consul General in Nairobi to route his messages through Leopoldville because, "it would be difficult to comply with this request without establishing a precedent for the use of the route by other senders."[49] The British Post Office saw the problem of the Belgian wireless from another angle. A cable of the Imperial and International Communications Company landed at Banana, whence a Belgian Government telegraph ran to Leopoldville. Although the wireless route was cheaper the General Post Office refused to allow direct

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[49] G.P.O. (F.W.Phillips) to M. Le Directeur General Regie des Telegraphes et des Telephones, Bruxelles, 1.ii.33, No. 6087/32, G.P.O. M11096/23.

wireless messages between Britain and Leopoldville to protect the position of Cable and Wireless.[50]

In 1934 the Agreement covering the Fort Portal-Irumu Telegraph expired. The Belgians naturally wished for its renewal to cover the exchange of wireless messages, while commercial opinion in East Africa hoped that improved communications with the Eastern Congo would benefit trade. Cable and Wireless readily approved revision of the Agreement to cover the use of their wireless station at Kololo Hill, Kampala, for communication with the Congo in replacement of the telegraph, but remained adamant that international traffic should not be allowed. The local limitation, opposed by the three East African Governments, was imposed by the Colonial Office under the Agreement of the Imperial Wireless and Cables Conference of 1928.[51]

By mid-1935 the situation had been complicated by the growth of wireless telegraph traffic between East Africa and Japan. Inwards wireless messages for East Africa routed between Japan, Beyrouth and Leopoldville were cheaper than the Cable and Wireless service, owing to the prevailing exchange rates.[52] The main point that the British authorities questioned was not really connected with East

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[50] G.P.O.: M5381/34: POST: 33/4296.

[51] C.O. (Malcolm Macdonald) to Governor, Kenya, 30.x.35, Kenya No. 886, T.N.A. SMP.22306.

[52] Governor, Kenya (J. Byrne) to C.O., 12.ix.35, Kenya No. 484, T.N.A., SMP. 22306.

Africa. It seemed that, if the Belgians were allowed to forward inwards traffic, they could then establish a claim to forward Japanese telegrams to South Africa, and that was a profitable service of Cable and Wireless. Such considerations did not deter Sir Joseph Byrne, the Governor of Kenya, from informing the Colonial Office that the problem could be overcome if Cable and Wireless were to abandon their "policy of maintaining unduly high rates between East Africa and Japan".[53] The General Post Office doubted whether competition would benefit East Africa and felt that the constitutional redress would be to the Imperial Communications Advisory Committee, which should then ask the Company to reduce its rates.

The question of Belgian competition with Cable and Wireless remained unresolved at the outbreak of war in 1939. The British Company proved inflexible when faced with commercial competition. East Africa, however, had regained access to a competitive telecommunications service, which it might use in the future for both Foreign and Imperial traffic. Apart from competition, the only practicable solution of the problem facing Cable and Wireless lay in an Anglo-Belgian price-fixing agreement and the establishment of a low Empire cable 'flat-Rate' in 1938.

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[53] Governor, Kenya (J. Byrne) to C.O., 17.i.36, Kenya No. 32, G.P.O. M 11096/23.

Overseas Airmail Services

The development of East Africa's overseas airmail services was the most important innovation of the 1930s because it affected speed, regularity and route. The first regular air mail service began in 1919 between London and Paris, but the British Government always intended that air transport should be used for communication between different parts of the Empire. In 1921 Royal Air Force training flights between Egypt and Iraq carried mails and, in the following year, the Government appointed a Civil Aviation Advisory Board. The Board's Report led to the formation of the Imperial Airways Company in March, 1924 to develop "British commercial air transport on an economic basis."[54] Imperial Airways initially concentrated its attention upon clearly profitable European routes, and gave some attention to a service to India. Africa was left to occasional R.A.F. and pioneer flights until the 1930s.

As early as 1925 the Legislative Councils of Kenya, Uganda and the Sudan voted a total of £7,000 for the operation of twelve experimental flights between Khartoum and Kisumu by the Blackburn Aircraft Company, through a specially formed subsidiary concern entitled the North Sea Aerial and General Transport Limited.[55] The

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[54] "Historical Account of Overseas Air Mail" (Anon. ca. 1939), G.P.O.: POST: 50/8.

[55] The Times, 19.iv.25 and 3.vi.26.

government finance contributed to the scheme was largely mobilised by the recently constituted Conference of East African Governors while the prospect of a permanent contract encouraged the Company's participation. The Times paid due tribute to the initiative of private enterprise and the Colonial Governments, but found the absence of Air Ministry support "rather surprising".[56]

The Company's operations proved unfortunate. The original series of flights had to be postponed after the Blackburn-built aircraft severely damaged a float whentaking off from Khartoum on 30th December,1926. The service started on 8th February, 1927 using an R.A.F.machine, and on 15th February the first official airmail from East Africa was despatched from Kisumu. The General Post Office, reluctant to use such an unproved service, proposed to send mail only after a second flight but were overborne by the Air Ministry and the London Chamber of Commerce. British airmails to East Africa, forwarded at Senders Risk, were despatched by the flight leaving 10th March, 1927. The company suspended service on 14th March, after the aircraft crashed at Kisumu, while on test. The experimental flights resumed on 25th September carring mails, but finally terminated on 16th November, 1927 when the aeroplane again crashed at Kisumu.[57] The service stimulated public interest

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[56] The Times, Editorial, 16.viii.26.
[57] G.P.O.: M27062/21.

and revenue had been raised from philatelists by a surcharge of 50 cents per ounce. The Posts and Telegraphs Department of Kenya and Uganda concluded from the abortive experiment that "... There is little doubt that such a service would be welcomed by the public at large provided the cost to these territories was reasonably within their resources."[58]

The Blackburn Company's subsidiary, operating just one aircraft of experimental design, proved inadequate to develop East Africa's overseas airmail services. The publicity given to the flights led, however, to the raising of additional capital and Sir Alan Cobham, who feared that the French and Belgian airlines already operating in Africa would outflank the British interests between the Cape and Cairo, joined the Board of the Blackburn Company. Throughout 1928 negotiations continued with the relevant British Government Departments but further advance came only when the Company agreed to merge with Imperial Airways at the close of 1928. On 14th March, 1929, Sir Samuel Hoare, British Secretary of State for Air, informed the House of Commons that the Governments of South Africa, Kenya, Tanganyika, Uganda and the Sudan had agreed to join the Imperial Government in subsidising an air service between Britain and the Cape for a five year period.

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[58] P. & T. Annual Report, 1927.

The African route of Imperial Airways opened as far as Mwanza for United Kingdom despatches on 28th February, 1931, and for East African despatches on 10th March. It was available for the use of any participating member of the Postal Union and was extended to the Cape in January, 1932. The air service effectively broke down East Africa's isolation. Not only were mail transit times with Europe reduced by twelve to fourteen days over the steamer services, but also despatches weremade on a more rigid timetable. During the first ten months of the scheme no less than 12°/o of East Africa's despatches of first class mail matter (letters and postcards) travelled by air despite frequent delays during the early months. During 1932 9,118 lbs of airmail were despatched from East Africa, Kenya providing 7,938 lbs of the total.[59]

The carriage of parcels by air mail began in December, 1931. An experimental service, at a charge of 4/6d per pound, proved so successful that the Post Office permanently instituted the air parcel service as from 27th January, 1932.[60] The service operated between East Africa, the United Kingdom, and South Africa. Up to a weight of 5 lbs, the charges were actually cheaper than the Imperial Airways freight rates.[61] The Department handled 2,654 airmail parcels in

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[59] P. & T. Annual Reports, 1931, 1932.

[60] E.A.P. & T. 76/32/3.

[61] East African Standard. 30.i.32.

1932, and the total increased to 5,479 during the following year, especially after the introduction of a half pound postage rate on 1st June, 1933.

The service developed further in 1933 when a connection with Imperial Airways Indian Service reduced the time taken for East African air mails to reach India from twelve to six days. The percentage of overseas mails forwarded by air rose 23.8°/o during 1934 while the air parcels traffic increased by 56.4°/o. A less popular facility, established on 1st May, was a public telegram service to and from aeroplanes in flight. By the end of December only twenty-seven messages had been handled.

The airmail service proved a valuable stimulus to East African society. It facilitated commerce, enabled Government to function more efficiently, and added vastly to the amenities of expatriate life. In 1933 no less than 21.3°/o, 15.53°/o and 25.64°/o of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika overseas letter mails travelled by air. By the end of 1935 almost 30°/o of all East African overseas letter mails travelled by air and all airmail letter rates had been unified on a cents 50 per 1/2 ounce scale. In addition, 13,578 air parcels were handled in 1935. The public support given to the service led Imperial Airways to establish a twice-weekly service from January, 1935.

The diversion of mail to the air route exceeded all expectations. As late as 1931 the General Post Office considered that the air services

would attract "not more than about 5°/o" of established postal traffics, "at any rate for some time to come."[62] The unexpected public enthusiasm for the African air mail service prompted two alterations. One was the expansion of the service, largely routine matter. The most important was the re-organisation of the postal authorities in Southern Africa.

The initiative for the administrative changes came from the South African Government, which proposed a conference of Central and Southern African Postal and Telegraph Administrations. The Conference, which met late in 1935, aimed at strengthening personal contacts and exchanging information because, "the growing use of inter-territorial communication services has resulted in increasing complication."[63] In other words, the rate of technological innovation in the 1930s had advanced beyond the control of any individual government. Fitzgerald enthusiastically supported the new scheme for technical and administrative reasons. The East African Governments obtained Colonial Office approval for their participation, and allowed Fitzgerald to handle the necessary arrangements. The recognition of the importance of the East African postal service represented the highest point of Fitzgerald's career and justified his enthusiasm for administrative amalgamation.[64]

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[62] G.P.O. (F.H.Williamson) to C.O., 10.iii.31, No. 23504/31, G.P.O. M13012/30.

[63] Secretary for External Affairs, Pretoria to C.S., DSM, 26.xi.34, No. P.M.30/1, T.N.A.. SMP. 22563.

[64] e.g. P.M.G., NBI (T. Fitzgerald) to C.S., NBI, 12.i.32, Memorandum, E.A.P. & T. 1260/27/3.

Before the Conference assembled the South African authorities circulated draft conventions to act as a basis for discussion. In the Autumn of 1935 the Imperial authorities realised the political significance of the Conference. The form of the draft Conventions was unsuitable for endorsement by dependent territories and the Colonial Office ruled that agreements should be signed only between Postal Administrations and not between Governments. If the Conventions were presented as inter-government documents, the only assent that the Colonial Postmasters General could be authorised to give would be to initial the drafts ad referendum to the Colonial and Imperial Governments. The British Government delegated the manipulation of the Conference to Fitzgerald, who was instructed to consult the Government Secretary of Basutoland so that, in case of difficulty, he would be able to suggest that the special relationship between the South African and Basutoland postal administrations made his approval a matter for reference to his Government. Fitzgerald's opposition to an inter-government agreement had to be restricted to departmental technicalities because,

> "... as difficult questions of intra-Imperial relationships are involved, it is most particularly desired, if possible, to avoid any controversy with that /South African/ Government on this question, particularly in a Conference at which foreign delegates would be present."[65]

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[65] C.O. (Malcolm MacDonald) to Governor, Kenya, 23.ix.35, Kenya Confidential, T.N.A. SMP. 22563.

The Conference opened on 16th October, 1935 with an address by General J.C.Smuts, the Deputy Premier of the Union. Fitzgerald, however, arrived in Pretoria on the 14th where he convinced the South African Postmaster General, T. Lenton, to substitute working agreements for the formal conventions. In this atmosphere the Conference established an African Postal Union and an African Telecommunications Union, appointing the South African Postal Administration as the bureaux of the Unions and as the organising headquarters. Unified telegraph and postage charges were approved, subject to the approval of Governments, and transit charges on postal matter were abolished. Most significant of all, Lenton suggested, were the personal contacts made between technical officers and administrators.[66] The Conference manifested the outward looking economic policy that the Union of South Africa adopted during the depression. Although it enabled South Africa to demonstrate the technical superiority of its society to senior civil servants, the East African Postmaster General discreetly thwarted its overt political purpose.

The second consequence of technological innovation lay in the improvement of services. Initially this took the form of reducing

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[66] P.M.G. NBI (T. Fitzgerald) to Acting C.S. NBI. 13.1.36, No. 1383/84 enclosing Concluding Address by President (T. Lenton, P.M.G., Pretoria) at first African Postal Union Conference. T.N.A. SMP. 22563.

postage rates. Despite the contention of Imperial Airways that their poundage charge for mail ought to be related to the rates levied by local authorities, some alterations were achieved, notably on 1st July, 1935, when the Post Office reduced the air mail letter rate from cents 65 to cents 50 per half ounce.[67] Such alterations did not represent substantial advantages because revision of air mail rates depended very largely upon the terms of the original grant of the airline's monopoly and its subsidies. Without co-operative action by the governments involved in the Cape-Cairo air service, further development seemed likely to be confined to allowing traffic increase to offset rising costs.

Towards the end of 1934 the British Government decided that the air service deserved further development and proposed that an Empire Air Mail Scheme should be introduced in 1937. This involved an 800°/o intensification of the air services operating in 1934 and the development of new aircraft. It recognised that the profitable development of civil aviation depended upon guaranteed aircraft loading and therefore proposed that the whole of the first class mail should be transferred to the air services. Postal communications, in other words, would be used to indirectly subsidise the civil operation of British aircraft. In 1934 the United Kingdom Government

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[67] P.M.G. NBI (T. Fitzgerald) to Association of Chambers of Commerce of Eastern Africa, NBI, 15.vi.30 and enclosures, E.A.P. & T. 1214/30.

enjoined the East African Colonies to

> "... join in the scheme, realising that it offers unique opportunities for the future. The combined improvements in frequency, speed and capacity ..., taken in conjunction with the bold innovation of the carriage of all first class mail by air, should put the countries of the Empire in the forefront of long distance air and postal development. The scheme would, moreover, be of the utmost value to the countries of the Empire as a whole, alike from the commercial and strategic points of view."[68]

The scheme provided for three flying boat services each week between Southampton and Kisumu, two of which would continue via Mombasa to South Africa. The payment of Imperial subsidies, in the name of mail transport, would cost the Empire Governments a total of £287,000 per annum for 15 years, but the time between London and Kisumu would be reduced initially from $6^1/4$ to $4^1/4$ days, and later to $2^1/2$ days.

The Postmaster General of East Africa, T. Fitzgerald, considered the financial prospects of the proposed service. After allowing for the revenue produced from mail payments and anticipated savings he found that the established service cost Kenya £13,100 whereas the proposed scheme would cost only £9,900. Fitzgerald "unhesitatingly" recommended the scheme, with the proviso that the carriage of inter-territorial mail should be allowed free of any charge.[69] The new arrangement also promised to save the Governments

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[68] C.O. to Governor, Kenya, 23.x.34, Kenya Confidential, enclosing Memorandum: "The Empire Air Mail Scheme", London, 1934, Strictly Confidential, E.A.P. & T. 1236/34/1.

[69] P.M.G., NBI (T. Fitzgerald) to C.S., NBI, 3.xi.34. No. 'B' 1236/34/1, Urgent and Strictly Confidential, E.A.P. & T. 1236/34/1.

of Uganda and Tanganyika £3,310 and £3,080 of their airmail subsidies.

The East African Governments agreed to participate at a special session of the Governor's Conference held in Entebbe. Their approval was subject only to such points of detail as the reservation of accommodation on the flying boats from Tanganyika to London. The scheme, despite protracted financial negotiations amongst the Governments, progressed almost according to schedule. The African service, originally intended to become effective on 1st April, 1937, was deferred until 1st June because of delays in the delivery of flying boats. The service to India and Malaya opened in February, 1938, and was extended to Australia and New Zealand during July.

The British arrangements, embodied in a series of three party agreements between the General Post Office, the Air Ministry and Imperial Airways, provided that the British Post Office would pay the Company £900,000 per annum in respect of mail carriage. £825,000 of this amount represented the estimated net yield on first class mail exchanged between Britain and the Empire with a postage rate of $2^1/2$d per half ounce. The balance of £75,000 would be found by postal revenues from countries not participating n the scheme. For internal political reasons it was not desirable to increase the $1^1/2$d first unit rate in the Imperial service and the Government therefore authorised the General Post Office to bear the consequent loss, £200,000 per annum. The General Post Office accepted this device subject

to the stipulation that postal payments should not subsidise any form of transport, "... and the Dept's acceptance of the initial loss was given with expectation that the traffic increase during the 15 year period of the agreement would enable the P.O. to break clear."[70]

The introduction of the scheme led to considerable modifications in the East African internal air services. The main Imperial Airways route now ran to Mombasa and thence via East African Coast. Under an Air Ministry subsidy a land plane service operated between Kisumu and Lusaka and hence a number of alterations were required in the internal air schedules. The greatest changes lay in the rates of postage. At the beginning of 1937, G.B.Hebden, who had been appointed Postmaster General on Fitzgerald's retirement, called the Governments' attention to the fact that inter-state rates would be governed by the Empire Air Mail Scheme, in which each territory participated as an autonomous country. The inter-state rate would thus be automatically reduced from 50 to 20 cents per half ounce although the internal air mail rate was 35 cents per half ounce. Hebden suggested a reduction of the rate to fifteen cents per half ounce, costing Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika £1,695, £245, and £800 respectively in lost revenues. Hebden strongly advocated adoption of the 15 cent rate, for it would mean that all

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[70] "Historical Account of Overseas Airmail" (Anon. C.A.1939), POST: 50/8.

air mail would be despatched by the most expeditious route without requiring surcharges or superscriptions. The proposed changes were readily accepted by the Governments of Kenya and Uganda, and slightly more reluctantly by the Government of Tanganyika owing to the length of coast along which Wilson Airways operated services. The revised charges became effective on 1st June while the Wilson Airways Company agreed to reduce the poundage charge on mails to shgs. 1/50 in the anticipation of increased traffic. The revision of internal air services and postage rates had been forced upon the Posts and Telegraphs Department by external circumstances.

The Empire Air Mail Scheme began inauspiciously. The first southbound flying boat arrived at Kisumu one day late. This was unfortunate, but by no means unprecedented. The regrettable incident lay in the failure of the Department to inform its officials at Kisumu that the South African mails would travel with the flying boat by way of Mombasa to Durban and Cape Town. In ignorance, therefore, the staff at Kisumu transferred the South African mails to the waiting land plane scheduled for Lusaka. Under the Empire Air Mail Scheme in 1937 there was no connecting flight from Lusaka for three days after the arrival of the South African mail.[71]

The British Government completely suspended the scheme on the outbreak of war, but in January, 1940, it reinstated weekly flying

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[71] F. Birkitt (for PMG) NBI to Director of Postal Services, G.P.O., London, No. I236/34/G, 16.vii.37. E.A.P. & T. 1236/34/2.

boats to Durban and to Kisumu although air mail postage rates were increased sharply to conserve aircraft capacity. Meanwhile the old basis of developing Imperial communications by subsidised private enterprise had ended on 24th November, 1939 when the British Overseas Airways Corporation was formally established under the terms of the B.O.A.C. Act. The Corporation took over its constituent undertakings on 1st April, 1940.[72] Its obligations extended over Africa, the Middle and Far East, Canada, India and Australasia.

The development of airmail services in Africa, despite the Imperial stimulus for its development, bore remarkable similarity with the Government attitudes towards the adoption of wireless telegraph services. In 1934 the Imperial Government had

> "... requested that special considerations may be given ... to the possibility of combining participation in the air scheme with the continuation of their current shipping contracts."[73]

The Imperial Government would not allow established interests to suffer competition from the development of new technologies. Thus, both the inefficient or expensive and the efficient or cheaper means

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[72] E.R.E.Surridge for C.S., NBI, Circular Letter No. 79, 6.xi.42, No. S/B/AV.50/5/49, enclosing Circular by A.W.Street, Permanent Under Secretary of State for Air, 23.viii.42, E.A.P. & T. 1236/34/2.

[73] C.O. to Governor, Kenya, Confidential, 23.x.34, unnumbered, enclosing Memorandum, "Empire Air Mail Scheme", London 1934, Strictly Confidential, E.A.P. & T. 1236/34/2.

of communication were subsidised so that they might compete commercially. State regulation promised a balance between the perpetuation of established procedures and the development of new competitive technologies.

Overseas Communications and Technological Change

Technological change radically altered East Africa's Overseas communications between 1918 and 1938. Radio waves and an air mail route along the Nile Valley and the spine of Africa superseded steamship and cable services. Although the new facilities were still under foreign control, their range and variety represented an almost incalculable benefit. The focus of East Africa, after an interlude of some fifty years, returned from the Coast to the shores of Lake Victoria.

Overseas communications introduced the Posts and Telegraphs Department to new developments in technology. The public could compare and contrast the conduct of internal and external operations. In terms of efficiency, the new equipment clearly improved upon the old methods and might well be adapted for internal services. The Post Office was therefore charged with the duty of maintaining internal services at a level of effectiveness commensurate with overseas communications. As a result the Department faced the twin problems of technology and finance. Although the market for Post Office services was too small and too poor to support heavy capital investment, by 1931, with the introduction of wireless telegraphy, air

transport and long distance telephony, it became feasible to extend the scale of Departmental organisation to secure operating and administrative economies. In 1933, the extension of unified essential services to themore southerly British territories encouraged the amalgamation of the Posts and Telegraphs Department of Tanganyika Territory with the Kenya-Uganda service.

Chapter VIII

THE POST OFFICE OF TANGANYIKA TERRITORY

Technological innovations and the financial crisis of the depression led to the amalgamation of the Posts and Telegraphs Department of Kenya-Uganda and Tanganyika in 1933. A larger service offered economies of scale but it caused widespread unease and opposition amongst the Indians in Tanganyika. The issues stimulated exhaustive discussion in East Africa, Europe, the United Kingdom and the League of Nations.

The Posts and Telegraphs Department of Tanganyika Territory failed to develop an effective policy during the 1920s as result of previous historical circumstances. The development of services during the period of German rule between 1890 and 1916 influenced only the routes followed by telegraphs and the broad directions of mail routes. Only in so far as the British encountered the same general problems of illiteracy and purchasing power in a sparsely populated country did postal policy after 1916 bear relation to German precedent. The occupation of German East Africa by British military forces between 1916 and 1918, led to the hasty reestablishment of telegraph lines and the improvisation of mail runner services without much regard for either expense or policy. As a consequence of this period, the civil post office inherited a network

of telegraph lines that had been rather crudely built for wartime communications and needed expensive reconstruction.

Tanganyika's Post Office commenced operations as a Department of Government in 1917, when the region north of the Dar es Salaam-Kigoma railway had been secured by military operation. In 1918, the British Government extended the service to the whole country, and two years later the name Tanganyika was officially adopted. During 1922, the League of Nations formally entrusted the country to British administration. Since the conduct of the territory was subject to international scrutiny, Tanganyika had to adopt policies of conscious development. For the Posts and Telegraphs, as most other Departments, this meant expanding services and recurrent expenditure. Facilities were often extended or provided without reference to commercial considerations. Although considerable development occurred in difficult circumstances, the heavy costs in loan charges and interest rates proved unsound when the international economy became depressed at the end of 1929.

The operation of the Tanganyika Territory Posts and Telegraphs Department showed ingenuity and receptiveness to innovation. The principal mail routes were established by 1920 and the main lines of the telegraph service were clear by 1925, but the pattern of settlement in Tanganyika encouraged the adoption of new equipment. The country, larger than Kenya and Uganda, possessed its most productive and populous areas around its borders. Facilities as land

telegraph lines or motor mail services were expensive, because on most long routes there was little intermediate traffic. Air transport and wireless telegraphy offered potential economies, but the capital required was beyond the Territory's resources. Even an air mail service between Dar es Salaam, Zanzibar, Tanga and Mombasa proved unprofitable. The Department suffered from its obligation to subsidise services used principally for Government purposes and the absence of an accounting stimulus.

Amalgamation of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika public services, was advocated for economy throughout the 1920s. The Governments rejected the various schemes partly because the political ambitions of the Kenya settlers aroused widespread concern, but also because inter-territorial communications seemed too poor to allow for effective centralised control. In 1931, the East African Governments established air mail services along the coast and during the following year inaugurated telephone communication between Nairobi and Dar es Salaam. The financial stimulus of the depression caused the East African and Imperial Governments to experiment with a unified Posts and Telegraphs Department.

The Governments instituted the amalgamation, an extension of the Kenya-Uganda system, by administrative means. Details of the scheme were published only late in 1932, as part of the Annual Estimates for each state. The secrecy surrounding the necessary

arrangements aroused political suspicion, particularly amongst the Tanganyika Indian community. Settlers had often demanded the fusion of the East African territories into a new 'white dominion' and the postal amalgamation seemed a prelude to government by Kenya. Postal amalgamation produced a political storm. Protests in East Africa proved ineffective and further complaints to the Government of India and the British Colonial Office went unheeded. The Indian communities took the remaining option of protesting to the League of Nations that the United Kingdom had failed to honour the spirit of the Mandate for the Tanganyika Territory.

The Posts and Telegraphs Department of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika was formally constituted as from 1st January, 1933. Administrative action conceived the amalgamation in the interests of finance and technology. However, the significance of the reorganisation really lay in the state of the Tanganyika economy and the operating policies adopted before 1933. Technological change widened the scale of Post Office operations.

Post Office Policy in Tanganyika Territory

The subordination of financial considerations to political and administrative purposes marked the policy of the Posts and Telegraphs Department in Tanganyika Territory. Government demands for services encouraged the Post Office to consistently raise recurrent expenditure beyond the level of revenue by subsidies from the general revenues of the State. The German and British military postal systems

both practised subsidy. The Germans because communications seemed an incentive for private investment and proved useful for security in the Wahehe wars and the Maji Maji Rebellion; while for the British armed forces military success was obviously more important than any communications policy. The civil Government of Tanganyika Territory adopted the tradition of subsidy in 1922, hoping to stimulate economic development. The United Kingdom Government acquiesced because it administered Tanganyika under a League of Nations Mandate. Policies were under international scrutiny and failings in a Mandated Territory might well be used as a general indictment of British colonial practice. Geographical factors also influenced the question of subsidy, for Tanganyika's most populous and productive areas lay on the borders of the state. Long distance services were consequently expensive in the absence of substantial intermediate traffics. However, subsidy soon became a pattern rather than an expedient. The wishes of local administrators governed the extension of services. The Posts and Telegraphs operated in a Government environment, exercising little control over its financial priorities. Reform came only in 1933 by the amalgamation of the Department with the Post Office of Kenya and Uganda, which ordered its services upon commercial principles.

The German influence upon post office policy in Tanganyika was limited to the routes of communication. The Postal system, as in British East Africa, developed in response to commercial or political expediencies

and expanded as railway communications became available. In 1894 the Government service operated only on the Coast while the private caravans of Missionary Societies, the Boustead Ridley Company and Messrs. Shulke and Mayr served the interior.[1] During 1895 the Government opened the first eleven interior post offices and the army established a series of mail runner routes on behalf of the postal authorities. This system reached even into Bukoba and proved sufficient for the circumstances of administration.

The further expansion of the postal system came from the investment of state and private capital into railway construction, which not only cheapened transport costs but also made state-sponsored colonisation possible. Moreover, as in British East Africa, Indian labour undertook much railway construction and required both letter mail and money order services. The principal difficulty experienced by the German postal authorities lay in the slow pace of railway construction. Work on the central line between Dar es Salaam and Kigoma began in 1905 and was only completed in 1914. The Usambara Railway was built even more slowly. Construction started at the port of Tanga in 1893 but only in 1911 did the line reach Moshi at the foot of Mount Kilimanjaro. The Government of German East Africa compensated by transporting mail on the Uganda Railway. Moshi was at first served from the station at Voi and in 1908 a postal treaty replaced an informal arrangement for the circulation of mails between

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[1] e.g. Boustead Ridley & Co. to Governor, DSM, 29.xi.91, E.A.P. & T. (ex Zanzibar Archives).

Kisumu and the German settlements on Lake Victoria.[2]

Considerations of administrative and political convenience governed the development of the telegraph system. By 1905 telegraphs linked the principal settlements and within five years urban telephone systems had been opened in Dar es Salaam, Tanga, Lindi, Dodoma, Tabora, Kilosa, Morogoro and Pangani. Goans and Africans operated these services and the German educational services placed great emphasis upon such vocational training as might be useful for postal clerks and telegraphists.

The German East Africa telegraphs also gave great attention to wireless communication, partly in reaction to the widely dispersed areas of dense population but also because the British owned Eastern Telegraph Company monopolised external communication. A further cause lay in the internal strategy of colonisation. Military occupation led to the wide use of heliographs as a substitute for telegraph construction. Heliographs required a disproportionate employment of staff and only operated effectively in fine weather. Like wireless, however, they were not interrupted by wire cutting and were easily defensible. By 1914 wireless stations operated at Dar es Salaam, Biharamulo, Mwanza and Bukoba and the Government planned a series of similar installations to cover the country. The service gave an impression of effective occupation although the wireless

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[2] P.M.G., NBI (J.T.Gosling) to Deputy Commissioner, EBE, 9.x.08, No. 414/05, E.S.A. SMP. 1623/08. See also: K.N.A. PC/MSA: 66/11.

stations at Mwanza and Bukoba masked the fact "that the native population ... would oppose an armed resistance to the erection of a Land Line".[3]

The German East Africa posts and telegraphs were destroyed during the First World War, but the British military authorities restored the service upon the existing routes because it proved easier to rebuild a road or railway than to establish new facilities. The conquest of German East Africa began as a serious military operation early in 1916 and by the end of the year a British military communications system operated in the northern half of the country. During their retreat the Germans quite systematically destroyed their telegraph lines and the wires erected by the British army were crudely constructed, often merely strung from trees without any insulation. The system proved unreliable and expensive to maintain despite the transfer of line of communication works to a reluctant East Africa Protectorate.

At the end of 1916 the posts and telegraphs were subordinated to Sir Horace Byatt's provisional civil administration, with headquarters at Wilhelmstahl in the Usambara Mountains. In December public telegraph services opened at Dar es Salaam, Bagamoyo, Dodoma, Ruthumie, Sadani, Kilosa, Kondoairangi, Korogwe, Lolkisale, Mbunyuni, Mombo, Morogoro, Moshi, Mwanza, Pangani, Tanga, Tabora and Taveta,

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[3] Assistant Superintendent of Telegraphs (W.T.Wallace) to C.S., EBE, 20.ii.11, No. C.11. In Acting Governor, Uganda (S.Tomkins) to C.O., 10.iii.11, Uganda No. 78, E.S.A. A39-17.

with extensions over the military wires south of the Central Railway and in the vicinity of Kigoma. By the beginning of 1919 the German East Africa telegraphs had been restored to their pre-war extent but heavy capital expenditure was required if they were to be made efficient.[4]

Efficiency depended upon the calibre and perseverence of the staff. On 1st June, 1917, the Government appointed A.O.Ayre 'Superintendent of Posts and Telegraphs', with a staff of six clerks transferred from the East Africa Protectorate Post Office. The service initially operated as an extension of the East Africa and Uganda system under an agreement that the East Africa Protectorate should supply the staff and in return retain all the postal revenue.[5] This arrangement was quickly abandoned and replaced by an independent postal authority. In May 1917 six clerk-telegraphists were seconded from Ceylon, a further ten were recruited in Mauritius, because the War Office threatened to withdraw the last of its personnel, arguing that Africans could easily be trained as replacements. Even as early as 1917 a telegraph school had been opened, but such measures were founded more upon expediency than altruism. The employment of Africans was unavoidable if services were to operate because European personnel were practically unobtainable and, as the

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[4] Administrator, Tanganyika (H.A.Byatt) to C.O., 12.xi.20, Tanganyika Territory No. 494, C.O. 691/35.

[5] Administrator, German East Africa (H.A.Byatt) to C.O., 27.v.17, German East Africa No. 54, C.O. 691/5.

military advance moved southwards, the army personnel who had organised military communications were withdrawn.

Byatt's achievement lay in the training of local Africans rather than in the further import of staff from East Africa or Uganda. This policy alone enabled civil postal services to continue during 1917, when the army closed all their post offices in the northern areas of German East Africa.[6] In 1920 Byatt reduced the establishment of African telegraphists from 130 to 100, noticing that "the principle of training natives ultimately to replace Europeans will be kept in view".[7]

The rapid expansion of the posts and telegraphs services and staff soon made administrative reorganisation necessary. In 1919 Byatt requested the appointment of a Postmaster General who possessed "the mental calibre necessary to make a good head of a Department which needs complete re-organisation".[8] The appointment was given to W.T.Storm of the Nigerian Posts and Telegraphs, who firmly established a Departmental hierarchy and a continuity of policy. He continued the employment of Africanpersonnel that had been begun by the military authorities, because there was no practical alternative. In 1919 most of the European personnel were employed on

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[6] War Office (D.D.White) to C.O., 22.viii.17, No. 0165/8902 (M.O.2), C.O. 691/10.

[7] Administrator, Tanganyika (H.A.Byatt) to C.O., 11.v.20, Tanganyika Territory No. 188, C.O.691/31.

[8] H.A.Byatt, 30.vii.19, Confidential Memorandum; see also: A.C.C. Parkinson to W.C.Bottomly, 4.viii.19, Minute, C.O. 691/29.

one-year contracts and it seemed essential to obtain seconded qualified staff from the British Post Office. However, the British Postal Workers Union disagreed with the Colonial Office upon appropriate terms of service for junior officials in tropical dependencies. Potential recruits boycotted service in Tanganyika at a time when business interests in Britain campaigned for extended services. Byatt's administration maintained censorship of correspondence until 1921 in order to encourage British trade, but staff shortages prevented the operation of a parcel post service even in Dar es Salaam.[9] There was no practical alternative to some measure of Africanisation.

The British Government avoided much investment in German East Africa's communications until settlement of the country's political future. Reconstruction of the telegraph service could therefore be entrusted to relatively inefficient European personnel and its operation left in the charge of Africans. Britain, however, wanted political authority in German East Africa. During January, 1918, a substantial body of Russian and French opinion demanded that plebiscites should be held in the former German colonies, giving the populations an opportunity to determine their own future. The Colonial Office at once instructed Byatt to forward a statement "containing evidence of the anxiety of natives ... to live under British rule".[10]

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[9] G.P.O. (F.H.Williamson) to C.O., 28.vii.20, No. 156210/20, C.O. 691/39.

[10] C.O. to Administrator, German East Africa, 8.1.18, Telegram Secret; C.O. 691/20; see also T.N.A. SMP. 7288.

Under such circumstances there could hardly be a coherent British policy let alone a properly organised Posts and Telegraphs Department.

German East Africa became known officially as Tanganyika as from 1st February, 1920. On 15th July, 1922, the League of Nations formally appointed the British Government to administer the Mandated Territory of Tanganyika. During June the first issue of Tanganyika postage stamps had been made and in July the British Post Office initiated the necessary procedures for the Territory's adhesion to the various international conventions. For diplomatic reasons this very necessary step had been avoided since 1918.

The Posts and Telegraphs Department of Tanganyika Territory became a branch of British colonial administration in 1922. Within the limits of established practice, it gained the right to design policies. The service had already been restored from wartime damage by liberal capital expenditure but its finances were unsatisfactory. Revenue increased from £15,573 in 1920 to £27,970 in 1921 but in the same period expenditure more than doubled to £69,982. Between 1920 and 1922 the cost of internal mail carriage almost doubled to £2,452 while personal emoluments almost trebled to £66,672. During the year ending 1922 the cost of maintaining the telegraphs was one-thirteenth of the expenditure on the senior staff.[11] This pattern

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[11] P. and T. Annual Report 1925.

continued until the post-war inflationary boom collapsed. When the British Treasury insisted upon economy, the Colonial Office vainly pointed to the "important political considerations connected with the status of Tanganyika Territory".[12] The Departments of the Tanganyika Government had no alternative but retrenchment.

Storm attempted to reduce the immediate costs of the Posts and Telegraphs by Africanisation, but he particularly emphasised that much of the Department's expenditure was incurred upon facilities mainly used by the Government. The Dar es Salaam telephone exchange served 170 instruments, of which all but twenty eight were held in Government offices and therefore produced no revenue. The telegraph service also operated largely for state purposes. Thus the route between Tandala and Songea, 211 miles in length, produced a revenue of only £7.12.0. per month. Unless such services were abandoned, Storm could only replace a few Asian employees by Africans and regrade the European staff with a total saving of £5,000 per annum.[13]

The Tanganyika Government functioned under British sovereignty and the supervision of the League of Nations. International political

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[12] C.O. (W.S.Churchill) to Governor, Tanganyika, 23.ii.22, Tanganyika Territory No. 125. Enclosing C.O. (J.E.Masterton-Smith) to Treasury, 28.8.22, No. E.A. Estims 1128, T.N.A. SMP 3447. See also: W.S.Churchill (C.O.) to Sir Robert Horne (Treasury), 26.i.22, No. 60305/Tang., Demi-official, C.O. 691/47.

[13] Acting Governor, Tanganyika (A.C.Hollis) to C.O., 5.viii.22, Tanganyika Territory No. 538, enclosing "Cost of Specific Services", Memorandum by P.M.G. (undated); C.O. 691/56: see also: C.O. 691/58.

pressures as well as British opinion supervised the policies of the state. Two conflicting financial policies affected the Territory. Firstly there was the traditional obligation of British colonial governments to subsist without the aid of any Imperial subsidy. However, it also appeared that the Mandate system would effectively place the character of British Empire in Africa before international scrutiny. The wish of the British Government that development policies should be seen and executed tempered financial economy.

Departmental revenue increased from £42,528 in the year ending 1926 to £81,300 in 1929-30. During the same period expenditure rose from £63,515 to £94,212, and the value of free services performed for other Government departments increased from £18,162 to £23,530. On paper, the Department produced a profit but the statistics did not allow renewals, depreciation or free services rendered by the Public Works Department and similar authorities. The improvement was achieved without any significant expansion of services. The mileage of cross post routes increased from 3,402 to 3,615 miles, but in 1929 fewer than 300 miles of the cross post routes had a motor service throughout the year although as early as 1926 almost 150 route miles served by motor vehicles. Telegraph and telephone route mileage only increased from 3,212 to 3,577 miles carrying 5,895 and 7,080 miles of wire respectively.

The Department completed its reconstruction programme at the end of 1925 when the services required by Government had largely been

established. The Post Office then practised economy and triedto make its operations produce revenue at least approximating to recurrent expenditure. One obvious opportunity for economising lay in the replacement of European staff by Asians and the promotion of Africans. By 1932 Asians and Africans held some 70°/o of the graded posts in the Tanganyika service, as compared with 40°/o in Kenya-Uganda, but many of these positions consisted of small, unprofitable rural offices which were rare in both Kenya and Uganda. Inexpensive non-European staff enabled the expansion of services in theinterests of increasing Departmental revenue, while overlooking the question of profit.

The Department regarded statistics of profit as an index of efficiency and in 1929 attempted to introduce some order into its accounts by charging for services rendered to the Government. During 1925 one third of the Department's business consisted of state traffic while in 1928 the value of free trunk telephone calls for Government officers had increased by 64.5°/o. The Postmaster General's protests led to agreement that the "present great extravagance and waste" should be met by payment for official services, with the exception of letter mail, as from 1st April, 1930.[14]

The Government abolished the payments in 1931, believing that economies could be made in the Posts and Telegraphs Departments' staff

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[14] D. Cameron, 18.vi.29, Minute, T.N.A. SMP 13488.

by dispensing with the clerks who made up the monthly statements for Government offices. A saving of £160 per annum in staff costs looked more definite than a reduction of operating expenditure, although the average inland state telegram contained 25 words, and its transmission would cost more than shgs. 2/50. The system of payment led to the despatch of some 16,000 fewer state telegrams, thereby saving the Department £2,000 by reducing overtime payments, because circuits were cleared earlier in the day, in addition to savings on such items as depreciation, stationery and delivery costs.[15] Despite Departmental protests, free services for Government were restored on 1st July, 1931.

The reversion to free services revived official enthusiasm for telecommunications. The value of telephone calls made by the Tanga Provincial Commissioner's office almost doubled to shgs. 2,429/- . In January, 1932 the value of Government trunk telephone calls totalled shgs. 3,723/-, shgs. 104/- above the Departmental revenue from public services. The Department naturally tried to explain the increased business. P.R.Smith, Acting Postmaster General, tactfully attributed expenditure by the Agricultural Department to a locust invasion, expected that troop movements must have affected the expenditure of the King's African Rifles, and felt that the trebling of trunk call

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[15] P.M.G. DSM. (W.T.Storm) to C.S., DSM., 7.vi.31, No. 270/31, T.N.A S.M.P. 13488.

expenditure by the Police "might possibly be ascribed to a wave of crime".[16] There were sharp retorts: the Agriculture Department explained that their activity was caused by efforts to boost African production, and the Police more specifically blamed unrest amongst the Wa Jongo of Undengereko. The Provincial Commissioner at Tanga pointed out with rather less subtlety that he did not think telephones were designed "for ornamental purposes".[17]

The abolition of payment for official services was but one measure of the Territory's failure to adjust to the circumstances of the depression. Economies in the Posts and Telegraphs Department in 1931 consisted of the dismissal of twenty-eight mail runners, while more expensive motor mail services were extended. In 1932 recurrent expenditure on the Posts and Telegraphs votes totalled £68,829 but no less than £47,309 was allocated to personal emoluments and allowances. The expenditure on the carriage of mails amounted to a mere £9,214. By 1932 the Department required reorganisation.

Reform could not come internally. The Department required a new management that would be able to impose retrenchment upon the staff and a system of payment for official services upon the Government. In January, 1933 the service passed under the control of the

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[16] Acting P.M.G., DSM. (P.R.Storm) to C.S., DSM., 13.ii.32, No. 986/26, T.N.A. S.M.P. 13488.

[17] Provincial Commissioner, Tanga, to C.S., DSM., 11.iii.32, No. 617/123, T.N.A. S.M.P. 13488.

Postmaster General at Nairobi. Even in 1924 there seemed to be economies in the amalgamation of the Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika Posts and Telegraphs Departments. The European headquarters staff for the Kenya-Uganda service cost £6,800 and administered a revenue of £140,000, while the Tanganyika establishment cost £7,130 out of a revenue totalling £27,000.[18] Amalgamation was discussed at frequent intervals but during the 1920s there was no real incentive for change because

> " The Kenya policy with regard to new services... appears to be one dependent on guarantees from the outset. Tanganyika provides facilities wherever there is a reasonable demand for development."[19]

The international depression in 1929 reconciled the conflict in policies. Economy became more important than principle and efficiency in both the administration and operation of services. The Department became an effective instrument for the first time but, in terms of facilities and given the financial limitations under which it worked, the Tanganyika post office had attempted to determine its own priorities for development.

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[18] "Memorandum on Proposed Extension to Tanganyika Territory and Zanzibar of the Scheme under which the Kenya and Uganda Postal and Telegraph Services are amalgamated, with a view to forming a single postal and telegraph administration for the four territories." T. Fitzgerald, 24.x.24, E.S.A. SMP. 8196.

[19] P.M.G., DSM, to C.S., DSM, 28.iii.28, No. 383/28, enclosing "Memo. on Unification of Postal Services", 28.iii.28, T.N.A. SMP. 11921.

