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KENYAN AGRICULTURAL POLICY:
The Colonial Roots of African
Smallholder Agricultural Policy
and Services.

By

Patrick O. Alila

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ABSTRACT

In their attempts to find ways and means of achieving growth and equity objective in national development a major problem which has confronted both intellectuals and practitioners alike is that of unequal regional growth. It is the aim of this paper focusing on differential agricultural policy and services between regions to enhance our understanding of unequal regional growth as having origins in uneven agricultural development.

The paper traces the evolution, during the colonial period, of Kenyan agricultural policy and services for African smallholder areas defined as those mainly engaged in subsistence agriculture. In contrast to approaches highlighting in a chronological order for the whole country, instances of policy especially innovations, and those emphasising marketed output for the whole economy the approach used identifies manifestations of policy resulting from attempts by the colonial administration to cope with contingencies brought about by crises such as World War I and II, the Mau Mau Emergency etc. with particular reference to the African areas. Thus it is towards the end of the colonial period, for the most part engineered by crises, that an agricultural policy for these areas emerges out of piecemeal actions on the part of the colonial administration and reactions by Africans. It is a major contention of the paper that the policy has basically remained the same in the post-independence era and is therefore crucial to an understanding of the present functioning of policy and services for the areas in question.

CONTENTS

Introduction

Some Conceptual and Methodological Issues

Crisis Administration

African Small-holder Areas: A Vanishing Species?

Crisis Agricultural Policy and Services

Uganda Railway
European Settlement
World War I and II
Mau Mau Emergency.

Introduction:

It is a generally accepted point that the basis of the present Kenyan agricultural development was laid down during the colonial period. Furthermore that some policies formulated in that period basic to the economy especially the agricultural sector have in fact been inherited intact by the independent government. Hence the argument that even today after more than a decade of independence we cannot discuss Kenya's current agricultural development policy without continually referring to policies and attitudes that were initiated at varying stages of the colonial era and which have contributed to the present structure, performance and problems of the agricultural industry in Kenya.¹ It follows, therefore, that the structural arrangements currently used in implementing the agricultural policy or providing agricultural services also have their origins in the colonial period to which they must be traced for a better understanding of their present functioning. To that end, we shall here address ourselves to the question: what significance the colonial agricultural policies had for the present structure of agricultural services and the resulting direction of agricultural development.

Some Conceptual and Methodological Issues:

In trying to answer the above question we shall not, unlike others noted below, give a countrywide chronological account of the colonial agricultural policy but will confine ourselves as much as possible to the former so-called African or Native² reserves. Although the fact that the area of our research formed part of Central Kavirondo and was located deep in Nyanza, one of the three major African reserve areas, bordered to the west by only the waters of Lake Victoria, is an important reason for such a focus, it is not the major rationale for this particular methodological stance.

1. Smith L. D. "An Overview of Agricultural Development Policy" in Heyer J. et al. ed: Agricultural Development in Kenya An Economic Assessment, Nairobi, OUP 1976, p. 111.

2. Native, White, Kavirondo etc, terms commonly used by the colonial administration meant to convey the sense of original users.

To begin with the two common approaches used in discussing Kenyan agricultural policy during the colonial period are the conventional historical approach of recounting in a chronological order the important agricultural developments for the whole economy³ or using the economist's key index of national economic development, the growth of marketed output to map out basically in a chronological order these agricultural developments for the entire economy.⁴ The major shortcoming common to both approaches is the extent to which farming in the European areas, or more precisely the former White Highlands, is played up, leading implicitly or explicitly to the erroneous conclusion that European settler farming was the backbone of the Kenyan economy. Moreover that it had assisted the development of African agriculture. Thus a fair consideration is not given to African agriculture per se and the many problems that farming in African areas vis-a-vis European areas continued to be faced with which have left an indelible mark on it mainly as a result of having borne the burden of propping up the latter and not vice versa.

The African population in the reserves was for example subjected to severe constraints as a result of being variously deprived of the three main factors of production in agriculture through land alienation and the extraction of labour and capital mainly for the benefit of European farming. Secondly the complete ban on some cash crops and the coercive methods of introduction of others in African areas in particular limited their incorporation into the market economy. Consequently their share of marketed output dwindled in the latter part of the colonial period instead of increasing as anyone would expect. And though this is correctly pointed out by those using the approaches in question the cause is overlooked as shown by the following quotation from one of the texts:

One of the most striking contrasts between the economy of the 1920's and that of the pre-war period was the far smaller part now played by independent African production in the export trade. In 1912-13 at a conservative estimate, 70 per cent by value of agricultural exports had been

3. Wrigley, cc. Kenya: The Patterns of Economic Life 1902-45. in Harlow, Vetal, eds History of East Africa, Vol II O.U.P. 1965 pp. 231-2; Clayton E.S., Agrarian Development in Peasant Economies, Pergamon Press, 1964; Brown, L.H. "Agricultural Change in Kenya 1945-60," Food Research Institute Studies Vol VIII No. 1 1968.

4. Heyer J., A Survey of Agricultural Development in the Small Farm Areas of Kenya since the 1920s. IDS Working Paper No. 194. October 1974

"native produce". In 1928 the proportion was less than 20 percent. Even in absolute terms the increase had been small, and since 1925 there had actually been a noticeable decline... over half was represented by hides and skins, the automatic by-product of subsistence pastoralism. The export of sim-sim, once so important to the Kavirondo economy, had dwindled into insignificance. Attempts to establish a cotton industry had been renewed in 1923 but had met with little success: during the 1920s the export value of this crop only once exceeded £10,000.⁵

Thirdly, negative and at times retrogressive policies particularly when the so-called mother country was fighting her two major wars and during the Mau Mau Emergency, a crisis also entirely of her own creation, resulted in severe dislocations of agricultural development in the native areas. One such very significant dislocation was the emergence of landlessness which instead of being eradicated to increase total production by involving as many people as possible in production was regarded highly as an inevitable positive development and later constituted the cornerstone of "A Plan to Intensify the Development African Agriculture."⁶

In short, in view of the obvious devastating biases against African farming one would have thought that in analysing agricultural development during the colonial period, whatever line of investigation one chooses to follow, one would at least take cognizance of the broad thesis that to succeed the settlers had to have not only some kind of monopoly over the new economic infrastructure created by the colonial system, but also be in a position to undermine the control which Africans had over their own productive capacity.⁷

5. Wrigley C.C. op cit p 243

6. Swynnerton R.J.M., A Plan to Intensify the Development of African Agriculture in Kenya, Government Printer, Nairobi, 1954

7. Brett, E.A. Colonialism and Underdevelopment in East Africa, The Politics of Economic Change, 1919-1939, Heinemann, Nairobi 1973, p. 168

Instead, what one encounters in writings using the approaches in question with regard to African areas is extreme concern with innovations that were actually introduced into African areas despite the fact that they were mainly for purposes external to these areas.⁸ They were mainly geared towards boosting export trade at certain strategic times; or preventing decimation of the African population by famine which threatened to curtail or bring to an end the surplus extraction or labour supply from these areas; all of which European farming depended on for survival. In addition they had to follow set patterns and take particular predetermined forms.

An argument advanced specifically in connection with the overall growth of marketed output, mainly as a result of adoption and growing of various crops, which clearly condones the overwhelming advantages European farming enjoyed and implies a crucial role for the economy, is that African agriculture was only developed to the extent that it was not competitive with the interests of the European Sector - as if the various measures taken with regard to African farming were positively aimed at developing African agriculture while that of Europeans got only its fair share.

An important variation on this innovations theme, reminiscent of the thinking of colonial administrators, which betrays the extremely exploitative and at the same time choosey motive underlying the measures effected, is to stereotype whole communities as either tribal, conservative and resistant to change or individualistic and innovative - the two arch types being the Luo and Kikuyu communities respectively.⁹ On the one hand the successful adaptation by the Kikuyu in particular to new circumstances in the face of their extreme deprivation especially through loss of land, even though this set the stage for a relatively higher level of exploitation: and the ensuing successful adoption of a particular set of innovations whose benefits were well known to them but from which they had been barred, are highly dramatized

8. Smith L.D. op cit is an important exception to this trend.

9. Clayton op cit p. 45

and viewed with great approval.

It is interesting to note that although not much later on successful adoption similarly applied to communities as far a field as the Kisii of Nyanza and the Meru at the foot of Mt. Kenya, mainly due to almost identical ecological conditions found in these areas, this development is however not taken as being of the same significance. On the other hand other groups refusing to embrace certain specific innovations only whose benefits were not apparent to them, or no attempt was made to at least demonstrate them if there were any, are branded conservative with little or no reference to either policy content as well as methods of implementation or the mitigating socio-economic factors these groups had to contend with.¹⁰

A more plausible interpretation especially of the latter situation is that an end to be served by the innovations¹¹ was contemplated and once introduced they had to be accepted. And no contrary behaviour was tolerated unless there was a complete disaster as in the famous case of Tanganyika groundnut scheme which was abandoned. This however does not conform to the now widely known innovations studies finding on adoption of innovations that when introduced an innovation can either be accepted or rejected depending on socio-economic and other factors. At any rate, whatever the outcome it is not irreversible should circumstances making for acceptance or rejection decision change.

It is in this light that the general comment that what was in all cases questionable and was indeed questioned by the people was the sociological implications in introducing these technical innovations¹² can be viewed as

10. Smith appropriately refutes the conventional wisdom that Nyanza people were traditional in outlook and unwilling to accept change. Smith op cit p. 117.

11. Hay points out the actual status of these innovations in the African farming system arguing that experimentation with new crops and implements was a regular feature of the agricultural system ... long before the colonial period. The presence of the British with their conscious attempts to intervene in the agricultural system simply intensified the pace of change. Hay M.J. Economic Change in Luoland, Kowe, 1890-1945, Ph.D thesis University of Wisconsin, 1972 pp 129-30.

12. Cliffe, L.R. 'Nationalism and the Reaction to Enforced Agricultural Change in Tanganyika during the Colonial Period in Taamuli, A Political Science Forum. Vol 1 No 1 July 1970 Dept of Political Science Univ. of Dar es Salam
p 5

getting to the crux of the matter. The somewhat obvious inference is that had there been genuine motives to develop African agriculture better judgement would have prevailed particularly in the execution of measures effected, which for all practical purposes was through coercion as discussed further below, and possibly minimal planning done. Thus that lukewarm support for or even total rejection of certain innovations could have been transformed into widespread adoption presents itself as a very strong possibility. The style of administration used by the colonial administration could not however allow for such a course of action.

