

presses the invitation, confident that there will be a response, aware that hungry hearts are waiting for the call to Christ, sensing that some would be disappointed and perhaps turned away from Christ were it not given. Neither the reserve of the people—a factor with which he will have to cope with in Britain much more than in America—nor the obstacles of a physical and structural nature to an effective response, such as awkward meeting places, deter him in this regard : the message exists for the sake of the appeal. In the Rose Bowl in California, a vast outdoor sports bowl, any evangelist would know in advance that, when the invitation was given, it would be at least three or four minutes before anyone could find his way from the stands to the platform. But the night of Graham's visit the newspaper estimated that 1,000 persons had answered the invitation by making their way to the cinder track and acknowledging a deep spiritual need of one kind or another.

Graham's theological sympathies are of a moderate Calvinistic framework, though not a Calvinism which erases the urgency of personal decision, and perhaps too mildly Calvinistic for some observers. But he is foremost an evangelist and not a theologian, and it is by his evangelism that he, like Moody and Torrey, will be remembered in Britain. The Isles need his message ; given a sympathetic hearing it will turn impressive numbers to Christ, create a fuller interest in the Churches, encourage the clergy to restore the task of evangelism and missions to the proper priority, and perhaps quicken the prayer meeting movement to a return to those spiritual elements with which Moody launched it a half a century ago.

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## **The Impact of Mau Mau on the Church in Kenya**

BY THE PROVOST OF NAIROBI

**T**HAT Christianity is on trial in Kenya to-day is undeniable. We are passing through a phase of which we trust history will record that the Christian Church has proved the truth of Samuel Rutherford's saying that " the ship He saileth in is scatheless anywhere ".

I have been asked to try to give an assessment of the impact of the Mau Mau uprising on Christianity in Kenya with special reference, naturally, to the Anglican Church. Although it is really too close to the events themselves to be able to judge fairly, and I myself do not feel qualified to assess a situation in which I am not personally as deeply involved as some, yet I would like to try to give an interim report because I believe that what is happening in Kenya to-day is of significance for the whole Church, particularly the younger Churches. The thoughts and prayers of Christians of all kinds have turned to this Colony, and if we can do anything to prepare the Churches of other lands for the impact of persecution, should it come, we shall feel greatly rewarded. " The holy Church throughout all the world " as a wide

Christian family can prove its brotherhood at times of testing such as we are going through just now.

Perhaps I can be permitted a word of personal explanation. In a sense I have a somewhat detached viewpoint, not being on a missionary staff. My responsibility lies chiefly with the 20,000 Europeans who live in Nairobi and the district around. It has, however, been possible to keep in close touch with the African side of our Church through the progress reports of missionaries on the spot, and through visits which we have paid to the storm centres in Kikuyuland. We have now reached the point when the two sides of our one Church, which have grown up independently, are being drawn together as never before, and we pray that the present Emergency will hasten this drawing together. In fact, I believe that our aim should be nothing less than an interchangeable ministry of black and white, such as would seem out of the realms of possibility in South Africa, and as far as I know is hardly to be found anywhere.

In describing the situation as it appears to me, I shall be speaking largely through information gained from Church Missionary Society and African Anglican Church sources. Much of what I shall write will probably also be true of the work of the Church of Scotland, and the Methodist Missionary Society, both of which also have stations in the Kikuyu area. It might be well, for the sake of those whose knowledge of Kenya is limited, if I were to give a few facts about the country as a background to our present problems. Kenya, with its five-and-a-half million Africans, 160,000 Asians, and 40,000 Europeans forms a multi-racial community lying on the Equator with Ethiopia and the Sudan to the north, Uganda to the west, and Tanganyika to the south, all predominantly African lands. Active missionary work is not much more than fifty years old in the Colony and so the Church suffers from many of the weaknesses of youth. Yet the Anglican Church is widely established throughout the land. For instance amongst the one-and-a-half million Kikuyu who live in the centre of the country, it has eighteen clergy, including six Rural Deans and Canons, nearly 200 schools and a church income before the Emergency of over £4,000. It is this Kikuyu Church which has been the target of Mau Mau attack.

#### *Why is Mau Mau Anti-Christian?*

A marked feature of the Mau Mau rebellion has been the fact that it is not only anti-Government and anti-European, but also strongly anti-Christian. When the Independent Schools were formed and carried on without any supervision from Government, they proved a fertile field for anti-Christian propaganda, and in them hymns were sung and a creed was repeated in which the name of Kenyatta was substituted for Jesus Christ and the expulsion of the Europeans became an ideal parodied on the Kingdom of Heaven.