Innovation and the Operation of the Tanganyika Post Office

The absence of a clear financial policy and Government pressure handicapped the operation of the Tanganyika Post Office Department. The Department aimed at the provision of extensive services that would at least be sufficient for administrative requirements. In a vast country, with dispersed centres of population separated by large areas of practically uninhabited land, the Department needed investment capital for innovation. As the German Government pioneered wireless communication in East Africa, the British administration in Tanganyika developed air mail services. Such investments were however viewed only in an official perspective and were never subject to financial analysis in terms of profit. The Government preferred to invest capital in the provision of extensive services rather than in the development of established facilities. The Department favoured the improvement of already profitable services, notably the postal business along the coast. One aim of Post Office policy was to divert subsidy from the interior to those areas of the country where it could operate effectively.

The postal system required little capital investment during the 1920s because it was largely operated by runner mails linking railway and steamship services. Even in 1922, however, the runner mails operated at a deficit because many routes served administrative needs. The Department avoided capital expenditure on Post Offices and

concentrated upon the extension of services. Thus, as late as 1929 two rondavel huts surplus to the requirements of the Director of Education accommodated the Mpurapura office. Departmental postal traffic trebled between 1923 and 1930 reaching a total of almost four million letters, but the only developments consisted of adding five further Head Post Offices to the eighteen that already existed and increasing the numbers of smaller offices. Departmental staff operated more than half the post offices in the Territory, an excessive proportion for the volume of traffic and far more expensive than an agency system. Expansion, which would be unlikely even to cover its costs, had been adopted at the insistence of Government while the reconstruction and modernisation of revenue-producing offices, including Dar es Salaam, had to be deferred for lack of funds.

The railway, and the sea and lake steamer services, were the basis of Tanganyika's postal services in 1925. Cross post routes, usually operated by mail runners, carried a weekly service. The Department used motor transport only between Momba and Lushoto, and Moshi and Arusha. Motor transport on the Lushoto service saved only ninety minutes over mail runner timing, and involved quite large capital expenditure. Elsewhere the condition of the roads precluded the regular use of motor vehicles.[20] Railway mails travelled twice each week between Kigoma and Dar es Salaam, with a third despatch

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[20] P. & T. Annual Report, 1925.

from Tabora. A weekly mail train served Moshi, with an additional train from Bwiko and two further services from Korogwe to the coast. Mails to the southern areas of Tanganyika travelled by ship, depending upon irregular and unscheduled sailings. The south-western area of Tanganyika was even less adequately served. Although Lake Tanganyika provided a good route for communications the only profitable traffic lay between Kigoma and the Belgian ports. In 1923, when the Tanganyika vessel Mwanza was out of use, Belgian ships operated a route to the south. This service was performed reluctantly and mails were often mislaid, while the Post Office declined to establish regular runner services in view of the shipping arrangements.[21]

The Department regarded its rare opportunities for commercial operation unsympathetically. The development of gold mining in the Lupa area during the late 1920s did not cause much extension of the postal system except in Mbeya township because the migrant habits of the prospectors excused departmental inactivity.[22] Similarly, the Department opposed attempts to set up postal agencies. The Kilimanjaro Planters Association was refused permission to establish a service at Marangu in 1931 because agencies "are not infrequently unsuccessful".[23]

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[21] Ufipa District Annual Report, 1923 (R.L.Cook), T.N.A. SMP 1733/5/27.

[22] D.M.Frazer (for Acting P.M.G., DSM.) to C.S., DSM., 26.iii.29, No. 241/25, T.N.A. SMP 11324.

[23] Acting P.M.G. DSM. (P.R.Smith), July 1931, Minute, T.N.A. SMP 18944.

The carriage of mails improved in the late 1920s. In 1927 the Railways agreed to operate Travelling Post Offices and to introduce a mail despatch between Dar es Salaam and Tabora six times each week. The frequency of services on the Tanga line was doubled. The most significant change in mail transport policy lay in the fact that by 1927 dry season motor services totalled 1,347 miles. The development of motor transport of mails was expensive. When the Provincial Commissioner at Lindi hoped that a lorry might be used between his station and Songea, Departmental investigation revealed that the probable cost of a weekly service would be almost £1,000 each year, or about one third of the total provided for the conveyance of all internal mails during 1927-8.[24] The scheme was revived in 1932, for a dry season service which would cost an additional £125. The project was abandoned but by late 1932 the runners between Lindi and Songea cost 242/- per week while a road maintenance company would carry the mails in return for a weekly payment of 250/- during the dry season.[25] The Tanganyika Government found the prospect of a reliable company operating mail services under European supervision at a similar cost to a mail runner relay attractive. The Company's incentive, the road maintenance contract, did not feature in the accounts of the Posts and Telegraphs Department.

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[24] Acting P.M.G., DSM (P.R.Smith) to C.S., DSM, 16.i.32, No. 687/28, T.N.A. SMP. 20657.

[25] Acting P.M.G., DSM (D.M.Fraser) to C.S., DSM, 29.x.32, No. 687/28, T.N.A., SMP. 20657.

The depression of 1929 hardly affected the conduct of the internal surface mail services. The railway reduced the frequency of its mail trains and the Post Office made some small reductions in the runner mails. Often these economies were fictitious. When the Department abandoned its route between Kigoma, Kasulu, Malgarasi and Kibondo, the Provincial Administration introduced its own service, charging expenditure to the Transport and Sleeping Sickness Votes. The administrative circumstances of Tanganyika militated against economy.

The most important development of the postal system came from Government interest in civil aviation. Air transport offered a solution to the problems caused by the wide dispersion of the Territory's productive regions, which rendered passenger and mail transport unreliable and expensive. The railway deficit precluded investment in a potentially competitive road system, but air transport, if developed by private enterprise, offered rapid flexible passenger and mail services, minimal capital expenditure and, above all, did not appear to threaten the Railway's financial stability.

The Government of the Territory used aeroplanes for a national survey, which was almost complete in 1931 when the Imperial Airways inaugurated their route to Mwanza. P.L.Gethin, the Director of Civil Aviation, suggested that the survey aircraft might be used for an experimental air mail from Dar es Salaam to Zanzibar, Tanga and Mombasa, financed by a contribution of £40 each from the Governments of

Tanganyika, Zanzibar and Kenya. Gethin withdrew the scheme because the other Governments refused to finance a service that would produce a postal revenue of only £30, but the Tanganyika Government remained enthusiastic because the overland journey to Mwanza accounted for one quarter of the passage time for an air mail letter from Dar es Salaam to London.

An alternative policy was the operation of a coastal air mail service supported by a 20 cent surcharge on correspondence. Mails would travel from Dar es Salaam by air, between Mombasa to Nairobi by train, to Kisumu by Wilson Airways and thence by Imperial Airways.[26] Kenya offered to undertake all arrangements for carrige between Mombasa and Kisumu in return for a payment of 130/- per week - the actual cost of transporting inward mails by Wilson Airways to Nairobi. R.W.Taylor, the Treasurer of Tanganyika, observed that the anticipated expenditure of 311/- per week actually included provision for depreciation so that in cash terms a weekly revenue of 212/- would be balanced by an expenditure of only 70/50. He approved the scheme "As there is no financial objection".[27]

The coastal airmail service operated from 21st October, 1931 until January, 1932, when Imperial Airways introduced its service from

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[26] Acting P.M.G., DSM (P.R.Smith) and Director of Civil Aviation (P.L. Gethin) to C.S., DSM, 6.x.31, No. 1122/31, T.N.A. SMP 19664.

[27] Treasurer, DSM. (R.W.Taylor) to C.S., DSM, 8.x.31, No. G.765, T.N.A. SMP 19664.

Kisumu to the Cape via Dodoma. It produced an overall profit of shgs. 652 cents 27, the shgs. 45/- loss on mail transport being redressed by the carriage of passengers at their own risk. 343 lbs. of mail had been carried but the 155 lbs. of inter-territorial correspondence did not justify continuance of the service.[28]

The experimental coastal air mail service showed that an inter-territorial market was required to support innovation and confirmed the world wide experience that airways had to carry both passengers and mail if they were to produce aprofit. The creation of several private companies followed the state's experiment. On 30th June, 1932, the Wilson Airways Company of Kenya opened a weekly passenger service between Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, connecting with both the north and south bound Imperial Airways schedule. On 18th August the Company gained a £1,200 subsidy to carry mails between Dar es Salaam, Zanzibar, Tanga, Mombasa and Nairobi. Since the subsidy would be defrayed from passenger and postal revenues, the Government of Tanganyika through its postal and Civil Aviation Departments achieved a considerable improvement in services.

The telecommunications services of Tanganyika developed more slowly than the postal system. The Department gave too much effort to the maintenance of unremunerative telegraph routes at the expense of developing wireless and telephone services. Even so, the telegraphs were poorly administered and subject to indifferent maintenance.

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[28] Governor, Tanganyika (G.S.Symes) to C.O., 29.i.32, Tanganyika Territory No. 94, C.O. 822/43 (27022).

The system consisted of a coastal line with branches along the Central and Usambara Railways. The subsidiary lines were often grossly uneconomic, the extremity being the African Trans-continental Telegraph Company's route. Reduced to a service between Abercorn and Namanyere after the Belgian army dismantled the wires to Ujiji, the Company was nationalised in 1925 and paid a compensation of £250 for its assets in Tanganyika. The Territory acquired a route unconnected to the rest of its telegraph system that was expensive to maintain and almost only used by the administrative stations of Kasanga and Namanyere.[29]

The relationship between the Government and the telegraph service demanded other heavily subsidised lines and service. In 1922 the relative proportions of paid and state messages reached 46°/o and 54°/o containing 15 and 25 words respectively. The 211 miles of wire between Tandala and Songea for example carried 34 paid telegrams per month in 1921, producing a revenue of £84 in the year but state traffic totalled more than 100 messages each month. New construction was similarly isolated from commercial reality. In 1922 the Provincial Commissioner at Lindi seriously advised the erection of a line from Tunduru to Songea, while admitting that the Tunduru sub-district "has but small population and production".[30]

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[29] Ufipa District Annual Report. 1925, T.N.A. SMP 1733/8.

[30] Lindi Province Annual Report. 1922, T.N.A. SMP 1733/6(59).

Wireless services were more suited to a country where there was little prospect of intermediate settlements producing much traffic while distances were considerable and maintenance costs unduly great. The Tanganyika telegraphs compared unfavourably with the network of forty two wireless stations in the Belgian Congo but the Government insisted that "the cost of working land lines is... very much smaller than the cost of working wireless stations as in the latter, the work could not be left to Africans who, apart from the question of pay, can be housed in wattle and daub buildings."[31] The Tanganyika Government also monopolised communications. It actively opposed the attempts of isolated mining companies to install their own wireless apparatus and in 1927 refused to allow the British East Africa Broadcasting Company to operate broadcasting and wireless telegraphy services "at the expense of prospective public revenue".[32]

The Government of Tanganyika built a wireless station at Dar es Salaam in 1926 to communicate with shipping and the installations in Zanzibar and Mombasa. The station proved unsatisfactory. Although intended primarily to ease port congestion by giving some hours warning of the arrival of ships, Dar es Salaam was situated on a tidal harbour and the prevailing offshore current varied in strength. Rarely could

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[31] Governor, Tanganyika (D.Cameron) to C.O., 2.xii.25, Tanganyika Territory No. 844, ESA. SMP 7166.

[32] P.M.G. DSM (W.T.Storm) to C.S., DSM, 20.xii.27, Minute, T.N.A. SMP 11525.

ships give more than ten hours notice of arrival and this proved insufficient. Revenue increased from £219 in 1927 to £298 in 1930 while the operating deficit remained at a fairly constant annual charge of £800.[33]

The telephone service was in an even worse predicament. Its revenue rose from £14 in 1919-20 to £689 in 1924-25 but the volume of state traffic greatly exceeded public use. In 1926 the Dar es Salaam telephone exchange provided 220 lines. Although the public rented 56, no fewer than 145 were used by the Government. The only other important exchanges were at Tanga and Lindi serving 17 and 7 Government and 30 and 4 public subscribers respectively. Public use of the telephone service directly subsidised official communication while the Department could not reinvest its surpluses to benefit its consumers.

The system itself was inefficient and in 1925 no fewer than four magnets exchanges operated in Dar es Salaam, the largest having a capacity of 150 lines. The system was quite unsuited to working through multiple exchanges with the result that

> ".... A subscriber to Main Exchange asks for a subscriber to Casino Exchange. The number of junctions available is four (two each way). If a junction is disengaged the first operator passes the call to the second and closes his switch. The latter operator rings the subscriber called. Meanwhile the calling subscriber 'rings through' and the first operator receives it as a

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[33] C.S., DSM (D.J.Jardine) to Chamber of Commerce, DSM, 21.i.30, T.N.A. SMP. 11047.

> 'ring off'. He cuts in and says 'finished pleased' or 'have they answered', further ringing then ensues by both exchanges and both subscribers. These conditions are still more complicated when a third exchange is involved."[34]

The Postmaster General suggested that the installation of an automatic exchange would solve these problems. Although the Post Office considered the change as early as 1925, in 1927 an additional 50 line magneto switchboard was installed in the Central Exchange. The 1927-8 Estimates contained provision for the expenditure of £6,000 on automatic telephone exchange equipment but the whole item was withdrawn when the Government refused to finance the new building. The Department again pressed for the replacement of the Magneto exchanges in 1929 and the expenditure was ultimately carried upon the Colonial Development Fund.[35] Treasury approval was encouraged by the absence of significant capital debt on the Dar es Salaam telephone system. The old German system had been acquired without payment after the First World War, the British military lines were purchased for a nominal sum and, hence, almost the whole of the telephone revenue in Dar es Salaam could be credited to the automatic telephone exchange works, which came into service on 28th March, 1932.

Trunk telephone services developed more slowly. Before 1925 the only trunk services available operated upon telegraph lines,

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[34] Acting Governor, Tanganyika (Scott) to C.O. 22.xi.24, Tanganyika Territory No. 749, enclosing "New Telephone Switchboard for Dar es Salaam and General Telephone Developments", Memo. by P.M.G. (undated), C.O. 691/73.

[35] Acting P.M.G., DSM (P.R.Smith) to C.S., DSM, 15.vi.29, No. 662/25, T.N.A. SMP. 11034/1.

financial considerations precluding the construction of special routes. Nevertheless, telephoning by arrangement was available along the coastal trunk lines and the Tanga Railway as far as Mombo. The first trunk telephone lines opened in 1925 between Kilwa, Dar es Salaam and Tanga, and Moshi and Arusha. The Tanga route opened on 23rd October but handled only twenty seven paid calls by the end of the year while the Kilwa line carried only five calls between 13th November and 31st December. The Department found the progress of the Moshi-Arusha line even more distressing. In nine months only 191 public calls were made. The Department belatedly realised "that any extension of trunk services" could be effective only if it were linked to public exchange systems or to rural telephone installations.[36] During 1929 exchanges were opened at Bukoba and Kilosa, in addition to Mombo, Muheza and Ngomeni which were linked by trunk line to Tanga. During April the trunk telephone line opened between Tanga and Mombasa and in 1931 the Department completed the construction of a route from Tabora to Shinyanga and Mwanza. Further expansion was deferred by the depression but in any case the conditions for a financially successful telephone system existed only along the coast. The demand was insufficient for urban telephone services which would initially have to subsidise both trunk lines and rural systems.

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[36] P. & T. Annual Report 1925.

The remittance and savings bank services operated as a part of the Territory's economic policy. The Government visualised Money Order and Postal Order services as secure means through which African migrant labourers could send money to their families while the Savings Bank appeared as a secure deposit for the surplus monies accumulated by Africans. The British military regime introduced Money Order services into Tanganyika to serve army personnel. When the service passed to the civil post office Posts and Telegraphs commission revenue fell from £129 in 1919-20 to £4 in 1922-3.[37] Money Orders competed not only with commercial banks but also with the postal order service. Inland money orders were only introduced on 1st November, 1925, but postal order services had been established in 1922 and the commission charge on a £40 money order was only one shilling cheaper than that on forty postal orders at shgs. 20/- each.

Post war reconstruction enabled the Territory to expand money order services. Before 1926 Foreign Money Orders were paid in Tanganyika but not issued in order to conserve external currency. On 1st January, 1926, the issue of orders began at thirteen Post Offices. On 1st April the Post Office instituted Telegraph Money Orders for inland use and, by the end of the year, the service had also been extended to Britain, South Africa, Kenya and Uganda. The effect of

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[37] P. & T. Annual Report. 1925.

issuing foreign money orders was remarkable: the total value of ordinary and telegraph money orders issued and paid rose to £47,913 in 1927, or an increase of 94°/o over the 1926 figures.[38] Revenue from money order commission during the year ending 1928 reached £994. Ironically, the Government of Tanganyika had lost by its informal exchange control policy because the refusal to issue money orders merely diverted traffic to the commercial banks.

The Department introduced Postal Order services to Tanganyika in 1922, when the value of payments totalled £3,411 and issues mounted to £32,151. The Government tried to popularise the postal order service among the poorer sections of the Community by reducing the poundage rate on postal orders from 60 to 40 cents. The reduction had one immediate consequence. From 1st October, 1925 the revenue from postal order poundage declined by 25°/o.[39] During 1926 the value of postal orders issued increased by only 4.41°/o but poundage revenue showed an overall decrease of 29.53°/o. The Government used the postal order system as a means to regulate the Tanganyika economy without considering the costs of the service and it was even suggested that labourers should receive deferred pay in the form of a postal order cashable only at the worker's home Post Office, to prevent "loss

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[38] P. & T. Annual Report 1927.

[39] P. & T. Annual Report, 1925.

by gambling, etc., at intermediate points."[40]

The Government of German East Africa established a Post Office Savings Bank ostensibly to serve African customers. Since it offered an interest rate of $3^1/2^o/o$, slightly higher than the commercial banks, the savings bank attained a substantial majority of European savers. The Africans who possessed accounts, and failed to withdraw their monies before the British occupation, lost their deposits after the First World War.[41]

In 1925 the Government published a Post Office Savings Bank Ordinance with the object "of encouraging the African to save" and established a new Savings Bank in January, 1927. Nineteen Post Offices opened for savings bank transactions and by the end of the year 665 accounts held £6,464 on which the Government paid a $3^1/o$ interest. Africans held 402 accounts but 314 of these savers were employees of Government and 28 worked for the Posts and Telegraphs Department.[42] African employees of the Police and Prisons Department, which had formerly adapted a system whereby credits could accrue on the departmental pay lists, held 254 accounts. By instruction of the Governor in 1927 this system was withdrawn so that

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[40] Orde Browne, Labour in Tanganyika. Colonial No. 19 of 1926.

[41] H. Brode, British and German East Africa, 95. See also: Kondoa-Irangi Annual Report 1922 (F.J.Bagshaw). T.N.A.SMP.1733/22.

[42] P. and T. Annual Report. 1927.

men would be encouraged to save in the Post Office Bank. This of course worked well, provided that the men were posted within easy reach of one of the nineteen post offices competent to handle savings bank business.

The Government established the Savings Bank on the false premise that Africans needed to be taught to save money and overlooked the fact that their savings were reinvested in cash crops, which offered a return higher than 3%. Expansion of the bank required large accounts on which administrative costs were proportionately smaller. When the Department requested authority to increase the maximum permissible deposit, the Government ruled,

> "... that the primary object of the Savings Bank is to promote thrift among the Native peasantry in the Territory and if, as appears possible, the large accounts to which you refer belong to non-native depositors it is doubtful whether Government should increase the limits and thus compete with other legitimate non-Government investments."[43]

Unless it competed with commercial banks the Savings Bank would never acquire the funds it needed for expansion. When the Government assumed that Africans only needed a secure depository for their money, it curtailed the development of the savings bank.

At the end of 1928, there were 700 African depositors, 291 of whom worked for the Police, 62 for the Post Office, 81 clerks

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[43] F.J.Durman (for Acting C.S., DSM.), to P.M.G., DSM, 30.viii.27, No. 10347/6, T.N.A. SMP.10347/I.

and 79 domestic servants. The Bank gained popularity primarily among those Africans resident in urban areas and in 1928 produced an operating surplus of £90.1.0. By 1931, despite the slump and the reintroduction of paysheet savings by the Police Department in 1930, there were 988 African users of the savings bank out of a total of 1,883 accounts, 716 of which were held by Asians. At the same time the service produced a deficit of £322 and still catered only for urban Africans. The Department lamented that Africans used the bank "as a means of safeguarding money for a short time rather than to accumulate savings".[44]

The Postal Amalgamation of 1933

The Governments amalgamated the Posts and Telegraphs Departments of Tanganyika and Kenya-Uganda as from 1st January, 1933, in an attempt to reduce expenditure. The depression of the international economy, which began in 1929, laid a premium upon effective operation. The state of financial and operating policies in Tanganyika was such that it seemed only a new and proved management could impose change. The amalgamation had in fact been advocated throughout the 1920s. When air mail services and a trunk telephone line operated between Nairobi and Dar es Salaam the unification became administratively practicable. However, finance remained the principal

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[44] P. & T. Annual Report. 1931.

issue involved in the reorganisation. Only in the early 1930s was there a sufficient incentive in terms of economy for the East African and United Kingdom Governments to risk the likely political arguments.

'Closer Union', the federation of East Africa under the hegemony of Kenya's white settlers, aroused deep political passion in the 1920s. The settlers saw their deliverance from Colonial Office regulation and the creation of a new White Dominion. The non-European population did not view this vision with much enthusiasm, and strongly objected to any measures that might weaken United Kingdom control over East Africa. Although the amalgamation of specialised services like Posts and Telegraphs clearly offered economies of scale, the political implications of strengthening inter-territorial organisation were too dangerous. The depression altered this perspective. Economy became a more urgent question then political animosity while inter-territorial co-operation offered an effective means for reforming the Tanganyika Posts and Telegraphs Department.

Closer Union proved a major subject for debate in East African politics throughout the 1920s. It demanded investigation by the United Kingdom Parliament and raised questions of the character of British Colonial government. Only in 1927 was the question of postal amalgamation seriously examined by a Royal Commission under the Chairmanship of Hilton Young. T. Fitzgerald, the Postmaster-

General of Kenya and Uganda, presented a Memorandum ennumerating the advantages of an integrated service, in which W.T.Storm, the Postmaster-General of Tanganyika, concurred. The Post Office evidence advised immediate amalgamation but the inadequacy of inter-territorial communications led the Commission to recommend decentralised management subject to a central board that could regulate construction, standards and development policy. Fitzgerald reported to the Government of Kenya that the Commission had exaggerated the difficulties of postal amalgamation but also realised that economic fusion was too closely identified with political aspirations and fears. He recognised political defeat and was prepared to wait for a more favourable opportunity.

A subsequent investigation of the question by Sir Samuel Wilson in 1929 met with criticism of any postal amalgamation by F.R.Smith, Acting Postmaster General in Tanganyika. Smith claimed that international conventions already unified the world's postal administrations and suggested that a similar arrangement would be "the only practical and economical method" for East Africa until the Governments created some inter-territorial financial authority. He opposed Tanganyika's entry into the Kenya-Uganda fusion and alleged that he had "yet to hear that Uganda is satisfied with the arrangement". Smith sought inter-territorial co-operation for only three main issues of postal policy: telegram terminal and transit rates, improved communications with South Africa, and a unified

policy for determining the relations between the railway and the post office. Wilson concluded that any economic closer union would be ineffective unless there were an adequate central administration.[45]

The depression focussed opinion upon the advantages of economic co-ordination and influenced the appointment of a Joint Select Committee on Closer Union in 1931. The Committee reconsidered amalgamation of the Posts and Telegraphs Departments but rejected the scheme in favour of co-operation because it would prove difficult to operate a service responsible to three autonomous governments. Unlike the Hilton Young Commission, the Select Committee recognised the political difficulties inherent in economic fusion, but discounted the mounting effects of the depression and the abilities of local civil servants to initiate policy.

The Report of the Hilton Young Commission gave the Posts and Telegraphs Departments clear inter-territorial development priorities. In 1932 it opened the Nakuru-Nairobi-Mombasa-Tanga-Dar es Salaam telephone line, although there was no telephone service between Kenya and Uganda. Internal air mail services were established and, when Storm was transferred to the Northern Rhodesian Post Office in 1931, his substantive office remained vacant. For practical purposes the Postmaster General at Nairobi determined policy throughout East

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[45] Acting P.M.G., DSM (P.R.Smith) to C.S., DSM, No. 383/26, 21.v.29, T.N.A. SMP 20684/1.

Africa. Shortly before Storm left Tanganyika he joined Fitzgerald in a Memorandum urging amalgamation on commercial grounds and as a first step towards the formation of a common postal system, "embracing the whole of the British territories from Kenya and Uganda southwards".

Early in 1932 Fitzgerald produced a further Memorandum for the Government of Kenya showing that amalgamation would save at least £10,000 per annum by retrenchment and the standardisation of equipment. He emphasised that technological innovation in telecommunications had made "the outstanding need" a unified control of engineering, without which much waste in equipment and personnel would ensue. He also noticed that "unification of postal and telegraphic services invariably pioneers every movement towards economic federation".[46] Fitzgerald's persistent advocacy made postal amalgamation a subject for Government consideration. In 1932 Sir Joseph Byrne, the Governor of Kenya, supported the scheme while Sir Stewart Symes, recently appointed Governor of Tanganyika, saw advantage in the Territory divesting itself of an unprofitable Department and saving some £6,000 annually.

C.G. Walker, the Secretary to the Conference of East African Governors, sympathised with economic fusion. He persuaded Symes to place the postal amalgamation on the Agenda for the April, 1932

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[46] P.MG., NBI to Acting C.S., NBI, 12.i.32, enclosing Memorandum on Conclusions of Joint Select Committee on Closer Union, E.A.P. &. T. 1260/27/3.

meeting in Dar es Salaam and asked Fitzgerald to modify his memorandum, emphasising economy and the possibility of a larger service attracting, and using more efficiently, the service of technical experts.[47] Fitzgerald, for his part, arranged that the Association of Chambers of Commerce of Eastern Africa should support a resolution urging "... the earliest possible amalgamation of the Kenya and Uganda and Tanganyika Postal, Telegraphic and Telephone systems".[48]

The Tanganyika Secretariat was not wholly convinced that amalgamation would prove advantageous. Even Smith preferred a consultative or co-operative organisation but the Governor felt that "an economy of £10,000 looks nice".[49] His Chief Secretary, D.J.Jardine, disagreed because he could not imagine that any amalgamation could prove profitable to all three Governments and supported Smith's view that only a single East African state would allow economic and administrative integration. Pending detailed financial studies, Jardine categorically stated that, "I would not advocate this Government agreeing even in principle to the unification of any Department".[50] Smith argued that centralisation would lead to

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[47] Secretary to Governors' Conference (C.G.Walker) to T. Fitzgerald, NBI, 3.ii.32, No. C/G.C.D.2, personal, E.A.P. & T. 1260/27/3.

[48] C.O. (H.T.Allen) to G.P.O., 19.vii.32, No. 27047/9/32, and Enclosures, G.P.O. M.8322/33. P.M.G., NBI (T. Fitzgerald) to A. Tannahill, NBI, 9.ii.32, Personal, E.A.P. & T. 1214/30.

[49] Sir Stewart Symes (Governor, T.T.), 11.iii.32, Minute, T.N.A. SMP. 20684/1.

[50] D.J.Jardine (C.S.) to Governor, 12.iii.32, Minute, T.N.A. SMP. 20684/1.

inefficiency, that most economies would be effected in the Tanganyika staff, that technical specialists would be out-of-date in a few years without expensive refresher courses, and that rate unification would involve Tanganyika in financial loss.[51]

Smith over-estimated his importance in the Government of Tanganyika. He recognised that the basic issue in postal amalgamation was political but failed to appreciate Fitzgerald's influence. Fitzgerald emphasised that amalgamation would not limit Tanganyika's freedom to levy its own internal rates to suit its own peculiar conditions and wisely complimented Smith upon "the honest way" in which he had conducted the negotiations, hoping that "no one in the Tanganyika service thinks that I am pushing this proposed amalgamation on any personal grounds".[52]

Personal issues, however, had much to do with the amalgamation scheme. Smith was nearly 48 years old and Jardine felt that he ought to be promoted to the substantive rank of Postmaster General. Provision for the appointment had even been made in the 1933 Estimates subject to the "remote possibility of the amalgamation".[53] Smith found his position acutely embarrassing and in May, 1932, formally applied for the post of Postmaster General because "... the proposals of an 'Acting' officer lack the force of identical

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[51] Acting P.M.G., DSM (P.R.Smith) to C.S., DSM, 31.iii.32, No. 383/28, "Notes on Fitzgerald's Memorandum of 23.ii.32", T.N.A. SMP. 20684/1.

[52] P.M.G., NBI (T. Fitzgerald) to Acting P.M.G., DSM, 19.iv.32, Confidential, E.A.P. & T. 1260/27/3.

[53] C.S., DSM (D.J.Jardine) to Governor, 26.iv.32, Minute, T.N.A. SMP.26089.

proposals submitted by an officer appointed in the post."[54] Smith even suggested that as an economy measure the position could be advertised at a reduced salary but its vacancy greatly strengthened Fitzgerald's case for amalgamation because it would not be necessary to compensate the holder of a senior office. When the Government of Tanganyika resolved to adopt postal amalgamation, Smith had to be content with the rank of Senior Deputy Postmaster General, an increased salary, and the position of heir apparent.

Official agreement that postal amalgamation at least deserved further study was followed by the April, 1932 meeting of the Conference of East African Governors. Symes simply stated that his only intention was economy and the Governors agreed that the two postal administrations should consult and report upon the future organisation of the Posts and Telegraphs services of East Africa with especial reference to fusion or, alternatively, the further unification of rates, practices and development.[55] The terms of reference allowed to the Postmasters General implied that East African and Imperial policies would sanction the amalgamation of the Post Offices of Tanganyika and of Kenya-Uganda but the Conference determined that reorganisation should be a purely administrative

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[54] Acting P.M.G., DSM (P.R.Smith) to C.S., DSM, 7.v.32, No. 1763/29, T.N.A. SMP. 26089.

[55] Minutes of Governors' Conference, Dar es Salaam, April 1932, E.S.A. V.1-3.

matter. This constitutional question was complicated by the fact that the Postmaster General, the Commissioner of Customs and the General Manager of the Railway were official members of the Kenya Legislative Council. Although it seemed improper for the administrators of inter-territorial services to sit in only one Legislative Council their votes alone prevented the Kenya Government from control by an unofficial majority. In 1932 the Kenya constitution was under examination and the Conference therefore agreed that the administrators of the inter-territorial services should "... cease to be permanent members of the Kenya Legislative Council as soon as the necessary change in constitution could be arranged".[56]

Two days later, Fitzgerald travelled to Dar es Salaam for six days of departmental deliberations upon the future of the East African Post Offices. Smith and Fitzgerald agreed that the extension of the Kenya-Uganda system would prove suitable for the co-ordination of Posts and Telegraphs services noting that the number of impending retirements in Tanganyika and Kenya, and the vacancy of the posts of Engineer-in-Chief and Postmaster General in Tanganyika, would enable amalgamation to proceed with a minimum of pensions liability arising from retrenchments. The scheme merely extended the Kenya-Uganda fusion but it promised savings of

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[56] Ibid; see also, C.O. (H.T.Allen) to G.P.O., 19.viii.32, No. 27047/9/32, G.P.O. M8322/33.

£8,190, £3,290 and £1,010 for Tanganyika, Kenya and Uganda respectively. These calculations discounted savings in respect of pension liabilities and housing which, for Tanganyika, totalled £2,400 p.a. The cost of pensions to retrenched officers would occasion expenditure of £3,000 but this sum would disappear as they reached their normal retiring age. A further economy would come from the transfer of the Accounts Branch to Nairobi. Savings Bank ledgers would remain in Dar es Salaam but arrangements would be made whereby money might be deposited in one territory and withdrawn in another. The banks, however, were to remain state concerns, financially responsible to the individual governments. It was also decided that the Post Office of Zanzibar should remain an autonomous service because the Island maintained a Rupee currency. Provision was made for Departmental officers to undertake imspections at the request of the Zanzibar Government.

Departmental agreement that amalgamation would be advantageous was followed by ready approval from the Governments. Symes instructed Smith to proceed with the necessary retrenchments from the Tanganyika staff early in June but expressed anxiety lest the consequent pensions liability should be the sole liability of the Territory and opposed any unification of rates which might reduce the Territory's revenue. He also hoped that his Government would retain disciplinary control over staff. The settlement of such points of detail did not deter Fitzgerald and Smith had become equally enthusiastic.

The East African Governments agreed by the end of July 1932 that amalgamation should proceed, the Government of Kenya conceding to all Symes' anxieties or passing the problems for Colonial Office considerations.[57]

Smith had largely abandoned his own opposition to amalgamation by May 1932. He came to urge an early decision, although he still wondered whether a partial change in territorial policy and the substitution of European staff by Asiatics, might produce greater savings than the abolition of certain senior posts in Tanganyika, the transfer of the Accounts Branch of Nairobi and a reduction in relief staff. The Government of Tanganyika was not yet fully converted to the idea of amalgamation. Jardine recognised that administrative independence was not the essence of policy, but R.W. Taylor, the Treasurer, had meanwhile decided that fusion was a financial impossibility. He feared that Nairobi would dominate the service, and suggested that the Kenya-Uganda combination was efficient only because taxation and local conditions had been similar in the past. Taylor wondered in which Territory a Posts and Telegraphs official would pay taxes and foresaw grave troubles if an income tax were introduced. He speculated that, "since the lines of development in Kenya are different to ours" such problems would

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[57] Governor, NBI (J. Byrne) to Governor, DSM, 27.vii.32, No. B.P.O. 4/2/60, G.P.O. M8322/33.

be likely to increase.[58] The experiment of postal amalgamation had, however, already been approved and reappraisal seemed inappropriate. Jardine could do not more than minute his agreement with Taylor and observe that "fusion need not necessarily be for all time, but only for so long as it is to the advantage of all concerned".[59] Tanganyika entered the amalgamation reluctantly, uncertain of its implications and afraid that the Territory's Post Office would be operated to serve the financial requirements of Kenya.

The Imperial Government considered the scheme more broadly. By September 1932, it seemed that the opposition to amalgamation would be far stronger than the Government of Tanganyika anticipated and the question had even been referred to the Permanent Mandates Commission of the League of Nations. Postal amalgamation therefore became a matter for Foreign Office consideration but the Secretary of State, Sir John Simon, saw no reason to delay administrative procedure providing that "the semblance of an independent postal service" could be maintained in Tanganyika, perhaps by the use of a special series of postage stamps.[60]

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[58] Treasurer, DSM (R.W.Taylor), "Notes on Amalgamation Proposals", 27.v.32, T.N.A. SMP. 20684/1.

[59] C.S., DSM (D.J.Jardine), Minutes on Treasurer DSM, "Notes on Amalgamation Proposals", 27.v.32, T.N.A. SMP. 20684/1.

[60] F.O. (A.W.A.Leeper) to C.O., 25.viii.32, No. W.9379/22/98, E.A.P. & T. 1260/27/4.

In November 1932 the Governments submitted the amalgamation proposals to the Legislative Councils as an integral part of the 1933 Supply Bills. Although it aroused practically no comment in Kenya or Uganda, Tanganyikan opinion regarded the scheme with great suspicion. M.P.Chitale, an Indian member, criticised the Government for failing to obtain a mandate from the Council before proceeding with an administrative amalgamation that might prejudice the Territory's sovereignty and noticed that every time a departmental reorganisation occurred, "the salaries of the officials have gone up".[61] Jardine retorted that amalgamation would not be effective until 1st January and therefore supposed that "constitutionally speaking, if the proposal was one which did not meet with the approval of this Council, the Council would refuse to vote supply."[62]

The Legislative Council debate emphasised the questions of staff and staff policy. Chitale attacked the regrading of Postmasters, which had increased the salaries of seven or eight officers by £40 or £50 p.a. while one or two had gained more than £100 p.a. S.B.Malik suggested that amalgamation would not only fail to produce economies but also that the Tanganyika contribution towards the expenses of the headquarters at Nairobi would noticeably reduce the amount of currency circulating in the Territory. Like Sir William Lead, he hoped

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[61] M.P.Chitale, T.L.C., 2.xi.32.

[62] D.J.Jardine (C.S.), T.L.C., 3.xi.32.

that the change would not diminish the opportunities for Tanganyika youths to serve the Department. European criticism was muted and less concerned for principles than using the issue to advocate the introduction of an Agricultural Parcels Post. J.S.K.Wells did, however, suggest that the Postmaster General should be replaced by "new blood from home" after the amalgamation had come into effect. D.M.Frazer, Acting Postmaster General for Smith, insisted that amalgamation would save an extra £3,500 over the economies of retrenchment, contended that the East African service would really be no more than a local elaboration of the Universal Postal Union, and admitted that "the majority of the staff in Tanganyika are not much in favour of the amalgamation; but there is no strong disfavour to the scheme so far as I am aware."[63] The official majority in the Council defeated Chitale's motion for the deletion of £15,449 from the Department's Estimates, the cost of Tanganyika's contribution to the Nairobi headquarters. Frazer duly reported to Fitzgerald that he had found "Leg. Co. ... on Thursday ... a most sticky and prolonged session and I was not free until Tuesday".[64]

After the passing of the Estimates, the Departments retrenched their superfluous employees and F.E.Balmer, the Chief Accountant of the Kenya-Uganda Department, travelled to Dar es Salaam to settle

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[63] Habib Jamal, S.B.Malik, J.S.K.Wells and D.M.Frazer (Acting P.M.G.) T.L.C., 3.xi.32.

[64] Acting P.M.G., DSM (D.M.Frazer), to P.M.G., NBI, 11.xi.32, E.A.P. & T. 1260/27/4.

some points of detail. Frazer conceded issues quite unrelated to finance and anticipated that,

> " Difficulties will undoubtedly arise as the Tanganyika staff have to fallinto line with asystem almost entirely different in detail from that to which they have been accustomed for the past ten years."[65]

The Government of Tanganyika had, however, little reason to be displeased. It achieved economies and insulated the Post Office from the critical investigations of Sir Sydney Armitage-Smith.[66] Fitzgerald, who had successfully persuaded three Governments and the Colonial Office to support the expansion of his Department, ~~was evermore optimistic~~. He wrote to Jardine to express "appreciation of the generous and sympathetic attitude of the Tanganyika Government".[67]

Political Opposition and the International Implications of Postal Amalgamation

The postal amalgamation came into effect on 1st January 1933 accompanied by opposition from the German Colonial Association, which sought the restoration of Germany's pre-war empire, and the Indian community in the Tanganyika Territory, who feared the domination of the Kenya settlers. The threat implicit in economic co-ordination led both bodies to raise their objections at the Permanent Mandates

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[65] "Notes of Agreement" between Frazer and Balmer, 12.xi.32. Frazer's "Note on Accounting Arrangements", E.A.P. & T. 1260/27/6.

[66] Cmd. 4182, 1932, 68.

[67] P.M.G., NBI (T. Fitzgerald) to C.S., DSM, 28.xii.32, E.A.P. & T. 1260/27/5.

Commission of the League of Nations. The structure of the Department and the nature of inter-territorial co-operation in East Africa was exhaustively discussed. When the Commission acquiesced in the administrative reorganisation of the Posts and Telegraphs, the British Government made arrangements to notify the members of the Universal Postal Union of the alteration. On 1st January 1935 the Post Office issued a definitive inter-territorial postage stamp series. Such changes were however carefully ordered to avoid giving the impression that the Tanganyika Department had been placed under the administration of the Kenya Government.

Durga Dass, the proprietor of the Tanganyika Opinion newspaper and Secretary of the Indian Association in Dar es Salaam, led the opposition to postal amalgamation. During May, 1932 he learned that postal amalgamation was under Government consideration and he immediately protested that any change in the control of Tanganyika's services should be subject to the fullest consultation. Fitzgerald's own efforts to gain white unofficial support coupled with the secrecy surrounding the negotiations deepened Indian suspicion that, "If ever at any time the white oligarchy of Kenya wrest power, Tanganyika will be annexed".[68] The Indian Association urged that all races should unite to preserve the spirit of the Mandate,

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[68] Tanganyika Opinion. 4.vi.32, Editorial.

and suggested that economic fusion would need to be endorsed by a referendum. Racial unity, however, consisted of the Indian Association, seven Europeans from the Posts and Telegraphs Department who expected retrenchment and replacement by Asians, and the German Colonial Association whose press handout concluded with the harangue: "Give us back our Colonies".

The political initiative lay with the East African Governments and the Posts and Telegraphs Department. Postal amalgamation became an accomplished fact before its opponents mustered their sympathisers. Even so, the strength of the Indian community was impressive. The Dar es Salaam Association, claiming to act for 54 similar bodies, drafted and approved a Memorandum by mid-October, 1932, asserting that coordination was a political manoeuvre which would not prove conducive to either efficiency or economy. During the following month the Memorandum was redrafted as a Petition and forwarded to the Permanent Mandates Commission through the Colonial Office. The Petition emphasised that the amalgamated service might reverse Storm's policy of increasing the number of non-Europeans in senior positions and feared a reduction of African and Asian salaries.

Opposition, intended for East African consumption, gave an even greater emphasis to the problems of the staff. An Indian member of the Tanganyika Legislative Council, M.P.Chitale, one of the political leaders of the Dar es Salaam Indian Association, produced a first statement of political grievances to the March 1933 session

of the Council, when he asked no fewer than fifteen questions during one sitting. The different conditions of service, he asserted, had not been given adequate consideration by the Government. Chitale alleged that all senior headquarters posts had been allocated to Kenya-Uganda staff, and criticised the high salary of £1,600 that would be awarded to the Postmaster General.[69] The policy that all recruitment should be controlled by Kenya headquarters and that appointments should be published only in the Kenya Gazette showed the Tanganyika Opinion clear evidence of "... a definite scheme of Kenyarising the leadership and command of ~~the~~ Tanganyika affairs."[70]

The Indian opposition pointed to a number of real disadvantages in postal amalgamation. Certainly, spending power in Tanganyika might have been reduced by staff changes, the support of Kenya headquarters, and the centralisation of passage booking in Mombasa.[71] Durga Dass also suggested that there was some public disadvantage in the absence from Dar es Salaam of a departmental head who could receive complaints.

The 1934 Estimates showed a saving of £5,065 over 1935, which reduced the Tanganyika Posts and Telegraphs expenditure to the 1931-2 level. The Indian community noticed correctly that the economy had

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[69] M.P.Chitale, T.L.C., 14.iii.33.

[70] Tanganyika Opinion, 27.xii.33.

[71] Ibid., 1.ix.33, Editorial.

been achieved by scaling down the previous year's over-estimates and by retrenchment, neither of which depended upon amalgamation, but they failed to record either that retrenched Europeans had been replaced by Asians, or that, without centralisation, the retrenchments would have led to a probable loss of departmental efficiency. The Indian community lacked political experience and never exploited their information. Thus Durga Dass missed the opportunity to create a first class scandal. Although Kenya handled a much greater volume of traffic than Tanganyika, the staff in its local headquarters was actually smaller because the inter-territorial offices, supported as a common charge by the three states, executed much administrative work for the Kenya division.[72]

Durga Dass, on behalf of the Indian Association of Dar es Salaam, despatched his petition to the Government of Tanganyika on 19th September 1932. The observations of the Imperial Government were dated 8th March 1933, and the document was submitted for the consideration of the Permanent Mandates Commission during July. Dr. Schnee's petition on behalf of the German Colonial Association, presented to the Colonial Office late in January, and was also submitted to the Commission in July.[73] The Commission's investigations

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[72] Tanganyika Opinion. 7.viii.33.

[73] C.O. (J.E.W.Flood) to F.O., 28.ii.33, No. 4008/33, enclosing "Observations of His Majesty's Government...", C.O. 822/50 (4008).

and debate were thus delayed until the postal amalgamation was apparently working without involving political considerations.

