Dialogues at the end of empire
the role of conferences and commissions in the decolonisation of British imperial Africa, c.1959-1964

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PhD Thesis, King's College, London

June, 2020

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Synopsis

The thesis examines the sixteen constitutional conferences and ten commissions that were held for British colonial territories in east and central Africa during the tenure of the Conservative Government of 1959-64. It argues that the British Government used these conferences and commissions to regulate, manage and control the pace of constitutional change in these territories. Hard methods of control, such as the use of force, were becoming increasingly unacceptable during this period. This was on account of a number of pressures, such as United Nations' criticism of the British Government, domestic pressure faced by the British Government after the Hola camp deaths and the state of emergency in Nyasaland in 1959, and the unwillingness of the British Government to commit to its own 'Algeria'. Commissions and conferences gave the British Government breathing spaces which ministers embraced fully. Objectives were worked out for conference and commission outcomes, and a whole range of tactics, schemes and manipulations were employed by the British to secure their desired end-results.

The second main argument put forward is that the commissions and conferences of the period helped shape politics and popular opinion in east and central Africa in the early 1960s. Both sets of mechanisms offered those in Africa the chance to make their voices heard at a time when few had the vote. Commissions, in particular, stirred an interest in territorial-wide issues, provided opportunities to become involved in politics, encouraged people to stake claims and to organise to make representations. Conference announcements could boost party membership and affirm identities, and the conference table offered aspiring leaders credibility and power and, like commissions, both encouraged organisation and development of political party policy. Conferences boosted the reputation of some politicians and political parties but diminished that of others.

The final key contention is that conferences and commissions are likely to have had particular consequences for British decolonisation in east and central Africa. Whilst giving the British Government temporary respite, conferences and commissions both ultimately ratcheted up the decolonisation process, having transferred more power to African political parties. Conferences, however, could also encourage alliances, leading to workable short-term political solutions, and gave the British the time and opportunity to work with African politicians seen hitherto as dangerously radical. They helped induce some mutual

understanding. The channelling of energy into commissions and conferences, the outcome which these offered to African politicians and the softening of perceptions which commissions and conferences engendered on both sides may have assisted in largely avoiding bloodshed in the final days of British imperial rule in Africa in the early 1960s.

The thesis seeks to supplement the existing historiography in several main ways. Historians have written about how the British Government employed a variety of means to control and manage colonial subjects including the law, coercion, intelligence gathering, propaganda, and even welfare measures. This thesis widens the literature to show how, in the last days of empire in Africa, the British used conferences and commissions as a valuable means of governance. Secondly, although there are histories which include short sections on many of the individual conferences and commissions that are the subject of this study, none has interrogated systematically how conferences and commissions affected politics and popular opinion in Africa in the round, as this study will do. Finally, whilst some works have credited individual commissions and conferences with historic significance, such remarks have been confined to commenting on commission recommendations and conference outcomes. This study goes beyond that by looking at the significance and consequences of change having been effected through the medium of conferences and commissions.

List of abbreviations used in the thesis

ANC - African National Congress, Northern Rhodesia

ASP - Afro-Shirazi Party, Zanzibar

BCP - Basutoland Congress Party

CAF - Central African Federation (the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland)

CPC - Colonial Policy Committee

CRO - Commonwealth Relations Office

DP - Democratic Party, Uganda

EAF - East African Federation

EADC - East Africa Dinner Club

KADU - Kenya African Democratic Union

KANU - Kenya African National Union

KNA - The Kenya National Archives, Nairobi

KBC - Kenya Broadcasting Corporation

KBS - Kenya Broadcasting Service

KNP - Kenya National Party

MCP - Malawi Congress Party, Nyasaland

MND - Movement for Multiparty Democracy, Zambia

NAC - Nyasaland African Congress

NKG - New Kenya Group

PAFMECA - Pan African Freedom Movement of East and Central Africa

SPP - Swaziland Progressive Party

TANU - Tanganyika African National Union

TNA – The UK National Archives, Kew

UCW - Uganda Council of Women

UFP - United Federal Party (CAF)

UNIP - United National Independence Party, Northern Rhodesia

ZNP - Zanzibar National Party

ZPPP - Zanzibar and Pemba People's Party

Introduction

Writing his autobiography in 1967, the radical Kenyan nationalist politician Oginga Odinga recalled how he and his colleagues had used constitutional conferences 'like rungs up a ladder, climbing ever higher towards the step of complete independence'.[1] The words are striking. What, precisely, were these 'constitutional conferences' to which Odinga referred? Why had the British Government set these up, and why had Odinga, a communist sympathiser who was viewed by senior colonial figures as extreme, been invited to attend in the first place?[2] Equally puzzling is why Odinga had so patiently acquiesced to the process, travelling three times to London at the behest of British colonial secretaries to climb the rungs, one at a time. Why had this militant leader not demanded swifter independence for Kenya, and taken more radical action? After all, in April 1960, shortly after the first of the Kenyan conferences but well before the further two, Odinga had called for assistance to 'liquidate imperialism absolutely from the face of Africa now', and some five months later he told a mass rally in China that the Mau Mau revolt was a 'glorious and heroic struggle of our people'.[3] Such rhetoric was hardly that of a constitutionalist who was prepared to bide his time. Each of these questions goes to the heart of this thesis.

This study examines the sixteen constitutional conferences and ten constitutional commissions of east and central Africa held during the tenure of the Conservative Government of October 1959 to October 1964, led for the first four years by Harold Macmillan, and then for the last one by Alec Douglas-Home. This period was one of extraordinarily rapid change in the region. It began with an assumption of the British Government in 1959 that its east and central African colonies would not be granted independence until the mid-1970s at the earliest. Yet by the end of the period, almost all had become independent. Much has been written about why British colonies were shed,[4]

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[1] Oginga Odinga, *Not Yet Uhuru: The Autobiography of Oginga Odinga* (Nairobi, 1967), p.181.

[2] The National Archives of the United Kingdom, Kew (henceforth TNA), PREM11/4083, EAC (61), Report of Proceedings of Meeting of East African Governors, undated but would have been January 1961; TNA, FCO141/6885, Special Branch paper, 21.09.60. The author recorded that Odinga's 'extremist outlook' had manifested itself some years before the 1960 Lancaster House Conference for Kenya.

[3] TNA, FCO141/6885, April 1960, Speech by Odinga in Belgrade at the Fifth Congress of the Socialist Alliance of Yugoslav Working peoples; FCO141/6885, excerpt from *East African Standard*, 17.08.60.

[4] Good summaries of reasons for decolonisation are contained in John Springhall, *Decolonization since 1945: The Collapse of European Overseas Empires* (Basingstoke, 2003), Chapters 1 and 8; and Frank Heinlein, *British Government Policy and Decolonisation 1945 -1963: Scrutinising the Official*

but much less about the process. *How,* exactly*, did Britain achieve decolonisation? Process is of course about far more than the dusty mechanics of transition between imperial rule and the concession of independence. In looking at how such changes were effected, the motives, aspirations and behaviours of actors from the metropole and colonies are all revealed. An examination of constitutional commissions and conferences for Africa in the wind of change era seemed a good way of exploring the procedural side of decolonisation. A very large number of such conferences and commissions were held, and both contemporary figures and historians have credited some of them with great significance. Michael Blundell, the leader of the liberal New Kenya Group, for example, considered that it was the acceptance by delegates of the first Lancaster House conference proposals for Kenya in January 1960 which was ultimately responsible for allowing the territory 'to pass tranquilly to independence without deep racial bitterness'.[5] Historian John McCracken argues that it was the outcome of the Nyasaland conference in August 1960 which effectively brought the Central African Federation to an end,[6] and Anthony Low viewed the Monckton Commission's recommendations as 'little short of revolutionary' given the tenor of previous official British and Rhodesian policies in Central Africa.[7] Despite African commissions and conferences being credited with great importance, these events have not received anything approaching a detailed, systematic, and comparative coverage in the secondary literature. This thesis seeks to change that. As the Introduction will go on to highlight, studying commissions and conferences at the end of the British empire in Africa gives us new insights into Britain's management of its colonies, African politics, and the decolonisation process itself.

Only two works deal with constitutional conferences or commissions in the decolonisation of British Africa in the early 1960s as one of their central themes. The most significant is Robert Maxon's *Kenya's Independence Constitution: Constitution-making and End of Empire*, which looks at how Kenya's constitution evolved in the years leading up to the territory's independence in 1964.[8] As far as conferences are concerned, the work concentrates largely on the second and third Lancaster House gatherings, a thread

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Mind (London, 2002), pp.4-6. The reasons why Britain might have shed its overseas colonies and the balance between domestic, nationalist and international influences are returned to in the Conclusion.
[5] Michael Blundell, *A Love Affair with the Sun: A Memoir of Seventy Years in Kenya* (Nairobi, 1994), p.135.
[6] John McCracken*, A History of Malawi 1859-1966* (Woodbridge, 2012), p.388.
[7] D.A. Low, *Eclipse of Empire* (Cambridge, 1991), p.225.
[8] Robert Maxon, *Kenya's Independence Constitution: Constitution-Making and End of Empire* (Plymouth, 2011).

throughout being 'majimbo' (federalism) and the way in which the British initially gave some support to this before abandoning it once it became clear that the Kenya African National Union (KANU), which opposed this, was to become the party of government in the post-colonial territory. The book draws on extensive primary sources and makes a number of interesting observations on the Kenya conference of 1962, arguing for example that the event was called by the British to safeguard minority (and particularly European) interests.[9] Charles Parkinson has charted the reasons for and the processes by which bills of rights became inserted in pre-independence colonial constitutions with the hope that entrenchment of such provisions would endure.[10] Parkinson devotes a chapter to East Africa and looks at the conferences at which bills of rights were discussed, showing how the impetus behind such bills came from minority groups within the territories and which sought protection. The book provides some helpful insights into conference dynamics, influence, and compromise.

Aside from the two books mentioned above, there are a large number of texts which make at least some reference to the African constitutional commissions and conferences of the period. These include works devoted to the decolonisation of Africa as a continent, the very many books on specific African countries, in particular Kenya, as well as biographies of politicians, nationalist leaders, and governors. Along with its valuable extracts of governmental records, Hyam and Louis' *The Conservative Government and the End of Empire 1957-1964*,[11] part of the British Documents on the End of Empire series, has helpful commentary too on some of the commissions and conferences. Several of these works hint at an important theme, which is that the British Government used both constitutional commissions and conferences for Africa for what might be described as 'collateral motives' - reasons other than wanting to receive considered advice from commission members and conference delegates. Simon Ball and Andrew Roberts have both argued, for example, that Macmillan set up the Monckton Commission to dismantle the Central African Federation.[12] In a similar vein, several authors have indicated that constitutional conferences were established not simply to negotiate the next stage of political advancement of a territory but to effect a preconceived strategy of the British or colonial governments - a method of

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[9] Ibid, pp.67-69.
[10] Charles Parkinson, *Bills of Rights and Decolonization: The Emergence of Domestic Human Rights Instruments in Britain's Overseas Territories* (Oxford, 2007).
[11] Ronald Hyam and William Roger Louis (eds.), *BDEEP,* Series A, Vol. 4, *The Conservative Government and the End of Empire, 1957-1964* (Norwich, 2000).
[12] Simon Ball, *The Guardsmen. Harold Macmillan, Three Friends and the World They Made* (London, 2004), p.349; Andrew Roberts, *Eminent Churchillians* (London, 1994), p.282-3.

controlling political development and the pace and nature of decolonisation. In relation to Zanzibar, M.M. Haj suggests, for instance, that in July 1961, the Colonial Secretary, Iain Macleod, put forward the idea of a constitutional conference the following year as a way of making independence for the territory as far away as he could, noting also that London saw the promise of a constitutional conference as sufficient to secure the co-operation of the Afro-Shirazi Party in Zanzibar's legislative council.[13] Keith Kyle, a former journalist, details Kenya's constitutional development leading up to independence, and argues that a British aim of the second Lancaster House conference was to promote a split in the Kenya African Democratic Party, hoping that its more moderate wing lead by Mboya would enter into an alliance with the Kenyan African Democratic Union.[14] Continuing the control mechanism theme, Robert Shepherd's biography of Iain Macleod emphasises how the Colonial Secretary sought to manage political situations in two territories through the conference mechanism, noting how Macleod intended that the forthcoming conference for Northern Rhodesia in 1961 would be used to enable the moderate nationalist Kenneth Kaunda to hold his position on a non-violent basis, and how the 1961 Uganda Conference was used as a means of encouraging the participation of a recalcitrant Kabaka of Buganda, the Colonial Secretary having told the monarch that if he did not attend then the future of the protectorate would be decided without him.[15] This theme of the use of constitutional conferences as a British tool of management is also picked up by Colin Baker in his biographies of Sir Robert Armitage, the Governor of Nyasaland and Sir Richard Turnbull, the Governor of Tanganyika. Baker comments on how Macleod considered that the prospect of a conference for constitutional matters of Nyasaland in the summer of 1960 would help Banda to keep his followers in order.[16] The author observes also how at the March 1961 Conference for Tanganyika, Macleod hoped to secure Commonwealth membership, an appointment of a governor-general for at least the first three years after independence ('to reassure expatriate civil servants') as well as a bill of rights and a public services commission which would make judicial appointments ('to prevent a dictatorship evolving').[17]

Two authors of works on specific African countries go as far as to note that British control through the use of constitutional commissions of the period could extend to impropriety. In

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[13] M. M. Haj, *Zanzibar, The Last Years of the Protectorate: A Constitutional and Political Account* (Oman, 2006), p.71.

[14] Keith Kyle, *The Politics of the Independence of Kenya* (Basingstoke, 1999), p.144.

[15] Robert Shepherd, *Iain Macleod* (London, 1994*)*, pp.206, 246.

[16] Colin Baker, *Retreat from Empire: Sir Robert Armitage in Africa and Cyprus* (London, 1998), p.253.

[17] Colin Baker, *Exit From Empire: A Biography of Sir Richard Turnbull* (Cardiff, 2010), p.268.

relation to the Northern Frontier Commission for Kenya, Hannah Whittaker recounts the Somali suspicion that the British Government had sought to influence the Commission through persuading its two members to discount improperly a section of pro-Somali opinion,[18] and James Brennan suggests enigmatically that in relation to the Kenyan Coastal Strip Commission, 'like so many before it, this commission's conclusions were reached at the start'.[19] What is not clear from the current secondary literature of the African conferences and commissions is how widespread this desire and practice to use the events as control mechanisms might have been. Did it just apply to certain ones? And if the British Government wanted to exercise control, how did it seek to do this? What methods did it employ? These are questions explored by this thesis.

The British and colonial governments had long used a wide range of measures to govern. These approaches included 'hard' methods such as the use of law,[20] police control,[21] restriction orders, publication bans, deportations, detention camps, and states of emergency.[22] Political activists could be imprisoned. Indeed, some of the key actors at the African conferences spent time incarcerated during the 1950s. In Northern Rhodesia, Kenneth Kaunda and Harry Nkumbula each served custodial sentences in 1955 for distributing 'subversive literature'. Jomo Kenyatta was gaoled in 1952 for Mau Mau activity, and in 1959 Banda was imprisoned for his part in the Nyasaland disturbances of that year.

Hard methods of colonial management were particularly prevalent in Kenya during the 1950s at the time of the Mau Mau uprising. During the last fifteen years, several scholars have documented just how widespread these measures of were. David Anderson and Caroline Elkins have shown how tens of thousands of Mau Mau supporters were held in detention camps, and how, between 1953 and 1956, hundreds were sentenced to be hanged.[23] More recently still, Huw Bennett has cited material from the Hanslope Park archives, first released by the British Government in 2012, to show how the British Army

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[18] Hannah Whittaker, *Insurgency and Counter-insurgency in Kenya: A Social History of the Shifta Conflict, c.1963-1968* (Leiden, 2011), p.33.

[19] James R. Brennan, 'Lowering the Sultan's Flag: Sovereignty and Decolonization in Coastal Kenya, *Comparative Studies in Society and History'*, Vol.50, no.4 (2008), pp. 831-861.

[20] See, in particular, John L. Comaroff, 'Colonialism, Culture and the Law: A Foreword', *Law and Social Inquiry*, Vol.26, no.2 (2001), pp.305-314, p.306.

[21] Martin Thomas, *Violence and Colonial Order: Police, Workers and Protest in the European Colonial Empires, 1918-1940* (Cambridge, 2012), p.5.

[22] John Darwin, 'The Central African Emergency, 1959', in R.F. Holland (ed.), *Emergencies and Disorder in the European Empires after 1945* (London, 1994), pp.217-234, p.217.

[23] David Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged: Britain's Dirty War in Kenya and the End of Empire* (London, 2005), pp.5, 6. Caroline Elkins, *Imperial Reckoning: The Untold Story of Britain's Gulag in Kenya* (New York, 2005).

used beatings, torture, murder and mass evictions to terrorise suspected sympathisers, and to gain information.[24]

'Softer' methods were also employed by the British and colonial governments such as intelligence gathering,[25] propaganda,[26] and manipulation of the press.[27] Hard and soft measures could be used together such as during counterinsurgency campaigns where troublemakers were isolated whilst at the same time efforts were made to win the hearts and minds of others.[28] By the end of 1959, importantly, the use of 'hard' measures (particularly the use of force) by the British and colonial governments was no longer so feasible. Two events in that year brought the hard style of colonial management to a head. The outcry that these episodes produced in Britain was particularly awkward for the British Government, and should be seen as an important milestone in the change from hard to soft measures of control in colonial Africa. As Kate Kennedy has argued, the deaths of 11 prisoners at the Hola detention camp in Kenya at the hands of British colonial guards in March 1959 marked a 'significant turning point in thinking on colonial governance',[29] prompting an unprecedented outcry by the British public and much of the press. Macleod later recalled the Hola deaths as being a decisive moment, the time at which time it became clear to him that the British could no longer continue with the old methods of government in Africa.[30] On the same day that the British public learned of the Hola prisoners' deaths (23 July, 1959), the Devlin report was issued. That report, which examined the state of emergency in Nyasaland in March of that year and the deaths during that time of 51 people, labelled the protectorate 'a police state'. The report caused Macmillan and his Government deep embarrassment and concern domestically. Macmillan recorded in his diary that he considered the report 'dynamite. It may well blow the

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[24] Huw Bennett, *Fighting the Mau Mau: The British Army and Counter-Insurgency in the Kenya Emergency* (Cambridge, 2012).

[25] Calder Walton, *Empire of Secrets* (New York, 2013), p.xxi.

[26] Susan L. Carruthers, *Winning Hearts and Minds: The British Governments, the Media and Colonial Counter-Insurgency 1944-1960* (London, 1995).

[27] Chandrika Kaul 'Introductory Survey' in Chandrika Kaul (ed.), *Media and the British Empire* (Basingstoke, 2006), pp.1-17, p.15; Joanna Lewis and Philip Murphy, '"The Old Pals Protection Society?" The Colonial Office and the British Press on the Eve of Decolonisation' in Kaul (ed.), *Media and the British Empire,* pp.55 -70.

[28] Benjamin Grob-Fitzgibbon, *Imperial Endgame: Britain's Dirty Wars and the End of Empire* (Basingstoke, 2011), p.2.

[29] Kate Kennedy, 'Britain and the end of Empire: a study in colonial governance in Cyprus, Kenya and Nyasaland against the backdrop of internationalisation of empire and the evolution of a supranational human rights culture and jurisprudence, 1938-1965'. (Unpublished DPhil thesis, University of Oxford, 2015), p.196.

[30] Hyam & Louis (eds.), *BDEEP,* Series A, Volume 4, *The Conservative Government and the End of Empire, 1957-1964,* Part 1, p.xiv.

Government out of office'.[31] As John Darwin has argued, henceforth '"no more Nyasalands"

became the unspoken motto' of Macmillan's African policy. Britain had to avoid

confrontation and enlist the co-operation of African leaders.[32]

Other factors played a part in the shift from hard to soft measures of control. From the late

1950s, there was an appreciation within the British Government that territories could no

longer be held by force because of logistical difficulties. A change in emphasis in military

strategy from conventional forces to nuclear weapons following the defence review of

1957 and the planned end of conscription in 1960 served as potential constraints.

Macmillan and Macleod, both wished to avoid the sort of long and costly campaign which

France had endured in Algeria.[33] During the early 1960s the British Government also faced

rising international scrutiny as well as demands to provide its colonies with rapid

independence. The United Nations exerted a growing influence. Macleod warned his

Cabinet colleagues in January 1961 that the organisation would form a more decisive role

in shaping British colonial policy, concerned no doubt by the UN General Council having

passed resolution 1514 on 14 December 1960, which called on the imperial powers to take

immediate steps to transfer political power to their colonies.[34] The Cold War imperative to

leave friendly successor states, which would not fall under the influence of the Soviet bloc,

also encouraged a turn to softer methods of control. To help keep the Commonwealth

together, Macmillan was also keen to demonstrate to Asian and African Commonwealth

leaders how Britain could demonstrate progressive credentials. This was especially so after

the outcry following the killing of 67 South Africans in Sharpeville in March 1960, when

African and Asian members became deeply uncomfortable with South Africa's continued

presence in the organisation.[35]

Hard measures in British colonial Africa did not completely disappear after 1959; a short

state of emergency was declared, for example, in Zanzibar in 1961.[36] But in general, by

1960 emergency control measures in British colonial Africa were generally seen as 'having

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[31] Jeremy Black, *The British Empire: A History and a Debate* (Farnham, 2015), p.202.

[32] John Darwin, *The Empire Project: The Rise and Fall of the British World System* (Cambridge, 2009), p.621**.**

[33] Peter Docking, '"The Wind has been Gathering Force": Iain Macleod and his Policy Change on Tanganyika', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, Vol. 46, no.2, (2018), pp.367-395, p.376.

[34] W. R. Louis, 'Public Enemy Number One: The British Empire in the Dock at the United Nations, 1957-1971', in M. Lynn (ed.), *The British Empire in the 1950s: Retreat or Revival?* (Basingstoke, 2016), pp.186-213, p.196; Ronald Hyam, *Understanding the British Empire* (Cambridge, 2006), p.90.

[35] Docking, 'The Wind has been Gathering Force', pp.384-385.

[36] Samuel G. Ayany, *A History of Zanzibar: A Study in Constitutional Development 1934-1964* (Nairobi, 1971), pp.85-89; *The Times*, 02.06.61.

had their day'.[37] It was negotiation which instead became the order of the day, and commissions and conferences became the vehicles through which such bargaining took place. Sir George Mooring, the Resident of Zanzibar, epitomised the change in thinking during his discussions with African and Arab nationalist party leaders in May 1962, telling them that there were only two ways for the difficulties in Zanzibar to be resolved: one was to impose force and the other was through co-operation, consultation, and agreement. Force, he said, had been ruled out.[38] Mooring no doubt made his remarks in the hope that this would secure co-operation, but for him not only to rule out force as a policy but also to impart this to nationalist leaders says much about the changing attitudes of the British.

This thesis examines how, at a time when hard methods of control were no longer so feasible, commissions and conferences provided the British and colonial governments with an appealing method of managing political outcomes. It is the first work to explore the British use of conferences and commissions in this way, and seeks to supplement the current literature on other methods of colonial control. Conferences and commissions were not a new way of managing colonial affairs - the Indian round table conferences were held as long ago as the early 1930s - but these mechanisms now offered scope for control which the British Government embraced fully. Conferences and commissions could be an imprecise and unpredictable way for the British Government to regulate the pace of change but offered at least some scope to exert influence and management in a changing environment. In particular, as the next chapter will argue, commissions and conferences brought the British and colonial governments 'breathing spaces'. Here, the thesis complements Frank Furedi's work on how states of emergencies were used for the same purpose.[39]

Conferences and commissions were not just about British control. How they were received in Africa by both politicians and the wider public merits study too. Here, some historians have noted in brief how both commissions and conferences could energise nationalist politicians and also bring about changes to African politics. John Hargreaves places emphasis on the combined force of international and African pressure in persuading

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[37] Kennedy, 'Colonial Governance', p.295.

[38] TNA, CO822/2328, Note of meeting between Mooring and others, 25.05.62. The Colonial Policy Committee had earlier ruled out holding the archipelago by force: see TNA, CAB134/1561, Minutes of CPC meeting, 16.02.62.

[39] Frank Furedi, 'Creating a Breathing Space: The Political Management of Colonial Emergencies', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History,* Vol. 21, no.3 (1993), pp.89-106.

Britain, France, and Belgium to accelerate vastly their planned decolonisations.[40] His book devotes some paragraphs to the Ugandan Conference of 1961, arguing that it was this event which prompted political contenders for the first time to either seek party support on a nationwide basis or to entrench themselves in defence of sectional interests.[41] James Hubbard makes a number of interesting observations on the Lancaster House conferences which were held for Kenya, showing how the expectations of the African public in Kenya rose dramatically following the first conference, and how for Uganda it was also the forthcoming Ugandan 1961 Conference which facilitated a political deal between Obote and the Kabaka.[42] Onek Adyanga's book on the general history of Uganda observes how the Wild Commission for that territory was set up to ease nationalist pressure, but also how London's rejection of the Wild Committee's recommendation of responsible government produced a heated reaction from prominent nationalist Milton Obote who immediately demanded Ugandan independence, demonstrating his new status.[43] Some commentators have included brief references as to how conferences could both assist and harm African nationalist politicians. Philip Short has shown how Hastings Banda used the period before the 1960 Nyasaland Conference to discredit rivals.[44] David Goldsworthy on the other hand, in his biography of Kenyan nationalist Tom Mboya, notes how, at the first Lancaster House conference for Kenya, the other African attendees became antagonised by Mboya staying at far superior accommodation and being singled out by the British press as leader of the African delegation. It was in the aftermath of this that several colleagues rejected his leadership.[45] Goldsworthy also observes how the first Lancaster House conference brought closer the prospect of African rule which in turn led in its immediate aftermath to individuals jockeying for power.[46]

Yet although there are short accounts as to how certain conferences and commissions affected the African public and politicians, there has been no detailed, comprehensive coverage of this theme. This thesis is the first to do so, and looks at the widespread effect of commissions and conferences on politics and popular opinion in Africa, showing how these events stimulated activity among the population, helped to clarify political thinking,

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[40] John Hargreaves, *Decolonization in Africa* (Harlow, 1988).
[41] Ibid, p.196.
[42] James Hubbard, *The United States and the End of Colonial Rule in Africa, 1941-1968* (Jefferson, 2011), pp.266, 314.
[43] O.C. Adyanga, *Modes of British Imperial Control in Africa: A Case Study of Uganda c.1890- 1990* (Newcastle upon Tyne, 2011), pp.133-134.
[44] Philip Short, *Banda*, (London, 1974), p.132.
[45] David Goldsworthy, *Tom Mboya: The Man Kenya Wanted to Forget* (London, 1982), pp. 134-135.
[46] Ibid, p.136.

enhanced political differences, built and dashed reputations, fuelled new alliances and broke existing structures. It will also show how commissions and conferences tell us something too about what issues mattered to the general public in Africa in the final years of colonisation. This study will therefore supplement the hitherto localised and particularised historiography.

In his article 'The Transfer of Power: Why and How', Dennis Austin looks at conferences and commissions as an instrument of transfer. The author argues that conferences were a 'brokerage mechanism' and notes too the 'quite powerful' effects of commissions, arguing that these often started a process which ended with independence.[47] Austin makes general statements in his article, supplemented by occasional, brief references to individual commissions, conferences, and actors. Notwithstanding its brevity and that it was written before the release of relevant government records, the article is an intriguing read, raising questions about how the practice of using commissions and conferences might have affected the decolonisation process itself. Did they have particular ramifications for the end of empire in British colonial Africa? Austin offers no specifics. Other writers, as mentioned earlier, have credited both commissions and conferences with significance, but in the sense that they had particular constitutional outcomes. No attempt has been made to look at how, beyond that, effecting change through the media of conferences and commissions may have had particular consequences. This study will do this, and this is the third major way in which it seeks to make a contribution to the existing literature. It will argue that commissions and conferences did frequently provide a breathing space for the British Government, slowing down the pace of change whilst political parties considered and formulated their positions. Yet it is likely that the overall effect of commissions and conferences was to promote a rapid decolonisation. Respite for the British brought about following announcements of conferences and commissions was only temporary. The pressures for change once conferences took place and commissions had reported became intense. Both mechanisms usually recommended constitutional change, which empowered and invigorated local politicians. And if conferences and commissions failed to bring about the hoped for changes, as some did, then this gave rise to anger on the part of nationalist politicians, further increasing pressures on the British Government to implement constitutional change. Conferences and commissions also fostered agreement when other methods of instituting change may well have failed, and sometimes aided an understanding

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[47] Dennis Austin, 'The Transfer of Power: Why and How', in W.H. Morris-Jones and D. Austin (eds.) *Decolonisation and After* (London, 1980), pp.3-34, p.19.

between the British and nationalist leaders and also between different nationalist factions. Conferences in particular, it is argued, may also have played a part in encouraging a relatively peaceful British decolonisation of east and central Africa during the early 1960s.

To summarise this part of the Introduction, whilst the secondary literature has many references to the commissions and conferences that are the subject of this case study, coverage of these events is almost always limited to a few pages in books and articles. The existing historiography is also particularised to individual countries, conferences, and actors. It is only through studying a multitude of conferences and commissions of the period that broad themes emerge around control, engagement and ramifications for the decolonisation process. As the thesis will go on to show, the degree of management exercised by the British over conferences and commissions varied from event to event, as did African engagement. To study just one or even several of the commissions or conferences in isolation would produce findings unrepresentative of the wider picture.

Aside from the specific works on African commissions and conferences of the early 1960s, there is a small but useful body of literature on commissions and conferences generally, and which this study draws on, referencing similarities. In turn, it is hoped too that this thesis will also contribute to this wider literature, supplementing current findings as to why governments set up commissions and conferences, what they hoped to achieve from these, and how commissions and conferences affected petitioners and delegates alike. This next section outlines what are considered to be the important more general works on conferences and commissions which are pertinent to this study and which have been drawn upon. To start with, it is worth noting that the two key books on commissions were written before the 1960s. Although there is no evidence from the material surveyed that British or colonial officials had read and were inspired by the books, it is possible of course that they were. K.C. Wheare's 1955 book, *Government by Committee*, looks at the committee mechanism as a cog of governmental machinery, distinguishing between different types (committees to advise, to inquire, to scrutinize and so on) and argues that although committees bring advantages to the process of government, such as involving a wide body of opinion, this has sometimes led to a strengthening of Whitehall at the expense of Westminster, which the author thinks is to be regretted.[48] The book is a largely

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[48] K.C. Wheare, *Government by Committee: An Essay on the British Constitution* (Oxford, 1955), p.249.

factual account of commissions which may nevertheless have proved useful background reading for Colonial Office officials. They would certainly have known of Wheare's presence as he was invited to be a constitutional expert for a difficult Northern Rhodesia franchise issue in 1961. The Colonial Office would have found Clokie and Robinson's 1937 *Royal Commissions of Inquiry* more to the point.[49] As well as looking at the rise and fall of royal commissions, the authors consider why these mechanisms were set up in the first place, drawing from material covered in the first part of their book on particular commissions. They argue that commissions were variously instituted to prepare the way for predetermined government policy; because expert advice was needed; to shift responsibility from the government to someone else; to relieve political pressure; and to postpone having to make a decision on a particular matter.[50] As will be seen, the reasons given by Clokie and Robinson for instituting commissions resonate with many of the reasons behind the African commissions.

There are two further books on the wider use of commissions. T.J. Cartwright's *Royal Commissions and Departmental Committees in Britain* examines the history of British commissions with chapters on how they work, arguing that their flexibility and role as mechanisms for facilitating public participation in government has ensured their continued popularity,[51] and Richard Chapman's edited collection, *The Role of Commissions in Policy Making*, considers some of the common and contrasting features of five separate British governmental commissions of the mid twentieth century.[52] Each of these books makes helpful and relevant background points as to why commissions have been appointed, and how chairmen have been chosen, which again resonate with some of this study's findings.

No literature has been found which covers comprehensively the subject of conferences. Nevertheless, there is a small and varied body of literature which has examined aspects of conferences or similar diplomatic meetings. The authors are drawn from disciplines of political science, history, geography, and international relations. Volker Rittberger gives a helpful account of the history of international conferences, and looks at the conference

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[49] Hugh Clokie and .J.William Robinson, *Royal Commissions of Inquiry: The Significance of Investigations in British Politics* (Stanford, 1937).
[50] Ibid, p.123.
[51] T.J. Cartwright, *Royal Commissions and Departmental Committees in Britain: A Case Study in Institutional Adaptiveness and Public Participation in Government* (London, 1975), p.207.
[52] Richard A. Chapman (ed.), *The Role of Commissions in Policy Making* (London, 1973).

process (initiation, preparatory work, negotiations, and implementation).[53] Rittberger argues that common ground is often found at conferences because of the complexity of the issues and shared uncertainty about acceptable outcomes, a trait sometimes in evidence at the African conferences. Key diplomatic meetings, this time of the twentieth century, are also the theme of David Reynolds' book *Summits: Six Meetings That Shaped the Twentieth Century*,[54] which examines the 'human dramas of summitry', making useful observations on how the chemistry of participants can affect outcomes. This theme is returned to in Chapter Six. Some scholars have examined the settings and atmospheres of particular conferences. Naoko Shimazu, for example, has looked at the Afro-Asian Bandung Conference of 1955 in terms of a 'theatrical performance in which actors performed on stage to audiences', a remark which could apply equally to many of the African conferences. Shimazu shows how a conference can be seen as a significant event, even though it produced no concrete results, Bandung being remembered as a symbolic moment for post-colonial Asia and Africa.[55] Stephen Legg has written recently on the three Indian Round Table Conferences held in London in the early 1930s, arguing that atmospheres at conferences are vital to their effectiveness. Legg draws no conclusions on the cause-effect relationship of the atmosphere and political outcome of the Round Table conferences but the author's detailed descriptions of the outside weather, conference room heating and ventilation, and how these matters affected delegates, illustrates how the dynamics of conferences have many different features.[56] Jake Hodder has examined the World Pacifist Meeting in India in 1949, arguing how the event was 'carefully staged to embody and project the shape of pacifist post-war internationalism', not least through its simple setting and modest accommodation for delegates.[57] As will be seen, stage management was used by both the British and Africans at the conferences under review

Some material has been written on constitutional commissions which are either outside of Africa or of the period of time which is the subject of this thesis. Howard Johnson has looked at the use of the Forster and Moyne Commissions of 1937 and 1938 in the West

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[53] Volker Rittberger, 'Global Conference Diplomacy and International Policy Making: the case of UN-Sponsored World Conferences', *European Journal of Political Research*, Vol.11, no.2 (1983), pp.167-182.
[54] David Reynolds, *Summits: Six Meetings That Shaped The Twentieth Century* (London, 2007).
[55] Naoko Shimazu, 'Diplomacy as Theatre: Staging the Bandung Conference of 1955', *Modern Asian Studies,* Vol.1, no.48 (2014), pp.225-252.
[56] Stephen Legg, '"Political Atmospheres": The India Round Table Conference's Atmospheric Environments, Bodies and Representations, London 1930-32', *Annals of the American Association of Geographers* (2019), published online 26.08.19.
[57] Jake Hodder, 'Conferencing the International at the World Pacifist Meeting in India, 1949', *Political Geography,* Vol.49 (2015), pp.40-50.

Indies.[58] The author examines how the then colonial secretary, William Ormsby-Gore, used the agency of an 'impartial' commission to achieve his desired outcome of the establishment of trade unions in Trinidad. He achieved this partly through careful selection of the commission's members. The author shows how, through a recommendation 'by an independent and prestigious commission of inquiry', the Colonial Office's desired but costly plans of long term reconstruction in the West Indies could be made more palatable to the British public. Johnson's work was particularly helpful to this study, his findings resonating strongly with some of the African commissions.

Having looked at how constitutional conferences and commissions have been treated in the secondary literature, the next section of this Introduction outlines the most important features of this study and also why it was embarked upon.

This thesis, as noted previously, examines three core topics: (i) how the British and colonial governments sought to use conferences and commissions to control the decolonisation process; (ii) how conferences and commissions affected African politics; and (iii) how conferences and commissions had ramifications for the end of empire in British Africa. The conferences and commissions that form the subject matter of this thesis are set out below in tables 1 and 2.[59] The listed conferences and commissions comprise all of the constitutional conferences and commissions that were held during the tenure of the Conservative Government of 1959-64 in east and central Africa, as well as in Swaziland and Basutoland. These are described further in the next chapter. As mentioned at the beginning of this Introduction, the period 1959-64 was chosen because, as a period of very rapid change in Africa, it could be expected to reveal much about how Britain achieved decolonisation. Other periods might also have made an interesting study. For example in the second half of the 1950s some thirteen constitutional conferences were held. Yet this period lacks the sheer intensity and activity of the 1960s: in the period 1954 to 1959, seven countries were the subject of constitutional conferences, whilst in the five years that

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[58] Howard Johnson, 'The Political Uses of Commissions of Enquiry (1): The Imperial-Colonial West Indies Context: the Forster and Moyne Commissions', *Social and Economic Studies*, Vol.27, no.3 (1978), pp.256-283.

[59] Throughout this thesis, the names of the territories used are the historic names that were applied before independence. This has been done to avoid a confusion which might otherwise arise, for example, where the thesis gives a conference its formal name and yet in the same paragraph makes reference to the country's (different) present name. Also, in the case of Tanganyika and Somaliland the territories differed from modern day Tanzania and Somalia.

followed, the comparable number of countries was 22. This heightened activity could be expected to reveal much about the methods used by the British to manage its colonies at the end of empire.

Why was east and central Africa chosen for an examination of commissions and conferences? As will be seen from Appendix 1 (list of constitutional conferences held in London, referred to in the next chapter), the area by no means had a monopoly over the conferences of the period. The primary reason for selection concerns the variety and depth of subjects and matters which were prevalent and which the British Government had to confront in the early 1960s, including nationalism, ethnic (non-white) tensions within territories, competing African political parties within territories, United Nations' involvement, the question of how to retain defence facilities after independence, the awkward problem of constitutional advance being granted for one territory having knock-on effects for its neighbouring British colonies, and resistance by powerful chiefs to any constitutional changes which might dilute their status and power. The chosen case studies together embrace all of these issues, and were likely to offer insights into how the British and colonial governments sought to manage these issues and, equally, how Africans reacted to them. Furthermore, the conferences for Kenya and Northern Rhodesia and the Monckton Commission also had to confront the issue of how white settlers would be integrated into a post-colonial society, thus offering potential rich pickings as to how the British and African actors would deal with these matters.

The spread in time of the case study commissions and conferences could also be expected to yield observations about British governmental attitudes. As the thesis will show, there were common attributes which drove British governmental thinking during the very late 1950s and early 1960s, notably the desire for stability, moderation, and for Britain to emerge with its prestige reputation intact.[60] Yet as this study will also show, conference planning over the period shows too how some objectives, notably an aspiration for only gradual constitutional change, had to be sacrificed for expediency. Some of the case study commissions and conferences were also considered failures by the British Government, whilst others were deemed a success. It was hoped that this diversity of subject matter in terms of time, purpose, and outcome would also assist in giving a nuanced view to the three thesis topics. In short then, the case study commissions and conferences offered potentially profitable material for seeking answers to the questions of imperial control, and

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[60] See the beginning of Chapter Three.

African politics of the period. Finally, because of the speed of change during Africa in the early 1960s, a lot of commissions and conferences were held for the case study territories: ten commissions and sixteen conferences. In fact, the conferences comprised almost one half of all the colonial constitutional conferences held by the Conservative Government of 1959-64. The commissions were also the sum total of constitutional commissions held for Africa during the period.[61] Looking at such a large number of examples should, it is hoped, enable confident answers to be given to each of the three thesis issues set out above, but also accurate ones. To re-state a point made earlier, it is only by studying a large number of conferences and commissions that clear patterns emerge; studying just one or even several of these events runs the risk of producing unrepresentative results.

It is worth pausing here to define what is meant by a 'constitutional conference' and a 'constitutional commission'. The former were events hosted by the colonial secretary and usually given the title of that name. Political leaders from Africa were invited to 'advise' the colonial secretary on the next stage of constitutional development for their territory. He was never bound legally by the outcomes (in the sense that agreements reached at conferences had automatic force of law) but colonial secretaries rarely departed from any agreement reached. As will be seen, some conferences were downgraded formally to 'discussions' to suit the needs of the British Government, but bore the same hallmarks as their official counterparts. 'Constitutional commissions' were also set up to give either the colonial secretary or the territorial governor advice. Sometimes these were labelled 'committees'- again for British purposes. Other types of commissions were also held during this period - commissions of inquiry into disturbances, for example, as well as those which had as their task the drawing up of voting constituencies. These are not the subject of this thesis.

Table I. Conferences examined.
Kenya 1960
Somaliland 1960
Nyasaland 1960
Federal Review Conference 1960
Northern Rhodesia 1961

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[61] If delimitation commissions for the purposes of recommending constituency boundaries are excluded. There was also a constitutional committee for Bechuanaland which reported on 8 October 1959, the day of the 1959 British election.

Tanganyika 1961
Uganda 1961
Kenya 1962
Zanzibar 1962
Uganda 1962
Nyasaland 1962
Kenya 1963
Zanzibar 1963
Swaziland 1963
Basutoland 1964
Northern Rhodesia 1964

Table 2.Commissions examined.
Wild (Uganda) 1959
Ramage (Tanganyika) 1959
Monckton (Central African Federation) 1960
Blood (Zanzibar) 1960
Munster (Uganda) 1961
Kenya Coastal Strip 1961
Molson (Uganda) 1962
Swaziland 1962
Kenya Northern Frontier 1962
Basutoland 1963

There proved to be a wide variety of primary source material available on the subject of this study and the next section of this Introduction comments on the principal sources that were used. The National Archives at Kew, in particular, provided a huge mine of information. The Colonial Office papers (CO series) were especially useful; not just those that dealt with the conferences and commissions themselves but also the files concerning the constitutional developments of the territories examined, files kept on political parties and their leaders, as well as intelligence reports. Files from the office of the Prime Minister

(PREM series), and Commonwealth Relations Office files (DO series) were helpful too. Some useful material was also gleaned from the recently released Hanslope Park archives, mentioned previously, as well as the KV series (intelligence service) files, providing information that had hitherto been unavailable. Many hundreds of files at Kew were examined altogether. From these varied sources, a detailed picture emerged on the position of the British Government in relation to each of the studied commissions and conferences, with contributions from the Prime Minister, Colonial Secretary, other government ministers, the Governors and their staff as well as officials at the Colonial Office, both senior and junior. Memoranda sent between staff at the Colonial Office and ministers were helpful in gleaning governmental thinking and views on specific conference and commission objectives. There were, however, some limitations to relying on the Kew files to arrive at a full understanding of the role of conferences and commissions. Notes of meetings between colonial secretaries and African leaders were invariably taken by Whitehall officials, and recorded the points that mattered to them. How African politicians saw such meetings and what they took out of them is often not known. Neither are private, off-the-record conversations between senior British ministers recorded, nor such discussions between them and African leaders. It is also likely that the wider, gradual and pervading international pressures of the sort mentioned earlier in the Introduction would have tacitly encouraged the British to be more willing to make constitutional concessions at conferences. One government study which Macmillan commissioned, for example, concluded in February 1960 that the United Nations was likely to grow in power and that Britain's 'own position and influence will, to a large extent, depend on our success in handling our colonial problems':[62] an acknowledgement of sorts that the transfer of power to local leaders would need to be accelerated. Yet these wider international pressures for change receive few mentions in the Kew files when it came to the British formulating objectives for conferences and commissions. Only occasionally were such pressures were acknowledged by ministers, the Tanganyika conference being a case in point, as will be shown in the next chapter.

To offer perspectives not readily available from governmental archives, politicians' diaries and papers were examined where they existed (Macmillan and Sandys) alongside those for colonial governors (Armitage and Mooring). These sometimes provided unguarded off-the-cuff comments, instructive as immediate reactions to events. Some members of

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[62] TNA, CAB129/100, 'Future Policy Study, 1960-70', Cabinet Memorandum, 24.02.60, paragraphs 26-27.

constitutional commissions wrote of their experiences or left behind papers, which were of some factual assistance as well as giving insight into thought processes. Archived papers for political and other organisations were also viewed; for example, those of the Conservative and Labour parties. Because of a paucity of relevant material, these were only of marginal use. Informal reports made by British officials or contemporaries who had been 'on the ground' added some colour to the official versions, as did the accounts of conferences and commissions which appeared in British newspapers. The collected works of the British Documents on the End of Empire were not only useful introductions to each of the territories but also helpfully set out documents dealing with broader, territory-wide issues such as admissions to the Commonwealth.

Finding African sources was more difficult. Local African newspapers, kept by the British Library in London, were very informative. Many of these were aimed at a European or educated African audience but nevertheless gave a real feel of the local importance attached to both commissions and conferences and provided useful quotations from politicians. They illustrate too how the public in Africa reacted to conferences and commissions. Viewing archival material from African actors was more difficult, largely because so little exists. Archives held in former African colonies always offered the potential for useful sources, but online research of such archives gave little confidence that visiting some of these would be profitable. The Kenya National Archives in Nairobi was, however, visited as part of the research. Reports from other researchers testified that this archive was generally well-stocked with material. Importantly, Kenya had also been the object of three of the conferences and two of the commissions under review. The trip was useful, producing documents which had not been available in London, notably on how the Kenyan colonial government made use of the settlement reached at the 1960 conference as propaganda, how it sought to influence the Kenya television service's coverage of the first Lancaster House conference, and information on how Kenyan delegates to the London conferences spent their time there. The only disappointment was that whilst the Nairobi archives yielded insights on local administration, they offered few insights into African perspectives. The British Library Endangered Archive Programme includes material from the two main political parties in Northern Rhodesia. These proved of some assistance. A number of politicians from the territories concerned, notably Blundell, Odinga, and Mboya, left autobiographies which provide an interesting insight into how they saw conference events. Finally, and importantly, the Kew Archives also proved to be a surprisingly rich source of material from the African side, containing, for example, letters written to the

colonial and London governments, and copies of literature from the nationalist parties. Commission reports also sometimes contained representations made by petitioners. The Monckton Commission report was especially helpful here. As will be seen in Chapter Four, these representations, all included in the Monckton report's lengthy appendices, give valuable insights into the process by which representations were made as well as their content. Oral interviews with those who had been key actors in the commissions and conferences were, unfortunately, not a viable option: virtually of those who played a significant part in the conferences and commissions under review have all since died.[63] An interview with Bill Kirkman, the *Times'* Africa correspondent during the early 1960s was, however, instructive in helping to glean the atmosphere of the occasions.

This thesis is organised in the following way. Chapter One begins by placing the case-study commissions and conferences in their historical context. It then examines why the conferences and commissions under review were set up. It argues that the key reason was so that the British Government could seize the initiative: an attempt to dampen the pressures it faced.

How the British Government sought to manage the constitutional commissions and their outcomes is the subject of Chapter Two. It observes that the British and colonial governments usually had their own ideas about acceptable outcomes from commissions. Sometimes these desired outcomes were specific but on other occasions the hoped for report was vaguer: simply that the recommendations would be 'sensible' and not ruffle feathers. To secure such outcomes, the British Government could, of course, not write the reports of the commissions, so sought instead to influence proceedings in other ways. It did this through choosing chairmen, and commission members, deciding on the nature of the body to be set up, its terms of reference, and in its dealings with the commission members. The chapter also, however, notes that there were limits to how far this process could be managed.

Chapter Three looks at how the British Government sought to use constitutional conferences to seize the initiative. It shows that having gained a breathing space by announcing the conference, the British Government then sought to plan its desired conference outcomes. It first identifies general aspirations which influenced the

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[63] Kenneth Kaunda, now 95, is an exception.

Government's thinking. The chapter then looks at the more specific plans drawn up for the conferences. The third part then examines a wide range of tactics used by the British and colonial governments to achieve its conference objectives. As will be seen, the British Government went to great lengths to secure what it wanted.

The second part of the thesis switches away from how the British and colonial governments used conferences and commissions to manage outcomes and looks instead at how these events helped to shape politics and popular opinion in Africa. Chapter Four seeks, in particular, to demonstrate the value of a study of the constitutional commissions of the second Macmillan government as a way of gaining greater insights into the African voices of the period. It examines the popularity and high expectations of commissions among the African population, looking at the nature of African representations, before examining the impact of African representations on local African politics.

Chapter Five shows how conferences, like commissions, were generally seen as notable and important events by African politicians and public. They helped clarify political thinking, brought out differences between the parties and their supporters, enhanced some politicians' reputations and diminished others, and both encouraged new alliances and helped break existing structures. The first part of the chapter looks at how conferences, like commissions, were seen as significant events which often galvanised the public in Africa. The chapter then notes the importance attached to conferences by African politicians, and how they made use of conferences to further their own positions. This was hardly surprising as conferences gave nationalist leaders the opportunity to shape the constitutional and political outcome of the territory after independence and, ultimately, to replace the British in power with themselves. Attendance at conferences also gave nationalists legitimacy and credibility. They afforded potentially a faster route to effect change than violent struggle. The chapter notes too how it was not just the British that employed tactics to achieve their objectives. African politicians did too, albeit on a much simpler scale. The final part of the chapter discusses the role of African women in conferences, showing that despite often being active on the political scene, women played a minimal role in conference proceedings.

The penultimate chapter begins by examining whether commissions were the successful control mechanism that the British Government had hoped for. It notes that for the most part these did not meet its aspirations, and that whilst the announcement of commissions often alleviated immediate nationalist and regionalist pressures for constitutional change,

as the British had hoped, these pressures re-emerged vigorously once the commissions had reported. The success of conferences from the point of view of the British Government is then examined. Some of these failed, but most were seen by the British as fruitful. Yet many of the latter, it is argued, produced only a short-term understanding and stability, doing little or nothing to heal long-term problems that had been building up in the colony. The chapter then looks beyond simple constitutional outcomes of the conferences and commissions and examines some of the likely consequences of constitutional change having been effected through the mechanism of conferences. For some territories, conferences produced a constitutional outcome that would have been unlikely if other mechanisms of change had been used. Conferences also, on occasions, encouraged African political parties to work together for change, and helped facilitate an understanding between the British Government and nationalist politicians. Although there were other factors at play, conferences, it is argued, played their part in a relatively non-violent African decolonisation in the early 1960s, at least up until the formal transfer of power. The final chapter sets out the thesis conclusions.

Chapter One

Breathing spaces and leverage: reasons behind the African conferences and commissions

Before examining ways in which the British Government sought to exercise control through African commissions and conferences, it will hopefully be instructive to say something about the use of conferences and commissions in wider terms. Part one of this chapter thus places the case-study commissions and conferences in the context of earlier counterparts, briefly tracing these constitutional mechanisms back hundreds of years. It then moves forward to look at the relatively modern day usage of the commissions and conferences, especially in the colonial context. This part of the chapter notes how Iain Macleod made very extensive use of conferences as a tool of colonial management in the Africa in the early 1960s. Parts two and three then go on to examine why, specifically, the conferences and commissions under review were set up. It is argued that although there were different motives, the most important reason was so that the British Government could seize the initiative: both conferences and commissions were employed as a way of dampening down the pressures the Government faced.

Part One: the African conferences and commissions in context

The use of constitutional conferences to sort out colonial issues was far from a 1960s invention, and the first part of this chapter looks at their origins. It is useful to do so in order to explain both how and why conferences came to be so widely used by the British Government in the early 1960s. The path to the regular use of such conferences was no straight line but the successes of certain previous constitutional conferences and, by 1959, the institutional familiarity which the Colonial Office would have had with their workings offered Iain Macleod, who became Colonial Secretary in that year, an attractive opportunity to use these mechanisms to solve problematic issues.

Conferences, if that term is used in its broadest sense, can be traced back hundreds of years. Congresses that were used to determine peace settlements have certain similarities to the conferences of this study. Both were events at which representatives from two or

more territories sought to use the negotiating table to regularise their relationships and to establish a mutually acceptable way of working. In his thorough review of peace conferences, their historical origins, how they worked, and ways in which they might benefit geo-political relations in the twenty-first century, Bernard Ramcharan observes that the oldest surviving peace agreement was concluded in 1280BC between Ramses II of Egypt and the Hittite King, Hatti Hattusiti, following war between the two regions. More recently, notable peace conferences include the settlement at Westphalia in the seventeenth century ending the Thirty Years' religious wars and establishing order in central Europe, the Vienna Congress of 1814-15, the Congress of Berlin in 1878 and the Paris Peace Conference of 1919.[1]

A list of decolonisation conferences which took place in London between 1930 and 1965 is attached at Appendix 1. These were conferences at which measures of constitutional advance or, in some cases independence, were discussed. The cut-off point of 1965 is intended to be sufficient for the purposes of this work, but it is noteworthy that London constitutional conferences continued after that time for those smaller territories which remained as colonies (known as British dependent territories after 1981 and then British overseas territories after 2002). As recently as 2009, Lancaster House hosted delegates of the Cayman Islands Constitutional Conference.[2]

Appendix 1 starts with 1930, but it is worth mentioning that in the colonial context, a conference in 1914, called by George V and held at Buckingham Palace, discussed Home Rule plans with Irish political leaders. The conference broke up after only three days. More pertinent in looking at the origins of the African conferences were the three India Round Table Conferences of the early 1930s. These were conferences held between representatives of the British and colonial governments and delegates from India to discuss constitutional change. The first of these was the initiative of the Viceroy, Lord Irwin, who had become concerned at recent political developments in India, including a boycott of the Simon Commission by the main political parties, a resolution by Congress in 1927 calling for complete independence from Britain, and the beginnings of widespread unrest generally.[3] Irwin hoped that a round table conference, which had been demanded by the legislative

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[1] Bertrand Ramcharan, *International Peace Conferences* (Leiden, 2015), pp.5-10.
[2] http://www.gov.ky/portal/page/portal/cighome/pressroom/archive/200902/logbstatementondraft constitution, accessed 19.04.2018.
[3] Lionel Knight, *Britain in India, 1858-1947* (London, 2012), pp.117-119; Carl Bridge*, Holding India to the Empire: The British Conservative Party and the 1935 Constitution* (New Delhi, 1986), pp.26-27.

assembly as far back as 1924,[4] would enable representatives from India and their counterparts in London to work out a future Indian constitution 'in an atmosphere of harmony', creating a bridge between Britain and Hindu nationalists, and fostering unity between Hindus and Muslims.[5] But the suggestion of a conference was by no means welcomed by all in London, provoking an outcry at Westminster and being opposed bitterly by some in the Conservative opposition, particularly Winston Churchill.[6] Sir John Simon, whose commission had not yet reported when the idea of a conference was first mooted, thought the idea dangerous and unlikely to produce an agreed solution, although he later suggested it was worth a try.[7] As will be seen shortly, the Indian conferences were by no means a success, and the mechanism of a conference as a means of brokering agreement between the British Government and nationalist leaders fell into disuse for many years, a hiatus which is partly explainable by the Second World War. After the Indian round table conferences of the early 1930s and a similar one for Burma in 1931, no further conferences were held until 1953, although it should be said that in 1946, three British Cabinet Ministers did travel to India to conduct talks with local party leaders.[8] Nevertheless, India, Ceylon and Burma (1948), Sudan (1956) and Gold Coast (1957) were all given autonomy without the independence conferences that so characterised the British-African relationships of the early 1960s. In the case of the Gold Coast, the British Government preferred to deal directly with Kwame Nkrumah, meeting him several times from 1951 onwards in both London and Ghana.[9]

Leaving aside formal conferences with local political leaders, the Colonial Office was well versed in organising conferences for British officials to discuss constitutional matters - another antecedent for the African conferences of the 1960s. Since 1926, for example, East African governors had held a number of conferences which sought to establish regional co-operation and common policies,[10] and in 1947 the African governors gathered in London to hear the Colonial Office's new ideas about the direction of British policies in the

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[4] It is noteworthy that pressure for a conference first came from Indian politicians. As will be seen later, this resonates with many of the African conferences where nationalist politicians could be vociferous in their demands for such events.

[5] Jaswant Singh, *Jinnah. India: Partition-Independence* (Oxford, 2012), p.145; R. J.Moore, *The Crisis of Indian Unity 1917-1940* (London, 1974), p.44.

[6] Knight, *India*, p.119.

[7] Bridge, *Holding India*, p.27.

[8] John Riddick, *The History of British India: A Chronology* (Westport, 2006), p.117.

[9] Richard Rathbone (ed.) *BDEEP,* Series B, Volume I, *Ghana,* Part I (London, 1992), pp. lvii – lix.

[10] Richard Mshomba, *Economic Integration in Africa: The East African Community in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge, 2017), p.40.

continent.[11] The conference mechanism had also long been used by the British Government to bring leaders from self-governing colonies, dominions and Commonwealth countries to London to discuss matters of mutual interest.[12] The re-styled Commonwealth conference in 1944 was judged by all to have been an instant success, fostering co-operation, and helping to dispel some earlier misgivings over lack of effective previous consultation.[13]

The Nigerian Conference of 1953 was the first of the post-War colonial constitutional conferences, setting in train a series of conferences that were to play such a major part in British decolonisation thinking. Between 1955 and the end of the Douglas-Home government in 1964 - a period of less than nine years - an astonishing 48 colonial constitutional conferences were hosted by the British Government in London, transporting leaders from all over the world to the negotiating table.

The idea of a conference for Nigeria lay with the then Colonial Secretary, Oliver Lyttelton, who appears to have been driven by local events rather than any lingering inspiration from the Indian conferences which had taken place some twenty years earlier. Alarmed by the collapse of the existing constitution of Nigeria which had led to ethnic tensions between the territory's regions, and presented with demands for self-government, the Colonial Secretary concluded that 'decisive action' was needed to retrieve the situation, coming up with the idea of holding a conference which would be chaired by himself at a London venue. Whilst he hoped that this would forge agreement between the parties, Lyttelton considered also that a conference would also buy the British Government time: his 'dilatory tactics'.[14] As will be seen later on in this chapter, reasons of delay were behind the calling of several of the African conferences, but the Nigerian conference is also of interest for a further antecedent: the conference mechanism was especially attractive when a colonial secretary was dealing with several different factions in the one territory. Here, the medium of a conference could be used not just to settle matters between Britain and a nationalist leader, but also to reconcile divisions amongst the delegates themselves. A conference would not have been so imperative with nationalist leaders who enjoyed hegemony within their own territory, such as Nkrumah, as seen above. This theme is repeated in the 1960s

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[11] L. J. Butler, *Britain and Empire: Adjusting to the Post-Imperial World* (London, 2002), p.89.
[12] Nicholas Mansergh, *Survey of British Commonwealth Affairs: Problems of Wartime Co-operation and Post War Change 1939-1952* (London, 1958), pp.183, 411.
[13] Ibid, pp.184-185.
[14] Martin Lynn, 'The Nigerian self-government crisis of 1953 and the Colonial Office', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History,* Vol. 34, no.2 (2006), pp.245-246, p.255; Martin Lynn (ed.), *BDEEP*, Series B, Volume 7, *Nigeria,* Part I (Norwich, 2001), p. lxi – lxxi; John P. Mackintosh, *Nigerian Government and Politics: Prelude to Revolution* (Evanston, 1966), pp.22-28.

where Macleod was not so concerned about having a conference for Tanganyika, where Nyerere was the only credible politician, than for Uganda or Kenya where intra-nationalist/ regionalist strife also needed to be settled.

The early constitutional conferences followed no distinct procedural pattern. The Indian conferences were very grand affairs. The first one opened in the House of Lords and was addressed by George V before convening to the regal St. James' Palace, where sessions were chaired by the Prime Minister, Ramsay MacDonald. As noted in Appendix 1, the number of participants at the first Indian conference was huge (155) and delegates were limited to speeches of ten minutes.[15] The 1955 conference for Malta on the other hand was chaired by the Lord Chancellor (Lord Kilmuir) and somewhat bizarrely took the form of an enquiry. The then colonial secretary, Alan Lennox-Boyd, together with leaders of the Maltese political parties, presented evidence to the conference as witnesses. Some sessions were held in London, some in Malta.[16] But by the late 1950s a familiar pattern had begun to emerge, with conferences being chaired by the colonial secretary and held at either Lancaster House or the Colonial Office. When Iain Macleod became colonial secretary in October 1959 it would have been easy for him to operate this ready-made apparatus and to use it himself. Many of the Colonial Office officials upon whom Macleod relied were also present at the conferences of the 1950s, building up considerable experience which could be applied to the African conferences. William Gorell Barnes (a deputy under-secretary) and N. B. J. Huijsman, for example, attended the 1953 Nigerian conference, and the one for 1957 was populated by the even more important Colonial Office actors (for our purposes) of Lord Perth, Hilton Poynton, and John Martin who became, respectively, Minister of State for the Colonies, Colonial Office Permanent Under Secretary, and a Colonial Office Deputy Under Secretary. The objectives and conference tactics of the British Government at the African conferences certainly had some provenance in their 1950s counterparts. Lennox-Boyd, for example, wished to use the 1955 conference for Malaya to not only manage pressure for further constitutional advance but to bring out matters which the British Government felt important and which they wanted to control, such as defence, security and finance.[17] To achieve this objective, the Colonial

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[15] Stanley Wolpert, *Jinnah of Pakistan* (New York, 1984), pp.119-121; Singh, *Jinnah*, p.151.
[16] Great Britain, *Malta Round Table Conference 1955 Report*, Cmnd.9657 (London, 1955).
[17] A. J. Stockwell (ed.), *BDEEP,* Series B, Volume 3, *Malaya,* Part 3 (London, 1995), Cabinet memorandum by Lennox-Boyd, 20.07.55, document 356.

Secretary told the British Cabinet that he would seek to establish 'an atmosphere of goodwill and understanding' early on in the Conference.[18]

In the early 1960s, then, the British Government had some colonial conference experience to draw on. Yet not all conferences of the pre-1960 period had been a success, and it might be asked why the British Government continued to arrange so many. The Indian round table conferences are usually seen as having failed. Woolpart notes that the first one ended with little accomplished,[19] and Bridge calls its conclusions 'vague'.[20] Singh observes that no substantive decisions were made at the second round table-conference,[21] and Moore argues that this event served only to widen Indian divisions,[22] with the third conference being a poor semblance of the (not very good) earlier ones.[23] A conference for Singapore in 1956 broke down without agreement,[24] and Lennox-Boyd's biographer notes that the Malta conference of 1958, at which the local political party leaders refused to meet each other, must have been a 'severe disappointment' to the Colonial Secretary.[25] Yet when the early conferences had worked well, they were perceived as having been very effective, something which explains the British Government's willingness for continuing to not only use this mechanism but to embrace it during the early 1960s. Oliver Lyttelton was certainly enthused by the 1953 Nigeria conference, writing in his memoirs that the Conference 'turned out to be the most successful of the many negotiations in which I was engaged during my term of office, and I take pride in the result'.[26] The former colonial secretary was particularly pleased about how the Africans had responded to his humour and how he had soon been 'able to steer the Conference'.[27] Allowances must be made for Lyttelton writing after the event and no doubt wanting to portray himself in the best light. Nevertheless, it is striking how the former Colonial Secretary chose to emphasise the control point. This ability to influence and manage the proceedings was surely not lost on the Colonial Office, some of whose personnel, as mentioned above, continued to hold their posts throughout the early 1960s. The subsequent three conferences for Nigeria were all seen as successful

[18] Ibid, Cabinet memorandum by Lennox-Boyd, 07.01.56, document 394.
[19] Stanley Wolpert, *A New History of India,* 8th edition (Oxford, 2009), p.332.
[20] Bridge, *Holding India*, p.58.
[21] Singh, *Jinnah*, p.170.
[22] Moore, *Unity*, p.315.
[23] Ibid, p.315.
[24] Great Britain, *Report of the Singapore Constitutional Conference 1956*, Cmnd. 9777 (London, 1956)
[25] Philip Murphy, *Alan Lennox-Boyd: A Biography* (London, 1999), p.128.
[26] Lord Chandos, *The Memoirs of Lord Chandos, Oliver Lyttelton* (London, 1962), p.408.
[27] Ibid, p.411.

too.[28] The 1955 Conference for Malaya had also ended well; Lennox-Boyd told his Cabinet colleagues that he had 'no doubt that the Malayan Delegation has returned to the Federation with feelings of genuine cordiality towards Her Majesty's Government and the British people' and then to prove his point read out a letter from the Malay Chief Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman, who enthused that the Conference had 'laid down a most excellent basis for the continued improvement of relations' between the United Kingdom and Malaya.[29]

Between 1953 and 1965 constitutional conferences were held for almost all British colonial territories, exceptions being made for those which were no doubt considered just too small such as St Helena or, in the case of Aden before 1964, just too awkward. In the latter case, the idea of a constitutional conference in London 1961/62 was rejected by the British Cabinet's Colonial Policy Committee on the basis that there were no reasonable grounds for believing that a settlement along the lines desired by the British could be achieved.[30] It is also the case that although constitutional conferences were held with territorial leaders during the 1950s, none took place during that decade for Britain's east and central African territories. Here, any constitutional advance was implemented through the British or colonial governments simply enacting change. The Lyttleton and Lennox-Boyd Constitutions for Kenya in 1954 and 1957 and the Benson Constitution for Northern Rhodesia in 1958 are examples of constitutions being imposed on colonies without prior discussions at a round-table conference.[31] That is not to say that consultation did not take place with local leaders. It did. Such consultations, however, were almost always held with each group separately, and when attempts were made to convene all groups together, the occasions lacked the formality, prestige and status of the later London conferences. East and central Africa were not considered ripe enough for a round-table conference, which would be likely only to end in failure.[32] British politicians simply did not want to take the risk that a constitutional conference, with all the publicity and exposure that such an event would inevitably generate, would break down. Not only would that have been damaging to the British and colonial governments' reputations, but there would also have been no imperative to

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[28] Mackintosh, *Nigerian Government*, pp.29-31.
[29] Stockwell (ed.), *BDEEP, Malaya*, Part 3, Cabinet memorandum by Lennox-Boyd, 21.02.56, document 405.
[30] Hyam & Louis (eds.), *BDEEP,* Series A, Volume 4, *The Conservative Government and the End of Empire, 1957-1964,* Part 1, Minutes of CPC meeting, 05.05.61, document 201.
[31] Robert Maxon, *Britain and Kenya's Constitutions, 1950-1960* (New York, 2011), pp.79, 173.
[32] TNA, CO822/1200, Telegram from Baring to Munster, 11.03.54.

convene a formal conference for territories in that region of Africa in the 1950's, where, as shown in the Introduction, harder methods of control were still employed.

As can be seen from Appendix 1, whilst the incidence of conferences under each of the colonial secretaries between 1955 and 1964 was high, the number held during the tenure of Iain Macleod was exceptional. Of the 22 calendar months between January 1960 and October 1961, only five were without conferences. Macleod's biographer, Robert Shepherd, notes how conferences were sometimes held simultaneously in London, each one chaired by Macleod, and how the Colonial Secretary 'realized that the constitutional conference had to be his main instrument if he was to achieve relatively peaceful decolonization'.[33] Pressures for self-government and independence were particularly intense whilst Macleod was colonial secretary and, as seen in the Introduction, the use of hard measures of governing, such as through states of emergencies and imprisonment, would have no longer been so feasible. But these factors alone do not explain Macleod's frequent use of the conference mechanism. After all, other methods were available, such as direct negotiation with a territory's nationalist leader (as, for example, Julius Nyerere had wanted) or the greater use of constitutional commissions which, as will be seen, were a popular earlier device.