One of the happier sides of Church work in Kenya for many years has been the close co-operation between the Government and the Church as exemplified in the large grants paid towards educational and medical work to the tune of £125,000 a year. This link between Church and State has naturally been one of the targets for Mau Mau attack, for in rebelling against the one they have had to condemn the

other. A further reason for the anti-Christian attitude of the rebels has been the fact that Christianity appears to them a foreign European religion. As Miss Margery Perham wrote in *The Times*, "what seemed once to be an advantage to Christianity, that it was the faith of the rulers, has now become a handicap from which St. Paul and his first successors did not suffer". A third reason for the attack upon the Christians is of course the fact that we are pledged to love one another, to act as an inter-racial bridge, which in this war there are many trying to blow up. We are concerned in this article with this anti-Christian aspect of Mau Mau, which has upset the organization of the Church, emptied the coffers, reduced the congregations and disturbed the schools in the course of its violent progress.

### *The Impact of Mau Mau Upon the African Church*

In most places the Mau Mau attack came so suddenly on the Church that it resulted in a great apostasy. In the Fort Hall district, for instance, where some 90% of Kikuyus are reckoned to have taken the Mau Mau oath, the effective membership of the African Anglican Church was reduced from about 12,000 to about 1,000, and some Churches which used to have Sunday congregations of 200 were reduced to eight, and of 500 were reduced to twenty. These figures probably represent the worst area and, as we shall be mentioning shortly, the situation is gradually improving; but the tragic fact that the nominal membership of the Christian Church in the Kikuyu areas has been drastically reduced must be noted. Exceptions to this occur where Mau Mau quietly entered unnoticed into the Church, before the Emergency, and then there was no sudden reduction of already corrupted congregations. Also, in the main mission stations we find large congregations partly gathered there because of a sense of security, partly due to the gathering together of refugees in those centres, and also possibly because there would be "cover" there for those on the wrong side of authority. In extenuation of the sad departure from the Faith, we must remember the extraordinary grip which fear has upon a primitive people. A few murders of those who had the courage to resist, and vigorous threats of similar action against others, has had a paralysing effect upon vast numbers of African Christians. We do not seek now to excuse or to blame, but that the situation is serious cannot be denied.

Perhaps one of the reasons why the Mau Mau attack has been so successful in its initial infiltration has been the fact that the genuine African Christian has been very reluctant to have anything to do with politics, as Canon Bewes points out in his book *Kikuyu Conflict*. The result of this attitude has been that there have been very few keen African Christian laymen in positions of political leadership or responsibility amongst their own people. If things had been different in this respect we believe there would have been earlier appreciation of the way subversion was developing and stronger resistance to it, before it reached gigantic proportions. But the Christians were thinking of their own and their brothers' personal salvation rather than the affairs of men around them, and their pietism, while admirable in itself, would seem to have contributed to their own defeat.

On the other hand there is no doubt whatever that there is a bright side to the horrors of the present persecution which augurs well for the future. We have not at the moment the figures of how many African Christians have been violently attacked or murdered and their loss to the Church is incalculable, but there would probably be no martyrs at all if it were not for the revival movement which, in the providence of God, has crept through the Church during the past five or six years. To-day in Kikuyuland from being a small inner group in the Church, it has now become practically all that is left of the Church. Church membership has been whittled down by the vigour of the persecution to a small but faithful group who remind one of the New Testament in their devotion to Christ and remarkable courage.

It is a striking thing that the revival movement in the Kikuyu Church seems less censorious and much more tolerant than it is in other places that one has come across. It would appear that living as they do in daily danger of death and on the brink of eternity, the tendency to criticize and judge other Christians has become softened with the result that we do not find separation so readily taking place where above all it would be fatal under the circumstances that maintain to-day. This faithful remnant are no less earnest than their brethren anywhere else in East Africa, but I believe that their gracious love towards others and their slowness to draw a hard and fast line between those who are "in fellowship" and those "not in fellowship" is something which similar movements might take to heart.

It should be understood that the revival movement in Kenya is very different from similar movements in which we read of large meetings and vast numbers of converts as in America and elsewhere. Here it is a revival in depth rather than extent. The numbers are small, and the impact of this small group on the masses is at present insignificant from an evangelistic point of view. But it is round this inner faithful core that the rebuilding of the Church will take place, and it is encouraged by them that confessions to Government on the part of those who have taken the oath are now beginning to be made. The discipline of the African Church itself in this matter is strict. Public confession with repentance is demanded by the Church leaders before fellowship can be renewed with those who have denied their faith, and so far only a few have been able to pay the price. Recently the Bishop has held Confirmations in Kikuyu country attended by literally thousands, which has been of great encouragement to those who have been watching for a turn in the tide, but it must be made clear that no great change has yet taken place in the situation. Indeed, at the moment of writing we hear of fourteen out of forty-six Church schools burnt down, and six teachers and eight Church elders have been murdered in one Rural Deanery alone since the Bishop's visit, and numbers are now probably reduced again there. And so the war goes on.

