U.S. FOREIGN POLICY TOWARD KENYA, 1952-1960*

by

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INTRODUCTION

Whatever one's definition of foreign policy might be, the element of national interests is always paramount. This is applicable not just to the U.S. alone, but to all countries; hence the nature of foreign policy in general.

U.S. policy toward Africa can be divided into three major periods: first, the period 1776-1950, in which the major U.S. concern was trade. Second, the period 1950-1958, when the major issue was the controversy over U.S. policy on 'the colonial question'. Third, the period since 1958 (the independence period), when the U.S. had to accommodate the rising nationalist interests in Africa.[1]

As far as East Africa is concerned, U.S. relations go as far back as the historic diplomatic links at Zanzibar in the 1830s.[2] However, the European partition of East Africa relegated the U.S. to the status of an inactive observer there until the first stump of nationalism and decolonization combined to change the diplomatic status after World War II.[3] With this, the historical domination of Kenya in East Africa started; hence the significance of that country in this study.

The study focuses on the second period of U.S. policy toward Africa, when the nationalist struggle (Mau Mau) erupted in Kenya on October 20, 1952. This development in Kenya was of great concern to the Eisenhower Administration. The modus operandi of this paper therefore involves an analysis of the nature of U.S. interests in Kenya during the period under review -- the major thesis being that Mau Mau affected U.S. perceptions of these interests (military, economic and security considerations in the Indian Ocean), in as far as it added an ideological element in which the U.S. administration alleged that Mau Mau was a "communist" inspired movement.

This paper seeks to delineate and analyze U.S. policy objectives in Kenya which sought to safeguard U.S. interests in the

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region while simultaneously playing British colonialism against African nationalism and vice-versa. The outcome of this double-edged policy not only served U.S. strategic interests, but also the rising Kenyan African national bourgeoisie.

U.S. INTERESTS IN KENYA

What were U.S. interests in Kenya at this time? Before the Mau Mau war that broke out on October 20, 1952, U.S. interests in Kenya focused on military and economic requirements and strategy in the Indian Ocean, as one authoritative source indicates.[4] From the military point of view, two important American shipping lines (the source does not identify them), maintained regular schedules between Mombasa and east coast ports in the U.S. Moreover, Mombasa was the principle British naval base during World War II in the East African and Indian Ocean area. Mombasa was also considered the key to the logistical importance of the area embraced by the East African High Command with its Headquarters in Nairobi. Mombasa constituted a military flanking position on the Middle East life line. The High Command stretched 2,000 miles -- from the South African border, to the Ethiopian border, and both of these were considered secure in the 1950s.

As one official source indicates,[5] the U.S. considered Mombasa an important base in the event of a general war. The U.S. sought to have access to Mombasa to control the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea, especially if the Suez Canal and Middle East bases were denied the west. It would not therefore be surprising to learn that presently the U.S. has a naval base at Mombasa for more or less the same purpose envisaged thirty years ago.

Commercially, the U.S. saw Mombasa (as it undisputably was), as the most important commercial port in East Africa. Through it the major portion of the trade of the region passed, including American imports of raw materials (such as copper and cobalt from Uganda and industrial diamonds from Tanganyika), and exports of finished goods to Kenya, Uganda, the Eastern Belgian Congo and Northern Tanganyika.[6]

How did Mau Mau affect U.S. perceptions of these interests? Ideologically, the U.S. felt that through the liberation war waged by the Mau Mau, Kenya would fall to communist influence and that the Mau Mau cause afforded communism the opportunity to exploit the dominant racial tensions in Kenya to the detriment of the west.[7] The U.S. was suspicious of a Mau Mau connection with communism because of Mau Mau's stand against the injustices of British Imperialism against the people of Kenya. Justifying why the people of Kenya had taken the road of armed struggle, Dedan Kimathi, the chief architect of the movement

in the forests, declared: "We resort to armed struggle simply because there is no other alternative left to us, because our people are exploited, oppressed, plundered, tortured . . ."[8] The U.S. administration knew of Mau Mau's ideological position through a document published in October 1953 by Kimathi -- a copy of which was sent to President Eisenhower as well as other world leaders, governments, and influential organizations.[9]

Thus specultaions concerning the possible connection between Mau Mau and what was referred to as "international communism" represents U.S. policy toward the entire Third World, the full articulation of which is beyond the scope of this paper.[10] Deputy Under Secretary of State Alexis Johnson gives what may be considered an authoritative statement:

> *It has been recognized as never before that what we in the United States are seeking in the less-developed world is not the building of military forces for their own sake, or pro-American propaganda for its own sake, but rather the use of all of the available resources for assisting society and government that can maintain itself, develop in step with the modern world and, above all, remain free from domination or control by communist forces hostile to us* [*my emphasis*]. *United States interests do not require satellites, colonies, or subservience to all of our ideas. I am convinced that our interests are well served if foreign peoples and lands are truly independent, and if that remains the objective they seek for themselves. Thus we have a basis for truly mutual cooperation.*[11]

It was therefore upon the wider parameters of U.S. policy as briefly outlined above, that the U.S. viewed the success of Mau Mau as something that would work to the benefit of "international communism" in creating another focus of "unrest" in the Western Hemisphere, as was the case in South East Asia.[12]

With the eruption of the Mau Mau war came the state of emergency. Under the Emergency Regulations, it meant that the colonial police and armed forces had a free hand in dealing with the Mau Mau movement. The most significant aspects of the Emergency Regulations were the arbitrary arrest and detention without trial.[13]

One of these first to be arrested was Jomo Kenyatta, President of the Kenya African Union (KAU). Charged with treason, the colonial authorities had described Kenyatta as the person the Mau Mau movement looked to as its leading spirit. At this trial with five other KAU leaders (Achieng Oneko, Paul Ngei, Fred Kubai, Bildad Kaggia and Kungu Karumba), the colonial authorities claimed that Kenyatta had "Moscow connections."[14]

There is no concrete evidence to this allegation, and one could therefore deduce that it was simply contrived to fulfill a desired goal.