Shepherd himself offers no explanation as to why Macleod favoured conferences, but it is easy to see why, in general terms, the Colonial Secretary felt predisposed towards conferences as a constitutional mechanism. As Bill Kirkman, former African correspondent of the *Times,* observed, 'Macleod was good with people'.[34] Confident of his own abilities and secure in his intellect, his former Cabinet position of Minister of Labour had also sharpened his skills around the negotiating table, where meetings with employers and trade union organisations had been commonplace.[35] Macleod, an expert bridge player, was also prepared to take risks if the reward seemed worth it. It was he who had tried to convince the Colonial Policy Committee that a London conference for Aden would be advantageous.[36] It was also highly likely that Macleod was buoyed by his success at, and the widespread acclamation he received after, the Kenya conference in the early part of 1960 - his first one. *The Times*, for example, called the settlement reached at Lancaster House 'a remarkable achievement' for Macleod, marvelling at how the new colonial

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[33] Shepherd, *Macleod,* pp.165-167.
[34] Interview with Bill Kirkman, 11.07.2019.
[35] Shepherd, *Macleod,* pp. 122-142.
[36] Hyam & Louis (eds.), *BDEEP,* Series A, Volume 4, *The Conservative Government and the End of Empire, 1957-1964,* Part 1, Memorandum by Macleod to CPC, 03.05.61, document 200.

secretary had acquainted himself so quickly and thoroughly with the complexities of Kenya, and noting Macleod's 'patience and skill in the role of mediator' which were 'exemplary'.[37] Macmillan too was effusive in his praise of Macleod's Kenyan conference success, sending him an acclamatory letter in which he conveyed his 'warmest congratulations', wrote of his deep gratitude, and said how the conference was a 'triumph of patience, imagination and perseverance'.[38] It would be extraordinary if Macleod had not been anything other than deeply encouraged by all this praise.

A particular attraction of conferences for Macleod was that once agreement had been reached, attending parties could be expected to 'sell' the outcome to their supporters. The Colonial Secretary was candid about this at the Northern Rhodesian conference of 1961, telling the delegation leaders that 'few people got all they wanted at conferences but if he offered them something which they could recognise as a substantial advance it would be a task of leadership for them to sell it to their supporters'.[39] In contrast to the Governor-imposed constitutions of the 1950s, the British and colonial authorities would not then have to do the hard work of emphasising a scheme's virtues; conference delegates who had given their public backing to the proposals were hardly likely to then disavow them, at least for the immediate future.

For completeness, it should be noted that not all constitutional advance in the African case study territories between 1960 and 1964 was done through the mechanism of conference. In two cases, Northern Rhodesia and Tanganyika, advances were made without a conference. As far as the first was concerned, in 1963 agreement was reached between the territory's Governor and the main political parties on internal self-government and universal adult suffrage. A conference was not considered necessary as the political parties in Northern Rhodesia had reached agreement on almost all substantial issues, the settlement reached was in line with British thinking, which by now had conceded an early independence and was concerned primarily with political stability,[40] and a 'full-dress' conference held the prospect of parties 're-digging in their heels'.[41] Tanganyika also managed largely to settle the form of responsible government which was to take effect in

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[37] *The Times*, 22.02.60, p.11.
[38] TNA, PREM11/3030, Letter from Macmillan to Macleod, 21.02.60.
[39] TNA, CO1015/2276, Note of a meeting between Macleod, Perth, Kaunda, Nkumbula and others, 08.02.61.
[40] TNA, DO183/63, Letter from Hone to Butler, 05.08.63.
[41] TNA, DO183/63, Memorandum from S.P. Whitley (CAO) to Tenant and Lord, 13.08.63.

October 1960 by way of private meetings between Macleod and Nyerere.[42] Such one-to-one meetings were the result of Nyerere's dislike of the idea of a London conference. Leslie Monson, an Assistant Under Secretary of State with responsibility for east Africa remarked to his Colonial Office colleague J. C. Morgan that: 'Mr Nyerere is allergic to conferences and thinks the Lancaster House technique a lot of Ballyhoo. We had some difficulty in getting him to accept a conference at Dar es Salaam.'[43] It would be fascinating to learn exactly why Nyerere thought so little of the conference mechanism, but no further insights here have been found. It would not, however, be unreasonable to assume that the astute African leader saw the London conferences for what they often were: a device used by the British to control and influence the decolonisation process.

Commissions also have a long history in Britain and can be traced back, as Richard Chapman has noted, to the Domesday Book of the eleventh century, when William I appointed the first royal commissioners to ascertain land ownership and its value for taxation.[44] Commissions have variously been titled 'royal commissions', 'commissions', 'committees', or 'working parties'. Yet as Chapman also notes, the main reason for the different formal titles is usually down to matters of prestige and status (although royal commissions are generally given certain special powers, such as to send for papers or witnesses).[45] Commissions can serve various purposes - those that inquire, those to negotiate, those to legislate, those to administer, and those to scrutinise and control.[46] Commissions are not unique to Britain. They have been used in countries with a former British nexus (especially the United States, Australia, and New Zealand) but also in countries without any British legal tradition, such as Sweden, France, Germany,[47] and the Netherlands.[48]

Commissions were used by the British Government for its colonies long before the wind of change era. As far back as 1865, for example, the Storks Commission was appointed to look

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[42] TNA, CAB134/1559, Memorandum from Macleod to Colonial Policy Committee, 25.04.60.

[43] TNA, CO822/2413, Memorandum from Monson to Morgan, 23.01.61. Because Nyerere enjoyed almost unrivalled power in Tanganyika, it would of course have been easier for him to take this line.

[44] Richard Chapman, 'Commissions in Policy Making', in Richard Chapman (ed.), *The Role of Commissions in Policy Making* (London, 1973), p. 184.

[45] Ibid, p.174.

[46] Wheare, *Government by Committee,* p.1.

[47] Monica Kirya, 'Performing "good governance": Commissions of Inquiry and the Fight Against Corruption in Uganda', (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Warwick, 2011), pp.185-191.

[48] Ann Laura Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* (Princeton, 2010).

into colonial resistance in Jamaica.[49] Africa was no exception to commissions, and ones which examined constitutional issues included the Watson Commission of the Gold Coast which was set up following the Accra riots of 1948 and which recommended that a new and more representative constitution should be drafted by an all-African committee.[50] Turning to the territories which are the subject of this thesis, the Hilton-Young Commission of 1927-1929 was set up to look at the possibility of a federation between the colonies of Tanganyika, Kenya, Uganda, Northern Rhodesia, Southern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. Its recommendations of a federation of the last three territories came to nothing but the idea of a central African federation did not go away and some ten years later, the Bledisloe Commission was established to examine the desirability and feasibility of this smaller association.[51] These earlier prestigious commissions were inevitably chaired by establishment figures. Thus Aitken Watson was a QC, and Edward Hilton-Young and Lord Bledisloe were both barristers and Conservative Party politicians, the first educated at Cambridge, the second at Oxford.

Constitutional commissions were only advisory to the colonial or British government. This would have been an attractive feature to the latter, who were thus free, at least constitutionally, to adopt the parts of any report they liked, and to ignore those which they did not. Moreover, commissions, although they carried the risk of unpredictability, had become a tried and tested way for the British to resolve thorny issues. In her study of Dutch colonial commissions into social problems in the nineteenth century, Ann Laura Stoler notes how commissions generally offered 'few surprises', employing certain conventions and techniques.[52] This was no less so in relation to the period under this study. The commission mechanism presented a ready-made formula for responding to an awkward problem. As seen above, and as will be shown in Chapter Three, putting an establishment figure as chairman acted as the cornerstone. It is easy to see why the Macmillan Government grasped at the commission mechanism in times of need. Yet, having said that, not all of the case study territories were considered right for a commission. The idea had been floated of establishing a constitutional commission before the first Kenyan conference met in 1960 which would make recommendations for constitutional change.

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[49] Ronald Hyam, *Britain's Imperial Century, 1815-1914: A study of Empire and Expansion* (Basingstoke, 1993), p.150.
[50] Richard Rathbone*, Nkrumah and the Chiefs: The Politics of Chieftancy in Ghana 1951-60* (Oxford, 2000), pp.20 – 21.
[51] Alois Mlambo, *A History of Zimbabwe* (New York, 2014), pp.120-121.
[52] Stoler, *Archival Grain*, p.125.

Lennox-Boyd opposed it.[53] Commissions might have been suitable for other African colonies, but the colonial and British governments considered a commission too hazardous for Kenya.[54] It was thought that such a body might make recommendations which had little relation to the 'hard facts' of the colony.[55] Constitutional commissions were also to have a limited shelf life in the African colonial context. As will also be seen later on in the thesis, by late 1962, the use of commissions to deal with situations had fallen out of favour. They had become too unpredictable. The then Colonial Secretary, Reginald Maudling, announced that no further commissions should be set up without his personal authority.[56]

Chapters Two and Three examine the specific objectives of each of the reviewed commissions and conferences, but it is useful to trail at this stage that there was no uniformly applied commission and conference blueprint or game plan by the British Government. As seen in the Introduction, by 1960 the use of force in colonial control was no longer attractive but there was never an articulated decision by British ministers to ramp up the use of conferences and commissions at the expense of harder measures. Rather, conferences and commissions amounted to a series of initiatives for each territory. Yet, as the thesis will show, they shared many of the same characteristics, and emerged as the British 'way of doing things' in the final days of the African empire. The need to use constitutional mechanisms for outcomes seemed ingrained in British colonial policy thinking in the very early 1960s. A small example of this is that when the Congo troubles erupted, the Colonial Office was aghast that the Belgian Government had rushed into giving the African territory independence without first having instituted a constitutional commission.[57]

In his biography of Macmillan in 1989, Alistair Horne observed how, as far as Africa was concerned, it looked as though the Conservative administration at the beginning of the 1960s was rapidly becoming 'a government of White paper and Royal Commission'.[58] Yet it is striking from the newspapers, archives, biographies and other primary literature of the period how little attention was in fact given as to why such a plethora of commissions and conferences were set up for colonial matters in such a short space of time. It seemed to be

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[53] TNA, CO822/1343, Telegram from Lennox-Boyd to Baring, 28.04.59.
[54] TNA, CO822/2354, Telegram from Coutts to Renison, 14.02.60.
[55] TNA, CO822/1343, Note from Perth to Macleod, 28.04.59.
[56] TNA, CO1048/47, Letter from Campbell to Latimer, 09.11.62
[57] TNA, CO822/2282, Note from Monson to Pearson, 02.03.61. Chapter Six discusses this further.
[58] Alistair Horne, *Macmillan 1967-1986* (London, 1989), p.179.

accepted by politicians, by domestic audiences and by those in Africa that conferences and commissions were simply an appropriate response to the tackling of colonial issues. Bill Kirkman, looking back at the early 1960s, has reminisced, for example, at how colonial conferences appeared at the time to be 'a natural way of doing things'.[59] And as far as African politicians were concerned, as will be seen later, they also would have little reason to question the motives of conferences and commissions, given the route to an increased power and influence which these events offered.

It has been seen, then, that the mechanisms of constitutional conferences and commissions would have held some attractions for the British and colonial governments in the early 1960s. The second part of this chapter will look at why, precisely, the African commissions and conferences were held.

Part Two: Why Commissions were held

The constitutional commissions under review each had different official purposes. Monckton was set up to look into the future of the Central African Federation, a structure which since 1953 had comprised Northern Rhodesia, Southern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, and which from its inception had been very unpopular with many Africans. The Wild, Ramage, Blood, Swaziland, and Basutoland commissions were established to make recommendations on constitutional advance. Munster looked at the question of whether Uganda should be a federal or a unitary state, and the Kenya Coastal Strip, Kenya Northern Frontier, and Molson commissions were instituted to help solve territorial disputes between different ethnic groups within the same country. Appendix 2 contains more detailed information about the African case-study commissions, including their terms of reference and those who served on them. Why was it, exactly, that the British Government instituted the case study commissions? What lay behind their establishment? As the Introduction to this thesis noted, a few scholars have suggested motives for individual African commissions, but there has been nothing like a comprehensive examination of the area. The next section looks at each of the commissions and identifies the various drivers behind them. As will be seen, whilst there were different motives for setting up the commissions, it will be argued that the desire of the British and colonial governments to manage and control was the key reason.

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[59] Interview with Bill Kirkman, 11.07.2019.

The motivation of Macmillan in setting up the **Monckton Commission** has attracted controversy among historians. One line of thought holds that it had been Macmillan's intention to dismantle the Central African Federation all along, and that the Monckton Commission was his instrument for doing so. As flagged briefly in the literature review in the Introduction, Andrew Roberts has argued that although the Commission was not supposed to consider secession, Monckton, who himself considered the Federation 'an error', 'knew what the British Government expected of him'.[60] Simon Ball continues with much the same theme, contending that Macmillan 'was confident that the commission would draw up a case for the termination of the federation' and that in its Report, the Commission 'wreaked the damage Macmillan had planned'.[61] Ronald Hyam too has argued that '[t]he Commission's Report vigorously sounded the death-knell of the Federation, as Macmillan had no doubt intended'.[62] Whilst none of the authors use the resource, they might also have referred to a recorded message from Commission member Elspeth Huxley. In a response to an enterprising A level student's enquiry, Huxley had told the student in 1996 that she did on reflection have a general impression that the commissioners were there to 'drive a nail into the coffin' of the Federation, and that Monckton was 'oily' and 'a politician'.[63]

Yet it is very difficult to reconcile this point of view with the many statements of senior and prime-ministerial support for the Federation, and to the genuine surprise such ministers had at the Report's recommendation of a limited right of territorial secession. Macmillan, for example, recorded in his memoirs that he had been determined 'not merely as a matter of policy but of honour' to do all that was possible to support the continuance of the Federation'.[64] No doubt the former British Prime Minister would have been keen to portray himself in a favourable light, but Macmillan's words are also consistent with the records of the time. The Prime Minister told the CAF Parliament that he considered the purpose of the Commission as maintaining 'the steady forward progress of the Federation',[65] and in a surprisingly frank statement to the Labour Party leader Hugh Gaitskell he said that it might turn out for the best if the forthcoming constitutional review of the CAF (and presumably

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[60] Roberts, *Eminent Churchillians,* p.282-3.
[61] Ball, *The Guardsmen,* p.349.
[62] Ronald Hyam, *Britain's Declining Empire: The Road to Decolonisation 1918-1968* (Cambridge, 2006), p.285.
[63] Papers of Elspeth Huxley, Bodleian Library Oxford, MSS. Afr. 2332, Folder 2/5, Tape Recording 1996.
[64] Harold Macmillan, *At the End of the Day 1961-1963* (London, 1973).
[65] TNA, DO35/7502, Note of meeting between Macmillan and the Federal Parliament, 19.01.60.

therefore the Commission) sought to 'engineer very little immediate change'.[66] Macleod too in late 1959 saw the Federation as 'the best, indeed the only solution' for the three territories and expressed hope to Macmillan that the Monckton Commission would come up with 'imaginative proposals' so that after the 1960 Review Conference there would be a 'true period of stability' during which 'we must try by every means in our power to see that federation works'.[67] Secession of a territory, in particular, was seen by senior British Ministers as being out of the question. Macmillan and Home, for example, both feared that a commission made up of independent people such as academics and Lords might 'recommend something totally unsuitable, e.g. that Nyasaland ought to secede'.[68]

Moreover, it is hard to see why Macmillan would have wanted to dismantle the Federation. A tenet of British policy at the time, endorsed by Macmillan and other Cabinet members in March 1960, was of an 'orderly and less precipitate progress' to independence which was 'judged desirable' in Central Africa.[69] Breaking up the Federation would have threatened this stability, with the unwanted consequence of Southern Rhodesia aligning itself with South Africa, and the possibility of bloodshed between European and African nationalists in Northern Rhodesia. As Macleod told Bill Kirkman in a lengthy interview in 1967, at the time of the Commission's appointment, the 'effective decision' had not yet been taken to increase the speed for independence of African countries,[70] the emphasis still being on 'partnership' and 'multi racialism' in the Federation. Macmillan's 'Wind of Change' speech in February 1960 was very much consistent with this line, with the Prime Minister emphasising how, in countries with white and African populations, the British aim was 'to find means by which the community can become more of a community'.[71]

Hyam's remark, mentioned above, is a fleeting one, the author adducing nothing further to support his claim, and Roberts cites only an unreferenced claim that it was newspaper editor's David Astor's belief that Monckton thought the Federation was 'wrong'. Ball uses two references to support his conspiracy argument. The first is a document in which

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[66] TNA, PREM5/251, Note of meeting between Macmillan and Gaitskell and others, 04.06.59. Under the terms of the CAF's constitution, the British and CAF governments were obliged to carry out such a review by October 1960.
[67] TNA, PREM11/3075, Macleod to Macmillan, 03.12.59.
[68] TNA, PREM5/251, Note of meeting between Macmillan and Home. Whilst Nyasaland's participation was not seen as particularly important to the economic well-being of the Federation, its secession would inevitably prompt similar demands by African nationalists in Northern Rhodesia.
[69] TNA, CAB129/100, Future Policy Study, 1960-1970, paragraph 48.
[70] Kirkman interview with Macleod 29.12.69, Bodleian Library Oxford, MSS Afr. S.2179, p.42.
[71] Hyam & Louis (eds.), *BDEEP,* Series A, Volume 4, *The Conservative Government and the End of Empire, 1957-1964,* Part 1, Wind of Change speech, document 32.

Macmillan tells his Principal Private Secretary Tim Bligh on 22 September 1960 that 'The Monckton Report… has done exactly what we all expected'.[72] Ball, however, has taken the Prime Minister's words here out of context. The precise content of the memorandum concerned Welensky's bad faith allegations against Macmillan over the Commission's terms of reference. Macmillan, obviously bruised, thought the Federal Prime Minister's reaction excessive, telling Bligh that the Report, taken as a whole, argued positively for the Federation. The exact words used by the Prime Minister were: 'broadly speaking the Monckton Commission has done exactly what we all expected': that is to say, the Report backed the continuance of the Federation. Instead of Macmillan being secretly pleased that the Monckton report had caused controversy, the Prime Minister had therefore been reflecting on how the Report lent *support* to the Federation and how unjust Welensky's criticism was. The 'broadly speaking' caveat was, surely, a reference to the problematic recommendation that a territory be given a limited right of secession. The second source used by Ball to support his line of thought is a memorandum from Bligh to Macmillan of 3 August 1960.[73] That communication deals with Macleod's assurance to Hastings Banda that should the Monckton Commission recommend something inconsistent with the constitutional principles reached at the recent Nyasaland conference, then the British Government would not use that Report as a reason to avoid what had just been agreed. It is very difficult to see how this could be used in support of Macmillan planning to 'wreak damage' on the Federation, as Ball claims.

As far as Huxley's statement is concerned, there is an obvious danger that, having seen subsequently the demise of the Federation less than four years after the Commission met, she has viewed the events teleologically, and accorded the British Government with an incorrect motive. As Huxley herself said to the researcher in 1996, after thirty-five years her memories here were 'vague'.[74] Certainly her subsequent description of Monckton as 'oily' and 'a politician' do not agree with her contemporaneous remarks, Huxley telling her husband in February 1960 that 'Lord Monckton of course is the perfect chairman, so very unassuming and gentle and he would calm down an angry buffalo.'[75]

It does, however, seem clear that the British Government expected the Monckton Commission to consider the right of one of the Federation's territories to secede, despite

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[72] TNA, PREM11/3078.
[73] Ibid.
[74] Huxley Papers, MSS. Afr. S.2332, Folder 2/5, Tape Recording, 1996.
[75] Huxley Papers, MSS. Afr. S.2154, Box 9, File 5. Letter from Elspeth Huxley to G. Huxley, 17.02.60.

Macmillan having given Roy Welensky, the Prime Minister of CAF, that this would not be the case.[76] In seeking to enlist Labour Party support for a commission, Macmillan, for example, indicated to Gaitskell that in practice a commission would be free to consider the secession issue, telling him that 'in [Macmillan's] experience, many parliamentary Commissions had felt able to say, whether or not a matter lay strictly within their terms of reference, that they thought Parliament might be interested in their observations.'[77] Yet at the same time it seems highly unlikely that Macmillan had actually wanted Monckton to make a positive recommendation of secession, given his views on the importance of maintaining the CAF, noted earlier. For this reason, the Prime Minister's emotional claim to Welensky after a dinner that he had been 'betrayed' by Monckton has credibility.[78] Certainly the Prime Minister's Cabinet colleagues were surprised by the actual report recommendation when it was published. Lord Home, for example, told Welensky that he 'certainly did not foresee that the Commission would plump for something of this kind',[79] and mentioned to Lord Birkenhead too that whilst he appreciated that the Commission would listen to evidence on secession, he had taken the view that they were not entitled to recommend it.[80] Duncan Sandys also recorded how the British Cabinet had been taken by surprise at the interpretation of the terms of reference.[81] The arrogance, and ultimately the flaw, was in the assumption by Macmillan that the Commission could be so managed (through terms of reference, and choice of chair and members) that it would not actually recommend secession. As discussed, however, that is quite a different matter from Macmillan positively wanting to use the Monckton Commission to dismantle the CAF. And of this, there is no convincing evidence. If a break-up of the CAF was not the reason for the establishment of the Monckton Commission what, then, were the motives of the British Government?

Domestic considerations were one important factor. Macmillan's Government wanted to 'inform and calm' British moderate opinion, and to get the Labour Party onside before the Central African Federation (CAF) became a party issue. Macmillan's concern, as mentioned earlier, was that the CAF might dissolve, which in turn would have consequences not just for the three territories of the Federation but elsewhere in British colonial Africa.[82] A

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[76] TNA, PREM5/253, Telegram from Macmillan to Welensky, 26.11.59.
[77] TNA, PREM5/253, Note of meeting, 16.11.59.
[78] Ibid, p.848.
[79] TNA, DO35/7502, Telegram from Home to Welensky, 11.10.60.
[80] Lord Birkenhead, *Walter Monckton* (London, 1969), p.343.
[81] J.R.T.Wood, *The Welensky Papers* (Durban, 1993), p.829.
[82] TNA, CAB128/33/19, Cabinet Minutes, 17.03.59.

commission, the Prime Minister believed, could help shore up the experiment by creating a favourable climate of opinion towards the Federation.[83] Sections of the British Press and Parliament had been critical of British and Federal government policy in the Federation following recent events there, notably the declaration of a state of emergency in Nyasaland, and the introduction of emergency public order legislation in Southern Rhodesia.[84] Africans in the Federation were seen increasingly as 'the underdogs'.[85] There was anxiety too about increasing criticism of the Federation from sections of the Church.[86] The Church of Scotland, which had developed strong links with Nyasaland, had been particularly condemnatory of recent events in that territory,[87] declaring at its General Assembly in May 1959 that in Nyasaland there should be a transfer of power to the African people.[88] A commission, Lord Perth told the Prime Minister of the Federation, Roy Welensky, would help retain Church opinion in Britain.[89]

Importantly, Macmillan also thought that the setting up of a commission would take the CAF out of the forthcoming October 1959 general election, preventing the Labour Party from using the Federation as a campaigning issue.[90] Senior ministers believed that the Labour Party was on the verge of demanding that the CAF be dissolved and that locking the party into joint participation on a commission was a way of preventing that. It was also not lost on Lennox-Boyd that if a commission were appointed before the election, then it would be the present (Conservative) Government which would choose and appoint the commissioners.[91] Lord Home, Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations, also told Welensky that he saw such a commission as 'insurance' if Labour got into power,[92] presumably meaning that in such event a Labour administration would feel bound to support the findings of a commission which, Home had assumed, would be pro-Federation in outlook. Finally, the British Government also hoped that the Monckton Commission would help ease African nationalist pressures in the CAF. In particular, it wanted to dampen

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[83] TNA, PREM5/252 Macmillan to Monckton, 22.08.59; PREM5/253, Macmillan to Welensky, 04.11.59.
[84] Roy Welensky, *4000 days: The Life and Death of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland* (London, 1964), p.137; TNA, DO35/7576, Shannon to Metcalf, 15.07.59.
[85] TNA, DO35/7576, Shannon to Metcalf, 15.07.59.
[86] John McCracken, 'Missionaries and Nationalists. Scotland and the 1959 State of Emergency in Malawi' in A. Adogame and A. Lawrence (eds.) *Africa in Scotland, Scotland in Africa: Historical Legacies and Contemporary Hybridities* (Leiden, 2014), p.61.
[87] TNA, CAB128/33/19, Cabinet Minutes, 23.03.59.
[88] TNA, CAB128/33/20, Cabinet Minutes, 25.03.59.
[89] Welensky, *4000 days,* p.138. Perth was Minister of State at the Colonial Office.
[90] TNA, DO35/7502, Home to Welensky, 01.04.59; CAB128/33/19, Cabinet Minutes, 23.03.59.
[91] TNA, PREM5/251, Lennox-Boyd to Governors of Nyasland and Northern Rhodesia, 06.04.59.
[92] Welensky, *4000 Days*, p.138.

calls in Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia for the dissolution of the Federation, and wanted a commission to report that the Federation was a 'good and right conception', and one which was moving in the right direction.[93]

Common to each of these reasons for the establishment of the Monckton Commission was a desire on the part of the British Government to make use of the commission mechanism to provide it with a 'breathing space'. Domestic and nationalist pressures would, it was hoped, abate while the commission got underway, and at the same time the commission offered the prospect of a report which would also assist in alleviating tensions. This is a recurrent reason behind the other African commissions, albeit that in relation to the others, the pressures were solely African nationalist or regionalist, rather than domestic too. Frank Furedi, as mentioned briefly in the literature review in the Introduction, has shown how states of emergencies in Britain's colonies after the Second World War were instituted to give the British Government 'breathing spaces'. Through adopting a range of coercive powers, while maintaining the pretence of normal civil rule, states of emergencies, the author argues, were attempts by the British Government to regain the initiative - 'pre-planned attempts at the political management of anti-colonial forces', as Furedi calls them.[94] Almost all of the African commissions under review were, likewise, attempts by the British and colonial governments to seize the initiative and to attempt to control situations before matters got out of hand.

The genesis of the **Wild Committee** can be found in the British and colonial governments' wish to delay further constitutional reform in Uganda on account of a bruising encounter with the Kabaka of Buganda (described further below), and also changes which took place in 1954 to Uganda's legislative and executive councils. Weary of further change and unrest, Uganda's Governor, Sir Andrew Cohen, told the territory's legislative council that it would be unwise to rush into further reform and that some important issues would first have to be studied, such as voting qualifications. In the period between 1958 and 1961 'appropriate machinery' would therefore be set up for such a discussion and study.[95] In this way, it was the colonial government which would thus control the constitutional agenda and a commission or its like would be the instrument used to assist.

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[93] TNA, DO35/7502, Telegram Home to Welensky, 26.03.59. Monckton Papers, Bodleian, Letter from Home to Monckton, 23.08.59.
[94] Furedi, 'Creating a Breathing Space', pp.90-94.
[95] TNA, CO822/900. Intel from Foreign Office, 06.06.55;TNA, CO822/900, Note by Mary Fisher of the Colonial Office, 25.03.55.

The **Kenya Coastal Strip Commission** was set up so that the British Government could manage more pro-actively this volatile region, which encompassed some 200 miles of the Kenyan coast, including the important city of Mombasa. The land, administered by the British, was held by the Sultan of Zanzibar and contained a sizeable minority Arab population, some of whom were vehemently opposed to becoming a part of Kenya on independence. Macleod thought that a commission would 'get the facts out there to destroy European and African pipe dreams' of the region's secession from Kenya, and that it would also seize any initiative from the Kenyan Government.[96]

The desire for a breathing space could be precipitated by the need to adopt a face-saving mechanism to avoid an immediately awkward situation.[97] **The Lost Counties (Molson)** and **the Kenyan Northern Frontier commissions** were thus established to avoid constitutional conferences from ending in disagreement. The 'Lost Counties' comprised territories in Uganda taken by the kingdom of Buganda from the neighbouring kingdom of Bunyoro in the late nineteenth century. Bunyoro refused to accept the position, and the issue became an important one at the 1961 Ugandan Conference. Not being able to settle the issue at the conference and not wanting the latter to finish with bad blood, a commission to look into the issue offered the Colonial Secretary a comparatively easy way of dealing with this turbulent matter. Similarly, at the 1962 Kenyan Conference, agreement between the two main Kenyan political parties and the Northern Frontier delegation could not be reached. Many of the large numbers of ethnic Somalis in the Northern Frontier area wanted secession from Kenya. To avoid the imposition of a controversial outcome and to bring the conference to an end, Reginald Maudling announced at its conclusion that an independent commission would be appointed to ascertain public opinion in the area regarding its future.[98] Commissions had offered an escape route for the British Government.

A desire to buy time and to fashion an outcome to British liking can also be seen in relation to the two **High Commission territories of Basutoland and Swaziland**. Fearful of a motion to be introduced in Basutoland's National Council in September 1961 which called for negotiations to start for responsible government, the territory's Resident Commissioner suggested that as a pre-emptive measure a commission be set up to examine the 1960 constitution and propose changes. He thought it important for the colonial government to

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[96] TNA, CO822/2149, CO822/2149, Monson to Webber, 09.05.61; extract from a meeting with the East African Governors, 16.06.61.
[97] Clokie and Robinson's 'fifth' classification, *Royal Commissions of Inquiry*, p.123.
[98] Great Britain, *Report of the Kenya Constitutional Conference, April 1962.* Cmnd.1700. (London, 1962), paragraphs 24 to 26.

take the initiative away from the territory's Paramount Chief to avoid unspecified 'unfortunate and disruptive consequences'. A commission, the Resident considered, would fit well with the British objectives of only gradual amendments to the constitution which would, in turn, avoid extremism.[99] Swaziland was different in the sense that the British concern was that not enough was being done to accommodate progressive voices and that Swaziland would be stuck in an archaic and divisive societal structure of chiefly and European rule. Once it became clear that the Swazis and Europeans were talking to each other about constitutional matters, the Resident Commissioner, Sir Brian Marwick, recommended that a committee with official members and representatives of the two racial groups be established without delay for the purposes of framing proposals for constitutional reform with at least some progressive features. Such a commission was thought necessary to avoid trouble further down the line.[100]

Taking control before matters got out of hand was also an important reason behind the **Munster Commission**, but here another factor also came into play: the wish to turn to experts. Richard Chapman has observed that sometimes commissions are appointed because a government needs experts to help develop its own ideas with a greater degree of rationality and coherence.[101] In Uganda there was a strong sense of the British Government not knowing quite what to do to settle the territory's festering issue of what sort of relationship the kingdom of Buganda should have with the rest of the territory. Macleod and his Cabinet colleagues were clear that Uganda should be kept as one territory, but were unclear as to whether a unitary or a federal system of government should operate and how any constitutional structure should hang together.[102] The kingdom of Buganda enjoyed a special status within Uganda. The British recognised its traditional monarch, the Kabaka, as ruler so long as he and the people of Buganda continued to 'co-operate loyally with Her Majesty's Government'. This agreement was respected by both sides until 1953 at which time Andrew Cohen, set out to reform the 'Lukiiko', the Bugandan parliament, and declared that Uganda would be developed as unitary state. The Kabaka, angered by this, was further antagonised by a suggestion in June of that year by Lennox-Boyd that a federation of British east African territories could not be ruled out, prompting

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[99] TNA, DO157/2, Letter from Chaplin to Latimer, 28.08.61.
[100] TNA, DO119/1409, Telegram from Marwick to Ward, 20.05.60.
[101] Chapman, *Policy Making*, p.184. See also the 'second' classification put forward by Clokie and Robinson, *Royal Commissions of Inquiry*, p.123. The authors argue that one set of circumstances behind the setting up of royal commissions has been 'to ascertain in a more or less "expert" fashion the best or most feasible solution of a problem the Government desires to tackle'.
[102] TNA, CO822/2262, CPC Minutes, 08.02.60.

fears that the kingdom would then be effectively governed by the European settlers of Kenya. The Kabaka demanded independence before being deported for his failure to co-operate with the British later that year. Following a state of emergency, and a settlement brokered by the Hancock Commission, an agreement was reached with the Lukiiko in 1955 under which Britain would continue to recognise the Kabaka as ruler. The truce was only temporary. The Wild Committee had been viewed by the Kabaka as a new threat to Buganda: an attempt by the British and Protectorate Government to strengthen the centre as a step towards a unitary government which would eschew Bugandan traditional values. Boycotts and intimidation followed. In response to this impasse, both London and the Governor saw that a solution had to be found to the problem of Buganda's relationship with the rest of the Protectorate.[103]

The British Government wanted to bring about gradual constitutional reforms to the whole of Uganda but also recognised that certain concessions would be necessary to accommodate the position of Buganda and, to a lesser extent, the three other kingdoms of Uganda. Yet it struggled to come up with a workable solution. In early 1960, Sir Hilton Poynton, Permanent Under-Secretary of State at the Colonial Office, told Macleod that he thought it wise to establish a commission to 'go into the whole political and constitutional problem of Uganda'.[104] The Ugandan Governor too could see merit in this idea.[105] By early February 1960, Macleod also was clearly attracted to the scheme, proposing to the Colonial Policy Committee (CPC) that a committee of enquiry which might take the form of a smaller version of the Monckton Commission be appointed to recommend a federal or unitary structure. The CPC agreed.[106] The British Government then set about finding experts to sit on a commission who could find a technical solution to the tricky issue of how Uganda might be kept as one, but without alienating Buganda.[107] By early October 1960 the potential for unrest had increased, with the Lukiiko having demanded independence from Britain with effect from 1st January 1961.[108] J.W. Stacpoole, a senior Colonial Office official, thought that this 'has changed the whole situation' and unless a commission were

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[103] D.A.Low, *Political Parties in Uganda 1949-62* (London, 1962), G.N. Uzoigwe, 'The Agreement States and the Making of Uganda: Buganda', in G.N. Uzoigwe (ed.), *Uganda: The Dilemma of Nationhood* (New York, 1982), pp.57- 93.
[104] TNA, CO822/2262, Memorandum from Poynton to Macleod, 15.01.60.
[105] TNA, FCO141/18293, Letter from Crawford to Macleod, 18.12.59.
[106] TNA, CAB134/1559, Colonial Policy Committee meeting 08.02.60, and Memorandum 04.02.60.
[107] There was no enthusiasm to give Buganda independence. See for example TNA, PREM11/4039, Letter from Macmillan to Lord Bridges, 15.11.60.
[108] *Uganda Argus,* 05.10.60, p.1; TNA,CO822/2276, Note from Stacpoole to Webber, 18.10.60.

appointed soon, then a worse atmosphere would prevail.[109] The disaster that this might bring on the region was highlighted by events in neighbouring Congo, made independent on 30 June 1960, and the declaration by the Katanga region of its secession from that territory on 11 July 1960. The British were concerned that the resulting chaos would give rise to a power vacuum which Russia would seek to exploit.[110] British Ministers began to worry that a Congo-style disintegration might happen in Uganda, and Macleod thought the position 'potentially explosive'.[111] Macmillan considered that failure of Britain's policies in Uganda would have a 'disastrous effect on Africa and indeed the world'- a reference to Cold War concerns and a loss of prestige for Britain.[112] A commission, the British Government hoped, would come up with a solution of safeguards to the rulers of Ugandan kingdoms, and in particular the Kabaka. This would in turn allow Uganda to progress constitutionally. Notably, there was also a belief in British and colonial governmental circles that proposals made by an independent body would be better received by the African population than proclamations by the British or colonial governments. British ministers thought that solutions put forward by a commission of distinguished experts would inspire confidence.[113] Macleod first had in mind that an eminent British judge might act as chairman, believing that there was great admiration in Uganda for the British judiciary.[114] The Kabaka in particular was thought to have particular respect for established British rank and position.[115] Yet whilst the desire and need for experts were an important reason for setting up the Munster Commission, that commission too was also established to temper the highly charged situation in Uganda, described above, and to bring the territory round to a constitutional solution acceptable to the British.

The Blood Commission was set up, in part, to calm the nationalist pressure and to enable the British Government to consider an appropriate way forward. For Zanzibar, Britain's policy aim was to produce a society which was non-racial in outlook, so as not to disturb the delicate balance between Arab and African interests.[116] To achieve this, constitutional advances could not be too rapid as such a move would not provide sufficient time for African educational and living standards to rise.[117] Towards the end of 1959, demands for

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[109] TNA, CO822/2276, Note from Stacpoole to Webber, 18.10.60.
[110] Hargreaves, *Decolonization,* p.209.
[111] TNA, PREM11/4039, Note from Macleod to Macmillan, 23.09.60.
[112] TNA, CO822/2276, Letter from Macmillan to Lord Bridges, 15.11.60.
[113] Ibid.
[114] TNA, CO822/2276, Letter from Macleod to Viscount Kilmuir, 15.08.60.
[115] TNA, CO822/2276, Note from Stacpoole to Webber, 18.10.60.
[116] TNA, CO822/1467, Brief for the Secretary of State, November 1959.
[117] Ibid.

constitutional progress intensified.[118] Zanzibar's political parties pointed to advances in

Tanganyika, Uganda, Somaliland, and Congo and wondered why Zanzibar had been left

behind.[119] It was not just the Zanzibar National Party (ZNP), which represented Arab

interests, that wished to proceed quickly. The African led Afro-Shirazi Party (ASP) had

traditionally been content to proceed at a slower pace, giving Africans time to catch up

with the Arab population in terms of educational standards. By the end of the year,

however, the ASP was under pressure from the Pan African Freedom Movement of East

and Central Africa (PAFMECA) to no longer 'go slow'.[120] Macleod, in a brief visit to Zanzibar

as part of a tour to East Africa in mid-December 1959, was struck by the 'strength of feeling

and hurt pride' in the Protectorate.[121] Zanzibar's Resident, Sir George Mooring, noted

(revealingly) that 'Commissions take time to accomplish their task; and their

recommendations have then to be considered by the government here and by Her

Majesty's Government before they can be implemented.' He, on the other hand, would be

expected 'to produce the rabbit out of the hat immediately'. This badly needed 'breathing

space' (the term used by Mooring) which the establishment a commission would provide

would also give moderate political leaders something with which to keep their followers in

check.[122] It would mean too that legislative council elections, scheduled to be held for July

1960, could be postponed as the Report's recommendations could not be implemented by

that time, further reducing short term political tensions.[123]

For Zanzibar, as was the case with Uganda, an important reason behind the commission

was that it was considered also that a set of proposals by an 'independent' person would

be better received than if it came from the colonial authorities. Mooring favoured 'a

substantial measure of responsible government', specifying precisely what he meant by

such a term.[124] Yet, significantly, he did not think it wise that either he or the British

Government frame the proposals. One of Mooring's stated reasons was that the

recommendations of a commission were more likely to command public support than if

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[118] Ayanay, *A History of Zanzibar,* pp.64-66.

[119] See the following TNA files: CO822/1467, Letter from Potter to Webber, 29.09.59; Note of meeting between Potter and Colonial Office officials, 19.11.59; Brief for the Secretary of State, November 1959; Telegram from Robertson to Webber, 04.12.59; CO822/2325, Letter from Mooring to Monson, 09.02.60.

[120] TNA, CO822/ 2325, Zanzibar Protectorate General Intelligence Committee Supplement to Monthly Report for January 1960.

[121] TNA, CO822/1467, Letter from Monson to Mooring, 01.01.60; CAB134/1559, Memorandum from Macleod to the Colonial Policy Committee, 15.03.60.

[122] TNA, CO822/2325, Letter from Mooring to Monson, 09.02.60.

[123] Ibid.

[124] Ibid.

they came from himself.[125] Macleod was attracted to this, telling the Colonial Policy Committee that '[v]iews expressed by an eminent authority who was not directly associated with the administration in the Protectorate would stand a far greater chance of acceptance if, as I would expect, they fell somewhere short of the many extreme demands of the politicians.'[126]

Only the **Ramage Commission** bucks this trend of commissions being set up to seize the initiative and to control situations. This commission was originally the idea in 1956 of Tanganyika's Governor, Sir Edward Twining, who seems to have been genuine enough in his desire for a committee of legislative council members to look at the best way of moving from a policy of multi-racialism to one of an African leadership. Perhaps, as Colin Baker has suggested, the Governor saw it as way of supporting and strengthening his views of multi-racialism as a moribund system, no doubt assuming that an independent fair-minded body would find against parity of representation.[127] More surprising is that the Colonial Office was happy enough to go along with the suggestion. But self-government in 1956 was still seen as a distant objective which the findings of a committee were hardly likely to influence, and nationalism was not the force it became by the end of the 1950s. Also, as we will see later, the Colonial Office had not at that time been hamstrung by the inconvenient recommendations of the Monckton and Wild commissions.

Different reasons, then, lay behind the establishment of the African commissions. Occasionally there was a genuine desire to seek expert input. Sometimes domestic considerations were important, and sometimes there was a desire on the part of the British Government to impose its own solutions through a body which would, it was hoped, be seen as impartial and influential. But as seen above, the key reason behind almost all of the commissions was to buy the British Government time, to hold off nationalist or regionalist pressures so that the British and colonial governments could find a breathing space during which they could plan their next moves. Time and time again the British Government used the device of a commission to pull the rug from under nationalist agendas, each time falling back on its well-trodden device of a commission to stall and to influence. One final observation, and returning to a theme mentioned in the first part of this chapter: it is striking from the archival papers that when British ministers, Colonial Office staff, and Governors discussed a commission solution to a colony's problems, the use of force in

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[125] Ibid.
[126] TNA, CAB134/1559, Memo from Macleod to the Colonial Policy Committee, 15.03.60.
[127] Baker, *Exit from Empire,* p.190.

terms of institutions of states of emergency or use of the military as an alternative to or even to complement the use of commissions, was not discussed. The emphasis was on constitutional means of holding British positions. For some of the commissions (the Molson one into the Lost Counties, for example) British military use was hardly a viable option, but for others, such as the Munster and Blood commissions, where the British were faced with nationalist and ethnic unrest and the consequent damage which this might inflict on the colony and ultimately British prestige and reputation, talk of the use of force was distinctly absent. The matter is returned to later in relation to conferences.

Part Three: Why conferences were held

Other than brief references to individual African conferences having been set up by the British Government for 'collateral motives' (and as mentioned in the Introduction), the reasons as to why the African conferences were instituted has received scant coverage in the secondary literature, something this part of the chapter seeks to redress. As will be seen below, it is argued that the key impulse behind the setting up of the African commissions - the desire by the British Government to manage and control, to stave off nationalist pressures and to give itself a breathing space - also lay behind the announcements of many of the African constitutional conferences. As with the constitutional commissions, this feature for conferences comes through strongly, yet it is only by examining so many that one can be truly confident of this clear pattern.

The constitutional conferences of this thesis can be grouped into those which agreed a measure of constitutional advance, and those which sought to deal with final matters which needed to be addressed before independence. Of the 16 conferences under review, four were 'independence' conferences, the remainder deciding only on interim stages of constitutional advance. It is also useful to note once more that the outcomes of constitutional conferences were not binding on the British Government. As was the case with commissions, they too were held to 'advise' the colonial secretary. But of course if a substantial level of agreement was reached between the key delegates and the British Government, the latter had every incentive to give lawful effect to the agreement reached. To do otherwise, would have been viewed as a betrayal by the African delegates, and would have damaged Britain's reputation.

Sometimes there were technical reasons which made it expedient to set up a conference. This is a feature of the independence conferences for Kenya, Northern Rhodesia and

Uganda, where time-consuming and sometimes awkward post-independence issues could be dealt with under the one roof. On one occasion an African conference was also constitutionally unavoidable: the British Government was committed some years in advance to hold a review conference for the CAF under the terms of the Federation's constitution.

What of influences from British domestic opinion? Might these have prompted the institution of any of the African conferences under review? It has been argued by both David Percox and Gardner Thompson that the first Kenya Conference was held because of pressure from British domestic opinion after the Hola camp brutalities where, in early March 1959, 11 African inmates were clubbed to death by guards. Percox considers that the Conference was intended to be 'a domestic and international political bridge-building exercise in the wake of Hola'.[128] Thompson argues that in proposing the conference, it was 'blood on the ground… which alerted the British authorities to the absolute practical need to change gear'.[129] The timing of the Hola incident, just weeks before Lennox-Boyd made his conference announcement, is suggestive of a link between the two events and, as already argued, in the fallout from Hola the British Government did turn to softer measures of control, such as constitutional conferences. Yet Colonial Office papers from the time carry no convincing evidence to indicate that the Kenya Conference was in any way linked directly to Hola (and indeed Percox and Thompson cite none). Thompson refers to a Cabinet meeting at which Macmillan and others were shocked by the events, but that meeting took place in June 1959, well after the Conference had been announced.[130]

As was the case with the constitutional commissions, by far the most common reason for holding the conferences was an attempt by the British to grasp an opportunity to dampen pressures and in so doing plot a constitutional and political course more to their liking. This is so for those conferences where the promise of one was made in the hope that this would calm pressure for independence from African nationalist politicians, and also for the first Kenya one where the goal was not so much to stave off nationalist pressure, but to encourage political moderation. Cloaked as bona fide invitations to listen and to consider

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[128] David Percox, *Britain, Kenya and the Cold War (*London, 2004)**, p.152.

[129] Gardner Thompson, *African Democracy: Its Origins and Development in Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania* (Oxford, 2015), p.105.

[130] Ibid, p.106. TNA, CAB128/33, Conclusions of a Meeting of Cabinet, 11.06.59. See also Philip Murphy, *Alan Lennox-Boyd*, pp.199-216, which shows that the pressure on the British Government over Hola from both the Labour Party and the Conservative Party's own backbenchers came in June and July 1959.

the views of delegates, the conference mechanism was instead used as a device by the British Government to assert or re-assert its influence.

Tempering nationalist pressure was the driver behind the decision of the British Government to hold conferences in Kenya (second conference), Nyasaland (both conferences), Northern Rhodesia (first conference), Uganda (first conference), Swaziland, Somaliland, Basutoland, Zanzibar (first conference) and Tanganyika. It is worth spending some time looking at each of these, for each one follows a pattern of the British Government agreeing to a conference in circumstances where it had general aspirations as to the end product of such events. These goals were often no more, initially, than a vague hope about using conferences to better manage a territory's affairs, bring stability, or simply to encourage moderation and stall extremism. Once it had been accepted that a conference would need to be held, work then began on specific objectives. That is the subject of Chapter Two.

Robert Maxon sees the **second Kenya conference** as having been organised by Macleod to resolve the colony's 'special problems', notably the protection of minority rights, the question of the coastal strip, and the future of the civil service. Macleod was also concerned that the three main ethnic groups were not representative in government.[131] Whilst these matters featured, pressure from the Kenya African National Union (KANU) was the initial force behind the conference. In April 1961, buoyed by the forthcoming independence of Tanganyika, the leading party official Tom Mboya wrote to Macleod telling him that the arrangements for constitutional advance agreed at the first Lancaster House conference were now out of date.[132] KANU had refused to serve in a government until Jomo Kenyatta was released from detention, and by June 1961 the party were pressing for a constitutional conference as a means of achieving further progress.[133] Macleod's attitude in the summer of 1961 to a conference was ambivalent. In April of that year, mindful of statements he had made to the House of Commons, the Colonial Secretary had told Kenya's Governor Renison that the present constitution should not be dismantled before it had had time to work.[134] Yet at the same time Macleod saw how a conference could be used to better manage matters for Kenya, telling Lord Perth, Renison and KADU's Ronald Ngala (in his then role as a Kenyan Minister) that a public announcement of a

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[131] Maxon, *Kenya's Independence Constitution,* p.46.
[132] TNA, CO822/2020, Letter from Mboya to Macleod, 01.04.61.
[133] TNA, CO822/2235, Note of discussions held between Macleod, Renison, Ngala, Muliro and others, 26.06.61. Maxon, *Kenya's Independence Constitution*, p.47.
[134] TNA, CO822/2235, Telegram from Macleod to Renison, 19.04.61.

conference to deal with internal self-government as well as problematic land issues in the Kenya's White Highlands 'would bring great relief in the United Kingdom and probably also in Kenya'.[135] It might also, he thought, deal conveniently with the minority issues.[136] By September 1961, Macleod had become firmer in his views that a conference for the colony was desirable. Not only would it enable these problematic matters to be addressed, but it could capture the then current 'favourable [political] atmosphere in Kenya'. Macleod accepted that a conference would mean that Britain had to be prepared to concede self-government. Importantly, however, the Colonial Secretary also observed how this would enable the British Government to secure a constitution that would be acceptable to it.[137]

On 9 October 1961, Reginald Maudling took over from Macleod as Colonial Secretary and, if anything, was even more convinced than his predecessor that a conference was necessary. Like Macleod he viewed it as a convenient mechanism to control and manage affairs in Kenya, telling the Colonial Policy Committee that it was an attractive alternative to holding the country by force. Maudling pointed out how the political situation in Kenya was now 'explosive and deteriorating', with talks between KANU and rival African party KADU having broken down. Economic confidence was draining away rapidly. He saw disorder possibly 'reaching even Congo proportions'. A conference which resulted in constitutional agreement would bring stability to the country, Maudling argued, restoring confidence and avoiding chaos.[138]

The 1960 Nyasaland Conference was agreed to by the British on account of a similar cocktail of both pressure and the British desire to maintain an upper hand. The leading nationalist party of the territory, the Nyasaland African Congress (NAC), had demanded that a new legislature in 1960 should have an African majority, as should its executive council.[139] Following the events leading up to and the declaration of the Nyasaland Emergency in March 1959, NAC leaders were arrested and detained in prison. This included the party's president-general, Dr Hastings Banda, who had been elected to that position in August 1958 following his return to the territory after more than 40 years' absence.[140] Constitutional discussions with nationalist leaders were put on hold indefinitely. Armitage,

[135] TNA, CO822/2235, Note of discussions held between Macleod, Renison, Ngala, Muliro and others, 26.06.61.
[136] TNA, CO822/2235, Telegram from Macleod to Renison, 14.07.61.
[137] TNA, CO822/2236, Telegram from Macleod to Renison, 07.09.61
[138] TNA, CAB134/1560, Memorandum by Colonial Secretary on Kenya, 14.11.61.
[139] *The Times*, 14.01.59, p.6.
[140] Baker, *Armitage*, p.216.

Nyasaland's Governor, did not want to give the impression that violence paid.[141] Yet in April 1960 Iain Macleod, now Colonial Secretary, visited Banda, who at Macleod's insistence had just been released from detention. A few days later the Colonial Secretary announced that constitutional discussions would now be held in London.[142] Macleod considered that conceding a measure of constitutional advance might help reconcile African opinion to the CAF.[143] Macmillan agreed, telling Cabinet in February 1960 that unless some progress were made on constitutional advance, then the CAF was unlikely to secure the degree of African confidence necessary for its survival. Opening discussions with Banda would bring with it the hope that the territory would regain its normal conditions,[144] and that it would help keep Banda and his followers in order.[145] It was thus important for the British Government to seize the initiative away from the Nyasaland leader. The institution of talks had to be seen as a step taken by Britain, not something forced upon it by nationalists. That way Britain would 'retain control over the direction and pace of constitutional developments in Nyasaland', as Macmillan put it.[146]

African nationalist pressure and Macleod's belief that the promise of a conference might encourage moderation were important factors behind the **1961 Conference for Northern Rhodesia**. From the early part of 1959 both Kenneth Kaunda, leader of the United National Independence Party (UNIP) and Harry Nkumbula, leader of the African National Congress (ANC), had begun to press the colonial authorities for a constitutional conference. By May 1960 Macleod and his colleagues at the Colonial Office were also coming round to the view that the promise of a conference might in fact be the best way forward, enabling Kaunda to hold his position against those in UNIP who were seen as more extreme.[147] The prospect of a conference, the Colonial Office thought, might also help harness Kaunda to a nucleus of African 'middle opinion'.[148] Nationalist pressure for a conference continued during the summer of 1960. Kaunda reminded the Colonial Secretary of the perception among ordinary Africans that constitutional progress had only come about in Nyasaland, Congo and Kenya after bloodshed. He added that a continuation of the status quo could see

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[141] TNA, CO1015/1607, Memorandum from D. C. Morgan to Gorell Barnes, 07.04.59.

[142] Baker, *Armitage*, p.273.

[143] TNA, CO1015/2267, Telegram from Secretary of State to Armitage, 15.02.60; CO1015/1608, Memorandum from Monson to Neale, 01.12.59.

[144] TNA, CAB128/34/10, Cabinet Conclusions, 18.02.60.

[145] Baker, *Armitage,* p.253.

[146] TNA, DO35/7564, Telegram from Macmillan to Welensky, 05.02.60.

[147] Philip Murphy (ed.)*, BDEEP,* Series B, Volume 9, *Central Africa*, Part 1 (Norwich, 2005), p.lxxxi.

[148] TNA, CO1015/2274, Memorandum from Monson and Watson to Martin, 23.05.60; Ibid, Note of meeting between Macleod and Kaunda, 20.05.60; CO1015/2274, Extract of a letter from Macleod to Welensky, 30.05.60.

trouble in Northern Rhodesia. The British Government were still not sure, pushed finally over the edge into announcing a conference by the Monckton Report recommendation that one should be held to discuss constitutional advance.

The 1961 Ugandan Conference was initiated by Iain Macleod on the back of the Munster Report as a way of resolving the complex question of whether Uganda should progress as a unitary or federal territory. Once again, the familiar ingredients of nationalist pressure and a British desire for a constitutional trajectory on its terms were present.[149] The conferences for the smaller territories of Basutoland and Swaziland should also be seen as having been arranged by the British to fend off pressures and to seize the initiative from local actors.

The Basutoland 1964 Constitutional Conference, on the face of it, was held simply to consider the recommendations of the earlier constitutional commission. But a key driver from the colonial and British governments was to use the event to water down the commission's proposals to something the British would find more acceptable. There were several matters in the commission's report which the British Government did not like. In particular, that independence should be fixed one year after proposed 1964 elections, and that in the meantime Basutoland should become a 'protected state' in which its Resident Commissioner would become an advisor with no powers except for defence and security. A constitutional conference, to be arranged in London and to be held behind closed doors and away from the pressures of Basutoland, would, it was thought, be the proper time for debate.[150] Fixing a conference some months away would give Britain time to lobby behind the scenes, and give Duncan Sandys, the then Colonial Secretary, 'time to mould Basutoland opinion into producing something more acceptable to Britain'.[151]

This desire to seize the initiative and 'mould opinion' was also the reason for the calling of the **Swaziland Conference**. The motivation here was in part to impress on the African chiefly and European ruling classes that some progressive constitutional changes were necessary. The colonial government was facing pressure from the reformist Swaziland Progressive Party and its followers for political change. The British and colonial governments took little persuasion. A conference would not only ease pressures but would also, importantly, afford the British Government the opportunity to assert its hegemony and impress its own desired constitution on Swaziland. As Sir John Maud, the High

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[149] See Chapter Three, p.108 for details of the pressures faced by the British Government here.
[150] TNA, CO1048/383, Telegram from the High Commissioner of South Africa to Colonial Secretary, 20.11.63.
[151] TNA, CO1048/383, Telegram from High Commissioner to Colonial Secretary, 02.12.63.

Commissioner for Southern Africa, told Marwick, the territory's Resident, a conference would enable the Colonial Secretary to show that it was he who had the 'last word' on the constitution, rather than the Nygwenyama, the Paramount Chief.[152]

Nationalist pressure was also an ingredient behind the **first Zanzibar conference**. In November 1960, Iain Macleod announced that Britain would implement the recommendations of the Blood Commission. Zanzibar's Executive Council would now include a majority of unofficial members, one of whom would be designated Chief Minister. Soon after elections in June 1961, Macleod met with Mooring and senior Colonial Office officials to discuss the volatile political situation in the territory. It was at this meeting that the Colonial Secretary first mooted a constitutional conference for Zanzibar. Macleod, concerned about the continued serious divisions in the territory between Arabs and Africans, wanted independence 'as far away as he could make it' and clearly thought that a constitutional conference in 1962 as well as another election would help draw out the process.[153]

In calling each of the conferences set out above, the circumstances were such that the British Government was able to take a relatively considered approach. Nationalist pressures were certainly present, and the British Government wanted to take action to contain them. But there was no sense of ministers being panicked into urgently arranging a conference in order to contain them and to re-direct outcomes. For the second Nyasaland conference, the Tanganyikan conference and Somaliland conferences, there was, however, a greater sense of urgency: a conference had to be arranged to prevent immediate fall-out.

The 1962 Conference for Nyasaland was instituted by the British Government to avoid continued pressure from Banda. It was hoped that the promise of a constitutional conference would preserve the CAF, if only on this occasion for a temporary period. Rab Butler's suggestion to Banda on 1 May 1962 of a conference in the autumn 'to discuss a substantial measure of self-government' and even a 'programme in broad terms for advance to full independence' was thus intended as a delay tactic, to keep Banda pacified with the hope that in the meantime he would not press his demands for Nyasaland's secession and independence.[154] Banda had not considered a further conference necessary,

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[152] TNA, DO119/1425, Telex from HC BBS to Marwick, 31.08.62.
[153] TNA, CO822/2327, Note of a meeting between Macleod, Mooring and Others, 12.07.61. Haj, *Zanzibar,* p.71.
[154] Butler's Central Africa Office had been given responsibility for the CAF. TNA, DO183/58, Record of a meeting between Banda and Butler, 01.05.62.

having pressed Butler for an announcement that Nyasaland would move to full self-government in July 1962 followed by independence in April 1963.[155] Butler hoped he could at least put these issues to one side until the autumn by which time the federal issues should have progressed.[156] Meanwhile, Butler would devise 'the minimum which will keep [Banda] in play'.[157] At the same time, the African leader would be discouraged from giving publicity to his independence demands.[158]

The Tanganyika and **Somaliland conferences** were arranged on account of even greater feelings of consternation on the part of the British Government. In each case, conferences were set up in some desperation to foil damaging legislative council resolutions, and in each case the general hoped for outcomes were simplistic. In May 1960, the British Government had accepted that Tanganyika would become independent in 1962 or 1963.[159] But it did not want the territory to become independent in 1961. This would have put pressure on the British Government to advance the constitutional position of its neighbouring territories, and would also have left very little time to implement the practical steps necessary for Tanganyikan independence. Macleod became worried, however, that the newly constituted legislative council might in October 1960 pass a snap resolution demanding independence at an 'impossibly early date'. He wanted to head off any such motion by proposing that a conference be held in February 1961 to discuss further constitutional advance.[160] In this he was supported by Leslie Monson, the head of the African department at the Colonial Office, who also considered that a conference promise would be the 'least necessary to keep the politicians off a more extreme line'.[161] Yet it was not just nationalist pressures which drove the British Government to look at a Tanganyika conference as a stalling device. Administered by Britain as a trust territory, Tanganyika was the subject of United Nations' scrutiny and the British Government was concerned too that a resolution calling for early independence would be seized upon eagerly by the UN General Committee at its meeting in the autumn of 1960, further adding to British pressures. As noted briefly in the Introduction, and as Andrew Cohen has also

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[155] McCracken, *A History of Malawi*, p.386.
[156] TNA, DO183/58, Telegram from Butler to Jones, 04.05.62.
[157] TNA, CAB129/109, Memorandum from Butler to Cabinet, 20.06.62.
[158] TNA, DO183/58, Telegram from Alport to Butler, 28.04.62.
[159] Docking, 'The Wind has been Gathering Force', p.367.
[160] TNA, FCO141/17779, Letter from Fletcher-Cooke to Turnbull, 20.06.60. Colin Baker in *Exit from Empire* seems to attribute (p.258) the conference initiative to Turnbull in August 1960. The recently released FCO141 file, however, makes it clear that the move was first mooted by Macleod some two months earlier.
[161] TNA, CO822/2299, Letter from Monson to Turnbull, 28.07.60.

illustrated, by this time British policymakers were paying more attention to UN colonial pressures, fearing that Britain might be left solely in the company of Portugal and South Africa.[162] A conference on the other hand would allow Britain to make a 'positive statement' to the United Nations to show that it was serious about making constitutional progress.[163]

The Somaliland Conference was organised as a last ditch effort to slow down what London saw as the worryingly fast pace of constitutional development in British Somaliland, and instead to encourage a timetable suited to British tastes. At the end of March 1960 a group of back-benchers resolved to put down a motion at the opening of the territory's new legislative council that practical steps should be taken forthwith for the immediate unification of British Somaliland and Somalia, and that unification should happen on 1 July 1960 - the newly advanced date which had been agreed at the United Nations for Somalia's independence. After the legislative council motion was passed, the British Government arranged hastily for a conference to be held in London in May 1960, which Macleod was to use to bring the Somalis face to face with the many 'serious problems' which needed to be settled before independence 'in the hope that they themselves might come to accept some deferment of independence'.[164]

Each of the ten conferences described in this section all thus shared a distinct pattern. They were instigated by the British Government to hold off nationalist pressure, and to give the British an opportunity to re-assert its grasp and to direct the political trajectory of the territory to one of its liking.[165] The **first Kenya conference** illustrates that even in the absence of strong nationalist pressures the British and colonial governments could also use conferences as a convenient mechanism to shape a territory's constitutional direction to one of their liking. As Shepherd has argued, the British Government seized on an opportunity to encourage moderation in Kenyan politics, eschewing what it saw as both radical African nationalists and inflexible white settler groups.[166] On several occasions in 1958, and even in early 1959, Lennox-Boyd had resisted calls for a round table conference

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[162] Andrew Cohen, '"A difficult, tedious and unwanted task": Representing the Central African Federation in the United Nations, 1960-1963', *Itinerario*, Volume XXXIV, issue 2 (2010), p.108.

[163] TNA, FCO141/17779, Letter from Fletcher-Cooke to Turnbull, 20.06.60; CO822/2299, Intel from Foreign Office to certain of Her Majesty's representatives, 07.10.60.

[164] TNA, CO1015/3518, Telegram from Macleod to Hall, 23.04.60.

[165] The reasons behind the second Zanzibar Conference, not mentioned in this section, are covered in Chapter Three. Although nationalist pressures were continually present in that territory, the forthcoming independence of Kenya and the desire to pull out of the troublesome territory as soon as possible were the main drivers.

[166] Shepherd, *Macleod*, p.174.

for Kenya. Having imposed his own 'impartial' constitution in 1957, it was considered far too early to be thinking in terms of further amendments.[167] Maxon considers the principal reason for a change of heart over the April 1959 announcement of a conference as attributable to pressure from the African Elected Members (AEMs), supported by Arab and Asian leaders.[168] Yet it is by no means certain that African pressure alone would have been enough to convince Lennox-Boyd to announce the plans for a conference. To do so, would have been a personal embarrassment for the Colonial Secretary, who had only recently put in place a constitution which was intended to endure for at least ten years and which, on a number of occasions, he had stated publicly that he would not change. Moreover, although there was pressure from the AEMs for change, there were no serious attendant security dangers. Kenya was still under a state of emergency, there were no African political parties which presented credible threats, and the African leaders were themselves divided - something not lost on the British and colonial governments.[169]

In mid-March 1959 Michael Blundell, the liberal European who was Kenya's Minister of Agriculture, shared with Baring, the Kenyan Governor, his plans to form a moderate movement which made an appeal to all races.[170] By early April, 10 European elected legislative council members had joined him and a policy statement had been issued by the group, imploring all races to work together in a steady development towards responsible government.[171] This development was very much welcomed by Lennox-Boyd and the colonial government in Nairobi. Blundell's political thinking matched their own and offered the chance of stability and only gradual change in Kenya, consistent with an approach which the East African governors and Colonial Secretary had agreed in January 1959 at a Chequers' meeting. The turn of events gave Lennox-Boyd a positive and credible reason to reverse his conference policy, and, it was thought, a conference could even lend support to and empower Blundell's group. 'It seems to me', the Colonial Secretary wrote to Baring on 9 April, 'that our most important objective now must be to give maximum backing to initiative [sic] taken by moderates.'[172] One day later he sent a memorandum to the Colonial Policy Committee stating how he was 'much encouraged' by Blundell's statement and that

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[167] TNA, CO822/1426, Telegram from Lennox-Boyd to Baring, 12.06.58 and Baring to Lennox-Boyd, 07.06.58. See also Maxon, *Britain and Kenya's Constitutions*, p.207.
[168] Ibid, p.221.
[169] Ibid, p.208.
[170] TNA, CO822/1361, Letter from Baring to Lennox-Boyd, 12.03.59.
[171] Blundell Papers, Bodleian Library Oxford, MSS. Afr.746, Policy Statement, 25.03.59; TNA, CO822/1861, Telegram from Blundell to Lennox Boyd, 02.04.59.
[172] TNA, CO822/1861,Telegram from Lennox- Boyd to Baring, 09.04.59.

it was now of 'cardinal importance' that he make a statement to the House of Commons which would announce the conference and at the same time 'have the effect of lending support to the moderates'. His statement in the Commons on 22 April announcing plans for the conference did just that, with the Colonial Secretary praising Blundell's motives. The British Government had therefore arranged the first Kenya conference as a way of changing the political landscape of that colony to one which better suited British ideals.

As was the case with commissions, the British governmental files relating to the run up to African conferences of the 1960s are noticeable for their distinct lack of consideration of 'harder' methods of control as an alternative way of maintaining stability. As colonies neared independence, the use of military or heavy police involvement as a form of administration would have in any event been less feasible, no doubt being viewed as counter-productive to maintaining a good relationship with the country after independence. Yet even when independence was seen as some way off, it is noticeable how the emphasis in the early 1960s was now placed on constitutional solutions to a territory's political difficulties. As noted in the Introduction, George Mooring, the Resident of Zanzibar, told the main political parties of the territory that the use of force as a way of governing Zanzibar had been rejected by the British Government. This statement took place in the context of the discussions leading up to that territory's 1962 conference. Also , and as mentioned earlier, Maudling specifically shunned the use of force in Kenya in 1961 and instead favoured the holding of a second constitutional conference to manage affairs in that territory. Perhaps the most clear-cut rejection of force in favour of constitutional discussions can be seen in the period just before the Federal Review Conference of 1960. Macmillan and Macleod were exploring how tensions in the CAF between its government and Africans might be managed. As the note of the meeting recorded, 'The Prime Minister and the Colonial Secretary said that they did not want an Algeria. That was the crux of the matter.'[173] The last sentence is particularly revealing, showing that at all costs the employment of force in Africa between the colonial power and its subjects was to be avoided. The emphasis had now shifted to dialogue in order to avoid such disorder and bloodshed.

Conclusion

This chapter began by noting that both conferences and commissions had a very long history and both had been used in the colonial context well before the wind of change era.

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[173] TNA, PREM11/3080, Note for the Record, 13.11.60. Underlining is by the original note taker.

Such conferences had by no means been universal successes, but many were seen by the British Government to have gone well. Constitutional conferences, in particular, suited the style and skills of Colonial Secretary Iain Macleod who chaired such events almost on a monthly basis during his tenure at the Colonial Office.

The constitutional commissions of the period under review were instituted for a number of reasons: to help the British Government develop its own ideas, to assuage domestic opinion, to inspire confidence and to act as a face-saving mechanism in tricky situations all played a part. But as the chapter has shown, behind the establishment of almost all of the commissions was a desire on the part of the British and colonial governments to give themselves a breathing space so that pressures might be eased, and so that time would be made available to manage and control situations. At a time when the British and colonial governments were finding hard methods of controlling their colonial subjects more difficult, commissions offered a relatively easy path.

The chapter has also argued that there were also a number of reasons why constitutional conferences were called, including the resolution of awkward technical issues in the run up to independence. But as was the case with commissions, the most common reason behind the calling of a conference was so that the British Government might gain respite from nationalist pressures (and in the case of Tanganyika also international ones), allowing it once more to seize the initiative and to manage outcomes. Nationalist pressures were not invariably the primary driver here; the British could also be proactive, and the chapter noted how Macleod and his colleagues sought to use the first Kenya Conference to change the political landscape in that territory.

The next two chapters look at precisely what it was that the British and colonial governments hoped to get out of the African commissions, and conferences and how they set about seeking to achieve this.

Chapter Two

Commissions and British governmental control

Chapter One showed the impetus behind the African constitutional commissions, noting that they were set up to present British governmental ideas through a body which was seemingly wholly independent, instituted as a face-saving mechanism, to assuage domestic opinion, or - and this was the case for most of the commissions - so that the British Government could seize the initiative and attempt to manage outcomes. To secure such outcomes, the British Government could hardly write the commissions' reports for them, so instead it sought to influence proceedings in other ways. This was done, as the chapter will show, by various means. Chairmen were chosen who were considered to be safe pairs of hands, and commission members were also carefully selected. Commissions could also be labelled as 'committees' if there was a concern about such bodies running away with their own importance. Significantly, terms of reference were often drawn narrowly to prevent commissions from involving themselves with issues which the British Government considered to be out of bounds. Finally, the chapter shows how the British and colonial governments sometimes went further, seeking to influence directly the content of reports through its dealings with the commission members.