The Commission appointed M. Rappard, the Swiss delegate, to report upon the Petitions and the British rejoinder. He found the Indian community's especial resentment founded upon the secrecy which had accompanied amalgamation, its political overtones, the development of Nairobi at the expense of Dar es Salaam, and the closing of avenues for the promotion of Indian staff. The Indians suggested that the reorganisation contravened Article 10 of the Mandate, while the Germans felt that Article 22 had been ignored thereby occasioning "... a unilateral modification of the mandates system and hence an infringement of Germany's rights".[74] Rappard observed that Article 10 permitted economic fusion, providing that it were divorced from political considerations and served the interests of the Territory.

Rappard accepted the British contention that amalgamation was desirable for economy and efficiency on the grounds of "common sense". He contended that the Indian economic analysis depended too heavily upon conjecture but also warned that the Commission would have to pay considerable attention to the affairs of the Posts and Telegraphs Department in future years. The Commission's powers

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[74] Tanganyika Opinion, 6.x.33.

were distinctly limited and it could not even influence any discriminatory staff policy because, "nothing in the Mandate obliges the Mandatory Power to give preference in this recruitment to the natives, or even less to Asiatic immigrants."[75] The Commission unanimously accepted Rappard's report as a basis for discussion and his contention that the German invocation of Article 22 was of less important than the Indian fears that the United Kingdom had contravened Article 10.

Sir Stewart Symes, as Governor of the Territory, reported to both the Commission and the Colonial Office. He declared that, while the African population was indifferent to economic fusion, the white population and the better informed Indians did not sympathise with Durga Dass' petition, which was primarily influenced by fears that the Asian staff would be reduced.[76] Symes drew the Commission's attention to the fact that, although the postal union largely governed postal services throughout the world, the Legislative Council in Tanganyika retained the sole right to initiate legislation affecting the department. Air travel and telephone communication placed the Postmaster General in Nairobi under immediate control and, in any case, the Territory was empowered to withdraw from the amalgamation. The Spanish delegate, Palacios, felt that

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[75] Ibid., 6.x.33, quoting Rappard's Report to Permanent Mandates Commission.

[76] Ibid., 6.x.33, quoting Symes in Permanent Mandates Commission debate.

"... even if the closer union had been renounced in its integrity it was being carried through in its component parts". Symes disagreed with the suggestion that complete economic fusion might be equated with closer union.

The deliberations of the Permanent Mandates Commission concluded on 28th June, after intense discussion.[77] The Commission produced its first Minority Report in twelve years and ruled that, "the Postmaster General... would therefore have to realise that he was responsible, not only to the Governor on the spot, but also to the League of Nations".[78]

The Commission's debate upon East African economic fusion concerned all Mandatory Powers. Belgium feared that, if the Council of the League declared against economic fusion in Tanganyika, it might also object to the integration of Rwanda-Urundi into the Congo. The United Kingdom Government particularly resented the Commission's warning that "any measures tending... towards the de facto establishment of ... closer union should be avoided" which seemed "an attempt to lay down the manner in which His Majesty's Government should interpret

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[77] Lugard to Sir Samuel Wilson, 18.viii.33, Confidential, CO. 822/53 (29094).
"The Mandates Commission spent many days (each of 6 hours or more) at its recent session in hot debate on the subject of 'Closer Union' in East Africa. So vehement did the arguments become that it was wholly impossible to get any clear conception of what was said when two, and even three, men were speaking in French at the same time." Compare: Sir Stewart Symes, Tour of Duty. London 1946, 52-53.

[78] East Africa, 28.ix.33.

and exercise their powers in the control of Tanganyika".[79] The United Kingdom was not obliged to justify its policies to the Council of the League, whose 76th Session approved the recommendations of the Permanent Mandates Commission.

International opposition having been frustrated, it remained for the Government of India to declare that they would watch over Indian interests in the Territory, and for Symes to address his Legislative Council. He suggested that, although closer union was inexpedient and threatened to raise too many problems, much greater emphasis should be given to economic co-operation. The East African Standard regarded such a policy as ineffective and insisted that "Great Britain has plenty of latitude within the Mandate for constructive work".[80] The Government of Tanganyika was however well pleased by the outcome of the Indian opposition. One official recorded that he wished the Government "... could convince the Indian Association of the stupidity of addressing the P.M.C. unless they are able to obtain satisfaction from this Government".[81]

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[79] C.O. (W.C.Bottomley) to F.O., 8.ix.33, No. 4041/33, C.O. 822/63 (29094).

[80] East African Standard, 2.xi.33.

[81] Anon., Minute to D.C.S., DSM. 9.xi.33, T.N.A. SMP. (21884). See also: Director, Mandates Section, League of Nations (Vito Catastini), to Durga Dass, Indian Association, DSM, 16.x.33, No. 6A/2774/72, C.O. 822/58 (24012).

The League of Nation's implicit approval of postal amalgamation allowed the United Kingdom Government to clarify the international status of the Department. The service was still portrayed as an administrative union, but within two years a series of interterritorial postage stamps had been issued and were held as a demonstration of the realities of amalgamation. The Department however remained acutely conscious of political questions and the ineffectiveness of its operation during the 1930s and 1940s was a result of its reluctance to again raise the issues of economic fusion and Closer Union.

The British Post Office learned of the amalgamation scheme in October, 1932 but the Colonial Office failed to forward the details needed to announce the change to the Universal Postal Union until the end of January. The Colonial Office explained that the independent Estimates of the three Governments controlled the amalgamated Department and there seemed no point in advising the General Post Office until the necessary votes had been approved by the Secretary of State. Kenya, Tanganyika and Uganda continued to enjoy separate representation at the Universal Postal Union to ensure that

> "... no step should be taken which would render inaccurate the statements ... that there is nothing in the unification scheme which impairs the liberty

of the Tanganyika Government to set up again at any time its own separate organisation, and that the Legislature of each state retains final control over the expenditure necessary for the service of that state".[82]

The opposition to postal fusion made both the Imperial and East African governments reluctant to produce any symbol which might imply a uniform control over Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika. For the purposes of public opinion uniformity seemed to be the appearance of inter-territorial postage stamps. A preliminary move was the introduction of 'Postage Due' labels on 1st July, 1933. These devices for surcharging underpaid mail, used in Kenya since 1927, simplified accounting procedures. Late in 1933, P.R. Smith drew the attention of the Governor's Conference to the Departmental convenience of issuing a common stamp. The Kenya-Uganda stamps did not correspond to the decimal currency and each sheet, which ought to have one hundred stamps, contained 60, 120 or 240. Moreover, although the new issue would cost £600, the Post Office estimated philatelic revenue at £12,000. Smith emphasised that the Universal Postal Union accepted the constitutional position of the Department and stamp issue was an internal matter that need not be referred to the International Bureau in Berne. He also contended that an inter-territorial stamp would probably have less political significance for

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[82] C.O. (J.E.W.Flood) to G.P.O., 9.iii.33, No. 4008/33, G.P.O. M.8322/33.

a Mandated Territory, "than the change in Tanganyika from the 'giraffe' issue to the present one bearing the King's head."[83] He felt that a pictorial issue should be made for the sake of public demand and that it would be desirable to open a competition for a suitable design, if Fitzgerald's suggestion of Lake Victoria, which represented the most inter-territorial physical feature, were not accepted.

The Conference of East African Governors met during October, 1933, and agreed that a common stamp was desirable providing that there were no political objections. Reference was made to the Colonial Office. On receiving the advice that the Posts and Telegraphs Department was solely a matter for local administrative convenience, arrangements were made for the issue of the new series of stamps as from 1st January 1935, subject to a competition for design. The issue was placed on sale on 1st May as a result of delays in shipping.

International scrutiny could be set aside over such considerations of detail but the reservations of the Permanent Mandates Commission on the administrative structure of the Department complicated its operating procedures until after the Second World War. The amalgamation was an experiment and the future of East African economic co-operation depended upon the ability of the Posts and Telegraphs

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[83] Acting P.M.G., NBI (P.R.Smith) to Secretary to Governors Conference NBI, 5.ix.33, No. 'B' 1260/27/5, C.O. 822/50 (4008).

Department to show that centralisation and efficiency were compatible with economy and territorial autonomy. However, the arguments over the 1933 amalgamation made both the Governments and the Department reluctant to introduce further changes in view of the assurances given to the League of Nations that neither the integrity of the Tanganyika Territory nor the interests of Tanganyika staff would be compromised. The Governments and the Department no longer possessed unlimited powers of administrative initiative.[84]

Amalgamation, Innovation and Traffic

The Posts and Telegraphs Department of Tanganyika Territory operated as a government service. The needs of the state had priority, tempered only by the problems of finance. This system, both wasteful and ineffective, made the Post Office a liability upon state revenues. The Department functioned in the political circumstances of a League of Nations Mandate and an expansion in international trade. Reform came through the depression of 1929, which made political complications seem irrelevant. Depression gave the East African governments an opportunity to effect necessary and overdue financial reorganisations and to reduce the power of minority political pressure groups. The amalgamation of the Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika Posts and Telegraphs Departments represented one facet of this general trend.

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[84] C.O. (P. Cunliffe Lister) to Governor, Tanganyika, 15.xii.33, Tanganyika Confidential No. 2, C.O. 822/50 (4008/1).

Created to initiate new financial policies, cope effectively with innovation, and pursue efficient operation, the inter-territorial post office was constitutionally responsible to three governments, which determined separate financial and administrative policies. Although economies of scale came from the amalgamation, the Department had little freedom of political or financial initiative. Its constitution led to misunderstandings and considerable dispute in the introduction of inter-territorial services, while the Post Office received public criticism for the provision of inadequate services. In 1933, the Department held political initiative and experienced difficulty. By 1939, its opportunities were transformed into frustration as governments discouraged investments in communications. The Department survived as an amalgamated authority through inertia, and the continuing problems of technology and an increasing volume of business.

Chapter IX

THE INTER-TERRITORIAL POST OFFICE 1933-1948

The establishment of a single Posts and Telegraphs Department for Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika was variously seen as a threat to United Kingdom control over the East African governments, a triumph for white settlement, and a measure of efficiency. Amalgamation served as a means of retrenchment. The Department's operations between 1933 and 1949 showed that none of the hopes or anxieties expressed about its constitution were valid. Dependent upon the authority of three Governments, the extent of the Post Office reduced its power. While its revenues benefited from East Africa's recovery from the depression, it could not reinvest in equipment. Between 1933 and 1938 the letter mail traffic rose fifty per cent, but the Department opened only seven additional offices. Facilities that had been under-used in 1933 approached their capacity. However, insufficient investment promised that at some time the Post Office would face considerable financial problems. Innovation came only in staff policy, particularly in the provision of training facilities for non-Europeans. Generally, the problems of finance and technology proved no stimulus to the Department.

Significant change did not mark the operation of services between 1933 and 1949. The volume of traffic increased but business

depended upon the level of economic activity and purchasing power. The Department made no real effort to extend even postal services into African rural areas and a trunk telephone line opened between Kenya and Uganda only in 1940. The principal works undertaken were the introduction of automatic telephone exchanges at Tanga, Mombasa, Kampala, Entebbe and Jinja. The Governments allocated capital for local schemes, but saw little profit from inter-territorial communications. Although the remittance and savings bank facilities extended to a few additional offices, these services could not compete with other forms of savings or remittance. The savings banks passed through a particularly difficult phase. Firstly, the Government of Tanganyika frustrated attempts to centralise accounting and auditing procedures in Nairobi. Following this occurrence the Post Office extended services to African areas at the same time as the Agriculture and Vetinary Departments instituted the forcible culling of cattle. Such schemes did not arouse African confidence in the savings banks.

The Second World War caused an immense increase in business. During 1948, the Post Office handled more than sixty million letters and served almost fifteen thousand installed telephones. However, the Department's constitution proved ill-adapted to changes in operating practice between 1933 and 1939. During the Second World War and its aftermath, the Posts and Telegraphs resisted change.

Staff policy became the only sphere in which the amalgamated service could demonstrate its efficiency. Although responsible to the

Governments of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika for the effective and financial conduct of the Department, the Postmaster General had a large measure of authority over the extension of non-European employment. During 1933, European personnel constituted one-third of the graded establishment in the post office. Although this proportion hardly changed by 1939, the Department opened schools to train African clerks, telegraphists and engineering apprentices. In 1946 there were one thousand established African employees and some six hundred Asians. The European proportion of the staff fell to one-eighth, while the volume of traffic doubled. The Postmaster General, G.B.Hebden, unlike many of his colleagues, sympathised with some advancement of African and Asian opportunities, but the staff changes between 1939 and 1946 were brought about by circumstances beyond Departmental or East African control. In 1948, the European proportion rose to almost one-seventh as the Post Office installed new and sophisticated equipment.

The amalgamated Department gained a further stimulus during the Second World War from its relations with the British military authorities who maintained their own postal system to distribute mail to serving soldiers. The two bodies competed in attempts to demonstrate superior efficiency, to the benefit of public services. However, the army considered that soldiers should enjoy nominal cheap postal rates. This view met with qualified acceptance by the Governments and opposition from the Postmaster General, who feared

lengthy political negotiations. The Department also hindered the adoption of innovations like air letters on the grounds of inadequate public demand. The strains of the Second World War revealed grave deficiencies in the policies, equipment and constitution of the Posts and Telegraphs Department.

The service failed to adjust to new technological and financial circumstances partly for internal reasons, but also because its responsibilities were too diverse and complex. The Second World War caused the Governments of East Africa and the United Kingdom to consider alternative patterns of organisation. However, given the exceptional increase in trafic between 1933 and 1949 and the Department's unwieldy responsibilities, mere survival and the maintenance of operations were significant achievements. In this process, the increase in the employment of non-Europeans and particularly Africans proved remarkably successful. However, only in a very few areas did the Department have sufficient incentive or freedom of administrative action to initiate new policies.

The Operation of Services

The Posts and Telegraphs Departments of Kenya-Uganda and Tanganyika justified their amalgamation by the hope that services would be operated more efficiently through the introduction of highly specialised equipment and the employment of specialist personnel. These aims were not realised because the Governments refused to

allocate capital to the Post Office. Re-equipment, modernisation and expansion depended upon Government authorisation rather than economic considerations. The Department planned in a financial vacuum and, although pricing policy did not represent the true cost of services, determined investment policy by public demand. Intensive use of existing facilities marked the operation of services after 1933. The Department restrained its enthusiasm for technological innovations at the price of some public dissatisfaction, and avoided costly engineering experiments.

Considerations of either technology or finance hardly affected the postal service. In 1933 316 post offices and agencies in Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika handled some 19,283,479 letters. By 1949 the number of offices had risen to 382, but the volume of letter mail reached a total of 76,467,500. Sub-economic facilities had been drawn into the colonial postal system, oriented towards European and Asian requirements.

The Post Office benefited substantially from the economic revival of the 1930s. The total number of letters handled rose by one third and parcels traffic increased by more than 50,000 pieces between 1933 and 1938. Although the number of letters handled by Kenya increased by one-third and the Tanganyikan total almost doubled, this increased traffic required the opening of only seven new post offices.

Development of the postal service was restricted to some intermittent expansion of the internal air mails. During 1932 the Tanganyika Government withdrew its support from the coastal air mail service but private enterprise continued the route as a feeder to the Imperial Airways African system. This service carried the greater part of Tanganyika's overseas letter mail correspondence and a substantial proportion of the Kenya air mails. Air mail offered great advantages in a country where considerable distances separated the towns. Its practicalities and limitations were most clearly demonstrated by the communications needs of Mafia Island, entirely independent of surface transport and telegraph landlines or cables.

The Wilson Airways Company, which operated the first internal air mail services in Kenya, soon dominated civil aviation in East Africa through the sponsorship of the Kenya Government. In addition to its well developed stake in the coastal air mail service, which produced a lucrative subsidy, the Company participated in the Cape-Cairo air mail arrangements through the financial interest of the Imperial Airways. The East African Governments channelled their business to Wilson Airways, as enjoined in the airmail service agreement, and the Company developed further services.

Wilson Airways exercised a Government sponsored monopoly of East Africa's scheduled air communications in the 1930s. Challenged

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[1] Deputy P.M.G., DSM (P.R.Smith) to C.S., DSM, 10.xii.34, No. 218/32, T.N.A., SMP. 18972.

only by Imperial Airways, the local company had little incentive to operate efficiently and in 1938 even asked permission to withdraw one of its thrice weekly services from the coast route, partly because the Governments had replaced their block subsidies by mail weight payments after the introduction of the Empire Air Mail Scheme. The Company's financial position was poor and in December, 1938, they informed the Department that if they were not released from the third service they would have to give three months notice of termination of their contract.[2] The twice weekly service became effective on 1st January, 1939.

Innovation usually proved a secondary consideration to the conduct of services. In 1939 the Department provided postal facilities at 322 centres: 137 in Kenya, 49 in Uganda and 136 in Tanganyika. By 1945 postal facilities were available at 338 places: 151 centres in Kenya, 52 in Uganda and 135 in Tanganyika. The increased business of wartime did not require the wider rural extension of post office services because the Governments could be persuaded to provide some rudimentary letter mail facilities. The volume of postal business increased dramatically during the war. An estimated total of 26,356,000 letters were handled in 1939 decreasing to 22,243,700 in 1940 and then rising to 25,041,800 in 1941 and to 30,103,900 in 1942. The movement of troops from East Africa caused the total to decrease to 28,537,500 in 1943, but the East African participation in the Far Eastern War caused a further rise to 37,319,700 in 1944. The closure of the Army

[2] Acting P.M.G., NBI (G.P.Willougby) to C.S., DSM, 10.xii.38, No. 230/1135, T.N.A. SMP 19146.

Post Offices in 1945 led to the Department handling the abnormal total of 64,249,100 letters.

Increasing business severely strained Departmental resources especially in capital equipment. While a volume of sixty million letters might be temporarily handled in the emergency of war, the pressure could not be sustained in peacetime, particularly when public criticism mounted. Although ultimately responsible for the provision of satisfactory Post Office buildings, the Department could not be blamed for the inadequate facilities of the middle 1940s. During the 1930s the Governments had often refused to allow the reconstruction of offices which were even then overcrowded and after the war the territorial Public Works Departments were unable to undertake much construction. The public unfairly attributed the congestion in Post Office buildings to poor Departmental management.

Telecommunications services suffered severely from the Government's refusal to allocate sufficient investment capital for the purchase of new and sophisticated equipment. By the mid-1930s the unprofitable telegraph system needed reconstruction. Its problems might in some measure have been eased by the widespread use of wireless telegraphy but the initial capital was not available. The installation of trunk telephone lines caused even greater problems, particularly when the route served inter-territorial purposes. Only in 1940 was the Uganda telephone system linked to Kenya after six years of delay during which Kenya refused to finance the construction of sixty-five

miles of line leading to the border. Telephone exchanges caused fewer problems, only because they raised no inter-territorial financial difficulties. After the War, the inadequacy of the service coupled with a greatly increased demand occasioned much public criticism. The Department however had already taken the necessary initiative in drawing up plans for the future development of telecommunications services so that a coherent inter-territorial system could be introduced when its financial constitution had been more satisfactorily arranged.

The East African telegraph system demanded capital expenditure although it promised an inadequate return on the investment. In 1933 East Africa possessed 7,345 miles of telegraph route carrying 20,039 miles of wire. During that year 514,478 inland and 145,897 foreign telegrams were handled. Many of the foreign telegrams were actually transmitted directly from the Cable and Wireless installations at Nairobi, Mombasa and Dar es Salaam, and the inland telegrams were mainly sent between the larger towns. The Department operated several thousand miles of unprofitable telegraph lines, and restricted its engineering work to route maintenance and strenghening. The replacement of wood poles by iron promised greater efficiency and would also enable the hanging of further wires for telephone services. In Uganda the Department rebuilt nine hundred and twenty eight route miles between 1927 and 1934 to provide the doubtful commercial advantage of "a permanent and efficient system of telegraph routes

to the more remote parts of the country."[3]

The telegraph service proved as unremunerative in 1938 as in 1933. The route mileage fell to 7,209 miles while the length of wire rose to 21,048 miles, principally because a second wire enabled telephone traffic with a super-imposed telegraph circuit. The Department handled 838,400 inland and 177,900 external telegrams in 1938. This increase left no economic justification for a general expansion of the telegraph service because the rise in inland traffic largely came from rate concessions for inter-territorial messages made in 1937. Although no operating loss had been incurred, public use of the telegraph service remained disappointingly low.

Wireless offered better possibilities because capital costs remained constant but its efficiency greatly increased. During 1933 Cable and Wireless operated stations for public traffic at Nairobi and Mombasa while the Department's installations at Kampala, Dar es Salaam, Mbeya, Dodoma and Moshi serviced shipping and aircraft movements. For the sake of ecnomy in Departmental expenditure, the Kampala, Mbeya, Dodoma and Moshi stations were transferred to Imperial Airways and the Dar es Salaam installation passed to Cable and Wireless during the mid 1930s.

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[3] P. and T. Annual Report, 1934.

The Post Office authorities realised that wireless would be of tremendous value in East Africa, where the distance between relatively substantial settlements was so vast. During 1934 short wave sets were installed at Musoma in Tanganyika and Arua in Uganda and the Department designed an inexpensive low power short wave set that could be used at out stations. This system, experimentally installed at Gulu in 1935, proved so successful that similar equipment was introduced at Kitgum, Arua, Lindi, Geita and Mafia. However, Post Office dependence upon Government finance severely circumscribed development. Innovation would be financed only for political or strategic reasons and the telegraph services continued to depend largely upon expensive land routes.

The Department devoted greater attention to the development of the telephone service because the public use of local exchanges, the principal source of telephone revenue, increased substantially after the provision of long distance trunk line services. The capitals of Kenya and Tanganyika, where automatic telephone exchanges operated, had been connected by trunk line during 1933. Two years later the Post Office established a circuit between Nakuru and Eldoret, thereby linking Eldoret, Moiben, Turbo, Soy, Hoey's Bridge, Kitale, Kimini, Kipkarren and Endebess with the inter-territorial telephone system. At the same time, a two channel carrier, the first used in East Africa, was installed between Nairobi and Nakuru. During 1936 Kijabe, Narok, Kericho and Kimamba gained access to the main inter-territorial trunk, and the Kenya Government authorised extensions from

Nakuru to Kisumu and thence to Kisii and Kakamega. During the following year, the Department built new lines from Nairobi to Machakos and work began on the erection of two new trunk lines connecting Entebbe, Kempala and Jinja.

One unfulfilled pormise of the 1933 amalgamation was the building of a trunk line to join the Kenya and Uganda telephone systems. The service was planned in 1932, but a series of inter-territorial misunderstandings delayed its opening until 1940. Commercial interests strongly wished that the internal telephone system of the Protectorate could be connected to the Nakuru-Dar es Salaam trunk line and in December, 1935 the Uganda Chamber of Commerce raised the problem in detail, but the Post Office then regarded the extension as prejudicial to Kenya's finances. Late in 1936 notice of a question in the Uganda Legislative Council asking whether only 100 miles of line needed to be erected to connect the two telephone networks reopened the issue. Investigation by the Department showed 100 miles of double wire would be needed in Kenya, and 65 route miles would have to be rebuilt. The Uganda cost would amount of £6,400 for the Jinja-Kamuli-Kaliro line and £3,000 for the stretch between Jinja and the Kenya border. Related questions in the Kenya Legislative Council caused the Government to alloaate funds for the extension although financial considerations precluded any work before 1938. The Colonial Office, which strongly supported the new connection and arranged a loan from

the Colonial Development Fund, was puzzled by the delay and the attitude of the Kenya Government.[4] The Postmaster General, G. B. Hebden, explained that

> "... although I have striven for a year to overcome the many difficulties which face a Head of an amalgamated Department, I am convinced that the major difficulties cannot be surmounted so long as I am serving under three separate Administrative and Financial Heads."[5]

During August, 1937, the Uganda Government resolved to construct its line to the border although the Kenya Government remained "unable to allocate the necessary funds" for its portion of the route.[6] Kenya only ordered the necessary equipment in April, 1939.[7] The urgency of the work, as the political situation in Europe worsened, led to the completion of the Uganda line on 22nd November, and the Department hoped to open the service in late February, 1940. Delay became unavoidable as British industry was increasingly diverted to the production of munitions. The Crown Agents inspection of the carrier system alone had to be put back to 15th February, 1940, and there was also the problem of shipping. Nevertheless, the Department still hoped the service could begin in April. In the meantime the Governments agreed that each state should be credited with its own collections of inter-territorial trunk call revenue; a considerable improvement

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[4] C.O. (J.E.W.Flood) to P.M.G., NBI (G.B.Hebden), 6.viii.37, No. 38176/36K, Demi-Official, C.O. 533/482 (38176).

[5] P.M.G., NBI (G.B.Hebden) to C.O. (J.E.W.Flood), 12.viii.37, No. 1401, Demi-Official, C.O. 533/482 (38176).

[6] Acting P.M.G., NBI (G.P.Willoughby) to C.S., EBE, 7.x.38, No. 242/1234, E.A.P. & T. 1401/35.

[7] E.A.P. and T. 1401/35.

on the old system which was based on the length of line used for a particular call. The Kenya-Uganda trunk channel opened experimentally on 6th December, 1940, and for public traffic as from 1st January, 1941. The influence of war and public demand led to an immediate average delay of about 1 1/4 hours on the single channel carrier circuit.

The reluctance of the Governments to invest capital also limited the development of urban telephone exchanges. The Mombasa exchange, for example, attained notoriety during the middle 1930s and the local Sub-Telegraph Engineer reported in 1936 that the useful life of the switchboard extended to maximum of twelve months. Protests were made to the Government of Kenya and the Postmaster General was even summoned before the Governor, who refused to authorise reconstruction. After learning of the Government's financial position, Hebden travelled to Mombasa, agreed with the Chamber of Commerce that the telephone system was inefficient, and offered to support any reasonable resolution made by the Chamber.[8] The announcement, a few days later, that Uganda intended to introduce automatic exchanges provoked further protests and the Government hastily authorised the Postmaster General to include £20,500 in his 1938 Estimates for the cost of the Mombasa reconstruction, with the proviso that "no guarantee can be given that the Colony's Estimates for 1938 will

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[8] Mombasa Times, 29.viii.36.

include any funds for this work".[9] The 1938 Estimates provided £1,400 for building costs, £9,900 for the laying of underground cables and left a balance of £9,900 for equipment that would be required later but materials had to be ordered from the United Kingdom making it unlikely that workcould begin before September, 1938. The Government determined to avoid expenditure and Hebden was only permitted to order the automatic exchange equipment through the 1939 Estimates. In effect this meant that the installation of new equipment would not be completed until the middle of 1940, or a year later than neeessary. Even in April, 1938 there were 47 subscribers awaiting connection at Mombasa and the Engineer-in-Chief feared that by 1940, "the continued refusal of subscribers will have reached the proportion of a first-class scandal".[10] The new exchange opened on 14th June, 1940, having involved the installation of 900 dial telephones, one thousand miles of new wire, the despatch of 2,760 circulars to subscribers, and the retraining of officers.

In 1939 the installation of automatic telephone exchanges at Mombasa, Tanga, Jinja, Kampala and Entebbe were well advanced and the Uganda-Kenya trunk line was nearing completion. The Tanga exchange opened on 13th December, 1941, but thereafter development was curtailed because the East African telephone service did not enjoy a

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[9] M. Sabine for Acting C.S., NBI, to P.M.G., NBI, No. B/PO, 40/4/4/2/57, 6.iv.37, E.A.P. & T. 1362/31/1.

[10] Engineer in Chief (G.P.Willoughby) to P.M.G., NBI, No. K527/38/1032/143, 25.iv.38, E.A.P. & T. 1362/31/1.

high wartime priority. The Department proceeded to construct military lines, and to maintain its own as best it could, causing a minimum of disturbance to public traffic.

Public criticism of the service became pronounced in the middle 1940s. Inconvenience had been accepted patriotically but when an Allied victory seemed likely, protests against Departmental inefficiency increased. In Mombasa the automatic telephone exchange became congested and the public service was a second priority to military requirements. Accusations were made in 1944 that the Department had deliberately given European subscribers preference and the Indian Merchants Chamber called for public telephone booths in the Mackinnon Market. Their protests were so vehement that the Department transfered the coin box from the Mombasa Club.[11] Congestion was explained by increasing traffic. In 1940 490 exchange lines at Mombasa produced 1,700,000 local calls whereas in 1943 710 lines, excluding the services' telephones at Kilindini, had almost doubled the volume of business.

The expansion of telephone traffic during the Second World War demonstrated the inadequacy of available facilities and showed the failure of the amalgamated service to draw up a coherent development plan. During the 1930s telephone services extended more upon local political considerations than upon service or economic

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[11] P.M.G., NBI (G.B.Hebden) to Indian Merchants Chamber, MSA, 3.xi.44, E.A.P. & T. 1362/31/11.

requirements. Government concern for revenues caused the expansion of urban telephone systems without adequate provision for communication between different exchanges. The war made it quite clear that expediency would no longer be an adequate criterion for development and, by the early 1940s, the rate of innovation in telecommunications engineering required the Department to draw up a series of development plans that could be revised and elaborated at regular intervals. The introduction of planned telecommunications development in East Africa was the work of the Telephone Traffic Superintendent, L.B.Harmer.

Harmer's two reports, submitted in 1944, became the basis of Departmental telephone development policy for the next fifteen years. He found that between 1920 and 1942 the overall average annual increase in the number of telephones in use amounted to no less than 10.5°/o per annum, and even during the Depression the number in use had risen by 5.34°/o. At the end of the war it seemed likely that there would be an immediate demand for the installation of at least 4,000 telephones with an ensuing growth rate of an annual 10°/o. Harmer's general policy study suggested that in 1955 some 40,300 telephones would be in use in East Africa, four times the 1944 total, and perhaps 112,000 in 1955. Such an optimistic estimate promised to raise several problems. The first was capital. This, Harmer felt, should total £1,000,000 in 1945, be doubled by 1955 and rise to £5,000,000 in 1965, producing estimated revenue

of £300,000, £600,000 and £1,500,000 respectively.[12]

The telephone trunk line services would also have to be extended. Although Harmer recommended that rural lines should be developed territorially, he insisted that the Department's headquarters should remain responsible for inter-territorial lines. Between 1933 and 1939 the volume of trunk telephone traffic doubled although the system was of poor quality. Harmer proposed a good standard of long distance conversation and a maximum of 15 minutes delay to traffic at the busiest times with no call having to be switched through more than two intermediate exchanges. This scheme implied heavy investment in facilities that would at first be under used. It also provided for the political contingency of, "... the formation of a unified East Africa with the Government in Nairobi."[13]

Harmer introduced the concept of planning telephone exchanges and telephone trunk line services as a unified system. His Reports assumed that investment would create traffic and his enthusiasm led the Department to invest most of its surpluses and loan monies into the telephone system in the late 1940s and early 1950s. At the same time Harmer's work demonstrated the Department's need for development capital, planned investment, increased staff training and the reorganisation of the Posts and Telegraph Department as a self-contained East African authority.

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[12] "Future Telephone Growth in East Africa", Memorandum (L.B.Harmer), 1944, E.A.P. & T. G.W. 230.

[13] "Telephone Trunk Forecast", Memorandum (L.B.Harmer), 1944. E.A.P. & T. G.W. 231

The operation of the Post Office Savings Banks underwent little change between 1933 and 1949. They were even excluded from the centralisation of the 1933 amalgamation because deposits were guaranteed by the individual Governments, who also controlled investments and carried the profit or deficit. Therefore, throughout the 1930s, the three banks designed their own policies and the only formal Post Office interest lay in general operation and administration.

Postal amalgamation recognised the administrative autonomy of the territorial savings bank. However, in 1934 the Colonial Office appointed an Inter-Departmental Committee to draw up a model Ordinance, imposing a uniform relationship between Colonial revenues and savings bank finances. The Treasurer of Tanganyika, G.R. Sandford, agreed that the banks's accounts should be kept separate from all departmental finances but saw no purpose in excluding savings bank funds from Colonial revenue accounts. The Colonial Office overruled Sandford's opinion, feeling that Savings Banks should be independent financial entities; the Government guarantees being contingent rather than direct liabilities. It was not intended to deprive the Colonial Governments of a share of the savings bank profits, but rather to subject the Government use of bank funds to statutory regulation.[14] Sandford had no alternative but to present

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[14] C.O. (J.H. Thomas) to Governor, Tanganyika, 1.i.36, Tanganyika Territory No. 2, T.N.A. SMP. 23465.

a Bill he did not support to the Tanganyika Legislative Council. G.B.Hebden had already introduced an identical Bill to the Kenya Legislative Council, with the observation that public confidence in the Savings Bank would be increased, because it "will be run on strictly commercial lines", and the accounts would be open to inspection.[15] Colonial Office instruction unified the East African legislation governing the operation of the Savings Banks.

In July, 1936, Hebden took advantage of this circumstance, proposing that a unified headquarters for the Post Office Savings Banks of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika should be established in Nairobi. Centralisation would produce economy, by the use of more complex calculating machinery, which would save £500 per annum in the case of Tanganyika alone. It seemed that the airmail services would make centralised control efficient for operating purposes and Hebden undertook to maintain separate accounts for each Territory. Sandford initially acquiesced but the Tanganyika Auditor, A. Bragg, pointed out that under the Savings Bank Ordinance of 1936 his Department certified the Bank's accounts.[16] Sandford therefore withdrew his approval for Tanganyika's participation. Only the headquarters of the Uganda Post Office Savings Bank transfered to

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[15] P.M.G. (G.B.Hebden), K.L.C. 29.x.36.

[16] Auditor DSM (A. Bragg) to C.S., DSM, 25.ix.36, No. 100/501/127. T.N.A. SMP. 10347.

Nairobi as from 1st January 1937. In July Hebden suggested that the Tanganyika Auditor might well travel to Nairobi to inspect the accounts or that the Kenya Auditor might be delegated to undertake the work on behalf of the Tanganyika Government, and emphasised that

> "... there is no intention that the Kenya Headquarters should dominate the Tanganyika Savings Bank in any way. Matters of policy and finance would continue to be referred to your Government and no change of any real significance would be introduced after centralisation without the full consent of the Tanganyika Government."[17]

The Tanganyika authorities ignored Hebden's letter and operated their Savings Bank as an autonomous territorial institution until after the Second World War.

The principal purpose of Post Office Savings Banks in Colonial Africa was felt to be the mobilisatiob of capital accumulated by African peasant producers. The Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika Savings Bank Ordinance of 1935 therefore exempted deposits from attachment for debt, while the Tanganyika Government's proposal to reduce interest rates from 3°/o to 2½°/o aroused strong criticism by the Department. P.R.Smith suggested that the saving of £130 each year would prove a false economy because

> "Tanganyika depositors are chiefly Africans whose confidence in the bank was not easy to gain after their losses in German times, and it would, I

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[17] P.M.G. NBI (G.B.Hebden) to C.S., DSM, 7.vii.37, No. 49/1178, T.N.A. SMP 10347.

think, be a calamity to shake that confidence, which particular efforts were made to gain."[18]

Smith's advice was over-ruled and the $2^1/2^0/o$ interest rate — introduced on 1st January, 1936. The Government of Tanganyika placed more faith in propaganda. In 1937 the Post Office introduced simpler forms in the Swahili language so that the African population should feel that the Savings Bank was provided "... as much for their benefit as for non-natives".[19] For Government purposes, propaganda was a satisfactory substitute for the expensive alternative of providing an interest rate that rivalled the income which could be obtained from stock raising or small scale trade. The Savings Bank was largely irrelevant to African needs because the Postmaster General could close any account which seemed to be used for banking rather than savings purposes.

The Post Office Savings Bank also applied to Government agricultural policy. In Kenya, for example, the forcible destocking of the Kamba reserve, which had been made necessary by Government restrictions upon the movement and marketing of African owned cattle, was accompanied by the introduction of a mobile savings bank. The expenses of operating the van for a five-month experimental period totalled shgs. 398-2-16 cts. and produced but 128 new accounts with

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[18] Deputy P.M.G., DSM (P.R.Smith) to Treasurer, DSM, 12.xii.33, No. 219/24, T.N.A. SMP. 23465.

[19] Provincial Commissioner, Mbeya to Deputy P.M.G., DSM, 13.vii.37, No. 30/11/16, T.N.A. SMP 21390.

a total deposit of shgs. 3,155. The Department concluded that if the Wakamba had been more in sympathy with the Government's policy, the result might have been more favourable.[20]

The operation of the Post Office Savings Banks became more important during the Second World War. Monies paid to Askari were automatically credited to the Banks while it also became possible to invest Bank reserves in British War Funds. At the same time efforts were again made to mobilise the capital resources accumulated by individual Africans as a supplement to the proceeds of saving and taxation in the United Kingdom. When a scheme to place United Kingdom Savings Certificates and Defence Bonds on sale in the Colonies proved administratively impractical, the Colonial Governments issued local securities at 3°/o with a life not less than 15 years in addition to encouraging the Post Office Savings Banks. The Government invested these funds in United Kingdom securities.[21] The Posts and Telegraphs Department advised the Governments to arrange extensive propaganda with particular attention being given to the schools and employers of labour. The only Departmental reservation lay in finance and administrative procedures. Throughout the War the Territorial Governments counselled the use of savings bank vans and similar devices. By 1944, five

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[20] Chief Accountant (C.H.Terry) to P.M.G., NBI, 22.xii. 38, Minute, T.N.A. SMP. 24386. See also: T.N.A. SMP. 10347.

[21] C.O. to Governor, Uganda, 2.vii.40, Telegraphic, in Acting Financial Secretary, EBE to P.M.G., NBI, 30.vii.40, No. F.23/37/42, E.A.P. & T. DF 2113.

vehicles costing £527 each were in use in Kenya, but in the first eight months of their operation the monthly average deposit per van totalled only shgs. 3,100. Such schemes were clearly uneconomic, their principal return lying in War propaganda. The Department's main concern was therefore to ensure that such schemes were not allocated to its annual estimates.[22]

The Post Office Savings Bank failed during the 1930s and 1940s because it could not compete with the higher interest and greater facilities of the commercial banks. As a financial institution it needed greater support from the more wealthy sections of the East African peoples. Without revenues it could not afford to expand into the rural areas and even there it proved unable to rival the traditional means of capital accumulation.

Staff Policy 1933-1948

The appointment of G.B.Hebden as Postmaster General in 1935 altered Departmental staff policy more fundamentally than either the depression or the 1933 amalgamation. Hebden's experience lay in West Africa, principally in Nigeria, and he showed considerable sympathy for African advancement. Although his practical experience was limited to the Engineering Branch and he had little enthusiasm for administrative or financial manipulations, Hebden established

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[22] Regional Director, DSM (J. Grierson), to C.S., DSM,16.xii.44, No. S.B.60/36, T.N.A. SMP. 32714.

a European apprenticeship scheme, increased the employment of Africans, and founded a central training school at Mbagathi.

The Posts and Telegraphs Department of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika employed 144 Europeans, 46°/o of the established staff, at the end of 1933. This percentage fell to 12.8°/o in 1945 and, although it rose to 27.6°/o in 1948, the power and responsibilities of non-European personnel increased substantially. European staff were used for supervisory tasks or the control of complex technical apparatus. The number of established African employees rose from 189 in 1938 to 1,514 in 1948. By 1949 the old racialist dreams of African technical incompetence and perpetual inequality needed a new formulation.

During the 1930s the Posts and Telegraphs Department began to train Africans for supervisory positions and the control of complex technical apparatus. On his arrival in East Africa, Hebden was appalled by the proportion of expensive European staff and the limitations upon African advancement in the Department. Only in 1934 had a coherent training pattern for African linemen been established at the Machakos Government School, although the effective operation of the telecommunications service depended upon workmen who had "a sound knowledge of elementary electricity and of modern principles of telephone and telegraph line construction and maintenance."[23] In

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[23] P. and T. Annual Report. 1935.

this year the Department arranged that linemen should receive frequent refresher courses in Nairobi and prepared an illustrated Swahili textbook on rudimentary telecommunications.

Hebden insisted that the training of Africans should be expanded and developed along systematic lines through two Departmental schools. One at Dar es Salaam would train postal clerks and telegraphists, while the other at Nairobi would concentrate upon engineering apprentices and be under the close supervision of the Engineer-in-Chief. Hebden did not suggest the transfer of senior administrative positions to Africans but he insisted upon effective training for apprentices.[24]

The opening of the proposed engineering school was deferred by discussions between the Governments, considerations of finance, and inter-territorial rivalries. The Governments doubted whether the Post Office would be able to offer suitable employment for its apprentices and suggested that it would be more economical if the Department were to recruit Makerere graduates. Hebden retorted that the engineering branch could immediately absorb ninety Africans from a technical school as well as forty three possessing a Makerere diploma in electrical engineering.[25] The Department's practical ability to absorb qualified Africans depended upon recruitment and training facilities. Government reluctance to provide funds and

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[24] P.M.G., NBI (G.B.Hebden) to C.S., DSM, 2.ix.36, No. 21401/27, T.N.A. SMP. 24431.

[25] P.M.G., NBI. (G.B.Hebden) to Secretary, Conference of East African Governors, NBI, 8.ii.38, No. 1430/25, T.N.A. SMP. 24431.

differing policies stifled African advancement in the engineering service.

Hebden met with greater success in his efforts to centralise the training of postal clerks and telegraphists in Dar es Salaam, partly because of the seeming urgency of training replacement staff but also because the Tanganyika Government was anxious that the school should be established in the Territory. The Department required 190 Africans recruited from secondary schools who should be not more than 15 years of age and would be expected to undergo three years training. Even this question aroused inter-territorial suspicion. K.S.Bajwa, for example, feared "The wholesale recruitment of natives from Uganda", and Sir William Lead emphasised the Postmaster General's promise "that Tanganyika would receive her quota of vacancies".[26] The school began operating in 1936, and its recruits were among the most highly educated Africans in Tanganyika, most of whom had been dissuaded from teacher training courses at Makerere by the promise of money. Their salary of Shgs. 60/- per month, subject to a Shgs. 20/- deduction in respect of board and lodging was high by the standard of African wages and they were also eligible for fourteen days leave each year with free transport and a travelling allowance of Cents 50 per night. Inevitably the Post Office became involved in African political and economic protest. The first issue of departmental clothing

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[26] K.S.Bajwa and W.C.Lead, T.L.C., 16.ix.36.

provided tee-shirts and shorts, the uniform of children and inferiors. The complaints of the probationers led to the issue of shirts. Bedding caused a further dispute because the school provided one dormitory for the thirty students with beds made of three wooden planks. Only after protests were the students allowed to buy their own mattresses.

During the Second World War the differential between the probationers' salaries and normal wage levels declined, causing considerable dissatisfaction. In an attempt to regain their advantage the probationers complained that a diet of ugali (maize meal) and beans was too monotonous and not helped when the ugali was stale and tasted bitter. Their European overseer saw no reason why they should adopt attitudes of superiority. Further protests ensued leading to a successful interview with the Regional Director in Dar es Salaam, who arranged for the supply of meat, spinach and potatoes. Wartime inflation caused greater trouble when it became necessary to economise by reducing the quantity of food. In 1941 the Director of Medical Services in Dar es Salaam agreed that the diet was inadequate and Hebden pointed out,

> "... that it is false economy for Government to go to heavy expense in training men and to deprive them of certain essential foodstuffs which will enable them to take full advantage of their training."[27]

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[27] P.M.G., NBI (G.B.Hebden) to C.S., EBE, NBI, DSM, 10.vii.41, No. 1951, T.N.A. SMP. 24431.