The U.S. had its own concerns over Kenyatta's trial -- concerns that were connected with its ideological interest -- that of curbing the so-called communism despite the absence of any concrete evidence of communist activity in Kenya. U.S. policy makers claimed, for example, that three of the principal persons who attempted to join Kenyatta's defense council -- Kola Balogun, Nigerian Lawyer and Secretary of National Council of Nigeria and Cameroon; H.O. Davis, leader of the Nigeria Peoples Congress; and D.N. Pritt, Q.C. a member of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers -- had communist contacts and sympathies.[15] The Acting Secretary of State also asked the following questions:

> *What is the opinion of Kenya government and police officials regarding the persons associated in Kenyatta's defense?*
>
> *Are there any indications that Kenyatta's Counsel have made contact with local Africans or Indians outside the course of their normal duties?*
>
> *Has any Communist propaganda in Kenya or elsewhere yet taken advantage of the possibilities posed by Kenyatta's trial?*[16]

This fear of "international communism" spreading into Kenya, as we shall see below, worked against U.S. primary interests.

U.S. OBJECTIVES

Having outlined the nature of U.S. interests in Kenya, the question now becomes: What were U.S. objectives in Kenya and East Africa as a whole? On paper the policy was neither to replace nor to undermine British colonialism. It was claimed that any alternative to British control would be unsatisfactory both from the standpoint of management of local affairs as well as from guaranteeing western interests in the area; that to the contrary, the U.S. was to help the British, as long as this help was not given at the expense of U.S. relationship with the indigenous population.[17] U.S. policy as privately professed by the State Department would be to work in harmony with the British in their efforts to "help" the indigenous population toward a "viable" economy and eventual self-government. Simultaneously, the U.S. recognized that British power was on the wane in Kenya, and indeed in East Africa. As the consular general at Nairobi felt,[18] the U.S. had to prepare for the day when the Pax Britanica alone was not enough to

ensure local stability and maintenance of western interest. The consular general recommended:

> *We must therefore begin now to develop stronger relationships with native leaders and with the native population, primitive as they may in some cases be. America must not forever remain an unkown quantity to these people, nor they to us, especially as they begin to acquire political power.*
>
> *To date, America is known to the native peoples primarily through American missionaries. These missionaries have done invaluable work. But in the final analysis, their job has been to interpret religion. It has not been their function, nor should we ask them, to interpret American economic philosophy, American business methods, American agriculture, industry, labor, etc. Commensurate with the advance of the local people, there should be a much more fully-rounded activity involving all types of American life, ranging from diplomacy between governments to discussions among farmers. At present, aside from the missionaries, only the Consulate General and U.S.I.S. at Nairobi . . . and a few scattered American businessmen are here to perform that function.*[19]

This statement was an invitation to the U.S. to play a more active diplomatic role in the region, an appeal that was to have far-reaching implications in subsequent U.S. policy in the region, as is discussed below.

In light of the foregoing, according to available evidence, a five-point program for a strong U.S. policy was worked out by the State Department. The program was meant to develop strength, flexibility and leverage in future U.S. relationships with the people of East Africa. First, U.S. consular representation in the region had to be augmented. This was important especially as regarded coverage of Uganda where U.S. policy makers believed anything could happen quickly in face of the then on-going constitutional crisis, historically known as the kabaka (king) crisis.[20] A separate consulate in Uganda was desirable and remained the goal. However, since for budgetary and political reasons it was not immediately possible, provision was made for an increase of Nairobi's staff by one officer and more frequent visits to Uganda by members of the Consulate General's staff.

Second, the United States Information Service (USIS) program was to be strengthened throughout East Africa. The USIS was meant to cover a cultural program for the entire region.[21]

Third, educational exchange with Makerere College (Uganda), with the New Royal Technical College in Nairobi, and with other educational institutions was given high priority. As secretary of State John Foster Dulles argued before the Advisory Commission on Education Exchange in August 1954:

> *One of our troubles is that we like to do things that work quickly. In that respect the Soviet Communists have a great advantage over us because they work for long-range objectives . . . Their work among the intelligentsia and the fact that their propaganda has made such an impact in even the Western World is very largely due to the fact that they are getting the fruits now of work which they started 20 years ago. Another angle that I have been greatly impressed with and one in which we get our greatest help as we deal with the so-called underdeveloped countries . . . is the fact that in those countries there have emerged and come to the top people who have been educated either in the United States or in American institutions abroad.*[22]

This above statement is remarkable because it was made by a strong anti-communist who, despite his view of the Soviet system, still commended their system against the American one -- an indication that perhaps the U.S. could learn something from the Soviets, especially in terms of foreign policy formulation.