To appreciate ways in which the British Government sought to manage the African commissions, it is useful to look at the particular recommendations which it hoped that each would make. On a number of occasions, the desired outcomes were specific. For the Blood Commission, for example, the British Government wanted a report which would provide for Zanzibar's legislative council to become predominantly elective in character and for a ministerial system to be established.[1] For the Swaziland commission, the British hoped that the end-product would see the introduction of a Swazi-European common roll franchise which would then elect at least some of the unofficial members of a proposed legislature,[2] and for the Kenya Coastal Strip Commission, Macleod hoped that the recommendation would be that the Strip would be administered as a part and parcel of Kenya but with protection of the legitimate interests of its Arab population through land

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[1] TNA, CAB134/1559, Memorandum from Macleod to Colonial Policy Committee, 15.03.60.
[2] TNA, DO119/1414, Telex from Resident Commissioner to High Commissioner, 26.09.61.

rights and the application of Islamic personal law.[3] The Wild Committee, it was presumed, would confine its recommendations to direct elections on a common roll, with more contentious subjects (particularly the relationship between Buganda and the rest of Uganda) being strictly off-limits.[4] Similarly, for the Ramage Committee of Tanganyika, the British and colonial governments thought that it would 'be most undesirable to let the Committee dabble in any matters which could affect the Government's ability to govern'. Instead, they wanted the committee report to deal only with matters 'on which the Government has no strong views'.[5]

On other occasions the sort of report which the British wanted was more vague, aspirations being that the conclusions should be (in their eyes) sensible, and ones which would not ruffle feathers. In particular, it was hoped that nothing radical would be put forward. For Basutoland, the colonial government anticipated a report which would produce 'acceptable results, and which recommended only moderate changes'.[6] As seen earlier, Macmillan hoped that the Monckton Commission 'would engineer very little change' and that it would steer well clear of making any sort of proposal on the right of a territory to secede from the Federation. For Munster, the objectives were less clear: mostly, as noted in Chapter One, because the British and colonial governments seemed in a quandary as to precisely what to do, and wanted expert views to assist them in recommending a precise form of constitution. For Molson and the Kenyan Northern Frontier commissions, there were no clear British aspirations. As these were set up primarily as a mechanism to give the colonial secretaries a quick way of breaking conference deadlocks, this is not altogether surprising.

How influence was sought

Except in the case of the Swaziland commission, the British Government chose the chairman of each of the commissions. This was important. The British Government wanted as a chairman (and it was always a man; women were not considered for the position) someone it considered reliable and safe; 'establishment' figures who could be expected to share official lines of thinking. Chosen chairs divided broadly into two types. Firstly there were those for the Monckton, Munster, Molson, Blood, Kenya Coastal Strip and (to some extent) Kenyan Northern Frontier commissions who were selected for their perceived

[3] TNA, CO822/2149, Telegram Secretary of State to Mooring, 04.07.61.
[4] TNA, CO822/1436, Note of Discussion held at the Colonial Office, 10.10.58. Letter from Crawford to Reid, 13.10.58.
[5] TNA, CO822/1460, Letter from Turnbull to Gorell Barnes, 09.12.58.
[6] TNA, DO157/2, Telegram from South Africa BBS to CRO, 02.09.61.

authority and gravitas, and also because it was thought that they would engender the respect of Africans on account of their position, stature and perceived independence. Then there were those for the Ramage, Wild and Basutoland commissions who were senior officials in their respective colonial governments, selected for their reliability and because they reported to the territory's Governor who could exercise influence over the commission's workings. These matters are explored below, but common to both groups were that the choices should be dependable; someone whose way of working and whose attitudes were predictable. Such a sought-after quality is hardly surprising and indeed Johnson has shown how for the West Indian Forster Commission of 1937 the Colonial Secretary, William Ormsby-Gore, wanted a 'suitably steady and reliable chairman'.[7]

For the commission enquiring into the Central African Federation, Macmillan chose Lord Monckton, a former president of the Oxford Union, a well-respected barrister who had advised Edward VIII during the abdication crisis, a former Conservative government minister, and long-standing friend of the Prime Minister. Monckton was seen by Macmillan as a person who had a reputation for 'creating a climate of opinion' and who would '[call] into being the best feelings of all sides'; 'a very wise man greatly experienced with men and affairs and at his best in a difficult and delicate situation'.[8] In other words, a safe pair of hands, and seemingly perfect for bringing together the diverse factions he would encounter in the CAF. British governmental thinking was that for the CAF a 'high political figure... would find it far easier to keep a Commission of this type together and to influence it in a sensible way than a former official or Governor'.[9] Monckton, in fact, had not been the British Government's first choice as chairman, although that was down to Macmillan's assumption that he would have been too busy with other matters to take on the task (Monckton was chairman of Midland Bank).[10] Earlier candidates had also been drawn from a pool of grandees, not all of whom were Conservatives but who, nevertheless, were considered sound in judgment and gravitas: for example, Lord Shawcross, a QC, former Attorney General and the leading British prosecuting counsel at the Nuremberg trials; Lord Radcliffe, an Oxford educated House of Lords judge who had chaired a series of public inquiries;[11] Lord Woolton, a former Conservative Party chairman, and Lord Birkett, a former

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[7] Johnson, 'Political Uses of Commissions', p.262.
[8] TNA, PREM5/252, Letter from Macmillan to Monckton, 22.08.59; PREM5/252, Letter from Macmillan to Welensky, 03.09.59.
[9] TNA, DO121/236, File note, J.L.G. to Home, 28.07.59.
[10] TNA, PREM5/252, Letter from Macmillan to Welensky, 03.09.59.
[11] Radcliffe looks an odd choice in view of his chairmanship of the Indian Boundary Committees and the partition chaos that ensued. British ministers, however, thought that he had 'stature' which

Court of Appeal judge.[12] Lord Munster was asked to take on chairmanship of the Uganda Relationships Commission. Munster was a descendant of King William IV and educated at Charterhouse. He was also a Conservative Party politician who had served as Under-Secretary of State of the Colonial Office in the early 1950s and was no doubt seen by the British Government as having the necessary badges of eminence and trustworthiness.[13] For the commission to look into the Lost Counties question, the British Government wanted a small body of Privy Councillors who, it was thought, would carry sufficient gravitas with the two rulers at loggerheads, the Kabaka of Buganda and the Omukama of Bunyoro.[14] Sir Lionel Heald, a barrister and Conservative Party politician, was asked to chair the Commission but was unable to take on the appointment. The second choice, Lord Molson, a former Unionist MP and Minister and another former president of the Oxford Union, accepted the position.

For the Zanzibar and Kenyan Coastal Strip commissions, a single commissioner was chosen, for reasons set out later.[15] The British Government wanted the commissioners also to be reliable, establishment figures. Thus for the Coastal Strip, Sir James Robertson, former Governor of Nigeria, was considered a sound choice as he had experience of dealing with Arabs in Sudan.[16] For Zanzibar, the Colonial Office favoured the appointment of an 'Elder Statesman'.[17] Sir Hilary Blood was chosen. He had had served as Governor of Gambia, Barbados and Mauritius, and had thus gained considerable experience of dealing with small colonial territories.[18] After his retirement in 1954, he had been appointed as a commissioner to review the constitutional position in British Honduras, for which Sir John Martin, joint deputy Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, noted that Blood had 'produced exactly what was wanted'.[19]

Letters, memoranda and notes of discussions on Colonial Office files contain no precise criteria for what was expected of a chairman of one of the above African commissions, and there was no list of sought-after qualities. The name, and the reputation attached to that

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seems to have been the decisive factor: TNA, PREM5/251, Telegram from Colonial Secretary to Governors of Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia, 06.04.59. As will be seen later, however, the Colonial Office had strong reservations about his use as chairman of commissions.

[12] TNA, PREM5/252, Home to Macmillan, 20.08.59.

[13] *The Times*, Obituary, 29.08.75, p.14.

[14] F D 'Max' Webber had been told that Bunyoro would co-operate with a commission if its members were sufficiently eminent. TNA, CO822/2790, Letter from Cartland to Webber, 19.10.61.

[15] Chapter Six, p.199.

[16] TNA, CO822/2149, Memorandum from Martin to Monson, 04.08.61.

[17] TNA, CO822/2325, Memorandum from Monson to Martin, 04.03.60.

[18] TNA, CO822/2325, Colonial Office Press Release, 31.03.60.

[19] TNA, CO822/2325, File note by Martin, 07.03.60.

name, was the most important factor. Each of the candidates considered would have been well-known to senior British ministers. There was an instinct about who would be right for the task. Put simply, the British Government looked for an establishment figure who was known to senior ministers, whose judgement was considered reliable, who shared similar sets of values on colonial matters (such as stability and moderation),[20] yet who also could be expected to inspire confidence amongst Africans because of their position in British society. It perhaps seems odd for British ministers to have made the assumption about such men being so respected, but as Chapter Four will show, some Africans at least did see grandee British figures as not only important but independent. This pool of potential chairs, then, was a small one. The arbiters of who would chair these commissions were Macmillan, his colonial secretary and, where he had a ministerial interest, the secretary of state for commonwealth relations.

For (what became) the Ramage commission, F. D. 'Max' Webber, head of the East African section of the Colonial Office, thought that it would be unwise to have a 'big name' as chair.[21] He considered that this would only inflate the committee's perceived importance, and suggested Sir Richard Ramage for the position. Ramage, a former colonial secretary in Sierra Leone, had since 1955 been acting as chairman of the Public Service Commission in Uganda, a post which he was due to leave in March 1959.[22] Sir Frederick Crawford, Governor of Uganda, had been reassuring that the candidate could be 'relied upon not to let the wild men run away with things'.[23] Ramage accepted the appointment at the end of February 1959.[24] Similar thinking lay behind the appointment of the chairman of the first of Uganda's constitutional commissions of the period. Crawford did not wish the body to 'go off the rails or think from the beginning that it was set up to discuss the future of Uganda'.[25] He suggested to the Colonial Office that John Wild, the Administrative Secretary of the territory, was 'probably the best choice'. Wild enjoyed not only the confidence of the Governor and other colonial officials (an essential pre-requisite) but also, it was thought, the public. As Crawford put it: Wild was 'well-liked and respected both by Africans and the Administration' and would be able to exercise the patience that the assignment was

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[20] For a fuller discussion of British governmental attitudes towards colonial policy at this time see the first part of Chapter Three
[21] TNA, CO822/1460, Memorandum from Webber to Gorell Barnes, 04.11.58.
[22] TNA, CO822/1460, Memorandum from Webber to Gorell Barnes, 02.02.59.
[23] Ibid.
[24] TNA, CO822/1460, Telegram from Crawford to Macpherson, 27.02.59.
[25] TNA, FCO141/18276, Telegram from Crawford to Gorell Barnes, 23.10.58.

thought to need.[26] Crawford might have added too that as a subordinate in the colonial government, Wild would be easier to supervise than an independent chairman. The Basutoland commission was also chaired by an official: Walter Stanford, President of the National Council. No doubt the thinking behind the appointment reflected the reasons why Ramage and Wild had been appointed.

There was no chair of the Kenya Northern Frontier Commission. Its task was a fact finding one, rather than one to make recommendations; as will be seen in Chapter Six, by the early part of 1962 London had become wary of the dangers of commissions being given too much power. It was recognised that a British chairman (and indeed commission member) would be unsuitable for this commission, no doubt because of perceived bias in favour of Kenya at the expense of the Somalis.[27] Instead, at least one Commonwealth member was felt to be appropriate such as an Indian or African judge who would be acceptable to African opinion.[28] It was finally agreed that a Canadian and Nigerian would offer the right balance,[29] and, after unsuccessful attempts with preferred candidates, a two man commission of G. C. M. Onyiuke QC and Major General M. P. Bogert was appointed in October 1962. Onyiuke was a Nigerian lawyer, considered 'capable and intelligent',[30] while Bogart was a long-serving and recently retired army officer.[31] Once more then, both were viewed as reliable figures.

The Swaziland Committee, including its chairman, was chosen without Colonial Office input. Each side - the Swazis, Europeans, and Colonial Government officials - simply nominated members whom they considered suitable. At first, it is a surprise that Whitehall did not take its usual detailed interest and scrutiny in the setting up of the Committee, but this can be explained by Swaziland's very slow pace of constitutional development, its perceived relative unimportance as a colony and, in contrast to other African colonies, its lack of autochthonous demands for change. Swaziland was also under the auspices of the Commonwealth Relations Office at the time, rather than the Colonial Office; the former had little experience of setting up African constitutional commissions and lacked the rigour

[26] TNA, FCO141/18276, Note of meeting of 10.10.58 between Crawford and Colonial Office officials.
[27] TNA, CO822/2007, Telegram from Webber to Renison, 25.05.52; CO822/2008, Note from Poynton to Sandys, 12.09.62.
[28] TNA, CO822/2007, Letter from Beith to Webber, 03.05.62.
[29] TNA, CO822/2007, Memorandum from Kitcatt to Webber, 04.07.62.
[30] TNA, CO822/2007, Telegram from Lagos to CRO, 18.08.62. It seems that the Nigerian Government had been asked to put forward a suggested candidate. The writer of the telegram said that Onyiuke was the personal choice of the Prime Minister. Nothing further has been found out about Onyiuke.
[31] TNA, CO822/2008, Telegram from Colonial Secretary to Rensison, 05.10.62.

of Leslie Monson and his colleagues, something which was to haunt London later down the line.

Aside from looking at who were selected as chairmen, it is also instructive to look at why certain figures were rejected for that position by the British Government. Going down badly with the African population, or being considered by the British Government to be too much of a risk were two such reasons. The best example of this can be seen in the debate as to who might chair the Uganda Relationships (Munster) Commission. Sir Charles Arden-Clarke, former Governor of Gold Coast, was ruled out as it was thought he might be 'wrongly held responsible' for the demise of chiefs in that territory.[32] The otherwise favoured choice of Lord Radcliffe, a law lord who had chaired a number of public enquiries, was eliminated because of his association with the partition of India.[33] Lord Monckton was considered but only if he 'succeeded' in his work on the CAF commission.[34] His name was not mentioned after his report had been issued in the summer of 1960 - a further indication of the disappointed reaction of the British Government to that enquiry. Macleod had initially wanted as chair someone of high judicial standing so as to appeal to the Kabaka, who was thought to have particular respect for established British rank and position. The Colonial Secretary's choice was Lord Denning who he though had 'a way with Africans that would be very useful'.[35] Macmillan, remembering the Devlin Enquiry into disturbances into Nyasaland and that law lord's criticism of the colonial government, bristled at the thought of another judge-led commission and the suggestion fell away.[36] Avoiding the 'wrong' person being appointed as chairman was thus another measure taken by the British Government to secure an outcome favourable to it.

The choice of who would serve on the commissions was almost always that of the British Government, in consultation with the territory's Governor. As with the choice of chairman, the British Government had on past occasions not been averse to appointing commission

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[32] TNA, CO822/2276, Letter from Monson to Crawford, 01.06.60.

[33] TNA, CO822/2276, Note from Webber to Monson, 20.10.60.

[34] TNA, CO822/2276, Memorandum from Reid to Webber, 22.03.60.

[35] TNA, CO822/2276, Letter from Macleod to Lord Kilmuir, 21.10.60 Macleod did not elaborate on his Delphic comment. However, in the 1950s, Denning had been a key figure in the training of Africans lawyers (see, for example, John A. Harrington and Ambreena Manj, '"Mind with Mind and Spirit with Spirit"; Lord Denning and African Legal Education', *Journal of Law and Society,* Vol. 30, no.3 (2003), pp.376-99). Macleod presumably thought that the judge had built up a reservoir of trust with Africans.

[36] TNA, CO822/2260, Note from Macmillan to Macleod, 02.11.60. Macleod also learned from the Lord Chancellor that a Law Lord could not be spared.

members based on the likelihood of such members drawing up a report to the Government's liking. Johnson has shown that to help achieve its goal of setting up trade unions in Trinidad, Ormsby-Gore thought it would be helpful to have a senior 'moderate Trades Union man' on the Foster Commission.[37] In the event, despite the Colonial Secretary's claim that the commission would be an impartial one, the author observes that all of the chosen commission members would have been accepting of the need to establish trade unions.[38] Members of the African commissions were also carefully selected to minimise the chances of an unsuitable report being produced. In their 1937 book *Royal Commissions,* Clokie and Robinson observed that a government can minimise the chances of an embarrassing report through picking appropriate commissioners, and in particular ones who are seemingly 'uncommitted' but whose views can be relied on as 'safe'. Whether British ministers were aware of this advice is not known, but the gist of it was followed for the African commissions.[39]

Common themes were that members should be (in British eyes) reliable, sensible and moderate. For the Monckton Commission, for example, commissioners were to be 'carefully chosen',[40] and invited in most cases because of what was thought to be their pro-Federation outlook; people who were 'really sensible' and could make a 'solid constructive contribution'.[41] That is to say, figures who would be likely to be supportive of British colonial policy in Africa. One member, the Canadian historian Donald Creighton, had published a two volume biography of John A. Macdonald, Canada's first prime minister, in which the idea of a strong federal government had been defended.[42] Creighton was considered to be conservative in sympathies and likely to prove very co-operative and helpful',[43] presumably because of his positive views on federal government and traditionalist values. Another, Professor D.T. Jack, had been working on a study of the economic benefits of the Federation to Nyasaland.[44] Commission member Reverend Robert Shepherd was known as a paternalist who opposed giving Africans the vote except in very

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[37] Johnson, 'Political Uses of Commissions', p.262.
[38] Ibid, p.264.
[39] Clokie and Robinson, *Royal Commissions of Inquiry*, pp.128-129. It would hardly have needed a textbook for British ministers and officials to reach this view in any event.
[40] Papers of Sir Walter Monckton, Balliol College, University of Oxford (and henceforth 'Monckton Papers'), f9. Letter from Home to Monckton, 23.09.59.
[41] TNA, PREM5/252, Telegram Home to Diefenbaker, 24.09.59.
[42] Donald Wright, *Donald Creighton: A Life in History* (Toronto, 2015), p.253.
[43] TNA, PREM5/253, Telegram CRO to Acting High Commissioner Salisbury, 05.11.59.
[44] TNA, PREM5/252, Letter from Cole to Pearson, 21.10.59.

limited numbers.[45] His views were thought by Macmillan to be 'entirely sound',[46] no doubt because the Church of Scotland Moderator had told Lennox-Boyd earlier that he believed the Government were working on 'just and sound' lines in Africa.[47] Elspeth Huxley was also considered to have a 'reassuring attitude' towards Central Africa.[48] By contrast Doug Abbott, who had been mooted as a possible Commission candidate, was not taken on as he had been a member of a Canadian government whose views on colonialism at the United Nations were not thought to be helpful.[49]

It was often recognised that African members would be needed for multi-member commissions to carry credibility and that such individuals should not just be government puppets. Yet at the same time measures were also taken to ensure that Africans perceived as radicals would not be in a majority position. Crawford, for example, saw that to avoid calls of the Wild Committee being labelled one of stooges the Committee would need to have a majority of African members.[50] But he also wanted a working majority of 'moderates', just in case the committee were inclined to 'go off the rails' as the Governor put it. Thus of a total commission membership of fourteen, eight were expected to take a moderate line and a further three were 'probably not wildly immoderate'.[51] There is no discussion on the Colonial Office files as to what being 'moderate' entailed, but it is clear that someone of that description would favour only the sort of constitutional advance with which the British and colonial governments would be content. For the Ramage Committee, William Gorell Barnes, Assistant Under Secretary of State at the Colonial Office, asked Tanganyika's Governor, Sir Richard Turnbull, to 'contrive matters that there will be a majority of government people and moderate unofficials on it so as to ensure that the extremists do not have it all their own way'.[52] Turnbull obliged, telling the Colonial Office that he had in mind four Africans (three of whom would be elected), two Asians (both elected), two Europeans (both elected) and two officials. At first sight it is odd that the Committee would be so weighted in favour of unofficials but Turnbull reassured Gorell Barnes that these arrangements should result in there being seven moderates as against

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[45] John McCracken, 'Missionaries and Nationalists', p.64.
[46] TNA, PREM5/252, Telegram Macmillan to Welensky, 23.10.59.
[47] TNA, DO121/236, Letter from Lennox Boyd to Home, 19.10.59.
[48] TNA, PREM5/252, Letter from Cole to Pearson, 21.10.59.
[49] TNA, PREM5/252, Telegram from Home to Welensky, 16.09.59.
[50] TNA, FCO141/18285, Telegram from Crawford to Lennox Boyd, 02.02.59.
[51] TNA, CO822/1436, File note by K.A.F. Woolverton, 03.02.59.
[52] TNA, CO822/1460, Letter from Gorell Barnes to Turnbull, 06.01.59.

three extremists.[53] The Committee thus had the appearance of a populist one but its composition of members, choice of chairman and (as will be seen below) narrow terms of reference were set up to achieve restraint.

There was not always consistency in relation to who should be appointed. On occasions the British Government thought it inappropriate to have African members on a commission. This happened in the case of the Munster Commission, where Africans were considered to lack the necessary skills; Crawford considered that they had little knowledge of the more fundamental problems involved, nor experience of solutions to similar problems elsewhere.[54] It was thought too that having Africans on the Commission would lessen the prospect of a unanimous report.[55] Instead, for this commission, Macleod wanted a small group comprising a constitutional expert, someone who had occupied a senior administrative position on Africa, and an authority on local government. In the event, Dr H.W.R. Wade, a Reader in law at Cambridge University and a specialist in constitutional law was appointed, alongside Dr A.H. Marshall, the City Treasurer of Coventry and an expert on local government. Yet for the Monckton Commission, both Macmillan and Home feared that a body which included academics might 'recommend something totally unsuitable, e.g. that Nyasaland ought to secede',[56] a remark that again illustrates how senior British ministers wanted to preserve the Central African Federation, and refrain from taking action which might upset the constitutional balance of that territory. And for the Wild Committee, Crawford considered that 'if humanly possible' an outside expert was to be avoided, the Governor presumably concerned too that an expert might not share his thinking.[57] Although there are inconsistencies between wanting Africans and not wanting Africans, wanting experts and not wanting experts, the point is that the membership of each commission was crafted by the British and colonial governments to produce the sort of thinking and conclusions that they would find acceptable.[58] If utilising moderate African

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[53] TNA, CO822/1460, Letter from Turnbull to Gorell Barnes, 04.02.59. Subsequently the Committee was enlarged to eight elected members, and seven nominated members but the sentiment remained the same. See TNA, CO822/1460, Telegram from Turnbull to Colonial Secretary, 02.03.59.
[54] TNA, FCO141/18278, Note of Provisional Commissioners' Conference, 10-12.05.60.
[55] TNA, CO822/2276, Letter from Monson to Crawford, 01.06.60.
[56] TNA, PREM5/251, Note of meeting between Macmillan and Home. Whilst Nyasaland's participation was not seen as particularly important to the economic well-being of the Federation, its secession would inevitably have prompted similar demands by African nationalists in Northern Rhodesia.
[57] TNA, FCO141/18276, Letter from Crawford to Reid, 13.10.58.
[58] Swaziland, as seen earlier, was an exception. That commission was self-appointed. For Basutoland, the British and colonial governments could only pick the chairman. It was appreciated right away that because of the control over internal affairs enjoyed by the Paramount Chief a commission chosen by the British Government or Resident or High Commissioner was likely to be wholly

members was likely to produce the most favourable result, then so be it. Equally, as with the case of Munster, there were occasions when the British and colonial governments put aside an instinctive distrust of experts and academics as the situation in Uganda at that time had called for outside thinking.

Whether a body was labelled a 'commission' or 'committee' was another means through which the British and colonial governments sought to exercise control. The Wild and Ramage commissions were both labelled as 'committees' by the British Government. For the Wild Committee, as seen earlier, Crawford was keen to constrain its brief. To emphasise the point a constitutional 'committee' rather than a 'commission' would be established. This title and its chairmanship by Wild would 'put the thing in its right setting' as senior Colonial Office official F. D. 'Max' Webber remarked.[59] This description of the body of a committee, rather than the usual commission was thus given in an attempt to stop committee members viewing themselves as having a more important role than the British Government wished. Committees, as Chapman has observed, have less of a status than commissions.[60] No doubt the same sort of thinking was behind the labelling of the Ramage and Swaziland bodies 'committees' rather than 'commissions'.

A similar urge to manage can also be seen with the Monckton Commission. Here, a pre-commission was set up to give 'wise treatment' to material which would then be placed before the eventual commissioners.[61] By so doing, the British Government thus hoped that the commissioners would not only focus on issues which it had prescribed but also that the information gleaned on such issues would be restricted to the sifted information that had been placed before them, which would presumably show the Federation in a positive light.[62] For Swaziland, both London and the colonial governments had ultimately very little influence on the Committee workings. Whitehall was largely, at least to begin with, kept in the dark about proceedings which were handled by the territory's Resident and High Commissioner. This was a source of annoyance to the CRO which was particularly irked by a

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unacceptable to local opinion. The British and colonial governments settled for the appointees being nominated by the Paramount Chief, in the knowledge that there would be at least two government members serving, that the chairman would be an official and that they ought to be able to influence the Commission through the appointment of a constitutional advisor.

[59] TNA, CO822/1436, Webber to Gorell Barnes, 29.10.58.

[60] Chapman, *Role of Commissions*, p.174.

[61] TNA, PREM5/251, Telegram from Lennox-Boyd to the Governors of Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia, 06.04.59.

[62] Whitehall officials viewed the task that they had been given as unfair as it had 'brought them to the very edge of political matters': TNA, DO35/7577, Note from J. C. Morgan to Martin and Poynton, 22.12.59.

press statement, issued without reference to London, and which suggested that the consideration and outcome of the Committee's recommendations would be a matter for the Resident and High Commissioner alone.[63] In a move designed to regain control of Committee proceedings, a 'constitutional expert' in the form of Sir Charles Arden-Clarke was foisted upon the Committee by the British Government in an attempt to temper the outcome.[64] It seems a little odd that Arden-Clarke was chosen for the role, given the reservations expressed about him a year or so beforehand in relation to the Monckton Commission, and mentioned earlier in this chapter. However, the discussion in relation to Monckton was between Colonial Office and Governor. For the Swaziland commission, Arden-Clarke was picked by the Commonwealth Relations Office, and perhaps the concern of the Colonial Office regarding Arden-Clarke and the chiefs simply did not occur to its officials.

The beginning of this chapter noted the objectives that the British Government had in organising the African commissions. To ensure that the commissions did not stray too far from these objectives, terms of reference were carefully prescribed by the British Government. This was a yet a further way in which it sought to influence outcomes. Providing a commission with strict terms of reference was nothing new. Clokie and Robinson have observed how 'careful manipulation of the terms of reference' can save a government embarrassment.[65] Chapman too has noted that the terms of reference of a commission are important, and that they are greatly influenced by the objectives in the mind of those responsible for setting up the commission.[66] Johnson has provided an example of this in relation to the Forster Commission, whose terms were drafted to focus attention on the Trinidad disturbances as a mere labour dispute. Such conflicts could then be solved by the colonial secretary's objective of setting up trade unions.[67] If it were the case that the British Government did not want the commission to dabble too much in colonial affairs, then terms were inevitably drawn narrowly to prevent commission members from considering wider issues which would embarrass the British and colonial governments. This was the particularly the case for the Wild, Ramage, and Blood commissions. The Wild Committee was given 'strict terms of reference', and then invited,

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[63] TNA, DO119/1411, Letter from Sykes to Latimer, 30.03.61.
[64] TNA, DO119/1414, Telex from Marwick to High Commissioner, 28.08.61.
[65] Clokie and Robinson, *Royal Commissions of Inquiry*, p.129.
[66] Chapman, *Role of Commissions*, p.179.
[67] Johnson, 'Political Uses of Commissions', p.264.

in such a way as it was framed as an afterthought, to give advice on the 'size and composition of the Legislature' and 'also possibly of the Government' (Crawford having subsequently recognised that if all discussion on this last matter was excluded then the colonial government was likely to face criticism).[68] It was made clear, however, in the Governor's speech of 17 November 1958 that for those wider matters on which advice might be tendered a 'special responsibility lies directly with Her Majesty's Government and cannot be settled here in Uganda'.[69] A firm marker had thus been put down for the Committee not to stray into forbidden territory.

The Ramage Committee's terms were also constrained. As seen earlier, Turnbull had proposed that the only matters which should be referred to the Committee were 'ones on which the Government has no strong views'. On that basis he suggested that terms of reference be limited to constituencies and boundaries, the racial composition of the legislative council, the possible establishment of a territorial council, and 'to give the Committee "some meat"', the electoral franchise.[70] To obviate nationalist pressure for the Committee to look at the executive council - something which Tanganyika's former Governor, Sir Edward Twining, had envisaged, and indeed had already announced - Turnbull would declare, before the Committee had been established, that the executive council would be broadened with effect from 1 July 1959 to include five unofficials.[71] The Colonial Office approved of the plan and the Committee's terms of reference were drafted accordingly. Thus through a series of steps, the British and colonial governments had restricted the Ramage Committee's brief.

Similarly, the terms of reference of the Blood Commission were very precisely drawn, specifying that the British Government's view was that Zanzibar's legislative council should 'become predominantly elective in character' and that the executive council 'should be reorganised to permit the establishment of a ministerial system'. At the same time, certain 'principles' were set down as part of the terms: the position of the Sultan and his successors should be safeguarded, along with Zanzibar citizenship; non-racial development should be promoted; there should be a common roll of electors, and there should be no change for the present in the franchise.[72] These precise terms of reference were a strong

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[68] Uganda, *Report of the Constitutional Committee, 1959* (Entebbe, 1959). TNA, FCO141/18276, Letter from Crawford to Gorell Barnes, 23.10.58.
[69] Uganda, *Report of the Constitutional Committee, 1959*.
[70] TNA, CO822/1460, Letter from Turnbull to Gorell Barnes, 09.12.58.
[71] Ibid.
[72] Zanzibar, *Report of the Constitutional Commissioner 1960* (Zanzibar, 1960).

indication of what the British and Zanzibar governments wanted from the Commission. Even if the Commission were smaller than a Wild-type one, it would still need to be kept 'on the rails' as B. E. Rolfe, a senior Colonial Office official, observed.[73] Blood himself noted wryly that the terms were 'unusually detailed'.[74] In fact Macleod felt so confident that Blood would recommend an unofficial majority not just in the legislative council but also in the executive council (which he subsequently did) that he sought and received approval for this measure from the Colonial Policy Committee before Blood had even reported.[75]

For Basutoland, once the responsibility for constitutional affairs of the territory had passed to the Colonial Office, Monson began to focus on the Commission and became increasingly concerned about events, reminding colleagues that locally based committees, such as the Wild Committee in Uganda and the Ramage in Tanganyika 'had generally involved some embarrassment for the Government even when it had helped by providing them with outside chairmen or advice to give them sufficient guidance'.[76] Moreover, the appointment of the Commission had not been brought to the attention of British Government Ministers.[77] The lack of care was regretted with Stanford telling his High Commissioner, that it was unfortunate that the Colonial Office had not itself dealt with the Commission's terms of reference, with its greater experience of such things.[78] Despite the awkward start, the Colonial Office nevertheless sought to manage the Commission's outcome. Monson's central thinking was to make use of that part of the Commission's terms of reference which obliged it to have 'regard to the responsibilities for Basutoland of Her Majesty's Government' and to now issue a statement from the British Government particularising these responsibilities in order to 'serve the purpose of making it clear how far the Commission could properly go in making its recommendations'.[79] It would, he thought, '"put a keel" under the craft of the Commission'.[80] It was no doubt hoped that Commission members would appreciate that Britain's continued responsibilities over matters such as grants and defence would make its members less inclined to make recommendations which stripped the colonial government of powers. Lord Perth, Minister of State, agreed with this approach, adding that it was 'important that the C.O. doesn't give up ultimate

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[73] TNA, CO822/2325, Note by B. E. Rolfe, 19.02.60.

[74] Zanzibar, *Report of the Constitutional Commissioner,* p.6.

[75] TNA, CAB134/1559, Memorandum from Macleod to CPC, 15.03.60.

[76] TNA, CO1048/46, Note of a Colonial Office meeting between Monson and others, 03.04.62.

[77] TNA, CO1048/46, Note from Monson to Martin, 05.04.62.

[78] TNA, DO119/1390, Letter from Stanford to Maud, 16.07.62.

[79] TNA, CO1048/46, Note of a Colonial Office meeting between Monson and others, 03.04.62.

[80] TNA, CO1048/46, Letter from Monson to Maud, 25.06.62.

control'.[81] Stanford and Maud, however, both warned against such a statement being issued, believing that it would be counter-productive,[82] and in the end none was sent. The episode illustrates, however, just how much the Colonial Office wanted to control the terms of reference and, ultimately, the end product of the commission.

Terms of reference could also be used by the British Government as propaganda. In Zanzibar those for the Blood Commission were paraded before the nationalist parties to show that the Government was serious about change. One reason for setting such precise terms was to give the local political parties an indication that the Commission was not being used as a stalling advice.[83] This in itself is revealing of the British use of commissions as breathing spaces, the Colonial Office being aware that their ploy might be recognised and taking steps to negate this perception.

Before leaving this section on terms of reference, it is worth examining controversies over two of the African commissions' terms of reference. The first is the Monckton Commission and whether that commission was permitted to consider a recommendation that a Central African Federation territory might be given the right to secede. The second is the Molson Commission and whether the Kabaka of Buganda was deliberately misled over the terms of reference in order to secure his participation. The matters are relevant, not least as they could illustrate another way in which the British Government sought to manipulate the use of commissions.

As discussed in Chapter One, it seems clear that the British Government expected the Monckton Commission to discuss whether a territory of the CAF should be given a right of secession. Here, did Macmillan therefore mislead Welensky? The Federal Prime Minister clearly believed that he had an assurance from Macmillan that the secession matter would not be considered. Writing his account of the episode some four years later, Welensky recorded how he had regarded the Monckton Report's secession proposals as 'the final straw' and 'a complete breach of the understandings upon which I agreed to the appointment of the Commission'.[84] Indeed, Macmillan does seem to have given Welensky comfort that secession would not be considered by the Commission, telling the Federal Prime Minister in November 1959 that '[o]n the terms of reference I have not yielded an

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[81] TNA, CO1048/46, Note from Perth to Martin, 17.04.62.

[82] TNA, DO119/1390, Letter from Stanford to Maud, 16.07.62; Letter from Maud to Monson, 03.08.62.

[83] TNA, CO822/2325, File note by Martin, 07.03.60.

[84] Welensky, *4000 days,* p.272.

inch', and that 'I realise that you may feel that I have gone a bit far in saying that the Commission would listen to evidence of all kinds. But really no one can in practice prevent that... I am sure we will gain by letting people talk, provided the Commission's recommendations are, as they will be, strictly within the terms of reference.'[85] Two days later, Macmillan was clearer still, sending a telegram to Welensky to say that: 'we have no intention of making an extension of the terms to include secession'.[86] As J.R.T. Wood points out, had Welensky learned that the commissioners were free to consider the secession issue, he would have withdrawn his support for the Commission.[87] Philip Murphy has suggested that the British Government's tactic, ultimately, was to skirt around the issue,[88] rather than to deliberately mislead. Murphy cites a minute from Lord Perth in which the minister notes a conversation he had had with Lord Home, during which the latter thought that 'we could "fudge"' the point about whether the terms of reference included the secession issue.[89] Rather than a 'fudge', a more accurate description of the British Government's attitude is that, as concluded in Chapter One, it told Welensky one thing, and others another, hoping that the contradictions would never come to light. Whilst the above episode should not be seen as a deliberate attempt by Macmillan to deceive in the sense that the British Prime Minister anticipated a secession recommendation, it is nonetheless a further example of how the British Government wanted to control and manage. It was hugely important to Macmillan that the Monckton Commission got underway, even if, in order to give effect to this, that meant telling commissioners and the Labour Party one thing, and telling Welensky another.

What about the Molson Commission and the allegation of British Government sharp practice there? That Commission's recommendation of a transfer of the two key counties to Bunyoro was greeted enthusiastically by its ruler, the Omukama, who pressed the Ugandan government for its immediate implementation.[90] The Kabaka of Buganda, however, whilst pleased that the Commission had not been able to substantiate allegations of discrimination in the 'Lost Counties', deplored the central recommendation that two counties be ceded, believing that the terms of reference went beyond what had been

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[85] TNA, PREM5/253, Telegram from Macmillan to Welensky, 24.11.60.
[86] TNA, PREM5/253, Telegram from Macmillan to Welensky, 26.11.59.
[87] Wood, *Welensky Papers*, p.725.
[88] Murphy (ed.), *BDEEP*, Series B, Volume 9, *Central Africa*, Part 1, p.lxxvi.
[89] Ibid, document 194, Minute of Lord Perth, 16.06.59.
[90] TNA, CO822/2791, Note of Meeting between the Omukama and Coutts, 30.05.62.

agreed.[91] The Kabaka contended that the British Government had deliberately misled him over the terms of reference of the Molson Commission in order to secure his participation, with the hope that once the Commission had reported then he would be under pressure to agree to its recommendations, irrespective of whether or not they fell within the strict terms of reference.

The difference in perception which arose over the terms of reference seems, in the main part, to have come about through a genuine muddle on the part of the British and Ugandan governments, although there is some element of sophistry on the part of the British. The Commission had originally been the Kabaka's idea, believing only that allegations of discrimination would be discussed.[92] Bunyoro found this unacceptable.[93] Terms of reference were then discussed between the British and Protectorate governments. Lord Perth thought that these terms should not be drawn 'too baldly for fear that the Kabaka would not then participate' but that 'he should realise beforehand that [the Commission] would be free to recommend any solution including that of a transfer of territory'.[94] Webber from the Colonial Office then had an 'unofficial' meeting with the Kabaka's legal counsel, E.F.N. Gratiaen QC, who felt that it would be wrong for the terms to openly make reference to a solution of transfer of territory, but accepted that this could be an outcome and that the Kabaka 'must be under no illusion about the matter'.[95] Terms of reference were subsequently drafted widely, without specific reference to a transfer of the Counties. Molson, meanwhile, who had served on the Monckton Commission and was keen to avoid a similar debacle about the terms of reference of his Commission, asked Macmillan to confirm that he would be free to make a recommendation of a transfer of territory if that was considered to be the right course. This was duly given.[96] The Kabaka accepted the terms of reference, maintaining ignorance of the Prime Minister's side letter. Matters then went quiet before the Kabaka was told by Molson towards the end of the enquiry that the terms of reference left the Commission free to make revisions to the existing boundaries.[97] The Kabaka then accused the British Government of bad faith, stating that he was unaware of the Prime Minister's letter. Webber asked Sir Walter Coutts, Uganda's Governor,

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[91] TNA, CO822/2787, Note of discussion between Maudling, the Buganda delegation and others, 19.06.62.
[92] TNA, CO822/2790, Letter from Kabaka to Macleod, 06.10.61.
[93] TNA, CO822/2790, Memorandum from Monson to Macleod, 07.10.61.
[94] TNA, CO822/2790, Telegram from Perth to Coutts, 06.12.61.
[95] TNA, CO822/2770, Note from Webber to Martin, 08.12.61.
[96] TNA, CO822/2790, Letter from Macmillan to Molson, 14.12.61.
[97] TNA, CO822/2791, Telegram from Webber to Coutts, 07.03.62.

whether he had made the point to the Kabaka that the Commission was free to recommend any solution that they thought appropriate and Coutts replied that he did not, saying that it did not occur to him that the Bugandan leader was unaware of the possibility of a cessation of territory solution. Whether the Kabaka was really unaware, and used the bad faith allegation simply to discredit the British Government because he did not like the Commission's findings, is not known. At the end of the day though, the overall impression gleaned is that the British Government did not wish to irritate the Kabaka by making a bald reference to transfer, but at the same time neglected to make it clear to him that this might be an outcome. The primary objective of the British had simply been to secure the Kabaka's participation. Spelling out precisely what this might mean for Buganda had been a secondary consideration.

The above two episodes show clumsiness on the part of the British Government. But as the examples below will show, both the British and colonial governments were not averse to taking more direct measures to secure a commission report to their liking. With the exception of the Kenya Northern Frontier Commission, the British and colonial governments kept a close eye on the progression of commissions' workings. Sometimes this was a relatively light touch but for some of the commissions interference was more direct, the most extreme case being in relation to the Wild committee where the Ugandan Governor saw and made changes to the first draft of the chairman's report. A prime example of the British Government's scrutiny of the progress of a commission can be seen relation to the Monckton Commission. On 1 November 1960 Macmillan told the House of Commons that he had not discussed with Monckton the report that the chairman and his colleagues intended to present.[98] Whilst that might be strictly true, the statement by no means presents a full picture of the ongoing relationship between the British Government and Monckton during the tenure of the Commission.

Whitehall officials, along with the governors of Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia and the British High Commissioner in Salisbury, kept in regular contact with Monckton during the tenure of the Commission, reporting on its progress and on the Chairman's latest thoughts. Sir Evelyn Hone, Governor of Northern Rhodesia, gleaning information from colonial official and Commission liaison officer Trevor Gardener, wrote to Leslie Monson on no less than

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[98] HC Deb 1 November 1960, Vol. 629 c30.

five occasions whilst the Commission was in Northern Rhodesia taking evidence;[99] Sir Glyn

Jones and Sir Robert Armitage, governors of Nyasaland, reported at least four times from

Nyasaland,[100] and M.R. Metcalf, a colonial government official from Southern Rhodesia did

so too on at least one occasion.[101] The more important of these reports were shown to

Macmillan.[102] David Scott, one of the Assistant Secretaries to the Commission, had

promised Sir Henry Lintott at the Commonwealth Relations Office that he would write him

the occasional letter to tell him 'about how the work of the Commission was going'.[103] Tim

Bligh, Principal Private Secretary to Macmillan, also discussed progress with Monckton on

at least one occasion.[104] It was not just officials that had at least an occasional dialogue

with Monckton. Lord Home met the Chairman early on in the Commission's visit to the

Federation,[105] and once Monckton was back in London in May, he told the Commonwealth

Secretary that if he ever felt like lunching alone with him it would not, he thought, catch

the eye.[106] Metcalf also assumed that Home would 'no doubt be getting an up-to date

account of how things have gone from Lord Monckton very shortly'.[107] Macleod also met

with Monckton in early April 1960 while he was in Nyasaland,[108] and again on 20 July of

that year to discuss his proposed constitutional advances in Nyasaland with the

Chairman.[109] Birkenhead claims that early on in the life of the Commission Monckton met

with Macmillan at the latter's house in Sussex to discuss the issue of admissibility of

evidence on secession.[110] By late June, however, Monckton turned down an invitation from

the Prime Minister to join him at Chequers, Monckton telling him enigmatically that the

other commissioners might misunderstand his actions.[111] Macmillan also met Monckton on

at least two other occasions - the first to talk about Commission member Lord Shawcross'

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[99] TNA, DO35/7595, Letter from Hone to Monson, 22.02.60; TNA, DO35/7595, Letter from Hone to Monson, 29.02.60; TNA, CO1015/2314, Letter from None to Monson, 01.03.60; TNA, DO35/7595, Letter from Hone to Monson, 11.03.60; TNA, CO1015/2315, Letter from Hone to Monson, 22.03.60.
[100] TNA, CO1015/2315, letter from Jones to Monson, 28.03.60; TNA, CO1015/2315 Letter from Jones to Monson, 02.04.60; TNA, CO1015/2315, Letter from Jones to Monson, 04.04.60; TNA, CO1015/2315, Letter from Armitage to Macleod, 13.04.60.
[101] TNA, DO35/7595, Metcalf to Home, 12.05.60.
[102] TNA, DO35/7595, Letter from Macmillan's Private Secretary to Cole, 25.03.60.
[103] TNA, DO35/7595, Letter from Scott to Lintott, 14.03.60.
[104] TNA, PREM5/255, Note by Bligh, 31.05.60.
[105] David Scott, *Ambassador in Black and White: Thirty Years of Changing Africa* (London, 1981), p.68.
[106] Monckton Papers, File 53, f.6. Letter from Monckton to Home, 12.05.60.
[107] TNA, DO35/7595, Metcalf to Home, 12.05.60.
[108] TNA, DO35/7595, Telegram from Nyasaland Information Department to the office of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, 06.04.60.
[109] TNA, PREM11/3077, Macleod to Lord Chancellor, 21.07.60.
[110] Birkenhead, *Walter Monckton*, p.347.
[111] Monckton Papers, File 12, f89, Letter from Monckton to Macmillan, 20.06.60.

ill health and whether he could carry on, and the second to discuss personally the proposed advances in Nyasaland.[112] The Prime Minister subsequently asked Monckton not to mention these meetings in public.[113]

From all of these meetings, the British Government was able to glean substantial information on the latest thinking of Monckton and his commissioners. On 11 March 1960, Hone reported that one group of commissioners favoured a loosening of the Federation,[114] and later that month Jones told Monson that there was now reason to believe that the Commissioners were seeking to find some looser form of association which might be acceptable to the people of Nyasaland.[115] On 8 April he further stated that the Commission thought that the only way to save the Federation was to give it an entirely 'new look'.[116] Macleod reported after his meeting with Monckton on 6 April that as far as Nyasaland was concerned, most commissioners would favour a constitutional set-up something along the lines of Swaziland - a protectorate within a federation,[117] and Monckton told Home candidly on 22 April that finding a solution which supported the Federation but which was also acceptable to Africans in the Northern Territories would be difficult.[118]

Macleod kept a watchful eye on the Commission during August 1960, meeting Monckton on several occasions.[119] It was during this month that the Commission inched itself towards making its recommendation of secession. Monckton took the lead here, suggesting that 'the way to make the Federation survive was to allow its members the opportunity of leaving it; a case of <u>reculer pour mieux sauter</u>'.[120] By the 26th of that month, it seems clear that Macleod, having met Monckton, learned that the secession recommendation would be made, telling Macmillan that some of the recommendations 'are obviously going to be a considerable pill for [Roy] Welensky to swallow', and that the Federal Prime Minister was already aware of the proposals.[121] The tone of the Colonial Secretary was one of concern, and of how to manage Welensky. Why did Macleod and Macmillan not seek to persuade Monckton to reverse the secession recommendation? As noted in Chapter Six, between the

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[112] TNA, PREM11/3077, Note for the Record taken by Bligh, 03.08.60.
[113] TNA, PREM11/3079, Memorandum from Philip de Zuleta to A. A. Ackland, 20.10.60.
[114] TNA, DO35/7595, Hone to Monson, 11.03.60.
[115] TNA, CO1015/2315, Letter from Jones to Monson, 28.03.60.
[116] TNA, CO1015/2315, Letter Jones to Monson, 08.04.60.
[117] TNA, DO35/7595, Extract of notes of a meeting, 14.01.60.
[118] Monckton Papers, File 52, f317, Letter from Monckton to Home, 22.04.60.
[119] TNA, PREM11/3077, Note from Macleod to Macmillan, 03.08.60 and 11.08.60; TNA, CO1015/2315, Note from Macleod to Macmillan, 28.08.60.
[120] TNA, CO960, Minutes of 25th Plenary Session of the Monckton Commission, 17.08.60 (trans. 'to draw back in order to make a better jump').
[121] CO1015/2315, Note from Macleod to Macmillan, 26.08.60.

time the Commission was set up and when it reported, the political scene had changed dramatically. It may therefore have been the case that by August 1960, both Macleod and Macmillan were prepared, reluctantly, to tolerate a secession recommendation. But more importantly, they would also have judged that it was just not possible at that stage to have persuaded this major, independent commission to change that recommendation. The difficulties of the British Government controlling commissions is a theme returned to at the end of this chapter, and then further in Chapter Six.

The Wild Committee offered greater opportunity to exert governmental influence. Here, it will be remembered, the chairman was a Ugandan colonial official who reported to the Governor. In February 1959, Crawford wrote that he 'had no intention whatsoever of interfering in any way with the proceedings of the Committee', although he would be interested in its work and available to discuss any 'knotty problem'.[122] This, however, was hardly reflected in practice. The Colonial Office had earlier told Sir Richard Turnbull, Governor of Tanganyika, that the Ugandan Governor would 'do what he can from now on to see that the answer they produce is not far off what he (and H. M. Government) would find acceptable'.[123] Wild acknowledged that he was to 'attempt to influence the thinking of the members of the Committee',[124] and communicated with Crawford on a number of occasions, passing back views of Committee members with the request that the contents be kept secret as 'great damage would be done' if members thought that their activities were being reported.[125] Crawford sought also to manage the timing of the Report to tie in with publication of constitutional proposals for Tanganyika,[126] and reviewed and made changes to the Report's first draft.[127]

A similar level of supervision by the colonial authorities was also exercised over the Ramage Committee. Before the Committee's work got underway, Gorell Barnes wrote to Turnbull, telling him that we should be clear 'on the kind of solutions we ourselves are aiming at', and that it would be 'a good thing if we could indicate to the Chairman the provisional lines on which we hope to work'. It was made clear to the Tanganyikan Governor that Lennox-Boyd did not want to move to an elected legislative council

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[122] TNA, FCO141/18285, Points for Address by H.E. Inaugurating Constitutional Committee, 07.02.59.
[123] TNA, FCO141/18276, Letter from Gorell Barnes to Turnbull, 20.10.58.
[124] TNA, FCO141/18285, Note from Wild to Hartwell, 17.06.59.
[125] TNA, FCO141/18284, Report from Chairman, 29.04.59. See also FCO141/18277, Letter from Crawford to Webber, 31.10.59 and FCO141/18277, Note from Wild to Crawford, 04.11.59.
[126] TNA, FCO141/18284, Note from Wild to Crawford, 29.10.59.
[127] TNA, FCO141/18284, Note from Wild to Hartwell, 12.11.59.

majority.[128] Turnbull suggested that a satisfactory result would be a racial composition of the executive council in which the number of Africans was roughly balanced by the number of combined Europeans and Asians and a franchise wide enough to forestall an early and insistent demand for universal franchise.[129] Sir John Macpherson, Permanent Under Secretary of State at the Colonial Office, briefed Ramage along these lines.[130] In mid-July, the chairman reported his provisional thinking to Sir John Fletcher-Cooke, Turnbull's deputy,[131] and by the end of August Turnbull was able to tell Julian Amery, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, that under the Chairman's 'wise guidance' committee members had 'swallowed the more extreme of their election promises', such as universal suffrage.[132] Ramage, as had been hoped, had been able to dissuade the Committee from viewing an elected majority for the territory's legislative council as being within their terms of reference.[133] A week or so later, Tanganyikan colonial official C.I. Meek told Webber that the draft Report was 'generally along the lines that you have already been led to expect'.[134]

The Kenyan Coastal Strip and Zanzibar commissions each, as mentioned earlier, had single commissioners. These would have been potentially easier to control than a large committee. Once again there is evidence of British and colonial government interference in the commissions' proceedings. Sir James Robertson, the chairman of the Coastal Strip Commission, and the British Government collaborated on several occasions whilst the Commissioner was collecting evidence and before his final report was published. Robertson had understood that he should report to Monson at the Colonial Office on how things were progressing. He also asked, on one occasion, for confirmation that Britain would not wish to offer continued protection for the Strip and that it did not require a naval base at Mombasa in order to 'knock down [Coastal Strip autonomist] arguments conclusively'.[135] Such confirmation was given.[136] Later on, London was particularly concerned at a recommendation made by Robertson in his final draft report concerning the Commissioner's proposed compensation for a forced loan of £200,000 that had been made by the Sultan to the British Government in 1885. The Commissioner had suggested that not

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[128] TNA, CO822/1460, Letter from Gorell Barnes to Turnbull, 06.01.59.
[129] TNA, CO822/1460, Letter from Turnbull to Gorell Barnes, 13.01.59.
[130] TNA, CO822/1460, Letter from Macpherson to Ramage, 23.02.59.
[131] TNA, CO822/1460, Telegram from Fletcher Cooke to Colonial Secretary, 22.07.59.
[132] TNA, CO822/1460, Telegram from Turnbull to Amery, 28.08.59.
[133] Papers of Lady Chesham, Borthwick Institute, University of York, Minutes of the First meeting of the Post Elections Committee, 05.06.59; Minutes of the Twenty-sixth meeting, 17.08.59.
[134] TNA, FCO141/17875, Letter from C. I. Meek to Webber, 07.09.59.
[135] TNA, CO822/2152, Letter from Roberston to Monson, 27.10.61.
[136] TNA, CO822/2152, Letter from Monson to Robertson, 03.11.61.

only should the loan be repaid by the British Government, but that a substantial ex gratia payment be made to the Sultan. It was thought by Whitehall that such a provision may 'land us in an endless series of demands for compensation from other quarters' and Robertson was asked to vary his recommendations to achieve the same financial effect, which he did.[137] Following representations from the Resident of Zanzibar, Roberson also deleted a suggestion that the Sultan might earmark £100,000 of compensation for the welfare of the Coastal peoples.[138]

The British and colonial governments also kept a close watch on Hilary Blood. The commissioner accepted the Zanzibar Resident's invitation to stay at his house for a few days before beginning his work, and it would be surprising if Mooring had not used the occasion to impart his views.[139] Mid-way through May, Blood discussed his proposals with the Resident,[140] who thought them acceptable and that they contained nothing contentious from the British point of view.[141] Indeed, it is striking that Blood's recommendations were so similar to those that had been already proposed by Mooring - a predominantly elective legislative council with a small number of reserved seats and those for ex-officios; and a majority of elected ministers on the executive council. The only substantive difference was that Blood had recommended the appointment of a chief minister, a proposal that the Commissioner had been keen to first share with the colonial government, no doubt to test its reaction.[142] Blood's findings were also sent to the Colonial Office before publication.[143]

Munster and Molson, two commissions with handpicked British-only members, were also subjected to at least some influence. In January 1961, Crawford met and emphasised to the Munster Commission members the importance of a 'strong centre' in Uganda, both to avoid the sort of security position the Congo had found itself in, and to provide a firmer basis for Uganda's participation in a British Government desired East African Federation.[144] Munster shared the Commission's thinking with Macleod and Colonial Office officials in early March of that year,[145] and Macleod then asked for the Commission's

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[137] TNA, CO822/2150, Letter from A. N. Galsworthy to Robertson, 23.11.61.

[138] TNA, CO822/2150, Telegram from Webber to P.A.P. Robertson and Griffith Jones, 08.12.61.

[139] TNA, CO822/2325, Letter from Rolfe to Blood and Blood's response, 04.04.60.

[140] TNA, CO822/2325, Note of a Meeting, 16.05.60.

[141] TNA, CO822/2325, Letter from Mooring to Webber, 21.05.60.

[142] TNA, CO822/2325, Note of a Meeting, 16.05.60.

[143] TNA, CO822/2325, Letter from Blood to Monson, 19.05.60.

[144] TNA, CO822/2277, Note of discussion between Crawford, Munster, Wade, Marshall and others, 25.01.61.

[145] TNA, CO822/2282, Note from Webber to Pearson, 01.03.61. CO822/2282, Letter from Webber to Stacpoole, 07.03.61.

recommendations before the Report was published so that he and the Governor could discuss them.[146] Munster agreed and the conclusions (which found favour) were considered by Macleod, Crawford, and senior Colonial Office officials in advance of publication.[147] One of the Commission's members, Dr A.H. Marshall, had earlier sent the Ugandan colonial Government the draft report for observations, asking for it to be returned to him so that the draft would not remain on Government files.[148] There is scant material in relation to a dialogue between the Molson Commission and the Colonial Office and Protectorate Governments, but Molson did ask Macmillan in December 1961 how he wished the Commission to tackle the enquiry,[149] and in February 1962, before the Commission's report was finalised, Webber was able to tell Walter Coutts, who had replaced Crawford as Governor of Uganda, that he understood the Commission's main recommendations to be that two of the Lost Counties should be transferred to Bunyoro.[150]

The Swaziland Committee would have been far more difficult to control for reasons mentioned earlier. As mentioned above, Arden-Clarke had been sent to influence the Committee, but without success. After the report of the Committee was published, the British and colonial governments had another attempt at influencing the constitutional outcome by setting up a further 'de facto' commission, under the auspices of D. S. Stephens, the former Legal Secretary of Malta. He was appointed to assist the Resident in ascertaining the views of the public of Swaziland on constitutional matters and to report on this - a commissioner in all but name.[151] Having not liked the Committee's report, the Colonial Office had thus wanted a further opportunity to be provided with something more palatable which would legitimise the British Government proposing a more progressive constitution. Stephens reported to the Colonial Secretary, Duncan Sandys, in August 1962, making his own set of recommendations.

As also seen earlier, the British Government was also limited in its dealings with the Basutoland Commission. When Monson's idea of issuing a statement to 'put a keel' under the Commission's workings was not put into practice, influence over the Commission was left to other methods: the government official member B. L. O'Leary was considered 'a

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[146] TNA, CO822/2282, Letter from Macleod to Munster, 24.04.61.
[147] TNA, FCO141/18327, Record of meeting at the Colonial Office, 29.05.61.
[148] TNA, FCO141/18327, Letter from Cartland to Marshall, 21.05.61.
[149] TNA, CO822/2790, Letter from Molson to Prime Minister, 13.12.61.
[150] TNA, CO822/2791, Telegram from Webber to Coutts, 22.02.62.
[151] TNA, DO119/1423, Telex from Resident to High Commissioner, 02.07.62.

useful medium for the injection of views and information and discreet lobbying'.[152] Stanford, the Commission chairman, was also able to keep the colonial government informed of developments,[153] supplying an interim report of events,[154] and a copy of the Commission's report in draft.[155]

Hannah Whittaker has noted the Somali suspicion that the British Government had sought to influence the Kenya Northern Frontier Commission through persuading its two commissioners, Onyiuke and Bogert, to discount a section of pro-Somali opinion. The author does not, however, comment on whether the suspicion was grounded in fact. The Somali claim centres around the decision of the Commission not to include the views of the Rendille ethnic group in its summary of opinion on the basis that they were not Muslim and had had no significant interaction with the Somali. As a consequence, their views were thought to be unreliable. Had the Rendille's views been conveyed in the Report, then not only would the body of opinion in favour of secession have increased, but because of the geographical spread of that group, so too would those districts of the Northern Frontier territory that the Commission labelled 'Somali opinion'.[156] No evidence has been found, however, which supports the Somali view of what took place and whilst the Kenyan Governor was certainly kept informed of progress, there is no indication of British or colonial influence being exerted on the Commission or generally.[157] But perhaps this is not surprising given that the Commission's role was to report on the facts rather than make recommendations.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown how the British and colonial governments sought to control the output of the African commissions through a number of mechanisms: deciding how the body should be labelled (commission or committee), prescribing terms of reference, deciding on who should chair the commissions and who should sit on them and, not least, by exercising at least a measure of control over the commissions' workings. Terms of reference were sometimes drawn narrowly for fear that the commission would otherwise examine wider and (from the British point of view) undesirable issues. Chairmen were

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[152] TNA, DO119/1392, Note of meeting between Maud, Giles, Stanford and others, 22.08.62.
[153] Ibid; TNA, DO119/1393, Brief for the High Commissioner, 01.03.63.
[154] TNA, CO1048/46, Interim Private Report of the Constitutional Commission, 02.11.62.
[155] TNA, CO1048/383, Memo from Campbell to Monson, 30.09.63.
[156] Whittaker, *Shifta,* p.33.
[157] See for example TNA, CO822/2005, Letter from Poynton to Caccia, 15.11.62, recording the Governor having reported on the evidence submitted to the Commission.

chosen who would share establishment policies on colonial matters and who could, if necessary, bring wayward commission members round to an establishment point of view. They were also chosen to engender respect from Africans. Commission members were also picked to suit British purposes. If more radical African members had to be accommodated for credibility, then these were counterbalanced by packing the commission with moderates or establishment figures. Most of all, the British and colonial governments kept tabs on the proceedings of the commissions, sometimes reminding them of the British colonial desired outcomes.

Writing about the efficacy of commissions and inquiries, Rowe and McAllister have observed that 'creating [a commission] is to cede some control over the process and conclusions… [t]he very appointment of a commission opens up the possibility of the unwanted.'[158] Notwithstanding attempts by the British Government to influence proceedings, there were limits to how far a commission could be controlled, and importantly what it might report. The Monckton Commission and its awkward recommendation of secession is the best example of this, but there were other commission reports which also embarrassed the British and colonial governments: Wild, Ramage, and the reports for Basutoland and Swaziland were further instances. The precise ways in which commissions had not met British Government expectations and the reasons for this are dealt with in Chapter Six but it is little surprise that Maudling issued his edict in late 1962 that no further constitutional commissions were to be appointed without his explicit consent.[159] For Africa, none were in the life of the 1959-1964 Conservative Government. As the chapter shows, commissions could be guided but they were blunt and unsteady tools of control, lacking the precision of the conferences where the colonial secretary could exercise far more control. This is the subject of the next chapter.

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[158] Mike Rowe and Laura McAllister, 'The Roles of Commissions of Inquiry in the Public Policy Process', *Public Policy and Administration,* Vol. 21, no.4 (2006), pp.99-115, p.111.
[159] The reference to 'explicit consent' was probably one to the institution of the Swaziland commission, which, as mentioned previously, had been set up with Commonwealth Relations Office approval, but seemingly not that of the Colonial Office.

Chapter Three

Conferences and British governmental control

As noted in Chapter One, the British Government sought frequently to use constitutional conferences to seize the initiative. The announcement of a conference was intended to stave off local pressures, giving the British and colonial governments time to work out their next constitutional moves. This chapter takes the narrative to the next step, and looks at how, having gained such a breathing space, the British Government then sought to plan its desired conference outcomes. Part one identifies general aspirations which influenced the British Government's conference planning before then examining the more specific plans drawn up for the conferences. Part two looks at the wide range of tactics used by the British and colonial governments to achieve their conference objectives. As will be seen, the British Government went to great lengths to secure what it wanted.

Part One: The conference objectives of the British and colonial governments

Historians of British decolonisation in Africa have long identified certain attributes of British governmental thinking which were prevalent in the final days of empire. These were characteristics and features which drove attitudes of British ministers, the Colonial Office and the Governors and their staff, and which, in the decolonisation process, mattered to the British most of all. Of course, not all thinking was identical and different actors held different views about the pace of change. Nevertheless, there were also shared, broad aspirations. Arguably the three most important aims of the collective 'official mind' were stability, moderation and for Britain to emerge with its prestige and reputation intact.[1] John Darwin is one of the historians to have pinpointed this desire for stability. As he has argued, 'British instinct was for a slow, careful, orderly transition'.[2] In practice, as the author goes on to state, this aim was constantly thwarted. But that did nothing to diminish it as a guiding aspiration, albeit one which, by the early 1960s had become increasingly hard to operate in Africa, where compromises sometimes had to be made. Zanzibar and Uganda, as shown in Chapter Six, are both cases in point. Frank Heinlein in his comprehensive study of British governmental policy towards decolonisation notes this

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[1] See later in this chapter for a discussion on the 'official mind'.
[2] John Darwin, *The End of the British Empire: The Historical Debate* (Oxford, 1991), p.76.

same trait, observing that 'British policy-makers were, above all, interested in stability', vital if Soviet penetration into Africa was to be prevented, and so that trade and investment might continue freely.[3] Aligned to stability was a British wish to place power in Africa in the hands of those perceived as moderate. As Darwin again has argued, long before the Second World War British policy-makers recognised that nationalism could not be crushed but had to be accommodated, yet they sought to mould things so that moderate nationalists would prevail, pursuing a ruthlessness to those who were seen as extremists.[4] As the race to win African minds in the Cold War intensified in the early 1960s, it became even more important to the British to install 'moderates' as future leaders.

Yet the crucial concern of British Cabinet members in transferring sovereignty in Africa was for Britain to emerge with its prestige and reputation as a world power unscathed. As Ronald Hyam has noted, 'the importance attached to prestige' is a key feature which the historian of British decolonisation observes in the archival records.[5] In one sense 'prestige' simply meant avoiding a colony dissolving into chaos, and it was a fundamental imperative of the British to avoid this.[6] As Heinlein and Butler have both noted, for Macmillan it was vital that Britain should maintain its global position, and that it should not be humiliated.[7] But there was more to the prestige issue than averting entropy which would in turn lead to an embarrassing loss of face. Intertwined with the desire to leave a colony with its reputation intact was also a strong aspiration on the part of the British to depart with a sense of decorum and even pride, bequeathing a colony British values. Harshan Kumarasingham has shown how the British sought to impose the 'dignified' culture of British Westminster onto a newly independent India, and David Cannadine has observed how the aim of 'freedom at midnight' independence ceremonials was to give the impression that power was being transferred voluntarily and with honour.[8] This is not to say, of course, that the importance attached to prestige equated with benevolence and enlightenment on the part of the British. As seen earlier, repressive measures including imprisonment and force were commonplace before 1960.

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[3] Heinlein, *Official Mind*, p.299.
[4] John Darwin, *Britain and Decolonisation: The Retreat from Empire in the Post-War World* (Basingstoke, 1988), p.168.
[5] Hyam, *Britain's Declining Empire*, pp.407-408.
[6] Hyam and Louis (eds.), *BDEEP,* Series A, Volume 4, *The Conservative Government and the End of Empire, 1957-1964,* Part 1, p.liii.
[7] Heinlein, *Official Mind*, p.301; Butler, *Britain and Empire,* p.152.
[8] David Cannadine, 'Introduction: Independence day Ceremonials in Historical Perspective', in S. Williams, R. Holland and T. Barringer (eds.) *Iconography of Independence* (London, 2013), pp.1-17, p.9.

A study of the Colonial Office files of the African constitutional conferences reveals all of these British objectives of stability, moderation and concern about reputation. The emphasis for the second Kenyan conference, for example, was on how best to preserve that territory's stability, the concern being that Kenya might fragment into small, powerless federal pieces - a 'balkanisation', as it was referred to disparagingly.[9] And in the run up to the third of that territory's conferences, the independence one, the Secretary to the Chiefs of Staff Committee argued that it was of immense importance 'to maintain a stable government on terms of friendship with the UK'. This, it was considered, would help ensure the security and the morale of the white population, and consequently maintain an 'atmosphere of confidence conducive to a sound commercial and financial situation'.[10] For the second Northern Rhodesian conference maintaining constitutional stability was a prominent goal of British officials, once again for trade reasons. Burke Trend, the British Government Cabinet Secretary, summed this up well in a note to Alec Douglas-Home, the then Prime Minister, arguing that the mineral wealth of Northern Rhodesia 'in which a vast amount of British capital is invested' made it 'particularly important to ensure stable and orderly administration'.[11]

The desire to encourage moderation also ran through conference planning objectives. The first Kenya conference, for example, was designed, as noted in Chapter One, to get Michael Blundell's group and the moderate Africans to agree and, as will be seen, the British aim at the second one became to avoid an authoritarian government and, if possible, to isolate the extreme wing of KANU. This British aspiration shone through at independence conferences too, where London was keen to rein in provisions in independence constitutions which were seen as giving leaders or political parties too much unchecked power. Thus for the third Kenyan conference, it was hoped that KANU could be swayed into abandoning its more extreme proposals of centralisation.[12] In the lead up to the Northern Rhodesian independence conference Whitehall also became concerned at what it labelled 'objectionable autocracy'; that is to say, just how much constitutional power Kaunda might hold.[13]

No less important in British conference thinking was the prestige point; the desire to depart with what it saw as grace and honour. Chaos was to be avoided at all costs. This can best be

[9] TNA, CAB134/1561, Memorandum from Secretary of State to CPC, 30.01.62.
[10] TNA, DEFE13/333, 'Defence Aid for Kenya', 17.03.64.
[11] TNA, PREM11/5030, Memorandum from Trent to Home, 28.04.64.
[12] TNA, DO168/48, Telegram from MacDonald to Colonial Secretary, 20.09.63.
[13] TNA, DO183/77, Memorandum from Watson to Secretary of State, 22.04.64.

seen in the run up to the first Zanzibar conference where British officials fretted about the consequences of departing the territory before it was seen as ready for independence. As Leslie Monson put it, getting out of Zanzibar 'willy-nilly' would go 'against all our instincts and training',[14] and Sir John Martin too wanted Britain 'to avoid leaving a baby Congo' in Zanzibar.[15] There are further conference examples of the desire to avoid what would be seen as a regrettable legacy. It was thus important for Somaliland to have a constitution for the Protectorate between its independence date and date of union with Somalia, even though this interim stage would last only a matter of days.[16] The British Government was also keen to facilitate talks between the Somaliland ministers and Ethiopian government so that valuable grazing facilities of the Somalis in Ethiopia would not be lost on independence,[17] and, in agreeing to relinquish British protection, Macleod was anxious too that there should be some demonstration that the authorities of the traditional groups who were subject to protection were also in agreement with their political leaders to avoid trouble down the line.[18] Yet, as mentioned above, British disengagement with its reputation in tact was about more than simply avoiding disorder. This was exemplified by a speech which Maudling, as Colonial Secretary, gave to the East Africa Dinner Club at an evening function during the course of the second Uganda conference: '[o]ur interest', stated Maudling 'is to see that [Uganda's] achievement [independence] does not result in chaos'. He expanded on what he meant, by telling the Dinner Club reception that Britain wished to leave as a legacy to Uganda the rule of law, respect for the rights of the individual, and respect for established institutions.[19] All of the above helps explain why Britain was keen to see that its soon to be independent African colonies had constitutions which would have checks on autocratic power and which would be very difficult to amend. As Chapter Six notes, it was appreciated that such constitutions might not survive a transfer of power,[20] but for the British it was nevertheless important to effect such measures and to be seen as having done so. As Gardner Thompson has observed, the British Government

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[14] Although even Monson recognised that Zanzibar could not be held unless the Ministry of Defence would commit troops to the territory: TNA, CO822/2328, Memorandum from Monson to Martin, 13.02.62.