### *The Reactions Amongst the European Christians*

The popular opinion of the Kenya settler is a whisky-swilling, huntin' shootin' fishin' type who goes about kicking Africans and cursing missionaries. In actual fact, while that sort of European certainly exists, it would be nearer the truth to say that European

farmers in Kenya take their religion far more seriously than most people in England. It is nothing to them to drive twenty-five miles to church, and in fact during the past few years no less than fourteen new churches have been built in different parts of the Colony by the Europeans themselves. There are, of course, limitations in the degree to which such churchmen have learnt their duty to the community, and in the towns such as Nairobi there are vast numbers of men and women engaged in commerce and so on who couldn't care less about Christian things. These are a constant brake upon progress towards a more Christian attitude to those of other races, and at the moment of writing we find ourselves up against them in the press. However, it should be understood at home that amongst the much maligned British settlers there is a vigorous church life and an increasing anxiety to learn their duty towards the African and to understand where they have failed in the past. There is one settler, for instance, who is hard at work learning Kikuyu, even though he has been in the country for twenty years without having bothered about it up to now. Again, in the case of practically every European who has been violently attacked, one finds little bitterness and a marked readiness to forgive at least the hired assassins.

The outstanding reaction on the European side during this Emergency has been the sudden appreciation of the value of missionary work. The remarkably brave stand of the loyal Kikuyu Christian, but for whom practically no one would have had the courage to resist Mau Mau, has made a deep impression on every thoughtful European. They are beginning to feel that the missionary, whom they little understood and easily despised in the past, has been responsible for planting a Church which is worthy of the name. Consequently we find again and again that politicians and speakers are convinced that the African must be given more, not less, Christianity (see L. S. B. Leakey, *Mau Mau and the Kikuyu*). Those who write like this have not really thought out the implication of such a statement, both in regard to the security of the White Highlands and the need to deal with every genuine grievance (and there are many) which the Africans may have. Moreover, there is still on the part of many European churchgoers strong resentment against what they call "politics in the pulpit", especially if those "politics" disagree with their own. We have even had strong complaints for stressing the need of African housing as a major social evil, in the course of a sermon. Also there are a number of Europeans in the security forces whose attitude towards the African must be changed if incidents of cruelty and illegal treatment are to stop. But it must be realized that such incidents, which gain great publicity, only represent a very small minority of the forces engaged.

#### *Possible Mistakes of Past Missionary Policy*

I have been asked if I would write something about what might be learnt from the present situation in regard to possible mistakes of missionary policy in the past. This I do with great diffidence, for no one has a greater admiration for the work that has been done in pioneering the field by the stalwarts of the past generation. There is, admittedly, a great difference in attitude between the dominant

missionary in his station whose word was law and with whom junior missionaries, much less African Christians, would never dare to argue, and the present Missionary Adviser who is prepared to get alongside the African leaders and help them with prayers and advice as they take over the affairs of the Church. But this progress from the one to the other does not mean that the first was necessarily wrong ; perhaps only men of such personality could have tackled the task of establishing the Church in the first place.

As I see it, there are three main weaknesses which may be due to lack of foresight in the years that are gone. The first is that the Church is not really African enough. Few of their buildings have anything in common with local architecture ; the canticles are still sung to old English chants and the hymns to English tunes without any reference to indigenous music, and the Africans seem to delight to have it so. But these are small matters and possibly inevitable. Deeper in significance is the fact that the African Anglican Church is popularly linked in thought with European domination. Christianity is the religion of Government and is still looked upon as Western rather than African. The African clergy are called by their detractors " Wazungu " (Europeans), and this is intended not as a compliment but as an insult, probably instigated by Mau Mau agents. Again, the organization of church life in the Reserves does not seem to have catered for the natural native desire for an emotional outlet. There is nothing comparable to tribal dances, which have had to be forbidden, and life is, frankly, dull. To this dullness must be added many frustrations, and an inability to link their religion with agriculture in the Native Reserves or with urban life in the towns.

A second weakness which has come to light during this time of difficulty is that there are not nearly enough well educated keen African Christians, clergy or laity, and many of the few there are have been targets for Mau Mau attack. The educated African turns quickly to the search for wealth, inspired possibly by European example, or to politics, and there is a tragic shortage of men who have been through Christian secondary schools and are still earnest Christian leaders amongst their own people. Moreover, there are hardly any African clergy well enough educated to evangelize their sophisticated brethren.