Fourth, Foreign Operations Administration (FOA), a kind of relief agency that was meant to function in developing countries, was to get into the picture as quickly and as strongly as possible, with the capacity of reaching both leaders and "grass roots" effectively through "visible projects." These projects were meant to make the U.S. concrete and real, rather than remote and unreal to the local people. Projects such as an American wing to the Royal Technical College was considered a "foot in the door," as well as a contribution of lasting benefit to the U.S.[23] The project was conceived to be "in consonance with American principles of racial equality," and the Consulate General and USIS would be responsible for it.[24]

Fifth, there was to be a stimulation of "constructive contacts" with the people of the area by private American organizations of all types. The State Department, for instance, had initiated efforts to stimulate private interest in the local "save the children" campaign.[25] The role of Cooperative American Relief Everywhere (CARE), a body of American philanthropic groups that was meant to contribute in 'cementing' people-to-people relationships was also reviewed. It was now time, the State Department believed, for CARE to fulfill this function in East Africa.[26] It is thus clear from all this

activity that by 1954 the U.S. was preparing the ground for her future policy in the region.

AFRICAN RESPONSE TO U.S. POLICY

In determining what U.S. interests and objectives were in Kenya, it becomes imperative to examine the African response to this policy. It would appear inevitable that U.S. policy during the 1950s was obliged to support British imperialism in Kenya. Accordingly, to support British colonialism in Kenya in the 1950s was not simply to support maintenance of the status quo. A representative expression of these "twin goals" was made by former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State, J.C. Satterthwaite, in 1959:

> *We support African political aspirations when they are moderate, non-violent, and constructive and take into account their obligations to and interdependence with the world community. We also support African ties with Western Europe. We see no reason why there should be a conflict between these two concepts.*[27]

But as Donald Rothchild has observed: "As the goal of self-determination came into conflict with those of orderly change, containment of communism, and respect for domestic jurisdiction, policy makers seemed uncertain as to their priorities."[28] It was precisely this ambiguity that provided an opening for Kenya African appeals to the U.S. during this transitional period.

Because the U.S. pretended to be sympathetic to the Kenya Africans, African moderate nationalists and other well-placed Africans in the colonial service looked to America for "possible assistance" in ameliorating the colonial problem in Kenya. India had already identified herself with the cause of the Africans in Kenya, and was training Kenyan Africans in Community Development projects, with a view to introducing them in Kenya.[29] One such nationalist involved in this progam was Joseph Murumbi, who had himself studied in India. He was therefore to visit the U.S. to enlist aid for economic and educational projects for the benefit of Kenya Africans. While in the U.S. in June 1953, Murumbi explained his plans to American aid groups in New York. The plans involved land reform, greater participation of Africans in government, the expansion of education and the expansion of health facilities for Africans. For immediate dealing with the Mau Mau emergency, he stood for the removal from the battle front of the reserve forces of European settlers whom he described as "trigger happy." He wanted to leave the problem to the regular army and police, adding that irresponsible activities by the settlers had resulted in driving more embittered Africans to the intensified

struggle.

As General Secretary of the KAU, Murumbi was to submit a three-point plan for ameliorating the political and economic problems in Kenya to the colonial office in London. In seeking U.S. aid for development, Murumbi outlined these proposals:[30] First, on land reform, top priority was for the opening up of Crown Lands in the European highland section for farming by Africans on a short-term basis. Along with this existed the need to develop African reserves through community projects and cooperative efforts. Second, in the colony's Legislative Council, Murumbi wanted equal representation for Africans along the lines of the system in Tanganyika and argued that the prevailing system of administration through nonrepresentative chiefs had to be abolished as had been accomplished in the then Goldcoast. Third, in the fields of education and health he proposed the full utilization of the services of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and the World Health Organization (WHO), so that outside financial aid and technical personnel could be permitted in Kenya without the prevailing restrictions, and African students could freely go abroad for training.

These were the proposals that Murumbi was to present on behalf of the KAU to all concerned parties. He hoped to obtain assistance from philanthropic foundations in the U.S. for "development projects" in Kenya, such as the Rockefeller and Ford Foundations had undertaken in India. The KAU's philosophy was that the political aspirations and economic problems of the Africans in Kenya had to be recognized and dealt with by associating African leaders with the opportunities for improvement, otherwise frustration was bound to be manifested in continued struggle by the people of Kenya. Therefore, Murumbi was in line with the expressed desires of the U.S. to bring about change by non-violent methods. His politics were the bourgeois politics of the KAU during the emergency.

Similarly, African members of the Kenya Legislative Council expressed their enthusiasm about the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in 1954 to abolish segregation in public schools, although white members were cool and hesitant to comment. Isaac Okwiri, representing the Luo nationality, his legal constituency, said:

> *America is right. Here in Kenya we are supposed to create one nation of all races. If we are not educated together, we will live in fear of one another. If we are to stay together forever, why should we have separate schools? Children will learn to know each other intimately in the same schools and fear will disappear.*[31]

In this regard it must be remembered that U.S. policy toward Kenya reflected the racial consciousness within the U.S. itself, where the administration was faced with similar problems of harmonizing its black population. This probably partly explains why her policy toward Africa as a whole has been "distinctly low-keyed and cautious in nature."[32] And as Ali Mazrui has asserted: "'the United States has done fewer bad things in Africa than she has done in Asia and Latin America. But she has also done fewer good things in Africa than elsewhere.'"[33] These categories reflect priorities in U.S. policy, where Asia (especially Southeast Asia) and Latin America have historically been the major concerns of U.S. policy toward the Third World. In the overall U.S. foreign policy objectives, Africa has been grossly neglected. This perhaps means that the neglect has been a blessing in disguise, in Mazrui's sense that the U.S. has done fewer bad things in Africa, by which Mazrui seems to imply that the U.S. has exploited Africa less. These "bad things" seem to have been committed in areas of heavy U.S. involvement (Asia and Latin America). Whatever fewer "good things" the U.S. had done in Africa can also be judged against the background of its "late coming" to Africa, in terms of the European colonialism of the continent towards the close of the 19th century.