[15] TNA, CO822/2328, Note by Martin on note from Morgan to Monson, 22.03.62.

[16] TNA, CO1015/2361, Somaliland Constitutional Conference, 'Steering Brief, with talking points for U.K. Delegation', April 1960.

[17] TNA, CAB134/1559, Memorandum from Macleod to CPC, 25.04.60.

[18] Great Britain, *Report of the Somaliland Protectorate Constitutional Conference held in London, May 1960*, Cmnd 1044 (London, 1960).

[19] *Uganda Argus*, 23.06.62, p.1.

[20] Although for Kenya, British Government ministers seemed surprisingly confident that this would not happen, as will be seen later on in the chapter.

was also unable to shed its own belief in its own superiority and ability; there was a belief that African leaders lacked the qualities to draw up appropriate constitutions themselves.[21]

Chapter One looked at the impetus behind the British Government calling the African constitutional conferences and noted further that this action was accompanied in almost all cases by a broad idea of what the British Government hoped to achieve from such events. The path between the calling of the conference and the British Government working out its precise objectives varied, as to be expected, from conference to conference. Sometimes the colonial secretary and his officials had a pretty firm view as to the outcome they were looking for but in many cases the precision was developed only in the period between the announcement of a conference and the conference taking place. This is hardly surprising. Events, interaction with the invited conference delegates and their advisers, and forthcoming conference deadlines all served as catalysts to concentrate British minds. The first Kenyan conference is a good example as to how this process worked.

The 1960 Kenya conference, as outlined in Chapter One, was driven primarily by the British Government's desire to encourage moderation in African politics, Michael Blundell's initiative providing the British Government with an opportunity to change the political landscape. The conference was announced by the British Government in April 1959 but at that time its thinking was undeveloped, aspirations being limited to inducing the European settlers to accept that one day there would be African majority rule ('the principle', wrote an unknown Colonial Office member in October 1959 'really boils down to helping the Europeans along rather faster than they would wish'),[22] and to get Michael Blundell's group and the Africans to agree, fuse together, and in time form a government in Kenya.[23] The months leading up to the Conference saw the colonial secretaries (Macleod took over from Lennox-Boyd on 14 October 1959) and Whitehall officials formulating just how far they wished to push the Europeans along, and what sort of agreement they wanted Blundell's New Kenya Group and the African delegates to reach. By the time the Conference opened the sort of agreement which the British Government wanted had matured into four specific objectives: increase the number of Africans in the Council of Ministers, reduce the number of communal seats, introduce a common roll with a qualified franchise, and incorporate

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[21] Thompson, *African Democracy,* pp.154-157.
[22] TNA, CO822/1475, 'Note for the Kenya Constitutional Adviser', October 1959 (Item 340 on file).
[23] Kirkman interview with Macleod 29.12.67, Bodleian Library Oxford, MSS Afr. S2179, p.13.

certain safeguards into the constitution.[24] As will be seen later, Macleod's desired outcome shifted further in the opening days of the Conference, when he came up with a more precise plan. But for now, the main point is to note that this conference, as with many others, was announced with the British Government having only a broad idea as to what it wanted. More precise ideas were then worked up in the months leading up to the conference.

The specific conference objectives of the British Government

The particular conference aspirations of the British Government can be grouped into two broad categories: those where the objectives at the start of the conference were relatively clear and well worked-out, and those where aspirations were much vaguer. Almost all of the African conferences under review fell into the first camp. Examining these objectives illustrates more precisely how the British Government used the conferences to control and manage outcomes.

Several of the African case study conferences were held at a time when independence for the territory concerned was seen as some way off. This was the case for those for Kenya in 1960, Nyasaland in 1960, Northern Rhodesia in 1961, and Swaziland and Basutoland. For these conferences, the British Government had gradualist objectives firmly in mind: constitutional advance would be agreed to, but the end result had to be to leave the British and colonial governments tightly in control of the territory's affairs. In hindsight it is easy to see that such conference concessions which resulted in increased African legislative and executive power would lead to an escalation of the decolonisation process, but this was not a view widely held at the time. Instead, the British thought that by conceding some ground at these conferences, they would appease nationalist leaders which in turn would lead to a period of calm and stability which would maintain British colonial control. It is a point worth drawing out, especially as some of the secondary literature has placed too much stress on a dramatic change of policy once Macleod was appointed as colonial secretary. Andrew Ross, for example, has argued that from the time of Macleod's first paper to Cabinet on 10th November 1959, less than a month after his appointment as Colonial Secretary, 'everything was organised on the basis of efficiently and effectively leading the British East African territories towards self-government as rapidly as possible',[25] and Robert Shepherd has written of the 'dramatic change of policy launched immediately after

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[24] TNA, PREM11/3030, Memorandum from Macleod to Home Secretary, 15.01.60.
[25] Andrew Ross, *Colonialism to Cabinet Crisis: A Political History of Malawi* (Zomba, 2009), p.200.

[Macleod's] appointment'.[26] Other historians have preferred to place emphasis on the Colonial Secretary's quickening of the pace having gained traction soon after, but not immediately following, his appointment. L. J. Butler for example, refers to Macleod 'soon abandon[ing] the painstaking, evolutionary approach to change until then nurtured by the Colonial Office'.[27] However, analysis of the first Kenyan, Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesian conferences, described in the next paragraphs, supports Frank Heinlein's alternative interpretation that a rapid dismantling of empire had *not* been Macleod's aim from the beginning.[28] As this chapter will argue, Macleod was a competent, effective Colonial Secretary, taking the initiative to set up conferences and driving through constitutional change when he thought it expedient to do so. In 1960 and 1961, responding to the nationalist and international pressures for a more rapid decolonisation of Africa, Macleod often did move at pace, but it would be wrong to say that at the time of his appointment as colonial secretary Macleod had firm plans to bring colonies in East Africa or elsewhere to self-governing status as soon as possible. In late 1959, Macleod shared the gradualist approach of his Cabinet colleagues, and even as late as March 1960, he rejected the Wild Committee's recommendation of responsible government for Uganda, regarding this as too radical a step.[29]

At the first Kenyan conference, Macleod's final position, formulated soon after the Conference began, was to accept that under a new Kenyan constitution, Africans could be expected to win a wafer-thin majority of seats in the territory's legislative council and that one third of the Council of Ministers would be comprised of African members.[30] After the Conference, Kenyan Chief Secretary, Walter Coutts, cabled his Governor, now Patrick Renison, who was still in London, expressing his concerns at the concessions which had been made to nationalists which he considered would 'sow dragon's teeth'.[31] Renison, however, wrote back immediately, admonishing Coutts, telling him that he and London considered that very little had actually been conceded and that Africans would go back to Nairobi without universal adult suffrage, no Chief Minister, no majority in the Council of Ministers, without having got rid of specially elected members, without responsible government in 1960, and without specific dates for a further announcement.[32] The

[26] Shepherd, *Macleod*, p.163.
[27] Butler, *Britain and Empire*, p.150.
[28] Heinlein, *Official Mind*, p.237.
[29] See the discussion by Docking in 'The Wind Has Been Gathering Force', p.370.
[30] TNA, PREM11/3030, Note from Bligh to Macmillan, 15.02.60.
[31] TNA, CO822/2354, Telegram from Coutts to Renison, 14.02.60.
[32] TNA, CO822/2354, Telegram from Renison to Coutts, 15.02.60.

defensive response might be seen as the Governor trying a little too hard to justify the conference outcome. Perhaps he was trying to convince himself that little had in fact been given away. But reading the response as a whole, Renison did seem genuinely surprised at Coutts' questioning which he believed to be misplaced. The British objective of gradual constitutional change had, in his view, prevailed even if such gradualism had moved at a faster pace than he probably would have liked.

In much the same way, Macleod considered that the constitutional concessions which he would be offering at the first Nyasaland conference were modest. The British Government's proposals for the Nyasaland conference were framed with the objective of giving Banda just enough: an executive council of ten plus the Governor, of which three would be African elected members, and a legislative council of 28, of which 20 would be elected from a 'lower roll' and were almost certain therefore to be Africans. However, a fundamental part of Macleod's proposal was that the Governor would retain a discretion to outnumber the unofficial members by nominating sufficient official members should the need arise.[33] To the British Government, this move would thus deliver its high level objective of keeping the executive council very much in official hands, and of a legislative council which would likewise give the appearance of a substantial African majority but which the colonial government could flood with its own members if it looked like its policies would be defeated. Macleod wished to give the 'appearance of power' but not the reality. As he told Welensky: 'I would like to be in the position with the Governor of Nyasaland of driving the train to its next journey; I don't mind who blows the whistle or waves the flags.'[34] The simplistic train analogy used by Macleod to Welensky was no doubt designed to win over and to resonate with the CAF Prime Minister who had been employed by Rhodesian railways, but there is nothing to suggest that the Colonial Secretary did not believe in the sentiments he expressed. Macleod's objectives for the 1961 Northern Rhodesian conference were similar. British aspirations for this conference went through a number of revisions, but at the start of the Conference, the Colonial Secretary's aim was for a legislative council of 30, comprised of 16 Africans, 14 Europeans and also 4 officials. This way, Macleod reasoned, the Africans could claim they have a majority but the Europeans could also claim that 'in the last resort power was in "responsible hands"'.[35]

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[33] Great Britain, *Report of the Nyasaland Conference, August 1960*, Cmnd 1132 (London, 1960); TNA, DO35/7567, Memorandum from Macleod to Macmillan, 01.08.60.
[34] TNA, CO1015/2268, Letter from Macleod to Welensky, 30.05.60.
[35] TNA, CO1015/2275, Memorandum from Macleod to Macmillan, 12.12.60.

The above three conferences describe how the British Government had clear objectives at the start of those conferences: to make only moderate constitutional concessions. Yet, working up objectives in order to manage and control outcomes was not limited to these sorts of conferences. Later conferences, when it was appreciated that independence would need to be conceded, were also the subject of careful planning. Thus the British Government also developed detailed objectives for the second Kenya conference. By late 1961, the British Government in the main appreciated that it could not hold on to Kenya for much longer, and feared that an independent Kenya would see an 'unprincipled majority' entrenching itself in power:[36] a reference to KANU which was the party of the dominant Kikuyu and Luo tribes. There was a concern in particular that such a government could work against European interests, to whom Britain had 'a certain moral obligation', and also the minority tribes, which support was grouped around KADU.[37] To guard against this turn of events, it was seen as essential by the British and colonial administration to entrench rights for minorities in a post-independence constitution, primarily through a bill of rights and an independent judiciary.[38] As Maudling told Cabinet colleagues in February 1962, Britain's aim at the forthcoming conference should be 'to try to frame a Constitution which gives the maximum of legal protection to minorities and to individuals'.[39] Of course, such protection would apply not just to African minority groups but also the European settlers. It was recognised by the British administration that safeguards could be overcome by force,[40] but the Colonial Policy Committee was surprisingly sceptical about such coups taking place, considering that it would be a mistake to undervalue the importance of constitutional checks.[41] Introducing a constitution with safeguards and which would be hard to amend therefore became a key British objective of that conference. As noted in the Introduction, Kyle has argued that one aim of the British Government at the second Kenya conference was to promote a split in KANU, hoping that its more moderate wing would enter into an alliance with KADU.[42] Although that was an aspiration, Maudling remained doubtful about whether this could be achieved,[43] and it was soon abandoned.

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[36] TNA, CO822/2237, Telegram from Maudling to Renison, 18.10.61.
[37] TNA, CAB134/1561, Memorandum by Secretary of State to CPC, 30.01.62.
[38] Ibid.
[39] TNA, CAB129/108/2, Memorandum from Maudling to Cabinet, 06.02.62.
[40] Parkinson, *Bills of Rights and Decolonisation*, p.242.
[41] TNA, CAB134/1560, Minutes of Colonial Policy Committee meeting, 15.11.61.
[42] Kyle, *The Politics of the Independence of Kenya,* p.144.
[43] TNA, CAB134/1561, Memorandum by the Secretary of State to the Colonial Policy Committee, 30.01.62.

For the Nyasaland Conference of 1962 and the Tanganyikan Conference, the British Government recognised that self-government had to be conceded. Yet in return, and seeking once again to retain the initiative and impose an outcome which suited its own purposes, the British Government required concessions from nationalist leaders. For the Nyasaland conference, Rab Butler, head of the Central Africa Office, which at the time had responsibility for the CAF, told Banda privately that Nyasaland would be able to secede from the CAF in December 1962 so that the British Government would not have to announce this publically.[44] That would increase pressures in the Rhodesias, and Butler also thought it premature to agree formally to Nyasaland independence before the consequences of secession had been worked out. It was also important to Butler that the colonial government would meanwhile continue to exercise governance over the territory. British Government objectives at the Conference therefore became ones of seeking colonial retention of powers over the police (where there was a concern about what would happen in an Emergency), public services (where a flight of expatriate civil servants might otherwise occur), and financial control (as the territory was heavily grant aided). Butler also wanted to see a bill of rights and council of state.[45] The strategy developed by the British Government for the 1962 Nyasaland conference was thus to give Banda 'the firm impression that [the British Government] broadly accept[ed] [Banda's] views on the general pattern of future progress' but that the 'pace and manner' of advance needed 'hard thinking' and 'hard work'.[46] In November 1962, before the Conference started, the Central African Office formalised these objectives in a series of briefs.[47] For the Tanganyika conference, Macleod recognised that a date for full internal self-government would need to be given, and that a timetable for independence would also have to be conceded.[48] In return, however, the Colonial Secretary wanted to secure a number of concessions from Nyerere.[49]

The British Government also had clear objectives at the start of each of the African 'independence conferences' of the period: those for Kenya 1963, Northern Rhodesia 1964, Zanzibar 1963 and (after a change of heart) Somaliland. Thus for Kenya, the aim of Duncan

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[44] Colin Baker, *Glyn Jones: A Proconsul in Africa* (London, 2002)*,* p.151.

[45] TNA, CAB129/109, Memorandum from Butler to Cabinet, 20.06.62; TNA, CAB129/111, Memorandum from Butler to Cabinet, 25.10.62.

[46] TNA, CAB129/111, Nyasaland Constitutional Conference, Memorandum by the First Secretary of State, 25.10.62.

[47] To be found in TNA, DO183/96.

[48] TNA, CO822/2300, undated Colonial Office summary of the points which Nyerere was likely to make to Macleod in his visit to London of 18.11.60.

[49] Baker*, Exit From Empire,* p.268.

Sandys, now Colonial Secretary, was to persuade KANU to abandon its more extreme proposals of centralisation.[50] For the Northern Rhodesian independence conference of 1964, the objective was to lend support to Kenneth Kaunda.[51] That country, 'in which a vast amount of British capital is invested' made it 'particularly important to ensure stable and orderly administration'.[52] Kaunda had by early 1964 earned the British Government's 'manifest trust',[53] and the British were keen to see him remain at the helm. Likewise, British aims at the Zanzibar and (what became) the Somaliland independence conferences were straightforward enough. In the case of Zanzibar, the key objectives were to settle the independence constitution, agree a date for independence, and to agree a procedure for ending the British protectorate status. For Somaliland, the aims were to secure overflying rights in an independent Somalia, mainly for fighter aircraft between East Africa and Aden,[54] to continue operation of the BBC transmitter at Berbera,[55] to maintain at least some influence over Somaliland's military, and for Britain to limit its aid budget.[56]

As with commissions, there were limits to which conferences could be used as a precise means of control and management. Intervening events, for example, could knock British objectives and planning off balance. The first Kenyan Conference illustrates the point. At the start of the conference, Macleod had sought the four specifics mentioned earlier in the chapter. Yet by 1st February 1960, less than two weeks into the Conference, the Colonial Secretary's views on the desired outcome had changed. The language he now used in his message to Rab Butler (filling in for Macmillan who was on his 'Wind of Change' tour of Africa) exhibited both urgency and anxiety, the Colonial Secretary recording that a common roll on a very large franchise was necessary and that he was now 'quite certain' that there must be a major move so that a large number of seats in Kenya's legislative council, around half, would be on a common roll, and that without such a move 'a major explosion' would follow. There should, Macleod thought, also be an unofficial majority in the Council of Ministers with four of these positions being reserved for Africans.[57] Then, on 12th February, having trailed his new position with delegates at the start of the month, the Colonial Secretary handed out a take-it-or-leave it proposal to the Conference under which 33 of 65

[50] TNA, DO168/48, Telegram from MacDonald to Colonial Secretary, 20.09.63.
[51] TNA, DO183/226, Memorandum from Jamieson to Whitley, 10.07.64.
[52] TNA, PREM11/5030, Memorandum from Trend to Home, 28.04.64.
[53] Fergus Macpherson, *Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia: The Times and the Man* (Lusaka, 1974), p.438.
[54] TNA, CAB134/1559, Memorandum from MacLeod to CPC, 25.04.60; CO1015/2518, 'defence interests in Somalia', 28.04.60.
[55] TNA, CAB134/1559, Memorandum from Macleod to CPC, 25.04.60.
[56] TNA, CO1015/2366, Undated brief for Conference.
[57] TNA, PREM11/3030, Note from Macleod to Home Secretary, 01.02.60.

of the legislative council seats would be open (and thus could be expected to be won by Africans) with a Council of Ministers of 12, eight of whom would be unofficial with one half of the latter being African.[58]

Why did Macleod change his position, conceding what would be either parity or even an African majority in the legislative council? This was very different from the outcome that Blundell's New Kenya Group had wanted which was a legislative council of moderates, non-racial in outlook. Unfortunately, the archived British Government files at Kew give us no conclusive answers, and we need therefore to look elsewhere for clues. In his interview with Bill Kirkman, Macleod said that the principle of giving Africans a majority in the legislative council had in fact been tested out 'in a long series of talks every day for weeks and weeks' with ministerial colleagues and Colonial Office officials.[59] But as Maxon notes, this claim by Macleod is simply not supported by contemporary records.[60] It is possible that a change in outlook came about from Macleod having listened to speech after speech by African members and deciding that a more emphatic gesture towards African wishes was necessary. Perhaps more likely though is Blundell's assertion that the unexpected announcement by the Belgian Government of the independence of the Congo on 28 January threw Macleod off balance. The NKG leader recalled an agitated and concerned Colonial Secretary holding a telegram which had just informed him of the news. Macleod, Blundell thought, seemed anxious that this event would now mean that Britain would be the last of the colonial powers with an empire left in Africa (with presumably the attendant international and nationalist criticism that this position would then draw).[61] Macleod told Kirkman in his 1967 interview that he could not recall this event,[62] but the episode feels authentic enough. Macleod was troubled by the Congo; a few days after his change of course the Colonial Secretary sent a telegram to the still absent Macmillan saying how the pace of events in Africa and 'above all' in Congo would have serious effects for the Central African Federation.[63] Tom Mboya, buoyed by the Congo announcement, told the Press that the AEM's demands of (just) responsible government now no longer made them look

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[58] TNA, PREM11/3030, Note from Bligh to Macmillan, 15.02.60.
[59] Kirkman interview with Macleod 29.12.67, Bodleian Library Oxford, MSS Afr. S2179.
[60] Maxon, *Britain and Kenya's Constitutions*, p.276.
[61] Michael Blundell, *So Rough a Wind: The Kenya Memoirs of Sir Michael Blundell* (London, 1964), p.271.
[62] Kirkman interview with Macleod 29.12.67, Bodleian Library Oxford, MSS Afr. S2179, p.22.
[63] TNA, PREM11/3030, telegram from Macleod to Prime Minister, 08.02.60.

extreme, something surely not lost on the astute Macleod, who was acutely sensitive to the pace of change in Africa.[64]

An underlying British objective at three of the East African conferences - those for Tanganyika and Uganda in 1961 and then again for Kenya in 1963 - was that delegates should resolve that their countries should join together with neighbouring ones to form an East African federation. A *Sunday Times* article in its edition of 30 October 1960, picked up by the Colonial Office, carried an exclusive interview with Julius Nyerere in which he shared his vision of a federation, saying that he was prepared to hold up Tanganyika's full independence until 1962 if that meant that Kenya and Uganda could also become independent then and so enter into federation.[65] As Michael Collins has observed, federal plans have had a long history in British imperial thinking, motivations being a mixture of practical, administrative, and cost-saving schemes, sometimes tinted with ideas of imperial unity.[66] In the early 1960s, the British Government welcomed a move towards an East African federation, although given the vehement reaction from Africans to a British-imposed Central African federation British ministers also recognised that the initiative for a federation must be seen to arise locally.[67] Macleod thought that an East African federation would be a 'wonderful prize', and told Macmillan that the March conference for Tanganyika might be used to start the initiative.[68] The British Government welcomed an East African federation for a number of reasons. It would, Macleod noted, 'have the incidental but very important effect of adding cohesion to the movement for federation in Central Africa';[69] the Colonial Policy Committee also thought that a federation 'would be of great benefit to the Territories economically' and, perhaps most important of all, 'it would be much easier effectively to entrench in the constitution provisions regarding individual and property rights of European settlers'. Federation would also, the CPC considered, give each territory a vested interest in preserving stability in the other territories. As an example, it was thought that any attempt by the Kenyan government to expropriate the property of European settlers might be resisted by the other territories because of the harmful economic effects on them. Finally, an East African federation might also make the

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[64] *East African Standard*, 29.01.60. p.1.

[65] *Sunday Times*, 20.11.60, excerpt in TNA, CO822/2299.

[66] Michael Collins, 'Decolonisation and the "Federal Movement", *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, Vol. 1, no.24 (2013), pp.21-40, p.23.

[67] TNA, CO822/2300, Telegram from Monson to Turnbull, 18.11.60; Note from Macleod to Macmillan, 22.11.60.

[68] TNA, CO822/2300, Note from Macleod to Macmillan, 22.11.60.

[69] Ibid.

European settlers more willing to agree to independence and should also make a satisfactory defence agreement easier to secure.[70]

At a conference of East African governors in January 1961, attended by Macleod, it was agreed that matters should be arranged so that the Tanganyikan conference would consider an East African federation with the hope that at the end of the conference Nyerere would issue a communique saying that he would consult with the other African leaders over the formation of a federation and that he hoped to arrange a conference with the other leaders to consider the further steps necessary for its establishment.[71] In the event Turnbull reported that Nyerere had 'a bad attack of cold feet' over federation, daunted by the political difficulties in Tanganyika and the other territories.[72] Federation was taken off the Conference agenda. The episode shows once again though how Britain sought to use the conference mechanism for its own self-interested purposes, to control and to manage. Similar British thinking about the Ugandan conference opening up the possibility of that territory joining an East African federation had also impacted on British governmental thinking during 1961,[73] although after Nyerere's change of heart it was never a major aspiration for that conference.

In 1963, the prospect of an East African federation coming to fruition was back on the table.[74] An 'independence conference' for Kenya was always seen as necessary by the British Government, not least to make the technical changes to Kenya's self-governing constitution which independence would require, but also to deal with other matters such as defence issues, financial aid and technical support. Yet the Conference was held at a time which was earlier than the British Government had expected. It had been assumed that Kenya would become independent 'well into 1964', but in early June 1963, Sir Malcolm MacDonald, now Governor of Kenya, informed Sandys that because of their desire to establish an East African federation of an independent Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika, Kenyan Ministers now wished to bring independence forward. It may seem surprising that at a time when the CAF was unravelling, an East African federation was contemplated, yet

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[70] TNA, CAB134/1560, Colonial Policy Committee minutes, 05.01.61. See also C.M. Vaughan, 'The Politics of Regionalism and Federation in East Africa, 1958-1964', *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 62, no.2 (2019), pp.6-7.

[71] TNA, CO822/2301, Letter from Martin to Cohen, 20.01.61. In passing it is notable that the British Government saw a *conference* of East African leaders as the way to take things forward. It shows, once more, the attachment which, in the early 1960s, Britain had for this constitutional mechanism.

[72] TNA, CO822/2301, Telegram from Turnbull to Martin, 04.02.61.

[73] TNA, CAB134/1560, Colonial Policy Committee minutes, 05.01.61.

[74] Maxon, *Kenya's Independence Constitution*, p.198.

the idea received support from Nyerere, Kenyatta and Mboya who saw it as a way to marginalise 'tribalist' opponents.[75] Progress towards a federation had been made amongst the leaders of the three African countries but federation could not take place until Kenya was independent.[76] As the African leaders wanted the federation to be represented in the United Nations in the 1964 session, that would necessitate Kenyan independence by the end of 1963,[77] which would mean a Kenyan independence conference in the autumn of that year at the latest. MacDonald thought that the leaders' zeal to achieve federation was serious and hoped that Sandys could accommodate the Kenyan ministers' proposal, suggesting an independence date of 30 December 1963,[78] with perhaps an independence conference in September 1963.[79] The Colonial Secretary told the British Cabinet that a federation would bring economic advantage and would tend to reduce the risk of tribal dissension in Kenya and reinforce the position of other minority groups, considering that the federation might restrain the Kenyan Government from making arbitrary constitutional changes. If, however, Britain were to delay the independence of Kenya and therefore the federation beyond the end of 1963 then Britain, he considered, would 'incur the odium of appearing to frustrate the EAF and lose the goodwill' of the three countries concerned.[80] A Kenya independence conference which would be used to facilitate an early federation thus also became an initial objective of the Kenyan 1963 conference.

Might the British Government sometimes have used conferences in order to accelerate British withdrawal from a colony? Michael Blundell who was a delegate at the Kenya Conference of 1960 certainly received this impression at that conference, writing that 'unknown to any of us', the British Government had arranged the Conference to 'give up responsibility for Kenya'.[81] As seen above, however, the reverse was generally the case: the British staged conferences in order to delay the process of independence, conceding the bare minimum necessary to reach agreement. Yet in two instances, the 1961 Uganda conference and the 1963 Zanzibar conference, conferences were used as a vehicle to deliberately hurry the process of independence as this was seen to be in British interests. There was a tension between the desire to get out of these troublesome territories quickly,

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[75] Vaughan, 'The Politics of Regionalism', pp.527, 532.
[76] TNA, PREM11/4328, Telegram from MacDonald to Colonial Secretary, 07.06.63.
[77] TNA, CAB128/37/41, Cabinet Conclusions, 24.06.63.
[78] TNA, PREM11/4328, Telegram MacDonald to Colonial Secretary, 20.06.63.
[79] TNA, PREM11/4328, Telegram from MacDonald to Colonial Secretary, 07.06.63.
[80] TNA, CAB128/37/41, Cabinet Conclusions, 24.06.63.
[81] Blundell, *A Love Affair with the Sun,* p.107.

and the British aspiration - as noted earlier - to leave with its prestige intact, but ways were found at the conferences to reconcile the two.

Reginald Maudling's biographer argues that for Uganda it is hard to escape the conclusion that 'the British simply wanted rid of Uganda quickly' so long as there was a 'reasonably acceptable set of people to shake hands with'.[82] This is a good summary of one of the key British objectives at the 1961 conference. Having called the Conference to unlock the Buganda problem and to avert a potentially dangerous situation, Macleod, still then Colonial Secretary, began to see the acceleration of Ugandan independence as desirable and by May 1961 senior officials at the Colonial Office as well as Uganda's Governor, Sir Frederick Crawford, agreed. In March 1961 Macleod announced that Tanganyika would become independent by the end of that year,[83] a development which for Crawford 'altered the picture' for Uganda, heaping pressure on the colonial government to make the same concessions there.[84] Uganda was administratively more prepared than Tanganyika for independence, with a broadly based economy and far fewer white settlers.[85] Nationalist politicians in Uganda had also begun to press forcefully for constitutional advance. Increasing international pressure from the United Nations for Britain to swiftly transfer power may also have played a part in the decision to accelerate Uganda's independence. The British decision to concede independence at the forthcoming conference was made only a few months after the passing of Resolution 1514, described in the Introduction. The aims of the British at the 1961 Conference were straightforward: to persuade delegates to adopt the Munster Report recommendations as far as a constitutional structure for Uganda was concerned, and to bring Uganda to self-government as rapidly as possible. As Macleod told Crawford, he wanted these recommendations of the Commission to be adopted 'with a minimum of glosses'.[86] Some seven years later, Walter Coutts, who succeeded Frederick Crawford as Uganda's governor, recorded that one African said to him after the conference that he was 'absolutely amazed when Iain Macleod said you are going to get independence in one year' and that whilst they wanted independence, they had not expected that.[87] Looking back at the official records, it is no surprise. The Munster Commission had offered Britain a way to rid itself of this troublesome territory whilst at the same time allowing the

[82] Lewis Baston, *Reggie: The Life of Reginald Maudling* (Stroud, 2004), p.170.
[83] Baker, *Exit from Empire,* p.269.
[84] TNA, CO822/2269, Crawford's file note of discussion with Monson, 24.04.61.
[85] TNA, PREM11/4039, Note from Macleod to Prime Minister, 23.09.60.
[86] TNA, CO822/2422, Telegram from Colonial Secretary to Crawford, 04.09.61.
[87] Interview of Sir Hilton Poynton (and Walter Coutts) by John Tawney (Director of Oxford University Colonial Records project) 20 to 21 October 1968, Bodleian Library Oxford, MSS 537.

British to be able to claim that they had exited the country leaving behind a stable constitutional structure in place and which delegates had approved at the 1961 Conference.

As noted in Chapter One, Britain divesting itself of Zanzibar as quickly as it reasonably could also became an objective for the British at the 1963 Conference. In the early summer of 1962, British policy over Zanzibar remained confused but just over one year later, in August 1963, Sandys informed Cabinet that it was proposed to hold an independence conference for Zanzibar in September so that the territory might become independent by the end of the year.[88] There was now an imperative for Britain to grant the territory independence as soon as it could. Kenya was to become independent on 12 December 1963, and holding problematic Zanzibar as a sole East African territory was now seen as otiose. While Zanzibar was far from stable politically, one other block to independence had been lifted. A British concern over potential awkwardness should Zanzibar decide to apply to join the Commonwealth had now abated, a working party of officials having concluded that Britain seeking to avoid an influx of new (small) Commonwealth states in the next decade would incur serious criticism from both inside and outside of the Commonwealth, which would be undesirable.[89] Britain became keen to divest itself of Zanzibar speedily, with the minimum of fuss, but also in a way which would allow it to demonstrate that it had fulfilled its imperial obligations.[90]

It might be thought that a key objective of the British Government at independence conferences would be to use the occasions to cement post-colonial relations with the soon-to-be autonomous countries through defence agreements, financial aid, Commonwealth membership, and technical assistance. Much has been written about how Britain sought to retain influence over its former colonies after their 'flag' independence. Louis and Robinson, for example, argue how, under the second Macmillan government, it 'became increasingly urgent to exchange control for informal empire',[91] and how, after independence, 'economic and military aid with technical advisers would bind the new states to their former rulers'.[92] Similarly, Benjamin Grob-Fitzgibbon has argued that 'the British Government developed a concerted imperial strategy designed to secure the

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[88] TNA, CAB/128/37, Cabinet Conclusions, 01.08.63.
[89] Hyam and Louis (eds.), *BDEEP,* Series A, Volume 4, *The Conservative Government and the End of Empire, 1957-1964,* Part 2, doc. 545, CO1032/226, 'Evolution of the Commonwealth', 24.04.62.
[90] See Chapter Six, p.209.
[91] Wm Roger Louis and Ronald Robinson, 'The Imperialism of Decolonisation', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, Vol. 22 no.3 (1994), pp.462-512, p.485.
[92] Ibid, p.488.

colonies for the Commonwealth in an orderly transfer of power while maintaining British influence in the region and strengthening overall Western dominance in the Cold War world'.[93] Sarah Stockwell has more recently examined how both within and outside of the British state, imperialist ideologies as well as British technical assistance continued long after *de jure* independence.[94] Yet the picture presented from the conferences is a rather confused and fragmented one. Defence agreements were rarely concluded at the independence conferences under review, Somaliland being the exception. That, however, was consistent with British aims only to enter into such agreements when there were particular interests which Britain wanted to protect.[95] Colonial secretaries did make speeches at independence conferences emphasising their hope that friendly relations would continue after independence. However, matters such as technical assistance, aid, and defence were almost always avoided at these conferences. That is not to say that these issues were not important to the British: they were, and were dealt with in forums outside of the conference. Yet that the issues were not, for example, employed regularly as bargaining chips in the way that they were for Somaliland perhaps says something about the British priorities. The overarching aim in the months before independence was generally to depart with prestige.

Cullen has argued how for Kenya there are clear limits to charges of neo-colonialism and that in many instances, British involvement stemmed from Kenyan requests.[96] Similarly, Maekawa has submitted that involvement in the affairs of former colonies was 'reluctant'.[97] Both of these traits come across in the archive papers for the African independence conferences. Commonwealth membership requests at conferences, for example, were frequently not driven by British pressure, but by nationalist leaders. Of course, different departments of the British Government had different interests. But the relatively low priority given to discussion of continuing aid issues at independence is illustrated by the second Northern Rhodesia conference. At first there was some enthusiasm for raising matters such as technical assistance, finance, and defence. B.G. Meara of the Department of Technical Co-operation (DTC) in London asked the Commonwealth Relations Office to inform the Government of Northern Rhodesia that the DTC would like the issue of technical assistance to be discussed at the Conference. Meara

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[93] Grob-Fitzgibbon, *Imperial Endgame,* p.3.
[94] Sarah Stockwell, *The British End of the British Empire* (Cambridge, 2018).
[95] Ibid, p.77.
[96] Cullen, *Kenya and Britain after Independence*, p.9.
[97] Ichiro Maekawa, 'Neo-Colonialism Reconsidered: A Case Study of East Africa in the 1960s and 1970s', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History,* Vol. 43, no.2 (2015), pp.317-341, p.317.

offered to outline at the Conference the various types of assistance his department might give.[98] A Ministry of Defence official also told the CRO that his department viewed the forthcoming independence conference as the best and possibly only opportunity to discuss with the Northern Rhodesian ministers the British defence requirements in Northern Rhodesia after independence.[99] These ancillary matters were, however, gradually dropped. The matter of technical assistance was thought better left to a separate occasion, when financial issues could be discussed in the round,[100] and the Defence Department concluded that military issues would be more suitably handled, at least initially, with officers in Lusaka.[101] The Conference priority was to settle the independence constitution.

One way in which the British Government sought to exercise post-independence influence at the African conferences was through ensuring that independence constitutions were framed in such a way as to minimise autocratic tendencies of future presidents. Richard Drayton has discussed this in a wider context, showing how the British sought to use post-independence constitutions of former colonies to preserve colonial ideas.[102] As seen earlier, there was a desire to be seen to depart with British prestige intact, leaving behind a stable country with a moderate government and bequeathing a structure which might keep it that way. A key objective of the British at independence conferences was therefore to ensure that a constitution was left with checks and balances on the exercise of powers, as noted previously in this chapter.

So far, as has been seen, the British and colonial governments had firm objectives at the conferences examined, including making what were seen as small constitutional advances in order to delay independence, conceding self-government but in return for concessions which would further delay the independence process, imposing British-desired terms at independence conferences, securing a hoped for East African federation and, on two occasions, using conferences to divest itself speedily of the territory concerned. All of these objectives were employed by the British Government to control and manage the pace and trajectory of decolonisation, either to slow down the process when that was considered

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[98] TNA, DO183/68, Letter from Meara to Jamieson, 26.03.64.
[99] TNA, DO183/68, Letter from Holton to Jamieson, 01.04.64.
[100] TNA, DO183/68, Note by Jamieson, 02.04.64.
[101] Ibid.
[102] Drayton, R. H. 'Whose Constitution? Law, Justice and History in the Caribbean: 6th Distinguished Jurist Lecture.' (Distinguished Jurist Lecture series). Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago: Judicial Education Institute of Trinidad and Tobago (2016).

desirable, to depart on terms it wanted, or to divest itself of territories considered awkward. Yet although the British Government generally had firm ideas as to what it wanted, this was not the case for two of the conferences: the Federal Review Conference of 1960, and the Zanzibar Conference of 1962. In the case of the former, the British were at a loss as to what precisely should be the objective other than to avoid the break-up of the CAF, and to hope that the Conference would accept as many of the Monckton Commission recommendations as it could.[103] As far as the explosive recommendation of a 'right to secede' was concerned, the British Government thought it best if resolution of this matter could be postponed to a later conference.[104] Aspirations instead were centred on the short-term objective of securing the attendance of African delegates, particularly Kenneth Kaunda from Northern Rhodesia and Dr Hastings Banda from Nyasaland, who only confirmed their intention to take up their places shortly before the Conference started. It is an obvious point, but without attendance of key players, conferences were almost bound to fail.

For the Zanzibar Conference of 1962, British Ministers, senior Colonial Office officials and the Resident were muddled and divided in what they hoped to achieve from the Conference. There was disagreement over whether Zanzibar should be given rapid independence, or whether it should be held on to for a long period, as Maudling had hoped for when the Conference started. There was also confusion over whether a coalition between ASP and ZNP should be a necessary condition of constitutional advance or whether the British Government should just encourage this at the Conference, and what to do about a likely insistence from the ASP at the conference table that there be another set of elections before independence. On the eve of the Conference, London still wanted independence to be delayed for as long as possible to encourage stability and avoid dealing with the tricky knock-on effect on Commonwealth and Kenyan issues. Yet this view was not shared by the Resident. London also wanted to persuade rather than require ASP and ZNP to enter into coalition as a necessary condition of independence, a view also not held by the Resident. The Colonial Policy Committee and the Resident wished to avoid a further election, but Maudling did not. No thought had been given to what would happen if the parties did not agree to enter into a coalition: would independence and self-government

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[103] TNA, CO1015/2335, Letter from Martin to Hone and Jones, 15.09.60; TNA, CAB134/1362, Note from Bishop and King and accompanying report by HMG officials on the timing and handling of the FRC, 13.10.60.

[104] TNA, CAB134/1362, Note from Bishop and King and accompanying report by HMG officials on the timing and handling of the FRC, 13.10.60; TNA, CO1015/2338, Memorandum from D. A. Scott to Shannon, 28.10.60.

dates nevertheless be conceded? Moreover, if the ASP and ZNP did agree to a coalition, they could be expected together to press for immediate independence. How would this pressure be reconciled to the CPC objective of delaying independence? At the end of the day, Britain's (but not the Resident's) aim at the 1962 Conference had been to avoid an early independence for Zanzibar. How Maudling and Perth (who chaired most of the conference sessions) had hoped to achieve that objective was never clear. It is no coincidence that this conference and the Federal Review one ended in failure, as will be seen in Chapter Six.

Before leaving the first part of this chapter, it is worth a digression to say something about the conference decision-making process of the British and colonial governments. Who, precisely, determined conference policy? Writing in 1961 about the motives behind Victorian imperial expansion, Robinson and Gallagher coined the phrase 'official mind', referring to the collective mind of political party leaders, the House of Commons, British secretaries of state, ambassadors, governors, and consuls.[105] Whilst many works have assessed the roles that individuals played in the African decolonisation process, sometimes bringing in relationships with other actors, none has sought to make a comparative analysis of where, within the 'official mind', British imperial power in the final days of empire was held. Philip Murphy's largely very positive review of Frank Heinlein's *British Government Policy and Decolonisation 1945-1963* draws attention to his lack of analysis of the policymaking process of the British and colonial governments, and in particular the absence of any detailed commentary on the respective influence of London and the colonial governors.[106] The final paragraphs of this part of the chapter look at four actors - the Governors, Whitehall, the Colonial Secretary and Macmillan - in an attempt to gauge where the balance of power rested in relation to the African conferences. It is by no means intended to be a thorough analysis of the complete 'official mind' structure. Nevertheless, conferences were pivotal moments in deciding a colony's future. Who determined the policy for these events should therefore give us a good indication of the leverage of the actors described above during Britain's final days in Africa.

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[105] Ronald Robinson and John Gallagher, *Africans and the Victorians: The Official Mind of Imperialism* (London, 1961), p.19.
[106] Philip Murphy, 'British Government Policy and Decolonisation 1945-1963: Scrutinising the Official Mind (review)', *Journal of Cold War Studies*, Vol. 6, no. 3, (2014), pp.154-155.

As late as 1959, the former Governor of Uganda, Sir Andrew Cohen, was able to write in his review of British policy in colonial Africa that 'governors have continued to take the initiative in putting forward policy proposals'.[107] For the conferences under review, however, governors tended to play only supporting roles, having little input into strategy. This was not the case uniformly. For the third Kenyan Conference, the colony's Governor, Malcolm MacDonald, held in high esteem by a busy Duncan Sandys, developed procedural tactics for that conference, writing for example the content of the Colonial Secretary's opening Conference speech. He also had the idea of putting less controversial items at the top of the Conference agenda to help foster agreement.[108] MacDonald was also most active in visiting delegations during the Conference, seeking to broker agreement. Uganda's Governor, Crawford, also played an important part at the first Ugandan Conference negotiating with the Kabaka in advance of the formal proceedings. Macleod credited him with much of the conference success.[109] These, however, were exceptions, and the role of the Governor at conferences was limited, typically, to preparing technical papers, chairing conference subcommittees, and acting as liaison officers between different groups of conference delegates. Anthony Kirk-Greene captures this well. As the author puts it, 'In the latter-day empire, the Governor's role was less to govern and lead, more to act as mediator and moderator'.[110] At the conferences, Governors' views often carried surprisingly little weight. This was exemplified by events at the first Northern Rhodesian Conference. During the fraught conference proceedings, Macmillan told senior British civil servant Burke Trend that if no scheme were to meet with general support or acquiescence by all parties concerned, then '[w]e will have to make one'. Such a decision, the Prime Minister continued, would need to be formulated by the Colonial Secretary and then put to him and the Commonwealth Secretary for approval, perhaps also to the Colonial Affairs Committee too, before it could be 'fortified by a collective decision of Cabinet'. It would then need to simply be 'communicated' to the Governor.[111] On reflection it is not too difficult to see why the Governors' roles had become relatively modest. The nationalist, internationalist and domestic pressures that had so intensified in east and central Africa in the early 1960s

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[107] Sir Andrew Cohen, *British Policy in Changing Africa* (London, 1959), quoted in Gardner Thompson, *Governing Uganda: British Colonial Rule and its Legacy* (Kampala, 2003), p.342.
[108] TNA, DO168/48, Telegram from MacDonald to Colonial Secretary, 21.09.63.
[109] Nigel Fisher, *Iain Macleod* (London, 1973), p.178.
[110] Anthony H. M. Kirk-Greene, 'On Governorship and Governors in Africa' in (eds.) L. H. Gann and Peter Duignan, *African proconsuls: European Governors in Africa* (New York, 1978), pp.209-264, p.238.
[111] TNA, PREM11/2491, Minute from Macmillan to Trend, 04.06.61. Trend was at that time second secretary to the Treasury, taking up his appointment as Cabinet Secretary the following year.

prompted the colonial secretaries and Macmillan to take a personal interest in the affairs of the colonies, including the conferences. It was their reputations, and that of their government which was now very much on the line. Delegation of such matters to the Governors would not normally have been attractive in such circumstances. Governors of course would only ever have made recommendations to the British Government on important matters but the African conferences are notable for the absence of such advice.

The Colonial Office played a significant role in working up outline policies of Colonial Secretaries, preparing a series of technical briefs for the Colonial Secretary in the weeks before a conference started. For the second Kenya Conference, for example, 11 briefs were produced in total for Maudling on such matters as what he might say in his opening speech, factors affecting the sequence of the agenda and procedure, regionalism and citizenship.[112] Internal conference planning meetings had been held,[113] and it was the Colonial Office which first prepared a proposed outline for a Kenya constitution which the Conference was subsequently able to accept with very few changes.[114] The Colonial Office legal department had only a very minor role in conference planning, the odd technical question being referred to it here and there. When constitutional points of principle had been agreed at a conference, the legal department then had a much more important job to do in documenting the formal constitution, fleshing out points that had not been fully explored. That, however, is a subject beyond the scope of this thesis.[115]

As Nigel Fisher has argued, officials at the Colonial Office did not themselves formulate the high-level principles of the policies to be pursued at the African conferences of the early 1960s.[116] That was the preserve of the Colonial Secretaries. Leslie Monson recalled that after October 1959 'there is no doubt in my mind' that the 'initial impetus [for colonial policy]' came 'from British Ministers, more especially from the Secretary of State [for the Colonies]', adding that Macleod's initiative here was 'sufficiently strong to carry forward the process under his successors, Reginald Maudling and Duncan Sandys'.[117] One important feature of the Colonial Office in relation to conferences which should not be overlooked is

[112] See TNA, CO822/2368.
[113] See for example TNA, CO822/2367, Minute by Kitcatt on Kenya Constitutional Conference, 20.02.62.
[114] TNA, CO822/2368, CO Brief 'Proposed Outline for a constitution of Kenya (UK eyes only)', 20.03.62.
[115] See Chapter Five, however, for a discussion about legal representation of the African delegates.
[116] Fisher, *Macleod*, p.194.
[117] Leslie Monson, 'The View from the Colonial Office', in A.H.M. Kirk Green (ed.), Africa *in the Colonial period. The Transfer of Power: The Colonial Administrator in the Age of Decolonisation (*Oxford, 1979), pp.24-43, p.28.

that the Colonial Office acted as a glue, providing a vital resource and nexus between the successive Colonial Secretaries. The period under review saw three colonial secretaries, yet the senior figures of the African department at the Colonial Office - Sir Hilton Poynton, Sir John Martin, Leslie Monson, and F.D. 'Max' Webber - were in office for the whole of the period. As will be seen in the second part of this chapter, the tactics used to achieve conference objectives saw little variance, notwithstanding the change of secretaries of state, something with which the continuity in personnel had no doubt assisted.

During his time in office it was Iain Macleod who, time after time, made the running for conferences, instituting them himself or developing an initiative from his Colonial Office staff. It was Macleod who then formulated objectives, persuading Macmillan and the Colonial Policy Committee to lend their support to his plans, and even changing objectives if he thought it expedient. Parliament was seldom involved.[118] As noted in Chapter One, conferences suited Macleod's quick mind. He had an acute intelligence and political agility which he used profusely at these events.[119] There were setbacks - most notably Northern Rhodesia - but most of the time he received nothing but praise for his work, and he engendered respect from many African leaders. Macmillan was also generally supportive and gave him room for manoeuvre.[120] The events surrounding the first Nyasaland conference epitomised this drive. Macleod released Banda so he might give evidence to the Monckton Commission, decided shortly afterwards that it would be right to hold a conference, devised an outcome for that conference, and then sold successfully his proposals to both Macmillan and to Welensky.

Reginald Maudling was colonial secretary for only four of the case study conferences. For the most part he too provided strong leadership. As Baston argues, Maudling sometimes judged that things needed to go further than Macleod had envisaged,[121] and like Macleod he was active in using the conference mechanism to push things along. It was Maudling, for example, who pressed for a second conference for Kenya and who displayed effective chairmanship at the second Ugandan conference. Maudling was careful to involve the Colonial Policy Committee in obtaining approval for major initiatives, no doubt reflecting on the deep, earlier fissures over Northern Rhodesia. He was less convincing, however, over

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[118] Philip Murphy, *Party Politics and Decolonization: The Conservative Party and British Colonial Policy in Tropical Africa 1951-1964* (Oxford, 1995), p.23.
[119] J. M. Brown and W. R. Louis (eds.), *Oxford History of the British Empire, Volume IV The Twentieth Century* (Oxford, 1999), p.351.
[120] Ibid, p.351.
[121] Baston, *Reggie*, p.153.

the first Zanzibar conference which, as seen earlier, was characterised by muddled, vague thinking.

Duncan Sandys was clear in his conference objectives, determining for example when the time was right for the second Zanzibar conference. He was driven by pragmatism and a desire for Britain to hold colonies for no longer than necessary, seeing them as an economic drain and involving Britain in unwelcome international controversy.[122] Sandys frequently delegated the running of the conferences to his deputies, Hornby and Landsdowne, not always with success. Lansdowne chaired the initial Basutoland Conference sessions, but his when his tactic of suggesting immediate independence backfired,[123] Sandys took over many of the sessions. The territory's Resident, Alexander Giles, noted that when the Colonial Secretary did so the 'atmosphere became more cordial'.[124] Sandys then displayed effective chairmanship at the Conference, conceding the independence point and brokering compromise.

Notwithstanding the power and influence of the colonial secretaries, Harold Macmillan was the ultimate arbiter of conference policy. Most of the time, he shared similar thinking to his colonial secretaries, and was prepared to back their initiatives. For the sensitive area of the Central African Federation, however, this was not always the case. Here, the Prime Minister, fearful of a British Algeria, and concerned that if negotiations broke down the Conservative Party divisions would widen,[125] took a hands-on approach and personal interest. Matters came to a head over Northern Rhodesia. Up until 8 February 1961, just over a week into the Conference, Macleod had made the running, convincing his colleagues that the territory's legislative council should have an African elected majority, albeit a 'token one' and one which could always be defeated should the elected European members and official members vote together. Once it became apparent that Welensky would reject this plan, Macmillan overruled his Colonial Secretary, favouring instead a system under which it could not be said with certainty what the precise make-up of the legislative council would be. This would be done through the introduction of a tranche of 15 'national seats' to sit alongside the 15 'lower roll' seats (which were expected to return

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[122] Peter Brooke, *Duncan Sandys and the Informal Politics of Britain's Late Decolonisation* (Cham, Switzerland, 2017), p.30.

[123] Landsdown had hoped that delegates would shy away from this.

[124] TNA, CO1048/396, Telegram from Giles to High Commissioner, 01.05.64. Giles offers no explanation as to why the atmosphere improved, but perhaps the delegates had felt short-changed by having only Sandy's deputy as chairman of their conference.

[125] Andrew Cohen, *The Politics and Economics of Decolonization in Africa: The Failed Experiment of the Central African Federation* (London, 2017), p.127.

African candidates) and the 15 'upper roll' seats (which were expected to return European candidates). National candidates were to be returned by averaging the percentages of the votes obtained on the upper rolls and lower rolls, subject however to the winning candidate also having received a minimum percentage of votes cast on each roll. This complex scheme would, it was thought, encourage moderation as national candidates would need to seek support from both races to be successful.[126] Macmillan recorded in his diaries that he thought Macleod had leaned 'over too far towards the African view', and that the token majority the Colonial Secretary had had in mind would be 'intolerable' to the Europeans. Macleod accepted the 15:15:15 scheme, and the Prime Minister was pleased to have got Macleod off this onto 'a much more imaginative plan' which was in keeping with the multi-racial policy he still had in mind.[127] That, however, was not the end of the matter. A further row erupted between Macleod and Welensky over the criteria for national seats. Ever fearful of civil war in Northern Rhodesia, Macmillan once again sought to modify the proposals Macleod had put forward so that they would appeal to the Federal Prime Minister. New measures were put forward which were clearly designed to help European candidates, and would not produce increased African representation on anything like the scale envisaged by Macleod.[128] Welensky was satisfied.[129] Macleod later told Bill Kirkman that he had been prepared to yield a little from his original proposals.[130] In reality, the Colonial Secretary had had little choice in view of the resolve of Macmillan backed also by some powerful Cabinet colleagues including Sandys and Home.

The decision making of the official mind worked, then, as a pyramid structure. At the bottom, the Colonial Office and Governors made helpful suggestions, with the latter having a useful liaison role with nationalist leaders. The Colonial Secretaries were the drivers and instigators of conference and commission policy. As, however, would be expected it was Macmillan who sat at the top, ready to overturn policy if he deemed it expedient.

Part Two: Tactics used by the British and colonial governments to achieve their conference objectives

Once the British Government had worked out its objectives, the imperative then became to secure conference agreement on its terms. If a conference ended up without an

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[126] TNA, CAB125/35, Cabinet Conclusions, 13.02.61.
[127] Peter Catterall (ed.), *Macmillan Diaries, Volume II, Prime Minister and After 1957-1966* (Basingstoke, 2011), diary entry 22.02.61.
[128] David Mulford, *Zambia: The Politics of Independence 1957-1964 (*London, 1967), pp.194-197.
[129] TNA, PREM1/3943, Minute from Macleod to Macmillan, 09.08.61.
[130] Kirkman interview with Macleod 29.12.67, Bodleian Library Oxford, MSS Afr. S2179, p.56.

agreement, or one which was seen as unsatisfactory, then that could of course be damaging. The British Government therefore employed a whole range of techniques and strategies to persuade conference delegates to agree to what it wanted.

As Alan Henrikson has noted, the physical and political location of a diplomatic meeting conditions what happens there. Henrikson identifies 12 different diplomatic sites, the most relevant of which for our purpose is 'my place', where the host controls basic organisational arrangements and also where, at a psychological level, there is a factor of 'territorial governance' in play.[131] In exercising conference management, choice of conference venue was highly important to the British. That meant first of all that the conference had to be in London as indeed each of the African ones were with the exception of the Tanganyikan conference. Discussions over the venue for the first Kenyan conference set the tone. Leslie Monson felt strongly that the conference should be in London, as this would insulate delegates from off-stage pressure from their supporters and give the British Government a greater control over the discussion.[132] This was to become a reoccurring theme. When deciding on the venue for the 1960 Federal Review conference, for example, holding the event anywhere in the Federation was rejected by London as this 'would expose delegates to local pressures inhibiting any spirit of compromise', and also attract demonstrations. Using London as a venue, on the other hand, would mean, as the deputy Governor of Nyasaland observed, that Banda would 'be exposed to the many good influences which can be brought to bear on him there'.[133] Similar observations were made for other conferences. As will be seen later, having London as the conference venue would also enable the British security service to keep a close watch on delegates. 'Back-stage diplomacy', it was thought, could also more easily be carried out in London.[134]

The events surrounding the Tanganyikan conference of 1961 also show why London was the venue of choice for the British. Macleod gave no reason for his willingness to travel to Dar es Salaam. One factor may have been that he did not anticipate major areas of disagreement, but it was also the case that Julius Nyerere, who by now had considerable leverage, was not at all keen the idea of coming to London for a conference, no doubt

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[131] Alan Henrikson, 'The Geography of Diplomacy', in Colin Flint (ed.) *The Geography of War and Peace: From Death Camps to Diplomats* (Oxford, 2005), pp.369-394, pp.374, 390.
[132] TNA, CO822/1427, Draft Telegram from Monson to the Governor, 13.08.59.
[133] TNA, CO1015/2335, Telegram from Nyasaland Government to Colonial Secretary, 24.10.60; CO1015/2338, Note from Macleod to Macmillan, 26.10.60.
[134] TNA, CO822/2237, Note on agenda items for discussions with Sir Patrick Rension; no author and undated but would have been October 1961.

fearing, as mentioned in Chapter One, that this would give the British the upper hand.[135] Lacking the usual and familiar conference scaffolding, Macleod wanted the Conference to be as short as possible, with contentious decisions being put off until Nyerere could come to London for talks later on in the year (and which the Colonial Office were careful not to label a 'conference'). The Dar es Salaam Conference, which had been planned for four days, lasted for an even shorter time than anticipated. In the event it comprised one meeting from 10 am to 4pm, one from 3pm to 4.15pm, and a final one from 9.20am to 10am.[136] The *Tanganyikan Standard* observed at the close of proceedings that: '[i]t must surely be unique in recent colonial history for such a conference to have ended early'.[137] The paper attributed that to a spirit of compromise. In truth it was because the British, fearing a loss of control in unfamiliar surroundings, had managed events so that there was nothing difficult to discuss.

In London, the case study conferences were held at one of three venues: Lancaster House, Marlborough House or, less glamorously, a room at the Colonial Office. Lancaster House was the prestigious venue. James Yorke, who has devoted a whole book to the building, describes it as 'this monumental edifice', and one whose 'splendid interiors have dazzled many a VIP'.[138] The building, a neo-classical mansion designed by the Duke of York in 1825, had hosted many leading events, including Queen Elizabeth II's coronation banquet in June 1953.[139] A testament to Lancaster House's grandeur and size is that it was used as a stand in for Buckingham Palace in the 2010 film the *King's Speech*.[140] The largest and most important of the case study conferences were held at this venue: the first Kenyan conference, the first Nyasaland conference, the first Ugandan conference, and the Federal Review Conference. The venue was chosen to awe delegates and to remind them of Britain's power. Invitations to such a prestigious venue were no doubt also intended to flatter delegates. Alan Lennox-Boyd captured this mixture of motives in 1956, telling a colleague that:

'Both the Malayan and West Indian conferences are of enormous importance… and I just want to let you know how greatly we value our being able to have them in Lancaster House. I am quite certain that the dignity and splendour of the building will not only make an immediate and favourable impact on the delegations we have to negotiate with, but exert a

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[135] TNA, CO822/2413, Memorandum from Monson to Morgan, 23.01.61.
[136] TNA, CO822/2415, Minutes of meetings, 27 – 29.03.61.
[137] *Tanganyika Standard*, 29.03.61, p.1.
[138] James Yorke, *Lancaster House: London's Greatest Town House* (London, 2001), p.15, p.175.
[139] https://www.gov.uk/government/history/lancaster-house, accessed 26.02.2019.
[140] *The Guardian*, 02.01.2011.

potent and helpful influence throughout the discussions. I won't attempt to analyse why this is, but I think you will know what I mean.'[141]

This was a common view amongst British ministers. When requesting the building for the first Nyasaland conference Macleod told Lord Hope, Minister of Works, that 'apart from the administrative convenience, the prestige attaching to a conference at Lancaster House in the eyes of some of our visitors would be an additional earnest of the seriousness of our intentions, and could itself make a contribution to the successful outcome of these important discussions.'[142] Sir John Martin, deputy under-secretary of state at the Colonial Office, could see value in the 'mystique' of Lancaster House as a venue for the first Nyasaland conference and when it transpired that the building was not available for the timeslot first desired, the territory's Governor was told that it would be 'better that we should accept a short postponement in order to give the Conference full Lancaster House treatment'.[143]

Not all delegates were taken in by the 'Lancaster House treatment'. Like Nyerere, Hastings Banda seemed to see through the use of the venue to impress and intimidate, telling the first Nyasaland Conference on its opening day that if he returned to Nyasaland empty handed and his people had come inside and looked at the Lancaster House building, then they 'would accuse us of having been dazzled by the beauty, magnificence, and other things that I see about in this building'.[144] What other delegates made of the building and whether the 'Lancaster House' treatment actually worked is difficult to gauge. Certainly one of the New Kenya Group party was impressed. Mrs Hughes observed how the Conference had opened in a 'beautiful and stately room'.[145]

Marlborough House was also an impressive venue, having been furnished as a 'Commonwealth centre' with the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' conferences as its main function.[146] It is striking how many of the *second* conferences for a particular African territory in the wind of change era were held at this venue - notably those for Uganda, Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. These conferences were more functional, workaday than the initial ones. There was no need at that stage to awe delegates, who would already

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[141] Quoted in Yorke, *Lancaster House,* p.171. Reference given is PRO Work12/444, Boyd to Buchan-Hepburn MP, 04.02.56.
[142] TNA, CO1015/2375, Letter from Macleod to Hope, 10.05.60.
[143] TNA, DO35/7567, Telegram from Colonial Secretary to Armitage, 25.05.60.
[144] TNA, CO1015/2379, Minutes of Meeting, 25.07.60.
[145] Kenya National Archives, Nairobi (henceforth 'KNA'), MSS13/57, Undated Memorandum of Mrs Hughes.
[146] TNA, FCO141/18390, Letter from Webber to Coutts, 03.05.62; *Uganda Argus*, 13.06.62.

have experienced the glamour and prestige of Lancaster House at the first of the territories' conferences. Moving further down the scale was the Colonial Office itself. This hosted the Swaziland and Basutoland conferences, both of which were seen as minor and both of which were seen by the British Government as possibly ending in failure. For these events, the emphasis of the British Government was on discreet, behind-the-scenes negotiation and influence, not the oxygen of publicity which Lancaster House (and even Marlborough House) would have attracted. Quite what the delegates attending these smaller conferences made of the inferior venue is, unfortunately, not known.

Choosing the right conference venue was thus another manifestation of how the British sought to control the conference and ultimately decolonisation process. One further way of doing so was through was labelling. Conferences were formally termed as 'discussions' or 'talks' if the British wanted to downplay the chances of success. The Swaziland Conference was an example of this. Alarmed at the potential for failure, the British Government was keen to avoid the forthcoming discussion being badged as a 'conference', presumably fearing that this would elevate its status and make failure all the more awkward. As a Colonial Office official put it, the issues to be discussed were 'difficult and important' and the forthcoming event should not be seen 'a full-scale conference'.[147] Instead, the discussions were to be labelled 'talks'.[148] The *Guardian* newspaper was quick to pick up on the terminology, noting that the announcement of the Conference 'carefully avoids' that word, referring only to a 'meeting'.[149] Yet in the privacy of the Conference, Sandys used the term 'conference' liberally, no doubt considering that using a less prestigious term would be insulting to delegates.

In the run up to conferences other manoeuvres were used by the British Government to put itself in the best position. Conference delegates were vetted and their advisors were sometimes not permitted to attend conference sessions. Equally, the British Government could make positive choices about who should attend. For the first Nyasaland conference, moderate Africans were invited to Lancaster House by the British Government, comprising members from the minority Congress Liberation Party, legislative council members, and chiefs. Banda considered that these had been chosen as a counterweight to his demands.[150] The chairman of each of the conferences was inevitably the colonial secretary

[147] TNA, CO1048/53, Memorandum from Campbell to Gideon, 03.01.62.
[148] TNA, DO119/1426, Telegram from Colonial Secretary to HC BBS, 28.11.62.
[149] TNA, CO1048/51, excerpt from the *Guardian*, 08.12.62.
[150] TNA, CO1015/2440, Special Branch translation of Banda's speech at Nkata Bay on 05.06.60.

or his deputy, and when sub-committees were formed at the conference (always at the behest of the British) these were also chaired by British Government ministers or the colonial governors. In this way the British had control of the agenda throughout the duration of the conference. Seating plans were sometimes used to facilitate British objectives. For the Kenyan independence conference, for example, a Colonial Office official was keen that the Kenyan Government should not sit on the opposite side of the conference table to the British Government which would create a sense of opposition.[151] It is also possible that for the Kenyan conference of 1962 delegates were billeted at different hotels to encourage an alliance of moderates, drawn from KANU and KADU. The great majority of KADU delegates stayed at Rubens Hotel, with the bulk of KADU residing at the Eccleston.[152] Kenyatta and Odinga, however, who were perceived as radicals, were isolated from the main group, staying at the Cumberland.[153] Odinga seemed to think that the hotel arrangements were engineered, although did not specify by whom. Writing some five years after the Conference he observed how '[e]ven the way our [KANU] delegation was divided between different hotels seemed to illustrate the stresses between us'.[154]

Key actors were sometimes invited to meet with members of the British and colonial governments shortly before a conference began in order to secure their agreement to British objectives. For example, efforts were made to secure an understanding with Buganda before the first Uganda Conference started. Discussions were held between Crawford and the Buganda Constitutional Committee in Entebbe - 'softening up' talks as the Ugandan Chief Secretary called them, thought to be necessary if the Conference were to have any chance of success.[155] Similar techniques were used for Hastings Banda. Before the first Nyasaland conference, Macleod wanted to find a reliable 'third party' who might be lined up to influence Banda, convincing him on the benefits of compromise. The names of Oliver Woods of the *Times* and the Fabian Sir Jock Campbell were put forward.[156] The

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[151] TNA, CO822/3134, Memorandum from W.T. Hull to Milton, 16.08.63.
[152] TNA, CAB133/213, Kenya Constitutional Conference 1962, Administrative Arrangements, Note by the Secretary General, 12.02.62. There does not appear to have been a difference is standard between the two hotels.
[153] TNA, CAB133/213, Kenya Constitutional Conference 1962, Administrative Arrangements, Note by the Secretary General, 12.02.62. This shows Odinga staying at the National Hotel, but a note on the Intelligence Services file TNA, KV2/4085 of 12.02.62 (ref.E.2B/LH) records that Odinga had moved to the Cumberland. Whether the move was Odinga's choice is not known. Either way, both he and Kenyatta resided in hotels which were different from those of the other delegates.
[154] Odinga, *Not Yet Uhuru,* p.224.
[155] TNA, CO822/2269, letter from Crawford to Fraser, 09.07.61; CO822/422, Letter from Cartland to Webber, 08.03.61.
[156] TNA, CO1015/2268, Letter from Macleod to Welensky, 30.05.60.

Colonial Office took up the suggestions, with Campbell telling Leslie Monson that he 'would do his best to influence Dr. Banda' to accept the sort of constitutional settlement that the Colonial Office contemplated.[157] Before the Federal Review Conference, Welensky was also invited to Chequers so that the British Government could 'have this opportunity of working on Welensky in advance'.[158] Sometimes, this softening up was more than just flattery and persuasion, and involved the British conspiring with leaders to make the conference path an easier one. Before the second Nyasaland conference, it was recognised that Banda's colleagues would baulk at the British Government's wish not to consider independence until the wider issue of Nyasaland's future was worked out. Yet if Banda was approached privately with timescales then Whitehall considered that Britain 'might hold the position'.[159] Butler took up the suggestion and important private meetings were held with Banda alone, beginning before the conference had started. An unorthodox step taken by the British Government before the Tanganyika conference was also to share with Nyerere its immediate reason for calling the Conference (which, as seen in Chapter One was to head off a legislative council resolution for independence in 1961). It was known that Nyerere, who thought that Tanganyika's infrastructure was not yet ready for autonomy, did not want to move as fast towards independence as some of his TANU colleagues.[160] It was no doubt calculated therefore that he would be supportive of any move which delayed independence until 1962.

One of the most arresting tactics which the British used to gather information for a conference was to make use of the British intelligence service to bug the conference venue, hotel rooms and telephone lines, spy on delegates and intercept their letters. In his 1987 book *Spycatcher*, former senior intelligence officer Peter Wright recounts how he set up an extensive operation installing microphones at Lancaster House. The Colonial Office had agreed to this enthusiastically and the system was used whenever high-level negotiations took place. More recently, Christopher Andrew, who had access to MI5 restricted files (which he was not permitted to reference), notes how surveillance was carried out on colonial delegations which visited London, and in particular the intelligence which was gleaned for the third Kenyan conferences.[161] More recently still, several KV series files have

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[157] TNA, CO1015/2241, Memorandum from Monson to Macleod, 19.07.60.
[158] TNA, CO1015/2338, Telegram from Colonial Secretary to Hone, 11.11.60.
[159] TNA, DO183/96, Nyasaland Constitutional Conference. General Brief for First Secretary of State, November 1962.
[160] Docking, 'The Wind has been Gathering Force', p.12.
[161] Peter Wright, *Spycatcher: The Candid Autobiography of a Senior Intelligence Officer* (New York, 1987), p.73. Christopher Andrew, *Defence of the Realm: The Authorized History of MI5* (London,

been released to the National Archives which show just how widespread the surveillance operation was. Files provide details of the surveillance of delegates at the second and third Kenyan conference, the Federal Review Conference, and both Nyasaland conferences. There may well have been more occasions when this was done, with the further material not having yet been released.