It took six months for the Department to arrange with the three Governments for the expenditure of an additional Shgs. 150/- per month upon the probatinner's food. Such minor troubles rather compromised the success of Hebden's scheme but they showed that the Department needed to be responsible to the Governments for the principles rather than the details of staff policy.

Many of Hebden's European colleagues didhot share his faith in the training of Africans. Automatic telephone exchanges, for example, seemed so complex that L.B.Harmer, the Traffic Superintendent, advised the appointnemtn of European operators at Tanga, where the exchange, "was far beyond the mental capacity of the Africans and was the most complicated switchboard he had himself ever seen".[28] The Europeans supervisor at Tanga supported Harmer's opinion and claimed that,

> " The African requires twice the number in strength in comparison to the European or Asian races ... He cannot be left in charge of any emergency; praise or promote him and immediately he has a swollen head; he learns very slowly and quickly forgets ... an African ... cannot conceive anything more complicated with telephony than pushing a plug in a hole."[29]

In 1941 the British Post Office trained its telephonists for three months before allowing them to operate a switchboard handling local calls. Only after five years experience were they permitted to deal

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[28] Senior Deputy P.M.G., NBI, to Regional Director, DSM, Minute, 10.xii.41, E.A.P. & T. D.F. 2343.

[29] Mrs. R.Robertson, Tanga to Traffic Superintendent, NBI, Minute, 10.xii.41, E.A.P. & T. D.F. 2343.

with trunk calls. In East Africa, the Department expected seventy-eight hours training at Tanga under unsuitable teachers to produce efficient telephonists. Remarkably, four of the seven African trainees proved competent and this discovery elicited a marginal note from Hebden that "they are then capable of being trained?"[30]

The outbreak of the Second World War hampered further investment in training facilities but the performance of African staff during the war showed that Africanisation was both practical and economical. Admittedly the first apprentices from the Government school at Machakos displayed considerable indiscipline after they qualified in 1939 but the men had been given unreasonably heavy duties and responsibilities without a commensurate salary scale.

During 1944 the Department applied to the Colonial Loan and Development Scheme for money to establish an engineering school. The application was supported by the evidence of the Machakos apprenticeship programme. Sixty-one students had been trained, of whom fifty-two had remained in Departmental service and, "A number of these are becoming increasingly useful as they gain experience".[31] The school, at Mbagathi near Nairobi, opened in March, 1949 with 78 African students, who took courses in basic engineering and

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[30] Traffic Superintendent, NBI. (L.B.Harmer) to Senior Deputy, P.MG., NBI, 30.xii.41. No. T.S. 570/41. See also: P.M.G.'s Marginal Note E.A.P. & T. D.F. 2343.

[31] P. and T. Annual Report, 1944.

traffic duties. By the end of the year they were undertaking field work in Kenya and Uganda. During the following year 273 African trainees attended the school, but it proved difficult to recruit engineering cadets.

The Department employed 1,854 Africans in senior grades in 1949, out of a total of 3,294 posts. The number had increased to 1,932 at the end of 1950, but there were then 3,612 established posts. This represented a decline from 56°/o to 54°/o while the European staff had increased from 419 to 492 and Asian employees had risen in numbers from 943 to 1,079. The demands of new equipment for skilled staff exceeded the rate of African training.

Departmental progress with Africanisation provoked Asian Trades Union activity during the post war years when proper discipline was re-established, very often by officers new to East African conditions. Long-serving Asians resented the newcomers who seemed less experienced, enjoyed higher salaries, and virtually monopolised the more senior grades. The incoming European recruits and the rapid increase in the African staff threatened the financial and social position of Asian employees.[32] Anxiety, disillusionment, and the knowledge that India would become a Republic within the British Empire caused trades union protests.

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[32] Minutes. Standing Finance Committee, T.L.C., 31.iii.44.

The Asian Postal Union, despite its regular monthly meetings in Nairobi, was inactive throughout the 1930s. Its failure caused the founding of a Uganda Asian Postal Association in 1944. This body comprised the seventy-seven Asian staff serving in Uganda but was not granted official recognition because the Department realised that a centralised Asian union would reduce the problems of staff transfers between the territories.[33]

Stimulated by the threat of competition, the Asian Postal Union, under the Chairmanship of Peter D'Costa, revived at an Extra-ordinary General Meeting in July, 1945, revised its rules, and achieved full Departmental support. The Uganda Asian Postal Association reacted by interpreting the reconstitution of the ~~A.P.U.~~ Union as a Post Office attempt to deceive the Asian community, and its General Meeting on 15th September, 1945, resolved

> "... that the Association should not be made to affiliate with the Postal Union at Nairobi but should continue to run independently as it is the only competent body in a position to look after the interests of the Postal Staff stationed in Uganda."[34]

The Uganda Association made only one effective protest. When the British Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies visited East Africa in 1946 it directly represented grievances without even submitting a memorandum through the Department. The Association complained that

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[33] Acting P.M.G., NBI (G.P.Willoughby) to C.S., EBE, 20.xii.44, No. 1731/21, E.A.P. & T. 1731/21.

[34] Uganda Asian Postal Association to P.M.G., NBI, 12.xi.45, Unnumbered, E.A.P. & T. 1731/21.

Post Office salaries were lower than Government wages, that overtime rates were inadequate, that increments and promotions were too frequently deferred, that the award of an Acting Allowance was not given unless the officer had undertaken three months duties, and that local leave facilities were insufficient. Aside from the economic grievances, the Regional Director in Uganda, S.T.Collins, was accused ~~for~~ of inhuman attitudes.[35] The Uganda Asian Postal Association was created by post war frustration and by the appointment of Collins as Regional Director. For the first time since 1939 discipline was re-established. War time supervision had been lax and the unpopular Kenya Local Asian Civil Service regulations still remained effective. The accusations were born of weariness and the Postmaster General noted that "... Mr. Collins is one of the most humane of men and his attitude towards his staff is one of patience and unfailing courtesy."[36]

The Association's protest to Creech Jones was their only activity. Their memorial was answered by the award of house allowances to temporary Asian Staff, an interim settlement of salaries and advice from Creech Jones "that your Association shall reorganise itself as a branch of the Asian Postal Union".[37] The amalgamation of the two Unions marked the end of the most active period of Asian

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[35] Uganda Asian Postal Association (A. Constance, Ram Partrap) to Creech Jones, EBE, 27.vii.46, E.A.P. & T. 1731/21.

[36] P.M.G., NBI (H.C.Willbourn) to C.S., EBE, 26.viii.46, No. 1731/21, E.A.P. & T. 1731/21.

[37] Acting C.S., EBE, to Uganda Asian Postal Association, KLA, No. V.125, 24.xii.47, E.A.P. & T. 1731/21.

trades union activity. Improved conditions of employment, the post-war economic boom in East Africa and, most important, the expansion of Departmental services which spelled promotion to the Asian communities, made protest futile. There was, however, another influence. Africans had become literate, articulate, and therefore, acquisitive and ambitious. The position of Asian civil servants seemed to be threatened.

European personnel monopolised the senior administrative and technical positions in the Department. Although the social environment of East Africa secured their privileges, technological innovation greatly increased the demand for junior specialists and foremen. Asians and Africans filled these new positions to restrain the Department's expenditure upon personal emoluments. This altered circumstance meant that gradually non-Europeans would increase their influence over the technical branches leaving white men in primarily supervisory and supernumerary positions. Such men, if they were to justify their employment, clearly had to have professional engineering qualifications as well as experience.

Hebden recognised this changing circumstance and as early as 1935 proposed a scheme of engineering cadetships designed to train young men for senior ranks, thus ensuring a sufficient supply of qualified personnel for the Department to take advantage of new engineering developments and save expenditure. Hebden had established

a similar scheme in Nigeria during 1931 and he was confident that it would prove as successful in East Africa. Candidates possessing a University degree in electrical engineering would be selected between the ages of 21 and 25, undergo eighteen months practical training in the United Kingdom, and be appointed to East Africa as Assistant Engineer Cadets on two-year probationary contracts. If their service were satisfactory, the cadets would be eligible for confirmation in posts of the Assistant Engineer grade.[38] This scheme ~~would produce~~ offered economies because after their training, the Cadets would be doing the same work more cheaply than promoted Europeans. If the scheme were started in 1938, this saving on Personal Emoluments would amount to £1,340 in 1943 alone and

> "... With the influx of better trained European personnel it is confidently anticipated that a general improvement in the efficiency of African staff will be procurable. This will have the natural consequence that gradually duties at present performed by subordinate Asian staff can be delegated to Africans. This will produce economies, the financial extent of which are nevertheless attributable to the scheme."[39]

The cadetship scheme promised many benefits to the Department but it never came into effect. The Colonial Office believed it would unnecessarily elaborate the Departmental bureaucracy, and the Tanganyika Government refused to finance its proportion of the initial training costs.

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[38] A. de V. Wade (for Governor, Kenya) to C.O., 5.vi.37, Kenya No. 87 Confidential, T.N.A. SMP. 25078/1.

[39] P.M.G., NBI (G.B.Hebden) to C.S., NBI, 21.v.38, No. 1437/35, Confidential, T.N.A. SMP. 25078/1.

The Department introduced an apprenticeship scheme in 1944 to ensure the availability of qualified European personnel. The Kenya Secretariat felt that European youth suffered unfairly by their remoteness from higher educational facilities and in 1944 urged its Departments to make "extensive provision" for bursaries, and scholarships.[40] The Post Office employed few locally-born Europeans because conditions of service and salary were quite inadequate. A youth beginning service as a Technical Learner in 1944 would, for example, receive a training allowance of £60 p.a. After ten years as a Junior Inspector the salary would be only £360 p.a. and a further promotion to the Inspector grade would produce a maximum salary of £500 p.a. Rarely were such recruits promoted even to the Sub-Engineer rank. The Department therefore drew up an apprenticeship scheme whereby candidates possessing a Senior Cambridge Certificate would spend three years training in East Africa and, subject to examination, a further eighteen months in the United Kingdom. On return to East Africa they would be appointed as Inspectors after one year's probation. In effect this scheme meant that any post in the Department would be open to local men.[41] It was forwarded to the Government with the observatinn that "... Our

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[40] Kenya Secretariat Circular Letter No. 92, No. S/e 13 1/1, 13.x.44, E.A.P. & T. D.F.2937.

[41] Memorandum on a Proposed 'Youth in Training Course' in Acting Engineer in Chief NBI to P.M.G., NBI, 2.i.45, No. K.188/11/12/585. E.A.P. & T. D.F. 2937.

African staff is not yet sufficiently advanced to make plans on similar lines for them. At a later stage, however, it will be necessary to devise a similar scheme."[42] The Government accepted these proposals and the Post Office recruited its first apprentices in 1946. The scheme, one of the last efforts by Government to subsidise the poorer Europeans, was significant in its awareness that Africans would also require similar assistance.

The cadet and apprenticeship schemes hardly affected the realities of Departmental staff policy. The increasing sophistication of telecommunications equipment required specialised engineers who would be recruited or seconded from the British Post Office. The employment of local youth produced few economies because the Post Office paid their salaries at expatriate rates to avoid ill-feeling and financed the costs of training. By 1950 Departmental opinion favoured the recruitment of Assistant Engineers from the United Kingdom. It seemed that competence rather than race or origin would become the criterion behind Departmental staff policy. Local youth was expensive and not necessarily efficient despite the Engineer-in-Chief's questionable opinion that "Such youths are accustomed to the country, are not racially conscious and, most important of all, are surely entitled to take part in the development

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[42] P.M.G., NBI (H.C.Willbourn), to C.S., NBI, No. 47/2937, 28.vi.45, E.A.P. & T. D.F. 2937.

of their country of origin."[43]

The Army and the Department

The operation of the Post Office during the Second World War showed the inefficiencies inherent in operating a service dependent upon three Governments. The Department contrasted with the Army Postal Service established solely for military requirements, and strongly oriented towards efficiency. For the East African Post Office effective operation implied the absence of change and the two bodies entered into conflict. The Department steadfastly opposed any concessions in postage rates for troops in East Africa, objected to any innovations in its services proposed by the military or shown to be necessary by the volume of business, and after the War took over a great deal of military communications equipment at a sub-economic price.

The Department maintained unsatisfactory relations with the Army Postal Service throughout the War through differing principals of service. The Army considered that soldiers' letters should be given the privilege of free transmission whereas the Department asserted that the occurrence of War should not affect either its revenues or its established operating procedures. The refusal of concessions proved less troublesom than the reference of decisions

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[43] Engineer in Chief, NBI (M.W.Manson) to P.M.G. NBI, 9.xii.50, Confidential Minute No. 4-1122 4470/1 EAP & T. DF 6532.

to three separate Governments.

Five days after the declaration of War, Hebden informed the military authorities that the Department would handle only official or private overseas communications prepaid at the standard public rates. At this time the General Post Office conceded free postage only to troops in an actual theatre of war and the Department's attitude followed the accepted Colonial postal practice of adopting British policy wherever possible. In spite of Departmental protest the Conference of the East African Governor conceded that free redirection of parcels, letters and telegrams should be allowed in addition to free postage for troops stationed more than five miles from a post office, but agreed that no other concessions should be allowed.[44]

The conduct of the service aroused protests against inefficiency that were certainly justified when the rapid advance into Abyssinia severely strained British supply lines, but Departmental failings were only a small part of the popular cricitism directed at East Africa's attitude towards the armed forces. Soldiers even paid for any necessary hospital treatment, apart from wounds received on active service, and Non-Commissioned Officers in the King's African Rifles above the rank of sergeant were not entitled to marriage allowances.[45] A general need for reform in the relations

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[44] Proceedings of Conference of East African Governors NBI, 1-3.xi.39, E.A.P. & T. D.F. 1700/1.

[45] East African Standard. 27.vii.40.

between the Kenya Government and the military affected the Post Office because frequent correspondence boosted soldiers' morale.

At the end of August, 1940, the civil and military authorities appointed a Committee to examine the working of the Army Postal Service, the censorship arrangements under the Department's control, and the financial implications of free postage. It also studied the most effective means of expanding the service and suggested ways of "effecting closer co-operation" with the Department. The Committee, under the chairmanship of H.L.G.Gurney, Secretary to the Governors' Conference, condemned the previous refusal of the military authorities to provide unit location lists to the Army Postal Service and strongly criticised the maintenance of an autonomous service for South African troops. It rejected amalgamation of the two Army post offices to avoid South African dissatisfaction but insisted upon a "single direction", a unified Base Post Office, and a common despatch of all outwards mail. The Report laid down consultation procedures between the Army and the Department through the Base General Staff (intelligence and censorship), the Deputy Adjutant and Quarter Master General (postal services) and the Chief Signals Officer (telecommunications). The Committee also suggested that military mail should be addressed through the civil post office at Nairobi and that all forces mail would require pre-payment except letters addressed to Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika, the Rhodesias, Zanzibar

India, United Kingdom, South Africa, Nigeria and the Gold Coast. The Army Postal Service gained a stamp imprest and the Postmaster General tightened censorship regulations.[46]

Captain P.J.Pyper was appointed as Assistant Director, Army Postal Services, East African Force, to effect the reorganisation.[47] The Army Postal Service was allocated eight panel vans and given authority to requisition heavy lorries from the motor transport pool. The Committee placed the Army and Civil Postal organisations a rational basis, but successful operation of the services demanded compromise and co-operation.

In July, 1940, after Italy's declaration of war, the British Post Office defined East Africa as a theatre of war operations, conceding free postage to troops in the area. The Colonial Office immediately referred the question of granting special facilities to members of the British Expeditionary Force to the East African Governments. Kenya approved the introduction of free postage on July 2nd but had to reverse its decision two days later when the Governments of Uganda and Tanganyika refused to adjust their rates. Only at the end of August did Uganda agree to follow Kenya's example while the Tanganyika authorities reluctantly agreed on the condition that "This privilege should... be confined strictly to

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[46] Report of Army Postal Services Committee, 9.x.40, E.A.P. & T. D.F.1700.

[47] Deputy Adjutant and Quarter Master General to Captain P.J.Pyper, NBI, 12.x.40, No. E.A.F. 11028/Q, E.A.P. & T. D.F. 1700.

members of His Majesty's forces and does not extend to their wives and families."[48]

African troops were less fortunate. In 1941 Brigadier C.S. Richards of the 24th Gold Coast Brigade drew a typical instance to the Department's attention. One of his privates, on active service more than 1,000 miles from Nairobi, received a summons to collect his letter from the Nairobi Post Office on payment of a ten cent surcharge. Richards pointed out that his men were volunteers and objected to the imposition of such penalties "by some over-zealous or ungrateful official". He even offered to lodge a sum of money in Nairobi to meet similar charges in the future.[49] The Department merely attributed the incident to the inefficiencies of the Army Postal Service, which lacked the necessary machinery for the collection of surcharges. A further problem was inadequately addressed African correspondence, which made up no less than 90% of the 1,500 undeliverable postal items returned from the Army Postal Service to the Department each month. Hebden felt that these items should be returned to the Army Postal Service "in bulk, preferably to one selected central office for disposal".[50] The refusal or inability of the Department to encourage African correspondence did little to arouse confidence in the postal system or

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[48] C.S., DSM, to P.M.G. NBI, No. 28465/13, 23.viii.40. E.A.P. & T. D.F. 1700.

[49] C.S.Richards, Brigadier, 24th (Gold Coast) Brigade to P.M.G., NBI, No. G.C.B. 17/3659/801, 12.iv.41, E.A.P. & T. D.F. 1700.

[50] P.M.G., NBI (G.B.Debden) to Assistant Director, Army Postal Service, East Africa Command, NBI, No. L7105/42, 15.ix.42, E.A.P. & T. D.F.1700.

contribute to the morale of either troops or civilians.

When the Army Postal Service suggested improvements in the circulation of mails, the Department felt its authority challenged. During 1943 a further conference met to consider the whole question of efficient operation and the refusal of the Army Postal Service to refund surcharges on underpaid correspondence. The military authorities agreed that reorganisation was required but they pointed to such instances as the chance examination of a mail bag in the Nairobi Post Office. The bag, said to contain airgraph envelopes, actually held more than 100 postal items including air letters.[51] The conference assembled under Gurney and established a series of compromises. All air and surface correspondence posted in the Department's office in Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika addressed to the correct Army address would in future be handed to the first Army Post Office on the route that would normally be followed. Mail addressed by troops in East Africa would be passed for delivery to the Department, prepayment being essential outside Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika, Zanzibar, Nyasaland, South Africa, the Rhodesias, India, Ceylon, United Kingdom, Nigeria and the Gold Coast. Censorship of items posted by troops or handled solely by the Army Postal Service became a purely military responsibility. In return the military authorities agreed to pay surcharges on understamped

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51 Assistant Director, Army Postal Service, East Africa Command, ~~AD. APS. EAC.~~ NBI (F. Beacham) to P.M.G., NBI, No. POST/158/43, 30.x.43, E.A.P. & T. D.F. 1700.

correspondence as frpm 1st January, 1944, but the Postmaster General waived all unpaid surcharges up to 31st December, 1943, a total of more than £900.[52]

Agreement was a function of falling morale. As the war continued, civilian discontent increased and the troops became dissatisfied. In 1944 the Army suggested that free surface postage for two ounce letters should be allowed throughout the British Empire, a concession available in all military commands apart from East Africa. He also advised the introduction of a special troops' parcel post rate and a 6d air letter service for civilian correspondence with soldiers stationed in the United Kingdom. Knott suggested that this alteration would make little difference to Post Office revenues because "the troops are for the most part, additional customers... and the concessions asked still leave a substantial profit to be derived".[53] The Department disagreed and sought the opinions of other Empire postal administrations. When Hebden learned that free surface postage was available for soldiers throughout the Empire, he advised the East African Governments to approve the concession. This took precisely one week.

Knott determined to carry his advantage further. He wanted concessions given to civilians corresponding with troops, the extension

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[52] 'Record' of a Meeting held on 21.xii.43, at Rhodes House, Nairobi under H.L.G.Gurney, E.A.P. & T. D.F. 1700.

[53] A.J.Knott, Brigadier in charge of Administration, East Africa Command, NBI, to C.S.Conference of East African Governors, NBI, 18.ii.44, No, EAC/1/25/1/Q, E.A.P. & T. D.F. 1700.

of the 6d Air Letter Service to the Middle East, North Africa and the United Kingdom, and the reduction of the 30 cent airgraph rate to the 25 cents charged elsewhere. He even sought a revision of the parcel post rates which were abnormally high because of the "P.M.G. K/U/T's insistence on levying terminal charges ... a rather harsh tax on East African troops".[54] Hebden protested to neighbouring postal administrations that in future concessions should be granted only after consultation thereby depriving the military authorities of "an opportunity to play one Administration off against another in an endeavour to lever concessions down to the lowest approved in any one Administration".[55] None of the Postmasters General consulted agreed with Hebden's suggestion and on 21st August the Department granted Knott's concessions, rejecting only the abolition of parcels terminal charges.

The Department also resisted three possible innovations in its facilities suggested by the Army Postal Service. Although air letter cards and airgraphs represented only an extension of activity, a more radical change lay in rural postal services to handle African correspondence.

The Empire Air Mail Scheme, which introduced the concept of carrying all first class mail by air, was replaced by a system of

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[54] A.J.Knott, Brigadier in charge of Administration, East Africa Command, to C.S. Conference of East Africa Governors NBI, 22.vi.44, No. EAC/1/25/15Q, E.A.P. & T. D.F. 1700.

[55] P.M.G. NBI (G.B.Hebden) to P.M.G.s, Northern/Southern Rhodesia, Nyasaland, Zanzibar, Seychelles, Mauritius, 30.vi.44, No. 1700/IV, E.A.P. & T. D.F. 1700.

surcharges on the outbreak of war to conserve aircraft space. The General Post Office compensated by introducing lightweight air letter forms in 1941, initially between Britain and the Middle East. On 16th June this service was extended to East Africa with a postage of cents 25 and limited to British troops corresponding with the United Kingdom. The military authorities then suggested that similar services should be made available to all Imperial troops serving in the Middle East Force which included the East Africa Command. The General Post Office felt this extension would be justified but it was only introduced in 15th January, 1942, after some dispute as to whether the air letters should be carried in civil despatches at East African expense.[56]

The financial aspects of the air letter service attracted further attention in October, 1941, when the available stock of forms was nearly exhausted. Previous production costs had been borne by the military but they felt that as Post Office stamps totalling Cents 25 were affixed to each card, the Department might reasonably bear the printing costs. Hebden refused because his Administration paid a heavy air mail subsidy to the British Overseas Airways Corporation, which transported the air letters, and pointed out that Departmental provision of air letter forms would be comparable to supplying "free stationery and envelopes to members of the public

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[56] P.M.G. NBI (G.B.Hebden) to Assistant Quartermaster General, East African Force, NBI, 15.xi.41, No. 1700/c, E.A.P. & T. D.F.1700/C.

who write and post letters."[57]

Further development of the service occurred in December, 1942, when the British Post Office introduced services to East Africa, the Middle East, India and Ceylon with transmission by air all the way. The military service was further extended in 1944 to the whole of the American continent, with a charge of 75 cents. Development came increasingly as a result of army initiative against the Post Office of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika. Thus, in 1943 the Army Postal Service asked that air letters should be made available for East African civilian correspondence to serving troops. The Department felt the extension unnecessary and a source of administrative trouble. The military authorities were amazed at the treatment East Africa gave to its own troops serving overseas and Brigadier Knott roundly castigated the Departments' "prejudice, ignorance and hide-bound conservatism".[58] The Army Postal Service estimated that at least 1,000 air letters would be addressed to the Ceylon Army Command alone each week but the Department observed that most of the soldiers were Africans whose relatives would obviously be illiterate while the cents 50 postage was equivalent to the wage for a day's labour. There was also the risk that the Army would require the service to be extended to India, making measures necessary

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[57] P.M.G., NBI (G.B.Hebden) to C.S.,NBI, 23.x.41, No. 1700/111, E.A.P. & T. D.F. 1700.

[58] A. Knott, Brigadier in charge of Administration, East Africa Command, NBI, to C.S. Conference ot East African Governors, NBI, SECRET, 7.viii.43, No. EAS/1/25/22/Q, E.A.P. & T. D.F. 1700.

to prevent "local Asians from corresponding with their fellow countrymen in the Indian Army".[59]

The Conference of East African Governors overruled the Department, which opened the service on 1st January, 1944. Ten thousand forms were placed on sale, in batches of five at a cost of Cents 10. On 6th January the Post Office ordered a further urgent printing of 20,000 forms and on 27th made a further order for 50,000. The military suggested that this level of business would justify a reduction in the postage rate from Cents 50 to Cents 35 but Hebden reported, "that a few Europeans would benefit".[60]

The Department regarded African mail as a temporary inconvenience of war because it defined its function as the mere movement of mail rather than the encouragement of correspondence. African mail was often unpaid or underpaid through ignorance, poverty, or design. The payment of the resulting surcharges to the Department, a responsibility of the Army Postal Service, was always discharged in a dilatory fashion. Between 16th April and 31st July, 1943, the unpaid surcharge totalled no less than shillings 9,079-60. The Army considered that it would be impossible and unprofitable to collect this money and suggested that the Department should finance

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[59] Senior Deputy P.M.G., NBI, to P.M.G., NBI, 28.ix.43, Minute, E.A.P. & T. D.F.1700.

[60] P.M.G., NBI (G.B.Hebden) to C.S., NBI., DSM., KLA., No. 1700/IV, 23.vii.44, E.A.P. & T. D.F.1700.

the loss, it being unreasonable to expect British taxpayers to finance the errors of "East African Native civilians and troops". The Department felt that the return of insufficiently prepaid correspondence to the senders would be more satisfactory. During October, 1943, the Department and the Army Postal Service held a conference on African mail. On Hebden's insistence the Governments agreed to warn African civilians that understamped correspondence would be returned to the senders. Brigadier Knott accepted this decision with reluctance, pointing out that as surcharges had been waived for "White troops there is all the more reason for such a concession for black".[61] He had, however, no alternative but acquiescence, while Hebden welcomed "the tardy co-operation of the military"[62].

The East African Governments also gave attention to the problems of African mail. In Tanganyika the Government decided early in 1943 that all letters posted to serving troops should be carried free of charge and the Department spent much effort seeking withdrawal of the concession. Uganda tried other expedients. Posting boxes were fitted on buses and the District Commissioner for Toro adopted the novel idea of taking all unpaid servicemen's letters

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[61] Brigadier in charge of Administration (A.J.Knott) ~~E.A.C.~~ East Africa Command, NBI, to C.S. Conference of East African Governors NBI, No. EAC/1/25/15/Q, Vol. 111, 11.xi.43, E.A.P. & T. D.F. 1700.

[62] Senior Deputy P.M.G., NBI (F. Birkitt) to Regional Director, KLA., No. 1700/6, 23.xi.43, E.A.P. & T. D.F. 1700.

handed to him, putting them in a parcel and sending them direct to the Army Post Office. The Department regarded this development as an infringement of their statutory monopoly and the Senior Deputy Postmaster General confessed his amazement that a District Commissioner should have "supported the African civilians in evading the payment of postage on their letters". The Post Office regarded compulsory prepayment of postage by Africans as a very important issue because

> " There is an ever increasing use made of the Post Office by Africans, and if the impression becomes that letters need not be stamped, it would be most difficult to eradicate this impression in the years to come."[63]

The delivery of African mail also caused severe problems. Often African civilians waited months for replies to letters and morale suffered. The Army Post Service suggested an innovation that would have been abhorent to the Department before the war: the delivery of mail by sub-chiefs. The Commissioner of Uganda's Eastern Province, who had already arranged that Native Administration cycle runner would call at all Post Offices in Busoga, extended the scheme to Mbale, Toro and Karamoja. Letters addressed care of the District Commissioner travelled by runners to County Headquarters and Gombolola runners carried the mail from County Headquarters to the Muluka Chiefs, who would undertake delivery.[64] This system was adopted

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[63] P.M.G., NBI (G.B.Hebden) to Brigadier in charge of Administration East Africa Command, NBI, No. 1700/6, 27.ix.43, E.A.P. & T. D.F.1700.

[64] Provincial Commissioner, Jinja, to Regional Director, KLA., No. 18/6, PT 111, 23.xi.42, E.A.P. & T. D.F. 1700.

throughout Uganda with minor adjustments according to local administrative circumstances.

African correspondence produced some unexpected results. It led to the circulation of rumours of famine and defeat which were not always dispelled by the Government newspapers, such as Habari za Vita or by broadcasts.[65] In addition, Government officers suffered from a "... flood of letters, many of them trivial, some of them incomprehensible, and occasionally offensive".[66] However, the greatest burden remained the distribution of correctly addressed letters from Post Offices, Government stations and Missions to the relatives of serving soldiers.

Although the Army Postal Services proved a constant embarrassment to the Posts and Telegraphs Department, it did much to improve the services available in East Africa. Its operation increased Departmental revenues in return for minimal effort, Africans were trained in postal procedure, and the mechanism of postal communication became more widely known. After the war the Post Office even took over much of the military's telecommunications equipment at a sub-economic price.

The Army Postal Service expanded rapidly. By December, 1940, twelve established South African Army Post Offices and seven East

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[65] T.N.A. SMP. 27436.

[66] C.S., DSM, to C.S., Conference of East African Governors, NBI, 18.ii.43, No. 31269/6, T.N.A. SMP.31269.

African A.P.O.s operated in Kenya alone. The defeat of the Italian armies in Ethiopia rendered the greater number of Army Post Offices superfluous and reduced the function of the remainder to the transfer of mails from soldiers overseas to the civil post office. The Army Postal Service handled a large volume of traffic. The Base Army Post Office at Nairobi, responsible for all East Africa Command mail, received some seven hundred bags of mail every six weeks in 1943.

Censorship of military mail ceased at 5 p.m. on 6th November 1945. Unit censor stamps were withdrawn as from 1st December and the use of the Unit Orderly Room Stamp was considered an adequate evidence of a valid claim for free postage.[67] It remained to dismantle the Army Postal Service between 1945 and 1950, commencing with the office at Kampala. By July, 1945, the only army post offices operating were at Nairobi, Mombasa, Gilgil, Thika, Yatta, Nanyuki, Moshi and Dar es Salaam. All save Yatta closed for the acceptance of mail and counter business before August, but the sorting office at the Base Army Post Office continued to function. The withdrawal of the service demonstrated how much postal work the military undertook for the Department and at the end of 1945 the Post Office protested that the rapidity of closure severely strained its

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[67] Chief Cenor East Africa Command, NBI (H.Haydon Williams) to P.M.G., NBI, 10.xi.45, No. EAC/4/23/1243/IC Confidential, E.A.P. & T. D.F.1700.

its normal operations.

The closure of the military telecommunications system caused other troubles. Initially lines, such as the routes from Mombasa to Tanga and from Moshi to Arusha, passed from the Army to the Department with the proviso that the Services' calls should be given priority and free clearance, while the Department should maintain the routes in exchange for authority to use them for revenue producing civilian traffic. During the war the Department received considerable free assistance in trunk lines maintenance. After the war demobilisation rapidly reduced the number of men available for military maintenance and, simultaneously, promised to alleviate Departmental staff shortages. By the end of 1945 the Army had no option but to urge the Department to take over its routes and personnel. However, the Acting Engineer-in-Chief found no vacancies for Africans and no Europeans applied for Departmental positions. He expected that his branch would be able to maintain satisfactory services and pointed out that during the war "our main trouble has been unauthorised interference by the Military with our plant and tampering with the apparatus".[68]

At the end of the year the military authorities drew up a list of their major disposable communications assets. Fourteen trunk lines, a Submarine Cable System around Mombasa island, underground

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[68] Acting Engineer in Chief, NBI, to P.M.G., NBI, 25.ix.45, No. K 658/2/2878/2884, E.A.P. & T. D.F.3044.

cables in Nairobi and Mombasa, five camp layouts and various switchboards were available for Departmental use. Brigadier Wilson, the Chief Signals Officer, East Africa Command, suggested that the war had done far more to develop East African telecommunications than the Department would admit. Although much construction had been undertaken with Departmental help, the army erected some 2,300 miles of paired telephone wires. In 1946 the military requisitioned only 34 miles of Departmental route and the transfer of army lines to the Post Office was help up by a shortage of engineering staff.[69] The Department purchased overhead lines valued at Shs. 503,629 Cents 91 from the Military authorities and acquired other equipment, such as carrier installations, for £5,304.1.8d. The original cost of those assets totalled £12,437.4.6.d. and in post-war conditions such equipment was unobtainable.

Amalgamation and Administrative Structure

The amalgamated Kenya and Uganda Posts and Telegraphs Department operated efficiently because the two participating states entertained similar policies. From the early 1930s, these conditions no longer existed. Financial considerations frustrated the possibilities of improving the technology of East Africa's communications. The incorporation of the Tanganyika Department into the Kenya-Uganda

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[69] East African Standard. 12.iv.46.

service service only aggravated the situation, because the Post Office then faced these conflicting government policies. During the Second World War, the strains of this system became almost intolerable.

The Second World War led the East African and United Kingdom Governments to consider more satisfactory means of ordering the whole apparatus of inter-territorial co-operation. During the War, the common Government services produced economies of scale, and emphasised the problems stemming from the absence of an East African administrative bureaucracy. These issues threatened to raise contentious political questions and even international protests. However, the potential advantages were overwhelming. On 1st January, 1948, the East Africa High Commission was formally established as the responsible body to administer inter-territorial services. Twelve months later, when it became a self-financing authority with its owncapital accounts, the Posts and Telegraphs Department gained a substantial freedom to determine its own operating and financial policies.

Chapter X

THE CONVERSATION OF THE EAST AFRICAN POST OFFICE 1945-1949

Failures in services during the 1930s and 1940s caused the conversion of the Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika Posts and Telegraphs Department into a self-financing, self accounting body maintaining its own capital accounts, raising its own loan monies, and operating according to the commercial principles. The reorganisation released the Governments from supervising trivial details of Departmental management and promised that the Post Office would develop its services according to public demand through an economic rate structure. Although similar accounting systems had been applied to the railway systems of the British colonial empire, the conversion of the East African Post Office was the first extension of commercial practice to any postal service in the world.

The United Kingdom and East African Governments reformed the Post Office through the creation of an East Africa High Commission to control inter-territorial authorities. Co-operation between the Governments of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika extended during the Second World War by the administrative action of the Governor's Conference. The advantages of expanding the scale of Departmental operations caused the United Kingdom Government to consider constitutional provisions for inter-territorial organisation. In 1944 the Colonial

Office evaluated a number of schemes and, during the following year, published a White Paper. A change in the ruling British political party caused a further two years of discussion, the publication of a second White Paper, and the introduction of a scheme which reduced non-European political safeguards and weakened the central administrative structure. Widespread controversy ensued because the settlers of Kenya felt they were shackled to the pace of African political advance in Uganda and Tanganyika, while the Asians and Africans sensed that administrative co-operation might lead to their disadvantage. Both these anxieties proved unfounded. Although the High Commission proved too weak to assert any lasting influence, it was not too weak to be discredited. Designed solely to control non-political services through an impartial bureaucracy and a Legislative Assembly with limited powers even of discussinn, the East Africa High Commission served the purposes of administration rather than of government.

The Posts and Telegraphs Department, the Railways and Harbours, ~~the~~ and Civil Aviation existed within the structure of the East Africa High Commission as self-contained services maintaining their own finances and responsible only for satisfactorily administered services. The High Commission reduced the degree of control that the Governments could exercise over their own essential services. The conversion of the Post Office aroused strong opposition from the

settlers in Kenya because the change introduced separate accounts for the different services and provided for economic prices. Despite Departmental enthusiasm the Governments treated conversion with some scepticism. In Kenya there was strong criticism during the Legislative Council debate and during December the Government expressed reluctance to see the introduction of the scheme. By then it was too late. Conversion had been approved by the Governments of Uganda and Tanganyika, the High Commission and the United Kingdom authorities. As from 1st January 1949, the Posts and Telegraphs was established as a self-contained service operating according to commercial principles.

The establishment of the East Africa High Commission and the conversion of the Post Office altered the pattern of British colonial government in East Africa. While local political circumstances could influence the Posts and Telegraphs, a central controlling body was created. Conversion, a response to problems of technology and finance, provided a more efficient means for the provision of development capital while it recognised the dangers inherent in local political bitternesses.

The Creation of the East Africa High Commission

The British Colonial Office instituted the East Africa High Commission to provide a soundly based authority responsible for inter-territorial services. Designed by Sir Philip Mitchell, a noted administrator of considerable East African experience, the High Commission aimed to avoid the problems of political closer union while securing

the efficiencies of co-operation. The United Kingdom Government published Mitchell's scheme as a basis for discussion in the Non-Parliamentary White Paper No. 191 of 1945. It proposed that an East Africa High Commission consisting of the Governors should be established under the chairmanship of the Governor of Kenya and be given the powers of a Colonial Government in respect of the various common services.

The High Commission would be administered by four principal executive officers: a Financial Secretary, a Director of Transport, the Postmaster General, and a Chief Secretary. A fifth member of the Executive would be the Commission for Customs, appointed as Under-Secretary for Finance. The responsibility of the Secretariat and its Departments lay to an inter-territorial legislature in which the unofficial members had no power to initiate legislation, but might introduce motions on any subject. The Assembly, consisting of the five Principal Executives, the Legal Secretary, the Economic Adviser, and three nominated members, also included twenty four unofficial members. The High Commission would nominate six, two of whom would represent Arab interests while six Europeans and six Indians would be elected by the territorial Legislative Councils. A further six nominated members, "as many as possible of whom would be Africans", would serve "as trustees for African interests".

The Posts and Telegraphs Department fitted into this structure as a self-accounting Department with an autonomous capital account

on the system adopted by the Kenya-Uganda Railways and Harbours in 1924. It would purchase its existing assets from the Governments and thereafter finance development from revenue and loan capital, finding its own interest and sinking fund payments. Its Budget would be submitted annually to the Central Assembly and its operations would be supervised by an Advisory Board consisting of six members nominated by the territorial Governors.[1]

White Paper 191 promised all that East Africa had ever asked. The Europeans gained closer union while the Indians and Africans obtained equal representation. The Posts and Telegraphs Department attained an autonomous status based upon commercial accounts and efficiency. And yet, the Europeans resented racial equality, the non-Europeans were suspicious, and the Department was reluctant to innovate. These doubts were not dispelled by the explicit statement that the scheme did not mean political closer union because both the Territorial Governments and the proposed East African authority would continue to be supervised by the United Kingdom Parliament exercising the principles of trusteeship.

The British Socialist Government that gained power in 1945 modified the scheme. A. Creech Jones, the new Under Secretary of State at the Colonial Office, visited East Africa during 1946 to

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[1] "Inter-Territorial Organisation in East Africa", Colonial No. 191 of 1945.

study the problems of inter-territorial organisation and was impressed by the opportunities for administrative centralisation.[2] On his return to the United Kingdom, he reduced the powers and autonomy of the High Commission and curbed non-European participation to a minority interest.

Published as the Colonial Office Non-Parliamentary Paper No. 210 of 1947, Creech Jones' scheme became the constitution of the East Africa High Commission. The Central Assembly was reorganised to contain twenty three members under the chairmanship of a Speaker appointed by the High Commission. The seven ex-officio members remained. An Arab, nominated by the High Commission, represented the interests of his community. Each Territory provided a further five members, one a territorial official, three appointed unofficials (European, Asian, and African), and the unofficial members of each Legislative Council elected one of their number by majority vote. The reduction of non-European representation was justified by the promise that more Africans would be admitted to the territorial legislative councils.

The powers of the central authority were also reduced. All expenditure by the High Commission now needed approval from the East African Governments, whereas before the Customs and Excise revenue directly financed all joint departments apart from Research

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[2] C.S. Conference of East African Governors NBI. to P.M.G. NBI. 9.xi.46, No. D. COM. 4/1/1/A, Strictly Confidential, E.A.P. & T. D.F. 4193. Compare Sir Philip Mitchell, African Afterthoughts, p.219.

Creech Jones restricted the Assembly's legislative powers to High Commission expenditure approved by the territorial governments, civil aviation, customs and excise excluding tariff rates, defence, income tax including standard rates and allowances although the actual rates levied in each territory would be a matter for the decision of each Government, Research, Lake Victoria Fisheries, Higher Education, Meteorological Services, the staff of the High Commission, the Railways, Statistics and the Posts and Telegraphs.

The Central Assembly was to be established for an experimental period of four years. The High Commission would be empowered to administer the scheduled services, to appoint staff, to enter into contracts, to hold land and operate a fund for its own expenses. It might enact legislation on specified subjects affecting East Africa, with the approval of the three Legislative Councils and the advice and consent of the Central Assembly, and would assume the duties of the High Commissioner for Transport of Kenya and Uganda and the functions of the East African Transport Policy Board. The unification of the Kenya-Uganda and Tanganyika Railway systems, the amalgamation of the Customs and Excise Departments, and the conversion of the Post Office into a self-accounting Department with its own capital account required approval from each Legislative Council, the High Commission and the Secretary of State.[3]

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[3]Colonial No. 210 of 1947.

The revised scheme formed the basis of the East Africa Order-in-Council that established the High Commission. It seemed however that for administrative peace both the powers of the East African Assembly and African participation had been deliberately reduced at the behest of the European population. However, the High Commission was part of a wider administrative centralisation in the British Colonial Empire, creating a number of regional and Imperial authorities that could employ experts and plan development. The free interchange of personnel and uniform salary scales seemed likely to produce a Colonial civil service dependent upon the Colonial Office rather than local political considerations. This policy required regional administration and "... a certain delegation of power by the participating Colonial Governments."[4]

Nevertheless, non-European reaction in East Africa was critical. Julius Nyerere, then a student in London, saw a European political victory in the abandonment of the principle of equal representation. Africans had distrusted White Paper 191. Its successor was even less tolerable and Nyerere found with dismay,

> "... that the principles embodied in Paper 191 were those of a Conservative Colonial Secretary, and that the really Labour Government principles were those embodied in Paper 210."[5]

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[4] "Organisation of the Colonial Service", Colonial No. 197 of 1947.

[5] J.K.Nyerere, Freedom and Unity, pp. 24-25.

The reduction in non-European representation shattered many African aspirations. In the long term however the principle of East African co-operation proved more important than a temporary loss of representation. It tied the politics of Kenya Colony firmly to constitutional development in Uganda and Tanganyika by United Kingdom supervision and growing economic interdependence. In 1947 White Paper 210 became a constitutional reality in East Africa by the Government's use of their official majorities in the Legislative Councils, but the most anxious debate came in Kenya where some settlers were conscious of a loss of power.[6]

The reorganisation of East African government included provision for Post Office reform. As early as 1945 the Department, under a new Postmaster General, H.C.Willbourn, agreed with the Kenya Government that its accounts could be more effectively presented upon commercial lines with provision for a Renewals Fund, a Betterment Fund, and proper pensions contributions. This early proposal, properly a Kenya scheme, was prompted by inefficiencies in the service and the appointment of a Postmaster General who lacked "the cold, proud aloofness of his predecessor".[7] The approval of White Paper '210' as the basis of East African co-operation enabled Willbourn and Newing, the Department's Chief Accountant, to fully

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[6] Minute by Governor (P.E.Mitchell), 17.iii.47, on K.L.C. Agenda 15.iv.47, E.A.P. & T. D.F. 4193.