In the mid 1950s, U.S. economic "aid" reached $4,161,700 to finance "development projects" in the East African colonies. Kenya received the largest share worth $3,887,800, while Uganda received only $268,800, and Tanganyika a mere $5,600.[34] This clearly indicates how the U.S. regarded Kenya as the most important of the three colonies. In explaining the grants, U.S. State Department representative in Nairobi stated that: "The United States Government regards assistance of African territories as an important part of its foreign policy, designed to help raise living standards and promote the realization of the economic potential of the entire society." Plans for using the grant to Kenya were outlined in the Legislative Council by E.A. Vasey, Minister of Finance. It was to finance plans for the "improvement" of "African native" agriculture -- clarifying that "A total of $2,413,400 of American funds have been earmarked for this purpose."[35] The projects included research and demonstrations, farm replanning, irrigation, and livestock experiments in various parts of Kenya. Nineteen American "technical specialists" were to go to Kenya to work on the agricultural program.

Other major categories of the grant included $512,000 for health, $280,000 for commerce and industry, $186,000 for education, $176,000 for roads, and $20,000 for community development.

An examination of these allocations makes it clear that U.S. policy was hypocritical; it bolstered the colonial regime

in Kenya and simultaneously gave Africans peanut assistance according to their "requirements and needs." The excuse was that the aid to the colonial government was given with the hope that it would ultimately benefit Africans. According to E.A. Vasey,

> *Other sums will be spent for adult literacy programs, handicraft training, clerical and commercial courses, and for training African road supervisors and plant operators. The $512,000 allotment for health alone will make possible the construction of a larger medical training school in Nairobi. This will increase from 250-500 the number of places for students who may take courses in hygiene, laboratory technology, pharmacy and radiographical technology.*[36]

U.S. economic "aid" in part was the result of efforts made by people like Murumbi in appealing to the U.S. to play a more positive role in ameliorating the colonial problem in Kenya. Such efforts by other Kenyan Africans including civil servants (who had been molded along colonial lines) continued in the subsequent years. The case of John Muchura who was senior inspector for the Labor Department in Nairobi will suffice. In 1956, Muchura was the first Kenyan African to be awarded a Smith Mundt Fellowship. The fellowship was an educational exchange service of the State Department based on legislation written by Senators Karl. E. Mundt of South Dakota and Alexander Smith of New Jersey -- both of them republicans.[37]

Why Muchura was selected as the first African in Kenya among so many others, remains unclear. Presumably this was a new element of U.S. policy to hand-pick people of their choice and taste. But since Mundt was a fierce anti-communist,[38] it probably had something to do with the so-called "communist threat" in Kenya. Muchura's selection as the very first recipient of this fellowship demonstrates the importance of Kenya to U.S.-Africa policy makers.

While on a tour of the U.S. that year, Muchura noted that the social, educational and economic barriers in Kenya followed the same pattern as that in some parts of the southern U.S.[39] He declared however, that the Africans in Kenya were concentrating their efforts on attaining a greater voice in government. In this regard, the prevailing representation by race in the Kenya Legislature made impossible for Africans to gain a majority, although they out-numbered Europeans by 120 to 1. In this way, he was appealing for greater support for the Africans in their struggle for majority rule in Kenya.

Such appeals made by people like Murumbi and Muchura meant that the U.S. had to come out openly to support the cause of

the Africans. There was suspicion by Africans in Kenya that the U.S. was supporting the colonial regime not only financially, but also militarily, by providing American soldiers to fight against Mau Mau. But as the records show, only one unofficial American is known to have fought against Mau Mau.[40] The number, however, probably does not matter, because even this solitary American, William W. Baldwin, had already caused enough embarrassment to the State Department, which pressured him to return to the U.S.[41] Baldwin was told by U.S. consular officials in Nairobi that his activities had caused the U.S. government considerable embarrassment. The State Department informed him privately, and its representatives announced publicly, that his presence as a combatant in the Kenya Police Reserve "must be classed as unwarranted participation in the affairs of another state."[42]

TOM MBOYA'S GAMBIT

Any talk of Tom Mboya during the 1950s involves locating him in the Kenyan political scene and relating his position to U.S. policy toward Kenya. The Emergency Regulations marked an important dividing line in the growth of the nationalist movement in Kenya. In this respect, Cherry Gertzel identifies two effects: "One of its effects was to reinforce the tradition of violence that had earlier crept into Kenyan politics . . . A second effect was the manner in which it limited Kikuyu participation in political events for eight crucial years . . . ."[43] These eight years saw the rapid development of national consciousness among other nationalities "enlarging and changing the scope of the nationalist movement far beyond that of KAU."[44] With this growth came a new leadership group that voiced the African political consciousness and eventually won the 1960 constitutional concessions.[45]

After the proscription of KAU in June 1953, trade unionists led by Mboya, quickly filled the political vacuum. Mboya became the dominant figure in the campaign for the redress of emergency grievances, and was in the forefront in the battle for the improvement of labor conditions.[46] Consequently, by 1955 he had become a leading spokesman for Kenyan nationalism.