For the London conferences, and from the files we have, the emphasis, not surprisingly, was on finding out the thoughts of the key African actors. The hotel room and telephone calls of Kenyan delegate Oginga Odinga were bugged at the second Kenya conference. In the application for the telephone check, it was suggested that this was done not just to keep a watch on the African politician's communist activities but because 'it is of the utmost importance [that]... the Secretary of State for the Colonies should have in advance the fullest access throughout the course of the Conference to the views and intentions of the delegations and individuals concerned'.[162] For the third conference, it was not just Odinga who was closely observed. MI5 were requested by the Colonial Secretary to 'give full coverage to certain of the delegates who will be attending the Kenya Independence Conference', with one of its operatives noting that '[i]t is the view of the Colonial Office that there will be questions of great importance to her Majesty's Government arising at the Conference, and it will be of vital importance to the Secretary of State to have the fullest access throughout the Conference to the views and intentions of the various parties'.[163] Andrew has observed from the files to which only he had access that Colonial Secretary Duncan Sandys made use of the information he received for the third of the Kenyan Conferences.[164]

Hastings Banda was the subject of surveillance before and during the London conferences he attended. Clearly the British Government had reservations about how far they could trust the enigmatic African leader, but they also wanted to remain one step ahead of Banda. Nyasaland intelligence authorities were able to report before the first Nyasaland conference of information that indicated a 'preparedness to compromise'.[165] Banda's post was also intercepted by security services as it was 'desired to investigate his activities and contacts before and during the conference', and his phone lines were tapped for the same

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2009), p.467. Drawing on Andrew and Wright's observations, Calder Walton notes this practice too in relation to Kenya: Walton, *Empire of Secrets*, p.269.
[162] TNA, KV2/4085, Note by G. R. Mitchell, 07.02.62.
[163] TNA, KV2/4088, File note by E.2.B, 04.09.63.
[164] Andrew, *Defence of the Realm*, p.467.
[165] TNA, KV2/4075, Extract from Nyasaland Intelligence Report for May, May 1960.

reason.[166] As an MI5 briefing note recorded: 'Almost anything that Dr. BANDA says or does may be helpful in assessing his attitude to the conference and in trying to discern his intentions'.[167]

During the conferences themselves, a large number of schemes and ploys were used to bring delegates round to the British way of thinking. Conference sessions other than the opening ones were carried out in private, away from the gaze of the press so that delegates would have fewer chances to garner publicity, and so that the British Government might be spared embarrassment. If the British Government was especially fearful of the conference attracting adverse publicity, even the opening session would be held in private. This was the case for the Somaliland conference where the Colonial Office were concerned that 'formal speeches made in an open session' might 'give needless publicity' which might be misinterpreted by Ethiopia and the French as Britain stimulating a Greater Somalia.[168] Minister of State Lord Perth agreed, noting that the less publicity, the better.[169]

A key tactic used by Macleod, and one noted by his colleague Nigel Fisher, was to encourage delegates to make an opening speech so that they would not feel frustrated.[170] Indeed the Colonial Secretary confirmed the practice to Bill Kirkman in his 1967 interview, telling the journalist that only once delegates had finished the oration that had been 'boiling inside them' would the Conference then get down to business.[171] Macleod's ploy seemed to work. Delegates jumped at the chance to make what were often very lengthy speeches. Mrs Hughes, present at the first Kenya conference, noted how Macleod's patient listening made those present feel that he would be influenced by what was being said.[172] The technique of letting delegates do the initial talking was also developed into allowing delegates to cross-examine each other until they were exhausted, at which point the Colonial Secretary would present his solution. Odinga observed how Macleod used to allow delegates to 'talk themselves out'.[173] Maudling also used this tactic of his predecessor.[174] As

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[166] TNA, KV2/4075, Intelligence Reports 04.07.60 and 11.07.60.

[167] TNA, KV2/4075, A.2.A. Briefing sheet, 13.07.60. Banda was subject to checks at the second Nyasaland conference: see KV2/4077, Letter from R. G. Holden to N. A. Hawkins, 02.11.62, and also at the FRC: see TNA, KV2/4075, Letter to Major A. E. Denman, 29.11.60.

[168] TNA, CO1015/2362, Minute of Sir Hilton Poynton, 27.04.60.

[169] TNA, CO1015/2362, Minute from Perth, 27.04.60.

[170] End of Empire interviews: a Granada programme for Channel 4, 1985, Bodleian Library Oxford, MSS Brit Emp S527, Interview with Nigel Fisher, February 1985, p.158.

[171] Kirkman interview with Macleod 29.12.67, Bodleian Library Oxford, MSS Afr. S2179, p.17.

[172] KNA, MSS13/57, undated memorandum from Mrs Hughes.

[173] End of Empire interviews: a Granada programme for Channel 4, 1985, Bodleian Library Oxford, MSS Brit Emp S527, Interview with Oginga Odinga, November 1984, p.32.

Odinga noted, Maudling waited 'seemingly for us to reach a state of physical exhaustion as well as policy deadlock', before imposing his own solution.[175] Butler employed the same technique at the second Nyasaland conference.

The brief opening speeches given by the colonial secretaries at the London conferences often provided a set of boundaries and prompts to steer delegates onto what Britain considered to be the right path. In his speech for the first Kenyan conference, for example, Macleod acknowledged that one day Africans would form a majority in government,[176] and told the Conference very early on that he hoped that a common roll could be introduced for many of the elected seats, and that an increase in the number of communal seats should not be contemplated, but equally that it was not the Conference's task to consider independence, even though that was the ultimate objective for the country.[177] Contentious matters were avoided in the opening stages of the conference to avoid spoiling the atmosphere. Thus at the Federal Review Conference, topics were to be discussed on 'some other basis than White versus Black'.[178] Instead, concentration on past experience of the Federation 'would enable the case for continuance to be put',[179] and avoid substantive discussion of contentious items. For the third Kenyan conference, non-controversial amendments were debated first on an agenda set by the British Government. The Governor thought this 'could help in establishing a friendly, co-operative atmosphere between all delegations before the most difficult discussions commence'.[180] Webber of the Colonial Office concurred, observing that 'in general, this often proves a useful tactic'.[181] Delegates were also sometimes taken through matters at a fast pace to discourage debate. At the Ugandan independence conference, a Colonial Office official suggested to Lord Lansdowne, the recently appointed Colonial Minister of State, that he took its delegates through their papers at a fast pace to avoid 'muddle-headed' contributions.[182]

Delegates were also asked to put themselves in the colonial secretary's shoes in a bid to gain understanding and acquiescence. During the first Kenya conference, for instance,

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[174] Maxon, *Kenya's Independence Constitution,* p.85; Reginald Maudling, *Memoirs* (Tiptree, 1978), p.91

[175] Odinga, *Not yet Uhuru,* p. 225.

[176] TNA, CAB133/212, Macleod's speech 01.02.60.

[177] TNA, CAB133/212, Speech of Macleod, 20.01.60.

[178] TNA, CO1015/2335, Note of a meeting between Macmillan, Sandys, Macleod and others, 02.11.60.

[179] TNA, DO35/7500, Note of a meeting between CRO officials, 15.11.60.

[180] TNA, DO168/48, Telegram from MacDonald to Colonial Secretary, 21.09.63.

[181] TNA, CO822/3139, Memorandum from Webber to Huijsman, 22.09.63.

[182] TNA, CO822/2445, Memorandum from Rushford to Sir John Martin and the Minister of State, 14.06.62.

Macleod conscripted delegates to think of the matter from his point of view, caught between the demands of the Africans and the intransigence of the European settlers. Macleod's approach infuriated the (settler) Briggs group which in turn impressed on the African group that they were winning. It was only with hindsight that Oginga Odinga appreciated that Macleod had been a skilful psychologist here, using such tactics to enlist African support.[183]

Delegates were also made to feel important, that a huge reward would be there if only agreement could be reached. Thus at the first Nyasaland conference, Macleod told delegates that 'it would be an achievement of statesmanship among the delegations which would delight Nyasaland, amaze the world and show a beacon throughout Africa. Members should realise what a tremendous prize lay within their grasp.'[184] On the other hand, delegates were also made to feel that they would have failed if they returned home empty handed because agreement could not be reached.[185] Thus at the first Kenya conference Macleod held out the carrot of the British Government giving great weight to recommendations which were agreed by a substantial majority.[186] If, however, they failed to reach agreement, they would, he said, be going back home with nothing to show. It was the threat of the latter, and Macleod's insistence that if the Conference broke down he would appoint a commission to Kenya, which would no doubt take a long time to report, that convinced Tom Mboya to go along with Macleod's final proposals.[187] Reminding delegates of the consequences of failure, and that it would be they who would be blamed, was a device used for several other conferences to force agreement on British terms. At the Federal Review Conference, Macmillan (who chaired the opening session) told the assembled delegates that the Conference would rightly be condemned in later years if it failed now to rise to the level of events.[188] At the Ugandan independence conference, Maudling used his opening Conference speech to emphasise delegates' 'solemn responsibility… to ensure that Uganda can embark upon independence and nationhood with a constitution that all citizens can trust', and that it was up to them to solve remaining problems.[189] And at the Basutoland Conference, one delegate, B. M. Kakelte, noted how Sandys made the Africans feel that if they did not compromise, then they would come

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[183] Odinga, *Not Yet Uhuru,* p.179.

[184] TNA, CAB133/233, Minutes of Conference meeting, 02.08.60.

[185] TNA, CO822/3134, Memorandum from W. T. Hull to Milton, 16.08.63.

[186] TNA, CAB133/212, Address of Macleod to the Fifteenth Plenary Session, 03.02.60.

[187] Tom Mboya, *Freedom and After* (London, 1963), p.116.

[188] *The Times*, 06.12.60, p.12.

[189] TNA, CAB133/284, Record of first meeting, speech by Secretary of State, 12.06.62.

home empty-handed, and that 'anxious to return home with a Constitution, the Delegation compromised'.[190]

Sometimes blatant attempts were made to frighten delegates into agreeing to what the Colonial Secretary wanted. Thus at the second Kenya conference, Maudling, anxious to protect the European settlers, fused Kenya's economic dependence on white farmers with the need to protect them and others through constitutional safeguards. In his opening speech the Colonial Secretary emphasised the need to eliminate 'the great dangers of discrimination, intimidation and exploitation', stressing also the precarious state of Kenya's economy and how eighty percent of the territory's income from cash crops and livestock came from non-African farms. Maudling then told delegates that it was an essential requirement that the political leaders assembled should agree on a constitution which would give individuals freedom from fear and an assurance of equality before an impartial law. Delegates had a duty to make sure that they were handing Kenya over to a stable regime, free from racial discrimination.[191] When the Conference seemed to be stalling, the help of Sir Anthony Swann, Kenya's Minister for Defence and Internal Security, was enlisted. He told delegates that all sections of the population in Kenya were waiting eagerly for the results of the Conference and that there could be serious trouble if something satisfactory did not materialise. Lord Perth, in the chair that day, thanked Swann for a speech which 'brought home to all present the great responsibilities resting upon them'.[192] At the first Ugandan conference, Macleod invoked the troubles in Congo as an example of what might happen if a satisfactory solution was not reached. Concessions, he told delegates, would need to be made and all sides should be ready to do this.[193] Sandys also employed scare tactics. At the Basutoland conference, the British Government had to decide how best to persuade the Basuto delegation to accept that they would not achieve independence one year on from the next set of elections, as the Africans had hoped. It was decided that this would be best be done by 'explain[ing] clearly what consequences of independence would be' in an attempt to frighten off the immediate demand.[194] These warnings would include telling the delegation that independence, through economic and

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[190] L. B. B. J. Macobane, *Governmental Change in Lesotho 1800-1966: A Study of Political Institutions* (Basingstoke, 1990), p.300. The author interviewed Kakelte.
[191] TNA, CAB133/213, Opening speech of Maudling, 14.02.62.
[192] TNA, CAB133/213, Conference proceedings, 20.03.62.
[193] TNA, CO822/2428, First Meeting of Uganda Constitutional Conference, 18.09.61; Uganda Argus, 19.09.61.
[194] TNA, CO1048/384, Telegram from Resident Commissioner to Colonial Secretary, 25.03.64.

political pressure, could lead to the country being absorbed into South Africa,[195] that financial assistance would no longer be a right, and that no assurance on future military protection could be given.[196]

When delegates needed reassurance or the British Government wanted them to feel important, the status of the office of the Prime Minister as well as Macmillan's own personal charm and authority were made use of. At the first Kenyan conference, to coax Michael Blundell's group along gradually, Macleod enlisted Macmillan's help, especially when the group baulked at the Colonial Secretary's new proposals;[197] the message to be given to the NKG, Macleod told the Prime Minister, should be *'Courage, mes braves'.*[198] At the first Nyasaland conference, when the European UFP leaders were concerned at the concessions to be made to Banda, Macleod suggested that Macmillan be asked to meet them as the Prime Minister's 'reassurance… would be enormously helpful'.[199] Macmillan was otherwise engaged but the Chancellor, Lord Kilmuir, stepped in, reading out the Prime Minister's words of support.[200] Banda was also subjected to the Macmillan treatment at the Federal Review Conference, the Nyasaland leader telling assembled crowds on his return that having walked out of the conference, he had been persuaded to return to the table following a 'fatherly' talk from Harold Macmillan, adding that 'I could not disappoint a man like that. His great humanity made a deep impression on me,' and that 'If my trip did nothing else it allowed me to meet a great Prime Minister'.[201] Macmillan was actually only four years older than Banda, and the latter's description of the British Prime Minister as a father figure shows the paternalistic ambience which Macmillan wanted to convey: that he was at hand to help and to guide but was also someone of authority.

Ruth Craggs has argued that hospitality is an important diplomatic instrument, facilitating information gathering, communication, and negotiation. As the author observes: '[d]iplomacy often happens outside the office'. Craggs has shown too how when Nkrumah attended a drinks reception given by the Royal Commonwealth Society, shortly after Ghana's independence, the event also 'elevated and reinforced diplomatic conventions,

[195] Ibid.
[196] TNA, CO1048/384, Memorandum from Campbell to Minister of State, 25.03.64.
[197] TNA, PREM11/3030, Telegram from Macleod to Macmillan, 08.02.60; TNA, CO822/2354, Note from Macleod to Macmillan, 17.02.60.
[198] TNA, CO822/2354, Note from Macleod to Macmillan, 17.02.60.
[199] TNA, DO35/7567, Note from Macleod to Macmillan, 02.08.60.
[200] TNA, PREM11/3077, Note for the record, 03.08.60.
[201] *Nyasaland Times*, 20.12.60, p.1.

assumptions and power relations'.[202] Much the same points can be made about official British hospitality at the African conferences. Each of the conferences had a bar which would open at the end of the proceedings. It was considered by the Colonial Office, only half-jokingly, that conferences 'might not be altogether successful without one' and that it was '[their] experience that this facility contributes materially to the successful outcome of negotiations'.[203] The bar was to be open for half an hour before lunch and for half an hour in the evening.[204] Formal drinks receptions were also held for delegates shortly after the conferences opened, often at Lancaster House and hosted by the Prime Minister and other Cabinet members. This hospitality was no doubt given, as the Colonial Office staff intimated, because they thought it would aid discussion. But the drinks receptions were also surely, as Craggs has argued, designed to make the delegates feel important, and that they now had a sense of responsibility, including the reaching of an agreement. The hospitality also reinforced British hegemony: it was the British Government who decided how long the bar should be open for, paid the bills, and who, outside of the delegations, should be invited to the conference receptions.

Controlling the conference proceedings generally was important to the British Government. It was the latter who, for example, recorded the first draft of the minutes of a conference, and the first draft of the bland communiques that were issued to the press at the end of each day. Small but important acts showed who was in charge of proceedings. At the first Kenya conference, Macleod demonstrated that (the white settler) Briggs' group held little power by imposing a solution on the Conference, opposed by Briggs, which would allow a last-minute African adviser, Peter Koinange, who had been excluded from Kenya on account of perceived Mau Mau activities, to be admitted to Lancaster House (although not the Conference sessions). If legal documents needed to be drafted following conference proceedings, then it was British Government lawyers who had the final say. At the Northern Rhodesia independence conference, its African government was invited to submit the first draft of their desired constitution, but there was no question of the Northern Rhodesian government drafting the final constitution (although it would be consulted). 'Following normal procedure' was the reason given for this process to be in British hands, but it is easy to imagine that issues concerning the British Government's

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[202] Ruth Craggs, 'Hospitality in geopolitics and the making of Commonwealth international relations', *Geoforum V*ol. 52 (2014), pp.90-100, p.94.

[203] TNA, CO1015/2375, Letter from Reynolds to Watson, 17.06.60. From the bar bill at the end of the conference, gin and tonic was by far the favoured drink: letter from Strachan to Reynold, 08.08.60.

[204] TNA, CAB21/3119, Letter from le Tocq to J. L. Clark at the Treasury, 28.11.60.

perceived superior drafting ability and also an innate need to direct the situation were factors too.[205]

For several of the conferences, the British Government provided the delegations with a constitutional expert which it had chosen and who was used to test out proposals.[206] For the second Kenya conference, Sir Ralph Hone, the recently retired head of the legal division at the Commonwealth Relations Office, fulfilled this role. Hone was seen as someone with 'an immense amount of common sense and first-hand knowledge of East Africa'.[207] Hone reported his findings back to London in January 1962, informing the Colonial Office of how wedded KADU was to federalism, how KANU suffered from internal divisions, how the moderate element led by Mboya was worried about the activities of Odinga and others, and how Kenyatta was seen as under the domination of Odinga. The white settler party of the territory, the Kenya Coalition, on the other hand, seemed disposed to stop shouting about European interests and wanted to build a bridge between KADU and KANU. Hone gleaned too that the moderate element led by Mboya might be prepared to go a considerable way to meet KADU on the basis of administrative devolution and that there might be the basis of an agreement if KADU would swap federalism in favour of modified regionalism.[208] All of this was highly important information which enabled Maudling and the Colonial Office to shape their conference policy. Another example of the British Government's desire to closely control a conference can be seen in the appointment of a British QC as the Somaliland delegation's advisor. Colonial Office lawyer Kenneth Roberts-Wray had considered it essential, given the legal issues that would be talked about at the Conference, for the Somaliland ministers to have their own legal advice.[209] Colonial Office officials took up the suggestion eagerly, choosing Neil Lawson QC, who was considered by Perth to be 'extremely sound'.[210] He had acted previously as adviser to Singapore and Brunei delegations at constitutional conferences.[211] Macleod thought that Lawson's 'experience and guidance should prove salutary'.[212] Indeed it did. While Lawson was not shy in advancing the Somaliland delegations' case, clearly saw the latter as his clients, and

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[205] TNA, DO183/77, Telegram from Whitley (CRO) to Hone, 22.04.64. The British Government's legal department's role was seen as a technical one by Commonwealth Relations Office officials.
[206] See Chapter Six for further discussion.
[207] TNA, CO822/2243, Minute by McPertrie, 10.11.61.
[208] TNA, CO822/2238, Note on Kenya by Sir Ralph Hone, undated but would have been in January 1962.
[209] TNA, CO1015/2518, Telegram from Perth to Hall, 08.04.60.
[210] TNA, PREM11/2893, Memorandum from Perth to Macmillan, 08.04.60.
[211] TNA, CO1015/2362, Telegram from Colonial Secretary to Hall, 12.04.60.
[212] TNA, CAB134/1559, Memorandum from Macleod to CPC, 25.04.60.

generally seemed to serve the delegation well, the British Government were able to use him to test out proposals concerning financial aid where the lawyer told Colonial Office officials the figure the delegation would be likely to accept.[213] Lawson had been someone they knew about, and could deal with, Perth's 'sound' remarks indicating an expectation that he would be at least sympathetic to British governmental thinking. Dealing with Lawson would be a different proposition than dealing with an unpredictable Somali delegation.

The British Government also made frequent use of private dialogue during the course of the conference with African leaders. Rittberger has observed that the formal plenary proceedings often play only a marginal role in conference negotiations.[214] For the African conferences, this often rang true. Many of the breakthroughs came about from discussions initiated with the African leaders outside of the formal conference forum. It was seen earlier how colonial secretaries used the opportunity to speak with nationalist leaders during the period between their arrival in London and the official start of conference proceedings. Private discussions often continued during the tenure of the conference itself. For example, to avoid souring the Ugandan Independence Conference with disputes, negotiations with the Baganda on powers to be given to that kingdom after independence were to be carried out way from the spotlight of the Conference itself and behind closed doors.

Another technique used by the British Government to achieve its conference objectives was management of the press. Lewis and Murphy have shown how the Colonial Office sought to manipulate the press in the 1950s, taking measures for example to dismiss a letter written by a number of Mau Mau prisoners at Lokitaung prison alleging cruel and harsh treatment.[215] The events surrounding the conclusion of the Kenya Independence Conference provide a further example of Colonial Office handling of the press over Kenyan issues. In an effort to spare KADU's post-conference fallout, that party having come out of the conference badly, MacDonald, Kenya's Governor, told his deputy, Eric Griffith-Jones that it would be helpful if he could explain and emphasise as much as possible to local newspaper editors, including the head of Kenya Broadcasting, just how many of KANU's proposals had been rejected by the British Government. He suggested that Griffith-Jones arranged a private conference with the media to 'get them to present the results of the

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[213] TNA, CO1015/2363, Note from Wyatt to Macleod, 06.05.60.
[214] Volker Rittberger, 'Global Conference Diplomacy', pp.167-182.
[215] Lewis and Murphy, 'The Old Pals' Protection Society?' p.58.

Conference in a way which, without seeking to minimise KANU's gains, points out the successful preservation of a number of vital KADU interests'. 'Presentation of these facts in a conciliatory way would', the Governor observed, 'be particularly helpful and healing on the K.B.C'.[216] This was not the first time that Kenyan television had been so used. At the second Kenya conference, the colonial government observed that '[i]t is so important that the Conference should be a success that I feel that K.B.S. should keep as close to the official line as possible and avoid relaying the wilder statements of delegates. Might I suggest that if funds are found for K.B.S. to send a reporter he should be attached to the P.R.O. [Public Relations Officer] London and be guided by him in his treatment of the Conference.'[217]

One of the more extraordinary claims made by a delegate at any of the African conferences of the early 1960s was a suggestion that Iain Macleod may have conspired with the Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Fisher, to use the 1961 Ugandan conference to defeat the predominantly Roman Catholic Democratic Party. The episode started after Kiwanuka walked out of the Conference following Macleod's announcement that the British Government accepted that Buganda could indirectly return delegates to Uganda's new legislature, subject to certain conditions. Soon after the walkout, Fisher, according to Kiwanuka's biographer, wrote to the Democratic Party leader criticising him for his intransigency.[218] Kiwanuka wrote back to Fisher, arguing that indirect elections amounted to disenfranchisement which in turn was an infringement of a Christian principle. Further acrimonious correspondence continued between the two men with Fisher writing to other 'stakeholders' in the Conference berating Kiwanuka for his actions. The Democratic Party leader then confronted Macleod to tell him that he thought there was an organised campaign by the Church of England against him. He suspected that the British Government had colluded with Anglicans to perpetuate protestant hegemony in Buganda and Uganda politics.[219] As Sarah Stockwell has shown, the Archbishop was no stranger to making his voice heard in Ugandan politics: in the mid-1950s he had sought to present himself as honest broker between the British Government and the Kabaka. Fisher also played an active and interventionist role in the run up to and during the 1961 Conference, where he was far from a neutral party.[220] But there is no indication from the British Government files

[216] TNA, DO168/49, DO168/49, Telegram from MacDonald to Griffith Jones, 18.10.63.

[217] KNA, HAKI/7/139, Memorandum from 'U.S.' to 'P.S./ L.H', 21.12.61.

[218] Albert Bade, *Benedict Kiwanuka: The Man and his Politics* (Kampala, 1996), p.88.

[219] Ibid, p.108.

[220] Sarah Stockwell,'"Splendidly leading the Way"? Archbishop Fisher and Decolonisation in British Colonial Africa', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History v*ol. 36, no. 3, (2008), pp.545-564; Sarah Stockwell, '"A sort of official duty to reconcile": Archbishop Fisher, the Church of England and

examined that Macleod had played a part in the Fisher/ Kiwanuka episode. Moreover, ecclesiastical politics in Uganda had never been a guiding light for the Colonial Secretary who was influenced far more by the desire to seek a pragmatic solution to the Uganda issue along the lines Munster had put forward.

The British and colonial governments also sought to manage events after conferences to put themselves in the best light. Thus after the first Zanzibar conference, which had ended without agreement, the British Government was keen to appear blameless over the conference failure. As Perth wrote to Maudling in relation to (what is presumed to be) the Colonial Secretary's proposed statement to the British Cabinet: 'I have just one comment on the proposed statement for the Zanzibar Conference, namely whether it puts the blame sufficiently squarely on the two Parties rather than H.M.G. for the delay in self-government and independence.' The Minister of State suggested some amendments.[221] Equally, outcomes of conferences could be used to British advantage. Sir Patrick Renison, Kenya's Governor, used the agreement reached at the first Kenya conference to issue a pamphlet which emphasised how the Conference 'provides us all in Kenya with a framework upon which to build a sound and stable future', adding that people can now 'work together in this new spirit of co-operation'.[222] Thousands of copies of the conference White Paper were produced in the major languages of the colony and sent to district officers for circulation, including to detention camps.[223]

Conclusion

The first part of the chapter noted how certain general attitudes of British governmental thinking pervaded conference planning, notably stability, moderation and maintenance of British prestige. It observed too that precise conference objectives were often only worked up by the British in the period between the announcement of, and the taking place of, a conference. For the most part, British objectives were firm, with colonial secretaries seeking to use conferences to guide delegates to particular outcomes. These included limited constitutional advance, conceding self-government but in return for concessions, closing off loose ends at independence conferences, and establishing an East African federation. On two occasions (the first Uganda and the second Zanzibar conferences) the

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the politics of British decolonisation in East and Central Africa', in Thomas Rodger, Philip Williamson and Matthew Grimley (eds.), *The Church of England and British Politics Since 1900* (Woodbridge, 2020), pp.240-261.

[221] TNA, CO822/2455, Memorandum from Perth to Maudling, 04.04.62.

[222] KNA, AHC/11/32, 25.02.60.

[223] KNA, AHC/11/32, 26.02.60 and 03.03.60.

conference aim was to offload the territory as soon as reasonable possible. Occasionally British conference planning could, however, be vague.

Part two of the chapter has shown how the British Government used a very wide range of tactics to achieve its conference objectives. The essential aim was to persuade a conference to agree to what the Colonial Secretary wanted. Conferences were held in London for maximum advantage, with the choice of venue there being influenced by the impression that the British Government wanted to create. It was the British Government that decided who to invite to the conferences, and who chaired conference sessions. Intelligence was used to find out delegates' positions before the conference started, and key actors were often worked on before the conference. During the conferences themselves, sessions were held in private to minimise potential embarrassment for the British and delegates were encouraged to exhaust themselves arguing with each other, only for the British to then present their solution. Delegates were made to feel important and responsible, and that if the conference reached agreement they would have achieved a great prize. At the same time, delegates were warned that if a conference failed, it would be their fault. Sometimes scare tactics were used. Private dialogues away from the conference were used by the British to forge agreement, and the press was sometimes manipulated both during and after the conference.

Yet there were limits and constraints to tactics. The British Government employed its techniques and ploys at some conferences more than others. This was generally dependent on the degree of agreement beforehand between the British Government and the delegations. British tactics also did not work so well at the independence conferences where nationalist leaders of a soon to be independent sovereign state had less of the role of supplicant. Just as the British Government sought to use their schemes to bring delegates round to their way of thinking, delegates also employed their own tactics. These aspects are examined in Chapter Five.

This chapter concludes the first aspect of the thesis, which was an examination of how the British and colonial governments sought to use conferences and commissions to regulate the final period of empire in Africa in the wind of change era. The next two chapters look at how those in Africa responded to both the commissions and the conferences.

Chapter Four

Strengthening voices: constitutional commissions and popular opinion and politics in Africa

A number of writers have examined how, during the course of the twentieth century, Africans used a variety of mechanisms to make themselves heard. Sometimes approaches were made within the territory: for example, by making representations to a territory's legislative council, parliament or to its Governor. Yet on occasions other mechanisms were used, ones which reached out to a wider and more international audience. These might be called extraterritorial approaches. Ryan Irwin, for example, has shown how in their battle with apartheid in the early 1960s, African leaders co-ordinated their fight against the South African government at forums such as the United Nations and British Commonwealth.[1] Liberal organisations in London were sometimes used by African nationalists in British territories in an attempt to enlist support for their cause and to project claims,[2] and representatives were sent to foreign capitals to influence their governments.[3] Pan-African organisations were also formed to develop a collective voice, most notably the All-African People's Conferences and PAFMECA, the Pan-African Freedom Movement of East and Central Africa.

For the purposes of this work, an extraterritorial approach of particular interest which was used to carry voices was the procedure of petitioning which operated in the mandated territories of the League of Nations and, after that institution's demise, for the trusteeship territories of the United Nations. Under such procedures, those in the relevant territories had the ability to and did seek redress from those inter-governmental organisations on a variety of matters including territorial administration, education, labour questions, land problems and local quarrels. Susan Pedersen (in relation to the League of Nations) and Ullrich Lohrmann (in relation to the United Nations) have each demonstrated the value of a

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[1] Ryan M. Irwin, *Gordian Knot: Apartheid and the Unmaking of the Liberal World Order* (New York, 2012), p.42.
[2] Ibid, p.45.
[3] See for example the efforts of the United National Independence Party. Robert Power, 'Federation to New Nationhood: The Development of Nationalism in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland 1950-1964' (Unpublished PhD Thesis, King's College, London, 2013), pp.308, 312.

study of such petitions.[4] Both writers' works show the popularity of petitions among colonial subjects; what the petitions can tell us about the issues of concern to such peoples, alongside the conditions in their territories; how petitions could turn inchoate grievances into articulated claims; and how such petitions had agency: even if the exercises brought no redress, they did serve to alter political relations, mobilise alliances and to create new political opportunities. Petitions could hone the organisational skills of petitioners and build up international and publicity networks. They offered exposure, contacts, credibility, publicity and, above all, a voice to the those who had no parliamentary representation.[5]

In some ways, representations by Africans to the constitutional commissions of the period can be seen as extraterritorial approaches. It is true that each was set up and, as we have seen, influenced heavily by the British or colonial governments. Yet for the most part, as will be seen, commissions were viewed by the African public and politicians alike as prestigious and - importantly - independent bodies which operated outside of the usual strictures of the colonial governance mechanism and to which claims, complaints, and grievances could be made. They were popular too. As Pedersen and Lohrmann have shown in relation to colonial petitions, so this chapter seeks to demonstrate the value of a study of the constitutional commissions of the second Macmillan Government as a way of similarly gaining greater insights into the African voices of the period. A study of representations made to constitutional commissions, something which has not been done before, can provide valuable information on how the autochthonous population engaged with the decolonisation process.[6] As was the case with United Nations and League of Nations petitions, the chapter will show the general popularity of the commissions amongst a wide range of African opinion and how commissions were generally seen as well regarded, independent, and influential by both the African public and politicians who hoped that they would institute change. It will look at what the commissions tell us about the nature of the

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[4] Susan Pedersen, *The Guardians: The League of Nations and the Crisis of Empire* (Oxford, 2015); Susan Pedersen, 'Samoa on the World Stage: Petitions and Peoples before the Mandates Commission of the League of Nations', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, Vol. 40, no.2 (2012), pp.231-261; Ullrich Lohrmann, *Voices from Tanganyika: Great Britain, the United Nations and the Decolonization of a Trust Territory, 1946-1961* (Berlin, 2007).
[5] See Pedersen, *Samoa*, pp.231, 233 and 250; Pedersen, *Guardians,* pp.91, 93 and 94; Lohrmann, *Voices*, p.8 and 214.
[6] Representations made to commissions were not of course just confined to a territory's black African population. There were plenty of submissions from Europeans and Asians too. Whilst a study of these would be interesting for what it tells us about how these groups used commissions, that is outside the scope of this chapter - and indeed this thesis, which has chosen instead to concentrate on how commissions and conferences shaped popular opinion and politics of the autochthonous African population.

constitutional claims of African subjects, where the language of liberalism and democracy was used against the British to assert rights, and will also examine the wider socio-political matters which were of concern to African opinion. As was the case with League of Nations and United Nations' petitions, the very act of making representations to commissions at a time (in our case) when African democracy and was still in its infancy for the relevant territories, with little opportunity for Africans to express popular will through the franchise, would have helped also to clarify local views, encourage domestic political organisation, and mobilise political parties. The marked growth of political parties in east and central Africa in the later 1950s and early 1960s has been thus far attributed to a number of factors. Authors such as Giacomo Macola, Miles Larmer and Benoni Turyahikayo-Rugyena have pointed to the rise of a younger, better-educated elite, who were often denied political outlets in existing structures.[7] Party organisation became slicker during the 1950s too, with the number of branches and full time organisers increasing, and youth and women's sections forming.[8] Indeed, as several authors have shown, the increased involvement of women generally in politics in this region and at this time was an important factor behind party growth.[9] Elections for legislative council seats on widened franchises and the consequent campaigning could also stimulate party growth,[10] and, not least, the emergence of charismatic leaders played its part too.[11] This chapter seeks to supplement the narrative by showing that commissions also were an important enzyme in the shaping and intensification of African politics during this period. Conferences also played their role, but that is the subject of the next chapter.

To begin with, a note in relation to evidence. Of the ten commissions examined, not all, unfortunately, have had preserved a record of the written and oral representations made to them. But several have: the report of the Monckton Commission has weighty appendices containing each of the written memoranda submitted by witnesses, together with notes painstakingly taken of the oral evidence given before the commissioners. The memoranda submitted to the Kenya Coastal Commission and notes of its meetings with witnesses have

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[7] Giacomo Macola, *Liberal Nationalism in Central Africa: A Biography of Harry Mwanga Nkumbula* (New York, 2010), p.54; Cohen, *Failed Experiment*, p.13; Miles Larmer, *Rethinking African Politics: A History of Opposition in Zambia* (Farnham, 2011), p.25; Benoni Turyahikayo-Rugyena, 'The Development of Mass Nationalism 1952-1962' in G.N. Uzoigwe (ed.), *Uganda: The Dilemma of Nationhood* (New York, 1982), pp.217-255, p.229.
[8] See eg. Short, *Banda* , p.133; McCracken, *Malawi*, pp.369, 390; Mulford, *Zambia*, p.159.
[9] See eg. Susan Geiger, *TANU Women: Gender and Culture in the Making of Tanganyikan Nationalism, 1955-1965* (Portsmouth, 1997).
[10] See eg. Low, *Political Parties in Uganda*, p.46.
[11] Power, 'Federation', p.203; Turyahikayo-Rugyena, 'Mass Nationalism', p.230.

also been preserved, all filed at the British National Archives. The Blood Commission Report too contains key memoranda submitted by various organisations, and the memoranda submitted to the successor body of the Swaziland Constitutional Committee have all been conserved.[12] Yet even where such detailed evidence has not been preserved for other commissions, it is still possible to gain valuable insights of representations made. Letters written by political parties to the commissioners, for example, frequently appear on files held at Kew; progress reports by commission chairmen also often summarise the opinions they had heard, along with their reactions to such evidence. The commission reports themselves often precis evidence, and local newspapers too provide valuable insights. Together, these sources amount a rich source of material.

One way to judge the popularity of the commissions is to look at the number of written and oral representations that were made to each. Some of these numbers, even with the acknowledgement that some memoranda were submitted by European populations, are impressive in their own right, given the literacy rates at the time among African men and women. For example, the adult literacy rate in Tanganyika and Zanzibar is thought to have been under ten percent in the early 1960s, and in Kenya the comparable figure in 1960 was only 20 percent, a rate which presumably included the better educated European population.[13] Whilst the numbers of petitions submitted in absolute terms might sometimes appear to be small, when set against the population who could read and write, they no longer look so modest. Then there was the sheer effort involved in travelling often vast distances to reach a centre where the commissioners were hearing evidence, and (in Nyasaland, Northern Rhodesia and Buganda) the political pressure on Africans not to give evidence. For the Monckton report, over 1,000 written memoranda were received.[14] For the Basutoland Commission the figures were even greater: 1,747 written memoranda were received and 608 witnesses (both individual and collective) were heard,[15] dwarfing the secretarial structure of the Commission, such that its chairman insisted that commission members could view only the original documents, rather than copies be made for each commission member,[16] and a subcommittee was needed to sift through the evidence.[17] The

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[12] TNA, DO119/1424, 'Swaziland: Written Comments by Members of the Public on Constitutional Proposals, July 1962', henceforth 'the Stephens inquiry'.

[13] Gerald Meier, *Emerging from Poverty: The Economics that Really Matters* (Oxford, 1984), p.73; *World Development Report 1980,* the World Bank, Washington DC, p.154.

[14] Great Britain, *Report of the Advisory Commission on the Review of the Constitution of Rhodesia and Nyasaland,* Cmnd 1148 (London, 1960), and henceforth 'Monckton Report', Paragraph 6.

[15] Basutoland, *Report of the Basutoland Constitutional Commission, 1963* (Maseru, 1963), and henceforth 'the Basutoland Report'.

[16] *Basutoland News*, microfilm, British Library, 07.08.62, p.3.

Kenya Northern Frontier Commission attracted 106 written memoranda and 134 delegates gave evidence: impressive for the subject of a small area.[18] Yet these figures tell only a small part of the story. Written material submitted was often expressed to represent very large numbers of people. The Northern Rhodesia Mineworkers' Trade Union, for example, stated in its evidence to the Monckton Commission that it was submitting views on behalf of its 15,000 to 18,000 members;[19] a delegation of Muslim Africans to the Kenya Coastal Strip Commission said that they represented 5,000 to 6,000 people;[20] Chiefs noted expressly that they were giving evidence on behalf of their people,[21] and welfare associations for their townships. Of course in some cases, views were no doubt formulated solely by the hierarchies of the groups. But in others, this was not the case, and views submitted represented a much wider body of opinion. For the Wild Committee, for instance, many district councils appointed subcommittees to tour their own districts to discuss matters before submitting evidence,[22] and the Serenje Welfare Association, for example, was at pains to show its delegated authority, telling the commissioners that the six who gave evidence represented a committee of forty which in turn represented its township of 2,000.[23] Many of those who represented African organisations which gave evidence would be directly accountable through election to their members and it is unlikely that they would have formulated their views wholly in a vacuum.

Commission hearings were often attended by large numbers of Africans. The chairmen of the Kenyan Northern Frontier Commission reported that altogether around 40,000 people had attended discussions;[24] Monckton noted that in tribal areas of the Central African Federation the groups giving evidence sometimes amounted to several hundred;[25] indeed at Mwansabombwe some 1,000 tribesmen attended a hearing of the Commission and the entire meeting was broadcast through a Government information department van loudspeaker with the crowd breaking several times into spontaneous applause.[26] At one

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[17] *Basutoland News*, 05.03.63, p.1.

[18] Great Britain, *Report of the Commission on the Future of the Northern Frontier District Kenya 1962*, Cmnd. 199 (London, 1962), and henceforth 'the Northern Frontier Report'.

[19] Monckton Report, Appendix VIII, Volume I, p.88.

[20] *Mombasa Times*, 20.10.61. Extract in TNA, CO894/2.

[21] See for example the evidence of Senior Chief Mbromoma. Monckton Report, Appendix VIII, Volume I, p.158.

[22] Uganda, *Report of Committee Appointed by His Excellency the Governor of Uganda to Consider Certain Constitutional Changes* (Entebbe, 1959), and henceforth 'the Wild Report', paragraph 9.

[23] Monckton Report, Appendix VIII, Volume I, p.178.

[24] The Northern Frontier Report, Foreword.

[25] Monckton Report, paragraph 6.

[26] *Northern News*, microfilm, British Library, 07.03.60 , p.1. It would be interesting to know who organised the presence of the van and the loudspeaker and why. One possibility is that this was

meeting before the Basutoland Commission an audience of some 3,000 people gathered.[27] Africans also often travelled long distances to attend commission hearings. At a meeting in Maqha, Basutoland, it was noted that some had travelled from towns hundreds of miles away.[28] In Northern Rhodesia, Chief Tembwe of the Senga Native Authority had come in by bus from Chama, ninety miles north, and his headman, Tesya, had an even more remarkable journey, replicating that of his chief but first travelling thirty miles by bicycle and canoe.[29] Many African witnesses were unable to give evidence in English and interpreters were employed. In the case of the Monckton Commission, a team was appointed to deal with seven different major languages.[30] Commissioners were frequently greeted by large crowds of Africans on their travels, who carried out demonstrations before them to carry their point. Sir James Roberson was met at Kilifi during his itinerary of the Kenyan Coastal Strip with crowds shouting 'Uhuru', (freedom),[31] and the *Uganda Argus* noted on several occasions how the Molson Commissioners were greeted by big crowds, including in one case some 3,000 Banyoro, who carried flags and waved placards.[32] Commissions often made front page news in both the English speaking and vernacular press. The three commissions of Uganda, for example, were hardly out of the headlines of the *Uganda Argus* whist they toured the territory, with the paper reporting prominently on the Molson Commission's activities on eleven of the twenty-one days in which it toured the Protectorate. The ownership of the *Uganda Argus* at the relevant period is not known, but it is clear from matters such as readers' letters to the editor and advertisements of the newspaper that its readership was comprised of both Europeans and educated Africans. The Swahili paper *Maarifa* devoted its front page to the Blood Commission on 19 May 1960,[33] and *Mwongozi,* the mouthpiece of the Zanzibar National Party, had as its front page on 6 May, the whole text of the memorandum submitted by that party to the Commissioner.[34]

Certainly the commissioners themselves were often impressed by the popularity of the commissions with the colonial (African) population. The Ramage Committee members, for

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intended as a measure of crowd control to avoid a potentially dangerous crush in the building (the Chief's court) where the meeting took place.

[27] *Basutoland News*, 09.10.62, p.1.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Monckton Report, Appendix VIII, Volume I, p.249.

[30] *Northern News*, 19.02.60, p.1.

[31] *Mombasa Times*, 16.10.61, excerpt from TNA, CO894/2.

[32] *Uganda Argus*, microfilm British Library, 16.01.62, p.1; 18.01.62, p.3.

[33] *Maarifa*, microfilm, British Library, p.1.

[34] *Mwongozi*, microfilm, British Library , p.1.

example, observed how constitutional development of the territory had become a 'matter of widespread and active public interest' which was 'demonstrated very strongly to the committee in the course of the representations received'.[35] A wide body of African opinion made representations to the commissions, including district councils, tribes, native authorities, welfare associations, teachers, trade unions, farmers' associations, traders, as well as individuals with no obvious connections. Wild noted to the Chief Secretary of the Ugandan Government how, with the exception of Buganda, all sections of the community in all parts of the country were coming forward with evidence.[36] Groups of African women featured strongly for some commissions; in Basutoland around half of the 3,000 crowd attending the meeting at Maqhaka were estimated to be women,[37] and both the Molson and Munster reports list a number of bodies of women which came forward to give evidence. Unfortunately, little information is available on the contents of the submissions made by women to the three commissions mentioned, where records of individual submissions have not been retained. By contrast, representations from women were not a noticeable feature of the Monckton Commission where records were kept. This is in spite of the prominent role of women in the decolonisation of Northern Rhodesia where women had been instrumental in the formation of the formation of the Zambia African National Congress, and its successor, the United National Independence Party.[38] The boycott of the Monckton Commission by the latter and the intimidation which women may have felt as a consequence may explain this absence.

An exception to the general popularity of constitutional commissions amongst Africans was the Swaziland Constitutional Committee which carried out most of its work during 1961. Only 13 individuals and institutions made representations, something which can be explained by the very traditional and authoritarian structure of African society in the territory where its ruler, Sobhuza II, vehemently opposed the idea of 'modern politics', preferring instead a system based on tribal traditions.[39] The Committee was comprised mostly of loyalists to the ruler, and of Europeans who favoured no real change. As such, it made little attempt to engage with the public. Swaziland's fledgling political party which

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[35] Tanganyika, *Report of the Post Elections Committee, 1959* (Dar es Salaam, 1959) and henceforth 'the Ramage Report', paragraph 83.

[36] TNA, FCO141/18284, Note from Wild to Chief Secretary, 17.06.59.

[37] *Basutoland News,* 09.10.62, p.1.

[38] Irene Manda, 'Women and Mass Mobilization in Nationalist Politics in Colonial Zambia 1951-1964: the case of Lusaka' (M.A. Dissertation, University of Zambia 1992), accessed online, 30.10.2017, pp.47-49.

[39] Hyam and Louis (eds.), *BDEEP,* Series A, Vol. 4, *The Conservative Government and the End of Empire, 1957-1964,* p.513.

promoted democratic values, the Swaziland Progressive Party (SPP), boycotted the Committee which it considered lacked proper standing.[40] Uneducated Swazis were thought to be bewildered by the whole process.[41] So disappointed were the British by the Committee's resistance to change that, as noted in Chapter Two, they appointed a further 'de facto' commission, this time under the chairmanship of the trusted D. S. Stephens, the former Legal Secretary of Malta. This attracted a somewhat better response, and 47 representations were made.

In Uganda, the Wild Committee was boycotted by most Bugandans, on instruction from their political elite, and in Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia Africans were urged not to give evidence to the Monckton Commission by the Malawi National Congress, African National Congress Party and the United National Independence Party.[42] In each case, the relevant political parties were concerned that the commissions were establishment shams, designed only to uphold the status quo. The commissioners in the Monckton Report noted the intimidation with which these boycotts were enforced in the Federation. This theme is returned to later, but for now it is worth making the point that it was surely *because* of the expected popularity of the commissions among African people that nationalist leaders took these enforcement steps. Had commissions been seen as otiose by the political leaders, boycotts would not have been necessary.

Notwithstanding the exception of Swaziland, and the instructions of the Bugandan elite and the nationalist parties of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland to boycott the events, commissions were usually seen by the African public and politicians as important. Despite his suspicions of the Wild Committee being a 'Governor's Committee', E.M.K. Mulira, President of the Progressive Party of Uganda, for example, considered that 'the political future of the country' rested with the Committee.[43] The radical *African Mail* in its editorial on 29 March 1960 called on Macleod to institute far-reaching reform in Nyasaland but understood that this would need to await the recommendations of the Monckton Commission, seen as influential.[44] As will be seen below, commissions were seen by at least some as operating independently of the colonial government. It no doubt helped that the

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[40] TNA, DO119/1422, SPP Memorandum to the Secretary of State, 07.05.62.
[41] TNA, DO119/1415, Telegram from High Commission to Secretary of State, 21.10.61; DO119/1421, Savingram from Resident to High Commissioner, 09.04.62.
[42] Monckton Report, paragraph 6.
[43] *Uganda Argus*, 07.02.59, p.2.
[44] *African Mail*, microfilm, British Library, 29.03.60, p.1.

colonial governments sought to portray them in this way. As already noted in Chapter Two, Uganda's Governor, Crawford, in his address which inaugurated the Wild Committee emphasised that he 'had no intention whatsoever of interfering in any way with the proceedings of the Committee',[45] and Sir George Mooring, speaking of the Blood Commission announced that '[w]hat would form the basis of the recommendations and in what stages would Responsible Government be granted now rests entirely with what material will be placed before Sir Hilary by the people of this country', and that Blood would 'undoubtedly try to know and find out the wishes of the people in the first instance and then formulate his recommendations', stating that the Commission was 'the quickest possible way to obtain constitutional reform'.[46] Often politicians did remain suspicious of commissions' motives but nevertheless co-operated because of the publicity which commissions could bring to both themselves and their organisations, sensing that they could broaden a commission's remit to suit their own agenda. Milton Obote for example, believed he could circumvent the narrow 'strict' terms of reference of the Wild Committee,[47] and Julius Nyerere cleverly used the opportunity afforded by a public discussion on constitutional demands during the tenure of the Ramage Committee to press his party's case for an acknowledgement by the Tanganyikan Governor that responsible government would be granted during the course of 1959, linking the narrow work of the enquiry with his much wider objectives.[48]

Members of the public were invited by the colonial governments to give evidence through posters, newspaper articles and advertisements, as well as radio talks in both English and vernacular languages.[49] The press could enhance the reputation of commissions. In Uganda, the *Argus* spoke of the Wild Committee as '15 men to shape the future of Uganda'.[50] The paper seemed genuine enough in its sentiment and expectation; as mentioned in Chapter Two the colonial government hoped that the Committee would make only narrow constitutional recommendations, and is therefore unlikely to have fed to the press a story which glamorised the Committee. The paper's letter writers also expressed attitudes of expectation. Petero Busari, a member of the public with no obvious

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[45] TNA, FCO141/18285, Points for Address by H.E. Inaugurating Constitutional Committee, 07.02.59.
[46] *Zanzibar Voice*, microfilm, British Library, 03.04.60, p.4.
[47] Low, *Political Parties in Uganda,* p.31.
[48] TNA, CO822/1460, Note by Fletcher-Cooke of a meeting with Nyerere, 23.12.58. Submission of TANU to the Ramage Committee, 13.06.59. See Chapter Six, p.202 for a more detailed discussion on this point.
[49] See for example Ramage Report, paragraph 4, and Wild Report, paragraph 6.
[50] *Uganda Argus*, 05.09.59, p.1.

political affiliations, thought that the (Wild) Committee 'cannot help but take into consideration our evidence and memoranda',[51] and in relation to the Munster Commission, E.A.S. Ochienghs-Well-Born, another person without obvious affiliations, wrote that '[w]e welcome Lord Munster and his Commission in Uganda. We have been waiting for you, all of our thoughts, energies and minds are centred around your Commission.'[52] Whether or not these letter writers were representative of the Ugandan population of the whole, at least outside of hostile Buganda, is difficult to gauge. As noted earlier, the readership would have been drawn from Uganda's educated classes. But given that interest in country-wide politics was still in its infancy in 1959, the attention given to the commission and its consequences for Uganda as a whole by those who were relatively well-informed is itself of significance.

Notes taken by colonial officials suggest that African witnesses could be very respectful towards commissioners, although how widespread such deference was is difficult to judge, and, of course, the note-takers may also have chosen to emphasise the respect. Mr Kulubya, in presenting his evidence to the Molson Commission, knelt before the commissioners and gave his evidence standing, despite being asked to sit, as he was 'addressing persons of such importance'.[53] P.N. Chibulu, secretary of the Luwingu Branch of the Northern Rhodesia Teachers' Association, told the Monckton Commissioners that he was presenting his evidence 'with good wishes for your consideration as an arbitrator entrusted by the Crown and British Government',[54] and three Lunda headmen told the same commission that they wanted to thank the Queen for sending commissioners to 'hear their words',[55] with a delegation before the Kenya Coastal Strip Commission telling Sir James Robertson that they considered it a very great occasion that the British Government should 'send such a wise man' as Sir James to look into their problem.[56]

A key point in relation to commissions of this period, one which helps explains their popularity, and in turn their influence (and is indeed also a reason for their study), is that they offered an opportunity for the African public to make their voices heard at a time

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[51] *Uganda Argus*, 07.03.59, p.3.
[52] *Uganda Argus*, 21.12.60, p.1.
[53] *Uganda Argus*, 26.01.62, p.5.
[54] Monckton Report, Appendix VIII, Volume I, p.165.
[55] Monckton Report, Appendix VIII, Volume I, p.191.
[56] TNA, CO894/8, Meeting between Robertson and six others, 19.10.61. The comment was noted down by an official from the colonial government, but there is no reason to assume that he would have misrepresented what was said.

when the opportunities to do so through the legislature were severely limited.[57] Very few Africans were enfranchised at the time when the respective commissions were variously instituted. In Basutoland, for example, at the time of its commission there were no direct elections to the colonial government's legislative council and indirect elections had only been set up shortly before that, following a report of 1959.[58] Similar positions applied to other territories. At the time of the Wild Committee, Uganda had a qualitative franchise with a very high bar for elections to its legislature, the first of which had only been held, in any event, in October 1958;[59] and in Tanganyika, elections were first held only in September 1958, enfranchising just 60,000, a number of whom would have been European and Asians, out of a total population of some eight million.[60] It is no wonder that in such circumstances Africans were generally eager to engage and present their views. As the Congress Liberation Party of Nyasaland noted in relation to the Federation: 'The Monckton Commission is our only referendum'.[61]

Given the purpose and terms of reference of the constitutional commissions it no surprise that most of the representations made by African witnesses were on such constitutional matters. Those giving evidence often took the trouble to go through the terms of reference point by point. The Bahaya Council for example told the Ramage Committee diligently that in its opinion tripartite voting should be abolished (the first term of reference), that it would be unwise to have minority representation in the Legislative Council, and that certain seats should be reserved for minorities (second term), that there should be universal adult franchise (third term) and that the present Convention of Chiefs which had an advisory role was adequate, rejecting a territorial council of chiefs (fourth and final term).[62] Memoranda submitted ranged from the long and very detailed - typically from African political parties - to inchoate but effective assertions. The short submission from the Chizera Traditional Committee to the Monckton Commission, for example, ended with a statement that they 'don't want Government such as Autocracy and Dominion Status

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[57] To this extent there are parallels with the English legislature of the Early modern period where petitioning became one of the main methods of airing grievances by those citizens not represented in Parliament. See for example House of Commons Information Office's 'Public Petitions', https://www.parliament.uk/documents/commons-information-office/P07.pdf, accessed 29.03.2017.

[58] Basutoland Report.

[59] Oliver Furley 'The Legislative Council, 1945-1961: The Wind of Change', p.201 in G. N. Ugoigzwe (ed.) *Uganda: The Dilemma of Nationhood* (New York, 1982), pp.167-216; Wild Report, p.29.

[60] Ramage Report, p.3.

[61] *The Nyasaland Times*, 04.03.60, p.1.

[62] *Tanganyika Standard*, microfilm, British Library, 28.07.59, p.3.

where by one race dominate the other, We want Democracy Government',[63] with another witness telling the commissioners '[w]hat we want is self govt. Federation is a bringer of bad ruling'.[64] Representations on constitutional matters could be both voluminous and forceful. Those Africans giving evidence to the Monckton Commission complained frequently at the lack of African representation at the Federal legislature and the undemocratic franchise arrangements. The right of secession for Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, and strong opposition to the Federation achieving dominion status were also recurring themes. African representation on constitutional issues showed also how the population was divided on certain issues. The Ramage Commissioners, for example, noted that public opinion was 'less clearly formed regarding the desirability of women voting than in the case of men'.[65] Witnesses also often strayed outside of the strict terms of reference of a commission to impart wider constitutional views. The Ramage Committee members observed for instance the 'widespread and intensive desire for an immediate and substantial widening of the franchise',[66] notwithstanding that the terms of reference of the commission confined the issue to parameters 'within the general principles of qualitative franchise'. The Wild Committee members noted too that whilst the subject of a common electoral roll was outside of the Committee's terms of reference, they had 'received so many expressions of opinion on the subject' that they 'felt bound to discuss the issue in this report'.[67]

As seen in Chapter One, constitutional commissions of the period were used by the British and colonial governments to manage outcomes. As also discussed in the Introduction, other methods were employed also to manage and control. Of particular relevance to this chapter, Frederick Cooper has noted that from the mid-1940s, the British Government used labour management tools as a mechanism of control, hoping on a broad level that the treatment of African males as 'industrial men' would create a 'predictable, known being' conducive to a controllable society,[68] and more particularly that the establishment of Trade Unions for African workers would mould grievances into defined categories to which

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[63] Monckton Report, Appendix VIII, Volume II, p.184.
[64] Monckton Report, Appendix VII, Volume II, p.218.
[65] Ramage Report, paragraph 53. Such views accord with a point made in the next chapter that notwithstanding the active part played by many African women in politics in the very late 1950s and early 1960s, patriarchal views of society still held sway.
[66] Ramage Report, paragraph 51.
[67] Wild Report, paragraphs 43 to 53.
[68] Frederick Cooper, *Decolonization and African Society: The Labour Question in French and British Africa* (Cambridge, 1996), p.2.

employers would respond.[69] Yet, as Cooper also went on to demonstrate, the process did not work as planned, for the African labour movements, sensing that colonial regimes were economically and politically vulnerable, used the labour organisations as a platform to make voices heard, seizing the new discourse of administrators to demand entitlements.[70] As the author puts it 'the very Eurocentricity of official thinking and universalistic language in which it was expressed became the basis for claims. If officials wanted Africans to work like Europeans, they should pay them like Europeans'.[71] The next paragraphs look at how a very similar process happened with constitutional commissions of the period: from starting off as an intended way of controlling constitutional progress, many African respondents grasped the language of democracy, liberalism and freedom, and used it against the British colonial regime to enforce claims, rights and entitlements, serving to add to the pressure for change.

In sifting through representations made by Africans to the commissions, a notable characteristic is how often the rhetoric of liberalism and democracy is invoked. Milton Obote, President General of the Uganda National Congress, no doubt setting out his credentials as a future leader under a majority rule franchise, told reporters that his party would stress that 'Uganda was an African country and that no government can claim authority unless it is based on the will and consent of the Africans.'[72] An individual witness to the Monckton Commission asserted that under the Federation there was a monopoly of power by a dominant minority but that Africans wanted a democratic system 'that would justify the political aspirations of the majority'.[73] The Uganda People's Union submission to the Wild Committee argued that no one with the requisite qualifications must be debarred from contributing to the country's political development 'because of his race colour or creed',[74] and an apparently ordinary African member of the public, M.K. Mubitana, wrote to the Monckton Commission: 'let every citizen of the Federation irrespective of race,

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[69] Frederick Cooper, 'Modernising Bureaucrats, Backwards Africans and the Development Concert', in S. Stockwell (ed.), *The Rise and Fall of Modern Empires, Volume III, Economics and Politics* (Farnham, 2013), p.541.
[70] Cooper, *Decolonization*, p.3; Frederick Cooper, '"Our Strike". Equality, anticolonial politics and the 1947-48 railway strike in West Africa', p.180, in J.D. Le Seur (ed.), *The Decolonization Reader* (New York, 2003), pp.156-183.
[71] Cooper, 'Modernising Bureaucrats', p.542.
[72] *Uganda Argus*, 07.02.59, p.2.
[73] Monckton Report, Appendix VIII, Volume I, page 35. Evidence of Mr Simenda.
[74] *Uganda Argus*, 11.07.59, p.1.

colour or creed rise up and reach the highest rung of advancement according to his ability'.[75]

Demands for constitutionally enshrined declarations of fundamental rights with judicial enforcement were not infrequent.[76] Claims were sometimes couched in the language of law, with precedents borrowed from other jurisdictions. Chief Shimumbi, for example, told the Monckton Commission '[w]here in British Democracy are people governed against their consent. Didn't the British Government learn from the famous preamble of Mr Thomas Jefferson of the American Independence', that 'all men are created equal... with certain rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness' and that governments derive powers from the consent of the governed.[77] The Northern Rhodesia Mineworkers' Union stated in its submission that it regarded the Federation as being undemocratic, unjust and contrary to the principles laid out in the 1949 Philadelphia Universal Declaration of Human Rights.[78] Those wanting autonomy for the Kenya Coastal Region submitted petitions to the Robertson Commission, based on nineteenth century concepts of political sovereignty arbitrated by the great powers.[79] In asserting rights and claims, the position of other territories was sometimes deployed, illustrating well Thomas and Thompson's point about how decolonisation should be seen as a 'globalising process', ideas spreading from place to place.[80] Rashidi Kawawa, for example, reportedly told a Ramage Committee meeting: 'the French free their territories. Why do the British hang on to theirs?'[81] Witnesses pointed out to the Wild Committee members that Ghana, with a smaller population than Uganda, had a much larger legislative assembly,[82] and T.D.T. Banda, President of the Congress Liberation Party in Nyasaland appealed directly to those commissioners who were from Commonwealth countries to draw comparisons with their own populations which, unlike Africans, had now been given the right to choose a form of government, and not 'to be told what kind of government they should have'.[83] The concept of a wider democracy was also frequently invoked. The Serenje Welfare Association, for

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[75] Monckton Report, Appendix VIII, Volume I, page 35. Evidence of Mr Mubitana.

[76] See for example, Monckton Report, Appendix VIII, Volume I, p.58; *Uganda Argus,* 10.08.59, p.1.

[77] Monckton Report, Appendix VIII, Volume I, p.165. Evidence of Chief Shimumbi.

[78] Monckton Report, Appendix VIII, Volume I, p.854.

[79] James Brennan, 'Lowering the Sultan's Flag', p.855.

[80] Martin Thomas and Andrew S. Thompson, 'Rethinking Decolonization: A New Research Agenda for the Twenty-First Century' in M. Thomas and A. S. Thompson (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of the Ends of Empire*, Online publication, September 2018, p.17.

[81] TNA, FCO141/17875, Letter from Director of Special Branch, Tanganyika Police, to Minister of Security, 20.08.59

[82] Wild Report, paragraph 56.

[83] Monckton Report, Appendix VIII, Volume III, p.71.

example, noted in its submission that democracy was not a new thing to Africans; they were accustomed to voting through the election of their own chiefs.[84] In Swaziland, the SPP in its submission to the 'de facto' Stephens commission submitted a memorandum which drew heavily on that part of Macmillan's Wind of Change speech in which the Prime Minister had said that the aim of the British Government was for a society in which individual merit alone is the criterion for advancement; the disparaged earlier constitutional committee's proposals, the SPP pointed out, were diametrically opposed to this.[85] Swaziland, it argued, should be like a shop window facing towards South Africa and it was the British Government's responsibility to fill that window with goods without delay.[86]

In a situation with no little irony, African witnesses sometimes themselves turned the tables on commissioners and colonial governments by urging the establishment of commissions to further their own causes. G. M. Magezi, for example, a member of the Ugandan Legislative Council, told that body at the time the Wild Committee was touring the Protectorate that an independent commission of enquiry was needed into the Africanisation of the civil service as the only answer to an atmosphere of muddle, suspicion and discontent which existed at present.[87] Less than two months later a memorandum bearing twenty-one signatures, some of them representatives of the three main political parties of Uganda was sent to Iain Macleod, urging him to set up a commission of inquiry into the political crisis of the country which had arisen on account of the boycott of non-African trade.[88] Sometimes the plea for a commission went wider, asking for United Nations involvement, such as the memorandum from the Euro-African Association of Northern Rhodesia which represented people of mixed descent and which asked for an independent UN commission to gauge the possibilities of granting independence to Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia within the framework of the Federation.

It would be interesting to learn more about the background and influences behind some of the submissions mentioned above. Who, for example, in the Northern Rhodesian Mineworkers Union had decided to invoke the 1949 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and how had they gleaned this information? One possibility is that the information was supplied through connections within the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions,

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[84] Monckton Report, Appendix VIII, Volume I, p.178.
[85] TNA, DO119/1422, SPP Memorandum to the Secretary of State, 07.05.62.
[86] TNA, DO119/1423, Memorandum from the SPP, 02.08.62.
[87] *Uganda Argus*, 23.09.59, p.1.
[88] *Uganda Argus*, 14.11.59, p.2.

to which the Northern Rhodesian union was affiliated at this time [89] How widespread were such ideas within organisations such as this? Unfortunately such information is not apparent. Yet that issues of democracy, race, colour, creed, human rights, France's colonial policies in sub-Saharan Africa, Commonwealth democracy, and UN interest in colonial issues were raised tells us something about the spread of a wide variety of ideas amongst at least a section of the African population in east and central Africa in the early 1960s. Of course it is difficult to know how widespread such thinking was from just these representations, but that they were being made by a diverse group of individuals and organisations is of note in itself.

Quite how much agency all of these representations of democracy and liberalism had is also not easy to judge. However, the very act of formulating grievances with precise and effective use of language is likely to have assisted the development of politics in Africa, and this is returned to later in the chapter. Furthermore, as will be seen in Chapter Six, many commissioners were also influenced deeply by the strength of representations made, and a part of that strength must surely have derived from the eloquent and persuasive language used and the credible legitimacy with which rights and claims were asserted.

Whilst constitutional issues were the subject of many submissions, other evidence submitted made representations on ancillary issues, of interest for what they reveal of contemporary concerns amongst the African population. Many submissions concerned local issues but had wider resonance. Those engaged in making representations had diverse views and differing motives. In Basutoland, complaints were made to commissioners about the depravation of hereditary rights to arable land, the non-enforcement of the Pound Law, as well as the claim that chiefs were adjudicating without the authority of the Basuto courts.[90] In the 'Lost Counties' of Bunyoro, women spoke out against having to dress like Buganda women and being forced to speak Lugama, which they did not fully understand,[91] and in Zanzibar, unions spoke out against poor work conditions, demanding health and safety legislation to protect their members against the 'misfortunes of injury and loss of life'.[92]

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[89] Raja Singh, 'Trade Union Development in Zambia', *Presence Africaine Editions*, Vol. 131, no.3 (1984), pp.13-23, p.19.
[90] *Basutoland News*, 09.10.62, p.1.
[91] *Uganda Argus*, 19.01.62, p.1.
[92] Zanzibar, *Report of the Constitutional Commissioner* (Zanzibar, 1960) and henceforth 'the Blood Report', Appendix A, memorandum of the Agriculture and Allied Workers' Union, 11.05.60.

In Swaziland, submissions to the 'de facto' commission set up under Stephens provide interesting insights into issues troubling the Swazi educated elite, and the way in which they sought to use the exercise to further their position at a time when, as seen above, this group were still squeezed by the traditional chiefly society on the one hand and the European settlers on the other. In view of these strictures, it is perhaps not surprising that education was seen by this group as an important enzyme in bringing about societal change. One petitioner, Philemon Dlamini, argued that the right to an education should be the same for all racial groups in Swaziland,[93] and the SPP attested that 'in common with all Africans today, the Swazi are vitally interested in educational advance'.[94] The system of chiefs, unsurprisingly, was subject to criticism with E.M. Msibi, a teacher, observing that it did not comply with the 'modern democratic way of governments' and that it was open to abuse, citing examples of chiefs acting 'ultra vires' by ordering Swazis in their area to quit without explanation, and using the forced labour of subjects without pay.[95] Equal rights with Europeans were demanded by the Memorandum Group which claimed the backing of some 250 educated Swazis, and which argued that any new constitution be non-racial and non-sectional.[96]

By far the richest source for finding more about African concerns are the memoranda and oral representations given to the Monckton Commissioners, all of which, as mentioned earlier, are reproduced in the huge appendices to the report. Complaints, which were sometimes attributed to the Federation, concerned the sort of socio-economic and political issues that might have been expected to have been taken up by political parties in a mature democracy. The greatest grievance cited to the Monckton Commission, by some distance, was racial discrimination. The Northern Rhodesia African Mineworkers' Union complained that Africans were not allowed to do certain jobs and that they were paid less than European workers.[97] The Choma Tonga Native Authority protested at the 'discriminatory and vexatious laws' that were present throughout the Federation, despite overwhelming African opposition in the territorial legislatures.[98] The Luingu Branch of the Northern Rhodesia Teachers' Association argued that a new government was needed which 'does

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[93] Stephens inquiry, evidence of Philemon Dlamini, 24.03.62. It is not known whether the comments were given by the same Philemon Dlamini who had been a member of the earlier Swaziland commission.
[94] TNA, DO119/1423, SPP to Colonial Secretary, 13.10.62.
[95] Stephens Inquiry, evidence of E.M. Msibi, 22.03.62.
[96] Stephens inquiry, evidence of the Memorandum Group, 27.06.62.
[97] Monckton Report, Appendix VIII, Volume I, p.88.
[98] Monckton Report, Appendix VIII, Volume I, p.3.

not discriminate against any citizen on grounds of colour, religion, race, sex or any of them' pointing to the injustice of the one shilling and three pence that was spent on an African child's education, compared with one pound for that of a white Rhodesian. Discrimination, the submission implored, should be eliminated in shops, public restaurants, hotels, rest houses, and places of public entertainment.[99] M. Simfukwe and S. Kambole who were respectively a general trader and building contractor, and who gave evidence together, summed up the general mood, telling commissioners '[t]he reckoning of a person's dignity and respect on white colour basis is the greatest evil and factor of many resentments and opposition from the African community'.[100]

Medicine was also raised with the Monckton Commission as an issue by some: the increased cost of drugs when dispensaries had closed down, and that payment needed to be made to take patients to hospital.[101] Agricultural issues were also highlighted, specifically concerning the withdrawal of the maize subsidy.[102] Others complained that wages were no longer keeping pace with inflation.[103] As seen above, education was advanced as an issue in the context of racial discrimination, but some witnesses simply expressed dissatisfaction that African educational progress was so poor.[104] Complaints too were made against the police ('imperialistic oppression of Africans'),[105] against European immigration which some in Nyasaland saw as leading to land shortages for Africans,[106] and about sharp increases in the cost of postal services.[107] The Kariba Dam project was criticised as being carried out against the will of the African people and having resulted in forcible evictions.[108] As with evidence submitted to the Basutoland, Wild, Munster and Ramage Commissions and the de facto commission set up in Swaziland under Stephens, the evidence to the Monckton Commission revealed too the tensions between the populace and the traditional chiefs. In Nyasaland, chiefs expressed concern about nationalist

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[99] Monckton Report, Appendix VIII, Volume I, p.165.