Crisis Administration

Thus the premise of the approach focussing on African areas to be adopted in this analysis is that with regard to these areas the colonial administration employed, to a much greater extent relative to European areas, a particular style of administration which in administrative theory jargon has come to be known as crisis administration. In other words that it reacted to problems as they reached crisis points. It is then that action was taken on various contingencies encountered in desperate attempts to avert the crises rather than formulating a line of action before the fact. Especially because their economy was not operating on the same principles as the market economy the African areas naturally presented many more contingencies in the face of crises. Furthermore due to the very nature of their economy, and more so because they were regarded by the administration as peripheral to the market economy and there was therefore no planned action to achieve any set of goals in these areas, leave alone positive ones, except of course in so far as European areas stood to benefit, in the long run at least, they bore the brunt of crisis administration.

The basic tenet of crisis administration was not consensus, or conformity to the interests of the African population, as those trying to compile as long a list as possible of new crops introduced over the years, be they for cash or foodstuff purposes, plus the accompanying services would lead one to believe. It was rather a conflict of interests at least in terms of the nature of the demands that were placed on the population by the administration - not to mention its attitude towards natives - which used all means possible to see them fulfilled with greater or less vigour depending on the gravity of a particular crisis. Likewise the contingencies were more or less depending on the magnitude of the vigour which determined the level of interaction with the populace.

This is not to deny that some of these actions yielded some positive results. The point is that such results were mere side effects and not the goals the actions intended to achieve. For example, while a greater variety of foodstuffs relative to the period before the introduction of new ones improved the level of nutrition of the population the aim was to ensure the supply of labour and not necessarily having a healthy labour force at that. Similarly, although cash earned by Africans from wage labour or crops sold helped them satisfy some wants made mandatory by involvement in the market economy its express purpose was to enable Africans to pay taxes and not to provide them with an adequate purchasing power¹³ These, and other similar requirements, ran directly counter to the proper functioning of the subsistence economy in the short run and in the long run jeopardised the development of the agricultural sector especially in the African areas. A very important consequence of increased disruption of African economy by the colonial administration was that nationalist consciousness gained momentum as a result of articulation of African interests which in turn led, as everyone now knows, to the achievement of political independence.

As to its mode of operation, crisis administration exhibited two main features. The first one, discussed fittingly by Liebenow was coercion.¹⁴ He argues that in contrast to the traditional African technique of agricultural education, which relied largely upon demonstration and observation, innovation under colonial rule took place largely under threat of coercion. The transformation of the economy took place initially in response to the demands of the tax collector for cash as already pointed out rather than produce. Within the subsistence economy the only way to secure cash was to grow a cash crop which could be sold to European or Asian traders. Later the transformation was spurred through legislation (nominally passed by African councils or chiefs) which carried with it the threat of fines or imprisonment for failure to comply.

13. Leys' argument, based on calculations using Wrigley's figures, is that African purchasing power was kept about as low as was possible, short of not paying for labour in cash at all. Leys C. Underdevelopment in Kenya. The Political Economy of Neo-Colonialism 1964-71, Heinemann, London, 1975, p 32.

14. Liebenow, J.G., Agriculture, Education, and Rural Transformation - with particular reference to East Africa., The Carnegie Seminar on Political and Administrative Development, 1969, Dept of Political Science, Indiana University Phamington pp. 11-12.

There was for example a whole series of "Thou shalt not" orders relating to the protection of forests, grasslands, water holes and hunting preserves. There was a series, too, of "Thou shalt" orders which required people to plant cash crops for tax purposes or an extra field of cassava as a reserve against famine. These were followed by orders which required Africans to plant in a specific way, rid their fields of proscribed noxious weeds, or use a specific manuring technique. Thus, through the constant threat of coercion, reform in agriculture was to take place. It was argued by administrators underlining the persistent crisis atmosphere of their operation that they did not have time to let education or cash incentives provide the stimuli to change; by the time these took effect, the natural resources of Africa would have been exhausted.

What made the coercion so objectionable is that administrators seldom took time to present the reform in terms which were meaningful to the African cultivator. Being asked to increase production for its own sake, without any assurance that he would have more things to buy or more schools for his children, made little sense. The only tangible results the peasant could observe from higher production were higher taxes, which were used to pay the salaries of policemen, tax-collectors, agricultural officers, and others who would only make his life increasingly miserable. Moreover the African farmer was constantly being asked to deal with problematical threats to his future (such as the denuding of forests where he and his forefathers had cut wood for generations without apparent loss) rather than to respond to the perceived needs of the present.

Colonial administrators argued that the value of coercion must be tested by the results. In areas where force was systematic and persistent, it did succeed in changing habits and the present generation of independent Africans is the richer for it.¹⁵ It is they who are having the title deeds to secure loans and keeping grade-cattle the preparatory activities to which their fathers performed under threat of fine or imprisonment. Yet this argument fails to consider what the results might have been had education and incentives been improved. It ignores the question of how many really good and imaginative farmers left the land, particularly when faced with genuine adverse socio-economic conditions rather than continue to submit to senseless threats. Moreover, compulsory farming although it exposed the

15. Liebenow *ibid.*

underlying motives of serving the needs of foreign colonialists, it prejudiced African attitudes against agricultural extension programs as something which could improve the lot of farmers.

Yet another consequence of the punitive approach to Agricultural innovation which was to be of short-range disadvantage to the colonial administration and of long-range disadvantage to the African nationalists/ was the exploitation by the nationalists of farmers' hostility toward the various agricultural rules and orders.¹⁶

It is in this context that political opposition to land consolidation in Central Nyanza for example should be seen although there have been repeated attempts to use it especially by the colonial administration during the dying days of their rule as proof of conservatism of the Luo community which incidentally is not confined to this district alone. The problem as far as the nationalists generally were concerned was that they found it politically difficult when they assumed leadership of the country to reintroduce officially the very measures they once opposed.

The second feature has been appropriately termed experimentalism.¹⁷ The first major shortcoming in this case was the quality of personnel used who were either totally ignorant or had little prior experience with tropical agriculture as well as their limited numbers. In the early days it was the district commissioner who assumed responsibility for innovation. With only a liberal arts background acquired at Oxford the political administrator was a rank amateur. His untutored advice could spell famine or pestilence and, only by accident, prosperity. The later addition of first veterinary and then agricultural officers provided a measure of expertise. However the specialist staff was very short handed; and even if they spent the better part of each month on tour in their districts, they could not hope to reach more than a fraction of the population. Consequently, they had little time in which to educate and persuade even if they had known the local language.¹⁸ In addition by the nature of crisis personnel problem made manifest yet another shortcoming in that to save the situation all available personnel even missionaries and traders regardless of their original assignments had to direct all their efforts towards averting the crisis. Thus there was only a thin line between administration, technical officers and other personnel. The result was not only that persons had to perform tasks to which they were unsuited but also, and this is more important, that the same familiar method of coercion had to be used.

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid.

18. Ibid.

Secondly they were not prepared to listen to their African charges who had, at the very minimum, managed at least to survive at the subsistence level. The African had some crude knowledge of his soils, had worked out a rough technology and had even developed a primitive 'meteorological science'.¹⁹ Later other administrators would agree with Robert Delavignette, who had served in the colonial service in French West Africa, that African agriculture:

was a complete mystery to us.....The whole situation was so different from what we had expected that we sometimes even denied to these people the status of peasants; we did not realise how they must have laboured and suffered to make their soil into cultivable land, and we regarded them as merely labourers, only fit to be used on European plantations.²⁰

Experimentalism therefore often took the form of a doctrinaire approach to cultivation instead of taking into account the great variety of soil conditions in different parts of the colony. For example while cotton could be suitably grown in low lying black cotton soil areas of Central Kavirondo and rice in the irrigable Kano plains they were introduced in the highland areas and worse still in the more hilly North Kavirondo District only to be withdrawn later in the latter areas. And within the population the target of agricultural officers towards whom most of the educational efforts were directed were the men. However, such a strategy failed to recognise that agriculture was a community-wide enterprise and that many of the vital roles were reserved for women and children.

All in all what is highly amazing is that experimentalism despite various shortcomings became a regular feature of rural reform. In Tanganyika the Africans referred to it as "Wazimu wa Mzungu" or the "white man's madness." It was to be anticipated that each new district or agricultural officer would have his pet projects. Since he could not possibly pay attention to the whole gamut of affairs which were legally under his jurisdiction, he concentrated upon one or more items which would be his contribution to district development (and possibly to his promotion as well). As soon as the Africans discovered what the madness of the new officer was they could relax with regard to programs of his predecessor. This not only led to a great deal of

19. Ibid,

20. Quoted in Liebenow op cit p. 13

misdirected energy on the part of African cultivators, it also meant that agricultural innovation tended to be both capricious and transitory. Projects once launched and then permitted to lapse were even more difficult to introduce at a later date.²¹

African Small-holder Areas: A Vanishing Species?

Due to the dynamics of agricultural development in different parts of African areas greatly accelerated mainly by political developments the situation in these areas did not remain uniform over time. An important consequence of this has been a gradual but occasionally rapid decline of what is termed African small-holder areas. A major cause of this decline has been the relocation of the African population particularly to former European areas or more accurately to originally African owned land although not necessarily the original owners or their descendants. Hence the need to delimit the extent of the discussion spatially taking into account the dynamics of the situation.

The declining African smallholder areas that we are directly concerned with are those in which subsistence agriculture has been and for the remainder continues to be the predominant mode of production.²² The argument is that it is in these areas especially the latter that agricultural policy and services as practised during the colonial period had and continues to have the greatest impact and are therefore the best illustration of colonial legacy for agricultural development. In view of this it is of great significance that a good part of the remainder of the areas in question fall in a category of areas that have been earmarked for concentrated development efforts by the independent government²³ as that raises the vexed question of whether there have been any qualitative differences in policy and services.²⁴ An example of the areas described is Kisumu district, a part of the former Central Kavirondo. And although it is more familiar and will therefore receive special attention what is said about the district and generally of the old Nyanza Province by and large applies to other similar areas.

21. Ibid p14.

22. Heyer et al give an alternative more wide embracing definition. Our concern to a large extent correspond: to their first category; the 'non-scheduled areas', the former African areas, with their well over one million small farms and two hundred and fifty thousand pastoral holdings. Heyer J and Waweru J.K. "The Development of the Small Farm Areas" in Heyer J. et al eds op cit Chapter 6. In terms of Gross Domestic Product it is these areas which are largely responsible for Product Outside Monetary Economy; see for example Republic of Kenya, Economic Survey, 1974, p2.