During his political career, Mboya was regarded as a very controversial figure. According to his biographer, David Goldsworthy: "Some people saw him as concerned and ... radical, liberal, conservative. Mboya the ardent nationalist . . . clashes in the memory with the Mboya castigated as an agent of exploitative foreign (especially American) influence in Kenya . . . It is manifestly difficult to sort out one's attitudes towards so controversial a man."[47]

Whatever his countrymen thought of him, it is apparent

that he was the man whom the Americans had handpicked to be their candidate for national political leadership in Kenya. In the U.S. he was seen as the man who was to replace Kenyatta. The New York Times asserted: "Mr. Mboya is regarded as a man who may easily become the political leader of the Africans in a land where since the imprisonment of Jomo Kenyatta . . . no important African leader has appeared."[48] However, this fact was later to determine his subsequent political career -- both positively and negatively, and ignores the critical role of Oginga Odinga at this time.

Mboya's American connection started in 1956, and it progressively increased over the years. His connection was supposedly meant to serve the interests of the Africans in Kenya who were struggling against British rule. Explaining the nature of this struggle during his 1956 American tour, he said:

> *White supremacy in East Africa is doomed. British settlers will give up their power only under coercion. The British colonial office should exercise the necessary coercion by legal and constitutional means before it is too late . . . The African community is not asking that the European community be physically removed from the country . . . But they must be told that there will be a democracy based on individuals, with a vote for each man, and not a representation based on race groups.*[49]

In August 1957, Mboya visited the U.S. under the sponsorship of the American Committee on Africa (ACOA), an organization of "Americans interested in furthering American-African relations." Its broad objectives were:

> *To interpret the meaning of African events to the American people; support policies which will further the development in those parts of Africa where it does not exist; raise special funds in the United States to support projects in Africa to establish inter-racial cooperation, and oppose racial discrimination; and serve African people through African students in this country and through educational and service projects in Africa.*[50]

While in the U.S., Mboya managed to convince American businessmen to sponsor or at least to pay airfares of Kenyan African students to attend American colleges. In the following few months of that year, William X. Scheinman, a wealthy American Industrialist, personally squared the fares of seventeen Kenyan students. This was the result of Mboya's earlier contacts with him.[51]

Despite his favored position with the Americans, Mboya's increasing political popularity and rise to prominence at home caused the British colonial regime now to regard him as its number one enemy. In the words of the Governor-General of Kenya, Evelyn Baring:

> *The trouble is Mboya. He is the completely indoctrinated man . . . He himself speaks very well in Legco [Legislative Council] partly by persuasion and partly by threats holds his people together. He will not cooperate and tries to force our hand . . . He sees himself as the Kenya Nkrumah and is only just 27. One day he might be brought around but at present he is pretty sinister and evil . . . Well, we must fight him, he is intensely arrogant, a lapsed RC [Roman Catholic] with the morals of a monkey.*[52]

This racist, religiously bigoted, and arrogant statement by the colonial governor merely confirmed the regime's fear of Mboya -- a statement that warranted maintaining the status quo, despite the struggle by the Africans to change it. This situation was bound to create further dilemma in U.S. policy toward Kenya.

Mboya visited the U.S. again in 1959. By this time, it was beyond any reasonable doubt that he was the leading African politician in Kenya. This, of course, was resented by the colonial authorities, as it was also by his own political rivals, especially older ones, who regarded him as an upstart and a threat to their own ambitions.[53] Nevertheless, his image in the U.S. sharply contrasted with that at home. In America, he was both regarded and treated as a hero. However, for his own part, he saw the U.S. as the hope for remedying the colonial problem in Kenya. Therefore, whereas he minimized the British, he now maximized his U.S. connection -- involving the world's leading imperialist power in the Kenyan cause -- not for the purpose of changing one imperialism for another, but as Goldsworthy has commented, "to take advantage of the situation."[54]

In his usual impressive style, Mboya did not fail to win the admiration of U.S. policy makers. In Boston, it was reported that:

> *Despite the fire in his words, Mr. Mboya spoke calmly and softly, in a low-pitched sonorous voice. This contrast -- the passionate appeal keyed down to placid, unhurried yet expressive tones -- gave his talk much of its impact.*[55]

On the west coast, in California, he met the man who was soon to become the U.S. President, Senator John F. Kennedy. Mboya has revealed his own belief that in many political respects,

he and Senator Kennedy shared similar visions:

> *I first met Mr. Kennedy -- he was then Senator Kennedy -- in . . . the West coast near San Francisco. This was at a conference on international affairs . . . I think we found a lot of interest in each other almost immediately. I had written a pamphlet published by the Fabians on The Kenya Question: An Answer which I gave him and in which he was very interested. We discussed a lot about the African situation and found that we were in a lot of agreement about the whole area of American foreign policy as it affected the African scene. I was most impressed with him as a person.* [56]

On the whole, Mboya's U.S. itinerary that year was a success in many respects. First, from the personal point of view, he had earned unprecedented admiration of the American people, who had never before encountered an African of his personal attraction; that is to say, he was recognizable to an American audience. Second, in a nationalistic sense, his itinerary aided in projecting an "acceptable" image of Kenyan nationalism. Third, in a continental perspective, his itinerary was a landmark in U.S.-African relations in the sense that "his poised performance on Meet the Press," at age twenty-nine, was for many Americans the first occasion they began to take Africa seriously.