[100] Monckton Report, Appendix VII, Volume I, p.184. Although on this occasion testimonies were given together, the responses provided to the Monckton Commission are not generally suggestive of any co-ordination on the part of individuals. There were no pro-forma submissions.

[101] Monckton Report, Appendix VIII, Volume I, pp.35, 158 and 163.

[102] Monckton Report, Appendix VIII, Volume I, p.59. This appears to be a reference to the colonial government's withdrawal of subsidies to consumers which, between 1942 and the late 1950s, had cost the government some £10 million: see Kenneth Vickery, 'Saving Settlers: Maize Control in Northern Rhodesia', *Journal of South African Studies,* Vol. 11, no.2 (1985), pp. 212-234, p.232.

[103] Monckton Report, Appendix VIII, Volume I, p.158.

[104] See eg. Monckton Report, Appendix VIII, Volume I, p.160.

[105] Monckton Report, Appendix VIII, Volume I, p.197.

[106] Monckton Report, Appendix VIII, Volume III, p.13.

[107] Monckton Report, Appendix VIII, Volume II, p.200.

[108] Monckton Report, Appendix VIII, Volume I, pp.178, 200.

politicians; Yao chiefs Kawinga, Chikowi, and Mlomba thought that Nyasaland was 'being handed over to African nationalism on a silver platter' and that 'we chiefs around here do not have any confidence that such a future would be a peaceful one for the chiefs'.[109] Equally, politicians could be critical of the chiefs. T.D.T. Banda, President of the Congress Liberation Party in Nyasaland, warned commissioners to think carefully about evidence submitted by the Chiefs who favoured retention of the Federation.[110]

Care is needed if representations made to African commissions are to be assessed as a barometer of African political thinking. Although responses were frequently far wider than the commissions' terms of reference, they were nevertheless supplied in that context. Commissions were not a referendum on whether or not a territory should be given rapid independence. As seen earlier, nationalist parties in the CAF also encouraged its supporters to boycott the Monckton Commission. Notwithstanding these caveats, responses to the African commissions do bring home the point that in the very last days of empire, the dialogue was much richer than the simple goal of nationalism. Some, perhaps, saw a rapid independence as providing them with solutions to their issues, particularly for matters like discrimination. But it is by no means clear from the submissions that this was always the case, especially in relation to more domestic concerns such as medicines, maize, and the power of the chiefs. As Thomas and Thompson have reminded us recently, the temptation to read history backwards should be resisted.[111]

The next part of this chapter moves away from examining the popularity amongst Africans of colonial commissions and the nature of representations made, and looks at how and in what way the establishment of commissions might have influenced African politics.[112] It will argue, as highlighted in the chapter introduction, that they helped inform and clarify popular views - valuable at a time when democracies in east and central Africa were in their very infancies, encouraged civic and community debate of issues, and mobilised political parties. This is an area that has received scant treatment in the historiography of

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[109] Monckton Report, Appendix VIII, Volume III, p.45.
[110] Monckton Report, Appendix VIII, Volume III, p.62.
[111] Thomas and Thompson, 'Rethinking Decolonization', p.5.
[112] As mentioned earlier, Chapter Six deals with how the *outcome* of commissions influenced politics in Africa.

African politics beyond the odd reference to individual commissions having boosted political careers.[113]

In forming their submissions to constitutional commissions, organisations frequently looked at the terms of reference and worked out their position on each, one by one.[114] The example given earlier of the Bahaya Council in relation to the Ramage terms was by no means untypical, and such procedures were valuable exercises in pushing such bodies to consider wider national political issues. Responding to commissions could also help elites clarify their political thinking. G. S. Ibringira, who became an influential Ugandan politician, for example, wrote to the *Uganda Argus* at the time of the Wild Committee, that having read so much about Ugandan politics and the memoranda submitted to the Committee, 'I get some feeling that we don't know precisely what we want in 1961'. He then stated that he had been an advocate of a unitary government but that in writing his memorandum to the Wild Committee, he had concluded that now was not the right moment for this step, and that the immediate aim should be for responsible government.[115] Commissions could also, on occasions, inform African public opinion. At a meeting of the Kenya Coastal Strip Commission, Robertson met fifteen delegates and their interpreter from the Miji Kenda tribes who had heard 'that there was some question about the future of the Coastal Strip, but they were unable to understand what it was about', saying that they had never heard of the Coastal Strip and neither had their fathers. After the issue had been explained to them, the group said that now they had understood the issue they were of the view that the Strip should be a part of Africa as a whole and that regardless of tribe they were all Africans, united together. They prayed that Robertson would be able to find a solution to the problem.[116]

Commissions could help the African public and politicians alike to confront difficult issues, ones which had been simmering away for some time but which had never been tackled comprehensively. In Uganda, for example, in thinking ahead to their position in an independent state, several Asian groups decided and then announced publicly that they did not wish to press the Wild Commission for reserved seats for their communities, emphasising the part they played in the social, economic and political development of the territory (although declarations of fundamental rights were often requested too, no doubt

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[113] Viz. Obote, referred to in detail later on.
[114] This is suggested strongly by the format of some of the responses, which followed closely the questions asked in the commissions' terms of reference.
[115] *Uganda Argus*, 12.11.59 , p.2.
[116] TNA, CO894/7, Note of Meeting, 14.10.61.

as way of protecting property and position).[117] In that territory, the Wild and Munster exercises also exposed fully the issues of whether the post independent state should be federal or unitary, the position of Buganda, and the position of the hereditary rulers.[118] The Kenya Coastal Strip and Northern Frontier Commissions encouraged majorities and minorities within the territories to think ahead to a time after the British had left and how they might or might not live together, and in Basutoland the commission no doubt focussed the minds of the public, the political parties and the traditional chiefs on the three key issues which needed to be resolved for independence: the preservation of chiefly powers, whether or not the territory could survive economically, and military protection.

Commissions and the responses which they demanded also encouraged district councils, native councils, chiefs, trades unions, interest groups and welfare organisations to organise themselves to deal with the attendant constitutional and wider political issues. It was seen earlier how the many district councils of Uganda consulted widely before submitting evidence. One such example is the West Nile District Council which drew up a memorandum proposing that Uganda should be developed as a unitary state with direct elections on a common roll and universal suffrage but did so only after teams of its members had toured the West Nile District to sound out public opinion. Once the evidence was received, organisations then had to decide how to deal with it. The Teso District Council, for example, called a meeting of its committee which decided issues by a show of votes and then authorised a sub-committee to draft a memorandum which captured their views.[119] The Provincial Advisory Council of the Northern Province had organised a conference which had been attended by delegates from all over the Province and which purpose was to consider the type of government best suited to Uganda so that a memorandum could then be drawn up and submitted to the Wild Committee, the task of which was delegated to a smaller group.[120] In Northern Rhodesia, before he submitted evidence to the Monckton Commission, Chief Chinyama Lipati who ruled over 2,500 people had a 'mass meeting' with all of his leading headmen to discuss a response,[121] and at a village in the Solwezi district, forty-two village headmen met to draw up evidence listing seven key points including issues concerning schools, hospitals and agriculture.

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[117] *Uganda Argus*, 23.07.59, p.1; 10.08.59, p.1; 02.09.59, p.1; TNA, FCO141/18281, Memorandum presented to the Wild Committee by the Central Council of Muslim associations of Uganda, 09.08.59.
[118] See further Chapter Six, p.197.
[119] *Uganda Argus*, 15.05.59, p.2.
[120] *Uganda Argus*, 30.09.59, p.5.
[121] Monckton Report, Appendix VIII, Volume I, p.186.

The mobilisation of African political parties through the process of the constitutional commission can be seen in many ways. Some used the occasion of a commission to rally supporters. In the Kenya Coastal Strip, vans belonging to political parties toured the region for three weeks or so, telling the people to gather in large crowds to show that they were against autonomy.[122] Others used anti-Commission sentiments to galvanise supporters. In Buganda at the time of the Wild Committee, pressure was put on Bagandans not to give evidence, and intimidation was widespread,[123] and in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, the Monckton Commissioners noted the intimidation with which boycotts were enforced by the United National Independence Party and the African National Congress in the former territory, and by the Malawi National Congress in the latter. In Fort Rosebery in Northern Rhodesia, the treasurer general of UNIP urged a crowd of some 300 to have nothing to do with the Commission, tearing up a Federal Information Department bulletin which gave details of the Commission and its functions. The *Northern News* reported that as the pieces fell to the floor, scores of children rushed from the crowd and set them alight to cries of 'freedom now'.[124] The power which the Commission had indirectly given to the more extreme nationalist parties of the Federation was highlighted by the Commissioners who observed that they had 'clearly established a remarkable degree of control'.[125]

Political parties also used the opportunity afforded by submissions to gain publicity. Press conferences were often held,[126] and submissions paraded in party newspapers.[127] Tensions could be heightened between parties, creating an 'us' and 'them' atmosphere. To draw a distinction between its position and that of the Malawi National Congress, for example, a group of around fifty members of Congress Liberation Party made a spectacle of parading through Nkata Bay on its way to give evidence to the Monckton Commission.[128] In Zanzibar, the memorandum submitted by the Afro Shirazi Party to the Blood Commission sought to distinguish itself from the other political parties, of which it was highly critical.[129] Finally, in Swaziland a new Swazi political party, the Swaziland Democratic Party, used the opportunity afforded to it by the Stephens' enquiry to differentiate itself from the SPP, arguing that before any constitution was formulated there were a number of fundamental

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[122] *Mombasa Times*, 20.10.61, excerpt in TNA, CO894/2.
[123] *Uganda Argus*, 24.06.59, p.7.
[124] *Northern News*, 01.03.60, p.1.
[125] Monckton Report, paragraph 6.
[126] See for example *Uganda Argus*, 11.07.59, p.1.
[127] *Mwongozi,* microfilm, British Library, 06.05.60, p.1.
[128] *Nyasaland Times*, 25.03.60, p.1.
[129] Memorandum of the Afro Shirazi party, 24.04.60 contained in Appendix A of the Blood Report.

issues which needed to be addressed, including a solution to the issue of ownership of mineral rights, the integration of the community into a modern economy and the development of local government institutions to enable people to acquire experience in running civic affairs.[130]

Several of the commissions had as members those who were senior representatives of African political parties and the lengthy tours undertaken by commission members helped put such politicians in touch with their future electorate. Wild thought that his Committee's tour of the Eastern Province and Karamoja had been very useful for members of the Committee in helping them to get to know the country and its problems.[131] It is at first blush surprising that the Committee were so apparently unaware of the country and its problems, but this is something that can be explained by the insular nature of the regions and kingdoms, paucity of large urban centres, newspapers, and the lack of countrywide issues that would have exposed politicians to the thinking of the whole of the territory.[132] The Tanganyikan Africa National Union used the opportunity of the touring Ramage Committee to sponsor meetings at which members of the Committee would speak. Commissions also afforded politicians opportunities. Milton Obote, for example, said that his party would use the Wild Committee as an opportunity to press for self-government.[133] Indeed, the events surrounding the Wild Committee and its Report also did much to launch Obote's political career. During the course of the Enquiry, Obote took the initiative in convening joint submissions from the political parties which advocated an accelerated independence,[134] and as Ingham has pointed out, it was during the subsequent Legislative Council debate on the Wild Commission Report that Obote also demonstrated his new status.[135] Obote was not the only Ugandan politician who saw the benefits of the Wild Committee. UNC Chairman, Joseph Kiwanuka observed that it was a 'golden opportunity for his party to put its views concerning the future government of the country'.[136]

Commissions could help fuel new political alliances too; the Obote wing of the UNC and the UPU came together to denounce the position of the British Government to the Wild

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[130] Stephens inquiry, evidence of the SDP, 29.06.62.
[131] TNA, FCO141/18284, Note from Wild, 08.07.59. The reference is to all members of the Committee.
[132] Low, *Political Parties in Uganda,* p.14. pp.34-35.
[133] *Uganda Argus*, 07.02.59, p.2.
[134] Bagonchwera N. I. Barungi, *Parliamentary Democracy in Uganda: The experiment that failed (*Bloomington, 2011), p.34.
[135] Kenneth Ingham, *Obote: A Political Biography* (London, 1994), p.58.
[136] *Uganda Argus*, 26.06.59, p.1.

Report, before merging shortly thereafter to form the United People's Congress.[137] Where commissions did contain members of rival political parties, the act of working together or against each other aided political maturity. In Basutoland, the Assistant Attorney General, B. L. O'Leary, a Commission member, noted that one effect of the extended discussions had by all of the political leaders during the long duration of the commission was that they 'have learned to compromise'.[138] He thought, somewhat patronisingly, that this would be valuable when it came to the constitutional conference scheduled to take place in the Spring of 1964, but the point is wider, illustrating how the proceedings of commissions helped forge the maturity of political debate in the territory. Its chairman also observed how the commission seemed to have given other parties confidence that they could stand up to the hitherto dominant Basutoland Congress Party.[139]

Conclusion

Through their popularity and on account of the wide engagement and interest they generated (whether positive or negative, in the form of boycotts), the constitutional commissions of the period did much, then, to stir and encourage political interest and organisation amongst the African public. At a time when very few had the vote, commissions provided Africans with a manifest opportunity to become involved in politics, to consider issues wider than just local ones, to form views, often through group discussion, and then to organise themselves to make representations, and to stake rights and claims. Some commissions afforded opportunities for African political leaders to meet with their future electorate and to find out issues of popular concern, and this in turn often gave the electorate the chance to meet their future political leaders.

For the African political parties, commissions were an occasion to muster support, for publicity, to show how, precisely, they were different from the opposition. Commissions helped politicians enhance their reputation and created political alliances, fostering also co-operation, debate and opposition. In short, commissions acted as a catalyst for political development in British held east and central Africa in the very late 1950s and early 1960s. It is noticeable that around the period of time in which the early commissions of Uganda, Tanganyika and the Central African Federation, toured, heard evidence and then reported, the African political parties grew rapidly. In Tanganyika, for example, the membership of TANU was around 300,000 in July 1958, yet by January 1960, it stood at about one

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[137] *Uganda Argus*, 24.02.60, excerpt in TNA, CO822/2275.
[138] TNA, CO1048/ 384, Telegram from High Commissioner to Colonial Secretary, 09.03.64.
[139] TNA, CO1048/46, Interim Private Report of the Constitutional Commission, 02.11.62.

million.[140] In Uganda, the acting Governor, Charles Hartwell told Macleod in January 1960 that '[t]here are as you know no political parties in Uganda which command any really widespread support.'[141] But by November of that year, Sir John Martin, joint Deputy Under Secretary of State at the Colonial Office, observed how in Uganda popular nationalist parties had now 'at last' gathered momentum and were demanding rapid advances towards independence.[142] And in Nyasaland, the Malawi Congress Party, set up in September 1959 had by October 1961 over 100,000 members.[143] It would be too much of course to say that this growth was attributable solely or even mainly to the political engagement aroused through the work of the commissions. Many other factors were at play, as set out earlier in the chapter. But it would be a brave assertion to say that the interest generated through commissions had not played its part in such growth.

The colonial government, British ministers and Whitehall rarely discussed how African commissions might have stirred political interest and organisation. There was nothing approaching a detailed analysis of their effects. Yet there were tacit contemporary acknowledgements of the powerful effect commissions could have on local politics. Monson, as noted in Chapter Two, saw that some commissions had produced embarrassing and unexpected results for the British – an appreciation, of sorts, of their mobilising properties. Macleod realised that if the British Government did not implement the recommendations of the Monckton Commission over the constitution for Northern Rhodesia there would be civil unrest.[144] Then there was Maudling's decision, also mentioned in Chapter Two, of proscribing further commissions being appointed in or relation to Britain's African colonies without his consent. The Colonial Secretary was clearly concerned that these institutions could no longer safely be managed by the British Government and that the representations made to commissions could evoke and marshal strong feelings.

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[140] John Iliffe, *A Modern History of Tanganyika* (Cambridge, 1979), p.567.
[141] TNA, CO822/2262, Letter from Hartwell to Macleod, 14.01.60.
[142] TNA, CO822/2276, Letter from Martin to Wheare, 23.11.60.
[143] Power, 'Federation', p.200.
[144] See further in Chapter Six

Chapter Five

Conferences and popular opinion and politics in Africa in the wind of change era

This chapter shows how conferences, like commissions, were generally seen as notable and significant events by African politicians and public. For the most part the public engaged with conferences enthusiastically, and the events helped affirm political identities amongst the colonial population, acting sometimes as a catalyst to bring out differences amongst both political parties and their supporters. Conferences also enhanced some politicians' reputations and diminished others. They fostered new alliances, yet also helped break existing structures. The first part of this chapter looks at public engagement in Africa with the conferences, and the second at the influence of conferences on politics in the colonial territories. Part three of this chapter examines the role of women at the conferences. The purpose of this chapter, like the previous one, is to draw out and to help explain these matters. Chapter Six then discusses their ramifications.

Part One: Popular opinion

Conferences usually galvanised the African public, contributing, like commissions, to an enhanced African politicisation. As mentioned in Chapter Four, there were of course many other reasons for this, but the effects of conferences played its part. It may seem surprising that conferences were seen as such significant events. After all, the London conferences were not open to the press, were held thousands of miles away from the territories concerned, and much of the discussion was of a dry, technical nature. Even when newspapers did report on developments, most of the colonial population would not have been able to read about them; as noted in the previous chapter, literacy rates were low. Yet conferences, for the most part, did energise many Africans. One way in which this can be seen is by the reception given to politicians departing to and returning from London. Such receptions were not confined to the period under review, and participants had antecedents to draw upon. When, for example, the Kabaka of Buganda returned from British-imposed exile in 1955, he was met by very large crowds of ecstatic well-wishers.[1]

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[1] Crawford Young, *The Politics of Cultural Pluralism* (Madison, 1976), p.265; John Iliffe, *Honour in African History* (Cambridge, 2005), p.321.

For the conferences of the early 1960's, the airport became the focus of well-wishers. Thousands gathered there to see off nationalist leaders and to welcome them back. After the third Kenyan conference, for example, there was a large amount of public interest in the returning KANU delegates, and more than 5,000 people met Kenyatta at Nairobi airport on his return from London. The *East African Standard* reported that some had travelled from upcountry areas and some had started to arrive some seven hours before the Prime Minister's jet had landed. Later Kenyatta spoke to a mass rally, attended by an estimated crowd of 150,000, described by the police as the biggest ever gathering in Nairobi for a political meeting.[2] On Kaunda's return to Lusaka from the second Northern Rhodesia conference, the *Northern News* reported how around 2,000 people were at the airport to greet Kaunda and outside a crowd of more than 15,000 lined the two mile stretch of road to UNIP's headquarters, receiving the UNIP Leader with 'thunderous cheers'.[3] Greater still were the crowds for Hastings Banda. On his return from the 1960 Nyasaland conference, some 10,000 gathered at the airport to welcome back the leader with 40,000 attending a later meeting at Blantyre which he addressed.[4] Then, for the second conference, crowds estimated at between 100,000 and 150,000 arrived to see the MCP leader return, many of these waiting at the airport itself.[5] The *Nyasaland Times* reported in advance of the arrival that every available bus, truck and lorry in the country had been seconded to bring in people from far afield.[6]

Newspapers and colonial intelligence reports testified to the interest which those in Africa generally gave to the conferences which took place for their colonies. The intelligence report for Kenya shortly before the 1960 conference, for example, noted that with the approach of the Conference, activity among the various African political parties had reached a high pitch,[7] and the report for January mentioned that the attention of all communities had been focussed on the Conference.[8] The *Tanganyika Standard* records how the end of the Dar es Salaam Conference 'sparked off one of the most amazing demonstrations of enthusiasm ever seen in the capital'. Nyerere was hoisted shoulder high and carried through crowds.[9] For the first Zanzibar conference, the newspaper *Zanzibar*

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[2] *East African Standard*, microfilm, British Library, 21.10.63, p.1.
[3] *Northern News*, 27.05.64, p.1.
[4] TNA, CO1015/2241, Note by Jones, 16.08.60.
[5] TNA, DO183/59, Letter from Jones to Butler, 04.12.62; *Malawi News*, 07.12.62, p.1.
[6] *Nyasaland Times*, microfilm, British Library, 30.11.62, p.1.
[7] TNA, CO822/2058, Intelligence Report, December 1959.
[8] TNA, CO822/2058, Intelligence Report, January 1960.
[9] *Tanganyika Standard*, 30.03.61, p.1.

Voice reported a keen interest amongst the population in the Conference outcome.[10] And in Uganda, the run up to its first London conference was seen by the press as a very major event, with the *Uganda Argus* frequently devoting its front page to developments in London. Religious institutions in Africa sometimes became involved in the pre-conference build up, and seemed to regard conferences not only as important events in themselves, but ones with healing properties. Special services, for example, were held in both churches and mosques in Uganda for the success of its first conference,[11] with the archbishop of Rugaba sending out a circular letter to all parishes under his archdiocese asking them to offer special prayers for a favourable outcome.[12] Similarly, for the second Nyasaland conference, prayers were said in churches for positive results; the Church of Central African Presbyterian in Blantyre had a special service on 25 October,[13] and the Roman Catholic Church in Nyasaland declared that Sunday 11 November would be observed as a national day of prayer when priests would be asked to pray for a successful conference outcome.[14]

The build up to conferences could also see increases in membership of political parties. For instance, soon after the first Northern Rhodesian conference had been announced, UNIP officials reported a marked rise in party morale and membership, and that in Lusaka enrolment figures increased by 80 percent.[15] Conferences produced excitement and expectation amongst the followers of the African nationalist parties, affirming identity through celebrations with flags, festive dress, and song. The first Ugandan conference was a particularly good example of this, where the delegates' homecoming showed the continued popularity of tribal politics in Uganda. In contrast to the relatively modest receptions for Obote and Kiwanuka, the Kabaka and the Buganda delegation were given a 'tumultuous welcome'.[16] They were met by a crowd of some 30,000, celebrating what had been achieved at the Conference.[17] Dances took place in both villages and urban areas, carrying on into the morning after, and the whole 22 mile road between Kampala and Entebbe was said to have been transformed by planting some 10,000 young banana trees by the roadside.[18] After the second Nyasaland conference, a special flagstaff was erected at the arrival airport on which the Malawi flag was to be hoisted, to be followed by the singing

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[10] *Zanzibar Voice*, 11.03.62, p.2
[11] *Uganda Argus*, 13.09.61, p.5 and 15.09.61, p.2.
[12] *Uganda Argus*, 13.09.61, p.5.
[13] *Nyasaland Times*, 23.10.62, p.1.
[14] *Malawi News*, 26.10.62, microfilm, British Library, p.5.
[15] Mulford, *Zambia,* p.158.
[16] TNA, CO822/2064, Uganda Monthly Intelligence Report for October 1961.
[17] Ibid; Bade, *Kiwaunka*, p.108.
[18] *Uganda Argus*, 23.10.61, p.1.

of 'Kamuzu Ndi Mkango' (Kamuzu is the lion); Banda was then to be garlanded with a lion skin, given to a person who has achieved something remarkable for his people.[19] After the Somaliland conference, the capital was in festive dress, with many people carrying the Somali flag.[20]

What is not clear is the extent to which the airport welcomes were orchestrated by the political leaders' party machinery. That trucks were seconded and the banana trees pre-ordered is suggestive of this. In Nyasaland, full time organising officials were appointed during the course of 1960 to the MCP and the number of the party branches grew rapidly.[21] Reasons for joining the party would have been mixed, it being likely that some did so primarily because of the protection and security offered by holding an MCP card.[22] Were such members attending the airport gatherings on account only of party political pressure? On the other hand, a reading of the local newspapers and contemporary intelligence reports of the colonial administrations leaves the impression that the gatherings were genuine enough expressions of joy and goodwill towards the leaders. At the end of the day, whether the crowds that gathered did so out of spontaneity or party organisation, the point is that conferences heightened political activity.

In fact, it is hardly surprising that the conferences in the wind of change era were seen by the public in Africa as major events. The early ones offered the chance of greater African parliamentary representation, and the later ones offered independence. This, in turn, brought hope to many. In an unusual move, which happened as the Tanganyikan conference was taking place locally, individuals and organisations were invited by the colonial government to make submissions on any matter which they wished to be brought to the attention of the constitutional conference.[23] It seems highly probable that the move was organised by the Colonial Office as a sop to trade unions and other bodies who wanted to attend. As the conference was on local soil, it would have been more difficult to turn down attendance requests than if the conference were in London.[24] The responses that were submitted give us useful insights as what the contributors wanted the conference to decide and, as was the case with representations to commissions, provide helpful information on how the local population engaged with the final days of empire.

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[19] *Nyasaland Times*, 30.11.62, p.1.
[20] *Somaliland News*, microfilm, British Library, 09.05.60, p.1.
[21] McCracken, A *History of Malawi*, pp.367-369.
[22] Power, 'Federation to New Nationhood', pp.208-209.
[23] TNA, FCO141/17957, Memorandum from 'P.A.S.' to Philip Rogers, 15.03.61.
[24] TNA, CO822/2413, Submission to Secretary of State by East Africa department, 19.01.64. Tanganyika was the only case-study conference which invited such submissions.

Less than twenty submissions were received for the Tanganyika Conference, but this number is more significant than might first be thought as many of the submissions were from associations representing large numbers of people. Some responses were in keeping with the nature of the forthcoming constitutional conference, for example arguing that for a calm country like Tanganyika it was appropriate that the 'chief minister title be replaced by 'prime minister'.[25] But many issues were raised that were outside the scope of a constitutional conference. Nasser Mohamed, an individual with no obvious political connections, argued that '[e]very Tanganyika citizen… must get a land piece for ploughing cereals produce or cotton etc.' and suggested that some types of thieves, for example 'a gang looting at any time small time' should receive a heavy punishment to dissuade them from committing 'their bad work,' and that '[c]inema owners must be requested to arrange family circle accommodation in order to stop nuisance of loffers'.[26] The Rungwe African Farmers' Representative Union petitioned that the colonial government should provide financial assistance for land development and that African farmers in particular needed aid. The writer of the letter also argued that money should be available for scholarships so that Africans could study abroad as 'we are thirsty of education in Tanganyika'.[27] A chief was concerned that Tanganyika would be more viable on 'an East African basis and a greater emphasis should be given to tourism'.[28] The Tanganyika Government Trade Union asked for Kenyatta to be released and that Europeans and Asians should learn Kiswahili.[29] A local tribe wrote in to ask for full access rights to Lake Nyasa,[30] and the Tanganyika Students' Discussion Group wanted 'political education for the masses'.[31] The invitation to submit proposals to the constitutional conference had no doubt provided the letter-writers with a convenient occasion on which to bring grievances to an influential audience, but the responses show also that constitutional conferences and constitutional advance were more than just about narrow political progress. Some Africans perhaps saw conferences, and the prospect of self-government and independence which they could be expected to confer, as a way of achieving their own extra-constitutional aspirations; a future blank canvas onto which they could project their desired outcomes. Yet it is by no means clear that the Tanganyikan representations were necessarily made on the supposition of forthcoming

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[25] TNA, FCO141/17957, Letter (undated) from J. A. Chiteri Chiboole, E.A.R. and H. Nangana, and T.T. Mtwara.
[26] TNA, FCO141/17957, Letter (undated) from Nasser Mohamed.
[27] TNA, FCO141/17957, Memorandum from the Rungwe African Farmers' Representative, 03.03.61.
[28] TNA, FCO141/17957, Memorandum from Chief Lugusha, 06.03.61.
[29] TNA, FCO141/17957, Letter (undated) from the Tanganyika Government Trade Union.
[30] TNA, FCO141/17957, Letter from the Unyanja Council and Tribe, 10.03.61.
[31] TNA, FCO141/17957, Memorandum from Tanganyika Students' Discussion Group, March 1961.

independence for that territory, chiming with the point made in Chapter Four that it would be a mistake to assume that (what we now know, with hindsight, to be) the final months of empire were solely about the goal of independence within a nation state.

Although conferences were held in camera and official communications of daily developments were bland and sterile, news of developments and breakthroughs often did find their way quickly back to the African territories, no doubt because of leaks from delegates. Local newspapers helped spread such news, but word of mouth was important too. Developments at the first Kenya conference illustrate the point, and show how conference proceedings could energise supporters back home, and once again attesting to their significance. Walter Coutts, Kenya's Chief Secretary, reported that Africans were jubilant when they heard, presumably through information sent by delegates, that Kenyan radical Peter Koinange had been admitted to the 1960 Conference. The development was seen as a victory, and provided encouragement that Macleod would meet African demands.[32] When, on 1st February, Macleod provided his initial proposals to the Conference, Africans, picking up the sense of what had been said, were reported once more as being overjoyed, with many now seeing independence as imminent. Celebrations were started which culminated in disturbances requiring police intervention.[33]

Yet as alluded to above, not all those in Africa saw conferences as a force for good which would lead to rapid independence and therefore a better life. Conferences brought out reservations and different ideas about the direction of constitutional advancement amongst sections of the local people. There was of course a strong undercurrent for rapid independence within the framework of a nation state, but that was no means the only vision that was prevalent.[34] Conferences, unsurprisingly given the prize on offer, brought out competing visions of post-colonial societies: federal versus unitary; progressive versus traditionalist; and, in the case of Zanzibar, African versus Arab. These are worthy of consideration. As Smith and Jeppsen have reminded us, there was no single, straight path which led to the end of empire, and it is easy to fall into traps by knowing how the story

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[32] TNA, CO822/2356, Telegram from OAG to Secretary of State, 25.01.60.

[33] TNA, CO822/2356, Telegrams from OAG to Secretary of State, 02.02.60, 03.02.60 and 04.02.60.

[34] See Michael Collins, 'Nation, state and agency: evolving historiographies of African decolonisation' in Andrew W. M. Smith and Chris Jeppesen (eds.), *Britain France and the Decolonization of Africa: Future Imperfect* (London, 2017), pp. 17-42, p.27. Frederick Cooper has shown that in the late 1940s independence was not the automatic goal of all colonial nationalists, and that for some, social and economic equality sometimes mattered more: 'Restructuring Empire in British and French Africa', *Past and Present* (2011), Vol.210 Supplement 6, pp.196-210, p.206. He has also observed how French Africans viewed independence in terms of federalism: Frederick Cooper, *Citizenship between Empire and Nation: Remaking France and French Africa* 1945-1960 (Princeton, 2014), pp.4-11.

ends.[35] One writer who has recently adopted this more nuanced approach is Emma Hunter who, in her study of Tanganyikan politics of the 1950s, notes how the Kilimanjaro Chagga Citizens Union promoted a patriarchal view of society, arguing that full citizenship should be limited to land-holding men. Hunter makes a strong case for arguing that in looking at what freedom from colonial rule meant to the ruled, we need to do so outside the prism of mid-twentieth century liberalism.[36]

What, then, can the African conferences tell us about competing visions of freedom? To place the visions in context it should be stressed again that the overriding aim of the political parties who sent delegates to the conference was of rapid advancement to self-government and independence, not least as those political parties would then themselves enjoy power. Having said that, we have seen already how, for example, some of those parties favoured a loose federal structure (KADU in Kenya, Bugandans in Uganda). Another current which ran through two of the conferences - those for Swaziland and Nyasaland - came from resistance by the chiefs to change. Disturbed at the fast pace of change and the implications for their own positions, many chiefs were concerned about an accelerated independence which conferences might bring. Soon before the first Nyasaland conference, a group of chiefs met Governor Armitage to tell him that Banda ('This man who has come from England') was causing serious trouble, and asked the Governor to tell the Queen that they did not want him and had been well looked after by the British.[37] Later, at the Conference itself, the chiefly delegates were divided in their opinions. Chinde said he and the 190,000 people he spoke for wanted self-government. Makanjira and Masula were more conservative, arguing that the territory was not yet ready for self-government and complained generally of Banda's high-handed attitude towards the chiefs. Kuntaja took a middle view, citing intimidation but saying also that Nyasaland needed self-government now.[38] Similar concerns by some of the chiefs were voiced in Basutoland before that territory's conference. Some chiefs and traditionalists were concerned at the financial consequences of independence, and others expressed reservations about the reduced powers of the chiefs and the Paramount Chief. A bloc of around 40 members consisting of several chiefs and members of all political parties formed the 'Parliamentary Group' in the National Council. It advocated a cautious approach and was concerned that insufficient

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[35] Smith and Jeppesen, 'Introduction: development, contingency and entanglement: decolonisation and the conditional' in Smith and Jeppesen (eds.), *Future Imperfect*, pp.1-14, p.1.
[36] Emma Hunter, 'Languages of Freedom in Decolonising Africa', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society,* Vol. 27 (2017), pp.253-269.
[37] TNA, CO1015/2377, Note of a meeting between the Governor and chiefs, 07.07.60.
[38] TNA, CAB133/233, Minutes of meeting, 27.07.60.

weight would be given to their views at the London Conference as they would have no representation at the event. The group wrote to Sandys, expressing their concerns.[39] It was a bold move, and which, as the March 1964 colonial Intelligence Report noted, 'tended to diminish the authority with which the [Basuto] delegation can claim to speak for all parties'.[40]

It was not just chiefs who expressed concerns around the time of the constitutional conferences about the fast pace of change. As Miles Larmer has argued in relation to Northern Rhodesia, by no means everyone in that territory shared Kaunda and UNIP's vision of nationalist thought. In some areas, ethnic and economic differences generated a more conservative tradition.[41] The second Kenya conference prompted a small number of Africans to write to the Colonial Office, detailing reservations about the rush towards independence. Samuel Malaki, a civil servant, wrote to Maudling and Kenya's Governor, Renison, in early 1961 complaining that it was apparent that 'the considerable voice of moderate African opinion will hardly be heard at the forthcoming constitutional conference'. In his letter he sought to address this, arguing that the territory was still very divided along ethnic differences ('The thinking of the Masai is probably as far removed from the thinking of the Luo as the Spaniard is from the Finn') and that the economic stability of Kenya depended overwhelmingly on the contributions of the Europeans.[42] This was not the first of his letters; earlier correspondence written by him with the support of 'like-minded Africans' had told of their apprehension concerning the pace of constitutional advance, and the motives of African politicians. Eric Griffith-Jones, Kenya's attorney general, observed that this body of opinion was 'largely inarticulate' and 'it is difficult to assess its size or spread', concluding that this should not affect British policies in the constitutional field.[43] Similar sentiments of wariness were expressed in Somaliland after its conference. P.E. Carrel, a colonial official in the territory, reported that whilst there had been 'great rejoicing and general jollification in all towns' as news of the Conference conclusions spread, he also noted that 'open demonstrations of satisfaction were confined to the younger section of the population', stating that among the older population, who had a 'better understanding' of the implications of withdrawal of the British administration and protection, there was 'apprehension which has found no public expression' and that no

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[39] TNA, FCO141/566, Letter from the Basuto National Council to the Secretary of State, 10.04.64.
[40] TNA, CO1048/457, March 1964 C.I.C. Report.
[41] Larmer, *Rethinking African Politics*, pp.11-12, p.22.
[42] TNA, FCO141/7154, Letter from Samuel Malaki to the Secretary of State and the Governor, 04.02.62.
[43] TNA, FCO141/7154, Letter from Griffith-Jones to Webber, 19.09.61.

doubt that all sections of the population wanted independence, but that some would have liked a longer period of preparation.[44] It took the Conference and its outcome to bring out this expression. Finally, the anxiety which conferences could expose was also evident in Uganda after its first conference. The Uganda Monthly Intelligence Report for 1961 noted that the dates for Uganda's internal self-government and independence announced on the last day of the Conference had been received in Uganda 'with satisfaction rather than enthusiasm', attributing this to the worry of many people of the 'heavy responsibilities to be assumed on independence'.[45]

Before leaving this section on how conferences affected opinion amongst the African population, it is worth noting that some conferences were greeted with greater enthusiasm amongst the African population than others. Those which were received with less fervour were those which ended with no clear outcomes, or where the constitutional issues were relatively obscure, or where politicians did not engage sufficiently with the public. The second Kenyan conference, the Federal Review Conference and that for Basutoland are all such examples. The second Kenya conference in particular did not attract the fanfare in Kenya of the first conference amongst Kenyan Africans. The *East African Standard*, for example, reported the exodus of politicians from Nairobi airport before the conference, but there was no mention of the large crowds of well-wishers associated with the first conference. This time the whole exercise felt much more business-like. Perhaps neither the parties nor their followers knew what to cheer. The first conference had created a sense of African Kenyans against 'the other' of the British administration and the many Europeans who were opposed to self-government coming any time soon. The African members had presented a united front and KANU and KADU had not existed. More power for Africans had been an easy message to get behind. Sophisticated constitutional discussion between federalism and unitary government, the subject of the second conference, lacked the same glamour. The authors of the colonial Intelligence Report on 'Reactions to the London Constitutional Conference in Nairobi' observed that KANU supporters had become perplexed by the welter of press and radio reports and were incapable of assessing the situation. When the African delegates returned to Kenya and were able to speak at rallies, some enthusiasm returned. Yet despite the renewed interest there was still a sense of the Kenyan audience not knowing quite what to make of the conference. In his biography, Odinga recounts how the great welcoming crowd that met the KANU delegates was 'silent

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[44] TNA, CO1015/2518, Telegram from Carrel to Colonial Secretary, 08.05.60.
[45] TNA, CO822/2064, Uganda Monthly Intelligence Report for October 1961.

and depressed at the start of the meeting', Kenyatta trying to rescue things by telling those assembled that when KADU looked at the face of the constitution they would think it was a cow, but when they tried to milk it they would find it was a donkey.[46] An Intelligence Report of April 1962 noted too how at the KANU rally a proportion of the crowd could not understand the benefits from the Conference as no date had been set for independence,[47] and another Intelligence Report concluded that since the conclusion of the Conference, the general public was 'bemused' by the competing slogans of 'Umoja' (unity) and 'Majimbo' (regionalism).[48] The next part of this chapter moves away from the effect of conferences on the public in the African colonies and focusses on how the announcement of and participation at constitutional conferences affected African politicians and party politics in the early 1960s.

Part Two: African politicians and party politics

African politicians used conferences to further their own positions. This was hardly surprising. As already noted, conferences gave nationalist leaders the opportunity to shape the constitutional and political outcome of the territory after independence and, ultimately, to replace the British in power with themselves. Conferences also gave nationalists legitimacy and credibility. As Goldsworthy has argued in relation to the first Kenya conference, the events afforded potentially a fast route to power,[49] easier than a violent struggle.

An illustration of the importance attached to conferences by African politicians can be seen in their eagerness to secure a place at the conference table. This can be seen, for example, in the case of the Tanganyika and Zanzibar conferences. For the former, the fledgling but growing African National Congress had pleaded with the colonial government for a seat at the table. One of its officers wrote to Macleod arguing that if their party did form a government they would find themselves bound by agreements in which they did not participate and which they would find difficult to fulfil. Throwing liberalism at the British Government, the ANC's general secretary argued that 'we have often read that the British people are believers in Democracy' but the neglect of his party suggested that the British would only co-operate with a party in a colonial country as long as that party has policies

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[46] Odinga, *Not Yet Uhuru*, p.234.
[47] TNA, CO822/2388, Intelligence Report on Reactions to the London Conference in Nairobi, 18.04.62.
[48] TNA, CO822/2057, April 1962 Intelligence Report (KIC MA (62) 4), April 1962.
[49] Goldsworthy, *Tom Mboya*, p.136.

acceptable to the British. He concluded that '[t]his is not the spirit of Democracy'.[50]

Nyerere, however, would have none of it, vetoing the ANC presence. The Colonial Office,

eager to please, agreed.[51] More determined efforts still were made by one group which

had not been invited to the second Zanzibar conference. For some time there had been

tensions within the ZNP between the traditional leadership and those, led by Abdulrahman

Mohamed Babu, who wanted to bring in socialist revolutionary ideas. At a ZNP conference

in June 1963, where party leaders sought a mandate for the forthcoming independence

conference, the left resigned en masse, and formed the Umma Party. Babu had not been

invited to the London conference, but nevertheless tried to gate-crash it. The acting British

representative in Zanzibar, Robertson, was astounded that notwithstanding the

confiscation of Babu's passport, the Umma party leader had somehow managed to travel

to London.[52] His colleagues Ali Sultan of Issa and Said el Mauli were also said to be there.[53]

The Zanzibar Central Intelligence Monthly Summary noted with surprise how Babu had

tried to get admission to Lancaster House but had been turned away.[54] The British

Government too was aware of how important conference invitations were to aspiring

African leaders. The first Northern Rhodesian conference is a good example. When

considering who might be invited, the Colonial Office had doubts at that time about the

sincerity of Kenneth Kaunda. Monson appreciated that holding a constitutional conference

to which the UNIP leader would be invited would only bestow prestige on Kaunda,

something the Colonial Office then wanted to avoid, especially as there was still the

possibility that more moderate African leaders such as Lawrence Katilungu might emerge.[55]

Politicians could and did use conferences to make a name for themselves, and to solidify

their support back home (and elsewhere). This was done through press conferences,

conference walkouts, and the use of symbolism. Walkouts were the most prominent tactic,

used at a number of conferences by African politicians to make a point to both the British

and to their colonial audiences at home. Walkouts were often followed by press

conferences to publicise the action. The best example of use of this tactic was at the

Federal Review Conference. Banda and Southern Rhodesia delegate Joshua Nkomo had

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[50] TNA, CO822/2413, Letter from Michael Sanga, General Secretary ANC, to Macleod, 09.02.61.

[51] TNA, CO822/2413, Telegram from Monson to Cohen, 25.01.61.

[52] TNA, CO822/3069, Telegram from Robertson to Webber, 20.09.63.

[53] TNA, CO822/3069, Telegram from Robertson to Webber, 21.09.63.

[54] TNA, CO822/3069, Zanzibar Intelligence Monthly Summary, October 1963. No mention is made of what happened to Issa and el Mauli but their names are not recorded as conference attendees.

[55] TNA, CO1015/2274, Memo from Monson and Watson to Martin, 23.05.60.

issued a press release on the opening day of the FRC reserving the right to walk out,[56] and then a few days later Banda along with his colleague Orton Chirwa and two Nyasa chiefs did just that.[57] The occasion was a speech by Edgar Whitehead, the Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia, who had contended that Nyasaland would suffer if it seceded from the Federation. Banda held a press conference after the walkout, using it to again emphasise that the difficulties with the Central African Federation lay with Welensky and Whitehead and that African leaders were interested only in secession and that the Federation was dead.[58] Macmillan was appalled, writing in his diary that both the African and European delegates held press conferences at the slightest provocation, and that the African leaders had 'done the dirty on us' by their walkout, noting that: '[t]he real trouble is that the Africans are vain and childish. Like children, they get easily excited. Also the Press and TV do infinite harm in flattering their vanity.'[59] Three days later, Banda was joined in his conference withdrawal by Kaunda and others.[60] The Conference continued without the African delegates although the *Times* noted that the absence of 14 African delegates had given the FRC a rather 'gap-toothed' appearance.[61] The *Rhodesia Herald* speculated, almost certainly accurately, that the walkout had been done to intimidate the British Government, gain publicity, and as a 'sop' to supporters back home.[62] Macleod and Sandys were said to have believed that the 'truculence' by Banda was 'largely for home consumption',[63] as did Banda's political rival, T.M.L. Chirwa, Publicity Secretary of the Congress Liberation Party, who called the walk-out a 'trick' to 'keep the disgruntled [MCP] leadership together'.[64]

Wearing traditional dress, carrying African symbols to conferences, or making use of objects generally was used on a number of occasions to convey messages. As Shimazu has observed in relation to Bandung, attending conferences in national dress can produce powerful visual imagery.[65] It seems unlikely the African leaders thought that the British establishment would be swayed by such actions. It is far more probable that, once more, these were popular measures aimed squarely at domestic audiences. Delegates at the Swaziland Conference from one of the parties, the SNC, attended that territory's London

[56] *Northern News*, 05.12.60, p.1.
[57] *Northern News*, 10.12.60 , p.1.
[58] Ibid.
[59] Catterall, *The Macmillan Diaries*, entries on 09.12.60 and 12.12.60.
[60] Wood, *The Welensky Papers,* p.853,
[61] *The Times*, 14.12.60, p.8.
[62] TNA, CO1015/2341, Telegram from Salisbury to CRO summarising local newspaper reaction, 14.12.60.
[63] *Northern News*, 12.12.60, p.1.
[64] *Nyasaland Times*, 20.12.60, letter to the editor, p.2.
[65] Shimazu, 'Diplomacy as Theatre', pp.243-244.

conference in customary dress despite the bitterly cold weather in London at the time. They wrapped themselves in blankets for the 'icy trip' from their hotel to the Colonial Office. The move did not go unnoticed: political rival Nxumalo told London newsmen that '[w]hat my country needs is more schools, not this sort of gesture. They are taking us back to the 15th century.'[66] The Federal Review Conference would have been an awkward event for the African politicians who attended. Implacably opposed to the Federation, they used imagery to convey hostility. Thus the *Times* newspaper reported that Banda stepped out at London airport 'brandishing an assegai as a symbol of war' and announced that this time he had not come in the spirit of give and take but rather 'in the spirit of take' stating that he wanted secession now and not in five years.[67] Harry Nkumbula, leader of Northern Rhodesia's ANC and another delegate at the Conference, in a move presumably aimed to delight party members back home, told the third plenary session meeting that he had been out buying a present for Macmillan - a coffin - as he had 'been asked [by ANC] to make sure that at the end of the conference or before, federation will be buried in this coffin'.[68]

Crucially, African politicians, especially aspiring heads of government, used the London conferences to build their own prestige. They were easy platforms for publicity even though most of the sessions were not open to the press. The send offs, the press conferences before and after the conferences, and the opening conference photos showing Africans round the table with their British counterparts as equals all conveyed credibility and power. Conferences were an ideal stage on which African politicians could perform and reach out. They gave African leaders the opportunity to exaggerate outcomes and the role they had played to achieve victory. Not only that, conference outcomes also offered the prospect of gaining real power. It was hardly surprising that all African politicians were eager to engage with them. Each of Kenyatta, Obote, Nyerere, Shamte, Kaunda and Banda were notably adept at using the conferences for their own purposes. How three of these leaders did so is detailed below.

Hastings Banda was particularly good at channelling conference episodes to boost his own standing, portraying the events as he (and Macleod) pitched against the 'others' who wished the Africans in Nyasaland harm (viz. the Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia, Welensky, and Banda's African political opponents). Banda also used the conferences to consolidate his position within his party, and to show his statesmen-like credentials. In the

[66] *Swaziland Times*, British Library, 01.02.63, p.1.
[67] *The Times*, 28.11.60, p. 12.
[68] TNA, CAB133/205, Note of third plenary meeting, 07.12.60.

months leading up to the first Nyasaland conference, Banda immediately began a tour of the territory. His party's newspaper, *Malawi News*, labelled it a 'Tour Before the Constitutional Conference'.[69] Large meetings were held with one at Zomba for example attracting some 40,000 people.[70] Banda painted a picture of a Utopia which would be introduced once the Conference was over,[71] telling audiences that at London he was going to 'kick and kick hard' and that he wanted self-government 'now, now, now'.[72] Colonial explanation at the time was that Banda's pre-conference tour of the territory was carried out in order to strengthen his hand at Lancaster House. A May 1960 report from the Provincial Information Office at Blantyre concluded that '[i]t is evident that Dr. Banda's main intention is to make a nation-wide tour enlisting the support of as many people as possible in Nyasaland. He would then propose to attend the Conference with the ostensible backing of the majority of his countrymen'.[73] Governor Armitage told Monson that '[i]n my opinion there is no question that [Banda] is out to prove at the time of the July Conference that he is in such a strong position that the Government cannot take any action against him and cannot refuse his demands'.[74] Some historians see the purpose of the tour in much the same way. Lwanda for example observes that having mobilised massive popular support, Banda 'had a good negotiating hand'.[75] But if the primary purpose of the tour was to use popular support to strengthen his hand, Banda made little use of this around the conference table in his rhetoric. Perhaps he did not need to, his popularity in Nyasaland at that stage being self-evident to the British;[76] something the astute MCP leader no doubt appreciated. It seems, however, equally likely that Banda's principal motive for the tour was to use the forthcoming Conference and its build-up to leverage his own position within Nyasaland at the expense of his political rivals, as Philip Short has briefly suggested.[77]

During his speeches throughout the territory in the run up to the first conference an important part of Banda's strategy was to 'other' his African opponents. At Nkata Bay he suggested that T.D.T. Banda and his supporters would be in collaboration with the colonial

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[69] *Malawi News*, 14.06.60, 'Karonga to Port Herald : A tour before the Constitutional Conference', excerpt in TNA, CO1015/2444.
[70] TNA, CO1015/2440, Letter from Jones to Monson, 27.06.60.
[71] TNA, CO1015/2440, Letter from Armitage to Monson, 04.07.60.
[72] TNA, CO1015/2269, Press cable from Zomba, 14.07.60.
[73] TNA, CO1015/2268, Report from the Provincial Information Office, May 1960.
[74] TNA, CO1015/2440, Letter from Armitage to Monson, 21.06.60.
[75] John Lloyd Lwanda, *Kamuzu Banda of Malawi, A Study of Promise, Power and Paralysis: Malawi under Dr Banda 1961-1993* (Glasgow, 1993), p.133.
[76] TNA, CO1015/2440, Letters from Jones to Monson, 15.06.60 and 27.06.60.
[77] Short, *Banda*, pp.132-133.

authorities at the Conference.[78] He asked the crowd whether they wanted to see T.D.T. at the Conference to which they responded 'No! No! No!'[79] If MCP failed at London, Banda told the crowds, then the 'stooges', his political enemies, would be to blame.[80] Linked to this, Banda urged the crowds to instead join the MCP,[81] and presented himself as the 'Saviour of the country'.[82] The *Malawi News* reported how its accounts of the MCP leader's pre-Conference tour 'will establish beyond any doubt the fact that the only man for this country is Dr. Kamuzu Banda'.[83]

It is perhaps puzzling that Banda used many opportunities at the time of the first Nyasaland conference to speak most favourably of Iain Macleod. Glyn Jones, the territory's Chief Secretary, noted, for example, that during his 'barn storming tour of the territory' Banda had gone out of his way to build up Macleod as a figure with whom he could do business.[84] He told the television programme 'This Week' that Macleod is a 'very great man',[85] and immediately after the Conference praised the Colonial Secretary as a 'Tory of the new age' and someone he could trust.[86] Part of Banda's praise seems genuine enough. Macleod had after all freed him from gaol and immediately invited him to take part in constitutional discussions. As Banda told a junior colonial official, Macleod 'is a Christian gentleman and treats me like a man'.[87] Yet by praising Macleod at and around the time of the Conference, Banda was also able skilfully to diminish the stature of his political rivals in the eyes of the Nyasas, telling his audience on his return for example that at the Conference 'Dixon, Chinyama, and the rest' had done 'everything they could to stop me from getting what I wanted for my people' and that they told lies about him and colleagues 'to make sure that Mr. Macleod would not give us what we wanted' but that Macleod had understood Banda and that 'if it had not been for Mr. Macleod the conference would have been broken up'.[88] A further example, then, of how Banda used the Conference to portray himself as the only

[78] TNA, CO1015/2440, Special Branch translation of Banda's speech of 05.06.60.

[79] *Malawi News*, 14.06.60, 'Karonga to Port Herald – A tour before the Constitutional Conference', excerpt in TNA, CO1015/2444.

[80] TNA, CO1015/2440, Special Branch translation of Banda's speech of 05.06.60.

[81] TNA, CO1015/2440, Note of Banda's meeting at Karonga, 07.06.60.

[82] *Malawi News*, 04.06.60, excerpt in TNA, CO1015/2444.

[83] Ibid.

[84] TNA, CO1015/2440, Letter from Jones to Monson, 15.06.60.

[85] Television Press Agency, Extract from 'This Week', 07.04.60, in CO1015/2439.

[86] TNA, CO1015/2241, Account of Press Conference, 10.08.60.

[87] TNA, KV2/4075, Extract from Nyasaland Intelligence Report for May 1960. When Banda heard that Macleod was to be replaced as Colonial Secretary, he wrote him a very warm letter telling him he would never forget 'what you did for me, as an individual, and for Nyasaland and the Africans of Nyasaland. Whatever happens, I shall always look upon you as a friend.' TNA, CO1015/2271, Letter from Banda to Macleod, 09.10.61.

[88] TNA, CO1015/3241, Account of Press Conference given by Banda, 10.08.60.

true nationalist, fighting alongside with Macleod and against the others; a ploy by Banda to strengthen his position.

The second Nyasaland conference was also used deftly by Banda, who by now was able to deal with the British Government (and specifically Rab Butler who then had responsibility for Nyasaland) from a position of power, something which stemmed not just from the MCP leader's position as head of Nyasaland's dominant party but also because of the damage he could cause if he were to resign his governmental position or no longer co-operate. Banda, for example, accepted Butler's private statement to him at the Conference that the British Government could not commit to a definite date for independence, but told the British Minister that if Nyasaland had not achieved independence by 3 March 1964 then there would be disorders in the territory and another state of emergency would need to be declared; a 'key card' as McCracken observes.[89] All of this was not lost on Butler, who was eager to placate Banda with private assurances. Banda's influence can be seen too in the way that he swept aside suggestions, made at the Conference by the UFP with some support from the British Government, for a council of state, an Ombudsman to deal with bills of rights disputes, and a council of chiefs.[90] Banda also used the Conference to demonstrate his new-found role as a statesman, thanking the Governor in his opening speech for his 'wise understanding and sympathetic guidance', and also praising the UFP leader Blackwood for his 'responsible Opposition'.[91] At the close of the Conference, Butler was thanked for his 'human understanding and courageous policy',[92] with the *Times* noting that at the final session 'extraordinarily high compliments' were being paid which suggested more an 'end-of-term prize giving rather than a confrontation of a nationalist movement and a metropolitan power'.[93]

Yet the Nyasaland conferences also presaged Banda's autocratic tendencies, providing him with a platform to consolidate his power base. For the second Nyasaland Conference, Butler and Banda did most of the negotiating in private. As Baker has noted, this was the way Banda preferred to operate.[94] Indeed, from November 1961 Banda had insisted that he alone was responsible within the MCP for policy-making.[95] As McCracken has observed,

[89] TNA, DO183/59, Note of meeting between Butler and Banda, 22.11.62; McCracken, *Malawi*, p.389.
[90] TNA, DO183/96, Record of eighth meeting of the Conference, 19.11.62.
[91] TNA, DO183/97, Note of third meeting of the Conference, 13.11.62.
[92] TNA, DO183/59, Note of meeting between Banda, Butler and Jones, 28.11.62.
[93] *The Times*, 26.11.62, p.10.
[94] Baker, *Glyn Jones*, p.153.
[95] McCracken, *A History of Malawi,* p.403.

to Banda colleagues were 'children'.[96] The MCP leader chose to tell just one of his colleagues, Kayama Chiume, about his talks with Butler over Nyasaland's secession from CAF; hardly the action of a politician keen on Cabinet openness and discussion.[97] Banda's breezy attitude towards his party colleagues at the second Conference and cosy meetings with Butler and Jones can have left no doubt as to who was boss. Yet this attitude, displayed so confidently at the Conference, was also to bring Banda trouble. As early as 1964 he faced a Cabinet crisis over his dictatorial style of rule, eventually resolving this by obtaining a vote of confidence from the legislature.[98]

Kenneth Kaunda sought to use the two Northern Rhodesian conferences to demonstrate his and UNIP's power and also his prime ministerial qualities. Larmer has shown how, in Northern Rhodesia in the early 1960s, political support was still fragmented, with Zambians having no singular idea of nation.[99] The London conferences would have presented Kaunda with an opportunity to portray himself as a future leader. Hints of Kaunda seeking to do just that were present at the first Northern Rhodesian conference where, for example, during the Christmas recess Kaunda took advantage of his return to Zambia to build up support for UNIP on the back of the Conference, paying 'courtesy calls' to chiefs in appreciation of the supportive stance that they had taken at Lancaster House.[100] Yet, as will be seen later in this Chapter, Kaunda came out of the Conference second best to his rival Nkumbula. It was the second conference that Kaunda really mastered. Kaunda's biographer refers to this conference as the easiest part of his premiership.[101] That may be so but the Northern Rhodesia leader had to work hard to get to that position. The future Zambian leader had hardly enjoyed unbridled supremacy over even his own party - threats from extremists and inability to control his followers at the time of the Cha Cha Cha riots (described in the next chapter) showed this well enough, and British officials had become concerned that Kaunda, who was now held in much higher esteem by the Colonial Office, might be toppled.[102] Kaunda saw how he could use the run up to and the second Conference itself to shore up his position by showing that when he became president he would be inclusive and moderate. For example, when UNIP's Minister of Local

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[96] Ibid.

[97] KV2/4077, Memorandum to SLC Africa on Nyasaland Constitutional Conference 1962, 12.12.62.

[98] Joey Power, *Political Culture and Nationalism in Malawi*: *Building Kwacha* (Rochester, 2010), p.186.

[99] Larmer, *Rethinking African Politics*, pp.22-30.

[100] *African Mail*, microfilm, British Library, 03.01.61, p.1.

[101] Philip Brownrigg, *Kenneth Kaunda* (Lusaka, 1989), p.43.

[102] TNA, DO183/70, Memorandum from G. W. Jamieson to Whitley, 03.03.64.

Government, Nailumino Mundia, made a maiden speech in Northern Rhodesia's legislature arguing that there was no need for the rival ANC to attend the London Conference, he was contradicted by Kaunda who confirmed that the party would be represented.[103] The UNIP leader was keen to iron out differences between the parties before they met at Marlborough House. He spoke too of how relations with the British Government were becoming much warmer and that Zambia wished to join the Commonwealth.[104] By the time the Conference started, the *Financial Times* noted that Kaunda had succeeded to a remarkable extent in gaining the confidence of the European population,[105] and the Northern Rhodesia settler newspaper *Northern News* noted how Kaunda was as acceptable to Europeans as he was to Africans.[106] After the Conference, in keeping with his soon to be presidential status, Kaunda told a crowd of thousands who gathered to welcome him home that they must be disciplined in the future if the nation were to achieve its goals, noting that 'this great thing' of independence had 'come about by hard work and perseverance' and that this must continue.[107]

Of all the African leaders, Milton Obote was the most skilful in using the conference mechanism to enhance his own status and reputation. Vaughan has observed how the negotiations in 1963 with Kenyan and Tanganyikan leaders over an East African federation 'provided an opportunity for Obote to position himself as the sole representative of Uganda's national interests'.[108] The second Uganda Conference gave him the same opportunity. A Ugandan Government official attending the first Ugandan conference observed how the UPC leader had showed a much greater grasp of essential issues than his DP rival Kiwanuka,[109] but it was at the second conference that Obote excelled. Obote, now Prime Minister, left Uganda in a purposeful mood, telling the press that he and his government were going to London 'to make decisions'. The *Uganda Argus* observed that Obote gave the impression of 'being determined to settle everything at the conference'.[110] It assisted Obote that the British Government was so willing to give its backing to the Ugandan leader, Webber noting to Coutts, the Ugandan Governor, that Maudling 'will obviously not be able to pursue a policy which runs contrary to Obote's'.[111] Almost all of

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[103] *Northern News*, 18.03.64, p.1.
[104] *Northern News*, 21.03.64, p.1.
[105] *Financial Times*, 04.05.64, p.8.
[106] *Northern News* , 08.05.64, cited in Macpherson*, Kaunda*, p.438.
[107] *Northern News*, 27.05.64, p.1.
[108] Vaughan, 'The Politics of Regionalism', p.533.
[109] TNA, CO822/2422, Telegram from Allen to Cartland, 29.09.61.
[110] *Uganda Argus*, 07.06.62, p.1.
[111] TNA, CO822/2432, Letter from Webber to Coutts, 22.05.62

the Conference papers had, unusually, been drafted by the Ugandan government, which no doubt helped it stamp its authority over the proceedings.[112] In the same vein, and again most unusually, the Ugandan Government was also given responsibility for choosing the conference delegates; the British Government considered that whilst the issue of invitations was formally a matter for the Secretary of State, it was felt (no doubt because of Uganda's imminent independence) that the decision should be a local one.[113]

Coutts told the Colonial Office that Obote had strong views on how the Conference should be run. The Prime Minister, for example, wanted to take a 'tough line' with the kingdoms and was not prepared to concede ground here.[114] The Ugandan leader asked that only he and the Colonial Secretary make opening speeches at the Conference, arguing that a speech by the rival Democratic Party would be disruptive.[115] This duly happened. DP leader Basil Bataringaya was annoyed by his exclusion.[116] It was Obote who made the Conference running. He instigated private talks with the Baganda early on in the Conference to resolve the finance issues,[117] reaching agreement relatively soon on this matter.[118] The Ugandan leader then spent the first weekend of the Conference in a busy round of informal discussions with representatives of the smaller kingdoms, seeking to secure constitutional settlement,[119] before tackling the Baganda over the key continuing issue of Buganda's relationship with central government. British authorities were often kept in the dark.[120] It would not be too much to say that a secondary conference was in effect being held alongside the official one, Obote using the London opportunity to iron out differences and to reach agreement with the kingdoms before independence, all of this away from the spotlight of the rulers' supporters in their home country. At least one of the private meetings was held at Obote's London hotel.[121] It was Obote too who took the lead at the

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[112] TNA, CO822/2432, Telegram from Coutts to Webber, 23.05.62. An exception was the paper on the constitution, a first draft of which was prepared by the British Government which wanted to exercise control over this key document: TNA, CO822/2432, Letter from Coutts to Webber, 10.05.62.
[113] TNA, FCO141/18390, Letter from Webber to Coutts, 03.05.62.
[114] TNA, CO822/2288, Telegram from Coutts to Webber, 02.06.62.
[115] TNA, CO822/2432, Draft record of a meeting between Secretary of State, Coutts, Obote and others, 08.06.62.
[116] TNA, CO822/2432, Telegram, from Coutts to Webber, 05.06.62; CO822/2435, Telegram from Badenoch to Cartland, 12.06.62.
[117] TNA, CO822/2435, Telegram from Badenoch to Cartland, 14.06.62.
[118] *Uganda Argus*, 16.06.62, p.1.
[119] *The Times*, 18.06.62, p.10
[120] TNA, CO822/2435, Telegram from Badenoch to Cartland, 22.06.62; CO822/2435, Telegram from Badenoch to Cartland, 26.06.62; CO822/2445, Letter from K.A. East CRO to all CRO posts, 06.07.62.
[121] *Uganda Argus,* 16.06.62, p.1.

London press conferences, reporting on progress and outcomes.[122] He also persuaded the Toro delegation to end its Conference boycott.[123] The only major issue to be decided by the British Government was settlement of the Lost Counties dispute. Passing responsibility for this hot potato on to the British Government would, however, have suited Obote.

The 1962 Conference culminated in Buganda and the other kingdoms dropping most of their demands and with the central government retaining effective powers:[124] no mean achievement for Obote. British authorities were full of praise for the Ugandan leader's performance. K. A. East of the Commonwealth Relations Office reported that the feeling among the British delegation was that 'Mr. Obote had a considerable personal success at the Conference'.[125] Coutts observed that Obote had 'demonstrated to the full his political skill and astuteness in keeping the Baganda… on the field of play',[126] and Colonial Office official J.W. Stacpoole made the important observation that after the Conference '[Obote's] position is very much stronger. This was his own achievement, the reward of skilful negotiation, tact and firmness'.[127] Even some of Obote's adversaries had been impressed. The *Uganda Argus* noted mid-way through the Conference that delegates 'paid tribute to [the Prime Minister's] negotiating skill, which they said was mainly responsible for the great degree of progress already achieved'.[128] The Toro delegation in particular commended Obote on his initiative in calling a meeting to discuss their boycott and on his statesmanship generally.[129]

Yet conferences were a potential double-edged sword. If politicians performed badly, their status could be diminished. This can be seen at the first Kenyan conference where Mboya had irritated other members of the African delegation by staying at far superior accommodation when he was in London. His frequent media appearances riled many of his colleagues too, who were resentful of the way he dominated public attention. As Goldsworthy has noted, the Conference served to accelerate the deterioration in Mboya's relationship with most other members of the African delegation.[130] The Conference also served to heighten awareness not of the politicians who attended, but of Kenyatta who

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[122] See for example *The Times*, 27.06.62, p.10.
[123] *Uganda Argus*, 27.06.62, p.1.
[124] TNA, CO822/2445, Letter from KA East CRO to all CRO posts, 06.07.62; Great Britain, *Report of the Uganda Independence Conference, 1962,* Cmnd. 1778 (London, 1962).
[125] TNA, CO822/2445, Letter from K.A .East CRO to all CRO posts, 06.07.62.
[126] TNA, CO822/2266, Letter from Coutts to Sandys, 25.10.62.
[127] TNA, CO822/2445, Letter from Stacpoole to East, 05.07.62.
[128] *Uganda Argus*, 21.06.62, p.1.
[129] *Uganda Argus*, 27.06.62, p.1.
[130] Goldsworthy, *Tom Mboya,* p.135.

remained in detention. After the second Northern Rhodesian Conference, one of the colony's newspapers observed how ANC leader, Harry Nkumbula, had increasingly come across as the spokesman for the Africans, and drew a contrast with the much more emotive Kaunda.[131] The newspaper was settler-orientated and a bias towards the ANC leader may have suited its editor and readership but it was also the case that Nkumbula had by no means been a junior partner in the Northern Rhodesian Conference discussions. Whether the success of the Conference would have continued to have given the ANC leader's stock a much needed boost is an unknown as, shortly after his return from London, Nkumbula was jailed for a motoring offence, his deputy taking over as ANC national president.[132]

The prospect of a conference could also, on occasions, forge political alliances. This happened before the first Ugandan and Swaziland conferences. Barungi has rightly observed that the build-up to the Ugandan Conference served to intensify political activity in the territory, causing political parties to take stock of their position and think to the future.[133] Just days before the Conference began, Obote announced that he wanted the Lukiiko to join forces with his party.[134] The initiative was accepted in Buganda. It is not difficult to see why Obote sought an alliance. Both the UPC and Buganda were largely Protestant, and an anti-Catholic coalition in Buganda would be expected to defeat the Democratic Party in the kingdom (which party up until then had enjoyed a majority of seats, but on a very small electoral turnout).[135] As one observer noted, by entering into an alliance with the Lukiiko, Obote may have thought also that he could limit the political aspirations of the Bugandan Government (Mengo) or even that he would be in a position to control Buganda.[136] Obote probably calculated too that unless he showed Buganda support for its position, the latter might have boycotted the London conference which in turn might have prejudiced a transition to a rapid independence.[137] It would be wrong of course to attribute the prospect of the conference as a decisive cause of the alliance. As others have argued, the underlying motive was the Protestant fear of being governed by the

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[131] *Northern News*, 21.02.61, p.1.
[132] TNA, CO1015/2280, Letter from Hone to Watson, 13.04.61.
[133] Barungi, *Parliamentary Democracy in Uganda,* p.36
[134] *Uganda Argus*, 06.09.61, p.1.
[135] TNA, CO822/2064, Uganda Monthly Intelligence Appreciation and Report for July 1961, 07.08.61.
[136] *Uganda Argus*, Letter from 'Political Observer', 14.10.61, p.2.
[137] *Uganda Argus*, 06.09.61, p.1.