[7] E.A.Vasey (Nairobi North), K.L.C. 27.xi.45.

consider the need for conversion. Early in December, 1947, Newing began to draft the 1949 Estimates and requested that a decision on the future status of the Department should be taken early in 1948 because in either form the Estimates would take some months in preparation and authorisation. Newing, most perturbed by the lengthy administative sanctions that might be required by Conversion, feared that, unless a prompt decision were made, "we may run the risk of drifting on into another year".[8]

White Paper 210 gave no explicit guidance on the problem of Departmental contributions to territorial finances and it seemed that only Kenya Post Office produced a profit. Newing felt that the self-accounting department should only be committed to financing cheap services, efficiency and development from its revenues. He emphasised that a contribution from Departmental revenues would be unfair because,

> "... It is basically unjust for the users of particular services to be taxed more heavily than others, simply because those services happen to be provided by a Government Department."[9]

Although financial reorganisation promised to resuscitate the old problems of revenue distribution in the form of disputes upon capital allocation, it seemed to be the only practical way by which a proper pricing structure could be given to Post Office services. Its

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[8] Chief Accountant (W.T.Newing) to P.M.G., Minute, 6.xi.47, No. CA.393/152, E.A.P. & T. DF. 4193.

[9] Chief Accountant (W.T.Newing) to P.M.G., Minutes, 1.iv.47, "P.O. Contribution to Territorial Revenues", E.A.P. & T. DF. 4193.

consideration was, however, deferred for three months by the problems of operating the Post Office as a non-self-contained Department.

The East Africa High Commission submitted its first Budget for the approval of the Kenya Legislative Council in November, 1947. Post Office expenditure was estimated at £794,204 but in Kenya, where estimated revenue from the Department exceeded estimated expenditure by £32,895, the problem of modernisation seemed less serious than in the other territories. The Colony's Member for Finance, J.F.G.Troughton, regarded conversion as a matter to be considered only when detailed commercial accounts were available and it could therefore be clearly seen that the establishment of the Post Office as an autonomous authority would not adversely affect Kenya's revenues. This attitude threatened the draft plans for the conversion. The Department therefore advanced its preparations, almost without reference to the territorial governments. Fortuitously the problems of operating a poorly-equipped and under-staffed post office during 1948 demonstrated the advantages of inter-territorial organisation and the disadvantages of financial dependence upon three separate governments.

The Posts and Telegraphs faced a financial crisis. Although cash revenue rose by £152,945 over the 1947 figures to £1,036, 476, recurrent expenditure increased by 56°/o on East African operations. The total Departmental surplus amounted to £4,602 and the profit

of £60,809 in Kenya, a decrease of £91,070 from 1947, just counterbalanced the deficits in Uganda and Tanganyika. Although business increased substantially, after conversion the Department would be unlikely to possess the necessary funds for development or reconstruction, unless it economised and adjusted its rates. The Post Office handled 61,423,000 letters in 1948, thirteen million more than in 1947, 200,000 additional inland telegrams, and telephone revenue rose by 13%.[10] However, the Department produced neither the revenue to cover its mounting operating costs, nor the capital required for the modernisation and expansion of services.

Conversion promised to alleviate the Governments' shortage of capital without increasing public liabilities. At the same time, the peoples and Governments of East Africa realised the inadequacies of their communications services. W.A.Perreau, the District Commissioner for Laikipia in Kenya, recorded that although 500 Europeans resided in the District, telephone communication was limited to the police station and a public call box at the Post Office.[11] Kenya and Uganda did at least possess a moderately well developed postal and telegraph service which connected the main

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[10] E.A.P. & T. Annual Report. 1948.

[11] Laikipia District Annual Report. 1946 (W.A.Perreau), K.N.A. DC/LKA 1/1.

centres of commercial activity. The pre-war financial policies of the Tanganyika Government had failed to provide suitable Post Office services even in Dar es Salaam. When the inadequacy of buildings and facilities met with strong criticism at the 1948 Provincial Commissioners Conference, the Department retorted that while it was tied to territorial budgetary control, any coherent development plan would be impracticable.[12]

The conversion of the post office promised that a possibly unprofitable service might be efficiently operated, expanded and modernised without increasing either government debt or the level of taxation. The scheme exercised considerable attraction upon territorial financial officers, although its radical conception of commercial operation was treated with some scepticism and there remained the possibility that the Department might actually prove to be a source of government finance. However, in 1948 the Department succeeded in convincing the Colonial Governments that their revenues would benefit if the Post Office were given financial autonomy.

The Conversion of the Posts and Telegraphs Department

The Postmaster General presented the Department's scheme for conversion to the first meeting of the Posts and Telegraphs

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[12] A.C. Thackeray DSM. (for Regional Director) to C.S. DSM., 25.viii.48, No. R.D.(T) 1405/48. T.N.A. SMP. 34494.

Advisory Board on 1st March, 1948. The plan explained the Department's attitudes and gave the Board a basis for discussion.[13] The Second Meeting, when the Board again met on 5th April, 1948, supported the Post Office proposals with a few minor amendments, the most important of which suggested that the interest rate on acquired assets should be raised from $1^1/2^o/o$ to $2^o/o$ per annum.[14] The Board also agreed that conversion should come into effect on 1st January, 1949. Existing assets would be acquired at an interest rate of two per centum per annum over a redemption period of thirty years. However, all future development would be undertaken by interest bearing funds and an initial renewals fund established by Territorial Loans. The Department would not be obliged to pay a contribution to the general revenues of the Territories, and all free services given and received by the Department would become chargeable on a public accounting basis.[15]

The three East African Governments at first entertained only detailed objections to the conversion scheme and looked upon conversion firstly as a fortuitous opportunity for the reduction of loan charges and then as means to evade future capital expenditure. Financial expediency produced Government support for economic closer

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[13] Minutes of first meeting P. & T. Advisory Board, 1.iii.48, E.A.P. & T. DF. 4611/1.

[14] Minutes of second meeting P. & T. Advisory Board, 5.iv.48, E.A.P. & T. DF 4611/1.

[15] Ibid., "Summary of Recommendations", published as Scheme for the Conversion of the East African Posts and Telegraphs Department into a self-contained Department with its own Capital Account. April 1948. E.A.P. & T. DF 4611/1.

union, but it was also necessary to gain the assent of the Legislative Councils so that inter-territorial co-operation could be seen to be approved by the peoples of East Africa.

The Government of Tanganyika submitted the conversion scheme to its Legislative Council in November, 1948. S.A.S.Leslie, the Official Member for Finance, Trade and Economics who had been appointed Chairman of the Posts and Telegraphs Advisory Board, recognised that, although Tanganyika would lose current revenues totalling some £35,000, it would save future capital expenditure and interest charge by transferring the obligations of re-equipment to a self-financing institution.[16] He suggested that, in the public interest, the Post Office should not be treated as an instrument of taxation, although it should be able to pay a commercial interest rate on its borrowings and hoped that conversion would encourage the efficient provision of modern communications by allowing the department to re-invest its surpluses. Despite the Government's immediate revenue loss of £30,000 as a result of the need to pay for official services, Leslie felt that Tanganyika's revenue could only benefit from conversion because it seemed that the Territory's postal service was unprofitable.[17]

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[16] T.L.C. Sessional Paper No. 9 of 1948, "Conversion of the Post and Telegraphs Department into a self-contained Department with its own capital account."

[17] S.A.S.Leslie (Member for Finance, Trade and Economics), T.L.C., 12.xi.48.

H.S.Potter, the Chief Secretary of the Uganda Government, introducted a similar motion to his Legislative Council in December. Potter felt that conversion would be followed by improvements in the postal service, but pointed out that the interests of the public would be represented by the Central Legislative Assembly and the Advisory Board, while any Government contribution to the Department would be subject to the approval of the Legislative Council and its Standing Finance Committee.[18] The only criticism of the scheme came from C. Handley Bird, a member of the Advisory Board, who felt it unreasonable to burden a newly converted department with a 2°/o interest rate and amortisation payments on assets transferred from the Governments. He suggested that the taxpayers of East Africa had provided the original cost and now were being made to pay again through the postal service.[19] Potter sympathised, noticing that his Government had to act in concurrence with Kenya and Tanganyika, which were determined to recover part of their investment.

The debate in the Kenya Legislative Council proved more troublesome because public opinion was expressed vociferously and articulately. The scheme raised a conflict of financial principles since European telecommunications services were supported by

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[18] H.S.Potter (C.S., EBE.), U.L.C. 28.xii.48.

[19] C.Handley Bird, U.L.C. 28.xii.48.

the profits of the postal branch and the conversion was partly intended to eliminate such hidden subsidies. This problem was aggravated by accusations of Departmental inefficiency and the suspicion that the profit from the Kenya Post Office would now be appropriated for development in Uganda and Tanganyika. Michael Blundell, the Member for the Rift Valley, sharply attacked the Bill because he doubted whether financial reorganisation and a probable reduction in representative scrutiny would lead to an increase in Departmental efficiency. He expected that the self-accounting Post Office would follow the Railway's example in raising rates to maintain Reserve and Betterment Funds.[20] W.B. Havelock, the Member of Kiambu, opposed the motion on the old grounds that European settlement might be stimulated by a policy of subsidised communications, arguing that "... it is the duty of these services to go before the pioneers or to go before the closer settlement".[21] Non-European opinion supported the Conversion scheme because it promised to eliminate one of the hidden subsidies that supported white supremacy. An African representative, J.Jeremiah, who had worked for the Post Office, attacked the allegations of Departmental inefficiency. He suggested that human error was a

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[20] M.Blundell (Rift Valley), K.L.C., 14.xii.48.

[21] W.B.Havelock (Kiambu), K.L.C., 14.xii.48.

constant problem, rarely affected by any administrative change.[22] A.B.Patel was even amused,

> "... that those who supported the principles of Paper 210 should now come out at every stage and oppose the implementing of the principle to which they had consented."[23]

The Deputy Financial Secretary closed the debate. He appreciated the anxieties of the speakers but also pointed out that the Postmaster General might attribute inefficiency to the failure of the Kenya Government to allocate sufficient capital to the Department in the past.[24] The Council accepted the Motion.

The Post Office then submitted the Conversion scheme to the newly constituted Central Legislative Assembly where it was carried without criticism. Thereafter the only remaining problems lay in the detailed financial negotiations with the Governments on the terms under which assets would be transferred. The East African Post Office, now subject to one central authority, could determine its own financial priorities.

Government approval did not mean public sympathy. The East African Standard did its best to console European settler opinion, declaring that the Post Office had done nothing to deserve the public confidence implied in the conversion. It feared that the Central Assembly and its members were too new and untried to "be effective

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[22] J. Jeremiah (African Representative), K.L.C., 14.xii.48.

[23] A.B.Patel (Eastern Area), K.L.C., 14.xii.48.

[24] N.F.S.Andrews (Deputy Financial Secretary), K.L.C., 14.xii.48.

watchful and trenchant critics of the Post Office". Its main criticism focussed upon the inability of the public to control Advisory Boards and the uncertain social responsibilities in a Department where "dilution of staff by a heavy admixture of employees of all races and varying capacities has taken place as a deliberate policy".[25]

The achievement of effective economic closer union was not marked by much settler rejoicing, for it showed the end of their political hallucinations. They had lost control of the essential public services and economic planning. The East African Posts and Telegraphs (Conversion) Order of the High Commission became effective on 1st January, 1949. However, only in February, 1949, did the Kenya Government reluctantly accept the principle of payment for official services after attempting to restrict the Department's commercial freedom in December, 1948.

On 15th December the Chief Secretary of the Kenya Government submitted a list of reservations upon the conversion scheme to the High Commission. Prompted by the difficult Legislative Council debate and unsympathetic public opinion, the Kenya Government insisted that the rental payments for territorial housing occupied by Post Office staff should be fixed at 7°/o of the current value,

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[25] East African Standard, 16.xii.48, Editorial; compare W.A.Bouwer (Kenya), C.L.A., 19.i.49. who complained that post office services had deteriorated because "... some of the lower grade staff think they have got completely out of reach of the public by being placed under the High Commission."

that a 3°/o interest rate should be paid on properties acquired from the Government, and that a final decision should not be taken upon the question of Departmental contributions to territorial revenues until the commercial accounts were available. In addition, the Government added a saving clause to the effect that

> "... Approval in principle of the scheme should not be taken as assent by Kenya to the assertion that legitimate grievances require redress as a result of Governments failure to provide an efficient service. This is denied."[26]

Newing quickly concluded that these reservations represented "a last minute threat to our Conversion".[27] He felt the Government's opinions to be ill-conceived, ignorant of Post Office rate structure, and intended to maintain an 'independent' Post Office. The Department ignored the Kenya proposals, which the last attempt by the settlers to assert their control over economic fusion.

A Conference met at Kampala in April, 1949, when the three Financial Secretaries, the Chairman of the Advisory Board and the Postmaster General attempted to reconcile their remaining differences. The principal item of dispute concerned services rendered to other Government Departments. The Government of Kenya felt that it ought to receive special concessions, particularly with regard

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[26] C.S., NBI, to Administrator, East Africa High Commission, NBI., No. H.P. & T. 37/47, 15.xii.38, E.A.P. & T. 4611/1.

[27] Chief Accountant (W.T.Newing) to P.M.G., NBI, Minute, 18.xii.48, E.A.P. & T. DF 4611/1. Newing observed that the Kenya letter of 17.xii.48 insisted that only "... if the representations of this Government... for modification of the Scheme were accepted was the Councils' consent for its being put into effect available". (Newing's italics).

to telephone services. It hoped that these would be provided upon a flat rate, and suggested that this facility might be extended to all consumers, although the Government rate should be lower than that applied to private subscribers. Simultaneously the Kenya Government insisted that all services provided for the Department must be paid for at an economic rate. Newing interpreted these arguments as a statement that the Government wished to make more and more telephone calls without having to pay for them.[28] The British Post Office had abandoned a flat rate system of charging in 1921 and in 1949 the Department metered all local calls handled by automatic exchanges so that accounting costs were minimal. A flat rate made the small users of the service subsidise the larger and complicated any Departmental attempts to charge commercial prices. The Kenya representative withdrew his claim. The Government recognised the legal constitution of the Posts and Telegraphs Department as a self-financing authority at the Kampala Conference.

The Post Office was financially autonomous with its own Funds, Estimates, assets and plant, and ability to raise its own loans. As from 1st January, 1949, the Department assumed all staff liabilities and it gained authority to negotiate with Governments in the event of any difficulties. The Post Office, if it wished to

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[28] Conference Paper No. 2 in Chief Accountant NBI (W.T.Newing) to P.M.G., NBI., 21.ii.49, E.A.P. & T. DF 4611/2.

modify the conversion scheme, would, however, be obliged to seek the approval of the Central Assembly, the three Legislative Councils and the Secretary of State. This provision did not seem so very different from the former dependence of the service on three Governments but the principles of operation had been established and normal administration was a purely Departmental concern. After the settlement of financial details the Department became virtually independent from political considerations unless it were to seek approval for some innovation.

Conversion and Responsibility

The conversion of the Posts and Telegraphs Department under the constitution of the East Africa High Commission was a response to the difficulties of operating and developing a service reposible to three separate governments. The financial autonomy of the Department meant that it would be able to raise capital for investment in the profitable services. Facilities would be adjusted to demand and it was hoped that the need for the Department to raise loan capital and pay an interest rate would encourage efficiency.

This optimism was only partly justified. The Posts and Telegraphs was a monopoly institution with political privileges, subject only to a non-political High Commission for supervision. Various other devices such as the Advisory Board proved quite ineffective. Conversion made the Post Office responsible nominally to the Governments

and the East Africa High Commission. In practical terms, however, the Department was judged upon the quality or effectiveness of its services and its introduction of new equipment. These criteria made the Post Office responsible primarily to itself and insulated it from the immense changes that occurred in East Africa during the following twenty years. While the colume of traffic greatly increased and considerable investment was made in communications services, little relation existed between the Department's policies and political realities.

Part Three

PROBLEMS OF RESPONSIBILITY

1949 TO 1967

PROBLEMS OF RESPONSIBILITY

The conversion of the Posts and Telegraphs Department into a self-accounting authority overcame the financial and technological restraints of the 1930s. Responsibility came with financial autonomy, which promised a commercially viable organisation. The Post Office interpreted its obligations in terms of efficiency, the prompt discharge of its duties, rather than through the effective business principle of minimising expenditure. The Posts and Telegraphs failed to satisfactorily determine its political or financial responsibilities because it did not operate as a commercial service in either its staff policy or in its postal and telecommunications business.

The Post Office came under the charge of an East African Legislative Assembly wherein political dispute was disallowed. As a self-contained service, the Posts and Telegraphs, insulated from the developing political structure of East Africa, never adapted to the changing environment in which the scale of its business greatly expanded. Between 1949 and 1965 the letter mail traffic doubled and the number of installed telephones rose five fold without substantially altering Post Office policies or attitudes. The inability of the Administration to recognize and manipulate political circumstances was only partly a result of defects in the arrangements for conversion. During the 1950s the powers of the Posts and

Telecommunications weakened as the political initiative of the Colonial Governments declined. The commercial management of the Post Office, with its dependence upon returns from investment as well as the financing of loans and equipment according to public demand, should have remained quite close to popular feeling. The failure to reconcile the Posts and Telegraphs with new conditions showed a distaste for political change and the inflexibility of the administrative structure.

When the Posts and Telegraphs were transfered to the High Commission in 1949, the East African Governments lost interest in the service except to periodically complain that the Department was failing to keep pace with economic development. Between 1949 and 1951 the Administration faced severe financial problems, complicated by even greater difficulties in maintaining services during the post-war shortage. Although the conversion scheme had not solved these problems, the political embarrassments of again reorganising the Post Office exercised a first mortgage on Government initiative.

The High Commission therefore appointed a new Postmaster General and the Central Legislative Assembly passed an Act recognising the status of the service as a self-financing body. At this point the Administration became truly autonomous and practically indestructible. It had, for the first time, to determine its own attitudes towards political developments.

Between 1951 and 1961 the Administration sought to justify

its existence as an inter-territorial service. The Post Office was preoccupied by the old political problem of closer union, the federation of East Africa under the hegemony of white settlers in Kenya. By 1956 Africans in Uganda and Tanganyika who previously questioned the political motives of co-operation were rephrasing their anxieties in economic terms. Surely, they argued, Nairobi was developing at the expense of Kampala and Dar es Salaam because it accommodated the High Commission offices. It rather appears that Kenya profits were actually used to benefit the other territories, but no local accounts were maintained. Instead the Administration retreated upon the claim that it was a non-political public service.

From 1961 until 1967 the Administration tried to maintain effective services in an environment of Africanisation, decolonisation and nationalism. The High Commission was replaced by an East African Common Services Organisation, and the Posts and Telecommunications Administration faced new problems. The Administration was attacked because it failed to extend postal services into rural areas and because it did not seem to be rapidly expanding the employment opportunities for Africans. The Post Office reacted to nationalism by shifting power to the Engineering Branch, controlled by expatriates, who regarded the largely African operated postal system with contempt. By 1965 the Posts and Telecommunications Administration had come into major conflict with the East African

Governments and an unsympathetic public.

The political inadequacy of the Post Office was caused by its reluctance to scrupulously observe the provisions of the 1951 East African Posts and Telecommunications Act. The Act insisted that the Administration should operate commercially by raising its own loans, paying sinking fund and interest charges, and financing its own development by charging profitable rates. In practice, business techniques were observed by maintaining subsidies between different branches of the service, a procedure that the Act was designed to prevent, and by maximising revenue rather than minimising expenditure. For example, the postal service, heavily used by Africans, was starved of investment capital so that the telephone system, which principally benefited the European and Asian population, could be developed. The establishment of a priority for telecommunications was helped by the Administration's monopoly position and its refusal to maintain territorial accounts. Without the stimulus of competition, efficiency seemed more respectable than effectiveness. Efficiency demanded investment in innovations, such as Very High Frequency Wireless equipment, which were not necessarily applicable to the commercial situation of the East African post office. Rates could be raised to compensate for unwise investments that justified the retention of a large expatriate engineering staff. Economy, the minimising of expenditure and the organisation of effective services, was not

part of the Administration's philosophy of commerce. These failures in financial responsibility overflowed into the conduct of services and staff policy.

Restricted investment and a failure to recognise the extent of African correspondence hamstrung the operation and development of the postal system. Although the operating account produced a handsome surplus, letter mail rates subsidised other activities and the Administration priced communication beyond African purchasing power. The postal system continued to function as an adjunct to overseas communication rather than as an internal service encouraging the growth of African correspondence. Even in 1950 more than three-fifths of the traffic in Kenya represented internal mail and thereafter the proportion of external business declined substantially. The Post Office under its commercial organisation maintained the principles of Departmental management that had suited the political circumstances of the 1930s. Despite some investment in the early 1950s, the postal service provided a source of revenue. Its existing installations and routes carried an increasingly heavy traffic while re-equipment or extension was undertaken with great reluctance.

The telecommunications service, marked by inadequate traffic, absorbed heavy investment. The Administration asserted that the expenditure of capital would produce profits in due course, assuming that the revenues of profitable businesses

should subsidise the unremunerative branches until the latter were an asset rather than a liability. Between 1949 and 1967 telephone services were extended at an unprecedented rate. The sophistication of equipment advanced notably and revenue more than doubled to £6,336,714. Although the system usually produced an operating surplus, it failed to cover its loan and interest charges. Efficiency in terms of technological excellence had a price that East African purchasing power could not afford.

The Posts and Telecommunications Administration was as divorced from East African feelings and realities on the question of staff policy as it was in its operations and finance. As it failed to overcome the traditions of subsidies in services, so it neglected to introduce criteria of cost to the selection of its staff. Expatriate personnel, who were more expensive than Asians and much more costly than Africans, maintained their position in the service. In 1962 Africans held only sixty-three per cent of all established posts, an increase of five per cent from 1949. By 1967 eighty-three per cent of such posts were held by Africans, but there had been some regrading of staff which improved the appearance of the figures, particularly because publication of the actual numbers of Europeans serving the Post Office was discontinued in 1963.

The Administration failed to train Africans for authoritative positions until the 1960s and to recruit graduate or qualified Africans

from outside the service. While the Post Office maintained various salary scales and career structures for different races, it complained about the necessity of appointing expatriates because there were too few African recruits. Particularly in the engineering branch there was a strong bias that Africans were incompetent to deal with complicated equipment. Europeans, it was suggested, guaranteed that the service would be efficient or, to use another euphemism, would maintain its quality. In the absolute terms of economising on the use of manpower such arguments may have had some validity, but in terms of cost-effectiveness there was no justification for limiting the employment of locally recruited personnel. The Administration fulfilled its responsibilities in staff policy by employing Africans as trained workmen and minor operatives. It failed in its responsibilities to operate according to commercial principles, which meant the acquisition of labour in the cheapest market, because of a variety of social limitations that applied both within the Administration and East Africa.

The East African Posts and Telecommunications Administration possessed unrivalled opportunities for initiative in 1951, but lost these advantages because it failed to operate commercially. However, the transition would have involved the abandonment of previous traditions and a series of precedents from the British Post Office. The Administration took the line of least resistance in the 1950s by continuing established policies, raising its own loan monies, and

paying interest and sinking fund charges. This produced controversy in the 1960s when African nationalism caused the Administration to further insulate itself from political change. The past political, financial and operating performance of the Post Office as an inter-territorial self-financing body came under public scrutiny. The post office, like the East African High Commission, had repeatedly emphasised its non-political character. African politicians regarded the inter-territorial services and the East African Legislative Assembly as irrelevant. When it became apparent in the 1960s that the inter-territorial authorities could operate contrary to the defined limits of national policies, strong feeling developed that these bodies should again be brought under state control. This led in 1967 to the East African Treaty of Co-operation engrossed by Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. The Treaty marked the political failure of the established pattern of inter-territorial services, not least amongst which was the Posts and Telecommunications. While the Administration's constitution had become a barrier against change, alterations in the political and social environment of East Africa made the policies of the postoffice quite irrelevant.

Chapter XI

POLITICS AND FINANCE 1949-1967

The conversion of the Posts and Telegraphs Department into a self-contained service meant that its financial policies would be almost inextricably tied to its political status. Conversion was an expediency designed to overcome severe problems in the financing of re-equipment. Between 1949 and 1951 the Post Office undertook its first detailed studies of rating policy and development projects. It raised charges to economic levels causing public criticism but political convenience dictated that the continuance of the self-financing structure would be less embarrassing than a further reorganisation. Therefore in 1951 the Central Legislative Assembly passed the East African Posts and Telecommunications Act, which defined the duties and status of the post office as a self-accounting Administration.

Until 1961 the Administration's financial policy aroused little influential political criticism. The subsidy of telecommunications and the limited advancement of African personnel seemed liberal and enlightened policies with potential financial benefits. Political developments in East Africa after 1961 did not effectively change the Administration's policies. The post office continued to subsidise services for the European community, to restrict the opportunities for Africans, and to emphasise that its investment priorities

were not limited by the development plans of the East African states. As a result of this inflexibility, it lost the respect of both officials and the general populace. In 1967 the national Government restructured the Administration as an inter-territorial State Corporation under the provisions of the Treaty for East African Co-operation in an effort to impose their control.

The East African Posts and Telecommunications Administration was formed between 1949 and 1951. As early as 1945 the Department enthusiastically accepted the conversion principle, but even as late as March, 1948 they possessed no plans for the preparation of commercial accounts or the valuation of assets. The ensuing difficulties exercised a considerable influence on subsequent policies. At the end of 1949 the post office was, in commercial terms, bankrupt. Its expenses exceeded its income and its liabilities exceeded its total cash reserves. Considerable reorganisation ensued under a new Postmaster General, whose first duty was the introduction of economic charges. The initial troubles of conversion showed that the post office would either have to undergo further reorganisation under state supervision or be given more power. In 1951 the latter solution was chosen and recognised in the East African Posts and Telecommunications Act. The Postmaster General gained sole responsibility for the service on behalf of the East African High Commission. His powers were checked only by an Advisory Board, the debates of the almost powerless East African Assembly, and the obligation of

the service to operate commercially. The Governments optimistically hoped that these limitations would oblige the Post Office to function effectively and responsibly.

During the years 1949 to 1961 when the Post Office was under the control of the East Africa High Commission, political and financial problems related to inter-territorial co-operation. The first task was to demonstrate to African opinion, particularly in Uganda, that the inter-territorial post office was not part of a scheme to impose the hegemony of white-ruled Kenya over East Africa. Between 1951 and 1955 the Administration repeatedly emphasised that it was a non-political, autonomous state owned authority governed only by its own legislation. After 1955 the acceptance of this increasingly directed criticism against commercial organisation. Services rather than financial soundness were held as the criteria for territorial development. In Kenya this emphasis gained political focus through the Mau Mau emergency. The Administration came under heavy criticism for refusing to invest its funds in telephone lines serving remote farms and for its reluctance to subject its african employees to the official procedures for 'screening' to detect the movement's sympathisers. Apart from this episode, the Administration was insulated from political development because constitutional change was being made by African politicians in a national rather than an East African framework.

The political independence of the Tanganyika Territory in 1961

led to the replacement of the High Commission by an East African Common Services Organisation. The E.A.C.S.O., a body formed of political expediency with uncertain powers, superintended Post Office conduct in the period of decolonisation. The Administration became subject to a ministerial committee, representing the three states, which could act only by unanimous agreement. Thus, the post office bureaucracy gained in power while political controls, which had always been weak, virtually ceased to exist. The Administration reacted to nationalism by reducing the publication of statistics, encouraging the abolition of the Advisory Board, and maintaining its established policies. As a result the post office lost government confidence and was reorganised as a state-owned Corporation.

Political considerations dominated the financial policies of the East African Posts and Telecommunications Administration on two levels. Since the bureaucracy had not been adjusted to commercial organisation, the financial authorities had relatively little influence upon policy. Power lay in the engineering branch which employed many Europeans and had a vested interest in the continued introduction of technologically sophisticated equipment. Until African politicians attained influence, the internal balance of the Administration was judged satisfactory. African objections to subsidised telecommunications gained point after the political independence of the East African states, when it became more difficult

to raise loan capital and the Administration was obliged to finance development from its own resources. The establishment of the Corporation in 1967 was as much a measure to restore power to the financial authorities in the post office, as it was a device to relate communications policies more closely to the needs of national development.

Between 1949 and 1967 the Administration operated without political or financial responsibility, because it failed to understand changes in its environment. The commercial constitution guaranteed flexibility in policy within the framework of East Africa during the late 1940s. By the early 1960s this structure was no longer a valid basis for post office policy. Only Government supervision could effect major changes and this was recognised in the establishment of the Administration as a self-accounting state Corporation.

The formation of the E.A.P. and T. Administration 1949-1951

On 1st January, 1949 the Posts and Telegraphs became a self-financing self-accounting Department of the East Africa High Commission. The new authority had no clear legal or constitutional status. Even the financial advantages of the reorganisation remained uncertain because the assets of the E.A.P. and T. were unvalued, its equipment was worn out, and its accounts were not arranged to show the profitability of the service. Political suspicion

aggravated this financial uncertainty. Both the Governments and public opinion regarded the autonomy of the Post Office as a threat to the constitutional integrity of the East African States. Consequently, both conversion and inter-territorial organisation came under close scrutiny and led to the appointment of a new Postmaster General.

On 1st October, 1951, the East African Post and Telecommunications Act, which defined the rights, duties and responsibilities of the Post Office, came into operation. It implied that the self financing organisation, initially an experimental scheme, would not be abandoned, and restyled the Department as an Administration. The Act explained the financial provisions governing Post Office operation and consolidated previous legislation by the Government of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika. The limitations imposed upon Departmental freedom by the circumstances of the years 1949-1951 proved irksome. [redacted] and an impediment to efficiency. They led the new Administration to apply the E.A.P. and T. Act for the purpose of neutralising external influences upon its policies.

Finance was the Department's most immediate problem. On 1st January, 1949 the Post Office suddenly found that its liabilities to the Governments of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika exceeded the total cash reserves. In that year, an operating profit of £128,323 produced a net revenue surplus of £73,581 and £17,616 passed into the Department's reserves.[1] Although the margins were low for a total cash

[1] E.A.P. and T. Operating Accounts 1949.

income of £1,372,098, the Department's performance was creditable in view of the very uncertain circumstances of conversion, and the absence of a commercial rating policy. The profit of £251,458 on the postal service supported telecommunications deficits and gave the contributions to reserve funds. A review of rating policy was as urgently required as the replacement of worn out equipment on which maintenance costs were unduly high. War-time shortages and inefficiencies continued and influential public opinion asserted that the Department should be investigated by a Commission of Enquiry. The self-financing Post Office required a thorough re-organisation if it were to operate effectively.

At the beginning of 1950 the Department recruited an officer from the British Post Office to reorganise the Chief Accountant's Department and the High Commission appointed a new Postmaster General. Willbourn and Newing, who established the self-accounting post office structure, showed that the Department did not contribute to government revenues. Because the posts and telegraphs services operated upon sub-economic charges, Willbourn was replaced by R.E.German in April, 1950. Conversion had been regarded as a quick panacea for the failure of the Governments to invest in communications but after two years of shortages in capital, equipment and staff, the post office faced criticism even from the Governor of Tanganyika, who condemned "the self-satisfied inertia of this inefficient department".[2]

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[2]Governor, Tanganyika, 3.vii.50, Minute, T.N.A. ~~S.N.P.~~ SMA. 26508.

During the year 1950 the postal service produced a profit of £275,226 but the telegraph and telephone deficits totalled £45,361 and £125,432, respectively. After meeting its other charges the Department was left with an overall deficit of £3,982. To achieve even this result, the expenditure of £200,000 on new buildings had been abandoned and the contribution to the Renewals Fund was reduced from £50,420 to £3,214.[3] Although the Department suffered from inflationary conditions, sub-economic rating policy proved a more serious problem. On 1st January, 1951 the Post Office imposed emergency increases in telegraph and telephone charges and announced that fully economic rates would be established in 1952. Although these measures led to renewed public criticism of the self-accounting principle, the Department who reduced its expenditure to the "minimum essential for the provision of reasonably satisfactory service to the public" and warned that "... it would be idle to suppose that the financial difficulties of the Department will disappear overnight".[4]

Without capital investment, the Department could neither provide an adequate public service nor hope to produce a profit. Unlike a commercial company, its capital could only be raised by redeemable loans and not by a share issue, for which the authority

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[3] E.A.P. and T. Operating Accounts. 1950.

[4] ibid., 1952.

would bear no capital risk. Loans depended upon the financial performance of the Department. A successful issue demanded a wise and profitable use of capital, although the bondholders were precluded from examining Departmental policy at annual meetings. However the Post Office was also a Government institution and, in order to relieve the financial crisis, the terms of conversion were re-negotiated when the self-accounting department commenced operations in 1949 without a Renewals Fund, its equipment nevertheless needed replacement. The E.A.P. and T. Advisory Board, which represented legislative opinion, felt that the Government should assume at least part of this liability.[5] Territorial reserves duly provided more than a million pounds. In addition the initial loans from the Governments, which covered the purchase of assets, were subjected to only a token payment in respect of interest while a moratorium was placed upon debt charges as from 1951. In 1950, £2,000,000 of the East Africa High Commission 3½ per cent Inscribed stock 1968/70 was successfully floated on the London market.

The financial problems stemming from conversion and the Department's success in handling very difficult circumstances reduced political difficulties. Thus, complaints from Tanganyika that post office buildings were inadequate and insufficient funds had been allocated to rural areas met the retort that such conditions were a result

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[5] 10th Meeting E.A.P. and T. Advisory Board, 14.xii.50, Minutes, T.N.A., [redacted]. 37314.
SMP.

of inadequate investment when the service was the direct responsibility of the Tanganyika Government. The Department anticipated that conversion would be followed by considerable improvement.[6]

The Kenya settlers, particularly concerned for sub-economic rural services, chose to emphasise Departmental responsibility through the issue of the railway realignment between Nairobi and Nakuru. The new line passed fourteen miles from its old route, which served the village of Elementeita. On realignment the railway postal agency closed, but the Department did not honour its previous undertaking to open a postal agency and telephone exchange because local revenues declined to Shgs. 336/- during the first half of 1948.[7] In spite of settler protest, the Department arranged that Moolraj, the Indian Postal Agent, should run a departmental telephone exchange, served by the wires along the old railway alignment to Elementeita. This arrangement was reached by administrative consultation between the Kenya Government, the Railway and the Post Office. For practical purposes the E.A.P. and T. was insulated from the protests of both official and unofficial interests.

The formation of the East Africa High Commission raised a further political problem in the suggestion that postage stamps might carry the legend "East Africa" instead of the territorial designations.[8] In

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[6] Regional Director (DSM) to C.S., DSM, 25.viii.48, T.N.A. SMP. 34494.

[7] Regional Director (NBI.) to Director of Traffic, NBI, 21.xi.49, No. RDK/E/5, E.A.P. & T., DF.4038.

[8] Tanganyika Standard, 4.iii.46, Editorial.

1948 the High Commission suggested a commemorative issue to mark its creation. The Postmaster General carried the idea further. He concluded that because the Department was under the sole control of the High Commission, its postage stamps should not bear the names of participating territories.[9] The Government of Tanganyika was particularly alarmed for political consequences fearing that the title "East Africa" would aggravate constitutional suspicions. The Post Office placed a new issue of four stamps on sale on 1st April 1952, and uttered a definitive issue on 1st June, 1954, carrying the old legend 'Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika' for political reasons which had been invalidated by the establishment of the East Africa High Commission.

Internal reorganisation, the provision of capital, financial solvency and the solution of political problems meant little to the consumers of the Department's services. H.C.Willbourn's retirement from the Postmaster Generalship and his replacement by R.E.German did little to still the popular demand for a Commission of Enquiry. The Central Legislative Assembly approved the Departments' 1951 Estimates because the four year experimental period of the East Africa High Commission had been extended into perpetuity by the

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[9] "Proposed New Issue of Postage Stamps " (P.M.G.'s Memo., No. HC (48) 3), in Administrator East Africa High Commission to C.S., DSM, 22.i.48, No. 4903/10, T.N.A. SMP 11801.

~~by the~~ Colonial Office. Consequently, the existence of local protests against one of the self-contained services became politically embarrassing. In spite of the inability of conversion to give improved Post Office services, German's flair for detail inspired public confidence. Sir Alfred Vincent, an influential Kenya member of the Central Legislative Assembly, later recalled,

> " What I liked about him most was that in debate he could give it and he could take it, and still retain his extraordinarily good sense of humour... I know of no one who has taken over a department under greater difficulties. He surmounted them because he was not afraid to face the issue at all times, no matter what anybody else thought."[10]

German's appointment was the apparent symbol that the E.A.P. and T. Department would survive as a bureaucratic entity and not be abandoned as a mere transient aberration of official opinion. In 1951 the Central Legislative Assembly passed a comprehensive Act governing Departmental operations. The Post Office became a legally defined entity insulated from territorial political issues.

The E.A.P. and T. Act introduced two new and fundamental principles to Post Office operation in East Africa: the Postmaster General became a corporation sole, in whom was vested all the property of the Department, and who could sue and be sued; the second innovation lay in the replacement of all territorial legislation affecting Post Office matters by unified Acts of the East Africa High

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[10] Sir Alfred Vincent, C.L.A., 10.x.58.

Commission. Departmental policies no longer had to be adjusted amongst the legislative divergencies of the three East African territories. In addition, the service received a new title, the 'East African Posts and Telecommunications Administration', which, according to German, more accurately portrayed the modern equipment and the altered financial constitution. Public control over the Department was given official surveillance by the appointment of the Postmaster General as an ex-official member of the E.A.P. and T. Advisory Board.

The E.A.P. and T. Act established the principles under which a self-contained authority should operate and defined the Postmaster General's powers, "clearly and comprehensively".[11] Section 16 stated that Governments could only require the Postmaster General to provide an uneconomic service if the deficits were subsidised from state revenues. German accepted that in the East African context his Department would have to allow for loss making services, but he rightly insisted that all judgment of the commercial utility of a service should be left to his authority. Part of the financial troubles of the Department came from uneconomic services operated before 1949, but even after the conversion unprofitable facilities had been instituted "on the specific request of the Governments".[12]

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[11] R.E. German (P.M.G.) C.L.A. 4.iv.51.

[12] ibid.

This procedure was intolerable if the self accounting principles were to be effective, but its withdrawal caused public anxiety. The Administration possessed a complete monopoly, the price of which seemed to be the provision of uneconomic services. There was also the danger that at some future time one Government might insist upon its specific revenues being used primarily for local development, rather than for the expansion of the organisation as a whole.

The E.A.P. and T. Bill passed its Second Reading in April, 1951 and by then public opinion was truly alarmed upon the issue of control. The Nairobi and Dar es Salaam Chambers of Commerce protested that there was inadequate representation on the Board. A greater fear was that the powers of the Postmaster General were disproportionate to the realities of East Africa. Even Sir Alfred Vincent, who sympathised with the Conversion principle, observed that the Bill "depends almost entirely upon the approach of the Postmaster General and his Administration".[13] Vincent recognised that the Central Legislative Assembly would have little authority over the Postmaster General, who could only be deprived of power by compulsory retirement under Section 21 of the Pensions Act.

The E.A.P. and T. Act might be questioned upon broad constitutional lines but in the terms of post office operation it

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[13] Sir Alfred Vincent, C.L.A., 10.x.51.

seemed to serve both public and administrative interests. The Act abolished hidden subsidies for sub-economic services. Most important of all, the territorial controls over Post Office finances and development were severly circumscribed. The Act came into operation on 1st October, 1951. Thereafter the Administration determined and practised its own policies for the development of East Africa's communications.

Financial Policy

The conversion of the Posts and Telegraphs to self-accounting status, able to determine investment priorities meant that, for the first time in its history, the Department could formulate its own financial policies. Before its conversion, the Post Office maintained accounts of revenues and expenditures, but the appropriate Governments had to approve and authorise all capital investment. The requirements of State had precedence over Post Office interests and often altered Departmental priorities. After 1st January, 1949, the Posts and Telegraphs had the freedom to determine its own financial policy.

Conversion relieved the territorial Governments from the problems of administering communications services and from the trouble of raising loans to provide the necessary capital. Although the Administration was nominally independent in matters of policy, in practice the principles of commercial operation proved to be

subordinated to local political and racial antipathies. The finance branch, which controlled approved expenditures rather than initiated new administrative policies, had little influence over the technical authorities in the Post Office. While conversion promised the creation of long term development plans there was indefinite connection between the raising of funds and the installation of equipment. Financial authority tended to be mesmerised in technical definition and merely administered plans drawn up without satisfactory consideration of Post Office finances.

Conversion was intended to ensure that the E.A.P. and T. would not be a charge upon public revenues and that its income would cover all its expenditures. The Administration could maintain its finances only by raising its charges to keep pace with inflation and the growth of its loan commitments. In 1953 German warned that unless the Administration were allowed to levy appropriate rates it might be obliged to seek Government subsidies until "with the expanding services we may be able to overtake those deficits".[14] The Post Office Advisory Board, the one public body which might potentially control the E.A.P. and T.'s policies, was already in conflict with the principles of conversion. At the end of 1951 the Administration's capital assets were valued at £3,000,000. This investment produced an operating

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[14] R.E.German (P.M.G.), C.L.A. 22.i.53.

revenue of £2,077.499. The 1957 Estimates allowed for assets worth £13,000,000 to produce a revenue of £5,281,000. German agreed that this performance was unsatisfactory. He suggested that unless revenues increased the Administration would "stand no hope whatever of supporting the capital that we are spending on the expansion of our services."[15] This problem was caused by the unwise policy of subsidising the telephone service.

During 1955 the Administration incurred a deficit of £67,514. In the following year it absorbed a loss of £68,928 and in 1957 a further deficit of £70,506. Such unfortunate circumstances were more readily attributed to economic circumstance rather than ill-advised investment. The 1956 Annual Report, for example, asserted that "There seems no doubt that the repercussions of the credit squeeze in England and the reduction in Emergency expenditure in Kenya caused a minor trade recession."[16] Only in 1958 did the Administration's Estimates respond to the conditions of its own finances. Belatedly, the E.A.P. and T. halted the recruitment of new staff and cut the capital expenditure programme by £1,000.000. The Department hoped for a revenue increase of £250,000, one tenth of 1°/o of the East African national income. It fortunately obtained a revenue increase of £714,955 in 1958. The financial administration of the E.A.P. and T. was no more

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[15] R.E.German (P.M.G.), C.L.A.. 5.xii.56.

[16] E.A.P. and T. Annual Report. 1956.

flexible under changing economic conditions than had been the civil servants in the territorial Posts and Telegraphs Departments. The Post Office was adjusted to the expenditure of money and the collection of receipts. Its inertia precluded any rapid alteration of policy under fluctuating economic conditions. German recognised this fault in the converted department and concluded that, "It is essential in the long term that the cost of new capital works should not be proportionately greater than the increase in revenue which can be attracted."[17]

Although the political changes in East Africa during the early 1960s did not lead to a revised financial policy, the telecommunications operations were at last placed on a revenue producing basis. This was not a justitication of long term planning but rather a result of the removal of political disabilities that had insisted upon sub-economic services and of difficulties in arranging external loans. If the engineering branch were to purchase the sophisticated equipment it desired, the necessary capital had to be provided from primarily internal sources. At this time, the Accounts Branch asserted its authority when it refused to approve the investment of the Pensions Funds into telecommunications equipment.[18] This initiative was a part of the control mechanism that became ineffective as soon as

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[17] R.E.German (P.M.G.), C.L.A., 4.xii.57.

[18] H.O.Ellis (P.M.G.), C.L.A., 9.xi.61.

either capital or revenues were available.