Mboya knew what he wanted from the Americans -- money for so-called development projects, not just in Kenya alone, but in Africa as a whole. He also wanted to win the support of Americans in helping to finance higher education in the U.S. for many young Kenya Africans who did not have the opportunities under the racist colonial system. This, however, is far from suggesting that he was merely a stooge of the Americans, ready to dance to their tune at anytime. Indeed, he was quite capable of speaking critically to his American hosts, as he did at Boston in 1959:

> *Your heritage leads us to believe there is no other country in the world from which we should expect greater things . . . There are those who ask if the African is really ready to govern himself, and I submit that the African need not justify his right to self-determination and there is no one who has a moral right to ask such a question.* [57]

He was also to express later, on the behalf of the African people, how Africa was immensely disappointed at the failure of the U.S. in the U.N. to support sanctions against racist South Africa, and stressed that the civil rights movement in the U.S.

was "part of our own struggle."[58]

Mboya's U.S. connection produced one outstanding result of which he had been dreaming for a long time -- the student airlift. In 1959, he had been made a member of the newly formed Africa-American Students Foundation (AASF) in New York. This organization had as its major task the soliciting of funds from America to assist further higher education for the unprivileged Kenya Africans. Immediately, the AASF received fifty scholarships, and $35,000 from some 8,000 contributors (excluding U.S. government) who responded to the AASF fund-raising committee.[59]

In the following year, 1960, the AASF officials made appeals to the State Department for further assistance for Kenya students. Although they received a favorable response, the matter was to be tabled to the Senate first.[60] Eventually, the second airlift was funded, but not without some interesting developments following Senator Kennedy's earlier request that a $100,000 contribution from the Kennedy Foundation should not be publicized. The same amount of money contributed by the government was turned down by Mboya on the pretext that the airlift affair was to be kept private. Senator Hugh Scott questioned the uses of this money that was tax-exempt.[61] He accused Senator Kennedy of undermining the U.S. government for his own electioneering purposes.[62] At the conclusion of Scott's remarks Senator Kennedy angrily called the allegations "the most unfair distorted and malignant attack that I have heard in 14 years in politics." He then gave these details of his association with the airlift:

> *. . . the Kennedy Foundation went into this reluctantly. Mr. Mboya came to see us and asked for help when the Federal Government had turned it down. We felt something ought to be done. To waste 250 students who hoped to come to this country, it certainly seemed to me would be most unfortunate, and so we went ahead.*[63]

Remarking to the press on Scott's speech, the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, J. William Fulbright, stated that the speech was "an outrageous distortion of the facts . . . it was an unacceptable interference by Scott with the orderly conduct of foreign policy by the State Department for partisan political purposes."[64]

It is interesting to learn that Mboya's 'airlift visit' made such an impact on the electioneering fever that was characteristic of a presidential campaign. As Mahoney has observed, "The controversy brought Kennedy a windfall of favorable press attention and provided him with excellent ammunition

on the campaign trail."[65]

Although Mboya was later to be criticized by his adversaries in Kenya for the manner in which scholarships were dispensed -- claiming that a lot of nepotism was being practiced in the exercise, Smith concludes:

> *It appears that he . . . controlled the dispensation of his scholarships rather closely, . . . but that he bent every effort towards selecting only the best-qualified of those he preferred. In Mr. Stephens's (Cultural Affairs Officer of the USIS in Nairobi) judgement those who received Mboya scholarships were better qualified than most of the students who joined the airlift with funds of their own.*[66]

The choice of scholarship applicants lay in the hands of a committee which included the Cultural Affairs Officer, Mboya himself, Dr. Gikonyo Kiano, who had himself studied in the U.S., and another American educated man, Kariuki Njiiri.[67] It is true that each of them wanted to dispense scholarships to their own favorites,[68] but such temptations are sometimes inevitable, and Mboya was not free from them. Moreover, the airlift program was virtually Mboya's, as A.G. Sims seems to confirm:

> *Mboya was our host and program coordinator in Kenya. Around the clock he devoted himself indefatigably to the airlift conferring by telephone with Nyerere and his aids in Tanganyika, with leaders in Uganda, and with the AASF office in New York -- organizing and addressing innumerable fund raising teas, dances and tribal festivities. At the wheel of his big Mercedes he hurtled us at eighty miles an hour through the dusty countryside. After the first such excursion we were limping . . . Throughout, Mboya dominated the proceedings, made the decisions, large and small, and sustained the momentum of the project.*[69]

The same camp (represented by Oginga, Bildad Kaggia, and Arthur Ochwada) also criticized Mboya's involvement in labor movement between 1957 and 1960.[70] This period saw Mboya increasingly connected with both the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and the Congress of Industrial Organization (CIO), more than with the British labor movement. He was especially deeply connected with the International Conference of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU). The ICFTU, though created by the major Western Trade Union Centers, was mainly financed by U.S. labor organizations -- with assistance from agencies of the U.S. government.[71] Mboya sought to connect the Kenya Federation of Registered Trade Unions (KFRTU) with the ICFTU.