A third weakness in the African Church has been the tendency to devote all energies to maintaining large institutions, schools and hospitals, for which Government have made generous grants, at the expense of pastoral and evangelistic work. In the writer's opinion more attention might well have been given in the past to the organizing of Bible Schools, and the running of Refresher Courses for clergy and lay evangelists. The tendency has always been, where economies (due usually to lack of support by the Home Church) have been necessary, to let the pastoral side suffer, with the result that the steadying influence of solid Bible teaching has not been developed nearly widely enough, which may account for numbers of Christians drifting away. However, we can say that many of these mistakes, if we can call them that, are being dealt with in the course of the plans now in operation for tackling the present situation. Most welcome financial provision from Britain during the Emergency and also considerable assistance

from European Christians in the Colony has concentrated upon this side of the work, and we hope to see the fruit of this forward move in the years before us.

### *The Present Challenge*

Apart from the long term issue of trying to make the Church more indigenous and to raise the educational standard of the clergy, when we say that the Africans need more Christianity, what does this really mean? Firstly, it means developing and grounding in the Word of God the many little cells of vital Christianity which are scattered throughout the land and about which we have already written. They are the hope of the future, but they must recognize and resist the temptation to live in on themselves and to despair of ever reaching the unconverted masses. There is an understandable, but nevertheless fatal inclination amongst some of the best Christians, to be satisfied with the fellowship they enjoy together, and to welcome, in ones and twos, others into that fellowship, but to lose the vision of the non-Christians who in their thousands people the native locations in the towns, and fill the villages in the reserves. We are thankful to note that in the Fort Hall area, where the Revival movement has deepest root, there is developing a true evangelistic concern for those of their neighbours whom Christians meet in the Home Guard, etc., and the tendency to be "fortress-minded" is being overcome. A great evangelistic urge must come upon the whole Church soon if it is not to be complacently satisfied with the minute numerical proportions which now exist between those who are Christian in fact, and those who are not.

The second great need, and one in which there seems to be no very clear light at present, is to know how to develop and guide the awakening African nationalism along Christian lines. This task is unduly difficult when there are so few genuine Christian Africans with the vision and insight necessary to guide their own people, but it is a problem which demands urgent solution. The problem of reconciling an inter-national Faith like Christianity with a rising nationalism in this and many other lands, is one to which theologians and missionaries should be putting their minds.

On the European side, the challenge of the hour would seem to be firstly to find some parallel movement within the Church comparable to the revival movement amongst the Africans. In other words there need to be developed all over the Colony small groups of earnest European Christians who will do for the European Church what the "Gakundi" have done for their people, and who will enjoy fellowship at the deepest level with their African brethren. In the wider sphere European Christians are beginning to take a lead in the rehabilitation of the country. This means adopting Christian attitudes in social matters and doing all possible to see that African grievances are dealt with by those in authority, and that ordinary Europeans learn how to behave themselves in their personal relationships. The example of the average European, regarded naturally as a nominal Christian because he is white, has too often been a libel on Christianity. But there are no grounds for complacency, and there is still a deadweight

of apathy on these matters, even in nominal Christian circles, which must be moved before we can achieve anything satisfactory.

There is always a danger when co-operation with the Government is close and when people start talking about more, not less, Christianity being needed, to think of Christianity as some kind of adjunct to State action, a kind of short cut towards ending our problems. This tendency must be resisted. Christians have got to remember that their religion is to be proclaimed and accepted because it is true and not because it is useful. The fact that when Christianity is applied it does alleviate suffering and bring good in its train, and may incidentally help to quieten native peoples and give them something to live for, is all purely secondary. The root of our Faith is God's action in love to mankind through Jesus Christ, who is to be offered to all men everywhere as Saviour and Lord. To do this is the Church's primary task. If in doing so the State gives encouragement and assistance, we should be grateful. But never let us reach the stage when this help in any way affects our stand for truth, or tempers the vigour of our efforts to attain justice for all. There may come times when the Church has to speak just as severely to Government as to Government's enemies, and she must remain free to do so. If we bear this fact in mind the situation as we find it in Kenya to-day, while in many ways serious, does give the Church a chance to play a significant part in moulding the molten chaos which prevails.

A thoughtful observer, who has seen the Church grow in Kenya during the past twenty years, told me recently that taking the whole picture into consideration, he believes that, by the grace of God, and in spite of so much opposition (or possibly because of it) the Church is as healthy to-day as it has ever been in this country. We say this not in any spirit of complacency or boasting, but in order that our friends at home and elsewhere may have a fair picture and not a distorted one. With a Church greatly reduced in numbers but stronger in faith on the African side, and a Church awaking but not yet fully aroused on the European side, we invite the prayers of our brethren that we may turn the evil of these days to good effect, and not only try to resist the enemy, but go over to the offensive and carry the attack into the enemy's field, wherever that may be. We remember the words of Marshal Foch in the first world war, "My centre is yielding, my right is recoiling. The situation is excellent ! I shall attack !"