Democratic Party.[138] Yet the Conference had acted as a catalyst. Similar stimulus was provided by the forthcoming Swaziland conference. Three delegates, said to represent moderate nationalist opinion, joined together in an alliance for the purposes of the conference: Simon Nxumalo of the Swaziland Democratic Party, Dr Mribi of the Bandzeni National Convention, and A. Sellstroom, leader of the Eurafrican community.[139]

Conferences could also contribute to the break-up of political parties. The preparations for the first Kenyan Conference exposed divisions among African delegates (then one single grouping). Once the Conference had been announced, expectations rose. It was seen by the Africans and other political groups as a blank canvas, unlimited in the subjects that might be discussed.[140] Yet this expectation and the need to formulate a more precise strategy for the Conference merely highlighted the different views amongst the African Elected Members, the fault lines of which endured up until independence. In June 1959, some seven months before the Conference began, the African Elected Members split. The Kenya National Party was led by Massinde Muliro and attracted the support of nine other AEMs, including the influential Ronald Ngala, as well as some Asian elected member support and that of the 'ultra-liberal' European elected member, Shirley Cooke. The Mboya group on the other hand comprised himself and three other AEMs including Odinga.[141] They formed the Kenya Independence Movement. Muliro and others had become angered by Mboya's public statements which had not been approved by all AEMs.[142] KNP's constitutional demands were relatively tempered, asking for independence in 1968 in contrast to Mboya's far more rapid timetable.[143] Shortly before the Conference started the divisions were patched up in the interests of presenting a united front at Lancaster House, only to reappear once the Conference had concluded.[144]

Armit Wilson argues convincingly that the Zanzibar independence conference was instrumental in splitting the ZNP. For some time there had been tensions within the party between the traditional leadership and those, led by Babu, who wanted to bring in socialist revolutionary ideas. At a ZNP conference in June 1963, where party leaders sought a

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[138] Samwiri Karugire, *A Political History of Uganda* (Nairobi, 1980), p.182. Low, *Political Parties in Uganda*, p.58.
[139] TNA, CO1048/410, excerpt from the *Scotsman*, 26.01.63.
[140] TNA, CO822/1427, Note of a meeting between Webber and Havelock, 11.08.59.
[141] TNA, CO822/1427, 'Kenya Political Groups', undated.
[142] TNA, CO822/1427, Letter from Baring to Gorrell Barnes, 29.06.59.
[143] TNA, CO822/1343, excerpt from *New Statesman*, 12.09.59.
[144] TNA, CO822/1343, Telegram from Webber to Coutts, 24.11.59. See also Maxon, *Britain and Kenya's Constitutions,* p.271.

mandate for the forthcoming independence conference, the left resigned en masse, and, as noted earlier in this chapter, formed the Umma Party, which event was to have a huge impact on the political scene.[145]

The third Kenyan Conference was instrumental in the breaking of KADU. That party had been dealt a large blow by the May 1963 elections, confining it to the role of opposition. Yet KADU had at least entered the 1963 Conference with the hope that the 'majimbo' constitution would remain intact; they were a party that the British Government listened to, with strongholds of support in Kenya which might be relied on to press their case forcefully if necessary. However, the experience of the Conference not only demonstrated KANU's hegemony, but also KADU's weakness and near redundancy. The greatest manifestation of the latter was the party's ill-judged plans to declare unilaterally an independent KADU republic, a move described in more detail below. The episode caused confusion and division amongst KADU leaders. The *East African Standard* immediately identified a split between Nairobi activists and London repudiators.[146] The call to arms had failed.[147] Less than five days after the partition plan had been announced by KADU, it was dropped.[148] At the same time, KANU had shown its dominance at the third Kenya Conference. Kenyatta was an effective conference leader, and KANU had taken on an active, governmental role at the Conference, tabling amendments and arguing with the British Government which increasingly had to treat the group as near equals to it. As Branch observes, by December 1963 KADU had been 'fatally wounded'.[149] The Conference events had surely played a large part in bringing this about. Kenyatta exploited KADU's weakness immediately on his return from the Conference, inviting KADU delegates to cross the floor,[150] which two prominent members, Murgor and Seroney, did in November.[151] Defections continued. In November 1964 Ngala and Muliro too joined KANU and KADU, just over a year after the Lancaster House conference. KADU forthwith dissolved itself, setting the stage for three decades of single party rule.[152]

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[145] Armit Wilson, *The Threat of Liberation: Imperialism and Revolution in Zanzibar* (New York, 2013), p.42.

[146] *East African Standard*, 11.10.63, p.8.

[147] *East African Standard*, 10.10.63, p.1.

[148] *The Times*, 14.10.63, p.8.

[149] Daniel Branch, *Kenya: Between Hope and Despair, 1963-2011* (Padstow, 2011), p.16.

[150] *Daily Nation*, microfilm, British Library, 23.10.63, p.20.

[151] Charles Hornsby, Kenya*: A History since Independence* (London, 2012), p.86.

[152] Ibid, p.96.

Forging and splitting political alliances were not frequent consequences of conference activity. But as with any sort of negotiation which held out the prospect of power, the African constitutional conferences forced politicians and parties to clarify their political thinking. It was not just the British Government that formulated objectives. Unsurprisingly, in the run up to conferences, the African delegates also appreciated the need to work out what they wanted from the conferences. As seen above, the first Kenya Conference was a case in point, as was the first Uganda Conference where local politicians had to confront the issue of whether they wanted a unitary state, federal relationship, or autonomy for the kingdoms, a consequence of which was the Obote-Buganda alliance. In the lead up to the first Zanzibar conference this working up of ideas can also be seen clearly. The Resident reported that the political parties had told him that their work in preparation for the conference may take two or three months; only then would their concrete proposals and recommendations be ready.[153] Special Branch reports for the archipelago also noted how, as the London Conference drew nearer, the ASP held a number of meetings 'in order to clarify their demands and obtain approval for same from the body of the party'. Demands were to include fresh elections, lowering of voting age to 18 without qualification, and the re-arrangement of constituencies on a pro capita basis.[154]

Chapter Three showed how the British Government used a plethora of tactics to achieve their conference objectives. African politicians also used tactics, albeit on a simpler scale. The use of the press, walkouts and symbols has been noted. African parties also used manoeuvres to demonstrate their responsibility and how they could be trusted to run the territory. As Parkinson has shown, bills of rights found their way into self-governing constitutions for a variety of reasons. In Sudan, the impetus came from educated northerners, pressing for self-determination, who saw constitutional protection as an 'unequivocal statement of the Sudan's aspirations to become an independent nation state'.[155] It is not known whether this influenced Banda's thinking but in any event the Nyasaland leader volunteered a bill of rights at the first Nyasaland conference to show how he would govern responsibly.

One measure used by African political parties and politicians at conferences to add ballast to their attendance was to make use of overseas advisers and, in particular, lawyers. The African conferences might first be thought of as a purely domestic affair: a conference

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[153] TNA, CO822/2327, Letter from Mooring to Morgan, 15.09.61.
[154] TNA, CO822/ 05.03.62, Letter from Mooring to Monson with attached special branch report.
[155] Parkinson, *Bills of Rights and Decolonization*, p.71,

between representatives of the British Government and delegates from the British colony. In a large part, that was the case, but global influences on conference proceedings and outcomes were also there and should not be overlooked. Overseas advisers were used by African delegates to give their case legitimacy and credibility. Mary Dudziak has shown how the African delegates at the first Kenyan conference used the prominent US civil rights lawyer Thurgood Marshall to advance their case. Marshall got to know Tom Mboya when the latter toured the United States, and the American was a strong advocate of using law as a means of change, rather than violent revolution. At a time when Mau Mau activity was still fresh in the official mind, Marshall's presence at the conference would have been intended to reassure the British of the Kenyan's peaceful intentions. The African delegates used Marshall to help them draft and present a bill of rights at the conference, which would protect the European settlers in Kenya once power had transferred.[156]

Overseas advisers were not limited to the first Kenyan conference. For the second Kenyan conference in 1962, in pursuit of their constitutional goal of a federal Kenya, KADU used as an adviser Dr Eduard Zellweger. He was a Swiss constitutional expert, and was used by the party to help formulate detailed constitutional proposals. Once again, the move was designed by a set of delegates to show that they were serious in their intentions and that a constitution of the sort they wanted could work. What better way for KADU to do this than to use a leading lawyer from a country which had long enjoyed a successful federal structure? Zellweger attended technical conference committee meetings, arguing the federal case.[157]

At the Swaziland conference, delegates from the progressive SPP party were anxious to show how a liberal constitution could be made to operate their country. For this, they employed the services of Professor D. V. Cowen, a constitutional law expert from the University of Cape Town, who assisted them in drawing up their submissions. A year later, Cowen was used by the Basuto delegation at their conference for the same purposes. Similar motives of seeking credibility and legitimacy also no doubt also lay behind the decision of the African delegates at the Somaliland conference to employ Patrick Elias, a solicitor from Nigeria, who had written on Nigerian law and custom. Elias was also used by Hastings Banda and his party at the first Nyasaland conference. It seems likely that his

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[156] Mary L. Dudziak, *Exporting American Dreams : Thurgood Marshall's African Journey* (Princeton, 2008), pp. 5, 53.
[157] See, for example, TNA, CO822/2374, Minutes of the Committee on Structure of Government, 01.03.62.

purpose was to help MCP draft constitutional proposals so that Banda was able to tell Macleod that Nyasaland was ready immediately for self-government; the bill of rights which MCP proposed, and which is referred to earlier, was for example drafted on the Nigerian model.[158]

To some extent, the tactic of using an overseas lawyer to enhance African delegates' standing in the eyes of the British government worked. Even though it was not adopted formally at the conference, Macleod praised Thurgood Marshall's bill of rights.[159] The British Government viewed Cowen as a key figure who could influence the outcome of the Swaziland and Basutoland conferences. As the Basutoland Intelligence Report for March 1964 put it: '[t]he influence of Professor Cowen, whichever way he exerts it, will prove a decisive factor in negotiations'.[160] Sandys accordingly used the Basutoland conference to have a number of private discussions with the academic.

Another significant ploy used by the African leaders at the conferences was to encourage supporters at home to send in telegrams. The purpose of this tactic was both to demonstrate support from back home, and also to paint an unfavourable picture of likely events should they not get their way. It is worth spending a little time looking at this matter for what it tells us about how African political leaders - and also their parties - sought also to manipulate conference outcomes to ones of their liking. The telegram sending came to prominence with the Federal Review Conference of 1960 at which Kaunda sought to bolster his position, telling the Conference that tension was mounting in Northern Rhodesia and that he had received 53 telegrams about it, but also that he had asked his people to stay calm and dignified.[161] Kaunda used a similar device at the Northern Rhodesian conference that followed shortly afterwards, broadcasting that he had received more than 250 cables from supporters which made it clear that unless the British Government stood firm against Welensky, there would be an explosion of a far reaching nature which he may not be able to control, which would make Mau Mau look like 'a childish picnic'.[162] At the first Zanzibar conference, ZNP and ASP party members from back home used messages by telegram to try to influence the conference outcome. Zanzibar Intelligence Services reported that the opening phase of the London conference had been marked by 'a spate' of ASP-originated telegrams to the Colonial Secretary 'ranging from

[158] TNA, CAB122/233, Memorandum by MCP, 29.07.60.
[159] Dudziak, *Exporting American Dreams*, p.91.
[160] TNA, CO1048/457, CIC Report, March 1964.
[161] *Northern News*, 15.12.60, p.1.
[162] *Northern News*, 10.02.61, p.1.

advice to near-threats'. It also noted that the ZNP London delegation had been deluged with over 30 telegrams from various ZNP branches proffering advice and reiterating the demand for independence in 1962 without further elections. More particularly, the general secretary of the ASP in Zanzibar, Thabit Komo, had sent a telegram to the ASP delegation in London telling them that a coalition would not be not acceptable unless there were a re-division of constituencies and an election before independence.[163] Whether that message was intended merely to bolster the ASP's negotiating hand, or was instead a case of the ASP delegation being driven from afar is not known.

Telegrams which offered both support and carried threats were also made use of at the Basutoland, second Nyasaland and third Kenyan conferences. The latter is especially noteworthy for the use of the telegram tactic. During the time of the third Kenya conference there was a considerable three way dialogue between the African parties in Kenya, their delegates in London, and the British Government. Much was now at stake: this was the last opportunity before independence for each of KANU and KADU to persuade the British Government to back their cause. KADU, as the party with most to lose from the Conference, was the most vociferous, making use of messages of support through telegrams to impart their views. KADU senators sent a cable to both Sandys and Ngala stating that on behalf of their supporters in the Coast, Rift Valley and Western regions they were totally opposed to any change in the constitution: these regions contained assemblies controlled by KADU, and the telegram was intended as a forceful reminder to the British Government that the Opposition did have strongholds whose views needed to be taken seriously.[164] This was followed by a further telegram from KADU in early October telling the London delegates that there must be no concessions.[165] The most significant KADU episode occurred towards the end of the Conference. Following a week of intensive private negotiations, KADU played what it no doubt considered to be its trump negotiating card, telling Sandys that if the constitution were altered out of recognition, then KADU would be left with no alternative other than to declare unilaterally a partition of its areas of support (aligned with the minority tribes). In a show of strength, a KADU delegate in London, Jean-Marie Seroney, sent a strongly worded telegram to Daniel ap Moi, President of the Rift Valley Regional Assembly, telling him to prepare Kalenjin and the region for the worst. Unfortunately for KADU there seems to have been little co-ordination between its Kenyan

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[163] TNA, CO822/2069, Letter from Mooring to Monson enclosing Special Branch Intelligence Summary, 04.04.62.
[164] *East African Standard*, 26.09.63, p.5.
[165] *The Times*, 08.10.63, p.12.

politicians and key delegates in London and those in London dissociated themselves from the move. The plan came to nothing and the episode, ultimately, served only to reinforce KADU's weakness and to stiffen KANU's resolve.

KANU party members at home were active too with sending messages to London. When a stalemate seemed to have been reached in mid-October, the KANU Party headquarters in Nairobi sent a telegram to London, telling delegates that if the British Government did not yield, then the Kenyan constitution would be changed after independence - a direct challenge to Sandys and intended, of course, to persuade him to support KANU's position. As seen in Chapter Three, a major reason for the British holding constitutional conferences in London was to take delegates out of the spotlight and away from party pressures in Kenya. This had been largely achieved in the first two conferences for Kenya, but not for this one. The watchful eye and show of strength from party colleagues back in Kenya, intended to bolster their colleagues' position, made it harder for those in London to compromise. The issues at stake at the third conference for both parties were now of course of particular importance, given the real prospect of post-independence power, but politicians back in Kenya from both KANU and KADU were now also no doubt more seasoned in conference management.

As with commissions, it seems likely that the British had at least some contemporary appreciation that conferences could have wide societal and political consequences. This must have been apparent in relation to the independence conferences, but was true also of the earlier ones. It was seen earlier in the chapter, for example, that Whitehall realised that invitations to the conference table would bestow status on the invitee. Monthly intelligence reports sent to London, which described the mass rallies that took place after conferences, would have been impossible to ignore, as would local reaction to conference breakdown, described in Chapter Six. The British too appreciated that constitutional concessions which were given at conferences would have consequences for local politics, albeit that the British sometimes sought to convince themselves that any such effects any would be limited, as the episode between Coutts and Renison, described in Chapter Three, illustrates. Yet, as with commissions, little or no time was spent by the British in analysing precisely what the wider consequences of managing change through conferences might be. Emphasis was always on managing immediate issues.

Part Three: Women at the conferences

It may not have gone unnoticed that in looking at how conferences and commissions influenced politics and popular opinion in Africa, little mention has been made of women. In fact, no African women attended the case study conferences as a delegate. The closest one came to doing so was at the second Kenya conference where Mrs P. I. Abwao attended as an 'official adviser'. Indeed, the conferences were very male dominated affairs, and not just on the African side. Aside from Mrs Abawao, the only other women who attended the case study conferences in any capacity were Mrs Hughes, a European elected member who was a delegate at the first Kenyan conference, and a handful of junior Colonial Office staff on the secretariat side.

A number of authors have shown how women *were* involved in nationalist movements in African countries. This was true of some territories more than others. In more traditional, patriarchal societies such as Zanzibar, women played only a marginal role in politics.[166] But in other places, women played an important part. Ali Mari Tripp, for example, has shown how, in the 1950s, the Uganda Council of Women (UCW) sought to influence public opinion and government policies which affected women. Whilst the latter were poorly represented in the Legislative Council of Uganda (for which only two African women had ever been nominated), women in Uganda, as Tripp has noted, were becoming increasingly interested in political matters. For the 1958 legislative council elections, many polling stations recorded more women voters than men.[167] In Northern Rhodesia, Irene Manda has demonstrated how in the late 1950s and early 1960s women played a significant role in mobilising both ANC and UNIP supporters, raising funds, and organising events. UNIP had a strong Women's Brigade and one of its members, Julia Mulenga Chikamoneka, known as 'Mama UNIP', played a particularly active part in organising demonstrations against Iain Macleod when he had visited the colony in March 1960. Through her extensive on the ground research, Susan Geiger has shown the important role which women played in the decolonisation of Tanganyika.[168] Women were remembered as 'vocal, often vociferous TANU enthusiasts', and were a major force in 'constructing, embodying and performing Tanganyikan nationalism'. Bibi Titi Mohamed was particularly notable as a TANU organiser, recruiting thousands of women to the party. She was often photographed next to Nyerere

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[166] Corrie Decker, *Mobilizing Zanzibari Women: The Struggle for Respectability and Self-Reliance in Colonial East Africa* (New York, 2014).
[167] Ali Mari Tripp, *Women and Politics in Uganda* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 34-40.
[168] Geiger, *TANU Women.*

between 1955 and 1965 at parades, meetings and public gatherings,[169] and indeed shared a platform with Nyerere at Tanganyika's Independence Day.[170] By the early 1960s, women began to play an important part too in Basuto politics. A Basutoland Congress Party women's league was formed which made a 'distinctive contribution' to political gatherings. Ellen Maposholi Molapo was especially prominent.[171]

Despite the influence of women in politics in colonial Africa, the senior positions in the parties were occupied by men. That no women were sent as delegates to the conferences was simply a manifestation of that position. In Uganda, the UCW had urged strongly that the delegation to the London conference should be increased by the addition of at least one woman, it being plain that otherwise none would be included. Colonial officials in Uganda told Whitehall that they had 'no strong feelings' but would 'not think invitation of a woman an embarrassment' if the Colonial Office thought this expedient.[172] Leslie Monson told the Ugandan government to turn the request down, stating that the Conference was already close to maximum capacity, the political parties could have included a woman if they so wished and unofficial organisations were not normally given representation at a conference.[173] In the event, Uganda sent 55 delegates to London, none of whom were women. Neither political party had been inclined to include any in their number, chiming with a further observation by Tripp that while Obote often pledged to do more to promote women leaders, the UPC leader 'did little to make good his promises'.[174] This was a theme elsewhere, and emphasises, ultimately, the male dominance of the African political parties in the early 1960s. Women were not chosen for high office.[175] As Allman, Geiger and Musisi have noted, the end of colonial rule did not, in the final analysis, result in women's emancipation. Rather, the resilience of the former colonial patriarchies prevailed.[176]

Despite women not attending the constitutional conferences as delegates, the submissions to the second Kenya conference do give us some insight, at least for Kenya, in what women may, in particular, have wanted as conference outcomes. Mrs Abawao submitted a 'memorandum on behalf of the African Women to the Kenya Constitutional Conference in

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[169] Ibid, pp.9-17.
[170] Ibid, pp.163.
[171] Mark Epprecht, 'Women's "Conservatism" and the Politics of Gender in Late Colonial Lesetho', *Journal of African History*, Vol. 36, no. 1 (1995) pp.29-56, p.44.
[172] TNA, CO822/2422, Telegram from Dreschfield to Webber, 30.08.61.
[173] TNA, CO822/2422, Telegram from Monson to Crawford, 01.09.61.
[174] Tripp, *Women and Politics*, p.40.
[175] Irene Manda, 'Women and Mass Mobilization', pp.47-62.
[176] Jean Allman, Susan Geiger and Nakanyike Musisi in J. Allman, S. Geiger and N. Musisi (eds.), 'Introduction' in *Women in African Colonial Histories* (Bloomington, 2002), p.10.

London, February 1962'. She expressed deep regret that African women had not been allowed direct participation in the Conference, arguing that many of Kenya's social problems, especially education for women, had been neglected in the past. Mrs Abawao hoped that the new constitution would provide for equal opportunities for all and drew attention to present practices in Kenya preventing women from enjoying full rights to ownership of land, submitting that every African woman should have the right to welfare and maternity benefits.[177] No official consideration appears to have been given at the Conference to the memorandum.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown how conferences were events which, for the most part, were engaged with energetically and enthusiastically by the public in Africa . This can be seen at the airports where politicians departed to and arrived back from conferences and which on many occasions attracted vast crowds. Conference announcements could boost party memberships, and celebrations of delegates' achievements could affirm identities. Yet conferences and the change these promised were not welcomed by all. Conferences drew out reservations about progress from sections of the population. As the chapter has also sought to demonstrate, nationalist politicians also engaged with conferences, which offered them a route to power, affording them an opportunity to criticise opponents and to demonstrate their credibility and legitimacy. Many African politicians took advantage of this, especially Banda, Kenyatta and Obote. Conference performances, however, could also have negative effects and it was seen how Mboya antagonised his colleagues at the first conference for Kenya. Conferences, as illustrated, could also help forge political alliances such as that between Obote and Buganda in Uganda. Yet they could also play a part in the rupture of parties, the third Kenyan conference being instrumental in the dissolution of KANU. The lead up to conferences helped sharpen the objectives and aims of the political parties, who also used tactics, in particular the use of overseas advisers and telegrams, to seek to secure their favoured outcome.

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[177] TNA, CO822/2369, Memorandum by Mrs P. I. Abawao, 19.02.62. Unfortunately, no further information has been gleaned about the author.

Chapter Six

Successes, failures, and consequences of the commissions and conferences

This chapter looks at two principal themes. The first is whether conferences and commissions were the successes that the British had hoped for. To what extent did these mechanisms meet British aspirations? The second aspect of this chapter concerns commission and conference ramifications. Chapters Four and Five focussed on how the run up to, and the duration of, commissions and conferences affected African politics. This chapter shifts the emphasis to the aftermath of these events, and the effect they had on the decolonisation process. On the first theme, the chapter argues that results for the British Government were mixed. Conferences were seen as the more successful of the two mechanisms, yet success could be superficial, the events having sometimes provided only a temporary solution which enabled the British to claim an orderly exit. Moving on to the second theme, the chapter looks beyond the constitutional outcomes and examines some of the consequences of constitutional change having been implemented through the mechanism of conferences. For some territories, conferences produced a constitutional outcome that would have been unlikely if other mechanisms of change had been used. Conferences also, on occasions encouraged African political parties to work together for change. Conferences became a mode of operation which themselves may have helped facilitate a largely non-violent transfer of power in the British colonies in east and central Africa between 1960 and 1964. Conferences may have done this through engendering an improved understanding between British and nationalist politicians, giving the British authorities their desired appearance of control (even if that was not so in reality), and providing nationalist leaders with an attractive route to power.

Commissions

A noticeable feature of the African commissions is that many of them went badly from the British Government's point of view, in the sense that they did not yield the sought-after objectives. Commissions often made recommendations which went much further than the British Government had been expecting. The Wild and Ramage Commissions which each reported in December 1959, shortly after Macleod took up his post, can hardly have given

the new Colonial Secretary confidence that these were reliable and predictable tools of governance. Crawford, Uganda's Governor, recognised at once that some proposals of the Wild Committee would be 'clearly unacceptable' to the British Government.[1] And they were. Macleod set about watering down the Commission's recommendations. Thus the principle of a majority of unofficial ministers in Uganda's executive council was accepted, but only with the condition that the body must remain advisory to the Governor. The legislative council, likewise, could be predominantly elective, as the Committee had suggested, but the Governor had to retain power to nominate additional members to ensure a working majority.[2] Control would therefore remain very firmly in the hands of the Protectorate Government. Macleod was sympathetic to the proposed idea of universal suffrage - there was no European settler population to speak of which needed looking after - but said that then was not the right time to institute this.[3] Various concerns conditioned the British Government's response: on the issue of universal suffrage, there was an anxiety that, if granted, this would give weight to nationalist demands in Kenya and the Central African Federation for similar advances.[4] Uganda, it was considered, was also not yet ready for responsible government. D.G.Reid, a senior Colonial Office official, thought also that Ugandan politicians lacked the experience to entertain such a step, particularly when the state of politics there 'are at such sixes and sevens'.[5]

The Ramage Committee's report was more in line with the British and colonial governments' expectations. Its principal recommendations were that parity of representation between the races in the elected membership of the legislative council should be abolished, that a mooted territorial council of Chiefs should not be established, and that the franchise should be broadened so that all adult men who paid taxes could vote, with alternative threshold qualifications for women. Macleod accepted most of the proposals, but was concerned that the recommendation of an enlarged electorate would have adverse effects in neighbouring countries, particularly Nyasaland.[6] The Committee's franchise suggestions were diluted considerably.[7]

Both in London and among members of the colonial government, regret was expressed at how easy it had been for the commissions to behave in an uncontrolled and unexpected

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[1] TNA, PREM11/4039, Telegram from Crawford to Colonial Secretary, 11.12.59.
[2] TNA, FCO141/18293, Telegram from Webber to Hartwell, 05.02.60.
[3] TNA, CO822/2262, Extract from Minutes of Colonial Policy Committee Meeting, 08.02.60.
[4] TNA, PREM11/4039, Note from Bligh to Macmillan, 17.02.60.
[5] TNA, CO822/1437, Note from Reid to Webber, 15.12.59.
[6] TNA, CO822/1461, Note of meeting between Macleod, Turnbull and others, 16.11.59.
[7] TNA, CAB134/1557, CPC Minutes, 23.11.59.

way. Wild noted with some embarrassment to Charles Hartwell, Chief Secretary of the Ugandan Government, that his report went 'farther than we had hoped',[8] the 'we' presumably being a reference to Wild and his colonial government colleagues, a remark which again illustrates how the commission had been set up as a joint enterprise involving chairman and Governor, each with the same objectives as to outcome. Using words which again are suggestive of the commission having failed to meet Crawford's and the British Government's objectives, Wild subsequently wrote a note which he labelled 'in the nature of an apologia'. The memorandum was almost certainly for the consumption of Crawford and explained why he thought the Committee's recommendations went far beyond what had been expected.[9] Leslie Monson, no doubt having regard to the unsatisfactory nature of the Wild and Ramage reports, thought that a similarly constituted committee in Zanzibar would be difficult to control, and might produce undesirable results.[10] And as seen in Chapter Two, some two years later, when discussing the constitutional commission for Basutoland, Monson also reminded colleagues that locally based committees 'had generally involved some embarrassment for the [UK] Government'.[11]

The report of the Monckton Commission, submitted in September 1960, also disappointed the British Government. At first, British ministers simply did not know how to react to the report, particularly the secession recommendation which, as shown earlier, had taken them by surprise, and which embarrassed them.[12] A problem for the British Government, as Monson noted, was that it would be 'impossible to reject the main conclusions of a Commission composed of persons on the U.K. side of such authority'.[13] The Northern Rhodesian Governor, Sir Evelyn Hone, recognised too that the British Government could not simply 'do a Devlin' and shelve the recommendations of the report,[14] with Sandys telling Macmillan that the British Government clearly cannot repudiate the report's recommendation in relation to secession.[15] Embracing the report, whilst desirable from the point of view of trying to enlist African support, would have prejudiced the prospects of agreement with Welensky at the forthcoming Review Conference. In the end, Macmillan adopted the more neutral line of stating that it was an error to think that the report

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[8] TNA, FCO141/18284, Note from Wild to Hartwell, 12.11.59.
[9] TNA, FCO141/18289, Chairman's notes, 02.12.59
[10] TNA, CO822/2325, Telegram from Monson to Mooring, 14.02.60
[11] TNA, CO1048/46, Note of a Colonial Office meeting between Monson and others, 03.04.62.
[12] TNA, DO35/7502, Telegram Sandys to Welensky, 26.09.60.
[13] TNA, CO1015/2335, Note from Monson to Martin, 09.09.60.
[14] TNA, CO1015/2335, Note from Hone to Gardener, 13.09.60.
[15] TNA, DO35/7502, Telegram Sandys to Macmillan, 22.09.60.

needed to be accepted or rejected, and it was, instead, a contribution to the debate:[16] a far cry from the Prime Minister's early hopes when he first set up the Commission. It received barely a mention at the December 1960 Review Conference, where Macmillan, bereft of his hoped for guidance, stood aloof from the proceedings.[17] Irritated British Ministers sought to wave away Labour Party pressure in Parliament whenever the report's recommendations were raised.[18]

Other commissions' reports must also have been dispiriting for the British Government. The Molson Commission recommended that two of the 'Lost Counties' be transferred to Bunyoro. The Colonial Office had strong reservations, considering that it would be 'a mistake to anchor ourselves too securely to [the proposals]'. No doubt having regard to the greater power, influence, and status of the Kabaka of Buganda, the Colonial Office thought that Britain's interest would be best served by appeasing the ruler. That way, Uganda's long-term stability would be more secure, and so 'selling Bunyoro down the river' might be the 'lesser evil'.[19] At the Ugandan Independence Conference in 1962, Maudling avoided endorsing the Molson Report, instead suggesting that a side meeting deliberate the Lost Counties issue.[20] British ministers and colonial officials were also taken back by the Swaziland Commission's report, the recommendations of which would leave Swazis disenfranchised, would preserve and enhance the position of the Paramount Chief and, in a situation with more than an intimation of apartheid, would divide the country along racial lines.[21] Maudling, whose Colonial Office now had responsibility for the High Commission territories, appreciated at once that the report's recommendations would not satisfy the progressives in Swaziland, telling Macmillan that 'we must find room in the political system' for the gradually increasing the number of politically conscious Swazis.[22] More ire still was vented on the Basutoland Commission's recommendations, in particular the proposal that negotiations be opened with the British Government as soon as possible regarding independence. In a fit of pique, Duncan Sandys, Maudling's replacement as Colonial Secretary, was half-minded simply to concede immediate independence, thinking that 'it

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[16] TNA, DO35/7502, Telegram from Macmillan to Home and Macleod, 20.09.60.

[17] Wood, *Welensky Papers*, p.813.

[18] Ibid, pp.1045-1046.

[19] TNA, CO822/2786, Note from Webber to Martin, 30.05.62.

[20] TNA, CAB133/284, Opening Conference speech of Maudling, 12.06.62.

[21] Swaziland, *Report of the Swaziland Constitutional Committee* (Mbabane, 1961).

[22] TNA, PREM11/3634, Memorandum from Maudling to Macmillan, 13.03.62.

would suit H.M.G. admirably',[23] having one eye, perhaps, on the financial savings for Britain which autonomy might bring.

The problem (for the British) with these large commissions made up of a mix of British and African members was that the dynamics of the commission proved very difficult to control. Certain African members showed themselves to be far more influential than colonial officials had contemplated. Wild, for example, observed how one of the members who it was thought might be a moderate 'lacked intelligence' (C. B. Katiti) and how another became was 'the butt of the party' (W.W. Kajumbula-Nadiope). Obote, on the other hand, became a force on the Committee: 'the outstanding politician', as Wild labelled him, who praised his 'ability and drive', noting how Obote expressed himself clearly and backed up his views with arguments, even if '[Obote] has Mr. Obote's interests rather than the country's interests at heart'.[24] Katiti and Nadiope, on the other hand, buoyed by Committee bonhomie and Obote's persuasiveness, simply fell into line with Obote's radical suggestions. The two Asian members, H .K. Jaffer and C.K. Patel may also have been influenced in this way.

Notwithstanding British and colonial government attempts to gear commissions to producing results to their liking, commissioners were also swayed by the evidence they encountered on the ground, resulting in unanticipated recommendations. Attending meetings of large groups of Africans in towns and villages may well have been a new experience for some of commissioners, in particular the British and white Rhodesian ones. The strength of the feelings expressed at such events seems to have had an effect. The Ramage Report observed that the weight of representations against the parity system of representation (whereby European, African and Asian elected members had equal numbers) was 'significant' and that a large body of African opinion 'held strongly that the arrangement was undemocratic' and that 'whatever advantages the system may have had in the first instance' were 'now outweighed by the very strong public feeling against it'. In recommending a far broader franchise, the Committee also stated that they were 'considerably influenced' by the 'widespread and intensive desire for an immediate and substantial widening of the franchise'.[25] The Wild Committee was no less affected by popular African opinion. Wild's 'apologia', mentioned earlier in this chapter, noted ruefully

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[23] TNA, CO1048/384, Note of a meeting with the Secretary of State to discuss the High Commission territories, 10.01.64.
[24] TNA, FCO141/18289, Chairman's Notes on the Work of the Committee, 01.12.59.
[25] Tanganyika, *Report of the Post Elections Committee, 1959* (Dar es Salaam, 1959), paragraph 51.

that his Committee's recommendations went far beyond what had been expected and that this had been due in part to 'the solid weight of evidence' received from bodies and individuals who favoured change in 1961.[26] Most surprising of all was how the Monckton commissioners were shaken and affected by African opinion. Hugh Beadle, a judge from Southern Rhodesia, was considered by one of his fellow commissioners, for example, to have begun the inquiry as a radical advocate of white ascendancy. Yet by the end of the process, his colleague noted how Beadle had undergone a 'transformation' in his views, which he had modified in the light of his experience.[27] Trevor Gardener, liaison officer to the Federal Government, reported on how those commissioners who did not know Northern Rhodesia 'were visibly affected by the vehemence of the opposition of all African witnesses to the Federation', a comment which 'applies particularly to the European Commissioners from Southern Rhodesia'.[28] Indeed, the Monckton Report observed that the dislike of the Federation among Africans in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland was 'widespread' and 'sincere',[29] and that 'racial feeling' had grown 'sharper and stronger'.[30] The 'bitter disappointment' which had been expressed by African opinion over the small number of seats in the Federal legislature registered, as did complaints over health, education, and agricultural services. Weight, in particular, was given to demands for secession.[31] The Monckton commissioners appeared to all get on well. Monckton, for example, told British minister Lord Home that the commissioners 'are all on the most amicable personal relations',[32] and later wrote of 'the close friendly relations which kept us all together'.[33] Another member, Lord Crathorne, also told Birkenhead how the Commission became a team.[34] This team spirit, alongside Monckton's determination to achieve as much consensus as possible, helped perhaps to insulate some of the commissioners from their hitherto more partisan stances.

An issue which affected some of the commissions was the length of time between conception and reporting, during which the climate of opinion could and did change. This

[26] TNA, FCO141/18289, Background to the Report of the Constitutional Committee, 02.12.59.

[27] Birkenhead, *Monckton,* p.345. The author attributes the remark to Aidan Crawley.

[28] TNA, DO35/7595, Hone to Monson, 22.02.60. The white commissioners chosen by the Southern Rhodesian Government were Beadle and Ellman-Brown.

[29] Great Britain, *Report of the Advisory Commission on the Review of the Constitution of Rhodesia and Nyasaland,* Cmnd 1148 (London, 1960), and henceforth 'Monckton Report', paragraph 27.

[30] Monckton Report, paragraph 32.

[31] Monckton Report, paragraph 82.

[32] TNA, DO35/7595, Monckton to Home, 30.03.60

[33] Monckton Papers, Bodleian Library Oxford, File 53, f74, Letter from Monckton to Menzies, 08.09.60.

[34] Birkenhead, *Monckton,* p.345.

can be seen in particular with the Monckton Commission, and may also help explain some commissioners' changes of heart. First mooted in March 1959, when multi-racial assumptions underpinning the CAF were still ingrained in British thinking, the writing of the Report did not take place until the summer of 1960 by which time both nationalist and internationalist pressures had gained considerable momentum, and there had been a change in the mood music. The independence of the Congo, the strengthening of African political parties, a stimulation of pan-Africanism, growing interest of the United Nations in colonialism, and world reaction following Sharpeville would have been difficult to ignore.

Those commissions which were chaired by sole commissioners or which contained no African members from the colony concerned, not surprisingly, produced results more to the Colonial Office's liking, with fewer unexpected proposals. These commissions, populated solely by those whose thinking was likely to have been far more consistent with British and colonial officialdom, were a different proposition to the large and hard-to-control commissions described earlier. For this reason, after Wild, Ramage and Monckton, this type of body became the Colonial Office's commission of choice.[35] George Mooring, Resident of Zanzibar, considered the Blood Report 'wise and well-conceived',[36] and Macleod told the House of Commons that he thought the commissioner's recommendations 'helpful and imaginative'.[37] The British Government also used the report of the Kenya Northern Frontier Commission to help justify its decision to create a new administrative region of Kenya, believing that delineating the borders to take account of the Commissioners' findings would help meet any international criticism.[38] Robertson's Kenya Coastal Strip report was also endorsed and commended by Maudling and by Minister of State, Lord Perth.[39] The reaction of the British and Protectorate Governments to the Munster Report, and its central recommendation of a state with a strong centre but in which Buganda would enjoy a federal relationship, was also positive. Macleod thought highly of it, writing in a memorandum to the British Cabinet that its central recommendation was 'wise' and that the Report offered 'a very sound and well-argued

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[35] As seen in Chapter Two, the later multi-member Swaziland and Basutoland commissions were appointed without Colonial Office involvement and for political reasons a single British commissioner would have been unsuited to the Kenya Northern Frontier commission. Privy Councillors were chosen for the Molson commission to lend gravitas.

[36] TNA, CO822/2326, Letter from Mooring to Monson.

[37] Ayany, *A History of Zanzibar*, p.72.

[38] TNA, CO822/3031, Telegram from Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary to Sandys, 01.03.63.

[39] TNA, CO822/2159, The Kenya Coastal Strip Conference 1962, Record of Meeting 08.03.62, and 09.03.62 (This was an adjunct of the second Kenyan Conference held at Marlborough House and discussed earlier).

solution to the difficult question of suggesting a structure of government most suitable to the special needs of Buganda'.[40] The Report now offered the British Government a practical and realistic solution to the unstable situation in Buganda. The reports of the African commissions were, then, a mixed bag for the British, with those from small single or two/three person committees being the better received. Yet, as this chapter will go on to examine, whilst these reports produced immediate satisfaction for the British, such benefits were often only short-term.

As seen in Chapter Two, an important motive behind the establishment of the African commissions was to give the British and colonial governments breathing spaces in which immediate pressure could be dissipated. To that extent, the commissions worked, at least to some extent. Once commissions had been announced, there was then an inevitable time lag whilst the commissioners gathered evidence and then drafted and submitted their report. As Chapter Five noted, for the most part, both the public and nationalist politicians in the African territories were prepared to engage with the commissions, peaceably focussing their efforts on persuading commissioners of the need for change. Sometimes a commission would recommend elections on a revised franchise which further reduced immediate clamour for change whilst politicians garnered their efforts into winning legislative council seats. Zanzibar is one such example. In that territory, all three political parties welcomed the appointment of a commissioner, each telling their followers that the next stage of political development in Zanzibar would be not less than an elected majority for the territory's legislative council.[41] Each party saw the Commission as offering them benefits. For Afro-Shirazi Party, it could be expected to recommend steps which would conform to its more gradualist idea of political development. The Zanzibar National Party viewed the commission as a useful tool which would provide them with a place and influence in government.[42] Indeed, its leader, Ali Muhsin, declared that political action could be temporarily abandoned.[43] The Zanzibar and Pemba People's Party, on the other hand, saw the appointment of the Commission and the consequent postponement of elections that were due to take place in July 1960 as giving them an opportunity to swing

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[40] TNA CAB134/1560, Memorandum by the Secretary of State on the Relationships Commission Report, 15.06.61.
[41] TNA, CO822/2325, Monthly Central Intelligence Committee Report for February 1960.
[42] TNA, CO822/2068, Monthly Central Intelligence Committee Report for March 1960.
[43] TNA, CO822/2325, Letter from Mooring to Monson, 21.04.60.

votes away from ASP.[44] All parties submitted memoranda to the Commissioner.[45] In the short-term at least, the announcement of the Commission had the colonial government's desired effect of reducing political pressure. Mooring observed in later April 1960 the 'very marked, almost complete, relaxation of political tension'.[46] Yet the lull brought about whilst parties were busily engaged with persuading commission members to come round to their way of thinking was only ever going to be a temporary state of affairs, and it is unlikely that commissions had any material long term agency in slowing down the pace of constitutional change. Indeed, as shown below, it is probable that the overall effect of commissions was to accelerate change.

As Darwin has noted, the British 'seemed to trap themselves into a spiral of constitutional concessions that reached the climax of full independence with unprecedented suddenness'.[47] The African commissions are an illustration of this. They frequently made recommendations for elections to be held on a wider franchise. Such elections, in turn, would invariably see nationalist parties win a greater number of legislative council seats, giving them greater power. This, in turn, resulted in a clamour for yet further change, the parties now strengthened and buoyed by public support and the enhanced credentials of victory at the ballot box. If, on the other hand, a commission recommended little change or a section of the population was disappointed by a commission's findings, then this fostered ill-will, resentment and often resulted in increased political pressure - the very thing that the commissions had been set up to dispel. Dennis Austin is correct in his observation (which has a wider application than the African commissions) that '[t]he effect of the great majority of the commissions was… to push reform farther along the road to self-government'.[48]

It was noted earlier that the announcement of the Blood Commission heralded a period of relative tranquillity in Zanzibaran politics. This did not last long. Publication of the Commissioner's report served only to act as a catalyst for greater political fervour. Its recommendations of unofficial majorities in the territory's legislative and executive

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[44] TNA, CO822/2068, Monthly Central Intelligence Committee Report for April 1960.
[45] See appendices to Zanzibar, *Report of the Constitutional Commissioner* (Zanzibar, 1960).
[46] TNA, CO822/2325, Letter from Mooring to Webber, 21.05.60.
[47] Darwin, *The End of the British Empire*, p.116. See also John Iliffe, 'Breaking the Chain at its Weakest Link: TANU and the Colonial Office' in G.H. Maddox and J.L. Giblin (eds.), *In Search of a Nation: Histories of Authority & Dissidence in Tanzania* (Oxford, 2005). Illife argues that once responsible government was conceded in Tanganyika, then '[t]he chain of imperialism in East Africa broke at its weakest link'. Once broken, 'imperial control unravelled throughout the region'. p.169.
[48] Dennis Austin, 'The Transfer of Power', p.19.

councils made the political parties all the more determined to win the forthcoming elections in January 1961. The leader of the winning party could now be expected to be installed as Chief Minister. B.E. Rolfe of the Colonial Office noted the signs of inter-racial tension as the struggle for power approached.[49] The June 1961 elections sparked off rioting, looting and murder - 68 were killed - and did much to damage race relations.[50] Ultimately, the Blood Report had done nothing (if anything could have been done) to solve the fundamental political issue of the Protectorate - the relationship between the majority Africans and minority Arabs. It was a matter which carried on until after independence when the revolution of January 1964 saw some 600 armed Africans overturn the ZNP/ZPPP coalition government. Over 13,000 died during the insurrection.[51] It would be wrong of course to attribute the underlying causation of this episode to the Commission. As seen earlier, the body was instituted only as a mechanism of introducing the proposed reforms; ones which would have been introduced in any event. But the events do illustrate the ultimate ephemera of the commission in terms of a holding mechanism.

As was the case with the Blood Commission, the constitutional commission for Basutoland also at first calmed nationalist pressures, only for it then to act as a catalyst for change. A lengthy breathing space was gained by the colonial government through the time it took to set up the Commission, the time it took between the motion for the Commission being passed (September 1961) and the Commission actually reporting (October 1963), and the subsequent protracted political debates by the territory's National Council over the report's recommendations. It was not until April 1964 that a compromise was reached. Yet, when agreement between the political parties was reached on the Commission's recommendation of a speedy independence, the pressure to attain that objective was intense. Faced with persistent demands for a short interim period and worried by the reaction of African Commonwealth governments to a prolonged independence, Sandys agreed at the April 1964 Conference that if at any time not earlier than one year after the forthcoming elections the people of Basutoland through both of the (to be introduced) houses of parliament should ask for independence, then the British Government would seek to give effect to their wishes as soon as possible.[52]

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[49] TNA, CO822/2045, File note by Rolfe, 17.10.60.
[50] Ayany, *A History of Zanzibar*, p.87.
[51] Ibid, p.126.
[52] TNA, CO1048/426, Report of Constitutional Conference, 15.05.64.

As Murphy has argued, '[t]he appearance of the Monckton Report gave renewed impetus to the question of the Northern Rhodesian constitution'.[53] The Commission noted with 'great satisfaction' the agreement which had been reached on the constitution of Nyasaland at the London conference ending on 4 August 1960 and took the view in its majority report that adoption of a comparable advance was 'essential in Northern Rhodesia in the near future' in order to dispel fear in that territory that the Federation was impeding its political progress. The Commission urged the British Government to make a declaration that a conference to consider these matters for Northern Rhodesia should be held without delay with the majority of Commissioners recommending that there should be an African majority in its legislative council and an unofficial majority in the executive one. Macleod recognised that the Commission's recommendations here would limit the British Government's freedom for manoeuvre at any conference,[54] telling Hone, the Northern Rhodesia Governor, that he could not 'see that H.M.G. has any alternative but to accept them [the recommendations], if we are not to have the whole territory about our ears'.[55] Subsequently, Kaunda used the Monckton Report's recommendation of an African majority in the Northern Rhodesian legislative council to keep up pressure for change.[56] In this way the Report played at least some part in advancing constitutional progress in Northern Rhodesia.

The effects of a report's recommendations should also not be seen solely in terms of a short term, limited reaction and consequence. The reports of the African commissions sometimes set in motion an unbroken series of events which sped up change. It is difficult, of course, to be decisive here as we do not know the answer to the counter-factual issue of what would have happened in other circumstances. Would, ultimately, change have happened over a similar timescale had commissions not been held? Nevertheless, it does seem probable that the recommendations of commissions had agency. The Monckton Report, for example, can be seen as a catalyst for long-term constitutional change in Nyasaland. Macleod was determined to release Banda from detention not least so that he could (Macleod hoped) give evidence as a free man to the Monckton Commission to avoid damaging publicity.[57] Macleod calculated that if Banda were to give evidence then that would 'transform the situation' in Nyasaland and give Monckton 'a real chance to

[53] Philip Murphy (ed.), *BDEEP*, Series B, Volume 9, *Central Africa*, Part 1 (Norwich, 2005), p.lxxxii
[54] TNA, FCO141/14019, Telegram Macleod to Hone, 05.10.60.
[55] TNA, CO1015/2275, Telegram from Macleod to Hone, 12.09.60.
[56] Woods, *Welensky Papers*, p.944.
[57] TNA, PREM5/254, Telegram Macleod to Armitage, 04.01.60.

operate'.[58] The prospective release from internment and discussions with the African leader over giving evidence to the commission enabled Macleod to meet with Banda and decide that there was enough co-operation and goodwill for a constitutional conference to be held in London. This then took place surprisingly quickly thereafter, resulting in a constitutional settlement which provided for an African majority in the territory's legislative council.

A commission's report giving rise to a chain of events can also be seen after publication of the Wild Report, incidents which culminated in Uganda's independence in October 1962. Following Crawford's speech rejecting the majority report of the Wild Committee, Obote and other African representative members of the Protectorate's legislative council demanded to see Macleod.[59] Reluctantly, the Colonial Secretary agreed. Following discussions with Crawford, Macleod conceded to the delegation, which he met in June 1960, that if one political party gained a majority after the 1961 elections then an early conference would be held to consider issues leading to self-government. This train of events then took place, with the Democratic Party returning a majority, and the constitutional conference of September 1961 adopting a self-government constitution. Of course, other factors were also at work in 1960 to accelerate Ugandan independence, but it would be hard to say that the furious reaction of Obote and others to the British Government's position on the Wild Report had not played its part.

The events surrounding the Ramage Committee illustrate too how commissions could set in train pressures for change. In this case, the driver was more subtle. Julius Nyerere appreciated straightaway that the Committee had been set up in such a way as to deal only with narrow issues: the 'mechanics' of the legislative council as he observed to John Fletcher-Cooke, the Deputy Governor.[60] Nyerere did not wish himself to serve on the Committee,[61] believing that he would have more room to operate politically outside its constraints. Instead, the TANU leader cleverly used the opportunity afforded by a public discussion on constitutional demands to press TANU's case for an acknowledgement by the Governor that responsible government would be granted during the course of 1959, linking

[58] TNA, PREM5/255, Telegram from Macleod and Home to Macmillan, 28.01.60; PREM11/3075, Macleod to Macmillan, 03.12.59.
[59] TNA, FCO141/18293, Proceedings of Legco Report, 01.03.60 to 08.03.60.
[60] TNA, CO822/1460, Note by Fletcher-Cooke of a meeting with Nyerere, 23.12.58.
[61] Papers of Lady Chesham, Borthwick Institute, University of York, Tanganiyka Elected Members Organisation Minutes, 29.04.59.

the narrow work of the Committee with his much wider objectives.[62] Turnbull became

alarmed that Nyerere was using the Committee to secure this end-product, and

notwithstanding his device of planning to broaden the executive council by adding

unofficial members to reduce this pressure, Turnbull wondered how the British

Government, when responding to the Ramage recommendations, could simply ignore

saying something about wider constitutional advance.[63] He told the Colonial Office at the

end of 1958 that unless responsible government were forthcoming, then he feared that

TANU would embark on a territory-wide campaign of resistance.[64] The Governor's concerns

in this respect increased during the tenure of the Committee, a further example of

commissions being influenced by events. The Colonial Office resisted making any further

constitutional concessions for most of the year, but in November 1959 newly appointed

Colonial Secretary Iain Macleod took on board Turnbull's concerns that Nyerere might be

supplanted by an extremist unless concessions were made, and agreed that he could make

an announcement at the end of the year. This announcement would cover the British

Government's decision on the Ramage recommendations, but also, and at the same time,

would declare that unofficial majorities would be introduced to both the executive and

legislative councils.[65] Through Nyerere's skilful use of the constitutional discussion which

was prompted by the Ramage Committee's work, and the British Government's potential

vulnerability of having to deal with the Committee's recommendations, responsible

government was thus conceded at the same time as the British Government announced its

position on the Ramage recommendations: the first time a British African territory with a

notable European settler population had achieved this, and an important milestone

towards independence, not just for Tanganyika but for neighbouring territories.[66] There

were other pressures which made such a move by the British Government expedient, but

the Committee had provided the framework for the advance. How the colonial

administration would respond not just to the Ramage Report but to the wider question of

responsible government had become entwined and inexorably connected.

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[62] TNA, CO822/1460, Note by Fletcher-Cooke of a meeting with Nyerere, 23.12.58. Submission of TANU to the Ramage Committee, 13.06.59.
[63] TNA, CO822/1460, Letter from Turnbull to Gorell Barnes, 13.01.59.
[64] Baker, *Exit from Empire*, p.197.
[65] TNA, CAB134/1447, Memo by Macleod to CPC, 12.11.59. CO822/1461. Note of meeting between Macleod, Turnbull and others, 16.11.59; Telegram from Colonial Secretary to Turnbull, 25.11.59; FCO141/17876, Letter from Permanent Secretary (Tanganyika) to Provincial Commissioners, 03.12.59.
[66] See, for example, the communication from the Governor of Uganda, Crawford, to Macleod of 21.04.60, in which the Governor told Macleod that: '[d]ecisions taken for Tanganyika are bound to have extensive repercussions here', TNA, FCO141/ 18278.

Commissions thus had nuanced and sometimes unexpected ramifications. Few were 'successful' from the British point of view in the sense that the reports they produced were often seen as embarrassing and disappointing. Commissions did nonetheless often dissipate immediate pressures which colonial governments were facing. However, their institution and subsequent reporting can hardly be said to have encouraged long-term stability. As shown, it is likely that on account of the political interest they generated and the recommendations which they made, many commissions had the overall effect of speeding up constitutional change. The next part of this chapter looks at the ramifications of the constitutional conferences of the period. It begins by exploring whether, as far as the British were concerned, the African conferences should be seen as successful or not. It then moves on to consider further ramifications of the conferences.

Conferences

In contrast to the commissions of the period, most of the conferences were considered by the British Government to have had favourable outcomes. Of the sixteen conferences which are the subject of this thesis, eight might be said to have been a success in the sense that the specific conference objectives of the British Government were met or largely met, and the conferences ended with general agreement. These conferences comprise both the first and second ones for each of Kenya, Nyasaland and Uganda, the second Northern Rhodesia conference, and the second Zanzibar conference. Chapter One noted how the outcome of first Kenyan Conference had been praised by British newspapers, but this was by no means the only one. Shortly after first Nyasaland Conference had ended, the *Times* newspaper observed how '[i]n an Africa distracted by racial conflict the agreement reached at Lancaster House yesterday over Nyasaland pierces the gloom like a shaft of sunlight'.[67] At the conclusion of the first Ugandan Conference that newspaper's leader writers were even more effusive, noting that '[i]f the hopes so bravely expressed on all sides at the successful conclusion of the Uganda Constitutional Conference yesterday are realized, Mr Macleod's crowning achievement as Colonial Secretary may prove his greatest'.[68] In addition to the eight, four further conferences would have been seen as limited successes by the British Government. These were ones that did not end in failure, but where the British Government had to modify its objectives, sometimes substantially, to avoid the conference breaking up in acrimony. The Somaliland Conference is one such example, where British objectives shifted from seeking to delay independence to accepting an early

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[67] *The Times*, editorial, 05.08.60, p.9.
[68] *The Times*, editorial, 11.10.61, p.13.

independence but protecting vital British interests. Other conferences in this category were the ones for Tanganyika (where Macleod only partially secured his objectives), the third Kenyan conference (which established good relations with KANU at the price of alienating KADU) and Basutoland (where Sandys had to revise the British Government objectives and concede autonomy earlier than he would have wished).

Robert Maxon has argued that the independence conference for Kenya of 1963, the third of that territory's conferences, lacked bargaining, consensus and agreement between the delegates of KANU and KADU, with decisions thus needing to be imposed by the British Government. As a consequence, he asserts that there was a failure to produce lasting reform in Kenya.[69] This view needs some qualification. As will be seen later in the chapter, the *second* Kenyan conference had, at least, seen a genuine negotiation between KANU and KADU, which led to the implementation of a self-governing constitution. This brokering process did not disappear at the independence conference. Rather, by the time of that conference, KANU's hegemony in African politics had risen and the British Government saw little alternative other than to give its general backing to that party. But Maxon raises a wider point which is of importance for the African conferences. That is, a positive conference outcome from the British point of view was not necessarily an enduring one. Whilst the twelve conferences seemed successful or partly successful to the British ministers, such success was sometimes only skin deep. The most obvious examples of this are the Zanzibar and Uganda independence conferences. It is useful to spend some time examining how and why this was so for what it tells us about the conference mechanism and also about British colonial policy in its last days in Africa.

At the end of the Zanzibar Independence Conference, a relieved Duncan Sandys told delegates: 'I must say I am very glad indeed that we have had such an extremely happy Conference'. ZPPP's Sheik Muhammad Shamte conveyed his warmest thanks to Sandys and ASP leader Abeid Karume expressed his party's gratitude that the Conference had been able to come to such a successful conclusion, telling those assembled that he would be going back to his country with great happiness and that they had the spirit to go back home and to work in co-operation.[70] Yet, as already mentioned, less than four months after the Conference ended Zanzibar was gripped by a bloody revolution. Terence Halliday and Lucien Karpik have shown that political liberalism in British colonies after independence was more likely to endure if the judiciary and/or the bar of the territory concerned had

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[69] Maxon, *Kenya's Independence Constitution*, p.273.
[70] TNA, CO822/3149, record of sixth meeting, 24.09.63.

been engaged in a fight against (colonial) state tyranny and/or for national independence. Lawyers and judges used to fighting for basic legal freedoms before independence are far more likely to do so afterwards.[71] A state of affairs which operated in a colony before independence thus carried through and determined conditions after that territory had gained autonomy. The authors argue that this mattered more than the provisions of the constitution itself at independence. The same might be said of Zanzibar and its independence conference. Whilst the latter ended in agreement and harmony, the apparent consensus was shallow. Despite the good wishes on all sides, the political conditions operating in the months and years before the Conference proved the determining trajectory. This is not to say of course that constitutional conferences could not influence outcomes. They could, and did.[72] But it does show that a successful independence conference was by no means a reliable indicator of a peaceful independence.

In hindsight it is easy to see how the agreement reached at the 1963 Zanzibar Conference was inevitably going to be short-lived. Apparent conference consensus had disguised deep divisions in Zanzibar society which abated until independence and then erupted, but which enabled Britain to depart the colony gracefully. Not only were fundamental grievances left festering after the Conference, as mentioned above, but important actors who harboured such grievances had also not been represented at the Conference, making the agreements reached all the more unstable. At the July 1963 elections, the ASP had attained over half of the total vote, but had nothing to show for it.[73] This had given rise to tension and recriminations. ASP's leader, Karume, was content for the party to form a 'strong but loyal parliamentary opposition',[74] but others in the party held very different views. Some wanted to co-operate openly with the radical Umma Party, others wanted a coalition with the ZNP at all costs. On account of these divisions Karume by no means spoke for all of his party at the Lancaster House conference.[75] Equally ZNP leader, Shamte, in heaping praise on Sandys, did not speak for the former ZNP members who had joined the recently formed radical Umma Party in large numbers. Shortly after its launch, that party's first rally

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[71] Terence Halliday and Lucien Karpik 'Political Liberalism in the British Post-Colony: A Theme with Three Variations' in Terence Halliday, Lucien Karpik and Malcolm Feely (eds.) *Fates of Political Liberalism in the British Post-Colony: The Politics of the Legal Complex* (Cambridge, 2012), pp.3-59. P.50.

[72] Uganda, for example, where the forthcoming conference forged political alliance between Obote's party and the Kabaka of Buganda.

[73] Ayany, *A History of Zanzibar*, p.112.

[74] Michael Lofchie, *Zanzibar: Background to Revolution* (Princeton, 1965), p.263.

[75] Ibid, p.264.

attracted a crowd of several thousand and the party received strong trade union backing.[76] When, soon after independence, the Zanzibar revolution happened, it began as a result of rioting by aggrieved ASP youths and was quickly orchestrated by Umma militia.[77] Neither had been represented at the London conference.

Despite Sandys' relief at the Zanzibar Conference having ended harmoniously, the British appreciated too that trouble lay in store. The overriding aim of the British at the Zanzibar conference had been to be seen to retreat in an orderly manner.[78] A conference which ended in all party agreement helped Britain achieve this objective. Yet the expectations of the British Government on the ground did not, in the case of Zanzibar, match Sandys' warm words. In mid-September 1963, George Mooring, Zanzibar's Resident, told the Colonial Secretary that whilst the security situation was expected to remain quiet up until independence, after that time 'renewal of inter-party rivalry seems inevitable' with the Umma Party having introduced subversive influence into an already tricky situation. The Resident added that while the ASP had accepted that the pre-independence elections 'were virtually beyond reproach' its leaders were trying to persuade their followers that an arrangement will be made which will give 'the [African] majority' a share in government. When that fails, Mooring added, it seemed probable that they will fall back on the idea that the majority must win, and they will look to the mainland for support 'and in the last resort rely on violence'.[79] A prescient view of what was to unfold.

The second Ugandan Conference was a further example of sticking plaster: an event which appeared to be successful, but which had merely shelved problems for later. As Gardner Thompson has argued, Uganda's government at independence rested on the shakiest of foundations.[80] Soon after independence, Obote sought to absorb the Bugandan KY party members, his political allies, into his own party, the UPC. Then, in 1966 the Ugandan president 'shattered the constitution', suspending it and arresting a number of legislature members. A further constitution of September 1967 elevated Obote to head of state and increased his powers of detention. When the Kabaka sought in 1966 to secede from the

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[76] Wilson, *The Threat of Liberation*, pp.42-43.
[77] Armit Wilson, 'Abdul Rahmen Mohamed Babu: Politician, Scholar and Revolutionary', *Journal of Pan African Studies,* Vol.1, no.9 (2007), pp.8-25, p.4.
[78] TNA, PREM11/4600, Extract from Sandys' speech following his visit to Zanzibar, 12.03.63.
[79] TNA, CO822/3069, PREM11/4600, Savingram from Mooring to the Secretary of State, 27.07.63.
[80] Thompson, *African Democracy*, p.83.

rest of Uganda, Obote sent in the army. The kingdoms and federalism were abolished.[81]
The Ugandan Independence Conference had provided no lasting solution to Uganda's
political issues. This though was hardly a surprise to British officials. In his valedictory letter
to the Colonial Secretary of 25 October 1962, Walter Coutts, Uganda's last Governor,
observed that 'Uganda… enters its independent future with its basic conflict of nationhood
unresolved, a difficult legacy for the new State… Whether Uganda can develop a proper
sense of nationhood while it contains within its narrow border such divisions of loyalty is
difficult to say'.[82] Whilst it would not have been in British interests for Uganda to fail in the
long term, in 1962 the overwhelming priority for the British Government had been to quit
Uganda with at least the appearance of peace and stability. That had been the key
objective of the British, and the Conference had been the mechanism to facilitate this
aspiration. Superficially, Conference agreement had enabled the Macmillan Government to
hold its head up both domestically and internationally, important to the Prime Minister and
his Cabinet colleagues. The Conference, however, had done nothing to solve long term
difficulties, something that Coutts was aware of, as no doubt were Macleod and Macmillan.
How Uganda fared once flags had been changed was always going to be of secondary
importance. As Gardner Thompson has also observed: '[t]he British knew that they could
not put together a system of government that could long survive the transfer of power but,
rather than admit as much, they invested in an unexceptionable face-saving procedure by
which to step aside'.[83]

Whilst the British were pleased at the time with most of the conference outcomes, not all
ended happily for them. The remaining four of the sixteen African conferences fall into this
category. The first Northern Rhodesia conference, the first Zanzibar one and the
conference for Swaziland all ended in failure with no consensus and no conference report.
The Federal Review Conference of 1960 was also hardly a success. That event adjourned,
never to resume. Failure came about at these conferences usually due to the very different
objectives of conference delegates, power relationships in the colonies, lack of preparation
by the British and colonial governments, and also on account of internal disagreements
within the British Cabinet. The first Northern Rhodesia conference had each of these
ingredients. *The Times* did not pull its punches, telling its readership that it was 'quite clear'

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[81] Ibid, pp.171-176; Martin Dornboos, 'Changing Perspectives on Conflict and Integration in Uganda'
in G.N. Uzoigwe (ed.) *Uganda: the Dilemma of Nationhood* (New York, 1982), pp.313-332, pp, 317-
318.
[82] TNA, CO822/2266, Letter from Coutts to Sandys, 25.10.62.
[83] Thompson, *African Democracy*, p.101.

that the Conference 'has ended in almost total failure'.[84] Macleod called it in private 'a complicated story and a sad one too'.[85] It is useful to examine precisely why that conference did fail, both for historical record, and also for what the conference tells us in general terms about conferences as a mechanism to broker agreement.

As seen in Chapter Three, Macleod had sought as the Northern Rhodesia Conference outcome a 'token' African majority. This, however, was not the eventual outcome of the Conference. In some ways this seems odd, given that the Colonial Secretary managed to achieve this result at his first Kenyan Conference a year or so earlier. Kenya and Northern Rhodesia had similar numbers of European settlers who were equally as vociferous about protecting their position. Yet Kenya had no Welensky. The Federal Prime Minister, wedded to his 'multi-racial' views, was inevitably going to fight against any constitutional proposal which might introduce African majority rule. For a conference to enjoy success there needed to be agreement amongst the delegates. Not all of those who attended needed to concur but there had to be enough to give any settlement credibility. Thus for the Kenyan conference of 1960, Macleod was never going to obtain the agreement of the right-wing settlers led by Group Captain Briggs, but acceptance of his plan by the European liberal Michael Blundell and his group along with the African members was enough to carry the scheme. As argued in Chapter One, a cornerstone of British conference policy was that once a conference settlement had been reached, the conference delegates could then be relied on to commend that decision to their supporters.[86] Conference delegates who had given their public backing to the proposals were hardly likely to then disavow them afterwards, at least for the immediate future. As noted, and it is worth repeating, Macleod was candid about this at the Northern Rhodesian conference of 1961 telling delegates Moffat, Kaunda, Nkumbula and others that 'few people got all they wanted at conferences but if he offered them something which they could recognise as a substantial advance it would be a task of leadership for them to sell it to their supporters'.[87] The problem with the Northern Rhodesian Conference was that each of the key actors in Northern Rhodesia in 1961 - Kaunda, Nkumbula, and Welensky - could not agree to Britain's conference proposals; this meant in turn that they were all free to criticise them and to scheme as to

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[84] *The Times*, 18.02.61, p.8.
[85] Papers of Michael Blundell, Bodleian Library Oxford, MSS. Afr. S.746, Letter from Macleod to Blundell, 06.03.61.
[86] Chapter One, p.36.
[87] TNA, CO1015/2276, Note of a meeting between Macleod, Perth, Kaunda, Nkumbula and others, 08.02.61.

how they could be changed, further undermining the proposition the British had put forward.

Welensky was the principal blocker of Macleod's initial Conference White Paper proposals, the arbiter who decided whether the first Northern Rhodesia Conference was a success or not. Under the terms of the Central African Federation's framework, he needed to be consulted over any changes to territorial constitutions.[88] Macleod and Macmillan had both thought in December 1960 that although it would not be easy, the Federal leader might nevertheless swallow the proposals for a token African majority in the territory's legislative council, just as he had begrudgingly acquiesced to the Nyasaland settlement that summer. But instead Welensky dug in his heels, refusing to accept even parity, and denied that this had been discussed, much to the annoyance of Macmillan.[89] Welensky's intensified opposition can be explained by a hardening of attitude amongst European settlers in recent months, something which concerned Northern Rhodesia's Governor, Evelyn Hone.[90] Influxes of refugees from Congo to the Copperbelt in late 1960 had brought home to Northern Rhodesia's white settlers the potential for disorder and conflict;[91] Congo had now become a byword for the awful consequences of unrestrained black rule.[92] At a time when Welensky felt his room for constitutional manoeuvre with his white electorate was becoming more constrained, the Federal Prime Minister felt too that he was being consulted only very lightly over the proposed changes to Northern Rhodesia and moreover was given very little time to respond. He was irritated that the proposals for an African majority had been formed in London without reference to the 'man on the spot', noting that Hone did not support them,[93] and seeing them as 'another attempt of the smart boys in London to put one over on him'.[94] Kenya had Blundell who enjoyed the backing of a substantial number of Europeans back home. There was no equivalent in Northern Rhodesia. The leader of the Liberal Party, Sir John Moffat, was prepared to back the White Paper proposals, but unlike Blundell in Kenya he was simply not influential enough to carry the necessary numbers of European opinion.[95]

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[88] *The Times*, 28.01.61, p.5.
[89] TNA, DO158/22, Telegram from Macmillan to Sandys, 27.01.61.
[90] TNA, CO1015/2276, Telegram from Hone to Macleod, 13.01.61.
[91] Larmer, *Rethinking African Politics,* p.37.
[92] Darwin, *Britain and Decolonisation: The Retreat from Empire*, p.254.
[93] TNA, DO158/22, Telegram from Sandys to Minister of State CRO, 29.01.61.
[94] TNA, DO158/22, Memorandum from Macleod to Macmillan, 01.02.61.
[95] Although Moffat as a figure was respected, in April 1962, the Liberal Party had only 15 registered branches in Northern Rhodesia with less than 100 members: Mulford, *Zambia,* p.244.