A conspiracy theory actually evolved as to whether his financial dependence on U.S. oriented labor organizations did not make him an 'agent' of U.S. foreign policy. A number of his critics, especially left wing ones, were of the view that he had been "recruited by the CIA" at the time he first visited the U.S. in 1956, and was therefore in the payroll of the CIA. This allegation is reflected by G. Morris's assertion (which can be taken to reflect that of the Communist Party of the United States of America (CPUSA) that:

> *The American trade union leaders have therefore always sought to build up the trade union movement in Africa on the basis of privileged leaders. Their chief weapon, following American practice, is the bribery of anti-communist and anti-colonial elements in the trade union and nationalist movement. In agreement with the State Department and the CIA the Americans have provided secret undercover for such leaders as Tom Mboya . . . In fact, we have reason to believe there is an understanding between him and the Americans and the whole emphasis on the plan for autonomy of the African Regional Organization is indeed to be used by the Americans as an indirect means for spreading their influence in Africa.*[72]

To what extent this allegation holds water, may be difficult to determine. The fact that Mboya was envied by many inside Kenya may lead one to conclude that anything could be said by his adversaries to discredit him. On his own part, he has not surprisingly denied having any dealings with the CIA.[73] As he stated in self-defense in 1960:

> *It is nonsensical to suggest that I am under the thumbs of Americans. I have condemned American race segregation and lack of positive support for democracy as vigorously as I condemn South Africa, Britain, France or Russia.*[74]

Although both sides in Kenya were attacking each other as being either American or Soviet stooges, the reality of the situation may more closely approximate Colin Ley's assessment of both camps as they evolved during the first decade of independence:

> *Maybe neither side fully believed what they said about themselves. Kenyatta and Mboya were not tools of foreign capital, but they were collaborating closely with it . . . Odinga and Kaggia were not communist stooges . . . But they were aligned towards the socialist countries.*[75]

At the very least, if the U.S. used Mboya, then Mboya also used his U.S. connection to his own advantage.

CONCLUSION

The dominant concern of U.S. policy toward Kenya during the period under discussion was 'stability' and gradual change. This purpose of U.S. policy in Kenya was part of its global imperial strategy after World War II. However, although the U.S. gave extensive symbolic support to African objectives of self-determination and 'modernization' in Kenya, substantive support for these goals was less forthcoming. And although the professed motive was neither to replace nor to undermine British colonialism, in real terms the U.S. endeavored to eventually replace Britain in Kenya in a neo-colonial capacity. The U.S. sought to realize this objective by seizing upon such objective conditions as colonialism and the need for self-determination. The U.S. also took advantage of such subjective conditions as those rendered by the existence of opportunistic elements (such as Mboya), who collaborated with international capital by promoting compradorial tendencies to the chagrin of militant nationalists who represented the masses of the people, and stood for genuine independence.

Finally, it can be argued that U.S. policy during the decade preceding independence had far-reaching implications for the subsequent decades. This is evidenced by Kenya's current importance in U.S.-African policy -- with the U.S. naval base in Mombasa in her favor. In all, it can be summed up that U.S. policy toward Kenya during the stipulated period was one that prepared the ground for the new exploitation of that country by U.S. imperialism. From a continental point of view, the U.S. can be regarded as the potent bearer of a much worse exploitation of Africa than colonialism itself. At least colonialism pitted itself against Africans in general, thus inviting a fight from them to overthrow it. As its policy, U.S. imperialism uses the African bourgeoisie to foster and maintain its exploitation and plunder of the resources of the continent.

FOOTNOTES

[1]V. McKay, Africa in World Politics (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), especially chapters 17 and 18.

[2]For details of these earlier diplomatic links, see for instance G.S.P. Freeman-Grenville, "The Coast 1498-1840." In R. Oliver and G. Matthew (eds), History of East Africa Vol. I (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), pp. 129-168.

[3]For details, see for instance, K. Ingham, A History of East Africa (New York: Praeger, 1962), especially Chapters 5 and 6.

[4]Foreign Relations of the United States (Here-after cited as FRUS), Vol. xi. U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, 1983, pp. 48-49.

[5]Department of State Bulletin, November 16, 1953, p. 689.

[6]Ibid.

[7]FRUS, Vol. xi, p. 49.

[8]Quoted in Maina-Wa-Kinyatti, "Mau Mau: The Peak of African Political Organization and Struggle for Liberation in Colonial Kenya." Ufahamu, Vol. xii, No. 3, 1983, p. 115.

[9]Ibid, p. 116.

[10]For a full discussion of this subject, see Richard L. Watson, Jr. (ed), The United States in the Contemporary World, 1945-1962 (New York, London: The Free Press, 1965).

[11]U. Alexis Johnson, "Internal Defense and the Foreign Service," Foreign Service Journal, (Vol. 39, No. 7, July 1962, p. 20).

[12]For details see R.H. Fifield, South East Asia in United States Policy (New York, London: Praeger, 1963).

[13]For details on Emergency Regulations, virtually every work on Mau Mau deals with them in reasonable depth. See, for instance, D. Barnett (ed), Mau Mau From Within (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1966); Bildad Kaggia, Roots of Freedom (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1975); J.M. Kariuki, Mau Mau Detainee (London: Oxford University Press, 1975); L.S.B. Leakey, Defeating Mau Mau (London, 1954); C. Rosberg and J. Nottingham, The Myth of Mau Mau (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1966). Waruhiu itote Mau Mau General (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1967); A collection of papers on the Mau Mau Movement in Special Issue of Kenya Historical Review, Vol. 5, No. 2, 1977.

[14]For details see M. Slater, The Trial of Jomo Kenyatta (London: Secker and Warburg, 1956, reprinted 1962).

[15]The Acting Secretary of State to the Consulate General at Nairobi, 745R. 521/12-1952, Washington, Dec. 19, 1952, FRUS 1952-54, p. 355.

[16]Ibid, pp. 355-356.

[17]FRUS, 1952-54, p. 378.

[18]The Consular General at Nairobi to the Department of State, 611-45 p/12-754, No. 242 FRUS, 1954, p. 375.

[19]Ibid, pp. 375-376.

[20]For a more recent interpretation of the Kabaka crisis, see for instance, S.R. Karugire, A Political History of Uganda (Nairobi, London: Heinemann, 1980), especially Chapter 5.