Development policy in the 1960s was subject only to the provision of capital. When it proved impossible to raise money, the E.A.P. and T. curtailed its development programmes. Decreased Post Office investment conflicted with the offers of new services that African politicians promised their electors and led to the conclusion that self-accounting bodies were at variance with the ideals of African Socialism. In 1961 the Postmaster General warned the Central Legislative Assembly that unless the Administration received additional capital, it might be necessary to restrict development. A.H.Jamal viewed this threat to territorial development plans with alarm and speculated that it could severely strain inter-territorial co-operation.[19]

The uncertainties of E.A.P. and T. financial policy caused the territorial Governments to lose confidence in the Administration. It seemed to operate against territorial interests and the negotiation of a $13,000,000 loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development in 1967 came too late for the E.A.P. and T. to be able to refashion its appearance.

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[19] A.H.Jamal (Nominated), C.L.A., 13.xi.61. See also: G.F.F. Melmoth (Nominated), C.L.A., 13.xi.61.

The Administration and the Politics of the East African High Commission 1951-1961.

The East Africa High Commission exercised responsibility for the Posts and Telecommunications between 1951 and 1961, with the result that the Administration was involved in inter-territorial political disputes. The E.A.P. and T. had to prove that its operations were not part of a larger scheme that would federate East Africa under the hegemony of the Kenya settlers. The Administration succeeded because it functioned in a European political framework that appreciated the objective character of its services. The pressures of non-European opinion were still quite small and the limited African and Asian representation on the Councils of East Africa was primarily concerned with reducing European political and commercial controls.

The Administration faced no direct political challenge in this last phase of the 'Closer Union' controversies, although it was affected by the arguments over the status of the Central Legislative Assembly. The Assembly served as the only mechanism of popular control over the operations of the inter-territorial bureaucracies. African and Asian opinion regarded this semblance of political unity as a vastly greater threat to their own rights than the existence of quasi-government institutions that lay beyond popular sovereignty. Such bodies could justify themselves in terms of numbers of telephones installed or miles of wire erected, while the Central Legislative Assembly had to justify its vitally important function of control by

emphasising its non-political character. In 1951 the Assembly passed a Motion requesting that the Colonial Office should approve an extension of its life until 1955. The Motion met with general support. Although Chief Abdiel Shangali of Tanganyika and P. Mboya of Kenya expressed reservations upon the European control of Committees, Shangali agreed that support for the Assembly was encouraged by the "entire lack of an indication of political union".[20]

The growth of African confidence in inter-territorial co-operation paralleled increasing unofficial sympathy in Kenya for East African integration. During the early 1950s settler opinion lost much of its fear that inter-territorial co-operation might mean subjection to Colonial Office rule and had yet to appreciate that Kenya might be tied to political changes in Uganda and Tanganyika. The Closer Union debates in Uganda and Tanganyika then moved into a new phase. It seemed that the expansion and diversification of the Kenyan economy depended upon the exploitation of East Africa and that Kenya benefitted by subsidising sub-economic services in the other territories. This myth arose through the non-political nature of East African co-operation. In the absence of political involvement, it seemed that self-interest governed the operations of inter-territorial economic bodies. Such criticism could not be satisfactorily answered by statistics.

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[20] Chief Abdiel Shangali (Tanganyika), C.L.A., 13.vi.51.

Nevertheless, according to the 1951 and 1955 Estimates the cost of Tanganyika Government services rose by 116°/o, whilst Tanganyika's expenses on the East Africa High Commission increased by only 91°/o. Similarly, the Estimates showed that between 1948 and 1954/5 Uganda contributed just over £3,000,000 to the cost of the High Commission while Tanganyika's contribution was slightly less than £4,000,000. However, Kenya paid more than £6,000,000 and the British Government provided almost £7,000,000.[21] Non-European opinion remained suspicious that Kenya was drawing undue profits. When Y.S.Bamuta informed the Uganda Legislative Council that "We want nothing to do with Kenya, and in that way we will be saving money for our children to come" it seems that he was expressing a very widespread anxiety.[22]

The constitution of the East Africa High Commission meant that changes in its organisation became practicable only at four yearly intervals, when the territorial Legislative Councils debated the continuance of the Central Legislative Assembly. Aside from these occasions, the deliberations of the Assembly seemed "as uninspiring as cold suet".[23] When the Tanganyika Legislative Council considered the extension of the Assembly's life from 1955 to 1959 there was little opposition, apart from some complaint that the High Commission

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[21] C.E.Tilney (Member for Finance and Economics), T.L.C., 10.vi.55.

[22] Y.S.Bambuta, U.L.C., 22.v.56.

[23] I.C.W.Bayldon (Southern Highland Province), T.L.C., 10.vi.55.

offices were centralised in Nairobi.[24] For Tanganyika politics, the Central Legislative Assembly seemed almost an unreal issue and its continuance was approved for reasons of pure expediency. Without the Assembly there would be neither closing down nor popular control of High Commission services. Sir Charles Phillips correctly observed that the East Africa High Commission had become "a body corporate with perpetual succession".[25]

This transition was recognised in Uganda, where the East Africa High Commission was one of the more explosive subjects in political debate. Although a motion for the continuance of the Central Legislative Assembly was carried, the Government was hard placed to justify its Attorney General's contention that "The history of the last eight years has shown that one can co-operate and still remain independent".[26] Ugandans saw the Central Assembly as the machinery of Federal Government, differing from the Central African Federation only in that the Uganda and Tanganyika Legislative Councils still controlled their own finances. The attitude of the inter-territorial bureaucracies on such issues as racial discrimination and the failure of the E.A.P. and T. to expand its rural services only deepened Ugandan suspicion.[27] Detailed criticism of inter-territorial arrangements diverted discussion from the realities of the Central Legislative Assembly and

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[24] A.L. le Maitre (Tanga Province), T.L.C., 10.vi.55.

[25] Sir Charles Phillips (Nominated), T.L.C., 10.vi.55.

[26] R.E. Dreschfield (Attorney General), U.L.C., 23.ix.55.

[27] Dr. E.M.K. Muwazi, U.L.C., 24.ix.55.

there was no official comment on J.T.Simpson's assertion that the real debates took place privately in the Members Organisation rather than on the floor of the Council. Simpson recalled that on one occasion he had even been lobbied by three other members to withdraw a Motion.[28]

The Kenya Legislative Council also approved the continuance of the Central Legislative Assembly until 1959. The Chief Secretary, R.C.Turnbull, portrayed inter-territorial co-operation as an opportunity to demonstrate that while settlement was not founded upon African indignity. To men like Group Captain L.R.Briggs, who represented the white farming constituency of Mount Kenya, this issue was irrelevant. He feared that a powerful Central Assembly might tie Kenya to the pace of African political advance in Uganda.[29]

The 1955 debates upon the perpetuation of the Central Legislative Assembly inaugurated a new phase in East African co-operation. The overriding fear of settler rule had been largely superseded by European awareness that African political power was increasing. Resentment of economic development in Nairobi replaced the old anxieties of Tanganyika and Uganda for their constitutional integrity. The old bitterness against Kenya survived while Colonial rule continued

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[28] J.T.Simpson, U.L.C., 23.ix.55.

[29] Group Captain L.R.Briggs (Mount Kenya), K.L.C., 2.xi.55.

but it was apparent that economic rivalry would lead to a revision of the administrative relationship between the three States. The inter-territorial organisations had lost their political initiative.

The political disputes of the later 1950s largely focused upon questions of priority in the serving of territorial development plans. The earlier fears of the absence of popular control over Post Office policy had switched to concern for National administrative control. In 1955 R. de S. Stapledon, the Chief Secretary of Tanganyika, claimed that the E.A.P. and T. was expanding its urban services because of Government policy. By 1959 this explanation was inadequate because the Tanganyika Government had regained its enthusiasm for rural development, having largely forgotten the expensive failure of the Groundnuts Scheme in the Southern Province. Faced with a close questioning on the slowness of the E.A.P. and T. in building a new Post Office at Lindi, the Minister for Communications and Works retorted that, "I am not accountable for the East African Posts and Telecommunications Administration."[30] The Chief Secretary then explained that Tanganyika's influence over the Post Office was exercised through the Central Legislative Assembly.[31]

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[30] Member for Communications and Works, T.L.C., 26.v.59.

[31] J. Fletcher Cooke (Chief Secretary), T.L.C., 26.v.59.

In Kenya the constitutional status of the High Commission seemed a positive threat to the future of white farming. The proclamation of a State of Emergency in 1952 and the rapid growth of active Kikuyu opposition to the Government caused white farmers to demand telephone services so that they might easily summon assistance in the event of a Mau Mau raid. White farms, situated in isolated positions, could only be served at great expense. In 1956 the installation of a telephone instrument sixteen miles from an exchange involved the subscriber in an installation charge of £415, an amount beyond the means of most settlers. In their demand for subsidy the financial basis of the E.A.P. and T. was re-examined. Humphrey Slade, Member for Aberdare, informed the Legislative Council that there was no scheme of priority in the allocation of telephones and that the Administration ignored Government suggestions. Slade claimed "... that part of the apparently irrational development of telephone services is due to the fact that the department is a self-accounting department". The territorial Governments were alone responsible for the provision of subsidy and the E.A.P. and T. regarded the question as irrelevant. The settlers had an even greater resentment of the constitutional independence exercised by the East Africa High Commission. During the Emergency, all African employees in Kenya were subject to security clearance but, "every possible obstacle was put in the way of screening Railway

employees, and postal employees."[32] Briggs put the issue more bluntly, revealing that some High Commission authorities "... regard themselves as a sort of supra-territorial authority and to some extent to be above the law of the territories in which they operate."[33]

In 1959 the continuance of the Central Legislative Assembly came under the re-examination. A Motion for the extension of the Assembly was carried without opposition in the Kenya Legislative Council. G.A.Tyson indeed urged the extension of the Assembly's powers to cover road transport and commercial legislation, but such opinions were beyond the realm of practical politics. In 1959 there were proposals to transfer the East African Currency Board from London to East Africa, the Lake Victoria Fisheries Service had been disbanded, and there was even speculation that Tanganyika and Uganda might withdraw from the East Africa High Commission.[34]

The Tanganyika Legislative Council approved a Motion extending the life of the Central Legislative Assembly until the end of 1961, by which time the Territory might have attained its independence. The Motion considered by the Uganda Legislative Council provided for an extension until 1963. The African representatives quickly a

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[32] H. Slade (Aberdare), K.L.C., 18.v.55.

[33] Group Captain L.R.Briggs (Mount Kenya), K.L.C., 2.xi.55.

[34] R.S.Alexander (Nairobi West), K.L.C., 13.x.59.

concluded that their country was being shackled to the pace of constitutional advance in Kenya and A.M.Obote described, "The continuation of the Central Legislative Assembly" as "a mockery of the sovereign rights of the people."[35] The motion was carried but the question of the Central Legislative Assembly was no longer a matter of prime political importance because it seemed to be a largely administrative body which approved neither change nor political enthusiasm.[36]

In 1959 it was clear that the structure of cooperation in East Africa had failed because it was oriented to administrative needs. Its non-political character meant that ambitious African politicians sought national rather than East African reputations and regarded the inter-territorial bodies as an irrelevant expatriate aberration. The problem for the territorial governments was simply to assert their authority over the East Africa High Commission.

The Administration and the Politics of the East African Common Services Organisation 1961-1967.

The assertion of Government control over the East Africa High Commission failed to deal with the basic problems of the responsibilities vested in and exercised by the inter-territorial Departments

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[35] A.M.Obote, U.L.C., 21.ix.59.

[36] e.g. Mrs. B. Saben, U.L.C., 2o.ix.59.

and Administrations. When the Tanganyika Territory attained political independence in 1961 a conference met in London to reorganise the East Africa High Commission and to secure an agreement between the Governments of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika to create an East African Common Services Organisation (E.A.C.S.O.). It was controlled by four ministerial triumvirates handling communications, finance, commercial and industrial co-ordination, and the social and research services. The membership of the Central Legislative Assembly was adjusted to include the E.A.C.S.O. In addition, each participating state would send four Ministers, the Secretary General and the Legal Secretary, and nine members elected by its legislature. Provision was made for central legislation to prevail over existing territorial enactments, but the initiative of the whole structure was severely curtailed because the decisions of the triumvirates had to be unanimous.[37]

The Prime Minister of Tanganyika, J.K.Nyerere, presented the E.A.S.C.O. scheme to the Tanganyika Legislative Council in October, 1961. He admitted that the triumvirate provision was unsatisfactory but felt that there was no feasible alternative if the independent status of Tanganyika were not to be partly subject to the colonial governments in Kenya and Uganda. The reorganisation met with general support. C.S.K.Tumbo, who represented the Mpanda constituency, offered the

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[37] "Future of the East Africa High Commission Services", London, July 1961, Cmd. 1433.

strongest criticism. He reported that the new constitution had been discussed with the managers of the technical departments and expressed disappointment that "the workers side was ignored".[38] Tumbo spoke for the cause of Africanisation rather than localisation, demanded cooperation between management and labour, and pointed out that the Organisation would be irrelevant unless it were intended to be the basis of political federation. The Government Motion passed with R.M.Kawawa's comment that Tumbo had failed to contribute a "constructive idea to the arrangement."[39]

The approval of the E.A.C.S.O. Agreement seemed less happy in Kenya. J.J.M.Nyagah, the Member for Embu, felt that the Legislative Council should have been allowed more than ten days notice of the proposals and his concern was echoed by the other members. However, the necessary Bill passed under the enthusiasm of R.G.Ngala who insisted that "... we can see in this new Organisation the embryo of an East African Federation".[40] An identical Bill also came before the Uganda Legislative Council, where the Minister for Legal Affairs emphasised its character as an East African agreement. The reservations formerly maintained in Uganda upon the issue of co-operation were not out-dated. Obote had attended the July Conference in London and new informed the Council that inter-territorial

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[38] C.S.K.Tumbo (Mpanda), T.L.C., 10.x.61.

[39] R.M.Kawawa(Nachingwea), T.L.C., 10.x.61.

[40] R.G.Ngala, K.L.C., 29.xi.61.

organisation was the most efficient and effective way of managing the various services.[41]

The East African Common Services Organisation replaced the East Africa High Commission as from 1st December, 1961 without causing any significant alterations in the structure of the technical departments. The change, and political advance towards independence in Kenya and Uganda, increased enthusiasm for an East African federation. A.H.Jamal, the Minister for Communications, Power and Works, who presented the first Post Office Estimates to the reorganised Central Legislative Assembly expressed Tanganyika's view. He emphasised that the Postmaster General was now dependent upon political factors in East Africa and not upon his position as a Colonial civil servant.[42]

Ministerial enthusiasm for the East African Common Services Organisation and for the cause of political unity in East Africa diminished after independence. The practical problems of reorganisation were too large to be conveniently dismissed and control by triumvirate actually increased the powers of the inter-territorial Departments. After independence the senior officials in the E.A.C.S.O.

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[41] A.M.Obote. U.L.C., 30.xi.61.

[42] A.H.Jamal (Tanganyika), C.L.A., 29.xi.62.

administrations despised not only the weakness of the Central Legislative Assembly but also the racial characteristics of the majority of its members. Ministerial control, administrative initiative, and legislative supervision drew apart from each other. The Post Office replaced the publication of statistics in its Annual Reports by graphs, percentages and diagrams. A change in the form of the Annual Estimates similarly concealed particulars of establishment, detailed charges and comparisons of sub-totals. When Semei Nyanzi of Uganda protested, Jamal suggested the appointment of a Committee to examine the problem and the matter was forgotten.

The years following the political independence of the three countries was marked more by the settlement of minor difficulties than by the imposition of control. In 1963 the Governments instructed the Administration to abandon its membership of the African Postal Telecommunications Union, which was administered by the South African Post Office. During the same year Ministerial control instructed a reluctant Administration to purchase a controlling interest in the Cable and Wireless Company's East African properties.[43] Such measures were superficial: they left the real problems of the E.A.P. and T. unsolved.

The principal problem of the E.A.C.S.O. lay in the control of its bureaucracies. Members of the Central Legislative Assembly no

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[43] R.M.Kawawa (Tanganyika). C.L.A., 27.viii.63.

longer exercised the power of directly questioning executive officers and written answers by Ministers were a poor substitute. The E.A.P. and T., remote from political feeling, left the task of justifying its policies to men like Dawson Mwanyumba, Kenya's Minister of Communications and Works. Mwanyumba began his duties by pointing out that the colonial post office had been "conceived primarily as an instrument of Government". Although he claimed that the Post Office had only begun to serve social purposes in the years after independence, his real purpose was to raise capital for the Administration. Mwanyumba drew the attention of the Assembly to the expense of a social Post Office policy and the need "to ensure the viability of the Administration by proper management."[44]

Mwanyumba's attitude strengthened the powers of the Administration, which was even able to allow the Posts and Telegraphs Advisory Board to lapse because of its cost.[45] The Communications Ministerial Committee, established under the E.A.C.S.O. Agreement, continued to meet, but it proved to be no substitute for the unofficial control that had been exercised by the Advisory Board. Moreover, informed 'Back-Bench' criticism of Post Office affairs no longer existed in either the National or Central Assemblies. The Central Legislative Assembly was thus reduced to a forum where Estimates might

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[44] Dawson Mwanyumba (Kenya), C.L.A., 27.xi.63.

[45] Dawson Mwanyumba (Kenya), C.L.A., 13.v.65.

be approved and questions of minor, local significance asked of responsible Ministers. Only rarely did the Assembly consider its own place in the political structure of East Africa. Even more seldom did it consider the significance of the Administrations it controlled. At the close of 1964, however, an Elected Member for Kenya, Mwai Kibaki, boldly raised the basic issues of responsibility that lay behind self-accounting public authorities. He feared that the E.A.P. and T. was abusing its monopoly status by paying too little attention to cost reduction and suggested that in commercial terms the Administration's Annual Accounts were "absolutely fictitious because these people have no competitors, therefore, there is no way of proving that a surplus shows efficiency."[46]

By 1966 there was widespread dissatisfaction with the rating policy, rural development programmes, Africanisation schemes, and international obligations of the E.A.P. and T. Administration. Such devices as the creation of a Public Relations Department came too late to redeem the organisation's image. Inextricably involved in the reconstruction of the East African Common Services Organisation, the Posts and Telecommunications Administration had lost its power to maintain political isolation.

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[46] Murai Kibaki (Kenya), C.L.A., 25.xi.64.

During the 1960s cooperation in East Africa came under increasingly vehement criticism because it seemed to favour Kenya. Critics of the Post Office also derided its development priorities and staff policy. By 1965 the Governments realised that the supra-territorial authority of the East African Common Services Organisation was beyond national control. On 6th June, 1967 the Presidents of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania signed a Treaty for East African Co-operation. The Treaty, a formal contract between sovereign states, came into effect from 1st December, replacing the E.A.C.S.O. Agreement.

The central issue in dispute was the question of monetary policy. The East African Currency Board, which had been tied to Sterling, precluded any territory from adopting an inflationary economic policy. and Kibaki pleaded in vain for the incorporation of the Board as an integral part of E.A.C.S.O., "because if we do not do it we are going to find ourselves falling apart."[47] By 1965 the Government of Tanzania had concluded that an early political amalgamation of the three territories would impair its intention to maximise economic, social and political development. In June, 1966 C.B.Ngala-Abok of Kenya wondered why it was necessary for the three States to issue separate money, if the three currencies were to be exchangeable at par. Kenya's Minister for Finance, J. Gichuru, attributed the revised procedure

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[47] Mwai Kibaki (Kenya), C.L.A., 5.xii.62.

to Tanzania policy and aroused A.O.Odinga to protest "that the Minister wants to give the House the impression that it was Tanzania who actually decided to break the East African Federation."[48]

During 1965 the Governments appointed a Commission under Professor Kjeld Philip to consider problems of co-operation. Confusion ensued in 1966 when the National Parliaments were asked to guarantee a thirteen million dollar International Bank loan to the E.A.P. and T. The loan resurrected the old difficulties of the Closer Union controversy in demands that all territories should enjoy equal shares of the new investment. The E.A.P. and T. also came under political criticism. J.S.Kasambala of Tanzania expressed the widely help opinion that the Administration needed to "... decolonise itself, and begin to plan with an East African atmosphere."[49]

The East African Treaty for Co-operation, which was based on the Report of the Philip Commission, accepted the financial constitution of the E.A.P. and T. However, the Treaty provided for the transfer of Post Office headquarters to Kampala and for a new system of political control. The Administration was re-structured as a Corporation whose shares were vested equally in the Governments of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. The introduction of a clear pattern of ministerial responsibility accompanied a further reduction of popular control. While the competence of the new East African Assembly was limited, discussion

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[48] A.O.Odinga, K.L.C., 29.vi.66.

[49] J.S.Kasambala (Tanzania), C.L.A., 28.xi.66.

in the national Parliaments depended upon the publication of adequate information. The Treaty, based upon the hypothesis that only Ministerial involvement could effectively control the government Corporations, implied that popular criticism was superfluous. The administrative development of the E.A.P. and T. Corporation had come to depend upon the division of political power between the legislature and the executive in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania.

Political Responsibility and Public Service

The establishment of the East African Posts and Telecommunications Corporation in 1967 was substantially an act of political decolonisation. A Department of Government could enjoy autonomous status only while the sympathies held by the responsible senior civil servants coincided with the beliefs of influential politicians. The service returned to state control while the advantages of proper accounting were maintained. The Administration's failure to react effectively to either an enormous increase in the scale of its business or to new definitions of its political and financial responsibilities made reorganisation a matter of Government priority.

The survival of the Administration between 1959 and 1967 remained more remarkable than its eventual reform. Political disagreements and constitutional divergences within East Africa contributed to the perpetuation of the Administration. More important, the Post Office was not a charge upon public revenues, although it undertook a massive

extension of expensive telecommunications facilities. Some Post Office policies were known to be distasteful, but the Administration, like the East African authority, had to be preserved until the national states had consolidated their internal organisation under African control. Reorganisation became practicable in 1965 and effective in 1967. Even then, the primary concern remained the maintenance of services ordered in the national interests of East Africa.

Chapter XII

THE OPERATION OF SERVICES 1949-1967

The East African Posts and Telecommunications Administration performed remarkably well in the operation and extension of its services. It assumed ownership of much pre-war equipment that had outlived its economic life. By 1967 its assets were valued at more than twenty million pounds. The telecommunications system was practically created without any subsidy from the general revenues of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika. This achievement was counterbalanced by a failure to develop the postal service because its profits financed speculative investments in telecommunications.

The postal service financed the Administration's other activities, it was a source of revenue rather than an enterprise in its own right. Development was undertaken only in urban or white-settled areas, where postal services were already available. The potential traffic from African rural areas was discounted as a worthwhile source of business. Purchasing power and levels of literacy amongst the African communities seemed too low to justify experiment. Only during the early 1960s did the Administration pay more attention to the postal service as a concession to African nationalist opinion although this branch of the business remained a secondary opportunity for profitable investment.

The Administration's primary concern with telecommunications was implicit in the conversion scheme. Clearly, the continued operation of the postal and telegraph services required far less investment than the creation of a modern East African telephone system. The telegraph service, which had probably failed to pay its costs during the 1920s and 1930s, produced an operating surplus only in the year 1958. Between 1955 and 1962 the overall commercial deficit on the telegraphs amounted to almost £850,000. While policy emphasised curtailment of telegraph services, the telephone system expanded under the belief that sophisticated equipment and heavy capital expenditure would lead to profit. In 1952 the Administration launched a major development plan aimed at making the telephones profitable by 1956. In spite of greatly increased traffic, the deficit on the telephone service in 1956 was the largest recorded. Further investment only brought profits in 1964 when difficulties in the financing of loans made it necessary to curtail development plans and to economise. Urban and long distance telecommunications were much improved but even these services hardly paid. The Administration's failure to levy profitable charges on these routes precluded any significant development of telecommunications in the more remote areas, such as Tanganyika's Lake Province. Even in the white-settled areas of Kenya rural telephone services were provided only under extreme public pressure. In spite of the Administration's

concentration upon urban telecommunications, the postal service absorbed the accumulated deficit of almost two and a half million pounds.

Post office attitudes also ran counter to the dictates of commercial operation in the field of staff policy. The conversion of the post office to self-accounting status did not lead to a rational policy for the selection or promotion of staff. The efficient operation of services depended upon European supervision while the social environment of East Africa favoured limitations upon African opportunity. Although the expanding scale of Post Office activities demanded an increased staff, which had to come primarily from the African population, the senior positions remained under white control. In spite of investment in training facilities designed to secure efficient workmen, the Administration overlooked the possibilities of recruiting African graduates. While the graded and established staff of the Administration rose from 3,294 in 1949 to 5,047 in 1962, the African participation rose by only five per cent. Only national political developments changed staff policy. In 1967 Africans held 83°/o of established positions and 73°/o of the Higher Executive and Supervisory posts. This significant advance, which cost approximately two million pounds, left power concentrated in the engineering branch. The Administration's staff policy defined tis responsibility to serving officers rather than to commercial

incentives.

The conduct of the East African Posts and Telecommunications Administration between 1949 and 1967 did not inspire confidence. The postal service, the only profitable branch of the business and the only facility within the limited purchasing power of most Africans, was used to subsidise telecommunications developments that benefited the European population and the engineering branch. Although Africanisation was regarded with distaste and disinterest, even during the early 1950s it offered economy. The inflexibility of the E.A.P. and T. prevented it from operating upon commercial principles or any general concept of social or political responsibility.

The Postal Service

The postal service formed the base of the E.A.P. and T. Administration and its profits subsidised the telecommunications system. This policy influenced by the rapid technological changes of the 1940s and the ensuing transfer of administrative power to the Engineering Branch, depended upon the realities of East African politics. In the 1940s and early 1950s the political pressures that affected the territorial governments came largely from the privileged immigrant minorities, whose wealth had been increased by government agricultural subsidies in the Depression and the Second World War. This interest required telecommunications services. After its Conversion the E.A.P. and T. justified its enforced subsidies to the

European community in the terms of business investment which took no account of profits.

The principal operating costs of the postal services consisted of staff and conveyance charges. Compared with the telecommunications branch, capital costs were quite small. The postal service therefore produced a profit, although German could complain even in 1951, "that there are certain offices in these territories where the gross revenue collected hardly meets the cost of the conveyance of mails from that office to a centre".[1] Post war inflation caused a rise in postage rates, while staff and conveyance costs rose rapidly. In April, 1953, airmail charges were revised because the air transport rate was increased to Shs. 32/- per lb. This was roughly equivalent to the total charged postage at the rates prevailing earlier in the year. German reported that "... We have no fat in the Posts and Telecommunications Administration. We are indeed little more than a skeleton surrounded by some skin and I have an awful job to keep the skin on it."[2]

The Administration neglected to expand the postal business, its principal revenue producing service. In 1955 the postal service produced a profit of almost half a million pounds which merely supported the deficits incurred by the telephone system. The actual

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[1] R.E.German (P.M.G.), C.L.A., 17.i.51.

[2] R.E.German (P.M.G.), C.L.A., 21.i.53.

economics of communication by post were not however appreciated by the public. Early in 1957 Imperial Chemical Industries investigated the United Kingdom costs of writing a letter. Without considering the expenses of postage, messenger service, filing and mail room handling, the Company noticed that, with the typist's time at an annual salary of £550, machine costs and depreciation, a quarto letter taken down in shorthand cost no less than three shillings, while a local telephone conversation was much less costly.[3]

During the later 1950s the Administration came under increasing pressure to devote capital for the development of the postal service. Constitutional change in East Africa meant that Africans, who largely for financial reasons were dependent upon the postal branch, would try to exert their influence upon the E.A.P. and T. The demand for increased postal services was not an insistence for the profitable operation of the Administration but rather a request for an equitable distribution of subsidy. The continuance of telephone deficits caused a general rate increase in 1958. Among the revisions lay a 50% increase in internal postage rates, which seemed "... a very big sum of money to try to appropriate from the poor Africans, who are using that service more than any other".[4] It seemed that the Administration was attempting to discourage African use of the postal

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[3] Treasury, Organisation and Methods Division, Bulletin. Vol. XII, No. 1, February 1957; see also: East African Standard, 30.xi.60, E.A.P. and T. DF 1099, and H.O.Ellis (P.M.G.), C.L.A. 29.xi.60.

[4] F.J.Khamisi (Kenya), C.L.A. 5.xii.57.

service but in fact many Africans preferred to send their letters through friends and acquaintances. The Post Office consequently regarded African mail as irrelevant to its business, and missed a substantial commercial opportunity.

The E.A.P. and T. expanded its rural postal services only during the 1960s but even then it proved difficult to adjust the system to African requirements. Many of the senior staff considered that their primary duties lay in the urban areas, or the region of large scale farming, while the engineering branch opposed much investment in the postal service. In 1960 it was hardly surprising that postal facilities for Africans were inadequate. In the towns, few could afford to maintain Post Office boxes for the delivery of mail while poste restante facilities were practically non-existent. The situation in rural areas was even more serious. Various suggestions for the organisation of rural services included the delegation of duties to local authorities, the lowering of building standards for agencies, and the introduction of road and railway travelling post offices. These alterations in Post Office procedures threatened established operating practices.

The E.A.P. and T. insisted upon fixed standards of service. Security and regularity were considered more important than mere expansion, although these requirements greatly increased the number of centres where the provision of postal services was uneconomic.

Under the terms of the E.A.P. and T. Act the Governments were empowered to subsidise unprofitable services. There were, therefore, two attitudes open to African politicians who demanded an expansion of the postal system. Governments could be pressured into subsidy or they could argue for, "... the structure and the organisation of the [postal] system to be changed ... and making arrangements for the Posts and Telecommunications organisation and other organisations to be put on a territorial basis".[5]

Popular demand for rural services came to the notice of the Post Office during the Second World War. Schemes like the villagisation programme in Kikuyuland and the projects of the African Land Development organisation focussed even more attention upon the need for rural communications but the E.A.P. and T. failed to formulate a policy. In 1949, for example, the District Commissioner at Same proposed that the Native Courts should be established as postal agents and that lorry owners might be appointed as mail contractors. The Administration could regard such a scheme as an infringement of the Postmaster General's monopoly, or as an application for a number of Private Bags. One officer, W.G.Moore, recommended that the P. and T. should offer to operate the services, providing that deficits were financed by the Native Authority but his advice was not followed. A number of chiefs obtained Private Bags and informally

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[5] Sir Amar Maini, U.L.C.. 24.ii.60.

provided a public service.

In 1952 the Administration resolved that all postal agencies should be vetted by the Finance Department, preparatory to requesting Government subsidy. The doubling of postal agents' minimum remuneration in 1955 and its later increase to Shs. 100/- per month provoked further thought. It was decided that all agencies producing a revenue less than Shs. 50/- a month should be closed unless they received government subsidy.[6]

Although rural postal services did not pay, the E.A.P. and T. only reluctantly delegated its powers. Closures caused government protests and in 1958 other means of operating rural services were examined. Much attention was given to the Nigerian system, in which official supervision was kept to the minimum level of insisting upon secrecy. The remuneration of agents was closely governed by the volume of business transacted and the carriage of mails was undertaken either by the local community or the agent.[7] A.C.Thackeray, the Acting Regional Director in Uganda, agreed that the Nigerian scheme was interesting but felt

> "... as a matter of principle ... that we, as a Postal Administration, should remain responsible for the cost of conveying mail, other than private bags, between post offices." [8]

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[6] E.A.P. and T., DF 161/1.

[7] Nigeria Government, Sessional Paper No. 4 of 1957.

[8] A.C.Thackeray, Acting Regional Director (Uganda) KLA to Services Department, Postal Branch NBI, Undated, E.A.P. and T. DF 161/1.

The E.A.P. and T. hardly extended its rural postal system because it determined to preserve its established privileges and monopolies. Initiative, outside the Administration's bureaucracy, was to be discouraged. And yet probably the greater volume of African mail was handled by private initiative. The stimulus for the opening of an agency at Usangi in the Pare District came not from an optimistic Departmental assessment of business potential but from the realisation that much of the work at the Lembeni and Kisangiro railway postal agencies was conducted on behalf of the Ugweno-Usangi area, where there was no Departmental office and local people had organised their own unofficial service.[9]

The E.A.P. and T. was even out of touch with local needs for its established services. The Administration only realised in 1961 that Butere, a railhead in Western Kenya, had been gaining importance at the expense of Mumias for the preceding twenty five years. The Administration reacted more quickly to political stimulus. In 1964 Hosenel Hassani indicated that he would be quite happy to operate an Agency at Kahe in Northern Tanganyika. Hassani combined the profession of a substantial trader with the duties of Chairman of the local T.A.N.U. branch. The contract office at the railway station was accordingly superseded by an agency at

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[9] R. Drummond, Controlling Postmaster Moshi, to Regional Director, Tanganyika, DSM, 22.vi.60, E.A.P. and T. C/Pmr., MSI.DF.1343.

Hassani's business premises.[10]

The Administration was only competent to handle the development of rural services at the level of a policy decision. In 1965 it announced that its most urgent priority would be the establishment of a postal agency for every 25,000 people, but there was no machinery to administer the strong controls imposed upon agents. The Post Office failed to establish satisfactory relations with its agents and mail transporters whose remuneration was often out of proportion to the work required. When contractors demanded a profit for their services, the Administration considered that its work was being deliberately undermined by people who did not understand the intricacies of operating a postal service.

The postal branch had become a secondary function of the Administration. In the 1960s its importance seemed to decline because it was largely Africanised. Power lay effectively in the European controlled technical branches of the Post Office. The Administration's failure to develop its rural services was rooted in the belief that it would be unwise to allow much delegation of authority to the African staff in the postal service. It was also based on the knowledge that the postal service could be made to produce a surplus without much effort and the belief that speculative investment in telecommunications would produce future revenue benefits.

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[10] E.A.P. and T., C/Pmr. MSI. DF.1615.

The Telecommunications service

The East African Governments approved the conversion scheme as a means of efficiently expanding the telecommunications services into an integrated network. The need for re-organisation and investment was quite urgent, for the demand and traffic in telephone branch was rising sharply. The rate of growth in Kenya rose from 8.97°/o in 1948 to 18.1°/o in 1949. Although 2,061 telephones were installed in 1949 the East African waiting list exceeded 6,000 applicants. However, the 1949 deficit of £77,762 prompted the observation that, ".... Development at uneconomic rates ... would be folly from a commercial point of view, and the rates, therefore, cannot be left as they are."[11] Although an additional 3,699 telephones were installed in 1950, the waiting list passed beyond 7,000. Thirty seven new telephone exchanges were opened in 1949 and 1950, and the operating deficit increased. At the end of 1950 the Post Office increased telephone charges by 25°/o as an interim measure pending a commercial survey of rating policy.

The introduction of self-accounting principles implied that new developments would be tied to future profit. Hidden subsidies between various facilities no longer existed, but there was nothing in the E.A.P. and T. Act to prevent the Administration from openly sustaining a service as a commercial risk. Public demand and criticism

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[11] E.A.P. & T., Operating Accounts. 1949.

in East Africa led the Post Office to develop the telephone service. Although it was confidently hoped that the telephones would soon become self-supporting, the Administration intended to subsidise the initial operating deficits from the profits of the postal branch.

In 1949 and 1950 the telecommunications activities were unprofitable. Distance and low traffic density caused the telegraphs to operate at a deficit, while the telephones suffered from the cost of rural lines, the low density of urban settlement, the distances between towns, and the purchase and transport costs of new equipment.[12] Rate increases at the beginning of 1951 did not redress these problems. In 1950 the losses on the telephone service totalled £125,000 as against £78,000 in 1949. The loss on the telegraph system remained at the £45,000 level but the postal profit rose to £275,000. Increased charges were then absorbed by rising staff costs and there was no means of countering the burden of interest and loan charges on capital equipment that was being installed.[13] In 1950 the E.A.P. and T. produced a real deficit of £34,000.

Subsidised telecommunications were clearly contrary to the spirit of commercial operation. The Post Office then adopted a policy of expanding capital investment in the hope that the telephone service

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[12] R.E.German (P.M.G.), C.L.A. 17.i.51.

[13] R.E.German (P.M.G.), C.L.A.. 30.i.52.

would produce a profit in 1956, when the telegraphs should be simply self-supporting. This policy presumed that the Department possessed the commercial flexibility necessary for it to adjust rates quickly enough to keep pace with rising costs and fluctuating demand. It sought to ignore business realities, preferring to concentrate its efforts upon mere technological improvement. While such a policy was adequate for a dependent Government Department, it proved unsuited to a self-financing Administration whose engineering staff emphasised the mere provision of costly installations. Between 1948 and 1954 expenditure upon engineering stores increased from £100,000 to £900,000 and the range of technical items was notably expanded. In 1956 a specially appointed Engineering Stores Organisation Committee found that there was "little or no appreciation of the importance of documentary or physical control".[14]

After the Second World War the telephone replaced the telegraph as the primary telecommunications service of the Post Office. Telegraphs between principal towns could be improved by the use of teleprinter and telex systems. Such developments really represented the mechanisation of established services and their introduction was partly a result of such commercial coincidences as the transfer of the Mombasa coffee auctions to Kampala in 1954.[15] However, over

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[14] Report of E.A.P. and T., "Engineering Stores Organisation Committee", 15.iii.56.

[15] R.E.German (P.M.G.), C.L.A., 15.xii.54.

most of East Africa the telegraphs continued to serve primarily government purposes and were not given much attention by the Post Office. Only in 1953 was the Iringa-Ifakara route replaced, although it had been crudely built by the British military forces in 1917. Similarly, the army telegraph between the Songea and Manda was still in use in 1956, with wires placed upon insulators secured to growing trees. The neglect of the telegraph system throughout the 1950s and 1960s was marked by a consistent policy of retraining telegraphists for other work. During the 1960 strike in Tanganyika the first service to be closed completely was the telegraphs. Capital could not normally be profitably applied to the service and it suffered from low traffic densities and the underemployment of staff. Thirty telegraphists were retained in 1960 alone but such economies were limited by "the fact that in many offices there is only one telegraphist in any event who cannot necessarily be fully employed on other duties".[16]

The expansion of the telephone service offered greater opportunity. After telephone rates had been increased by 50% in 1951 and rural flat-rate charges withdrawn, it seemed that the service could be made to pay by 1956. From 1952 the postal system openly subsidised the deficits caused by telecommunications development. The Administration

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[16] H.O.Ellis (P.M.G.), C.L.A., 29.xi.60.

raided the Renewals Fund, Money Order balances, and "all sorts of monies that we can lay our hands on in order to meet these losses".[17] Although the E.A.P. and T. gambled upon the economic future of East Africa, it paid little attention to the commercial implications of investment, while demand calculations were securely based upon experience in the 1930s.

The telephone system sustained its largest recorded deficit in 1956 when fifty thousand instruments were in use. Equipment costs had risen by 15°/o between 1951 and 1955 while the recruitment of expatriate engineers had boosted staff costs by some 40°/o.[18] A complete review of rating policy then took place. The Postmaster General concluded that domestic telephones with their high installation costs were under-used and really being subsidised by commercial and government traffic. The Departmental conviction that sophisticated equipment and heavy capital expenditure would yield its own rewards remained unquestioned. Revenue and the existence of facilities had become more important to the Post Office than expenditure or effective operation.

Investment did not quiet public criticism directed at inadequate services. The Central Legislative Assembly approved a loan of £4,500,000. in January, 1950 to create an infrastructure for the telephone service.

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[17] R.E.German (P.M.G.), C.L.A.. 31.i.52.

[18] R.E.German (P.M.G.), C.L.A.. 7.xii.55.

in 1953 the Administration was authorised to borrow a further £6,000,000 because "it is essential for the telephone service to become much larger if it is to be financially self-supporting".[19] Between 1949 and the close of 1953 the number of telephones in use rose from 15,000 to 30,000. The Department expected that 55,000 exchange lines would be in use by 1958 and considered that the service would then begin to pay its way. In spite of these plans and investments the system remained inefficient. Even in March, 1955, one trunk telephone call out of every thirty was ineffective because of faulty apparatus.[20]

There were more serious interruptions to service. The cutting of telephone wires normally preceded Mau Mau raids on European property.[21] Cases of telephone tapping led to the expression of doubts as to "the trustworthiness of African telephone operators who are placed in a position to gain information extremely valuable to subversive bodies in this country".[22] Such anxieties were usually confused with the simpler process of wire theft. The price of copper wire increased from Cents 87 per lb. in 1945 to Shgs. 2/65 cts. at the close of 1951. This price rise continued during the

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[19] R.E.German (P.M.G.), C.L.A., 15.iv.53.

[20] "Analysis of Trunk Call Bookings, March, 1955", Circular, 4.vi.55, E.A.P. and T. DF. 4030.

[21] e.g. East African Standard. 10.ii.53, 12.ii.53, 26.ii.53.

[22] G.C.Clark, Ngong District Association, to P.M.G., 31.viii.54. Confidential. E.A.P. & T. DF. 2111.

early 1950s, and in 1952 the Administration requested the Kenya Government to legislate for the control of scrap metal dealers. Although the application of high voltages to telephone circuits substantially reduced wire thefts, in 1959 the Kenya Government introduced the desired controls.[23]

The Administration's preoccupation with telecommunications led to investment in untried equipment, notably in the use of Very High Frequency (V.H.F.) wireless apparatus as a substitute for land lines. Early in 1948 the Post Office consulted Marconi's Wireless Telegraph Company to ascertain the cost of replacing all main telephone trunk routes, which were of overhead construction, by a V.H.F. radio system between Kampala, Kisumu, Nairobi, Mambasa, Tanga, Zanzibar, Dar es Salaam, Dodoma, Korogwe and Lindi. The Marconi Company estimated that the 1,576 route miles would cost £507,100 or £320 per mile, to which the Administration added a further £150,000 for local contingencies. The new system offered an opportunity to reduce African staff training costs by eliminating labour and thereby bringing "an earlier receipt of revenue with which to strengthen the Department's financial position."[24]

An experimental V.H.F. multiplex chain was in operation between Ngong and Menengai by the middle of 1949 and at the end of the year it

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[23] E.A.P. & T. DF. 409.

[24] Acting P.M.G., NBI (G.P.Willoughby), to E.D.Griess, c/o Messrs. Kinlevan, NBI, No. 14/4625, 3.viii.48, E.A.P. & T., DF 4725.

was proposed to introduce similar equipment between Kampala-Jinja, Mombasa Tanga and Tanga-Dar es Salaam. The Kampala-Jinja service was the most urgent priority because the existing land line was congested and its reconstruction would be complicated by future Uganda Electricity Board power routes. A new overhead system would cost £50,000, an underground cable £80,000, while a V.H.F. system would cost only £40,000. An immediate order was placed with the Marconi Company, whose delivery time was 18 months. Although the anticipated level of demand on the coast routes was rather less, the economies of V.H.F. were much greater. The Tanga-Dar es Salaam system, for example, involved a capital expenditure of £59,000 on V.H.F. equipment against £163,000 on land lines.[25]

The success of the experimental V.H.F. system between Nairobi and Nakuru aroused attention from countries as geographically diverse as Iraq, the Gold Coast and South Africa.[26] V.H.F. equipment demonstrated its flexibility between Nairobi and Nakuru partly because of the heavy loading on this circuit but also because Railway realignments had increased the costs of reconstructing the land line. The installation handled four simultaneous telephone conversations, but production models could accommodate no fewer than 36 channels. The system, first loaded with normal traffic in April, 1949, had succeeded

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[25] Assistant Engineer in Chief, NBI (J.R.J. Orchard) to P.M.G., NBI, 19.ix.49, Minute, E.A.P. & T. DF 4725.