23. For description of these areas see Alila, O.P. The Role of Public Bureaucracy in Agricultural Development in Kisumu District, Western Kenya. IDS Working Paper No. 277 pp 5-6.

24. A partial answer is given in Alila op cit pp 24-35

It is worth noting that the two major landmarks in the reduction of the expanse of these areas have been the emergency and the achievement of political independence. Up until the period of the emergency these areas could be viewed as being coterminus with African occupied land. After the emergency the areas growing cash crops such as coffee, tea, pyrethrum, crops which were formerly banned in African areas, no longer fall within the grouping mainly due to the nature of their operations, especially capital outlay. With independence, areas affected by the government's major land re-allocation policies drop out. These include, ^{are replaced by incoming African farmers} areas from which European farmers/being granted benefits enjoyed by their predecessors, as well²⁵ as irrigation and other settlement schemes. In addition to large scale African farms emerging in these particular areas basically it is the nature of the operations greatly aided by the special attention of the government which disqualifies them from smallholder areas grouping.

Lastly it should be emphasised that the grouping is not a hard and fast one but is rather on the basis of the extent to which the population in any particular area is engaged in subsistence agricultural production. And in terms of policy the main factors differentiating governmental political and economic policy between one area and another during the colonial period with major consequences for the ensuing period have been the possibility and extent of alienation of land to non-Africans and the supply of labour to non-African enterprises.

Crisis Agricultural Policy and Services.

In view of the foregoing discussion of crisis administration it should be obvious that the colonial administration could not and did not in fact formulate a policy and then systematically proceed to implement it employing instruments instituted and appropriate to the development of the agricultural sector in the African or native reserves. However, one can still talk of there having been an agricultural policy in two closely related senses. First that both action and inaction constitute a decision. Secondly, decision(s) or lack of decision (s) on the part of colonial administration in the long run at least constituted a policy. Such a policy is characterised first by fragmentation in the sense that there could be action in some areas while there was in action in others although decision may or may not have applied to the

different areas.²⁶ Secondly, it is cumulative in the sense that it is these fragments which add up over time and constitute policy which the colonial administration may have been aiming at through trial and error or may have been unaware of completely. In addition occurrence of some fragments more than once is not ruled out.

However, as opposed to compiling a chronological catalogue of isolated fragments one can best observe manifestations of such a policy substantively during a major crisis. It was then that under stress the administration was forced to make a decision and act or its particular response made it evident that either a decision was made and no action taken or no decision was made and consequently no action taken.²⁷ One can then relate occurrences during crises to aspects of policy coming after or even going before as in the case of Swynnerton plan which in essence compiled fragments of policy before the emergency.

We have identified four major crisis crucial to colonial policy formation which will be discussed in a sequential order to piece together colonial agricultural policy and services so as to establish the extent to which African Smallholder areas agricultural policy and services have their roots in that period. The first crisis was the completion of Uganda Railway which suddenly presented the colonisers with the problem of making the colony pay. The second was the Settlement of Europeans which led to land alienation and the urgent need to find both labour and capital. Thirdly, the two World Wars which required immediate

26. This is a different usage of fragmentation from that of Braybrooke and Lindblom in their theory of disjointed incrementalism. Their use of fragmentalism in decision-making in essence refers to inputs by participants at various points in the decision-making process. In the case under discussion not only are there no channels for participation but those to be affected are not even expected to participate. Those supposed to provide policy inputs are mere objects of policy and it is only from their responses to administrative actions that one can best only infer what their inputs would have been. The focus has therefore to be on administrative actions. Braybrooke and Lindblom C. Strategy of Decision, 1963, Macmillan.

27. One other possibility considering the fact that decisions are made at various points in the administrative hierarchy is that action could be taken without decision if such a decision was supposed to be made higher up and through failure to receive a decision an officer lower down acts on his own decision. Alternatively a decision from the top could even be overlooked lower down or disregarded completely. All the same we should note specifically that in an instance where action is taken and especially if a decision was made to that effect success or failure can set a precedent with far-reaching implications for policy. In most cases positive if there is success and negative if the result is a failure.

increased food production and in its wake made soil conservation the only goal. Last but not not only a pressing problem but the major if not least the Mau-Mau Emergency which necessitated writing a 'A plan to Intensify the Development of African Agricultural' In less than two months!²⁸

Uganda Railway.

The climax of the Uganda Railway crisis was its completion in 1901 when it reached Kisumu on Lake Victoria. Before this and for a while thereafter British administration in Nyanza in particular was marked by punitive expeditions ending with the final subjugation of the Nandi in 1906 and until then there was virtually no effective administration in the area. The main pre-occupation, which necessitated imposition of law and order was with protecting a communication route to Uganda and it was precisely to provide strategic access to the head waters of the Nile that the railway was built.

The loan funds for building the railway had been provided by the British Treasury. To repay the loans and to terminate the annual grants - in - aid paid by the Treasury to meet the cost of administering British East Africa the colony had to pay. This inevitably meant being hooked into the metropole - dependency set up in which the colony colony /at the periphery of the capitalist system in which the metropole is located. exports primary commodities and imports manufactures.

As then envisaged superficially by the colonial administrators some of whom had South African backgrounds, extensive white settlement would bring into production high - altitude land much of it close to the line of rail and appeared virtually unused. The settlers would invest capital and produce crops. Consequently the railway would earn revenue by carrying their produce to the coast, and by carrying the imports inland they would earn abroad, and the government would finance its activities by levying tariffs on these imports. However, although the settlement programme

28. Swynnerton Plan *ibid.*

decision was upheld the formula never worked out so neatly. It was at best a long term solution for a pressing need. And the Settlers themselves did not come free of problems either as it was apparently mistakenly taken for granted. But then a way out of the current crisis had to be found.

Thus it was on the Natives that the burden of meeting the immediate demands fell. These included getting the Settlers started for their envisaged role already mentioned by furnishing them with their requirements of labour and capital and also aiding them somewhat indirectly by spending revenue collected from African areas on settler related needs such as building the necessary infrastructure in their areas. The main strategies used to this end included exhortation, introduction of new crops and implements, and seed distribution.

A major form of exhortation which among other things whites and Government came to be associated with was taxation.²⁹ A hut tax was introduced in 1901 ostensibly for revenue collection, to be followed in 1910 by a poll tax on all males over sixteen years old who did not pay the hut tax. The latter measure in particular can be interpreted as a deliberate move to force Africans into the cash economy, and its impact was reinforced, not only by the increase in tax levels in 1915 and 1920 but also by imposition of import duties on many of the limited range of consumer goods purchased by Africans. All at a time when the taxation of Europeans was extremely light³⁰ Another measure was the formation of the Department of Native Affairs in 1907 which was specifically instituted to deal with labour supply and which encouraged coercion to force people to work not only on public works projects but for private employers as well.³¹

It should be emphasised that it was the current crisis which made the contingency of labour supply start acquiring certain features, such as being linked with taxation and use of brute force, which remained more or less permanent for the whole colonial period. Earlier on the colonial government had

29. Odinga, O. Not yet Uhuru, Heinemann London 1967 pp 1-2

30. Wrigley op cit p231

31. Smith op cit p115

found itself unable to meet its own needs for porters and road workers without resorting to conscription. It had even fulfilled demands of private employers in this way. It is apparent that this trend continued at an even greater pace as evidenced by the fact that the Liberal Government was prompted to declare in 1908 that forced labour could not be tolerated in the British Empire. However as Wrigley mildly puts it, though officials could no longer order natives to enter employment they were not debarred from encouraging them to do so, and the distinction between command and persuasion was a very fine one.³² The point is however that short of close supervision the declaration was meaningless.

The pros and cons of introduction of innovations especially the attendant exhortation has been discussed at great length. It therefore suffices to mention some examples without necessarily trying to make the list comprehensive and then comment on cotton and later in the discussion maize for illustration purposes. Crops introduced in Nyanza by about the 1920s included cotton, white maize, rice, simsim, cassava, groundnuts, sugarcane and various kinds of vegetables. In addition implements including improved hoeblades, hand grinding mills and Ox-drawn plough were introduced. What we need to note to underline the utility of African response is the general consensus that up to first world war 'native production' was contributing much more than settler agriculture to the wealth of the country.³³

The cultivation of cotton in Nyanza has its origins in the completion of the Uganda Railway and the introduction of Hut Tax. The purpose on which the success of both depended, was the development of some cash crop in Nyanza to allow Africans to pay their taxes in cash rather than kind and establish traffic for the rail road in order to pay for its maintenance. Cotton was introduced simultaneously in 1907 in the Nyanza Province of Kenya and the adjoining Eastern Province of Uganda. John Ainsworth the then provincial commissioner (1906 - 1914) first introduced cotton cultivation to several Luo areas bordering the administrative headquarters.³⁴

Then the District Commissioner and his staff, between 1910 and 1913 attempted to introduce cotton growing mostly along the road for easy supervision in the lakeside areas of Samia, Seme, Kisumu, Kano and Nyakech Locations, Their efforts met with a limited success only in Samia and Kano, and elsewhere the project was abandoned until the early 1920s. This is

32. Wrigley Ibid.

33. Wrigley op cit p227

34. Kisumu District Annual Report 1923 DC/CN quoted in Hay op cit.

despite the fact that the British East African Corporation³⁵ had built a cotton ginnery at Kisumu in 1908 although for several years most of the seed cotton continued to be supplied from Uganda. Hay first notes appropriately that several authors have been at pains to explain this failure of the administration early cotton policy, citing African preference for food crops, lack of desire for trade goods and so on. Then she makes the relevant point that, the fact that cotton prices dropped fifty percent between 1910 and 1914 is in itself probably a better explanation for the lack of Luo enthusiasm.³⁶

On assumption of their duties in Nyanza in the 1920s agricultural officials made a more serious attempt to develop cotton production by way of field safaris to encourage cotton. There was however a change of policy in 1926 directing that officers confine themselves to earlier role of advising African growers and inspecting their crops. The main focus of cotton policy around this time turned out to be primarily on the Uganda border region and on North Kavirondo and only half-hearted attempts made to encourage cotton in Central Kavirondo. Furthermore, a steady fall in cotton prices to the grower greatly frustrated whatever efforts made and even the senior Commissioner, Nyanza Province, expected instructions to drop cotton cultivation in the province. This was not to be the case and to the contrary he learned that an intensive propaganda campaign was to be waged.³⁷

Hay rightly takes issue with ~~fearn~~ and others over giving the impression that colonial officials were engaged in a fairly consistent attempt to introduce cotton in Nyanza from 1906 onwards, and that the Luo must have been remarkably determined in order to resist such an onslaught. She then provides evidence from Kowe in Nyanza which confirmed that the stereotype does not fit.³⁸ Among the issues considered quite pertinent to this discussion, are lack of technical knowledge regarding the suitability

35. The corporation was formed in 1906 deriving most of its finance from the British Cotton Growing Association founded in 1902 with the object of reducing Lancashire's dependence on American supplies, but also receiving an imperial subvention for experimental work. The initial operations of the corporation were to include the erection of a ginnery at Kisumu and the distribution of cotton-seed to Kavirondo peasants. Wrigley op cit pp 221-2

36. Hay op cit pp 135-6.

37. Hay ibid

38. Ibid

of the crop for the area, coercion and even deceit, lack of fit of the crop for the existing agricultural cycle, low prices and qualitatively as well as quantitatively poor personnel and other resources.