[21]See in this connection 511.45 R/10-1254. USIS dispatch No. 135, December 12, 1954.

[22]FRUS, 1954, p. 380.

[23]Negotiations involving an application for FOA assistance to the Royal Technical College are contained in 103.02FOA/110254 No. 171 and 745R.5MSP/11-454, No. 178, Nov. 4, 1954.

[24]Ibid.

[25]Dispatch No. 234, 845R.57/120254, No. 8, 1954.

[26]Ibid.

[27]Program of African Studies Northwestern University, United States Foreign Policy: Africa. A Study Prepared at the Request of the Committee on Foreign Relations U.S. Senate, October 23, 1959 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1959), p. 2.

[28]D. Rothchild, "Engagement Versus Disengagement in Africa: The Choices for America." In Alan M. Jones Jr. (ed), U.S. Foreign Policy in a Changing World. (New York: David McKay Co., 1973), p. 222.

[29]As reported in the New York Times, June 29, 1953. Oginga Odinga visited India for two months in 1953. For details of his visit see his Two Months in India (New Dehli, 1965).

[30]The New York Times, June 29, 1953.

[31]The New York Times, May 20, 1954.

[32] Rothchild, "Engagement," p. 215.

[33]Quoted in Ibid. Also see A.A. Mazrui, "The Kennedy-Johnson Era of Afro-American Relations," Mimeographed (Cam-

bridge, Mass: Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, n.d.), p. 1.

[34]The New York Times, June 17, 1955.

[35]Ibid.

[36]Ibid.

[37]The New York Times, September 16, 1956.

[38]Ibid.

[39]Ibid.

[40]The New York Times, June 12, 1954.

[41]Ibid.

[42]Ibid. Baldwin had been wandering in twenty countries -- in North America, Europe, and Middle East and then India. Sailing as a deck passenger from Bombay, he arrived in Kenya on April 17, 1954. By then he was nearly out of money. His knowledge of guns while he was a U.S. Naval Air Force Cadet (1945-1947), qualified him for a job with the Kenya Police Reserve. According to him, British rule in Kenya was not oppressive -- an expression that the State Department regarded as contrary to its views. Criticizing the State Department, he stated: "Before you fall for this stuff about the British being oppressive, try to find out more about it. My big complaint is that British justice is a darn sight too kind in these conditions." The Baldwin affair is important because it is linked to the whole general policy of the U.S.

[43]C. Gertzel, The Politics of Independent Kenya 1963-1968 (Nairobi, London, Ibadan: East African Publishing House, 1970), p. 4.

[44]Ibid.

[45]For details on the constitutional concessions, see, for instance, D. Goldsworthy, Tom Mboya: The Man Kenya Wanted to Forget (Nairobi, London: Heinemann, 1982), especially Chapter 9.

[46]For details, see T.J. Mboya, Freedom and After, (London, Andre Deutsch, 1963).

[47]Goldsworthy, Tom Mboya, pp. ix-x.

[48]The New York Times, October 25, 1955.

[49]The New York Times, May 13, 1956.

[50]Quoted in Goldsworthy, Tom Mboya, p. 61.

[51]Ibid, p. 62.

[52]Quoted in Charles Douglas-Home, Evelyn Baring: The Last Proconsul (London, Collins, 1978), pp. 278-279.

[53]For details, see for instance, Goldsworthy, Tom Mboya, especially Chapter 8.

[54]Ibid, p. 117.

[55]Christian Science Monitor, April 20, 1959.

[56]Goldsworthy, Tom Mboya, p. 117.

[57]Christian Science Monitor, April 20, 1959.

[58]Christian Science Monitor, April 18, 1961.

[59]For details on this subject, see M.I. Smith, "The East African Airlifts of 1959, 1960, and 1961," Ph.D. Dissertation, Syracuse University, 1966, pp. 26-27.

[60]Congressional Record -- Senate, 86th Congress, Second Session, August 19-27, 1960, p. 17 and pp. 150-153.

[61]On the Controversy of the Airlift Money in the Senate, see Congressional Record -- Senate, 86th Congress, Second Session, August 17, 1960, p. 16 and pp. 629-632.

[62]Ibid.

[63]Quoted in R.D. Mahoney, JFK: Ordeal in Africa (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), p. 32.

[64]Press release, August 23, 1960, United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. Statement by Senator J.W. Fulbright. See also Final Report of the Committee on Freedom of Communications on the Airlift of Students to Kenya, August 1, November 7, 1960 in Schlessinger edition, U.S. Foreign Policy, pp. 868-875.

[65]Mahoney, JFK, p. 33.

[66]Smith, East African Airlift, p. 57.

[67]Goldsworthy, Tom Mboya, p. 120.

[68]Ibid.

[69]A.G. Sims, "Africans Beat on Our College Doors." Harper Magazine, Vol. 222, No. 1331, April 1961, pp. 55-56.

[70]Goldsworthy, Tom Mboya, p. 154-156.

[71]ICFTU Report of the Third World Congress, Stockholm, July 4-11, 1953, p. 310.

[72]G. Morris, CIA and American Labor: The Subversion of the AFL-CIO's Foreign Policy (New York: International Publishers, 1967), p. 110.

[73]East African Standard, July 15, 1967.

[74]Free Trade Union News: Journal of the AFL-CIO, Vol. 15, No. 4, April 1960, p. 7.

[75]Colin Leys, Underdevelopment in Kenya: The Political Economy of Neo-Colonialism (London: Heinemann, 1975), p. 221.