[26] "Brief Description for the use of Members of the African Telecommunication Union of an Experimental V.H.F. Beam Relay Route operated between Nairobi and Nakuru in Kenya by the East African Post and Telegraphs Dept.", Nairobi, December, 1949, E.A.P. and T.. DF 4725.

beyond the expectations of either the Post Office or Marconi's, and even met with approval from the Nakuru Chamber of Commerce. However, this early optimism was not justified by subsequent operating experience. The economies of V.H.F. were not clear even in 1953 and, during the following year, it was decided that future investment would be devoted to land line construction.[27] It was then too late to arrest the process of using innovations for their own sake, rather than for commercial reasons. Further investment in a V.H.F. link between Dar es Salaam, Dodoma and Moshi culminated in a costly failure and the ordering of further wireless equipment.[28] By the early 1950s the V.H.F. systems were in effective operation but there was no discussion of their financial implications.

Rural services gained more public attention than the technical equipment of the trunk lines because the Governments related communications to developments. The Tanganyika Government was particularly anxious to extend facilities in the Lake Province and late in 1952 supported the Provincial Commissioner's request for a telephone service between Malya and Ngudu in the Kwimba District. He admitted that the line would be uneconomic, but objected to the principle that the provision of communications for District Offices should depend upon the state of E.A.P. & T. finance.[29] The Post Office refused

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[27] R.E.German (P.M.G.), C.L.A., 15.xii.54.

[28] R.E. German (P.M.G.), C.L.A. 4.xii.57.

[29] Commissioner, Lake Province to Member for Local Government, DSM, 3.xii.52, No. 1220/202, T.N.A. SMP. 26508.

to undertake this construction and the Tanganyika Government again raised the problems of the Lake Province in 1955, because of "... the necessity of getting the Haya tribe of Bukoba to look to Mwanza as their capital, and to cease looking over their shoulders towards Kampala."[30]

In the five years since its conversion, the P. and T. provided communications in an area where the Tanganyika Government had never made money available even for telegraph communication. Radio-Telegraph stations had been opened at Bukoba, Musoma, Geita and Tarime in 1949 and at Nansio, Ngara and Maswa in 1953, entirely supported by Administration funds. In addition to these developments, the Post Office was now supposed to provide telephone services to places where "... there is little or no demand on the part of the general public for telephone service ..."[31] The Tanganyika scheme threatened to retard trunk route construction schedules by as much as two years, and probably delay programmes in Kenya and Uganda. The Post Office suggested that it would be more appropriate if the wireless telegraph links were adapted to carry radio telephone traffic but even that scheme appeared uneconomic because Mwanza and Bukoba each handled fewer than twenty telegrams daily and those were mainly sent on Government business.

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[30] J.F.R.Hill, DSM, to P.M.G., NBI, 30.iii.55, No. CW 8/52/05, E.A.P. & T. DF. 2171.

[31] Regional Director, Tanganyika, DSM (O.R.Lewis), to Assistant P.M.G. (Services), Minute, 9.iv.55, No. DF 8818 Lake, E.A.P. & T. DF. 2171.

The Department suggested that, pending the development of telecommunications in the Lake Province, which was scheduled for the early 1960s, the Government ought to establish its own radio network, at a cost not exceeding £1,000 per station.[32]

The Post Office escaped financial obligation by promising a long term development plan. During September, 1955, the Government of Tanganyika decided that the Commissioner for the Lake Province ought to be authorised to make two calls each day over the modified wireless telegraph system.[33] Late in 1953 the Tanganyika Government tried to accelerate development by suggesting a formula to allow the Government to cover initial capital payments and be reimbursed if and when the service became profitable. This scheme seemed to threaten the Administration's commercial status because it took no account of any recurrent maintenance or staff charges. The Post Office considered that its effectiveness would be impaired, unless it retained "... the right to develop the telephone service to the best advantage of all users, and freedom to utilise our manpower and material resources as we think best."[34]

During the late 1950s the pressures for rural telephone service came increasingly from the public rather than the Government. Unlike

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[32] P.M.G., NBI (R.E.German) to J.F.R.Hill, DSM, 15.iv.55, No. DF 2171/4285, E.A.P. & T. DF 2171.

[33] J.F.R.Hill, DSM, to P.M.G., NBI, 17.ix.55, No. CW 8/52/05, E.A.P. and T. DF 2171.

[34] Assistant P.M.G. (Services) to P.M.G., 6.xii.55, Minute, E.A.P. and T. DF 2004.

official pressures, popular opinion did not realise that a high grade trunk telephone line with four pairs of wires cost £690 per mile in 1959. Even a minor telephone trunk route with two wires cost £220 while subscribers' connections to a trunk system cost £95 or £150, depending upon whether wood or steel poles were used. The Governments, when faced with pressures to provide uneconomic rural services, followed the Administration's example of taking refuge behind the E.A.P. and T. Act.[35] The rural telephone system of East Africa consisted of lines sponsored by the Governments and party lines in areas of white farming. Even the latter were not very advanced. As late as 1957 the Kenya National Farmers Union strongly demanded a pilot scheme to enable the evaluation of self-help telephone construction. The E.A.P. and T. could do little to prevent such a scheme, save refuse a licence and thereby become involved in a political argument. It reluctantly approved the K.N.F.U. suggestion but anticipated that disagreements between individual farmers would cause so much trouble that the Post Office would eventually have to take over the scheme.[36] Such schemes were few in number because political change also implied alterations in the pattern of Kenya's economy..

Telephones installed under the provisions for capital contribution by subscribers remained a severe problem for the E.A.P. and T. This arrangement provided that farmers paid a part of the construction cost

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[35] e.g. A.H.Jamal, T.L.C. 7.xii.60.

[36] M.W.Manson, (Assistant P.M.G.) [Engineering] to P.M.G., 3.iv.57, Minute, E.A.P. & T. DF 4345.

while the line would be built, operated and maintained at Post Office expense. Quite often a series of capital contribution schemes focused upon a small telephone exchange, which might well be held on an agency basis. This structure caused severe problems. Telephone Agents were able to insist upon increased salaries because the Administration was reluctant to assume responsibility for small rural exchanges. In addition, the settlers felt a sense of ownership over their telephone line and therefore protested strongly against inefficient service. In the case of West Kilimanjaro, the Agent even offered a twenty four hour service although his Agreement was limited to eight hours. Such initiative met with official disapproval. Capital contribution subscribers coupled with telephone agencies seemed an economical means for the Administration to provide rural services. However, by 1961 it appeared that

> ".... With the political and other changes taking place in East Africa as a whole the cost to agents of running Postal and Telephone Agencies.... will - I fear - rise steadily. This will almost inevitably give rise to pressure for increased remuneration or resignations. Where we have capital contribution subs - as we have at West Kilimanjaro - there could be very grave difficulties to overcome."[37]

Between 1949 and 1962 the number of telephones in use rose by 450% to 78,452. The number of local telephone calls increased four times and the total of trunk calls trebled. Conversion

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[37] R. Drummond, Controlling Postmaster, Moshi to Regional Director, Tanganyika, DSM, 21.iv.61, E.A.P. & T. C/Ptr. MSI. DF 1343/1270.

enabled this increased business to be handled with a greater financial efficiency but it still failed to produce a net revenue surplus. Internal telegraph traffic fell by more than 50°/o in the same period and yielded an operating profit only during the year 1958.

Political independence in East Africa was marked by increased business. In 1967 111,146 telephones were in use while 125,869,115 local and 4,826,859 trunk telephone calls were made. By 1962 the telegraph business had become so insignificant and so inter-dependent with the telephone service that the accounts were amalgamated. In 1964 the telecommunications branch produced a surplus of £29,375 and by the end of 1967 its accumulated surpluses totalled £462,432, three-quarters of which was derived from rate increases in 1966. In immediate terms this improvement was impressive, particularly when so many financial problems were attributed to Africanisation. In fact, it represented a very inadequate return on invested capital. Only in 1955 did the Post Office begin to publish a net revenue account for its telecommunications branch. Between 1955 and 1967 alone, the accumulated telecommunications deficit totalled £2,856,803 against which could be set a profit of £462,432. In a twelve year period the users of the postal service paid a high price for innovations in telecommunications.

At the end of 1966 the E.A.P. and T.'s assets were valued at some £25,000,000 and a further $13,000,000 loan was raised from the

International Bank for Development and Reconstruction, principally for the further expansion of telecommunications. It remained to be seen whether the revenues from the new installations and the economies of Africanisation would enable the telecommunications branch to continue to produce the small surpluses it had found in the mid-1960s.

Staff Policy

The E.A.P. and T. failed to apply the commercial principle of minimising costs to its staff policy until political change in East Africa meant that it would be expedient to promote African officers. Because conversion demanded economical operation, it gave an incentive for Africanisation which was heightened by difficulties in the recruitment of European staff. The E.A.P. and T. had to continue the wartime policy of advancing the employment of Non-Europeans. During the mid-1950s African politicians increasingly demanded the employment of local people whilst trained African staff, who had reached the limit of their pre-determined opportunities, wished for promotion. However, the difficulties of recruiting expatriate staff had then diminished. The financial incentives for Africanisation were negated in the late 1950s by vested interest. Political independence led to the voluntary retirement of many members of the expatriate staff, but those who remained were determined to maintain their official positions and their standard of living.

The staff problems of the E.A.P. and T. were acute at the end of the Second World War. Its salary scales and conditions of service for expatriate personnel had simply failed to keep up with the rate of inflation in Europe. Moreover, technological advance meant that there was a limit to the effectiveness of Africanisation unless adequate training facilities could be provided. Initially, instruction had to be given by Europeans, who were also needed for the more urgent task of maintaining established communications. The E.A.P. and T. was so short of staff that recruits were trained in service. By January, 1950, more than 100 Europeans had been recruited for supervisory positions, in addition to 160 Asians and 120 Africans who had been engaged for clerical and similar duties. The increased European staff enabled the inspection of all offices once every six months.[38]

The Department also faced a serious problem with those of its expatriate staff who chose to return to the British Post Office rather than be absorbed into the East African service.[39] H.O. Ellis, then Postmaster General of the Nyasaland Protectorate, suffered similar troubles. He suggested that a partial solution might be the establishment of the Colonial P. and T. as an additional 'region'

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[38] H.G. Willbourn (P.M.G.), C.L.A., 18.i.50.

[39] E.A.P. and T. Annual Report. 1950.

of the British Post Office. Thus, staff would become almost interchangeable for they would possess transferable privileges, while it would also be possible to arrange training courses for senior staff. Ellis found the General Post Office sympathetic, but the Colonial Office was opposed to strengthening the power of its Posts and Telegraphs Departments. The creation of a similar body, a Colonial Postal Bureau, had been suggested by East Africa in 1949, but rejected because it would be "contrary to the present trend of constitutional development" to transfer responsibility from the Colonial Governments to a United Kingdom authority.[40]

Although the E.A.P. and T. was unable to retain the services of European staff in the early 1950s, it was also under pressure in East Africa to increase its European establishment. The Administration suffered from popular racial antipathies, but as early as 1957 it was complimented upon " a tremendous improvement at the [Post Office] counter... queueing without anyone looking to see what colour a fellow is ..."[41] The European population of East Africa had no valid political alternative but acquiescence in desegregation. It meant, however, that their criticism of post office inefficiencies would be wrongly attributed to "a lot of incapable employees who, it would appear, are engaged only on some sort of racial basis due to the

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[40] M. Warrender Richardson, Director of Traffic, NBI, to P.M.G., 24.i.51, Minute quoting Colonial Office, E.A.P. and T. DF 7523.

[41] E.W.Mathu (Kenya), C.L.A., 5.xii.57.

political pantomime through which this country is expected to survive."[42]

The established post office policies of employing Africans conflicted with the post-war intention of introducing modern machinery. In effect, African staff would be down-graded unless training facilities were provided. The Central Training School at Mbagathi grew between 1949 and 1962 into 36 classrooms, equipped with typewriters, teleprinters and telephone transmission apparatus. In addition to facilities for instruction in line building and cable laying, the school possessed a fully equipped post and sorting offices, and a 300 line telephone exchange with a three position trunk switchboard. Forty-six instructors taught 1,100 students during 1961, devoting more than half the actual teaching time to engineering matters.[43] The E.A.P. and T. possessed sufficient training equipment to sustain a policy of effective Africanisation.

The Mbagathi School was so popular in 1952 that there were 3,000 applicants for the 300 places vacant. Technical skills that were not treated as manual labour aroused African enthusiasm. The Postmaster General, pleased that his school had gained such a good reputation, looked forward to the time when the Royal Technical College at Nairobi would be producing Africans, "who are prepared to become workmen"

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[42] John Penton, City Brewery, NBI, to P.M.G., NBI, 22.i.58, Personal, E.A.P. and T. DF 2211.

[43] H.O.Ellis (P.M.G.), C.L.A., 9.xi.61.

and would be suitable employees for the Administration.[44] This scheme met with European support but it did little to overcome the immediate problem of the Post Office, where the

> "... need for technically trained staff at all levels is increasing ... rapidly each year ... But it is difficult to obtain the right type of staff, Asians and Africans, who are required to do the actual work."[45]

The Administration constantly complained about the inadequate basic education of African recruits. However, instead of buying trained personnel by means of high salaries, the E.A.P. and T. preferred to recruit and instruct men with lower qualifications. In 1953, when racial considerations still dominated the Administration's salary scales, the highest salary of any person on the African scale was lower than the lowest Asian rate, that of a "Learner Female". German, like his predecessors, did not believe that Africans would respond to salary incentives and insisted that "post offices have a tradition of training their own supervisory and executive staff." Graduates from such institutions as the Makerere University College were excluded from Post Office service as a matter of policy.[46]

The Administration only slowly realised that restrictive employment practices and hierarchical salary scales designed to prevent competition between people of different races were ineffective

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[44] R.E.German (P.M.G.), C.L.A., 30.i.52.

[45] R.E.German (P.M.G.), C.L.A., 31.i.52.

[46] R.E.German (P.M.G.), C.L.A., 5.xii.57.

commercial practices for a self-financing body. The philosophy that Africans should be trained only for the junior tasks in the Administration was outdated in 1955 when the lower echelon positions were filled. It then became possible to set aside part of the facilities at the Central Training School for higher instruction. At the end of that year the hierarchical establishment of the E.A.P. and T. received a major blow, when the Administration accepted the Report of the Lidbury Commission. The Commission proposed the establishment of a non-racial hierarchy without barriers to promotion, to allow people with secondary school or university qualifications to join the Administration at salaries commensurate with market value. Changing political conditions in East Africa compelled the Post Office to recognise that the recruitment of competent African personnel was determined by wage incentives and fringe benefits.[47] The emphasis in training changed by 1959 to the instruction of African supervisory officers. H.O.Ellis, who succeeded German as Postmaster General, accelerated the programmes of Africanisation. At the end of 1960 he envisaged the opening of training schools in Uganda and Tanganyika so that Mbagathi could be used as a centre for high level instruction and "the inculcation of the art of supervision and higher command". The E.A.P. and T. was obliged to provide, from its own reserves of manpower, Africans who could take

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[47] R.E.German (P.M.G.), C.L.A., 17.xii.55.

over senior positions and might be empowered to direct European personnel.

Africanisation, the deliberate replacement of European staff, only became a political policy as the Territories gained responsible government. The graded staff of the E.A.P. and T. increasedd from 3,283 in 1949 to 5,081 in 1961, but in the same period the cost of salaries had increased at a much faster rate. Between 1949 and 1957, when publication of the statistics was discontinued, the salary charges carried by the Administration rose from £405,706 to £1,230,857. The bulk of this money was spent upon the graded staff, amongst whom preference was given to European employees, who thus enjoyed artificially inflated standard of living and social prestige. However, the self-accounting status of the Post Office demanded the employment of the least expensive staff and in the early 1960s the the political preference for European occupancy of senior positions ceased to be important. The E.A.P. and T. embarked upon a policy of localisation in 1961.

Training costs rose from £50,431 in 1959 to £184,162 inn 1961 and reached £405, 346 in 1967. Although as early as 1962 instruction was extended by the creation of supernumerary posts, the Administration's policies were clearly geared to producing statistical results. Training seemed so unplanned that there were serious fears lest all the lower grades might be Africanised while, "we are left with an Administration which is controlled by a handful of expatriates".[48]

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[48] W.C. Murgor (Kenya), C.L.A., 4.xii.62.

Aware of the political risks involved in such allegations, the E.A.P. and T. announced in 1962 that its former policy of localisation had been superseded by Africanisation.[49] The necessary qualified Africans were not available. By 1964, when Asians holding East African passports were displacing Europeans, the expatriate staff were obliged to create a shortage of personnel in order to maintain their position. The Asians were manoeuveured into resignation, reducing the number of graded staff from 5,047 to 4,754. The Asian staff were replaced by African trainees, whose promotion and salaries would be limited by their inexperience. Simultaneously, the Administration appeared to have a good record for Africanisation. In 1963, 65°/o of graded posts were held by 374 Africans. In 1964, 78°/o of graded posts were occupied by 624 Africans.

Further Africanisation depended largely upon external recruitment. because the E.A.P. and T. had exhausted its own reserve of personnel. In 1966 instruction was reorganised, "and new policies were introduced with special emphasis on the quality of our training rather than any addition to the quantity".[50] A newly appointed Training Adviser urged recruitment from Polytechnics and Technical Colleges, the creation of territorial schools, and the secondment of staff from

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49 E.A.P. and T. Annual Report. 1962.

50 E.A.P. & T. Annual Report. 1966.

the British Post Office, who would travel round East Africa giving in-service training. The Post Office adopted these ideas for political reasons but without much enthusiasm.

During the 1960s the E.A.P. and T. was hardly able to raise capital for development and throughout East Africa there were strongly held opinions that rising inefficiency was solely a function of African incompetence. These opinions were so influential that when an African Postmaster General, John Keto, was appointed in 1964, even Africans expressed some anxiety.[51] The self-confidence that had preceded independence was being subtly replaced by doubt and introspection. It was increasingly felt that European guidance was essential for the effective operation of technical departments. It was left to Mwai Kibaki, a Kenya member of the Central Legislative Assembly, to scathingly criticise the popular doubts, which were shown whenever Post Office staff policy was discussed. He alleged that even, "... the Minister in charge of the Communications Committee stands up and tells us that efficiency has fallen slightly because of Africanisation."[52]

The interest of the European staff lay in demonstrating that Africans required white supervision. A non-racial salary structure

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[51] e.g. Mrs. Eseza Makumbi (Uganda), C.L.A., 24.xi.64.

[52] Mwai Kibaki (Kenya), C.L.A., 25.xi.64.

was introduced during the middle 1950s. For the first time the Administration paid many Africans according to their competence and salary costs rose by £265,000.[53] Under the conditions of colonial rule this represented no threat to the European staff. At the end of 1957 there were but seven Africans on the senior salary scale. When German informed the Central Legislative Assembly that this achievement represented the beginning of Africanisation, a Kenyan politician, E.W.Mathu, pointed out that there were some twenty million Africans in Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika. German retorted "that we have in the Post Office a large number of people of other races who entered the service to make it their career, to whom we have obligations."[54] Non-racial salary scales were not yet synonymous with competitive recruitment.

Political independence shattered the privileged society of the technical expatriates. These men were now obliged to identify themselves with a way of life that they despised. Even departmental bureaucracies were confused. In December, 1960, Ellis stated that there had been no expatriate recruitment to the permanent establishment since 1957. On the following day he apologised for the fact that, "it is quite a minor matter, but I happen to be one myself."[55]

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[53] R.E.German (P.M.G.), C.L.A., 14.xii.55.

[54] R.E.German (P.M.G.), C.L.A., 5.xii.57.

[55] H.O.Ellis (P.M.G.), C.L.A., 1.xii.60.

Constitutional change produced expatriate anxiety for employment, fear that law and order would collapse, and a great resentment at the very idea of living under black rule. The white servants of the Post Office could either identify themselves with their adopted country or place themselves on the competitive labour market in the United Kingdom. Most faced neither prospect with any degree of enthusiasm.

The non-racial salary scale was supposedly reinforced in early 1961 when the East Africa High Commission adopted the Report of the Fleming Commission. The Report proposed that salaries would be related to the cost of living but also suggested that expatriates should have liberal inducement allowances. Most non-Europeans dismissed the Report as an aberration designed to fortify the European position. Ellis, however, insisted, that the effects on his department would be mitigated by salary contributions from the United Kingdom Government and pointed out that the changes only preserved the established differential between salaries in the E.A.P. and T. and the British Post Office.

Salary inducements did not prevent the retirement of personnel who refused to acknowledge African government. During 1962 no fewer than 125 officers voluntarily retired and even as late as 1964, 63 Europeans left the permanent service of the Administration. The retirement of expatriates between 1962 and 1967 cost £3,453,758 in

compensation payments, half of which was borne by the British Government. During the same period the E.A.P. and T. spent £2,123,667 on training its African staff. Pensionable officers were only a part of the problem because staff appointed on contract terms never enumerated in the Administration's returns. The insecurity of their professional status caused these employees to avoid the risks of work in East Africa. During 1964 their numbers fell from 998 to 489.[56] The recruitment of contract staff could not keep pace with the retirements. The E.A.P. and T. had no alternative but the expansion of its African staff. Although the established Europeans were prepared to see the employment of more Africans in senior positions, they conceded power reluctantly, with the effect that ".... the difficulty in promoting Africans has been primarily because all the people above them are people who do not have sympathy with the whole concept of Africanisation."[57]

Political pressure made it imperative for the E.A.P. and T. to Africanize administrative positions. Since the Post Office could scarcely plead that qualified Africans were not available, administrative power was partly transferred to the Engineering Branch to render Africanisation less effective. At the close of 1965, one hundred

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[56] Dawson Mwanyumba (Kenya), C.L.A., 18.xi.64.

[57] Mwai Kibaki (Kenya), C.L.A., 30.v.62.

and two Africans held substantive or supernumerary posts in the Assistant Engineer grade, the highest technical rank not monopolised by Europeans or Asians. This situation was further aggravated when qualified African engineers were allocated to other branches of the service "so that we should continue to have shortages of people in certain types of jobs."[58] The E.A.P. and T. had no wish to compete for engineering staff in the labour market. African engineers who joined the Administration were often disheartened when they were posted to the Personnel Branch or given tasks befitting skilled workmen. W.W.Kalema, Uganda's Minister for Communications and Works, voiced the official retort when he claimed, "... The trouble is that these young men, when they lave school, are only interested in salaries ... in the engineering department they do not stay long enough to get promoted."[59]

Financial matters never seriously influenced the staff policy of the East African Post Office. During the Colonial period the socially acceptable attitudes of the European population determined the character of employment. After the political independence of the East African states, the Administration merely evolved a new series of devices to limit African advancement and maintain the traditional system of racial inequality in position, salary, and conditions of service. The Department's success in defining its staff policy came directly from its status as a self-financing institution, free from political control.

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[58] Ali Saidi Mtaki (Tanganyika), C.L.A., 25.xi.66.

[59] W.W.Kalema (Uganda), C.L.A., 2.xii.66.

Business Principles and Political Change

Within the limitations of a monopoly public service, the East African Posts and Telecommunications Administration operated upon commercial principles between 1949 and 1967. However, it maintained no clear conception of its responsibilities to the political, social or economic environment of East Africa and resorted to a policy of internal subsidies to develop telecommunications. The European population regarded communications as a legitimate repository for subsidy. The self-contained post office was at first a threat to this attitude, but its practice of subsidising telecommunications deficits was rapidly appreciated as a tolerable arrangement of Government finances. The Administration obviously experienced a conflict between the principles of subsidy and responsibility in the 1950s and early 1960s. Thereafter, its very complexity and sophistication prevented a politically acceptable redistribution of subsidies.

The Administration failed to adjust to African nationalism and was reluctant to decolonise itself. Subsidies were still directed towards telecommunications and expatriate staff rather than to postal services and training facilities. In 1964 change began, caused more by a shortage of investment capital than by any appreciation of responsibility. Only political intervention by the national Governments of East Africa could again bring the Post Office and the State into an identity of purpose. The instrument of this revision, the 1967 East African Treaty for Co-operation, became the first real political defeat for the bureaucracy of the Post Office.

Chapter XIII

THE POST OFFICE AND CHANGE

Between 1837 and 1967, the Post Office encouraged and mitigated immense political, social and economic changes in East Africa. The imposition of colonial governments and the introduction of European settlement and commerce paralleled the efforts of African peoples to adjust to Western technologies, wealth and attitudes. Posts and Telegraphs enabled the Governments to operate effectively while encouraging business and agriculture to compete in international markets. Although the Post Office participated in the modernization of only a small sector of East Africa, it exercised a deeper influence upon the African peoples. The few rural post offices became increasingly important for contact between migrant labourers and their homes. Almost unintentionally, the Post Office prevented a divergence in the interests of urban and rural African life.

The fluctuating environment required a Post Office bureaucracy that could face change with confidence, if not equanimity. However, the problems of change within the Department reduced the flexibility of its response to external developments. New technologies of communication, demanding specialized personnel and sophisticated equipment, created further interests within the administrative hierarchy. In addition, the rapidly increasing volume of postal and telegraphic

business placed severe strains upon the existing structure. The alteration in the scale of the Departments' activities reflected broader developments in East Africa and led to conflict because the political involvement of the Post Office embraced territories embodying different philosophies of colonial government.

The environment in which the Post Office operated changed remarkably between 1837 and 1967. Increasing literacy and a rising level of purchasing power led the Department to extend its services: at first within the growing towns then into white settled areas and, from the late 1940s, into African rural communities. As different sections of East Africa's peoples became articulate, the political balances changed from an administrative colonial government to an oligarchy of the immigrant races. After the Second World War, inter-territorial organization returned power to civil service interests. The growth of specialized occupations and demands that administrative agreements should be expressed in formal terms reflected the increasing complexity and responsibility of government. For social and strategic reasons, the East African Governments became deeply involved in the economy through two World Wars and the depression of 1929. The reduced influence of the Post Office as a source of state patronage led to the introduction of new management techniques to secure Departmental efficiency, economy and innovation.

The rising level of Departmental business depended upon an

extension of literacy and increased purchasing power. Literacy made the sophisticated distributive service of the Post Office useful and convenient. By 1910, communications in East Africa possessed a speed, regularity and security unprecedented in the pre-colonial period. As education extended through Mission and Government auspices, the Post Office failed to keep pace with African demands for communication. The mail service for the greater part of East Africa's population seemed efficient, although inconvenient. The growth of purchasing power partly accounted for the slow extension of postal facilities. As the immigrant European and Asian communities amassed wealth, they not only made increasing use of such services as letter mail but also demanded the provision of a telecommunications network that would give expensive but almost instantaneous correspondence. Investment policies, guided by the belief that costly services for a minority would in time produce large profits, led to the neglect of the postal system. Purchasing power determined Departmental priorities far more closely than the opportunities of developing new areas of business.

Changes in political organization deeply influenced the forms of Post Office activities. The early colonial Governments required postal and telegraphic services for their administrative convenience. When the European and Asian minorities gained a significant influence upon Government during the 1920s and 1930s, they sought the extension

of postal services in urban areas, to trading centres, and in the regions of large scale farming. During the 1940s, the Second World War and the problems of inter-territorial organization led to the reimposition of Government control. The ensuing rapid development of telecommunications aimed to unify East Africa by increasing the effectiveness of contact between its Governments and amongst its minorities. By the late 1950s, African opinions gained relevance as it became clear that the colonial authority would give way to African government. Political change forced the Post Office to readjust its emphasis from subsidised telecommunications to a system of several hundred rural post offices. However, it could not so quickly either correct the imbalances in its urban and rural systems or reverse its establishsed investment policies.

Social change in East Africa manifested itself in urbanization, wage labour and discrimination. The dichotomies between town and country, employment and individualist investment, and central government and traditinnal society proved almost irreconcilable. The Post Office, committed to European and Indianinterests, largely ignored those services that benefited Africans. However, white opinion encouraged the extension of facilities so that Departmental remittances could be used to send cash wages into rural areas. Indians gained immense trading advantages from the economy and reliability

of post office services. Africans benefited from these differing purposes and maintained their contact with colleagues and relatives throughout East Africa. Communication stimulated political organization by drawing attention to common inequalities and problems.

East African society changed through increasing sophistication. Growing specialization in all Departments of Government narrowed the variety of occupations open to particular trainings. In the Post Office, the claims of 1910 that engineers ought to be qualified professional men contrasted with the requirements fifty years later for employees skilled in such fields as private automatic branch telephone exchanges. Although the rising level of post office business encouraged specialization, the growing pace of technological innovation proved more influential. Forty years after the opening of a short wave wireless telegraph service between Kenya and the United Kingdom, the Post Office began to construct stations to handle international telegrams and telephone calls transmitted through communications satellites. Specialization, innovation and the costs of investment reflected the changing position of government. Throughout the first half of the twentieth century the informal European administration of East Africa was progressively replaced by a regularized pattern of control. The duties, responsibilities, liabilities and complexities of Government increased

immensely. Administration became but one of the functions exercised by the state.

The increasing influence of Government formed part of a general process of economic centralization. State control over the East African economy was considerable even in the 1880s when the related British-India Steam Navigation, Smith Mackenzie and Imperial British East Africa Companies operated as an arm of the United Kingdom Government. Similarly, during the early twentieth century the British Government supported administrators in East Africa who refused to allow privately-financed railways. However, such measures were not related to the conscious direction of private investment. The Governments gained the right to mould the shape of the East African economies through the emergencies of the First and Second World Wars. The depression of 1929 proved a further influence because it led to restrictions upon competition in the cause of a rationalization in East African economic activities designed to counter a falling level of purchasing power. Economic centralization encouraged the growth of wage labour, particularly amongst East Africa's immigrant communities. The size of individual enterprises expanded under subsidies from the states. Professional management techniques became increasingly important. These changes in the economy reduced the influence of the Post Office because the Department became merely one facet of State interest in economic

prosperity and development. The conversion of the Posts and Telegraphs to self-accounting status in 1949 recognised the modified role of the technical Departments of Government. Although the patronage of the Post Office, the fourth largest employer of labour in Kenya during 1967, continued to expand, it declined relative to the financial reserves wielded by other state authorities.

Changes in the environment of East Africa radically modified the political scale of the Posts and Telegraphs Department. The United Kingdom Post Office provided overseas communications and participated in the partition of East Africa for reasons of British strategy. From the political scale of external control, the East African Post Office began as an inter-territorial body serving two Governments. As the quality of its management, the effectiveness of colonial Government, and the volume of traffic increased, the Department became more deeply involved in inter-colonial organization. Responsibility to different Governments exercised a profound influence upon the Department. When internal political changes limited the extent of civil service power, the Posts and Telegraphs slowly withdrew from the political life of East Africa.

East Africa's overseas communications in the Nineteenth Century operated for the benefit of European Powers. Political factors inthe late 1860s caused the assertion of British influence in the Persian Gulf and East Africa through the operatinn of subsidised

mail steamers and postal agencies. Submarine telegraphs were laid in the 1880s, when international rivalry became pronounced and aggravated local political problems. The partition of East Africa between Britain and Germany was followed by the organization of interior mail services.

External connections dominated East Africa's communications until 1905. The mail steamer service to Mombasa and the submarine telegraph cable to Zanzibar governed the policies, timetables and revenues of the Post Office. The political function of communications was determined from the United Kingdom. Before 1905 East Africa lacked the literacy and the purchasing power needed to support an internal communications system and even the external services received heavy subsidies. In international diplomatic terms, overseas mails and telegraphs proved important, but for East Africa internal communications exercised only a marginal significance. The Postmaster General of the Imperial British East Africa Company exercised such other duties as the management of the railway and public health. This order changed through the construction of the Uganda Railway. In 1904 the United Kingdom Government appointed East Africa's first professional postal official.

The organization of the Post Office as an inter-territorial Department enhanced its political status. Responsible from 1901 to the Governments of the East Africa and Uganda Protectorates, the

Postmaster General exercised an independent authority. After 1925, when the postal and telegraph branches were amalgamated and the Department gained an equitable constitution, the Post Office strongly influenced East African policies. It laid precedents in its attitude towards non-European employees and in the relationship between state and private capital through its encouragement of wireless telegraphy. Although unable to obtain adequate investment capital from the Governments, the Department used its peculiar status to erect trunk telephone lines and particularly encouraged the development of services between Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika. As early as 1924 the Postmaster General, T. Fitzgerald, advocated the extension of the Kenya-Uganda amalgamation into Tanganyika. Although the scheme appeared economically viable, the British and East African Governments foresaw political complications and the project lapsed. When the depression of 1929 affected East Africa, it seemed particularly desirable to reduce the expenditure of the Tanganyika Government. From 1933 the services were amalgamated through Fitzgerald's persistent pressure. Although the reluctance expressed by the participating Governments proved politically realistic, amalgamation gave clear economies and represented the Departments' greatest political achievement.

Unofficial opinion exercised considerable influence upon Departmental attitudes from the early 1920s. In Uganda many expatriates seriously wished that their Protectorate should operate an autonomous

service. In Tanganyika there was intense opposition to the postal amalgamation of 1933. Until the depression, the Post Office withstood unofficial criticism. After the extension of the Department into Tanganyika, the mechanism of control proved too complicated. Responsible to three Governments determining their own priorities, rules and regu lations, the Post Office found it difficult to reconcile the wide variety of public and private interests. The political competence of the Department outgrew its administrative structure and initiative. Unable to deal with criticism and reluctant to introduce controversial change, the Post Office became quiescent. Under the strains of the Second World War, the balances of its political structure almost collapsed.

The conversion of the Post Office into a self-contained Administration in 1949 related its bureaucratic machinery to the political scale of its operations. Given a very wide measure of autonomy and few controls over its responsibility, the Administration invested large amounts of money in the reconstruction and extension of its facilities. The Post Office, subject to an East African Assembly representing government and public opinion, again brought its administrative organization back into relation with its political function. However, from the mid-1950s, the increasing level of African discontent upset this balance. When African politicians determined that careers were made in national assemblies rather than

in a central council, the Administration became isolated from reality. Although the independence of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika caused the resignation of many European officers and the policies of Africanization, the Post Office could not adjust its structure to the circumstances of nationalism. Until 1967, the Administration survived and operated in a political vacuum of its own creation.

The Posts and Telegraphs Department faced severe problems of technological change. During the 1920s and 1930s the pattern of external communications altered when wireless telegraphy supplemented submarine cables and air transport replaced mail steamships for the despatch of urgent communications. Internal services passed through more drastic transition. During the early 1900s rail transport enabled bulk handling of internal mails. Within thirty years motor vehicles carried mail for inland destinations far from the railway line with considerable speed and reliability. Land telegraph lines, which in 1900 seemed vital for security, lost their utility in the 1930s when they proved unable to compete with the telephone system. After the Second World War the rate of change advanced markedly. The telephone system expanded into an East African network using such devices as Very High Frequency wireless and subscriber trunk dialling. These innovations had considerable repercussions upon the Posts and Telegraphs Department because they marked a shifting of power from the postal to the engineering interests.

The development of short wave wireless telegraphy posed the first problem of technological change for the Posts and Telegraphs Department. From the 1860s, submarine telegraph cables provided urgent British strategic and diplomatic communications. The development of wireless during the early twentieth century threatened the virtual monopoly of international telegraphs exercised by the Eastern Telegraph Company in the interests of British supremacy. Cable rates between Kenya and the United Kingdom were expensive and subject to constant criticism. Throughout the first three decades of the twentieth century, the Posts and Telegraphs Department contrived for the establishment of competitive services by overland routes along the Nile Valley and by wireless. However, the East African Governments proved reluctant to invest capital while the United Kingdom opposed any attempts that might undermine the Eastern Company. During the 1920s, rapid developments in the technology of wireless communication led Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India and South Africa to establish their own services to the United Kingdom in defiance of their mutual interest in the Eastern Telegraph Company. In 1927 Kenya followed the example of the older Colonies. Through the persistent enthusiasm of Fitzgerald, the Post Office on behalf of the Government licensed a private company to operate wireless telegraphy and broadcasting services. The success of competition proved transitory. The Eastern

Telegraph Company moved in the late 1920s towards a bankruptcy that would be unacceptable to the British Government. In Kenya, the losses on the broadcasting service absorbed the profits from wireless telegraphy and led to the local Company's collapse. The United Kingdom preserved its strategic cables by arranging an amalgamation of the cable and wireless interests into a monopoly company, which soon absorbed the Kenya radio station.

The transition from the carriage of mail by steamship to the use of air transport proceeded upon more orderly lines. Tentative experiments with an airmail service along the Nile Valley during the 1920s clearly demonstrated that only a highly capitalized company could develop the service. The United Kingdom Government, recognizing the strategic importance of aviation, sponsored an Imperial Airways Company as a monopoly institution. During 1931 an African air mail service opened to Mwanza, being extended to Cape Town in 1932. Five years later, the British Government established an Empire Air Mail Scheme, which provided for all first class mail to travel by air. This arrangement, designed to strengthen British aviation, depended upon postal subsidies. Air mail posed only a small threat to the shipping companies, whose profits came largely from bulk freight and passengers. Although the British maritime industry faced severe problems of foreign competition, by the 1920s post office subsidies produced so small a portion of its

revenues that the loss of the first class mail traffic proved quite irrelevant.

The carriage of mails within East Africa benefited greatly from technological change. From the close of the 1890s, railways replaced porterage on bulk mail routes. During the 1920s and 1930s road motor vehicles replaced porterage on less important services while long distance first class traffic passed from the railways to internal airways. Despite early troubles with these new techniques, they soon increased Departmental efficiency and reliability substantially. Adaptation to new means of transport for mails involved alterations in Post Office routing, capital investment in the new equipment, and the recruitment of such specialized personnel as motor vehicle engineers. Changes in mail routing often inconvenienced minor post offices or small communities. Frequently the Department experienced considerable inconvenience through public protest at the concommittant reduction in facilities. This problem and the costs of innovation tended to restrict improvements in the postal service to only those routes which handled bulk mails.

Compared with changes in the pattern of telecommunications services, expediency rather than design marked the development of the postal system. At the end of the First World War, the Department saw that public demand would emphasize the development of the telephone system at the expense of the telegraph network. Although

capital proved scarce and in spite of the depression of 1929, the Posts and Telegraphs installed automatic telephone exchanges in the larger towns of East Africa by 1940. In addition, a series of telephone trunk lines operated and was already being developed as an East African network. Remarkable as this progress seemed in circumstances of distinct economic adversity, it palled before the very great investment in the telephone system after the Second World War. During the War, the Post Office drew up long term development plans for urban and trunk networks.

After the conversion of the Department to self-financing status, the greater part of its profits and loan monies were devoted to the re-equipment and extension of the telephone system. Between 1949 and 1967 the number of installed instruments rose from 17,000 to 111,146, while the volume of local conversations increased five fold and trunk traffic quadrupled. Investment produced business and gratified a small segment of public demand but only in 1964 did the telecommunications operating account show its first surplus of £29,375. The Posts and Telecommunications Administration had invested enthusiastically in such innovations as Very High Frequency wireless telephone apparatus, which was untested but seemed likely to give economies. The new equipment was only slowly adjusted to East African conditions. Well intentioned but unwise investment proved expensive. Moreover, the Administration

operated under conditions of inflation. Its costs rosemore rapidly than its rates and the revision of charges involved complex negotiations with the Governments and criticism from the public. Innovation failed to mitigate the effects of inflation to any appreciable extent.

The changing technologies used by the Posts and Telegraphs reflected the increasing scale of Departmental business and alterations in the administrative structure designed to raise efficiency. Kenya's letter mail traffic exceeded one million items in the year ending 1902. This level of business had almost doubled by 1911, but by 1925 Kenya and Uganda dealt with nine million letters. This total rose to nineteen million in 1933 and to seventy-six million in 1946. The letter mail traffic then doubled by 1966. Such increases were paralleled in every branch of Post Office business except for the telegraph system which could not compete effectively with the telephones. The volume of business, as much as technological change, alterations in political scale, or the environment of East Africa, determined the organization of the Posts and Telegraphs Department. Before 1912 the small volume of traffic suggested efficiency through centralized administration. However, the effective organization of a common Post Office for Kenya and Uganda occurred only in 1925, when traffic was increasing after the post-war depression. The problems of civil servant and settler nationalism between 1912 and 1925 were followed by effective centralization,

which reached its greatest success in 1933 when the Tanganyika Posts and Telegraphs Department was drawn into the amalgamated Kenya-Uganda service. The 1933 reorganization complicated the administrative and financial flexibility of the Post Office. The structure proved so rigid during the Second World War that in 1949 the Department became a self-financing Administration responsible to an East Africa Commission.

Between 1890 and 1912 the scale of the Posts and Telegraphs Department expanded slowly, excepting for such fortunate intrusions of new business as the Uganda Railway construction workers. The principal object of the British Protectorates lay in economy. At first the Indian postal agency at Zanzibar and the Mombasa services were amalgamated. However, the building of the Uganda Railway so increased traffic that the Postmaster General had to give his full attention to the mainland. Initially it appeared that the most economical establishment of a postal system in Uganda would be through the inland extension of the Mombasa service. Transport costs postponed the amalgamation until the Uganda Railway cheapened the carriage of mails to the interior. Although the Post Offices of the East Africa and Uganda Protectorate were formally amalgamated in 1901, the telegraph service remained under divided control. Heavy capital expenditure, the highly Europeanized staff, and political and strategic importance led the Governments to maintain

separate telegraph services. In 1904 the four autonomous networks were transferred to the Protectorates while operation passed to the Postmaster General, but the two Governments still maintained independent engineering authorities. This division of duty caused considerable friction. At length, in 1912, the Governments attempted to merge the operating and engineering services under the control of the Postmaster General.

The 1912 amalgamation ended rivalries between the postal and telegraph officials but also enabled officers in Uganda to continue the creation of an autonomous department. The expansion of business during the years 1912-1925 led civil servants and unofficial opinion in Uganda to conclude that the post office, like the other inter-territorial services, merely subsidised the East Africa Protectorate. Engineering officers in Uganda, whose responsibility lay more to the Government than to the Department, exploited these pressures. Serious before the First World War, the arguments for an autonomous Department gained strength during the early 1920s when the international economy slumped. Reductions in service were adduced to mean that East Africa profited.

In 1925 the Governments established a unified Posts and Telegraphs Department for Kenya and Uganda. Local rivalries were reduced by arranging that each country should possess a financially autonomous service. The Postmaster General became solely responsible for the

conduct of the integrated system. Common administration soon proved economical, enabled the wider employment of experts, and demonstrated its ability to handle a rising volume of business. The scheme of administrative amalgamation, drawn up by Fitzgerald, facilitated retrenchment during the depression without a noticeable reduction in services or efficiency. The system appeared so effective that despite political scenes the Tanganyika Territory Post Office joined in the amalgamation. The extended system produced economies of scale and led to some development of inter-territorial connections. However, Departmental responsibility to three separate Governments and public opinions possessed of different policies and priorities led at first to conflict and soon to inaction. Lethargy seemed preferable to endless argument. The Department stopped adjusting to increased business because its administrative autonomy was circumscribed. When the Second World War caused a great increase in Post Office traffic and the introduction of such innovations as air letters, the Department resolutely opposed any change that might involve lengthy negotiation. By 1945 the amalgamated Posts and Telegraphs Department found itself close to administrative collapse.

During 1948 the East African Governments approved the reorganization of the Posts and Telegraphs into a self-financing body.

Freed from state supervision over most aspects of its operation, it seemed likely that the Post Office would function as an effective inter-territorial service. From 1st January, 1949, the Department was subject to its own management and investment priorities. Within fifteen years the emphasis of the Post Office had been redirected into telephone communication, although the rising volume of postal traffic in fact subsidised the deficits upon the telecommunications branch. The Post Office operated upon the assumption that investment would lead to profits because its internal balance of power had shifted from the postal to the engineering branch. The financial authorities never exercised control over policy but rather focused their attention upon the details of accountancy. Under autonomous management, the Post Office reversed the result of the disputes between 1900 and 1925 by subordinating the postal branch to the engineering service. Progressively, the Posts and Telecommunications Administration moved away from reality even as it handled rising levels of traffic. Policy still served a sectional interest. However, before 1949 the Department aimed to benefit influential minority elements in East Africa's population. Throughout the 1950s narrow interests in the Administration determined policies and investments, often with too little regard for either the Administration's profits or for public demand.