It is quite understandable that the Department of Agriculture set up in 1903 when the colonial government assumed responsibility for the agriculture of the country should have had limited resources during its embryonic stage.³⁹ What^{is}/at issue is that these resources were directed to dealing with the problems of European agriculture that infact had a virtual monopoly of the services. And it was not two decades later for example that agricultural staff were posted to the African areas.

In the meantime it had been the sole responsibility of the administration to promote agriculture by introducing cotton for example as discussed above. Moreover it was not considered a pressing need to devise ways for improving African farming. Thus in addition to tax collection the District Commissioner took charge of agricultural and veterinary matters. The significant implication of such a move for our concerns is that the promotion of agriculture was considered a law and order function and therefore left to the administration who played an active role in Virtually all agricultural matters even after the posting of agricultural staff to the African areas. All this was in any case in keeping with the official thinking at the time and reflected the official priorities in which agricultural development in the African areas was viewed as ultimately dependent upon the Africans themselves save seed distribution.

The administration considered veterinary matters in comparison to purely agricultural matters more important and concentrated their efforts on the former which consequently took precedence over the latter. The posting of veterinary staff for example preceded that of agricultural staff. The move resulted from recommendations of a 1922 Select Committee of the Legislative Council which expressed concern about the spread of disease from African to European Areas. It concluded that the only effective way of preventing the spread of disease was to have veterinary staff in African as well as European areas.

39. It was to take well over forty years before a member of the Executive Council was made responsible for Agriculture and allied services. Kenya Colony and Protectorate Department of Agriculture, Annual Report, 1945, p 19

This recommendation was implemented immediately. It is argued in this connection that trade in livestock had been going on from the time of arrival of the first Europeans bringing in breeding stock from the North and work oxen from all over the African areas. This trade was important to the European farmers and it made strong demands on veterinary control services⁴⁰

As to purely agricultural matters it is stated in the 1920/21 Department of Agriculture, Annual Report that the department's objective of increasing native production was to be directed towards an output of produce which can be exported. Crops such as maize, sorghum and millet, groundnuts, simsim, cotton, beans and peas fell under that category. In the department's view each of these crops was well suited to the resources and facilities of the native and no question of competition against the European growers should arise. It however did not fail to also recognise a popular view held by many in the colonial administration and Obviously by all the settlers that if natives are encouraged to develop their own land by being provided with necessary services as contemplated a sufficient supply of labour for European holdings would not be forthcoming. In the final analysis whichever of the two views whether or not to develop African areas prevailed depended on the nature of a particular crisis. In the case of Uganda Railway for example it was the former view which prevailed especially as the demand for labour was still relatively low while in the case of intensified European settlement the latter view prevailed.

The services to realise the stated objective of increasing native production were conceived along lines summarised in the following quotation.

To succeed in effecting a substantial improvement in native agricultural practice and increase in production a large number of instructors will be required. Native instructors are likely to succeed where Europeans would fail. The initial step is therefore the training of native agricultural instructors. They will be given a training of two or three years duration after which selected men who have satisfactorily completed their training will be posted to the native reserves. They will manage there a demonstration holding devoted to the crop to be grown. From these places as centres of operation seeds would be distributed and natives in the areas around would be taught how to grow different crops and how to secure better yields than they obtained under their previous methods.⁴¹

40. Heyer op cit p3

41. Dept. of Agriculture Annual Report 1920/21 Ibid.

However, the actual state of affairs in Nyanza Province in the 1920s was that there were between two and five Agricultural Officers (AOs)⁴² and at the most only twenty-six instructors. To make matters worse the instructors coming from Bukura Training Centre,⁴³ one of only two training centres for the African Areas, had inadequate training and acted primarily as liaison Officers. At any rate they were a crucial link between AOs and farmers for a very long time.⁴⁴ The arrangement which emerged it has been pointed out made the AOs typically have far more work of a directly executive nature eg running seed farms keeping the departmental vehicles in operation, supervising the Agricultural Instructors (AIs), draining swamps, organising locust and famine relief e.t.c. Therefore the image of an AO as being a farmer adviser or even an agricultural scientist can be highly misleading.⁴⁵

Even though judging from the population and size of Nyanza at the time even if the AOs directed their efforts to giving agricultural advice one can safely conclude that they could only have very limited success in changing African Agriculture. The estimated population for the province in late 1920s was over one million persons.⁴⁶ The province then consisted of three districts: North Kavirondo which included almost the whole of present day western province having an area of over 8,000 square kilometers; Central Kavirondo which included present day Kisumu and Siaya districts with an area of over 4,500 square kilometers; and South Kavirondo which included the present South Nyanza and Kisii districts with a total area of also over 8,000 square kilometers. To say the least this was an enormous area of scattered population and uneven agricultural development for two to five AOs to have an appreciable impact on.

42. As of 1932 it was considered normal that there was one AO for North Central, and South Kavirondo districts and one for Bukura. As of 1946 there were 16 European Agricultural staff comprising senior AOs, AOs and AAOs. In addition there were three Makerere trained African Agricultural Assistants, one for each of the three districts.

43. It is stated in 1936 Dept. of Agriculture Annual Report that at Bukura African apprentices from all agricultural tribes west of Nakuru are indentured for a 3 year course of training in agriculture and in duties of an Agricultural Instructor. All apprentices who complete this course satisfactorily should be well fitted to become peasant farmers. Agricultural apprentices are recruited from apprentices who have been through this course; other apprentices who do not obtain employment as agricultural instructors, or teachers of agriculture at mission and government schools are urged to return to their homes and farm on lines which they have been taught.

44. The fact that extension work in the Reserves was done by Native Agricultural instructors is recognised in the 1931 Annual Report p 74.

45. Moris, J., Managerial Structures and Plan Implementation in Colonial and Modern Agricultural Extension: A Comparison of Cotton and Tea Programmes in central Kenya, in Leonard D.K. Rural Administration in Kenya, EALB 1973, p108.

46. Fearn, H., An African Economy OUP, 1961 p43.

In terms of the AOs operations Moris notes that with little in the way of an articulated national policy for African development the AO was actually left very much to his own wits in devising the kinds of projects which he considered desirable for his area. And from the Department's viewpoint he could try any crop he liked so long as it did not require much money.⁴⁷ The three main methods which successively evolved in the operation that consisted extension work were first seed issue, secondly the Agriculture Department maintaining its own holdings and experimental farms. And lastly the annual field campaign. The procedure for seed issue was that through a baraza called by the AO and including all the local chiefs, their headmen and a few other interested farmers various experimental plots to be established were proposed. Seed was issued on the understanding that the person who accepted them would grow the stipulated demonstration plot. At first the seeds were issued free to anyone willing to plant them, but later it was decided to charge a nominal sum (two cents) on the understanding that the grower would return twice the amount after harvest to be redistributed by the local chief. In addition in an area targeted to receive bulk seed issue it would be an offence to plant any other variety in that locality.⁴⁸

Due to the failure of demonstration plots owing in part to the fact that weeding was done under duress by members of the community the Department of Agriculture was driven towards maintaining its own holdings and experimental farms⁴⁹ These provided work for AIs and bulked supplies of new seeds. It is significant that it was the local native councils which provided the land and paid salaries of most of the local staff underlining the fact that African areas had to fend for themselves.⁵⁰

It was mainly due to the fact that the demonstration plots appeared to make almost no impact on the surrounding area and the AOs soon tired of the continual supervision and reprimands they required, with limited success in the face of different crises, that the annual field campaign emerged. Administratively along with preoccupation with executive functions and limited resources already mentioned an important shortcoming of this method was that there was often little continuing impact from one campaign to the next especially if a change of officers occurred.

47. Moris Ibid.

48. Ibid.

49. 1931 Dept. of Agriculture Annual report notes the shift from small demonstration plots to Native Council seed farms which is rationalised on three major grounds. Native authorities having a direct and active share in responsibility for agricultural development in their areas. Acting as demonstration Centres for improved crops and methods. Lastly a centralised seed multiplication centre to maintain a permanent source of uncontaminated seeds of the kinds required. By 1933 LNC farms had entirely displaced departmental seed issues in the Central and Nyanza Provinces. 1933 Annual report p 85.

50. See Appendix Table 1 for an increased role of LNCs in issuing seed.

From the standpoint of the subordinate African Staff they often realised that they were being asked to achieve more than could be realistically expected, given the constraints of the environment, scarce resources, and their limited skills. Consequently they reacted to the selective enforcement of task norms by pretending to do everything while unobtrusively cultivating an "ear" at headquarters to learn what the real priorities at any one point in time were. The AO was in most cases probably not even aware that his changing commitments were being continuously assessed by his field staff, so that they could report what was wanted and avoid wasting time on activities that were not really essential.⁵¹

To summarise, African agriculture related decisions resulting mainly from the completion of the Uganda Railway with important implications for policy include attempts to improve yields of food crops which also served as cash crops through the provision of better seed distributed free and improvement of cultivation practices. Attempts to promote the introduction of a limited number of non-food crops such as cotton. Decision to control serious outbreaks of disease among livestock and to protect the livestock trade. Attempts to improve the methods of treatment of hides and skins to encourage destocking and to encourage the production of ghee. These decisions were implemented with a significant resource input from local councils by the very small numbers of agricultural staff allocated to African areas and by the administration through a series of seed farms which were established for the multiplication of improved seed and the demonstration of improved farming practices. Thus in terms of the development of African farming system in the African areas it is obvious that a large part still remained untouched.

European Settlement.

As already indicated with the completion of Uganda Railway the problem of making the colony pay became acute. And although it did not serve the purpose immediately as expected all the same the view, which as a matter of fact was mooted before the completion of the railway, persisted that European Settlement was a panacea for the problems of the colony's economy. Hence the major proposition that rather than indigenous agriculture being relied on as a mainspring of increased trade and output, plantation and settler agriculture should play the leading role. The view was particularly bolstered by a series of favourable reports emphasising the apparent abundance of land and a climate suited to both tropical and temperate agricultural production.

51. Moris Ibid.

The impetus for European settlement came from two major sources. The first was an active official encouragement. Secondly from large British Companies giving them large tracts of land at little or no cost and individuals who wished to realise their capital by selling leases to incoming settlers. Consequently as early as 1905 the colonial authorities agreed and not without pressure from the early European Settlers, to exclusive land rights for Europeans in the Highlands.⁵² While Europeans through these moves secured a monopoly of high potential land in the highlands, based on the white highlands policy, agricultural tribes were contained within reserves. Thus around 20 percent of the usable land area was alienated ie bought at nominal prices by Europeans for their exclusive use. In terms of individual acquisition their "farms" were extremely large averaging over 2,400 acres per occupier in 1932.

One group of beneficiaries worth noting were/brought with a blessing of the ex-servicemen most of whom were the British government under the soldier settlement scheme with the aim of doubling the white farming population.⁵³ The overall growth of settlers population and acreages they occupied over the years is given in the following table which gives a useful impression of the general trend of European Settlement.

White Settlement in the Kenya Highlands

	1903	1915	1920	1934	1942	1953
Settlers Capprox	100	1000	1,2000	2,000	3,000	4,000
Occupied acreage	?	4.5m	3.1m	5.1m	6.3m	7.3m.

Source: Leys C. Underdevelopment in Kenya op cit p29

At any rate what we need to emphasise is that settlement was an on going process and was not necessarily confined to the areas originally earmarked. This is borne out by the 1932 Kenya Land Commission finding that a certain amount of land which should have been treated as native territory had indeed been wrongfully alienated.⁵⁴ This meant relocating the

52. Smith op cit pl13

53. The trend of increasing the numbers of white settlers went on to as recently as 1953 with the Troup Report Smith Ibid.

54. Wrigley Ibid p259.

African population, in this case the Kikuyu who were the chief sufferers, to less desirable land labelled Forest Reserve.

In comparison to the Kikuyu areas Nyanza was much less affected by land alienation which was limited to two major instances viz land for the purpose of mining gold and land for settlement of a few Indian Colonists, former railway builders, in the Kibos area. In any case for the African areas generally increased European Settlement meant not only further land alienation but also greater demands on the African population arising mainly from the deficient nature of European farming.

A major drawback of European Settlement was that although they did not come to Kenya to work as peasants the settlers initially had neither the knowledge nor the capital to work their large tracts in ways very different from the Africans. Consequent upon that what perpetrated a crisis was that, a large proportion of these settlers farming activities ended in failure and to avert the crisis they had not only to be provided for but also afforded protection. The decision to salvage settler farming especially the fact that once taken it had a snowballing effect proved to be the major disadvantage to African farming outlasting the colonial period. A key element in this process discussed already, and to be considered in greater detail below was action aimed at satisfying the labour needs of settler farmers from African areas.

Following the acquisition of land the main contingencies were capital, labour, and suitable as well as lucrative crops to be grown. It has already been noted in our discussion of African taxation that one of its major purposes was to serve settler capital needs. An equally if not more important need it served initially which in addition led to the suppression of African commercial agriculture⁵⁵ was the requirement of abundant supply of labour to European areas. A high level of supply was necessitated by the labour intensive nature of European farming.

As a matter of fact both needs were closely intertwined in that with introduction of taxation Africans had to earn money either by selling their labour or by growing cash crops. Owing to the need of European farmers for labour and for freedom from competition the former came to be the accepted way in which Africans could acquire cash. Thus through taxation Europeans got

55. Smith Ibid pp 116-8.

a monopoly of agricultural labour. It was reinforced by a Masters and Servants Ordinance which bound the African worker to serve out a contract on pain of imprisonment, and after 1918 by a Resident Labourers Ordinance which converted the "squatter" labourer⁵⁶ into a kind of serf bound to work for the owner of ^{his} plot for a minimum of 180 days a year.

It is estimated that by the mid-20s more than half the able-bodied men in the two largest agricultural tribes viz the Kikuyu and Luo were working for Europeans⁵⁷. The obvious implication of labour exportation of this magnitude is that the overall supply of labour on African farms fell. Granted for some at least, a remedy for the labour shortage was that the absentee labourers began to "work with money"- that is they began to send their wives money with which to employ someone to help with clearing, hoeing or weeding. In other words, these migrant labourers would pay substitutes to perform their normal share of the agricultural labour.⁵⁸ But in view of the meagre wages noted earlier this option was not open to the majority which serves as a pointer to the disruption of African farming. In the same vein Wrigley also concedes, although only to a point, that the allegation that African economic agriculture, especially in the Nyanza Province, had been deliberately stifled in the interests of European farmers probably has some validity in respect of the early post-war years, when the whole endeavour of Government was directed towards the provision of labour for settled areas.⁵⁹

However by its very nature labour exportation had even more far reaching implications for agricultural activity. In the first place Leys notes in connection with the farming status of Africans affected that within the space of a generation they had been effectively converted from independent peasants, producing cash crops for the new markets, into peasants dependent on agricultural wage-labour.⁶⁰ Secondly Liebenow identifies the emergent phenomenon of migration as one of the factors which indirectly undermined African attitudes towards agriculture complementing the frontal assault of the colonial bureaucracy upon traditional agriculture and stability of rural life.⁶¹ For one thing the proliferation of opportunities for wage labour, together with the failure of cotton in Nyanza for example as a high value cash crop, produced the conviction that labour export was the most profitable allocation of resources and certainly the most secure. Consequently a large number of people by 1945 had come to feel that the only real economic

56. For a discussion of the squatter system see Leys op cit pp 46-47

57. Meyer Ibid p 11

58. Hay Ibid p 230

59. Wrigley Ibid

60. Leys Ibid

61. Liebenow Ibid.

security lay in a primary education and long-term wage employment outside the home.

The function of agriculture therefore came to be viewed essentially as a holding operation. It was to continue providing the basic elements of subsistence, food for the family in the African areas and often for the absentee labourer as well, guaranteeing a home and a place in the community which could always be activated when necessary. Thus having to spend cash for any needs which could be provided locally was avoided. It is this economic division of the household between urban and rural spheres that was one of the ways in which the African population was made to subsidise the development of the European sectors of the economy.⁶²

The bulk of this labour was employed in the plantation sectors producing coffee and sisal which survived on cheap labour and was therefore without protection.⁶³ This was however not the case with regard to wheat growing and dairy farming which were high cost (and high disease risk) and would have foundered without protection.⁶⁴ All the same for their main sources of revenue the majority of the settlers relied on maize production which was an attractive crop in view of two major advantages of requiring little skill and capital. Policywise the manipulation of pricing and marketing policies and the disproportionate provision of credit and other services plus subsidies to large scale European farmers during the colonial period became continuing features of agricultural policy even after African farmers took over these particular farms. Thus relative to smallholder areas they continued to be the focus of government attention.

62. Forrester, M.W., Kenya Today: Social Prerequisites for Economic Development, The Hague Meriton 1962 pp 109-112.

63. These were the two leading European crops whose export earnings resulted in European export superceding African export production. In addition to labour supplied African areas had also to supply maize to be used for feeding the African labour in the plantations.

64. Smith Ibid.

World War I and II

It is a matter of common sense understanding that war situations are crisis situations. Furthermore the gravity of these crises is determined by the extent of adaptation to wartime requirements which largely depends on conditions preceding the war especially the requirement of supplies. However with regard to implications of wartime crises for agriculture in African areas it is important to consider not only their origins outside these areas and infact outside the colony. Even more important is the extent to which they became the main victims of these crises compared to European areas due to measures centred in them to cope with resulting contingencies or more specifically wartime requirements of men and supplies. While the former consideration meant an outright drain of resources out of these areas, in combination with the latter, both meant an impairment of African agriculture. What complicated the situation further was the fact that the two world wars coincided with or brought in their train outbreaks of epidemics coupled with, in between the wars, other calamities such as the Depression and Locust outbreaks. There was thus at the same time a vicious circle of disease and famine⁶⁵ during war years or thereabouts.

The outbreak of the first World War marked a greater impact of colonial administration on the African areas than experienced heretofore. These areas were greatly afflicted by wartime requirements for labour and livestock which fell heavily on the people of Nyanza for example. These caused serious dislocations in the local economy as cattle requisitions depleted herds already reduced by rinderpest and many of the men conscripted for the Carrier Corps never returned.⁶⁶

There is evidence showing that Nyanza provided more than its share of manpower for the Carrier Corps in particular and also indicating its particular plight. More than half the total recruits (some 92,000 out of 165,000) came from Nyanza province. And that is not all for between 1915 and 1919 the province supplied nearly 200,000 males for civil or military recruitment (about one-sixth of the total population) and over 50,000 head of cattle. It has been estimated that one third of all those recruited for the Carrier Corps died during the war while many of those who managed to return were disabled or weak owing to unhealthy or poor conditions they were subjected to. The District Commissioner of Kisumu

65. Hay Ibid.

66. Ibid

wrote of the returnees that at least one half would not be fit for hard work again for along time⁶⁷ In addition small pox, plague spanish influenza accompanied the demobilised porters and spread throughout the province, reaching severe proportions in the years from 1916 to 1920. As if that was not enough a major famine occurred in 1918 and 1919 and generally increased the hardships caused by war and disease.⁶⁸

There is scarcity of information to help determine more precisely the nature of demands on African areas and the extent to which they were negatively affected during this period. It can however be argued that in comparison to war II, on which there is relatively more information, during War I there was less resource drain from the African areas which was mainly to satisfy wartime requirements of men and provisions. This was basically due to limited penetration of African areas by market forces which since being formally brought into play after the completion of Uganda Railway, less than two decades before the outbreak of the war, was still in its initial stages.