During the 1960s the East African Posts and Telecommunications

Administration faced a series of changes, which it proved unable to surmount. Earlier alterations in technology and scale had been mastered because the Department operated within an environment understood and manipulated by its management. When African discontent became the dominant political issue in Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika, the priorities of the Posts and Telecommunications seemed irrelevant. Established precedent gave no answer to the new situation, which required the development of new traditions and attitudes.

African government created major challenges. Africanisation became an accepted policy that was introduced without a noticeable loss in efficiency or a decline in the Administration's profits, in itself a notable achievement although many European staff resigned in protest and had to be replaced initially by more expensive contract officers. The Post Office handled these changes in a government framework hardly altered from the Colonial pattern. However, the Administration could not adapt to the growth of divergent African policies in the three territories and the rise of criticism in the national Parliament. When the African governments defined their own economic, political and social interests, the terms seldom proved intelligible to such men as expatriate engineers. For the first time in its history, the Post Office drew apart from the political realities of inter-territorial organization.

In 1967 the Posts and Telecommunications Administration served neither inter-territorial nor national priorities. Its autonomy, exercised in Post Office interests, proved a constant aggravation and embarrassment to the Governments. The signature of the East African Treaty for Cooperation marked the determination of the participating states to reassert control over the common services. The major institutional problem of the Posts and Telecommunications, that of inter-territorial coordination, remained despite the changes inherent in political independence and the control of the Governments over their services continued to be uncertain. The communal influences upon the history of the East African Posts and Telecommunications Administration proved paradoxically to be less important than the shape and control of the inter-territorial bureaucracy.

Table 1

Expenditure. Uganda, 1901-1902 to 1925

Year	Total Internal Costs (£)	Payments Overseas (£)	Expenditure on Telegraph Const. & Mntnce (£)	Other Local Charges (£)
1901-1902	2292(a)	-	-	..
1902-1903	1602(a)	-	N.A.	-
1903-1904	2625(a)	-	1431	-
1904-1905	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	-
1905-1906	4163	164	3302	-
1906-1907	4903	180	N.A.	-
1907-1908	4911	110	4	-
1908-1909	5119	130	4401	-
1909-1910	5486	657	4514	-
1910-1911	6008	873	4437	-
1911-1912	6324	769	6821	-
1912-1913	6858	649	5108	-
1913-1914	8085	910	6364	-
1914-1915	7644	785	6029	-
1915-1916	8992	818	6340	-
1916-1917	9347	1287	5523	-
1917-1918	8630	802	6317	-
1918-1919	8788	650	5613	-
1919-1920	22348	588	1976	-
1920-1921	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	-
1921 (9 mths)	42036	1376	N.A.	-
1922	20081	1698	16675	-
1923	30487	1285	6546	-
1924	30356	1395	9677	-
1925	104808(b)	12254(b)	13292	4363

Notes: N.A.: not available
(a) : telegraphs only
(b) : carried on Kenya Estimates Expenditure on Telegraph Construction excludes Loan Fund allocations.

Source: Uganda Protectorate 'Blue Books' 1901-1902 to 1925.

Table 2

Expenditure, East Africa, 1901-1902 to 1925

Year	Total Internal Costs (£)	Payments Overseas (£)	Expenditure on Telegrph. Const. (£)	Other Local Charges (£)
1901-1902	8018	252	N.A.	-
1902-1903	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	-
1903-1904	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	-
1904-1905	10403	456	1510	-
1905-1906	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	-
1906-1907	10848	411	3551	-
1907-1908	16229	266	1342	-
1908-1909	17137	299	1120	-
1909-1910	19093	1884(a)	1297	-
1910-1911	20629	2529	1837	-
1911-1912	22381	2308	2947	-
1912-1913	24423	2594	2910	-
1913-1914	29877	2435	3616	-
1914-1915	32071	2020	14158	-
1915-1916	33207	2453	9798	-
1916-1917	35060	3861	6937	-
1917-1918	41806	2407	12676	-
1918-1919	43848	2149	7251	-
1919-1920	91402	2353	7240	-
1920-1921	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	-
1921 (9 mths)	145548	5500	N.A.	-
1922	110265	3395	4433	-
1923	90820	6432	2691	-
1924	85524	5581	7258	-
1925	104808(b)	12254(b)	5192	6390

Notes: N.A.: Not available
(a) : Includes parcel post charges
(b) : Includes Uganda Expenditure on telegraph construction excludes special allocations from Imp. Treas.

Source: East Africa Protectorate, Kenya Colony 'Blue Books' 1901-1902 to 1925.

Table 3

Revenue, Uganda, 1901-1902 to 1925

Year	Postal Revenue (£)	Money Order Commission (£)	Postal Order Poundage (£)	Telegraph Revenue (£)	Telephone Revenue (£)	Miscellaneous (£)
1901-1902	N.A.	N.A.	-	443		-
1902-1903	N.A.	N.A.	-	561		-
1903-1904	N.A.	N.A.	-	1000		-
1904-1905	838	167	-	725		-
1905-1906	1172	217	-	874		-
1906-1907	1381	285	1	905		25
1907-1908	1682	290	5	1091		-
1908-1909	2057	374	7	1386		-
1909-1910	2355	360	12	1689		42
1910-1911	2674	473	2	1911	148	87
1911-1912	3280	547	45	1942	181	126
1912-1913	3756	633	31	2346		142
1913-1914	4425	723	51	2783		209
1914-1915	3217	1042	41	2473	58	240
1915-1916	3362	888	32	3094	62	122
1916-1917	3996	1004	22	4525	78	205
1917-1918	3676	894	19	4865	487	254
1918-1919	3692	1152	14	6318	627	258
1919-1920	7954	1036	37	7794	1034	5(a)
1920-1921	N.A.	N.A.	NA.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
1921 (9 mths)	9551	1599	83	8528	988	-
1922	9355	1388	95	7004	1599	461(a)
1923	11068	1850	98	8809	2671	479
1924	11789	2613	124	11692	3915	573
1925(c)	14303	4703	150	15162	5473	849(b)

Notes: N.A.: Not available
(a) : Accounting procedure altered
(b): Includes £143.7.7. as Railway payment for telegraph maintenance
(c) : There was also a 'common revenue' of £1382.18.5.

Source: Uganda Protectorate 'Blue Books' 1901-1902 to 1925.

Table 4

Revenue, East Africa, 1901-1902 to 1925

Year	Postal Revenue (£)	Money Order Commission (£)	Postal Order Poundage (£)	Telegraph Revenue (£)	Telephone Revenue (£)	Railway Payment for Telegraph Maintenance (£)	Miscellaneous (£)
1901-1902	5115	3569	-	325(a)		-	4
1902-1903	N.A.	N.A.	-	N.A.		-	N.A.
1903-1904	N.A.	N.A.	-	N.A.		-	N.A.
1904-1905	N.A.	N.A.	-	N.A.		-	N.A.
1905-1906	6885	1407	-	3156		1557-6-8	-
1906-1907	6464	1789	2	3349		1557-6-8	-
1907-1908	8931	1549	18	3958		1557-6-8	-
1908-1909	8582	1598	44	4123		1557-6-8	-
1909-1910	8548	1483	55	4672		1557-6-8	471(b)
1910-1911	9586	1477	11	5258	737	1557-6-8	409
1911-1912	11430	1729	162	5677	773	1577-6-8	1087(c)
1912-1913	17679	2242	140	8057	1306	1557-6-8	978
1913-1914	18368	2844	163	10006	2232	1557-6-8	1067
1914-1915	16877	2304	159	10510	2043	1557-6-8	1282
1915-1916	14348	2663	158	13113	1645	1557-6-8	1181
1916-1917	22496	3247	157	17914	1803	1797-6-8	1494
1917-1918	25918	3243	114	19461	2601	2395-0-0	2189(c)
1918-1919	26008	3237	194	25643	3020	2395-0-0	2392
1919-1920	51993	2559	293	33691	4545	2694-7-6	353(c)
1920-1921	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
1921- (9 mths)	62217	5033	541	36751	7085	3592-0-0	2440(c)
1922	63732	3250	383	32393	7146	2590-0-0	3331(c)
1923	58307	2466	623	32962	7972	2590-0-0	2392
1924	63100	2876	500	39683	8299	2930-9-7 3/4	2384
1925(d)	72960	3770	518	37975	11525	4284-12-0	2931

Notes: N.A.: Not available
(a) : Autonomous Department (Expenditure £158-16-0 3/4)
(b) : Includes mail transit dues
(c) : Accounting procedure revised in these years
(d) : The 'common revenue' totalled £4449-3-6.

Source: East Africa Protectorate/Kenya Colony 'Blue Books' 1901-1902 to 1925.

Table 5

Operating Account 1911-1912 to 1922

Year	Gross Expenditure East Africa (£)	Gross Expenditure Uganda (£)	Cash Revenue (£)	Value of free services to Government (£)	Operating Surplus (£)
1911-1912	27637	13914	27763	N.A.	N.A.
1912-1913	29926	12614	38800	12285	8545
1913-1914	35928	15359	44400	13718	6918
1914-1915	48924	15568	41800	22752	52
1915-1916	45459	16149	42200	29918	10518
1916-1917	45848	16167	58700	58609	55309
1917-1918	56889	15750	66116	50397	43874
1918-1919	53249	15051	74950	49996	56647
1919-1920	71528	17017	92686	42419	46580
1920-1921	134661	33217	151986	57772	41880
1921 (9 mths)	113286	32559	103821	35278	-6746
1922	118094	38454	132727	34103	10282

Notes: N.A.: Not available
Expenditure figures exclude pensions and loan charges, depreciation etc.
A further expenditure of £61,543 provided from non-departmental sources to meet extra-ordinary working costs between 1914 and 1920 is also excluded.

Source: P. and T. Annual Reports 1911-1912 to 1922.

Table 6

Traffic, Uganda 1901-1902 to 1925

Year	Letters	Post Cards	Newspapers	Book Packets	Parcels	Telegrams
1901-1902	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	7063
1902-1903	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	10526
1903-1904	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	23900
1904-1905	204469	10983	63870	19799	6486	19660
1905-1906	239808	11349	75273	21437	8181	31148
1906-1907	409657	20449	108235	42900	9673	30686
1907-1908	505281	28032	112666	49692	12643	26867
1908-1909	484481	17953	116818	48448	15727	32158
1909-1910	508829	21759	120236	62101	15920	33278
1910-1911	548730	19930	107764	60796	17631	42697
1911-1912	588527	20193	108914	64491	19447	45951
1912-1913	667420	20286	139429	72098	19931	53165
1913-1914	769924	22388	167872	87048	24149	64686
1914-1915	844102	20690	180903	98418	24304	86038
1915-1916	886307	21724	189948	103339	29371	98952
1916-1917	1235876	23027	201345	118357	31772	131982
1917-1918	1234719	24176	211413	122441	24168	131094
1918-1919	1179282	24176	211413	120832	17908	133795
1919-1920	748897	30634	244067		24948	N.A.
1920-1921	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.		N.A.	N.A.
1921 (9 m)	737544	59148	220223		33482	108711
1922	753768	51140	225066		23967	67091
1923	903860	23376	327354		30809	79513
1924	999459	22454	370428		31977	107526
1925	1333404	22654	417509		44987	155069

Note: N.A.: Not available

Source: Uganda Protectorate 'Blue Books' 1901-1902 to 1925.

Table 7

Traffic, East Africa, 1901-1902 to 1915-1916

Year	Letters	Post Cards	Newspapers	Book Packets	Parcels	Telegrams
1901-1902	1085639	63935	510777		16432	6660
1902-1903	1419732	29280	382872		18317	7700
1903-1904	1106664	29256	295570		16241	29609
1904-1905	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.		N.A.	N.A.
1905-1906	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.		N.A.	N.A.
1906-1907	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.		N.A.	N.A.
1907-1908	1338153	101267	299782	186453	20928	81993
1908-1909	1549275	92495	286936	160615	23740	80852
1909-1910	1662176	88933	286985	160881	23594	84046
1910-1911	1735627	109574	294276	190978	27501	98585
1911-1912	1940460	110722	381266	250013	28132	115781
1912-1913	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	39655	N.A.
1913-1914	3168363	132019	561281	371848	52257	174768
1914-1915	3137873	114320	619383	443171	44677	245681
1915-1916	3294767	120036	650352	465329	61542	299262

Note: N.A: Not available

Source: East Africa Protectorate/ Kenya Colony 'Blue Books' 1901-1902 to 1925.

Table 8

Telecommunications Capital Expenditure
1901-1902 to 1918-1919

Year	Uganda Protectorate		East Africa Protectorate	
	Telegraphs (£)	Telephones (£)	Telegraphs (£)	Telephones (£)
1901-1902	N.A.	N.A.	10000	Rs.588/6[1]/4
1902-1903	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
1903-1904	27457	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
1904-1905	29205	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
1905-1906	32508	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
1906-1907	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
1907-1908	25033	360	92108	1146
1908-1909	26877	400	93438	1656
1909-1910	28048	405	N.A.	N.A.
1910-1911	28336	543	94168	2971
1911-1912	31160	1200	98205	3625
1912-1913	36850	1320	N.A.	N.A.
1913-1914	37592	2025	103927	5596
1914-1915	37592	2074	105361	8260
1915-1916	37592	3007	109469	9710
1916-1917	37592	3029	N.A.	N.A.
1917-1918	43533	3453	N.A.	N.A.
1918-1919	45133	3635	N.A.	N.A.

Notes: N.A.: Not available
Publication of these statistics was discontinued as from 1919-1920.

Source: East Africa and Uganda Protectorates 'Blue Books' 1901-1902 to 1919

Table 9

Development of Telephone Service 1914-1915 to 1925

Year	Telephones in Use: Official	Telephones in Use: Railway	Telephones in Use: Private	Exchange Calls: Kenya	Exchange Calls: Uganda
1914-1915	229		225	602194	158331
1915-1916	603		227	629774	174299
1916-1917	518		226	666560	164270
1917-1918	637		284	760637	137494
1918-1919	630		354	912749	196536
1919-1920	663		409	805988	211971
1920-1921	588		440	750689	225050
1921 (9 months)	557		526	593376	185631
1922	634		562	1039477	277802
1923	463	122	616	1098947	318177
1924	539	134	718	1235484	349443
1925	634	165	849	2076826	401956

Source: P. and T. Annual Reports 1914-1915 to 1925

Table 10

Inter-Protectorate Accounting 1907-8 to 1924

Year	EAP Pymt. to Uganda as est. Tlgrph. Rev.	Act. Uganda Tlgrph. Rev. rec. by EAP	Uganda pymt. to EAP in respect of Staff Chgs.	Uganda expdtr. for tlgrph Const. & Mntnce.
	(£)	(£)	(£)	(£)
1907-1908	1000	1091	1512	4
1908-1909	1200	1386	1611	4401
1909-1910	1300	1689	1678	4514
1910-1911	1689	2059	1737	4437
1911-1912	2759	2123	2223	6821
1912-1913	2692	2346	2349(c)	5108
1913-1914	2477(a)	2783	2391(d)	6364
1914-1915	3800	2533	2932	6029
1915-1916	4800	3155	4206	6340
1916-1917	3200	4602	4428	5523
1917-1918	3900	5382	4468	6317
1918-1919	5633	6945	4502	5613
1919-1920	7200	7523	4828	1976
1920-1921	12000(b)	11770	5435	N.A.
1921(9 m.)	10912	7137	12286	N.A.
1922	12500	8602	11376	16675
1923	8400	11480	N.A.	6546
1924	11200	15608	N.A.	9677

Notes: N.A.: Not available
(a) : ESA SMP 6179 and 1161c quote £2700
(b) : £8000 plus 50°/o to cover tariff alterations
(c) : ESA SMP 290/06 ESA SMP 1161b quotes £2380
(d) : ESA SMP 6179 and 1161b ESA 290/06 quotes £2150.

Sources: ESA SMP 290/06, 6179, 1161
EAP & T 766/21/2
766/21/3
East Africa and Uganda Protectorates 'Blue Books' 1907-08 to 1924

Table 11

Principal Revenues, Kenya-Uganda 1922 to 1932

Year	Postal		Telegraph		Telephone	
	Kenya (£)	Uganda (£)	Kenya (£)	Uganda (£)	Kenya (£)	Uganda (£)
1922	70696	11299	32393	7004	7146	1599
1923	63788	13495	32962	8809	7972	2671
1924	68862	15099	42613	11693	8299	3915
1925	83442	20876	43445	15674	11525	6473
1926	86133	20893	49445	14907	12680	6909
1927	99409	20045	49689	15506	15822	8836
1928	100283	21969	54181	16070	17182	9796
1929	105136	24419	55111	16739	21911	11104
1930	95572	22650	52304	14746	25649	11194
1931	94945	21990	45692	13227	27495	12001
1932	104510	25713	33298	9831	30767	11280

Source: P. and T. Annual Reports 1922-1932

Table 12

Commercial Account, Kenya 1926 to 1932

Year	Cash Revenue	Value of Free Services to Government (£)	Recurrent Expenditure (£)	Value of Building Rentals (£)	Value of Free Medical Services (£)	Value of Free Transport Services (£)	Capital Expenditure (£)	Depreciation of Plant (£)
1926	148258	11885	105153	10437	631	250	5135	18901
1927	165100	12810	112586	11526	643	250	7525	N.A.
1928	171646	14359	116037	12633	603	250	19671	N.A.
1929	182158	17550	124407	14692	868	250	14276	N.A.
1930	173525	16312	135523	16157	852	250	29815	N.A.
1931	168132	15455	134946	16005	773	318	22587	N.A.
1932	168575	15970	121804	15106	685	330	7083	N.A.

Notes: N.A.: Not available
This account is not strictly commercial. Some items are estimated and no allowance is made for pensions or Loan charges

Source: P. and T. Annual Reports 1926-1932

Table 13

Commercial Account, Uganda 1926 to 1932

Year	Cash Revenue (£)	Value of Free Services to Government (£)	Recurrent Expenditure (£)	Value of Building Rentals (£)	Value of Free Medical Services (£)	Value of Free Transport Services (£)	Capital Expenditure (£)	Depreciation of Plant (£)
1926	42709	4220	39133	4775	322	-	7969	85445
1927	44387	4087	41649	5422	337	-	5219	N.A.
1928	47835	4609	42828	5479	316	-	4434	N.A.
1929	52262	5367	43749	5218	463	-	6654	N.A.
1930	48590	5686	45744	5250	392	-	5995	N.A.
1931	47218	5462	47720	7423	396	-	9360	N.A.
1932	46824	6394	43078	7638	415	-	7496	N.A.

Notes: N.A.: Not available
This account is not strictly commercial. Some items are estimated and no allowance is made for pensions or Loan charges.

Source: P. and T. Annual Reports 1926-1932.

Table 14

Postal Traffic, Kenya-Uganda 1925 to 1932

Year	Number of Post Offices etc.	Number of Postal Items handled	Number of Parcels handled
1925	143	9041799	175585
1926	156	11451700	187856
1927	166	13283900	189902
1928	182	14745100	197381
1929	188	15967700	204193
1930	191	17363900	189201
1931	188	15433800	165460
1932	184	16449500	160600

Source: P. and T. Annual Reports 1925-1932

Table 15

Telecommunications Traffic Kenya-Uganda 1925 to 1932

Year	Number of Inland Telegrams	Number International Telegrams	Number of Telephones in service
1925	363851	162797	1648
1926	395759	186394	1782
1927	416891	203309	2131
1928	45606	231844	2362
1929	470951	245276	2811
1930	427483	237066	3180
1931	386717	203501	3457
1932	328622	185729	3461

Source: P. and T. Annual Reports 1925-1932

Table 16

Wireless- Telegraph Traffic Kenya-Uganda 1918 to 1927

Year	Number of Messages Handled		
	Mombasa	Kismayu	Total
1918-1919	3514	2578	6092
1919-1920	7235	2169	9404
1920-21	3551	2264	5815
1921 (9 months)	3050	1713	4763
1922	3517	1596	5113
1923	5327	1809	7136
1924	2942	1549	4491
1925	6276	-	6276
1926	3983	-	3983
1927	3465	-	3465

Notes: 1. Kismayu station passed to Somaliland in 1924, when the Province of Jubaland was ceded to Italy.
2. Lamu wireless station was never used for public traffic.

Source: E.A.P. & T. Engineering Branch, Kenya files.

Table 17

Revenue, Tanganyika 1921 to 1926

Year	Postal Revenue (£)	Money Order Commission (£)	Postal Order Poundage (£)	Telegraph Receipts (£)	Expenditure (£)
1921	8239	50	-	19681	72743
1922	16065	35	486	12570	79402
1923	18645	4	796	10915	81107
1924	16372	8	912	12426	67403
1925	20472	11	1043	15153	68790
1926	26035	51	1020	15422	65844

Source: Tanganyika Territory 'Blue Books' 1921-1926

Table 18

Comparative Expenditures, Tanganyika 1921-2 to 1927-8

Year	Personal Emoluments (£)	Passages (£)	Carriage of Mails (£)	Travelling Allowances (£)
1921-1922	66672	4010	3549	2851
1922-1923	54225	4323	3514	2218
1923-1924	51927	3726	3521	2231
1924-1925	51830	3284	4897	2612
1925-1926	51160	3830	4471	2794
1926-1927	54099	3233	7637	1491
1927-1928	50988	2614	6271	1905

Source: P. and T. Annual Reports 1921-1922 to 1927-1928

Table 19

Africanisation. Tanganyika 1922 to 1927

Year	1922	1923	1924	1925	1926	1927
Post						
Sub Postmaster	3	7	13	22	20	24
Accounts Clerk	5	7	7	9	11	12
Postal Clerk	-	-	3	8	9	4
Typist	4	6	5	3	3	3
Telegraphist	71	76	62	66	65	66
Telephonist	4	5	6	6	6	9
Wireless Operator	-	-	-	-	-	1
Total	87	101	96	114	114	119

Source: P. and T. Annual Reports 1922-1927

Table 20

Traffic. Tanganyika 1921 to 1926

Year	Number of Postal items	Number of Registered Letters	Number of Post Cards	Number of Newspapers	Number of Parcels	Number of Telegrams
1921	1347937		40724	334554	17372	261810
1922	1049958		31503	286526	22186	236400
1923	1103705	106290	37818	361149	25215	144594
1924	1283074	111082	27087	443392	33655	183131
1925	1574889	135587	36153	665231	37727	242704
1926	1888130	152126	39714	798207	45685	237590

Source: Tanganyika Territory 'Blue Books' 1921-1926

Table 21

Commercial Account 1933 to 1935

	Recurrent Expenditure (£)	Revenue Surplus over Recurrent Expenditure (£)	Value of Staff Quarters (£)	Value of Medical Services (£)	Value of Transport and Agents Services (£)	Capital Expenditure (£)	Value of Free Services to Government (£)
Kenya							
1933	126800	48733	14662	744	326	10752	21421
1934	122172	59075	14535	725	335	7325	20807
1935	130979	71189	13143	657	386	9091	20503
Uganda							
1933	43364	1053	7468	407	-	5042	6801
1934	44370	4653	7527	440	-	3382	8292
1935	47727	9645	6614	206	23	4810	8612
Tanganyika							
1933	80945	7858	5799	730	40	1473	24194
1934	78834	15663	5819	659	40	271	26490
1935	79377	23572	5839	610	80	7389	25912

Source: P. and T. Annual Reports 1933-1935

Note: These statistics are not truly 'commercial' because they make no allowance for pensions, depreciation or loan charges, which were carried by the three Governments. Publication of these statistics ceased in 1936, when G.B.Hebden became Postmaster General.

Table 22

Postal Traffic 1933 to 1948

Year	Number of Post Offices etc.	Number of letters handled	Number of Parcels handled
1933	316	19283479	226857
1934	316	19371811	240105
1935	317	20076000	255144
1936	314	21542400	267600
1937	318	24809600	283300
1938	323	26006300	278400
1939	322	26356300	249800
1940	318	22243700	N.A.
1941	320	25041800	336500
1942	323	30103900	424100
1943	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
1944	N.A.	37319700	404200
1945	338	64249100	528000
1946	345	48809300	745300
1947	359	48269000	816500
1948	374	61423100	760900

Note: N.A.: Not Available

Source: P. and T. Annual Reports 1933 to 1948

Table 23

Telecommunications Traffic 1933 to 1948

Year	Number of Inland Telegrams	Number of International Telegrams	Number of Telephones in Service	Number of Telephone calls Local	Number of Telephone calls Trunk
1933	514500	145900	4505	N.A.	N.A.
1934	570500	150900	4865	N.A.	N.A.
1935	603200	170400	5245	5767000	289000
1936	687900	179000	5663	6412100	305900
1937	843300	193100	6360	7685200	383300
1938	838400	177900	6956	8859700	406200
1939	882000	209500	7781	9804400	480800
1940	986300	310000	N.A.	10735300	529300
1941	1028900	482000	N.A.	11423100	580700
1942	1119300	567000	N.A.	12498600	618700
1943	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
1944	1433100	417400	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
1945	1475500	405000	12173	15545700	763500
1946	1607600	394900	12412	16059700	850800
1947	1675900	414400	13588	18112400	961800
1948	1924300	498600	14839	20317400	1087500

Note: N.A.: Not Available

Source: P. and T. Annual Reports 1933-1948

Table 24

Staff, 1926 to 1948

Year	European	Asian	African	Mauritian and Seychelles	Unestablished
1926	103	234		3	865
1927	107	246		3	963
1928	109	260		5	1270
1929	121	267		7	1259
1930	124	276		12	1311
1931	116	267		12	926
1932	103	243		11	915
1933	144	298		18	1696
1934	141	294		17	1540
1935	141	329		15	1536
1936	138	341		18	1929
1937	159	378		17	2088
1938	173	376	189	21	1973
1939	191	370	221	23	1985
1940	Not Available				
1941	Not Available				
1942	186	426	729	22	1604
1943	Not Available				
1944	Not Available				
1945	177	532	848	20	2000
1946	206	617	1000	20	1620
1947	242	645	1036	18	1735
1948	307	708	1514	18	868

Note: Tanganyika staff included from 1933.

Source: P. and T. Annual Reports 1926-1948

Table 25

Finance. Kenya 1928 to 1948

Year	Cash Revenue (£)	Recurrent Expenditure (£)	Revenue Surplus (£)	Value of Free Services to Government (£)
1928	171646	116037	55609	14359
1929	182158	124407	57751	17550
1930	173525	135524	38001	16312
1931	168132	134946	33186	15455
1932	168575	121804	46771	15970
1933	170024	126800	43224	21421
1934	176035	122172	53863	20807
1935	195851	130979	64872	20503
1936	198877	134028	64849	23805
1937	207234	142917	44317	30159
1938	200765	138204	62561	26045
1939	209218	139968	69250	33764
1940	246170	146808	99362	N.A.
1941	299834	172799	127035	N.A.
1942	382709	181610	201099	70848
1943	452270	209937	242333	82017
1944	448372	240187	208185	84814
1945	440451	270927	169524	117802
1946	496400	334408	161992	98276
1947	551557	399678	151879	85412
1948	649337	588528	60809	100711

Note: N.A.: Not Available

Source: P. and T. Annual Reports 1928 to 1948

Table 2c

Finance. Uganda 1928 to 1948

Year	Cash Revenue (£)	Recurrent Expenditure (£)	Revenue Surplus (£)	Value of Free Services to Government (£)
1928	47835	42028	5807	4609
1929	52262	43750	8512	5367
1930	48590	45744	2846	5686
1931	47218	47720	-502	5462
1932	46824	43078	3746	6394
1933	45491	43364	2027	6801
1934	48698	44370	4328	8292
1935	55603	47727	7876	8612
1936	60736	49990	11746	9705
1937	61536	51953	9583	11164
1938	61607	52952	8655	12766
1939	61111	53586	7525	14595
1940	65032	55649	9383	N.A.
1941	74468	60406	14062	N.A.
1942	76698	58004	18694	24211
1943	83721	65516	18205	27188
1944	93461	67993	25468	23883
1945	102307	76076	26231	27187
1946	118298	97219	21079	29117
1947	122270	109713	12557	29727
1948	133335	159442	-26107	31827

Note: N.A.: Not Available

Source: P. and T. Annual Reports 1928-1948

Table 27

Finance. Tanganyika 1928-1929 to 1948

Year	Cash Revenue (£)	Recurrent Expenditure (£)	Revenue Surplus (£)	Value of Free Services to Government (£)
1928-29	76914	86213	-9299	N.A.
1929-30	81337	94500	-13163	N.A.
1930-31	81267	92913	-11646	N.A.
1931-32	76964	95310	-8346	N.A.
1932 (9 mths)	54979	68829	-13850	N.A.
1933	71178	80945	-19767	24194
1934	74525	78834	-4319	26490
1935	83566	79377	4189	25912
1936	91625	82552	9073	28066
1937	99477	95345	4132	28438
1938	92099	85964	6405	34423
1939	86239	84172	2067	39373
1940	81846	82793	-947	N.A.
1941	88567	92454	-3887	N.A.
1942	105125	86181	18944	49163
1943	120476	92807	27669	62735
1944	140392	102652	37740	67965
1945	162765	106565	56200	64771
1946	183512	115498	68014	67905
1947	209704	151657	58047	70577
1948	253804	283904	30100	78383

Note: N.A.: Not Available

Source: P. and T. Annual Reports 1928-1929 to 1948.

Table 28

Telegraph Traffic 1949 to 1967

Year	Inland Traffic	International Traffic	Number of Telex Subscribers
1949	1965300	549400	-
1950	2062000	571200	-
1951	2225600	609500	-
1952	2045033	637250	-
1953	2064067	689042	-
1954	1933701	682608	-
1955	1795529	602865	-
1956	1656111	695333	-
1957	1573026	618965	-
1958	1258168	681934	-
1959	1089439	662631	-
1960	955639	638018	14
1961	988621	626345	24
1962	957617	644904	37
1963	892180	664775	48
1964	899184	689803	57
1965	915210	685661	105
1966	964857	665457	175
1967	968857	666000	218

Note: International Telex service opened in 1960.

Source: P. and T. Annual Reports 1949 to 1967

Table 29

Telegraph operating account 1949 to 1962

Year	Operating Expenditure (£)	Telephone service charges (£)	Operating Income (£)	Operating Deficit (£)	Net Revenue Deficit (£)
1949	203013	11320	229470	45463	N.A.
1950	275801	11235	241675	45361	N.A.
1951	615971	11298	527518	99751	N.A.
1952	675107	6609	637420	44296	N.A.
1953	714282	5310	653965	65628	N.A.
1954	764385	9145	690954	82576	N.A.
1955	879943	12401	80068	92270	107387
1956	895790	14019	770095	139714	162227
1957	877801	39746	855865	61682	87387
1958	902557	47779	950971	+ 635	23701
1959	904667	48655	921707	31615	55985
1960	985561	44857	950997	79421	110452
1961	1028902	45938	981588	93252	124824
1962	1017713	42415	986084	74044	172705

Note: N.A.: Not Available

Source: P. and T. Annual Reports 1949 to 1962

Table 30 -

Telephone Traffic 1949 to 1967

Year	Number of Telephones in service	Total of Local Calls (a)	Total of Trunk Calls	Number of Radiocall Subscribers (c)	Number of international radio-telephone calls (d)
1949	17000(b)	22120500	1385600	-	-
1950	20411	26108917	1517272	-	-
1951	25174	26800000	1710723	-	-
1952	29488	24645000	2580000	-	-
1953	35395	27047000	2058000	-	-
1954	41943	34449064	3103000	-	-
1955	47889	40660618	3046676	-	-
1956	52824	44200703	3811947	-	-
1957	57601	49193774	3626303	-	-
1958	62322	56820077	3498913	-	-
1959	67928	62813943	3842494	-	-
1960	71313	68726326	4384050	20	8609
1961	74941	77320704	3225388	142	10225
1962	78452	82892816	3332242	212	11462
1963	82886	91448264	3614809	289	13612
1964	89316	98132683	3864434	383	15493
1965	95452	105332932	3949249	397	11887
1966	103159	113407996	4348256	457	24352
1967	111146	125869115	4826859	521	32928

Note: (a) Includes trunk calls made on S.T.D. systems
(b) Approximate only
(c) Service started 1960
(d) Statistics only available 1960 onwards

Source: P. and T. Annual Reports 1949 to 1967

Table 31

Telephone Operating Account 1949 to 1962

Year	Operating Expenditure (£)	Operating Revenue (£)	Operating Profit (£)	Net Revenue Surplus (£)
1949	377010	287928	-89082	N.A.
1950	480926	355494	-125432	N.A.
1951	634001	536020	-97981	N.A.
1952	876802	786784	90018	N.A.
1953	991909	1054247	62338	N.A.
1954	1121417	1298263	176846	N.A.
1955	1560585	1548227	-12358	-396880
1956	1776596	1988015	211419	-98102
1957	1974194	2265474	291280	-150367
1958	2153769	2455116	301347	-179535
1959	2424918	2727073	302155	-198756
1960	2612701	3086557	473856	-31662
1961	2720428	3218701	498273	-40587
1962	2856296	3388527	532231	-323865

Source: P. and T. Annual Reports 1949 to 1962
Thereafter see Telecommunications Operating Account

Note: N.A.: Not Available.

Table 32

Telecommunications operating account 1962 to 1967

Year	Operating Expenditure (£)	Operating Revenue (£)	Operating Profit (£)	Agency Revenues (£)	Net Revenue Surplus (£)
1962	3916424	4374611	458187	4172	-496570
1963	4001053	4768759	767706	10685	- 95751
1964	4283372	5270678	987306	15438	29375
1965	4493553	5583019	1089466	17300	55599
1966	4767842	6067482	1299640	17974	327348
1967	4865295	6336714	1471419	13618	50110

Source: P. and T. Annual Reports 1962 to 1967.

Table 33

Postal Traffic 1949 to 1967

Year	Number of Post Offices	Total of Letters Handled	Total of Parcels Handled
1949	382	76467500	928900
1950	393	65314000	856378
1951	397	76081300	989117
1952	407	91363700	1149789
1953	425	93424200	1156532
1954	461	99526196	1448796
1955	463	106952000	1623754
1956	511	109853048	1282200
1957	530	120000000	1213704
1958	549	112500000	1098338
1959	557	119000000	1080981
1960	560	125000000	1073495
1961	570	125000000	1052200
1962	592	130000000	1089233
1963	600	139000000	1191615
1964	627	142000000	1176608
1965	691	4% (a)	1253618
1966	788	7% (a)	1249051
1967	849	5% (a)	1293496

Note: (a) represents the estimated increase on the previous year's traffic

Source: P. and T. Annual Reports 1949 to 1967

Table 34

Postal Operating Account 1949 to 1967

Year	Gross Operating Expenditure (£)	Postal Operating Revenue (£)	Postal Operating Profit (£)	Money Order Commission (£)	Postal Order Poundage (£)	Agency Revenues (£)	Gross Postal Revenue (£)	Gross Operating Profit on Postal and Remittance Services (£)	Net Revenue Surplus (£)
1949	593472	814747	221275	26455	3818	N.A.	845020	251548	N.A.
1950	609570	852710	243140	27082	5004	N.A.	884796	275226	N.A.
1951	732475	977555	145480	30471	5935	N.A.	1013961	281486	N.A.
1952	861960	1234156	372196	31613	7013	N.A.	1272782	410822	N.A.
1953	1028705	1342527	313822	32529	7936	N.A.	1382992	354287	N.A.
1954	1202024	1630287	428263	33512	8388	N.A.	1672187	470163	N.A.
1955	1434988	1824301	389313	38097	10137	N.A.	1872535	437547	340316
1956	1563840	1738265	174425	37881	12203	N.A.	1788349	224509	191461
1957	1586116	1746426	160310	36424	12378	N.A.	1795228	209112	167248
1958	1646952	2179229	532277	32847	13359	N.A.	2225435	578483	533708
1959	1703848	2176158	472310	30561	14918	N.A.	2221637	517789	475672
1960	1969603	2265911	296308	28241	14810	142965	2451927	482324	438965
1961	2109790	2302686	192896	27611	14287	159449	2504033	394243	342056
1962	2174984	2426519	251535	26410	13388	153557	2619874	444890	205626
1963	2350737	2489594	139857	29764	13693	151262	2684313	334576	184688
1964	2359114	2516601	157487	32484	16160	141993	2707238	348124	198015
1965	2495767	2690910	195143	36840	18828	139900	2886478	390711	229455
1966	2622546	2856754	234208	40942	10966	136274	3043936	421390	279554
1967	2815712	2929360	113648	45803	8739	139253	3113155	297443	164682

Note: N.A.: Not available

Source: P. and T. Annual Reports 1949 to 1967.

Table 35

Staff 1949 to 1962

Year	Total Staff	Unestablished and Subordinate (African)	European	Graded Staff		Mauritian and Seychellois	% of graded posts held by Africans
				Asian	African		
1949	4138	844	431	986	1866	11	57%
1950	4526	1008	492	1079	1932	15	56%
1951	4944	1080	501	1221	2121	21	55%
1952	5349	1010	554	1297	2469	19	57%
1953	5501	1035	572	1362	2515	17	56%
1954	6116	1747 (a)	567	1243	2540	19	58%
1955	5782	973	636	1451	2700	22	56%
1956	5923	1022	660	1445	2785	11	57%
1957	6092	1080	650	1466	2866	30	57%
1958	7204	2078 (a)	685	1584	2832	25	55%
1959	7034	2072 (a)	593	1632	2711	26	55%
1960	7099	2096 (a)	585	1627	2766	25	55%
1961	7067	1957 (a)	524	1528	3029	19	59%
1962	7039	1992 (a)	399	1476	3156	16	65%

Note: (a) includes ungraded regular minor employees.

The publication of these statistics was discontinued in 1962.

Source: P. and T. Annual Reports 1949 to 1962

Table 3b

Staff 1961 to 1967

Year	:	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967
Graded	:	5110	5047	4916	4754	4823	4968	5025
Unestablished) Subordinate)	:	1957	1992	(483	1235	1336	1602	1719
				(1567	1488	1515	1626	1643
Total	:	7067	7039	6966[b]	7477	7674	8196	8387
Number of Africans holding graded posts	:	3029	3156	4916	4754	4823	4968	5025
% of Africans holding graded posts	:	59%	63%	65%	78%	80%	80%	83%
Number of Africans holding Higher Executive and Supervisory Posts	:	101[a]	226[a]	374	624	715	N.A.	N.A.
% of Higher Executive and Supervisory Posts held by Africans	:	N.A.	N.A.	32%	56%	66%	67%	73%

Notes: a : supervisory only
b : excluding 549 staff in training at the end of 1963
N.A.: Not available

Source: P. and T. Annual Reports 1961-1967

Table 37

Direct Costs of Training and Africanisation 1949 to 1967

Year	Training Postal	Training Telegraph	Training Telephone	Total Pensions Provisions	Compensation to designated officers	Total cost of Training
	(£)	(£)	(£)	(£)	(£)	(£)
1949	5823	5276	7097	112003	-	18196
1950	6391	6033	9922	141723	-	22346
1951	8709	5698	10926	145446	-	25333
1952	10535	17169	12000	152891	-	29704
1953	8837	6430	16406	163976	-	31673
1954	4883	4636	21970	268843	-	31849
1955	9798	6779	27920	326788	-	44497
1956	11939	6709	34877	402542	-	53525
1957	20479	5334	34145	430298	-	59958
1958	21377	11215	25040	446284	-	57632
1959	14460	8232	27739	450419	-	50431
1960	27796[a]	16678[a]	45416[a]	535260	-	89890[a]
1961	58512[a]	19664[a]	105988[a]	620507	-	184162[a]
1962	66066[b]	192411[b]		572617	571085	258477[b]
1963	98555[b]	251066[b]		551041	297446	350221[b]
1964	118867[b]	270289[b]		540116	299971	389156[b]
1965	82258[b]	277987[b]		588577	288270	360245[b]
1966	94580[b]	265742[b]		598459	262038	360322[b]
1967	103636[b]	301710[b]		628641	7069	405346[b]

Notes: a : localisation and training
b : Africanisation and training

Source: Annual Reports

Table 38

General Operating Account 1949 to 1967

Year	Operating Income (£)	Operating Expenditure (£)	Operating Profit (£)	Net Revenue Surplus (£)
1949	1362418	1234095	128323	73581
1950	1493200	1388767	104433	-3982
1951	2077499	1993745	83754	- 927
1952	2787004	2330460	456544	277803
1953	3091204	2740207	350997	61792
1954	3661404	3096971	564433	263410
1955	4220830	3887917	332913	-67514
1956	4546459	4250245	296214	-68928
1957	4916567	4477857	438710	-70506
1958	5631522	4751057	880465	332472
1959	5870417	5082088	788329	220931
1960	6489481	5612722	876759	296851
1961	6704322	5905058	799264	176645
1962	6994485	6091408	903077	-290944
1963	7453072	6350790	1102282	88937
1964	7997916	6642486	1335430	227390
1965	8469497	6989320	1480177	285054
1966	9111418	7390388	1721030	606902
1967	9449869	7681007	1768862	214792

Source: P. and T. Annual Reports 1949-1967

Table 39

Central and Territorial
Headquarters Costs 1957 to 1967

Year	Headquarters (£)	Regional Headquarters (a) Postal (£)	Telegraph (£)	Telephone (£)
1957	294058	32523	6185	40930
1958	295072	39450	6352	45262
1959	298193	46926	8283	47093
1960	406711	54359	10810	54097
1961	408134	46355	18402	53644
1962	435684	48674	71091	
1963	423215	44288	74753	
1964	438834	50584	64238	
1965	476705	56794	68542	
1966	484372	62728	80414	
1967	517911	67824	83636	

Note: (a) Regional 1957-60
Operational 1961
Territorial 1962-66
Regional 1967

Source: P. and T. Annual Reports 1957 to 1967

Table 40

Comparative Expenditures

Year	Salaries. Allowances. etc. (£)	Motor Transport (£)	Conveyance of Mails (£)
1949	405706	12717	220337
1950	455422	11445	202342
1951	578004	8377	249043
1952	684282	8958	307574
1953	809568	17271	374825
1954	993801	16129	420910
1955	1122886	15666	554019
1956	1204137	23479	522879
1957	1230857	14491	512409
1958	N.A.	N.A.	491330
1959	N.A.	N.A.	527101
1960	N.A.	N.A.	530428
1961	N.A.	N.A.	558422
1962	N.A.	N.A.	597845
1963	N.A.	N.A.	657574
1964	N.A.	N.A.	675502
1965	N.A.	N.A.	682426
1966	N.A.	N.A.	735451
1967	N.A.	N.A.	799338

Notes: (a) Altered to 'Renewals' in 1960.
(b) Accounting procedure changed
N.A.: Not available

1949 to 1967

Plant Maintenance (£)	Losses by Default and Compensation (£)	Depreciation (a) (£)
211282	517	43047
266699	777	45155
376827	2040	45101
423429	4053	46081
524259	4502	45673
554697	7521	43436
642084	6527	267466 (b)
695249	6559	319939
745498	6112	373326
680244	N.A.	437383
749582	N.A.	563651
818316	N.A.	564094
777409	N.A.	582502
798737	N.A.	636664
785780	N.A.	643327
820376	N.A.	666954
867154	N.A.	702923
956065	N.A.	675215
941837	N.A.	724434

Source: P. and T. Annual Reports 1949-1967

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