In addition to that was the fact that these areas had not yet experienced population explosion which in the case of War II meant greatly taxing the land to meet food requirements of a larger population as well as those of the War. The forces which were to set in motion population increase as a result of the establishment of colonial rule, such as putting an end to inter-tribal warfare, movement of food to famine areas using relatively better communications routes established as a result of colonisation, rudimentary medical services etc had not yet gathered momentum. Another factor was the smaller population of European farmers compared to War II which meant that the simultaneous demand for foodstuffs and labour for their farms and at the same time fulfilling wartime needs of men and foodstuffs was limited in scope.

It should however be noted that a major view adopted at this time in an atmosphere of War economics was to have long term implications for African agriculture. It was assumed that in the future as in the embattled present a high degree of imperial self-sufficiency would be the paramount

67. Quoted in Hay, Ibid.

68. Ibid.

objective and that East Africa therefore could and should produce all that it was physically capable of producing, regardless of such mundane considerations as comparative cost.⁶⁹ The significance of this view is that one can already detect in it the rudiments of a decision which was to guide much of the thinking as well as action on African agriculture. That in African areas the farming system should aim at being not only self-sufficient in food but also surplus providing on balance⁷⁰ The aim of self-sufficiency in food locally on the one hand was most vigorously pursued wherever African areas experienced potentially devastating calamities especially famine. On the other hand territorial self-sufficiency and the aim of provision of surplus was given prominence during crises and also in case of calamities that adversely affected the European areas as well, A case in point is the depression, graphically documented by Wrigley quoted at length below.

For the African population as well as for others the depression was a great disaster. The prices of such commodities as hides, ghee, beans and simsim slumped even more drastically than those of staples of European agriculture. Wages fell back --- there was unemployment, in the sense that men actively seeking work were unable to find it ----- they (African producers) were faced with the fixed obligation of tax payments, which now became a much heavier burden in real terms. The only solution was to increase production. Whether or not the Africans would have reached this conclusion for themselves the Government had reached it for them ---- in face of the Colony's evident need for more exports, opposition to the development of native production for the market was melting away; it found only one voice among members of the economic Development Committee in 1934. An exception was still made for coffee but in 1937 the authorities felt able to take the first very tentative steps towards the introduction of this industry in certain native areas.⁷¹

It is therefore significant that it was in the 1930s that the government declared an intention to intervene comprehensively in the local economy in contrast to earlier concentration on addition of new crops and tools. In 1931 the Department of Agriculture proudly announced the beginning of "a

69. Wrigley Ibid p 233.

70. See Uchendu V.C. and Anthony KRM, Agricultural Change in Kisii District Kenya EALB 1975, p 34.

71. Wrigley Ibid See also Heyer Ibid pp 14-15 on coffee decision.

long-range development programme for native agriculture" which had two major parts: a comprehensive survey of potential economic resources in each area and the formulation of individual development programmes for specific zones, taking soil and climatic variations into account and specifying the food and cash crops to be encouraged in each zone.

Specific moves in the above direction involved a general reorganisation of African agricultural services. The reorganisation comprised of first, the replacement of technically unqualified agricultural officers with trained men recruited under the colonial agricultural scholarship scheme, secondly, there was an increase in the number of officers in this cadre in African areas with the total rising from 10 in 1930 to 17 in 1938. There was also an increase in the number of instructors and other subordinate staff serving under the agricultural officers the total number exceeding 200 In 1934. Nyanza had more than 45 instructors rising to 69 in 1939.⁷² However, staffing remained thin with districts notably in the Rift Valley having no officers. In any case a related potentially positive development worth noting was an increase generally in the number of native instructors coming out of the two Training Centres, Bukura and Scott Laboratory.⁷³

Even in districts which were staffed there must have been concentrations of effort favouring the areas suited to particular crop or livestock products, favouring areas that were reasonably accessible and favouring farmers who responded well.⁷⁴ Thirdly there was also at the district level an important institutional development through the establishment in Central Province first of Native Agricultural Committees of Local Native Council under the chairmanship of the district Agricultural Officer.⁷⁵

Fourthly, a limited measure of decentralisation of the Department by placing a senior Agricultural Officer (SAO) in charge of all agricultural work at the provincial level, instead of having the individual officers directly responsible to Nairobi office was taken.⁷⁶ Thus the Nyanza SAO divided the province into ecological zones and drew up a programme of work which was put into effect in early 1933. The general objectives of the Central Kavirondo program of work in the decade included the extension of cotton and groundnuts as major cash crops, various regulations to improve the quality of marketed crops, and the beginning of soil conservation programs.⁷⁷ The SAO in addition regulated the periods within which crops

72. See Appendices II and III for staff posting trend.

73. See Appendices IV and V

74. Heyer Ibid

75. Dept of Agriculture Annual Report 1933, p 86

76. Ibid

77. Dept of Agriculture Annual Report, 1932, p 59..

could be bought and instructed Indian buyers to refuse below-standard produce.

It was also hoped that the depletion of soil fertility could be halted by gradually persuading farmers to consolidate their land and implement programs of mixed farming. The 1937 program of work declared in keeping with the emergent concern, that "Soil control, care, and improvement" should be given precedence throughout the province. Individual farmers were to be encouraged to adopt measures comprising stone terracing, contour lines of grass, live hedges on boundary ditches, reducing cultivation on steep slopes, better conceptions/^{of}land ownership, wind breaks, contour ploughing and planting, stall feeding of livestock, use of manure and compost as fertilisers, control of grass burning, increased tree planting and the mulching of crops. However the resources and personnel to/^{put}the program into effect were lacking and it was still in its initial stages at the outbreak of War II. It was the contingencies to be coped with during this latter crisis that greatly heightened the concern with soil conservation bringing it to a fever pitch after the war.

We should however reiterate in passing that during war II there was again military and civil conscription and on a greater scale as already pointed out. The former was received relatively more positively by Africans due to more favourable conditions in the service.⁷⁸ The latter was less popular especially in the case of "civil conscription" of labour for European farmers which were technically regarded as "essential undertakings" during the war. This task of labour conscription became a major preoccupation of administrative personnel at the expense of 'normal' administration which virtually came to a grinding halt. In addition this was happening at a time when they were less in numbers and had a high turnover rate due to being called for military service.

The main contingency the colonial administration was confronted with during War II, towards which both agricultural and administrative personnel attention was directed and everything subordinated to, was food supply. And to whatever level the local population may have fed itself the aim in increasing the food supply was to serve the wartime requirement of feeding

78. Hay Ibid.

large garrisons of troops stationed in the colony and prisoners-of-war. Once again as yet another feature of wartime conditions there was compulsory extraction of cattle from African areas. The military supply board paid for them prices that did not reflect their current market value. The Board established a standard price range for cattle which was in effect the lowest common denominator of existing prices.⁷⁹

With regard to other food stuffs it was agreed at a meeting of officers from both Nyanza and Central Provinces that in addition to increased maize production simsim, groundnuts and mtama should be increased. In the case of groundnuts where possible it should be interplanted in cotton. Also in the Kano plains and other suitable areas rice should be pushed even to the extent of orders under the Defence (Agricultural Production) Regulations if necessary.⁸⁰ The climax of these actions was a major onslaught in 1942 when there was an increased production drive under the Increased Production of Crops Ordinance. Out of the Ordinance emerged an important innovation which has survived and therefore worth noting. This was the concept of short term credit and guaranteed minimum return for a wide variety of annual crops grown essentially on contract for the government on European farms.⁸¹

At any rate there was a greater part played by African areas in the provision of other foodstuffs as exemplified by the case of maize shown below by figures of deliveries to control.

	1944	1945	1946
Native (Nyanza)	646,924 bags	716,459 bags	666,308 bags
Natives (other)	16,151	99,990	108,990
Total	663,075	816,449	775,298
Non - native	401,378	545,515	562,243

Source 1945 Dept. of Agriculture Annual Report p11. See also Heyer Ibid p16

79. Ibid.

80. Note on a meeting of PCs, Nyanza and Central, Agricultural Officer in charge Nyanza, SAO Central Province and Director of Agriculture Kenya National Archives Def 3.

81. Smith Ibid.

The encouragement by the government of a substantial increase in the production of foodstuffs during the war led to a large increase in the production of food crops for sale by African farmers despite temporary reductions in staffing. An important consequence of the high level sale of surplus food crops due to war created demand was that Africans were initiated into the money economy in greater numbers. Thus it can be argued the African population would respond whenever they were given the opportunity to produce crops with a reasonable cash return for the effort.⁸²

The higher sale is even more remarkable in view of the fact that marketing during the war⁸³ was highly controlled as noted in the quotation below. However the point to note is that this must have meant discrimination against some produce from the African areas whenever it served the purposes of powers that be.

The work of the field staff in native areas has been concerned mainly with production and considerable amount of their time has to be devoted to matters concerned with the organisation of marketing of the various crops and with assistance in their areas to the work of numerous wartime produce controls⁸⁴

An important institutional innovation emerging out of these controls was the creation of an Agricultural Betterment Fund (ABF) in Nyanza Province. Its source of funds was the difference between the price paid to the grower and the railhead value of his produce that was paid into the ABF. Since a single producer price ruled throughout a district the overcropping which prevailed around marketing centres and rail head points, was progressively eliminated. An allowance was given for transport which was shs 1/40 per bag in North and Central Kavirondo and Shs. 2/10 per bag in South Kavirondo. In addition a grade cess of 35 cts was paid into the fund⁸⁵ Later in the fifties this fund would be drawn upon to provide financial incentives to a class of "improved farmers" in Nyanza whose grooming started about 1951.

82. See Smith Ibid and Heyer.

83. European Marketing Officers posted to each of the districts in Nyanza.

84. 1943 Dept. of Agriculture Annual Report p5.

85. 1946 Dept. of Agriculture Annual Report pp 44-45. See also Uchendu and Anthony op cit p 36.

What was of major long term significance about the deliberate wartime policy of maximum production of food grains from the land were the crippling effects it had on the colony's agriculture especially in the African areas. It had led to a period of continuous exploitation of arable land to produce needed wheat and maize and other crops without a commensurate input of fertilisers, soil conservation measures, or sound long-term farm planning. The result was lasting damage to land in African areas. Soil erosion was rife all over the country notably in Fort Hall and Machakos. In these and other African areas the concern with falling soil fertility level became paramount after the war and soil conservation received a major emphasis in agricultural extension in the post-war years.⁸⁶

Measures to deal with the soil erosion contingency were embodied in the 1946 10 year development plan. The emphasis in the African areas was on reconditioning these areas and settlement of excess population. Relatively large allocations were made especially for soil conservation and water development under this so-called plan. For general agricultural development additional funds came from ordinary colony estimates, local funds provided by African district councils, and funds controlled by the East African High Commission. Thus post war resources were increased but at a time when agrarian problems had mounted to an all time high.

The strategy adopted to deal with the deteriorating condition of African agriculture had both a long - and short - term aspects to it despite the narrow concerns and virtually no systematic implementation. The thrust of the long term aspect of the strategy was exploring the possibilities of obtaining additional suitable land to which surplus populations could be moved and in which they would farm under strictly controlled conditions. The main factors to contend with in this connection were problems of bush clearing (tse-tse) fly elimination and the provision of adequate water supplies. The short term activities aimed at preventing further deterioration of soil resources and embraced "reconditioning" which included mechanical soil conservation and/or improved farming methods. The former involved making terraces, grass strips cut off drains etc. Methods for achieving the latter followed prewar pattern namely use of manure, resting pasture etc.

86. Brown points out that all the available machinery of the soil conservation was in use on the "non-native" areas and African areas virtually the whole time of agricultural staff was devoted to soil conservation. Brown op cit p40.

These methods for improved farming constituted the mixed rotational grazing system with land resting under temporary grass leys grazed with livestock which Clayton argues had fallen out of official favour after the war.⁸⁷ The main principle disputed was the need for individual ownership and consolidation which led to stiff opposition in some districts.⁸⁸ Consequently as a basis of extension effort mixed smallholding was replaced by planned Group farming in Nyanza in 1948 although not ruling out individual farming on launching group farm construction period.⁸⁹ Among the Kikuyu who were considered individualistic enclosures became the basis of extension effort.⁹⁰

At any rate even if smallholding idea no longer enjoyed official favour this certainly was not the case with regard to methods originally intended for the purpose which for example constituted criteria of better farming rewards discussed below. And it is important to note in addition that even with greater resources available these methods were thought to require legislative deterrent to back them up.

The extension service has in the past made use of demonstration precept and in certain cases legislation. The result of some 25 year's work on these lines has been to indicate clearly that unless some direct pressure is applied to urge improved methods and practices and unless such pressure is continuously applied the results that are obtained are extremely slow.⁹¹

It is in the context of change of outlook in the wake of a crisis mentioned previously that one can understand a novel addition to extension method as rewarding better farming which was applied to Nyanza. The "rewards for good husbandry" came from ABF funds noted earlier. To qualify for the rewards the holding of the beneficiaries had to pass inspection on three basic points. (a) complete soil conservation (b) half of arable land resting under grass and (c) the maintenance of the soil fertility of the arable land by the use of properly made farm yard manure or compost.

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87. Clayton Ibid p22.
88. Smith Ibid pl22
89. 1948 Dept of Agriculture Annual Report p22.
90. 1950 Dept. of Agriculture Annual Report pl7.
91. Clayton Ibid p21.

Rewards were made in the form of grants for the purchase of carts, wheelbarrows, fencing wire, farm implements and tools. They later included free labour for approved work, such as hedging and sometimes a cash reward. The value of an initial award was usually Shs. 250/= increasing at each stage of development to a limit of £50.⁹² A man's holding was then considered to be sufficiently developed to provide adequate security for a loan from the Betterment funds to meet the cost of still further improvement.

The free gift aspect of the scheme was abandoned in the mid-fifties when A.B.F. funds dried up and farmers were consequently unwilling to continue for no payment practices for which they had formerly received payment. Inducements to better farming then took the form of loans to individual farmers. A major consideration being that the purchases made by a farmer out of this loan had to be sanctioned by his agricultural Officer. However what should be of greater concern is the future implications, of such moves and accompanying methods for differentiation among the farming populace.

To conclude the discussion on War II crisis in particular it should be noted that it marked the end of an era of crisis administration proper. What brought it to a close was the final crisis, the Mau Mau Emergency. Furthermore although after the emergency conscious attempts were for the first time desperately made to develop some African areas to save the situation at least the methods employed remained the same as in the preceding period in these earmarked areas. As for the remaining African areas which still constituted smallholder areas according to our definition they were either neglected or at least things went on as before up until the time of independence and thereafter. This was with regard not only to methods but policy as well, given the resource constraints on the colonial administration in particular which forced it to focus on areas posing the greatest threat to it and in the process transforming these areas.

Lastly, an important serious ill effect of the conservation phase with far reaching implications for future implementation effort was the poor relations that existed in African areas between agricultural staff and the people. Several years of coercion to achieve the necessary soil conservation measures and against the opposition of African politicians left the Agricultural Department's field staff very unpopular. It is now well recognised even by those who were directly responsible for the implementation of these measures that had more thought been devoted in 1945 to the real and underlying causes of soil deterioration more forward-looking policies could

perhaps have been adopted earlier with more and far - reaching results.⁹³

Mau Mau Emergency

The Mau Mau Emergency was in essence the climax of growing political consciousness of the peasants due to enforcement and land issue during the colonial period. But viewed in broader terms it called into question the continuation of the whole colonial economy. Thus coming unexpectedly as it did it brought to ahead in particular the political problems of the colonial administration in terms of African-Settler production relationships that necessiated a sudden change of outlook with regard to African areas. Hence the crisis situation.

To begin with in an attempt to limit Mau Mau attacks on the white farming community thousands of landless Kikuyu were being repatriated by the lorry load from the large settler farms where they had been labourers and squatters to the African reserves. The tragedy of the whole situation was that most of these people had long since lost any claims to land or livelihood in the communities to which they were being sent. However a positive consequence was that the presence of these repatriates in the reserves was not only an embarassment to the colonial administration at a time when it was in the process of relocating Kikuyu and Embu people into fortified village camps but also the British government. The Mau Mau Emergency was drawing world attention to the apparent failure of British policy to bring about Kenya's peaceful evolution into a self-governing multi-racial state.⁹⁴

Internally the Emergency had a paralysing effect on government machinery with obvious consequences for all services except security as the quotation below specifically referring to the Department of Agriculture clearly indicates.

Many officers were devoted to Emergency duties and, although everything possible was done to lessen the ill - effects, both extension and investigational work suffered. A number of our best African instructors were murdered and a number also joined with the Mau Mau and possibly this loss of our trained staff constitutes the most serious setback.⁹⁵

93. Brown Ibid.

94. Moris J.R. The Agrarian Revolution in Central Kenya: A Study in Farm Innovation in Embu District, PhD thesis Northwestern University, 1970.

95. 1952 Department of Agriculture Annual Report pl.

However in the context of this analysis the major significance of the Mau Mau revolt was that it made the colonial administration realise, the hard way, at least some of the several shortcomings of the 1946 plan for the development of the African areas. Thus the Emergency crisis brought the colonial administration face to face with the contingency of developing African agriculture. In particular the critical importance of land in agricultural production and hence agricultural development.

In 1953 in response to the Emergency 'it was agreed that it would be necessary to develop schemes to provide employment to Kikuyu repatriates both in the Reserves and on development projects, having as their main objectives the raising of agricultural productivity, and the human and stock - carrying capacity of the land. At the same time the Government has decided to draw up a plan of accelerated agricultural development of the Native Land Units in other provinces of Kenya! A plan compiled by RJM Swynnerton, popularly known as the Swynnerton plan" was the response to this request.⁹⁶

The main consideration as regards agricultural policy and services is that owing to the crisis some Africans in their areas, practically all of high potential, and later through new settlement as a result of disproportionately greater resource allocation and generally more attention assumed the position of settler areas vis a vis the remaining African areas. Consequently the differential relationship hitherto witnessed during the colonial period between European and African areas started reigning between the areas in question and those which continued to have smallholder areas status. The latter judging from the colonial experience were therefore destined to remain peripheral to higher rate of agricultural change that the former areas started experiencing except of course in cases where deliberate measures were taken to avert the trend.

The Swynnerton plan reflected a continuation of the post - war pattern of agricultural development policy trend to the extent that it acknowledged the advantage of the sound foundation laid during the last eight years, covering soil conservation livestock improvement, construction of water supplies and experimentation into farming systems, cash crops, methods of cultivation, fertilizers and pasture research' Thus 'It is on the knowledge so gained and the work already done that the next phase of intensification can be built.⁹⁷ An important exception which was to reverse a previous tendency worth noting was that the plan saw little hope of re-settlement

96. Swynnerton op cit p (i)

97. Ibid.

as a solution to agricultural problems. It was in fact at this point in time a crucial move which meant that intensification of agriculture in existing populated areas was to become the major policy thrust as most land was settled. Thus having the requisite resources became a critical issue.

To effect intensification the Swynnerton plan recommended large increases of advisory staff, land consolidation, and farm planning services and set targets for greatly increased cash crop in African areas. To this end Britain made to Kenya a grant of £5 million. A meagre sum compared to £27,614,000 spent by the Kenya government directly on security operations between the beginning of the Emergency and June 30th 1955.⁹⁸

Basic to intensification was consolidation of land fragments into single holdings, formerly confined to Central Province, but now to be extended to other areas also classified by Swynnerton as 'suitable for balanced mixed farming more or less intensively'.⁹⁹ In addition individuals were to be issued with registered freehold titles. The larger lease holders would then be able to borrow from the commercial banks or from the government on the security of their title. It was a politically charged strategy echoing earlier propositions¹⁰⁰ of the Department of Agriculture that energetic or rich Africans will be able to acquire more land and bad or poor farmers less, creating a landed and a landless class. This was considered a normal step in the evolution of a country.¹⁰¹

The argument of the Department of Agriculture which was to guide its activities in implementing the plan was that a landless class already existed in Central Kenya in particular. But because of reciprocity and generosity, its members continued to eke out a livelihood by cultivating tiny plots which were borrowed from one season to the next. Since the perennial cash crops which were being suggested - coffee, tea, dairying, and pyrethrum - were three or four times as labour intensive per acre, and were also much more valuable than the maize and beans subsistence crop; the landless labour force could earn a substantially improved living working as wage labourers on large farms

98. Moris Ibid p82
99. Smith Ibid pp 126-35
100. 1948, 1950 and 1952 Department of Agriculture Annual Reports.
101. Swynnerton Ibid p 10.

planted to cash crops. In the long run the greater degree of economic specialisation which would followed from the creation of 'economic' size holdings would encourage the spread of high value cash crops and with a reasonable livelihood for those who were already landless. But first land registration was necessary as an administrative measure to identify clearly who were the owners and who were the borrowers of land.¹⁰² The view to say the least was idealistic considering the ecological and socio-economic heterogeneity of the areas to which it was considered equally applicable. In any case what was to make a big difference was which of these areas became the focus of attention and thereby received the necessary resources for intensification.

The focus of attention were Kikuyu areas of Central Province as revealed by the progress of land consolidation. Land consolidation went a head rapidly in Kikuyu land and was completed in three districts and the more productive parts of a fourth by 1960. The actual area involved as of June 30, 1960 was 884,000 acres belonging to 148,000 farmers in Central Province. A further 230,000 acres was in the process of consolidation. Enclosure of unfragmented high-potential land in Rift Valley and Nyanza provinces affected 989,000 acres belonging to 65,000 farmers. The total area consolidated or enclosed, 2,925 sq miles was about 6.8 per cent of Kenya's high potential land and about 8 per cent of such land in African areas.¹⁰³

A further indication of this trend is given by progress in farm lay out and plans recorded as of 1962

102. Moris Ibid p. 89

103. Brown Ibid p. 43.

	Number of farms	Acreage
Farm layouts		
Central Province	63,318	302,551
Nyanza Province	10,687	45,244
Rift Valley Province	275	8,022
Other	213	10,149
	74,493	365,926
Farm Plans		
Central Province	5808	60,597
Nyanza Province	1063	34,410
Rift Valley Province	524	17,167
Other	900	17,636
	8275	126,810

Source: Clayton Ibid p. 45

Thus one can see the areas that were the focus of attention, practically all in Central Province forging ahead. The situation is very well depicted by the quotation below which also summarises, the explanation for the emerging trend.

time

At the same/as the restrictions (on growing cash crops) were relaxed, central Province received a substantial increase in development resources during and after the Emergency. The infrastructure that was developed to help control the political situation benefited agricultural development greatly. Similarly, the increase in provision of agricultural services which was associated with the political situation made a considerable contribution. It was at this time that land consolidation and registration of little took place. These factors combined with complete reversal of policy with

respect to coffee and other high value products enabled Central province to gain a dominant position in the 1950's, a position which it has retained ever since.¹⁰⁴

In direct contrast were African smallholder areas, in Nyanza for example, which had not benefited from positive developments arising from the Emergency such as improved infrastructure. And more importantly the decision at last by the colonial administration to give in to African pressure and allow them to grow cash crops that were already found suitable for particular parts of the Country with emphasis on areas most affected by the Emergency. Furthermore when the colonial administration started encouraging cash crop growing in these areas the inadequate farm planning staff were concentrated in them as it was a prerequisite for cash crop growing. Still the demand for farm plans was so great in these areas for the available staff to cope with, despite stringent requirement that the method had to be loosened for faster completion. This situation was by no means ameliorated by the fact that the colonial administration failed to recruit all the additional staff provided for under the Swynnerton plan.¹⁰⁵ Thus without adequate numbers of suitable staff individual farm planning moves in Nyanza coming as late as 1950s, starting in North Nyanza, could not be expected to make marked strides.

The situation was further complicated by problems on the consolidation front. As of 1956 Nyanza was still negotiating for experienced consolidation staff from the central province and yet consolidation was a major if not the sole requirement for farm planning. An important consequence of this consolidation staff shortage was that the Administration came to play a much larger role in land consolidation using its familiar method of coercion. This sparked off resistance in Central Nyanza in particular due to a high level of peasant consciousness and based on the fear of further land alienation as had occurred in Kikuyuland. Therefore the grim picture of the situation prevailing in Nyanza given in the quotation below is not at all surprising although exception must be taken of the fact that it bases Nyanza's development potential on the current marketed output.

104. Heyer Ibid p. 26

105. 1954 Department of Agriculture Annual Report p. 1

Nyanza's development during this period was disappointing in contrast with the rapid rate of development in Central Province. Nyanza did not have such large areas that were well suited to the expansion of cash crops hitherto prohibited, and in much of Nyanza there was a lack of suitable high value products on which a faster rate of development could be based. Coupled with this was the fact that Nyanza's more limited development opportunities had already been more fully exploited previously than had those in Central Province. Nyanza did not stagnate but its marketed output grew much less dramatically than of Central Province.¹⁰⁶

One needs to add that the trend of focusing on high potential areas in question was to continue for the remaining part of the colonial period, which was in any case dominated by constitutional conferences and bargains, and well into the post Independence period. As for the other areas it is only with the drawing up of the 1974/78 Development Plan that one sees a seemingly determined attempt to shift attention to them.¹⁰⁷

Conclusion.

The main thrust of this discussion has been to identify the landmarks in Kenya's agricultural policy and services during the colonial period with particular reference to African small holder areas. The main contention is that the pattern of policy and services that evolved in these areas has at best undergone limited modification. Otherwise it has remained intact. There are several instances of policy and services mentioned which, to a reader familiar with Kenya's agricultural policy and services, automatically support this contention. However I should hasten to add that the analysis is not intended for only this type of reader. The end objective is to put Kenya's Agricultural policy and services for smallholder areas into its proper historical perspective in order to better understand its present functioning.

The strategy I have chosen as opposed to simply juxtaposing instances of policy occurring during the colonial period and the current trend is to systematically identify the policy that evolved during the colonial period and then relate it to discussions of macro and micro level policy and services. The former has already been discussed briefly elsewhere.¹⁰⁸ The latter will be taken up in a discussion of agricultural extension bureaucracy.

106. Hayer Ibid.
107. Alila Ibid p5
108. Alila Ibid.

There are however certain outstanding broad trends of policy and services worth summarising here. First is the relative neglect of food crop production. Presumably a task traditionally performed by Africans and therefore not requiring advice save introduction and distribution of seeds coupled with pressure to grow more in periods of stress eg famine, wars etc. A corollary to that is little or complete lack of attention to labour and capital as constraints in agricultural production in African smallholder areas. Secondly, a focus on cash crops in particular areas practically all of high potential. Thirdly a focus on progressive farmers in these and African smallholder areas. This is the now familiar line of least resistance argument. Fourthly a view of land tenure as a close correlate of agricultural development and therefore tying loans for example to land tenure status. Lastly, the reliance by the Ministry of Agriculture on the administration, for long the champion of agricultural development. A costly trend in terms of the methods the administration is familiar with.

Appendix Table I Seed Issue to Farmers in Nyanza Province 1928-1938 (selected years)

Seed Type	Sources of Seed Issued (2,000 lb. units)						1938 (b)
	1928 (a)	1928 (b)	1934 (a)	1934 (b)	1934 (c)	1938 (a)	
Maize	46.0	-	-	8.0	2.0	0.4	35.4
Wheat	.2	3.0	0.8	-	-	-	-
Sorghum	1.8	-	-	-	-	1.4	10.8
Mwale	1.4	-	-	-	-	-	-
Beans	9.0	-	4.8	-	-	-	-
Peas	.48	-	-	5.6	-	-	-
Chiroko (Sunflower)	1.08	6.0	-	-	-	-	-
Groundnuts	7.2	1.0	-	-	-	5.2	-
Rice	-	-	neg	-	-	-	10.2
Potatoes	-	-	-	12.2	1.4	-	-
Trees	-	-	-	-	150.4	-	-
Vegetables	-	-	-	0.8	-	-	-
Millet	-	-	-	-	-	1.0	16.6

Source: Uchendu V.C. and Anthony K., Agricultural Change in Kisii District, Kenya EALB 1975 p. 35 The Table shows the declining importance of the Department of Agriculture as the source of seed.

TABLE II

AGRICULTURAL STAFF IN AFRICAN AREAS 1924-1938

	1924	1925	1926	1927	1928	1929	1930	1931	1932	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938
<u>NYANZA</u>															
Europeans	5	4	2½	2½	3	2	4	4	4	5	5	3	6	n.a.	n.a.
Africans	26	22	16	8	12	14	29	n.a.	n.a.	45	111	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
<u>CENTRAL</u>															
Europeans	3	3	2½	3	5	4	4	4	5	6	7	n.a.	7	n.a.	n.a.
Africans	11	13	18	15	26	35	33	n.a.	n.a.	42	69	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
<u>COAST</u>															
Europeans	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1½	n.a.	4	n.a.	n.a.
Africans	1	8	10	13	13	17	23	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	48	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
<u>TOTAL</u>															
Europeans	9	8	6	6½	9	7	10	9	10	12	13½	n.a.	17	n.a.	n.a.
Africans	40	43	44	36	51	66	85	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	228	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.

Source: Heyer J. op. cit. p.5

Appendix Table III

AGRICULTURAL STAFF IN NYANZA 1946

Europeans

	Senior Agr. Off.	Agr. Off.	Asst. Agr. Off.
Kisumu	2		3
Maseno		1	1
Kakamega		1	
Bukura			3
Kisii		1	2
Kericho			2

Africans

	Agriculture Dept.	Local Native Council	Total
Agricultural Assistants*	3		3
Clerks	8	-	8
Instructors	168	?	168
Agr. Inspectors	-	216	216
River Scouts	40	-	40
Produce Inspectors	13	146	159
Market Staff		41	41
Labour	108	389	497

* Makerere trained.

Source: 1946 Agriculture Department, Annual Report p. 31.

Appendix Table IV

IDS/WP 327

PUPILS AT SCOTT AGRICULTURAL LABORATORY (NAIROBI)
AND BUKURA (KAVIRONDO)

YEAR	NUMBER OF PUPILS		NUMBER SENT OUT TRAINED	
	NRB	BUKURA	NRB	BUKURA
1923	21			
1924	42	30		
1925	43	32	10	
1926	34	55	28	
1927	42	45	-----*	9
1928	50	36	8	4
1929	48	32	24	20
1930	60	48	20	7
1931	60	51	14	14

* Course extended from 2 to 3 years

Source: 1931 Dept. of Agriculture Annual Report p. 75.

Appendix Table V

NATURE OF EMPLOYMENT OBTAINED BY APPRENTICES

NATURE OF EMPLOYMENT	1925-9	1930	1931	1932
(SCOTT AGR. LAB)				
Native Agricultural Instructors	43	10	6	10
Forestry	2	2
Educational work	4	4	1	1
Alliance High School	1	--	3	1
European farms	--	1	1	--
Other work	11	--	--	1
Returned to Native Reserves	6	3	3	6
(BUKURA)				
Native Agricultural Instructors	24	4	9	11
Educational work	2	--	1	1
European farms	--	1	--	--
Other work	2	1	--	2
Returned to Native Reserves	5	1	4	9

Source: 1932 Dept of Agriculture Annual Report p. 70.