At a time when neighbouring Nyasaland, Tanganyika and Kenya had received African majorities in their legislatures, and British Somaliland and Congo had received independence, it is easy to understand too why neither Kaunda nor Nkumbula could agree to the Northern Rhodesia Conference proposals which, following pressure from Welensky, had been modified by the British in mid-February 1961.The new electoral proposals, the 15:15:15 plan described in Chapter Three, moved away from a token African majority. The African leaders were not shy in making the point about how they had been treated differently from their neighbours.[96] The separate way in which Northern Rhodesia had been treated constitutionally had long been a source of grievance to Africans, a number of UNIP members emphasising this matter in a letter to the *Times* in early January 1961.[97] Kaunda had become convinced that at the London Conference the Africans would get a constitution giving them a clear cut majority.[98] Nkumbula noted too that Macleod had 'led us to believe that more lay within our grasp than we were offered in the end,' which cannot have helped matters.[99] The recommendation of the Monckton Report of an African legislative council majority must also have increased expectations.

The Northern Rhodesian Conference of 1961 is also notable for its lack of usual preparation by the British and colonial governments. Little time was spent on working out high level objectives, fall back plans and tactics as Macleod seems to have simply assumed that Welensky would agree to a token African majority. Once this had been dispelled, the British Cabinet were left to thrash around for new ideas. Lord Home captured the feeling in late January 1960, telling Macmillan that '[i]t looks to me as if we are in for a nasty situation… The trouble is we have got right up against the Northern Rhodesia Conference without being able to sit round the table with the federal Government and work out a compromise franchise which they could accept.'[100] It did not help that Cabinet members, officials from the Colonial and Commonwealth Relations Office, the Conservative Party and the Governor could not agree on parity or a 'token' African majority as the most desirable conference outcome. Macleod had also been ill over the New Year period, suffering from exhaustion, which cannot have assisted in instigating the usual detailed conference plans.[101] As Cohen has noted, the Colonial Secretary had also significantly misjudged the mood of the white

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[96] TNA, PREM11/3486, Note of meeting between Macmillan, Macleod, Kaunda, Nkumbula and others, 10.02.61.
[97] Letter to *the Times* from Mainza Chona and others, 03.01.61, p.9.
[98] Browning, *Kaunda*, p.69.
[99] Northern News, 21.02.61, p.1.
[100] TNA, PREM11/3486, Telegram from Home to Macmillan, 27.01.61.
[101] TNA, PREM11/3485, Letter from Macleod to Macmillan, 12.01.61.

settlers, thinking that the majority were willing to see pretty rapid constitutional advance.[102] Finally, the sheer complexity of the Conference proposals did not invite agreement. As Hone reported to his deputy '[p]art of the trouble is that new scheme has not been fully grasped by delegates'.[103] Macleod too noted to Cabinet colleagues that '[e]ach group suspected that the purpose of the plan was to enable control to be given to the other side'.[104]

The failure of the Northern Rhodesian Conference, however, introduces another point: that conference breakdown is sometimes not simply down to personalities and preparation. The reality was that the political and societal undercurrents in Northern Rhodesia were such that it is difficult to see how an agreement could have been reached at the Conference in early 1961. The territory had become a *cause célèbre.* On the one hand, there were those who advocated that it was right that Africans, as the overwhelming majority of the population, should enjoy a majority in the territory's legislature. On the other hand, there were supporters of a policy of 'multi-racialism', a concept of 'partnership' between races whereby racial groups were represented in the political process not on the basis of population size, but 'contribution', and which encouraged political activity around issues other than race.[105] It became a definitive trial of strength over the future of the Central African Federation.[106] The former camp comprised UNIP, the ANC and Moffat's Liberal Party as well as Macleod. The latter included Welensky, Hone and also it would still seem (at least as far as Northern Rhodesia was concerned) Harold Macmillan, exemplified by the Prime Minister's contemporaneous diary entry in which he expressed relief that he had finally dissuaded Macleod from pursuing his proposals which leant 'too far towards the African view' and was contrary to 'the "multi-racial" purpose we have in mind'.[107] In the final analysis, the British Government had to weigh up the prospect of the secession of the Rhodesias resulting in a bloody civil war against the likelihood of African disturbances.

A lack of preparation and differing objectives amongst colonial officials, combined with deep divisions amongst delegates which in turn reflected the situation on the ground in

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[102] Cohen, *Failed Experiment,* p.115.
[103] TNA, DO158/23, Telegram from Hone to Wray, 15.02.61.
[104] TNA, CAB128/35, Cabinet Conclusions, 16.02.61.
[105] Maxon, *Kenya's Independence Constitution*, p.47. Maxon uses and draws on the definition of that term adopted by Newell M. Stulz in 'Multiracial Voting and Nonracial Policies in Colonial East and Central Africa', *Phylon,* Vol.33 (1972), pp.67-68.
[106] Cohen, *Failed Experiment,* p.127 quoting David Goldsworthy, *Colonial Issues in British Politics 1945 -1961* (Oxford, 1971), p.367; see also Mulford, *Zambia,* p.180.
[107] Catterall, *The Macmillan Diaries*, diary entry, 22.02.61.

Zanzibar were also reasons for the failure of the first Zanzibar Conference. As noted earlier in the chapter, there were deep political and ethnic divisions between the two main political parties, and until 1963 the British Government resisted setting target dates for self-government and independence. If this meant that the Conference ended in failure then so be it, although failure was not a deliberate strategy. Aside from (and, to some extent, because of) this reason little serious attention was given to the Conference by Maudling and his Colonial Office colleagues. In part this may have been due to the small size of the territory and the absence of British interests in Zanzibar. Maudling was also preoccupied with Kenya. A feature of the Federal Review Conference was also the irreconcilable viewpoints of the delegates, as well as the British Government having no clear strategy. In contrast, the British and colonial governments did have firmer objectives for the Swaziland conference, but at that event the divisions between the traditional EAC/ SNP alliance and the progressive SPP were just too deep to reach agreement.

Superficially then, most of the conferences worked well for the British Government. They provided what ministers had wanted: a transition that gave the appearance of order and control. Yet 'successful' conferences could soon be unravelled where ethnic tensions remained (Zanzibar and Uganda). Moreover, those conferences which had ended in obvious failure should not be overlooked. This happened, typically, where there was both a lack of clear British strategy, and also deep and unyielding differences between delegates, reflecting in turn the schisms in the society of the territory concerned.

When conferences broke up in failure, violence sometimes erupted, the very thing the British had hoped to avoid. After the Northern Rhodesian conference had ended and the British Government had published proposals more to Welensky's liking, Kaunda acted with fury. He felt deceived and betrayed by the British Government who were 'treating us like pieces of dirt'.[108] At a UNIP Conference on 12 July 1961 attended by some 4,000 members, Kaunda was empowered by delegates to call for 'positive resistance' - a 'master plan' to defeat the British proposals through a non-violent campaign of boycotts, strikes and withholding taxes. But before this was put into motion, unofficial action (which became known as Cha Cha Cha) was taken by UNIP activists outside of Kaunda's control. In July and August 1961 schools were burned, bridges destroyed and roads blocked. Armed forces were mobilised and by September, 970 incidents of sabotage and violent unrest had been recorded. Oppression by troops led to an estimated 50 deaths. The official enquiry into the

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[108] Kenneth Kaunda, *Zambia Shall be Free* (London, 1962), p.156.

incidents concluded that there was no doubt that the root cause of the unrest was dissatisfaction over the British Government's plans for constitutional change.[109] The British Government had also recognised that failure of the first Zanzibar conference might give rise to disturbances in Zanzibar from disappointed party supporters.[110] This duly happened, although not, perhaps, on a scale that was first feared. Soon after the Conference had ended, the building housing the British Information Services was set on fire.[111] There was an attempt to burn down the territory's main post office, instituted by a group known as the Action Group of Youth's Own Union which plotted to set fire to other public buildings too as an act of protest against the London Conference and with the object of exerting pressure on the British Government. In May 1962, 11 people, including ZNP's general secretary, were arrested in this connection and detained without trial.[112] ZNP extremists began to gain influence.[113]

Having examined successes and failures, the next part of this section moves on to examine a further aspect of conferences; that is, how the last days of the British empire in east and central Africa might have been shaped by constitutional change having been effected through the mechanism of conferences, rather than alternatives such as declarations by the British Government, consultation of local political parties by the Governor, and talks solely between the Colonial Secretary and the political leader of the colony.

Conferences, as noted in the Introduction, have been lauded by some historians as major events in the decolonisation process, transforming local politics and changing trajectories.[114] The secondary literature, however, frequently frames the significance of conferences by reference to their constitutional outcomes such as the introduction of African majority rule, or self-government. Whilst these milestones are of course important, it is also interesting to look at the significance of changes having being *brought about* through the medium of a conference (rather than say through a British-imposed

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[109] Larmer*, Rethinking African Politics,* pp. 39-41. The ANC on the other hand had not been involved in the 1961 disturbances and acquiesced to contesting elections on the basis of the June proposals: Mulford, *Zambia*, p.243.
[110] TNA, CAB134/1561, CPC Minutes, 30.03.62.
[111] TNA, CO822/2069, Letter from Mooring to Monson enclosing Special Branch Intelligence Summary for the period 25 March to 25 April 1962.
[112] *Zanzibar Voice*, 06.05.62, p.1.
[113] TNA, CO822/2069, Letter from Mooring to Monson enclosing Special Branch Intelligence Summary for the period 25 March to 25 April 1962.
[114] See Introduction, p.8.

constitution made without any negotiation). As will be seen, some historians of the period have commented on particular occurrences at conferences such as rival political leaders unexpectedly getting along, but a study of the wider consequences for the decolonisation process of effecting change through conferences has yet to be done. We have seen already how conferences could have particular ramifications in terms, for example, of the consequences of their failure and their use as mechanisms to allow the British to claim a graceful exit, but which covered up deep divisions within a colony's society. The next part of the chapter focusses on further consequences: how conferences sometimes had unexpected ancillary effects, how they could bring matters to a head, how they encouraged and stimulated particular constitutional outcomes, and perhaps above all, how effecting change through the conference mechanism sometimes encouraged conciliation, at least in the short term.

As with commissions, the calling of and holding of a constitutional conference could slow down the pressure for change in the short-term, providing the British Government with the breathing space it wanted so that it could work out its next steps, and encouraging African politicians to focus their efforts on planning conference outcomes. In Kenya, for example, a boycott of the territory's legislative council by the African Elected Members was called off almost as soon as the first conference was announced.[115] Yet conferences, like commissions, could also speed up the pace of change. As with commissions, any breathing space gained was only ever going to be a temporary state of affairs, and it seems unlikely that the conferences acted, in the long run, to slow down the transition of colonies to independence. Indeed, it is likely that the overall effect of the conferences was, as with commissions, to accelerate the transfer of power in Africa. As discussed below, this came about through the encouragement that conference successes gave to nationalist politicians to press for further concessions, the logjams that conferences could break, and the understandings between British and nationalist politicians that conferences helped promote.

Having pocketed constitutional gains at conferences, it was not long before nationalist parties demanded more. After the first Kenya conference, for example, much to the colonial government's dismay, Tom Mboya made it clear that he and his colleagues would continue with the struggle for immediate independence.[116] As Ismay Milford has recently shown in relation to federation in central and east Africa, developments in one region can

[115] TNA, CAB134/1558, Minutes of a CPC Meeting, 05.11.59.
[116] TNA, CO822/2020, Press Conference addressed by Mboya, 26.02.60.

affect the anti-colonial politics of that region's neighbours.[117] So it was too in relation to conferences, whose outcomes could also not be ring-fenced. Concessions gained by nationalist politicians in one colony encouraged their counterparts in neighbouring territories to press for similar or better outcomes.[118] Where such concessions had been extracted by nationalist politicians at the conference table, the encouragement that this would have given to politicians in other colonies, pressing for conference outcomes of their own, must have been all the more intense. Somaliland was a particular example of this. Until shortly before independence, that territory had been far less advanced constitutionally than its British East African neighbours. Somaliland's independence, accepted at the May 1960 conference, may well have helped weaken Macleod's early resolve to stick to relatively far-away independence timetables for neighbouring territories. The difficulties for East Africa that would be presented by an early independence for Somaliland were best articulated by Walter Coutts, then Chief Secretary of Kenya who told the Colonial Office that '[u]ndoubtedly the promise of early independence for British Somaliland will have immediate repercussions on African nationalist politicians in Kenya, who will not be backward in pointing out anomaly of early independence for British Somaliland with its economic and political backwardness and its lack of trained technical personnel, whereas Kenya in its greater state of advancement will remain under Colonial Office rule.'[119]

Elections held under the conference-agreed constitutions invariably increased the seats won by African nationalist parties, providing them with leverage for further change. Conferences could also have further ancillary effects which acted as a catalyst for change. This can be illustrated by the first two Kenyan conferences. After the first of these had ended, Patrick Renison, Kenya's Governor, was so encouraged by the event's success, that he announced the lifting of the proscription, in principle, of colony-wide political parties, which had endured despite the ending of the Emergency.[120] But repeal meant also that the colonial government would no longer enjoy its strict control over the political process. As with other territories, African nationalist parties could and did form, feeding on the

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[117] Ismay Milford, 'Federation, Partnership, and the Chronologies of Space in 1950s East and Central Africa', *The Historical Journal* (published online 04.02.2020).

[118] Darwin*, Britain and Decolonisation: The Retreat from Empire,* p.259; Hyam, *Britain's Declining Empire*, p.278.

[119] TNA, CO1015, Telegram from Coutts to Webber, 11.12.59. See also, Docking, 'The Wind has been gathering Force', pp.381-382.

[120] *East African Standard*, 24.02.60, p.1; TNA, CO822/2354, Note of discussion between Macleod and others and WEMs, 22.02.60.

domestic political interest in the Conference, and pressing the colonial administration incessantly during the course of 1960 and 1961 for further constitutional change. The second Kenya Conference accelerated the restriction on Jomo Kenyatta being eligible to become a legislative council member. To make a success of the Conference, Maudling considered that the lifting of his prohibition would be a necessary step.[121] It was not long before Kenyatta then established his place as a strong leader, further increasing pressure on the British and colonial governments for rapid independence.

Conferences, like commissions, could also bring matters to an immediate head, encouraging abandonment of the status quo, forcing outcomes and removing hitherto problematic barriers, at least temporarily. This can be seen in Uganda. Up until just a few hours before that territory's first conference began, it was not certain that the Buganda delegation would attend.[122] The delegation did turn up and, as the *Times* noted, this was the first time in Buganda's history that Buganda had agreed to sit down at the negotiating table with politicians and representatives from other parts of the country.[123] As noted earlier in the chapter, there was a sense felt keenly in Buganda that if it did not send a delegation to the London conference, it would miss out: as the *Times* put it, the decision to take part was a 'realization that if it stayed outside while the future of Uganda was being settled then it would lose in the long run'.[124] Buganda might walk away from meetings in Entebbe with the Governor but it could not take the chance of being absent from an event which would be expected to shape decisively the future of Uganda in the run up to and after independence.[125] In the event, not only did the Bugandans attend, but agreed to the Conference settlement.

Effecting changes through conferences can reasonably be said to have, on occasions, brought about a result which change through an imposed settlement would not have seen. On account of the conference features of negotiation, face saving and the ultimate willingness of both KANU and KADU to go along with British Government proposals, the second Kenya Conference, for example, encouraged a state of play which enabled a self-government constitution to materialise where none had during the local constitutional negotiations in the autumn of 1961 under the chairmanship of Kenya's Governor, Rension. Because of ever-present counter-factual issues, it is once more difficult to be conclusive

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[121] TNA, CAB134/1560, Memorandum to CPC by Maudling on 'Kenya', 14.11.61.
[122] *The Times*, 19.09.61, p.9.
[123] Ibid.
[124] Ibid.
[125] Bade, *Kiwanuka*, p.80.

here but it is also hard to see how negotiations in Entebbe would have produced the same result as the outcome of the first Uganda conference. Talks there between the colonial Government and Buganda had already failed. It is also difficult to see how a constitutional settlement which might have been imposed by the British Government on Uganda without debate but which nevertheless mirrored the eventual conference provisions would have attracted the same sort of acceptance. The imperative of not wishing to lose out from being absent from the London conference table, the forging of an alliance in advance of the Conference between Mengo and Obote, the walkout by Kiwanuka to make his point, and the pressure imposed by the London (fortified by British Government tactics) all played their part in moulding a settlement which the delegates could eventually bring themselves to accept.

Conferences may also have played a subtle part in shaping the decolonisation process in another way, in that their structure was geared towards confirming constitutional change within the nation state model. Cooper has argued that 'African politicians had built their power bases within territories defined by the colonial powers. Those boundaries and the institutions of state provided the basis for negotiated decolonization, marginalizing other kinds of affinities and aspirations'.[126] Conferences can be seen as a case in point, one of the state institutions to which Cooper refers, and in some respects these events did marginalise other kinds of affinities and aspirations. The focus of the British and African actors at conferences was generally on the existing structure of territorial government with its legislative and executive councils, and the discussion which then took place concerned the balance of control between the colonial government and nationalists. As seen in the Introduction, for example, Oginga Odinga, one of the Kenya delegates, simply saw the conferences as a ladder leading to that colony's independence; broader ideas such as using the conference to explore supra-national federal structures were not on his agenda. Yet conferences could also buck this trend. As seen in Chapter Three, at the 1961 Tanganyika conference, both the British and Nyerere flirted with the idea of the establishment of an East African federation, and which would be implemented before the political independence of its members had been achieved. This federal idea, however, was quickly subsumed by the everyday business of discussing the details of territorial constitutional changes. The constitutional conference forum, with its focussed agendas and expectations, encouraged and facilitated dynamism over matters readily negotiable, such as the number

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[126] Frederick Cooper, 'Decolonization in Tropical Africa' in M. Thomas and A. S. Thompson (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of the Ends of Empires, Volume III Economics and Politics,* online publication March 2018, p.325.

of seats given to Africans in a territory's legislative council. Using these events to explore more abstract ideas would have been all together harder.

Another ramification of using the conference mechanism was that it did, on occasions, facilitate the future working together of rival political parties in government. Maudling's biographer argues that the lasting legacy of the 1962 Kenya Conference was a common understanding: politicians who had made 'demagogic, even blood thirsty speeches against each other realised they had a lot in common'.[127] This view needs qualification. On the delegates' return to Kenya, tension between KANU and KADU by no means ceased.[128] Yet after the second Lancaster House Conference the two parties at least managed to establish a way of working together which had not been present before. Much of the bickering was confined to party rallies and by late May 1962 Michael Blundell was able to note that Cabinet discussion was now functioning well with people putting their views across individually rather than on party lines.[129] After a lengthy process, the constitution in its final form was published on 18 April 1963, with both KANU and KADU expressing satisfaction as to its content.[130]

A similar alliance between the two main African Northern Rhodesian political parties, the ANC and UNIP, was formed on the back of relationships nurtured at the first Northern Rhodesia conference, where the two parties had largely worked together to press their claims on Macleod.[131] The *Times* noted in early February 1961 that mounting African annoyance at the pressure being put on the British Government by Welensky had led UNIP and ANC to submerge their rivalry and issue a joint statement which called for their supporters to be ready to fight and die for their freedom.[132] To enlist support from the British public the ANC and UNIP together paid for a notice which appeared in the *Times* and which appealed to the British people to give their support to a solution which was 'in harmony with Africa in the 1960s and the Wind of Change' and which would 'release political tension by giving the majority of people a majority share in government'.[133] Both African leaders met jointly with Macleod and Macmillan to express dissatisfaction with the

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[127] Baston, *Reggie*, p.168.
[128] TNA, CO822/2057, Kenya Intelligence Report, July 1962, KIC MA (62) 7.
[129] Papers of Michael Blundell, Bodleian Library Oxford, Letter from Blundell to Maudling, 18.05.62.
[130] Maxon, *Kenya's Independence Constitution,* p.171.
[131] TNA, DO158/23, Note from Macleod to Macmillan, 02.02.61.
[132] *The Times*, 08.02.61, p.9.
[133] *The Times*, 18.02.61, p.17.

White Paper proposals with no apparent tension between them.[134] This working together may have helped persuade each of the nationalist parties to join forces and form a UNIP/ANC coalition government after the 1962 elections. A further example of conferences encouraging parties to work together can be seen in Uganda where a pact of convenience was formed just days before the first Uganda Conference between the UPC and Buganda. This provided them with leverage over the Democratic Party. The pact continued into the April 1962 elections.

In his absorbing account of six summits that changed the twentieth century, David Reynolds argues that the Geneva Summit of 1985 between presidents Gorbachev and Reagan heralded the start of better relations between the United States and Soviet Union. The author observes that at this and subsequent summits, a chemistry developed which did much to diminish mutual suspicion.[135] The improved understanding forged at meetings also spread to the leaders' advisers, so that the 'encounters that began in frosty Geneva in November 1985 helped ensure that the Cold War ended not with a bang, or a whimper, but with a handshake'.[136] Much the same point can be made for the African conferences, which also offered an opportunity for the British Government to work with African nationalist leaders who had hitherto been seen as dangerous, such as Kenyatta, Kaunda and Banda. Generally they promoted better understandings, eased by the very high regard which African leaders had for Macleod. Time spent in the build up to and at conference events helped the British Government come to terms with African leaders, even if ministerial attitudes towards the latter could remain condescending at times.[137] Of course, there was always the expediency on both sides of needing to work together. But conferences did give British Ministers the time to get to know African leaders such as the three mentioned above as well as others like Nyerere, and by the time of the independence conferences, the attitude of the British Government towards the individuals had often turned from one of suspicion and wariness to one of positive support.

Conferences also helped soften British Governmental attitudes in another way: ministers feared giving away goodwill they had built up at conferences. This can be seen in particular after the first Nyasaland conference. Because Britain and the colonial administration in

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[134] TNA, PREM11/3487, Note of a meeting between Macmillan, Macleod, Kaunda and Nkumbula, 19.02.61.
[135] David Reynolds, *Summits,* pp.347-369.
[136] Ibid, p.369.
[137] Macmillan, for example, could still be dismissive of African leaders on occasions, as seen in Chapter Five.

Nyasaland were so pleased (and surprised) that a settlement had been achieved, they were especially concerned not to upset this position, even if that meant appeasing Banda. As the former editor of the Nyasaland newspaper *Tsopano* noted, the Lancaster House Conference had shown that 'reasoned discussion' could take the place of 'political disorder', 'opening the horizon for a peaceful dawn'.[138] Britain did not want to lose this. An example of this concerned the release of the rump of MCP senior members that remained in detention after the Conference had ended. Banda asked for these to be freed. Macleod accepted this, telling Cabinet colleague Home that we must now accept this if we are not to lose all that was achieved by the Lancaster House agreement.[139]

Although by no means true in all instances, nationalist attitudes towards the British Government cold also mellow following attendance at the London conferences. Hastings Banda appears to have taken a genuine shine to both Macleod and Macmillan at both the first Nyasaland and Federal Review conferences. The CAF newspaper, the *Northern News*, noted after the FRC that Banda 'has come from the Lancaster House talks a changed man', no longer launching raucous frontal attacks on his 'enemies' but instead criticising them in good humour. 'Observers of the new placatory Banda', the *Northern News* noted, 'are putting down the change to a mellowing influence exerted by some means or other by the British Prime Minister, Mr. Macmillan'.[140] There may well be something in this. As Colin Baker has noted, MCP intimidation against political opponents was still apparent in the run up to the Nyasaland 1961 elections,[141] but equally the territory's Governor, Glyn Jones, was able to report to Macleod in October 1961 that an 'almost unbelievable air of tranquillity' had characterised the elections and that MCP had now placed 'reliance on our new constitution as a means of attaining their ends'.[142] Certainly in 1961 Banda was most anxious to assure Macleod that he would take steps to control his sometimes unruly followers. In February he told Conservative MP Sir Godfrey Nicholson: '[p]lease tell Mr. McLeod [sic] that as long as I live, and am on the political scene, he need not worry about public order and peace here', and shortly after the elections he told the Conservative MP that 'I have promised Mr. McLeod that I will control my people, even under trying provocations, and I mean to keep my promise to him and to the British Government, as a

[138] Peter Mackay, *We have tomorrow: Stirrings in Africa 1959-1967* (Norwich, 2008), p. 59.
[139] TNA, DO35/7568, Telegram from Macleod to Home, 12.09.60.
[140] *Northern News*, 20.12.60, p.3.
[141] Baker, *Glyn Jones*, p.97.
[142] Ibid, p.103.

whole.'[143] Quite how much of this can be attributed to Macmillan's 'fireside chat' with Banda is impossible to say, although Banda had been most impressed with the Prime Minister's advice on what to do before and after the 1961 elections.[144] The talk with Macmillan almost certainly helped cement Banda's respect for senior British ministers which continued at the 1962 Nyasaland Conference.[145] Even after the debacle over the Northern Rhodesian constitution, Banda had told Nicholson that '[y]ou need not worry about my trust in the Prime Minister and the Colonial Secretary. It will take a great deal to make me lose trust in them'.[146] As argued in the previous chapter, Banda probably considered that going out of his way to keep on good terms with the British Government would help his cause, but the sentiments nevertheless also seem genuine enough. Some other nationalist politicians also seem to have returned with more favourable views of the British establishment. KANU delegate Daniel arap Moi, who went on to become President of Kenya between 1978 and 2002, was so impressed with Britain on his visit for the Conference that he named his twins who were born that year Philip and Doris Elizabeth in honour of the Queen and Duke of Edinburgh.[147]

Conferences became spaces where these nationalist leaders sought to demonstrate their moderate credentials. No doubt calculating a faster route to power, such leaders were usually happy to offer assurances of future stability to the British Government, British domestic audience, potential investors, and to European settlers in Africa. Leaders took time in London at events outside of the formal conference proceedings to address British political parties, members of parliament, church groups, and business leaders. Some delegates were invited to attend receptions or meetings organised by various associations. These were a feature of most if not all of the London conferences. During the second Kenya Conference, for example, KANU leaders provided assurances on the future of land, economic and citizenship policies under an independent African government in Kenya.[148] Kenyatta addressed a meeting of the Conservative Party's Imperial Affairs Committee's East and Central Africa Sub-Committee, and sought to give comfort to those present that developed land would be protected, that the judiciary in an independent Kenya would remain independent and that all Europeans and Asians who chose Kenyan citizenship would be fully protected and equal in the eyes of the law. Kenyatta went on to say that by

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[143] TNA, CO1015/2441, Letters from Banda to Nicholson, 16.02.61 and 16.08.61.
[144] *Nyasaland Times*, 20.12.60, p.1.
[145] Baker, *Glyn Jones*, p.103.
[146] TNA, CO1015/2441, Letter from Banda to Nicholson, 16.08.61.
[147] Andrew Morton, *Moi: The Making of an African Statesman* (London, 1998), p.79.
[148] KNA, MSS29/9, KANU press statement, 10.11.61.

giving Kenya independence, goodwill would be created and trade would be increased, and that Kenya would remain 'on the friendliest terms with Britain'.[149] At the time of the third Kenyan Conference, delegate Tom Mboya lectured at the British Commonwealth Society. There, he argued that the Commonwealth had neglected its responsibilities over South Africa, Southern Rhodesia and Portugal but reiterated also that Kenya had decided to stay in the Commonwealth after independence and spoke at length on the improved relations between Africans and Europeans in Kenya.[150]

Obote was meant to attend a dinner of the East Africa Dinner Club (EADC) on 22 June 1962, mid-way through the 1962 Ugandan Conference, but was unable to do so through illness. His ministerial colleague, A. K. Sempa, read out Obote's speech instead. This struck a moderate tone, seeking to engage with business by emphasising how private capital could contribute to raising living standards in Uganda.[151] Indeed, that Obote agreed to attend the annual EADC function in the first place says something about the Ugandan leader's willingness to reach out to British conservative society. The Club was founded in 1927. Its object was to 'afford opportunities for social intercourse and informal discussion amongst those interested in East Africa'.[152] Alan Lennox-Boyd (by then Lord Boyd), the former colonial secretary, was the EADC's chairman. Of the 22 tables of guests who attended the 1962 dinner, almost all were British, and many were former colonial governors, senior colonial officials and their wives. Lord Salisbury had been invited. In debating who should address the dinner, one option was for the speaker to be 'any prominent European who had done good work for any International Body and who would make a good speech in favour of what Britain had done in the Colonies'.[153] Although speeches by African leaders at these extra-conference addresses seem to have been, for the most part, well received, it was not universally the case. Some of those listening to Kenyatta at the Imperial Affairs Committee meeting saw his remarks as mere 'verbiage'.[154] Yet the willingness of the

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[149] Conservative Party Archives, Bodleian Library Oxford, CO507/1/1/1, Minutes of the meetings of the Imperial Affairs Committee, 27.02.62.

[150] *East African Standard*, 05.10.63, p.8.

[151] *Uganda Argus*, 23.06.62. p.1.

[152] East Africa Dinner Club papers, Bodleian Library Oxford, MSS Afr. S.1839, Minute Book. The rules are a version from 09.01.63 (no earlier ones can be found) but there is no reason to suggest a change in the Club's objects in 1963.

[153] Ibid, draft minutes 12.04.62; Annual Dinner Table Plan 1962. It is not known whether Obote was genuinely ill or had a last minute change of mind about addressing this conservative association. But the fact that he was prepared to do so in the first place and then sent along a senior colleague was important.

[154] Conservative Party Archives, Bodleian Library Oxford, CO507/1/1/1, Minutes of the meetings of the Imperial Affairs Committee, 27.02.62.

formerly reviled KANU leader to at least attend and speak in such a moderate way must have struck a chord with some. The only woman to have attended any of the African conferences as a delegate, Mrs Hughes, noted how sympathetic British public opinion was to the African delegates at the first Kenya Conference.[155]

The end of empire for the British was of course sometimes brutal and violent. As noted in the Introduction, east and central Africa was no stranger to this, particularly in Kenya during the 1950s where hundreds of Mau Mau followers were sentenced to death during the state of emergency. During the period 1960-1964, there were deaths in east and central Africa associated with British rule such as during the Cha Cha Cha riots. But by the early 1960s episodes of violence were on a relatively small scale, and British decolonisation of Africa during the period 1960 to 1964 was carried out, on the whole, with little bloodshed. Many factors were at work, such as Macmillan's instinctive reluctance to do anything that might lead to an 'Algeria', 'Hola' or another Devlin Report. The far right also lacked traction.[156] Then there were the logistical difficulties faced by the British in mustering sufficient troops to snuff out any serious disturbances that might spread between colonies, how the British saw themselves internationally, the perceived damage which a violent end of empire would have on political reputations, and not least the personalities and circumstances of the African nationalist leaders themselves who were far more inclined to use the ballot box than armoury. Yet conferences (and to a lesser extent commissions) did, in their own way, also play a part in the relatively peaceable decolonisation of Africa in the early 1960s. Conferences were primarily a product of the turn to soft methods of colonial management rather than a cause. But that is not to say that conferences themselves lacked agency. They assumed a role which then facilitated and encouraged a (usually) non-violent transfer of power, and succeeded here because they largely offered both the British and African actors what they wanted. As conference organisers, the events provided the British with a sense that they were still in control. This, in turn, allowed the British Government to maintain something it valued highly: the appearance of power up until the date of flag independence.[157] Equally, African nationalist leaders were, for the most part, happy to go along with this mode of operation because of the prize of power which conferences offered. Conferences, as argued earlier, also promoted an irenic process by providing the British ministers and nationalist leaders with opportunities to meet, discuss and not infrequently to come to an agreement. Darwin has

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[155] KNA, MSS 13/57, file of Mrs Hughes, undated memorandum on report of the Conference.
[156] Cannadine, 'Independence Day Ceremonials', p.11.
[157] John Darwin, *Unfinished Empire: The Global Expansion of Britain* (London, 2012), p.374.

called the transfer of power in Africa 'a pleasing pantomime in which all could delight'.[158] Conferences provided a convivial venue for the pantomime, but also took on a life of their own as a way of doing things and effecting change.

The Colonial Office could be smug about what its officials regarded as the mollifying, orderly nature of conferences and commissions. Leslie Monson reflected that if the Belgians had had a relationships commission before independence, such as the one the British set up for Uganda, then the Congo and the world might have been spared much of their present troubles.[159] The question raises a host of issues. *Did* Belgium and France employ constitutional commissions and conferences for the last years of imperial rule in their African territories? If they did not, then what conclusions can be drawn from this? Providing an answer to Monson's observation is straightforward. The Belgians did not, as Monson observed correctly, make use of a constitutional commission for Congo. The nearest that its government came was to establish a working group in July 1958 to look into the steps that would be needed to turn Congo into an autonomous state. No Congolese were members of that group.[160] A round table conference was held in Brussels in January and February 1960, several months before independence. Yet this conference was very different from the early Lancaster House conferences for, say, Kenya and Nyasaland which resulted in gradual constitutional changes. The Congo conference took place after independence of the colony had been announced and was akin to a messy divorce settlement. Hennesy argues that the conference was merely 'a gesture' at a time 'of almost complete abandonment'.[161] Major issues such as whether Congo should be a unitary or a federal state were postponed until after independence.[162] It would be wrong, however, to draw the conclusion that a carefully planned commission and set of conferences would have averted the Congolese bloodshed that took place at independence without far more research into the nature of the Congolese-Belgian relationship. That would make an interesting research project but is outside the scope of the thesis. It is also worth making a point which has been raised previously: that conferences and commissions often bought Britain a peaceable independence but did nothing to solve ingrained issues - as Uganda shows.

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[158] Ibid, p.375.
[159] TNA, CO822/2282, Monson to Pearson, 02.03.61.
[160] Martin Shipway, *Decolonization and its Impact: A Comparative Approach to the End of Colonial Empires* (Malden MA, 2008), p.221.
[161] M. N. Hennessy, *Congo: A Brief History and Appraisal* (London, 1961), p.79.
[162] Shipway, *A Comparative Approach*, p.221.

In its last years in Africa, France did on occasions make use of commissions and conferences. For example, in 1955 there was wide agreement that the French Union was working badly but little agreement on how to change it. Senegalese politician Leopold Senghor was asked to chair a committee to look into modifications of the constitution.[163] In January 1960 when Mali demanded that the competencies of a sovereign state be transferred to it by France, a conference was set up to discuss the constitutional issues arising such as nationality, defence, and justice. Negotiations took over three months.[164] These are small examples and no conclusions are drawn. How French decolonisation was or was not affected by commissions and conferences is, again, beyond the subject of this study.

As has been seen, effecting constitutional change through conferences had wide ramifications, slowing down and also speeding up the decolonisation process, fostering post-conference alliances and (for the most part) encouraging moderation. Yet conferences also had a further domestic consequence in that they impacted on Conservative Party politics, as several authors have noted. The staunch imperialist Lord Salisbury, himself a former Secretary of the State for Colonies, was hugely critical of the Monckton Commission's recommendations on secession. He demanded to know the assurances which Macmillan had given to Welensky on the point, and asked that relevant exchanges of correspondence with the Federal Prime Minister be published, telling Macmillan that a good deal of harm had been done by the whole episode.[165] As Ball notes, Macmillan's alleged treatment of Welensky 'was something of a Rubicon' for Salisbury, who subsequently marshalled considerable effort in attacking Macmillan and Macleod inside and outside Parliament in relation to the Government's colonial policy in Africa.[166] Tensions then mounted over Macleod's plans for constitutional advance in Northern Rhodesia at the 1961 Conference. Macmillan was even worried that the Conservative Party might split over the issue.[167] Not only was Lord Salisbury looking over his shoulder, eager to pounce should settlers' interests be harmed, but a Conservative MP, Robert Turton, had prepared a motion under which the House of Commons would call for the constitutional future of Northern Rhodesia to be maintained on the non-racial basis of the Benson Constitution.[168]

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[163] Cooper, *Citizenship*, pp.215-227.
[164] Ibid, pp. 374-385.
[165] TNA, CO1015/2334, Extract from House of Lords speech by Salisbury, 02.11.60.
[166] Ball, *The Guardsmen,* p.350.
[167] Murphy, *Party Politics and Decolonization*, p.186.
[168] *The Times*, 10.02.61, p.12.

By 11 February, 65 MPs had signed it.[169] Yet as Murphy has observed, by the end of February, following assurances to Turton by Macleod and Macmillan that the Benson principles would be adhered to, it became clear that Conservative Party opinion was turning back in favour of Macmillan.[170]

Conferences and commissions brought tensions within the Conservative Party to a head, but they and the associated constitutional advances never seriously looked like splitting the Conservatives over the issue as Macmillan had feared. The support was not there, and the dissenting group had no 'big-hitters'.[171] The tension did, however, have one noticeable effect on British conference planning. It made colonial secretaries and Macmillan himself less gung-ho about the decision making process. In October 1960, for example, Macleod had only reported '*his*' decision to hold a constitutional conference for Tanganyika to the Cabinet's Colonial Policy Committee.[172] But by February 1961 the Colonial Secretary was much more careful to involve the CPC, asking his colleagues to approve the independence date for the colony, having written a long memorandum justifying his position.[173] It seems highly likely that this was connected to the Turton episode which had taken place some two weeks before the CPC memorandum was written. For the second Kenyan Conference, as Macmillan himself noted, all of his colleagues were fully informed before the Conference met, and the Cabinet discussions on such matters were long;[174] further evidence, perhaps, of Macmillan's new caution. As Ball has noted, the Prime Minister had become rather 'obsessed' with his battle with Salisbury.[175]

Conclusion

This chapter has looked at the widespread effects of the African commissions and conferences. In the case of commissions it has noted that whilst they did act to slow down clamour for short-term pressures on the British and colonial governments, they often fell short of their expectations. Indeed once commissions had reported, their recommendations acted as a catalyst for rapid change. Conferences could fail too, and when they did the consequences could be serious - Northern Rhodesia is a case in point. Yet the British Government was satisfied with the outcomes of most conferences, which

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[169] Ball, *The Guardsmen, pp.*349-354; The *Times*, 11.02.61, p.6.
[170] Murphy, *Party Politics*, p.186.
[171] Ibid, p.201.
[172] TNA, CAB134/1559, Memorandum from Macleod to CPC, 04.10.60.
[173] TNA, CAB134/1560, Memorandum from Macleod to CPC, 27.02.61.
[174] Macmillan, *At the End of the Day*, p.291.
[175] Ball, *The Guardsmen,* p.367.

were in keeping with its pre-conference planning. As, however, shown, some of these 'successes' were only superficial, enabling the British Government to claim a departure with grace, while doing nothing to solve a country's long-standing problems. The chapter has argued too how the London conferences had ramifications other than just landmark constitutional developments. They encouraged politicians in neighbouring territories to press for similar advances, and brought about settlements which in some cases would have been unlikely to have been brought about by inter-party discussions with the colonial governor or an imposed solution.

It has also been seen how conferences assisted in a dialogue between not just the British and nationalist leaders but also as between the leaders of different African political parties. This, in turn, may have helped pave the way for post-conference alliances between African groupings. Importantly, lengthy conference discussions and the opportunities they afforded the British and nationalist leaders to get to know each other may have helped the British come to terms with, and subsequently back, African nationalist leaders such as Kenyatta, Kaunda and Banda who had hitherto been seen as dangerous. Conferences also provided African politicians with at least some sort of constitutional advance which they could point to as badges of success. In contrast to the decade before, these matters may have contributed to a relatively peaceful decolonisation of most of the British African colonies in the early 1960s. As argued, conferences were largely a product of the turn to soft methods of colonial management, but that is not to say that conferences themselves had no agency.

Conclusion

By looking at decolonisation through the prism of constitutional conferences and commissions, many of which have hitherto received scant attention, it is hoped that this thesis has given new insights into how Britain sought to manage its territories in east and central Africa during the final days of empire, how those in Africa engaged with these mechanisms, and also how commissions and conferences affected the decolonisation process itself. Someone studying any one particular commission or conference might reach a quite different set of conclusions from those who examined another. A person studying the first Zanzibar or Northern Rhodesian conferences, for example, would conclude that the ministers in the British Government were at loggerheads with each other over objectives. A scrutiny of the first Kenyan conference, on the other hand, would show not only a British Government that was clear in its objectives, but also one which used a wealth of tactics to achieve these. The same sort of point can be made about the British being unprepared for the Swaziland commission but at their most controlling for the Blood one. Equally, a study of the second Kenyan conference would show relatively little popular African engagement with the process, but an analysis of the first Kenyan conference would come to the opposite conclusion. It is only by studying a whole range of commissions and conferences that important broad themes begin to emerge clearly: on the British side, the use of conferences and commissions to provide breathing spaces and the opportunity to use these mechanisms as a soft way to control and manage; and on the African side how commissions and conferences acted as a catalyst, helping to shape politics.

The thesis began by showing that after 1959, hard methods of colonial management were no longer easily available to the British Government in east and central Africa because of a fear of alienating international and domestic opinion, and because of logistics. Britain, instead, turned to constitutional commissions and conferences to fashion constitutional and political outcomes. There were a number of reasons why the African commissions and conferences were set up. For commissions, these included a desire for expert help, wanting to assuage domestic opinion, as a face-saving mechanism, and also from a belief that recommendations from a commission would be better received by the African population than proclamations from the British Government. Some of the conferences examined were

set up because they were constitutionally necessary (the Federal Review one) or because it was thought convenient to deal with a number of difficult issues face-to-face. But the most common reason for the institution of both conferences and commissions was to provide the British Government with 'breathing spaces', giving a respite from nationalist pressures and an opportunity to use both conferences and commissions to manage the political process. Here, this exercise supplements Frank Furedi's argument that states of emergency were used in this way. Of the ten commissions studied, eight were set up to help ease nationalist or regionalist pressures, and this was also the case for ten of the sixteen conferences. This might, at first blush, lead to the conclusion that this study strengthens the hand of those who argue that in assessing which of nationalist, domestic and international pressures were responsible for the withdrawal of Britain from its colonies, it was 'nationalist upheavals against imperialist rule [which] set the pace'.[1] It is worth digressing, briefly, to consider this further.

Whilst it was the case that of the three competing influences, the pressures that drove most of the conferences and commissions were nationalist ones, this was not universally so. Earlier chapters have shown too how commissions and conferences could be influenced by international factors. On the British side, examples given were Macleod's change of strategy at the first Kenyan conference on account of the Congo, and the British Government to seeking to court international opinion during the Northern Frontier commission. As also noted in the Introduction, there would have been strong and growing background international influences too from the United Nations, the Commonwealth and through Cold War concerns. These would have pushed the British Government to grant constitutional concessions at a rate which was faster than had been anticipated in, say, 1959. Chapters Four and Five also examined how international influences affected the African public and politicians, who drew on international ideas and doctrines in commission representations. African politicians also made use of international advisers at conferences to persuade the British Government that their plans had credibility. Chapter Six noted too that conference concessions gained by nationalist politicians in one colony would have encouraged their counterparts in others. Moreover, sometimes nationalist and international pressures worked together to push the British Government into transferring power. In Uganda, for example, it was seen how the Munster commission and the subsequent conference were driven by nationalist pressure and fear of a 'Congo' but also a concern that a failure of British policies in Uganda would mean a loss of international

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[1] Low, *Eclipse*, pp.262-263.

prestige. There was also a greater sensitivity towards international pressures towards the end of the period, coincident with a stronger criticism of Britain from the UN. It is difficult to imagine the sort of international considerations afforded to the Kenya Northern Frontier Commission in 1962 having been given to, say, the Wild Committee in 1959. Conference and commission pressures were also invariably immediate ones, and they tell us little about the long-term structural forces which exerted a gradual, corrosive effect on imperial Africa such as the Second World War.[2]

Constitutional commissions and conferences were not, of course, peculiar to the years 1959-64, and had their antecedents rooted in earlier times. But conferences, in particular, flourished during this period. As argued in Chapter One, the impetus behind this was Iain Macleod. Conferences suited his style and way of working, and it seems highly likely that he was boosted by the success of his first one, that for Kenya in January 1960. Conferences were often the personal initiative of Macleod and his way of doing things were carried on by his successors, supported by a Colonial Office team that was by now well versed in conference management. The British Government had no overall, one-size-fits-all, consistent game-plan to dust down and to employ for commissions and conferences. This is hardly surprising given the different conditions that prevailed in the colonies and the shifting nature of domestic, international, and African pressures, which varied temporally. Yet in thinking of end results for conferences and commissions, the thesis argues that British ministers were generally guided by a common set of values: what they saw as 'moderation', a desire for stability, and an imperative that Britain should not be humiliated. As shown, objectives for the end result of particular commissions and conferences were worked out on an individual basis. For the most part, the British Government had a clear idea about what it wanted out of a commission or conference and used this mode of operation to seek to control and manage constitutional advance.

Various measures were then employed by the British and colonial governments to secure their conference and commission aspirations and objectives. This research is the first to interrogate these matters across different commissions and conferences. For commissions, these tactics centred primarily around the right choice of chairman and other commission members, designing suitable terms of reference, and keeping tabs on commissions' progress. For conferences, many more tactics were employed. These included choice of conference venue, backing of one group of delegates, and a wealth of measures to manage

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[2] Darwin, *Britain and Decolonisation: The Retreat from Empire*, pp.331-332, *The End of the British Empire: The Historical Debate,* p.118, *The Empire Project,* p.649

the conference outcome, such as letting delegates exhaust themselves arguing with each other before imposing a British solution, holding sessions in private to minimise embarrassment for the British, making delegates feel important and responsible, and using scare tactics to bring home to delegates what a failure to agree would mean. More direct procedures were used too such as phone-tapping. This work has also built on Frank Heinlein's examination of the 'official mind' in decolonisation, examining the balance of power structures in the conference decision-making process, concluding that the Governors had relatively minor, liaison roles, that the Colonial Office played a useful part in drawing up briefs and providing information, but that it was the colonial secretaries, and in particular Macleod, who were the drivers and key decision-makers. For the most part, Macmillan was prepared to back his colonial secretaries, yet the Northern Rhodesia Conference of 1961 showed clearly that it was he who wielded ultimate power.

As shown, the African commissions often failed British objectives. Multi-member commissions proved unpredictable and difficult to control, swayed unexpectedly by evidence which they encountered on the ground. Single member commissions were more successful from the British point of view, but soon after Maudling became Colonial Secretary, the constitutional commissions fell out of use in relation to British colonies - a deliberate decision. Conferences had better outcomes for the British Government, and the last chapter showed how most of these events resulted in the British Government securing the objectives which it had crafted beforehand. Yet some conferences ended with failure, and when they did, they sometimes had serious consequences. This was so for Northern Rhodesia in 1961. It is also argued that some of the 'successful' conferences were just sticking plaster. They enabled the British Government to contend that it had bequeathed stability and to depart with what it saw as relative grace, but the reality was that conferences did nothing to solve systemic issues. This was sometimes appreciated by the British Government at the time. Various controversies associated with the African conferences and commissions have also been examined, notably whether Macmillan and his ministers set up the Monckton Commission with the aim of breaking up the Central African Federation. It is argued that this was not the case.

A key theme has been to show how members of the public in the African territories frequently engaged with both commissions and conferences. This is an area that has received very little scholarly attention. Conferences and commissions offered the chance to participate and make voices heard at a time when few had the vote. Commissions,

especially, stirred and encouraged political interest and afforded Africans an opportunity to become involved in politics, to consider territorial rather than just local issues, to organise themselves to make representations, and to stake rights and claims. Conferences too galvanised the public in Africa, and the thesis has examined the vast airport send offs and greetings that were given to political leaders and the sometimes huge political rallies that followed shortly after their return from London. Conference announcements could boost party membership and celebration of delegates' achievements could affirm identities. It was shown too how conferences and the intensification of politics that accompanied them could also bring out another aspect: reservations amongst sections of the population about rapid political change. Here, the thesis seeks to add to the secondary literature about how the goal of rapid independence through a nation state was not an objective shared by all.

Conferences brought African politicians into the fold. Leaders who had until recently been interned by the British (Kaunda, Kenyatta, Banda) now became involved in these peaceable vehicles for change. Conferences offered them a route to greater power and it is easy to see the attraction for them. Aspiring leaders, it is argued, saw these structures as a way to give them influence and credibility and, ultimately, to gain power when the British left. Many grabbed the opportunities eagerly. Conferences - and commissions - also encouraged political parties to develop their thinking on what, precisely, they wanted. Differences between African parties were sometimes accentuated. Conferences could enhance the reputation of some African politicians, and diminish that of others. As demonstrated, Banda, Kenyatta and Obote came out of conferences well. Mboya on the other hand did not.

It is likely that effecting change through commissions and conferences had particular consequences for the end of empire in British Africa. Whilst conferences and commissions brought the British Government temporary respite, both mechanisms ultimately ratcheted up the decolonisation process. Commissions and conferences almost always resulted in more power being transferred to African nationalist parties which energised them, gave them votes and, ultimately, political power. Conferences sometimes produced short-term agreement between the British and nationalist parties, and between competing nationalist parties, when it is difficult to see that other constitutional mechanisms, such as local meetings with the Governor, would have had the same result. They sometimes encouraged alliances of African politicians and parties leading to workable short-term political solutions. Conferences, it is argued, also gave the British the time and opportunity to work

with African politicians seen hitherto as dangerously radical. They helped induce some mutual understanding. Whilst conferences also helped consolidate the power of nationalist leaders, allowing them to demonstrate their credentials and boast of victories, they could also presage autocratic tendencies. The outcome which conferences and commissions offered to African politicians, and the better relations between British and nationalist politicians which they often promoted may, it was argued, have assisted in largely avoiding bloodshed in the transfer of power in the east and central Africa in the early 1960s.

The colonial constitutional conferences and commissions have had another lasting legacy. As constitutional mechanisms, they survived the independence of the former British African colonies and were (and are) far from being otiose relics of a colonial past. In the late 1980s and 1990s, following pressure from international donors, the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and the Commonwealth, as well as a second wind of change following the collapse of the Soviet bloc, demands were made for more democratic systems of government in many African countries. As a response, several former British colonies set up commissions to review their constitutions and make recommendations. In Zambia (former Northern Rhodesia), after food riots in 1990 in which 27 people died, the Government announced its intention to amend the constitution, first appointing a commission to be headed by Patrick Mvunga to review such matters, including a system of political pluralism.[3] Following continued dissatisfaction, a second commission under the chairmanship of John Mwanatatwe was set up in 1993.[4] In 1991 in Tanzania, the Nyalali Commission was established, led by the country's chief judge, to collect the views of citizens and make recommendations on whether the country should continue with its single party political system.[5] Towards the end of 1998 a 21 member constitutional commission was appointed in Uganda,[6] and in Lesotho (former Basutoland) a commission was set up in 1991 to seek public views on the introduction of a new constitution.[7] Each of the above four countries were former British colonies, but the similarities did not stop there. The ways of working of the commissions bore remarkable similarity to how the colonial commissions had operated, inviting submissions from the public through television

[3] Jeremy Gould, 'Postcolonial Liberalism and the Legal Complex in Zambia: Elegy or Triumph? 'in *Fates of Political Liberalism*, pp.412-454, p.428.
[4] Ibid, p.430.
[5] Jonas Ewald, *Challenges for Democratisation Process in Tanzania: Moving Towards Consolidation 50 years After Independence?* (Dar es Salaam, 2011), p.278.
[6] Juma Okuku, 'Ethnicity, State Power and the Decolonisation process in Uganda', *Nordiska Afrikainstitutet Discussion paper 17* (Uppsala, 2002), p.27.
[7] Lesotho, *Report of the National Constitutional Commission 1991/1992* (Maseru, 1992).

and radio, and touring the country and holding meetings. As with the colonial commissions, they were usually very popular too. The Ugandan commission of 1993, for example, received over 25,000 submissions.[8]

Constitutional conferences have also been used by the governments of Zambia and Nigeria to avoid political breakdown. Despite his party holding all of the seats in Zambia's legislature, Kenneth Kaunda in 1991 agreed to hold constitutional talks with the opposition Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MND) at the neutral venue of the Anglican Cathedral in Lusaka, the MND having rejected State House as a venue. In Nigeria, a former colony for which several conferences had been held under colonial rule in the 1950s and 1960, a constitutional conference was held in 1994-5 to avoid political collapse following a military coup.[9]

Gardner Thompson in his historical review of governance in East Africa argues that the dominant colonial legacy was not constitutionalism or democracy but 'rather, the largely authoritarian institutions through which [the colonial authorities] had actually governed for two or three generations'. Africans adapted these institutions for their own advantage.[10] Conferences and commissions should too be seen in the light of a colonial institution adapted by African leaders for their own use. Yet whether these constitutional mechanisms were used as convenient devices of control in the same way as the British had used them or whether, instead, they were genuine attempts to seek resolutions to difficult issues is outside of the scope of this thesis. It is interesting here to note, however, that one scholar has argued that between 1962 and 2011 the Ugandan Government made use of commissions of inquiry (which were wider than just constitutional commissions) to legitimise its administration as a 'good governor' within the context of international government.[11]

A subject of some controversy is the extent to which the British established 'democratic innovations' which were responsible for the survival of democracy in former British colonies. The longer a colony spent under British rule, the likelier it is to have sustained

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[8] John Hatchard, Mana Ndulo and Peter Slinn, *Comparative Constitutionalism and Good Governance in the Commonwealth: An Eastern and South African Perspective* (Cambridge, 2004), p.29.
[9] T. Uzodinma Nwala, *Nigeria: Path to Unity and Stability: Abuja National Constitutional Conference 1994-1995, A Critical Review* (Engu, 1997), p.vii.
[10] Thompson, *African Democracy*, pp.14-16.
[11] Kirya, 'Performing "good governance"', p.228.

democracy since independence.[12] One line of thought is that this was so on account of measures introduced by the British such as elections, 'training ground' legislatures and independent judiciaries, which continue to exert a positive influence in former British colonies.[13] Should both conferences and commissions be seen as a further part of this apparatus? After all, as seen above, both commissions and conferences left a lasting legacy in former British African colonies. First, it should be said that the British Government did not establish the African constitutional conferences and commissions with a view to encouraging and facilitating democracy. On the contrary, and as seen, they were used as devices of control, usually to dampen pressures, and an examination of the Colonial Office files reveals an absence of public-spirited altruism. Nicholas Owen has suggested that rather than democratic survival being down to British measures, it might instead be attributable to fighting the British: anti-colonialism developed values, habits and practices which help democracy function well.[14] This proposal resonates with the conferences and commissions under review. Conferences and commissions did, it was argued in Chapters Four and Five, stimulate political interest and organisation amongst the African public and politicians, but insofar as that encouraged (for the most part) protest *against* British rule, and for the transfer of power.

The African constitutional conferences also left another legacy. Poppy Cullen has observed how leading Kenyans after independence still looked towards Britain for matters such as land transfer, technical assistance, personnel, military support, army leadership and supply, aid and finance.[15] The Kenyan politicians who had been present at the Lancaster House were still influential figures in Kenya well into the 1970s,[16] and the skills they had honed during the long negotiation periods at conferences and elsewhere were employed to good use later, giving them agency to shape their post-colonial relations with Britain and to encourage the British to offer the best possible terms.[17] There is some irony here, given that the conferences had largely been set up by the British to control and manage Kenyan politicians.

Whilst the constitutional commissions and conferences of Africa that were held during the early 1960s have been credited with importance, there has been a common tendency to

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[12] See discussion by Nicholas Owen in 'Democratisation and the British Empire', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History,* Vol.47, no.1 (2019), pp.974-998, at p.976.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Ibid., p.990.

[15] Poppy Cullen, *Kenya and Britain after Independence* (Cham, Switzerland, 2017), p. 133.

[16] Ibid, p.78.

[17] Ibid, p.265.

limit their significance to their reports and conclusions. Perhaps conferences and commissions are seen as dry and dusty, mired in long-forgotten discussion on tedious and obscure technicalities. But conferences and commissions are about so much more than that. The events were, essentially, episodes of human drama in which the aspirations of organisers, delegates, and spectators were played out in full. Studying such behaviour tells us much about how these actors engaged with the last days of empire in Africa.

Appendix 1

London Decolonisation Conferences 1930-1965

Below is a list of 'decolonisation conferences' held in London between the above dates. These were constitutional conferences attended by representatives of the British and colonial governments and by those from a colonial territory to discuss constitutional advance or independence.

Inevitably, what is covered by this definition and what is not is somewhat arbitrary. The list below does not, for example, include conferences held in London which discussed setting up a federation of territories (for example, the West Indies federation Conference of 1956) on the grounds that such events were often driven by Britain wishing to hold onto territories rather than relax control. Nor does the list include conferences or meetings held in the territory itself to discuss constitutional advance (for example, that for Southern Rhodesia held in Salisbury in 1961, or those held in Bechuanaland in 1963). The British Government also had a preference for labelling some London conferences 'discussions'. These have been included in the conference list, where it seemed right to do so. The 1961 Conference for Tanganyika has also been added. In this case, Iain Macleod, exceptionally, agreed to switch the venue from London to Dar es Salaam.

Information has been gleaned from mostly from published Command papers. Where these did not exist, records at the National Archives in Kew were consulted.

The colour of the conference delineates the colonial secretary in office at the time:

Blue: Oliver Lyttelton

Purple: Alan Lennox-Boyd

Red: Iain Macleod

Orange: Reginald Maudling

Green: Duncan Sandys

Conferences which are starred are the subject of the case studies of this thesis

Conference	Dates	Venue	Chairman	Number of Participants
1930				
India	12 Nov. 1930 to 19 Jan. 1931	St James' Palace	Ramsay MacDonald	89
1931				
India	7 Sept. 1931 to 1 Dec. 1931	St James' Palace	Ramsay MacDonald	155
Burma	27 Nov.1931 to 12 Jan. 1932	St James' Palace tbc	The Earl Peel	43
1932				
India	17 Nov.1932 to 24 Dec. 1932	St James' Palace	Ramsay MacDonald	83
1953				
Nigeria	30 July 1953 to 22 Aug. 1953	10 Carlton House Terrace	Oliver Lyttelton	77
1955				
Malta	19 Sept. 1955 to 9 Dec. 1955	Lancaster House and Malta	Lord Kilmuir (Lord Chancellor)	53
Cyprus	29 Aug. to 7 Sept. 1965	Lancaster House	Harold Macmillan (For. Sec.)	Not known (n/k)
1956				
Malaya	19 Jan. to 6 Feb. 1956	Lancaster House	Alan Lennox-Boyd	38
Singapore	23 Apr. to 15 May 1956	Lancaster House	Alan Lennox-Boyd	18
1957				
Nigeria	23 May to 26 June	Lancaster House	Alan Lennox-Boyd	105
Singapore	11 Mar. to 11 Apr. 1957	Lancaster House	Alan Lennox-Boyd	8
1958				
Singapore	12 to 23 May 1958	n/k	n/k	c.40
Nigeria	29 Sept. to 27 Oct. 1958	Lancaster House	Alan Lennox-Boyd	106
Malta	20 Nov. to 22 Dec. 1958	10 Carlton House Terrace	Alan Lennox-Boyd	28
1959				
Cyprus	17 to 19 Feb. 1959	Lancaster House	Harold Macmillan and Selwyn Lloyd (For. Sec)	n/k
Brunei	23 March to 6 April 1959	The Colonial Office	Alan Lennox-Boyd	25
Leeward and Windward Islands	15 to 26 June 1959	Lancaster House	Alan Lennox-Boyd	42

1960				
Kenya*	18 Jan. to 21 Feb. 1960	Lancaster House	Iain Macleod	71
British Honduras	1 to 17 Feb. 1960	The Colonial Office	Iain Macleod	26
British Guiana	7 Mar. to 31 Mar. 1960	Lancaster House	Iain Macleod	29
Sierra Leone	20 Apr. to 4 May 1960	Lancaster House	Iain Macleod	47
Somaliland*	2 to 12 May 1960	The Colonial Office	Iain Macleod	31
Nigeria	10 to 19 May 1960	tbc	Iain Macleod	48
Nyasaland *	25 July to 4 Aug. 1960	Lancaster House	Iain Macleod	39
South Cameroons	11 Nov. to 16 Nov. 1960	The Colonial Office	Iain Macleod	21
Central African Federation *	5 Dec. to 17 Dec. 1960	Lancaster House	Harold Macmillan, Duncan Sandys and Iain Macleod	109
1961				
Northern Rhodesia *	19 Dec. to 20 Dec. 1960 and then 30 Jan. to 17 Feb. 1961	Lancaster House	Iain Macleod	55
Tanganyika*	27 to 29 Mar. 1961	Dar es Salaam	Iain Macleod	35
West Indies	31 May to 16 June 1961	Lancaster House	Iain Macleod	93
Leeward and Windward Islands	19 to 22 June 1961	The Colonial Office	Hugh Fraser (Under Sec. of State)	34
Mauritius	26 June to 7 July 1961	The Colonial Office	Iain Macleod and Hugh Fraser	30 plus (exact figure not known)
Gambia	24 to 27 July 1961	The Colonial Office	Iain Macleod	24
Uganda *	18 Sept. to 9 Oct. 1961	Lancaster House	Iain Macleod	86
1962				
Jamaica	1 to 9 Feb. 1962	Lancaster House	Reginald Maudling	33
Kenya*	14 Feb. to 6 Apr. 1962	Lancaster House	Reginald Maudling	117
Zanzibar*	19 Mar. to 6 Apr. 1962	Lancaster House	Reginald Maudling	52
Uganda *	12 June to 29 June 1962	Marlborough House	Reginald Maudling	83

British Guiana	23 October to 6 November 1962	Lancaster House	Duncan Sandys	34
Nyasaland *	12 to 23 Nov. 1962	Marlborough House	R A Butler (Head of Central African Dept.)	32
1963				
Bahamas	1 May to 20 May 1963	The Colonial Office	Nigel Fisher (Under Sec. of State)	36
Malta	16 July to 1 Aug. 1963	Marlborough House	Duncan Sandys	40
British Honduras	10 July to 22 July 1963	The Colonial Office	Nigel Fisher	20
Kenya*	25 Sept. to 19 Oct. 1963	Lancaster House	Duncan Sandys	56
Zanzibar*	20 to 24 Sept. 1963	Lancaster House	Duncan Sandys	38
British Guiana	22 Oct. to 31 Oct. 1963	Lancaster House	Duncan Sandys	29
Swaziland*	28 January to 12 February 1963	Colonial Office	Duncan Sandys and Lord Lansdowne	25 plus (actual figure not available)
1964				
Basutoland*	20 Apr. to 15 May 1964	Colonial Office	Duncan Sandys and Lord Lansdowne	24
Northern Rhodesia *	5 May to 19 May 1964	Marlborough House	Duncan Sandys and Richard Hornby (Under Sec. of State)	41
Federation of South Arabia	9 June 1964 to 4 July 1964	Lancaster House	Duncan Sandys	21 plus (actual figure not available)
Gambia	22 to 30 July 1964	? Colonial Office	Duncan Sandys and Lord Lansdowne	41
1965				
Fiji	26 July to 9 Aug. 1965	Marlborough House	Anthony Greenwood (Colonial Sec.) and Eirene White (Under Sec. of State)	n/k
Mauritius	7 Sept. to 14 Sept. 1965	Lancaster House	Anthony Greenwood	44
British Guiana	2 Nov. to 19 Nov. 1965	Lancaster House	Anthony Greenwood	33

Appendix 2. Key information relating to the commissions

Basutoland

<u>The Basutoland National Council Constitutional Commission, 1962/3</u>

Commission appointed : February 1962

Terms of Reference: ' 1. to review the working of the 1959 Constitution in the light of experience gained: 2. to formulate proposals for the improvement of the Constitution, having regard to the responsibilities for Basutoland of Her Majesty's Government, and with particular reference to the Constitutional Position of the paramount Chief in a responsible form of Government, the composition of the Executive Council and the introduction of responsible government; 3. to formulate proposals for the addition to the Constitution of provisions protecting Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms; 4. to formulate precise proposals for dealing with matters arising out of paragraphs 1, 2 and 3; 5. To transmit its proposals to the paramount Chief to be laid on the table of this Council for debate.'

Commission members (all appointed by the Paramount Chief) :

W. P. Stanford, President of the Basutoland National Council. Chairman

Chief S. S. Matete, Leader, Marematlou party

B. M. Khaketla, Leader Basutoland Freedom Party

B. L. O'Leary, Assistant Attorney General

Chief Leabua Jonathan, Leader, Basutoland National Party

Ntsu Mokhehle, Leader Basutoland Congress Party

Chief Phakiso, Chieftain Representative

G. P. Ramoreboli, Basutoland Congress Party

E. Leanua, Marematlou Party

Chief Reentseng Griffith Lerotholi, Chieftainship Representative

Chief Kelebone Nkuebe, Basutoland National Party

C. T. L. Chakela, Basutoland Freedom Party

J. T. Mapetla, Independent

Report published: 3 October 1963

Central African Federation

<u>The Advisory Commission on the Review of the Constitution of Rhodesdia and Nyasaland, 1959/60 (Monckton Commission)</u>

Terms of Reference:

'In the light of information provided by the Committee of Officials and of any additional information the Commission may require , to advise the five Governments, in preparation for the 1960 Review, on the constitutional programme and framework best suited to the achievement of the objects contained in the Constitution of 1953, including the Preamble'.

Commission members:

Viscount Monckton (Chairman) ,

Sir Donald MacGillivray (Vice Chairman)

Sir Charles Arden- Clarke (UK)

Lord Crathorne (UK)

Aidan Crawley (UK)

Sir Lionel Heald (UK)

Elspeth Huxley (UK)

Professor D.T. Jack (UK)

Hugh Molson (UK)

Lord Shawcross (UK)

Rev. R. H. W. Shepherd (UK)

F. G. Menzies (Australia)

Prof. D. G. Creighton (Canada)

H. G. Habanyama (CAF)

A. E. P. Robinson (CAF)

Sir Victor Robinson (CAF)

R. M. Taylor (CAF)

Justice Beadle (Southern Rhodesia)

G Ellman-Brown (Southern Rhodesia)

Chief Simon Sigola (Southern Rhodesia)

Woodrow Cross (Northern Rhodesia)

L .C. Katilungu (Northern Rhodesia)

W. H. McCleland (Northern Rhodesia)

W. M. Chirwa (Nyasaland)

E. K. Gondwe (Nyasaland)

G. G. S. J. Hadlow (Nyasaland)

Commission announced on 21 July 1959 and its report was published on 11 October 1960

Kenya

The Kenya Coastal Strip Commission, 1961

Terms of Reference:

'To report to the Sultan of Zanzibar and Her Majesty's Government jointly on the changes which are considered to be advisable in the 1895 Agreement relating to the Coastal Strip of Kenya, as a result of the course of constitutional development in East Africa.'

Commissioner: Sir James Robertson

Commission appointed: 28.09.61. Robertson began his tour of the area on 4 October 1961, returned to London on 1 November and published his report on 23 November 1961.

The Kenya Northern Frontier Constitutional Commission, 1962

Commission announced in April 1962 and appointed on 5 October 1962

Terms of Reference:

'To ascertain, and report on, public opinion in the Northern Frontier District (comprising the districts of Isiolo, Garissa, Mandera, Marsabit, Moyale and Wajir) regarding arrangements to be made for the future of the area in the light of the likely course of constitutional development in Kenya.'

Commission members:

Major General M P Bogert

G. C. M. Onyiuke QC

Commission reported: 7 December 1962

Swaziland

The Swaziland Constitutional Committee, 1961/2

Terms of Reference: None

Committee members: [1]

Mr B. A. Marwick (Chairman and Resident Commissioner)

Mr A. C. E. Long (Official member)

Mr W. E. C. Pitcher (Official member)

Mr J. F. B .Purcell (Official member)

Mnt J. Makhosini Dlamini (Unofficial member)

Mr P. L. Dlamini (Unofficial member)

Mr H. D. G. Fitzpatrick (Unofficial member)

Mr C. S. Hubbard (Unofficial member, and alternate)

Mr A. K. Hlope (Unofficial member)

Mr D. Lukele (Unofficial member)

Mr J. S. M. Matsebula (Unofficial member)

Mr M. P. Nhlabatsi (Unofficial member, and alternate)

Mnt S. D. M. Somhlolo (Unofficial member)

Mr R. P. Stephens (Unofficial member)

Mr J. M. B. Sukati (Unofficial member)

Mr S. T. M. Sukati (Unofficial member)

Mr C. F. Todd (Unofficial member)

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[1] At time of the publication of the Report

Mr G. Bordihn (Unofficial member)

Mr E. S. Bowman (Unofficial member)

Mnt. Lutho Dlamini (Unofficial member)

Mnt. Sifuba Dlamini (Unofficial member)

Mr S. W. J. Gaiger (Unofficial member)

Dr A. M. Nxumalo (Unofficial member)

Mr B. P. Stewart (Unofficial member)

Mr J. D. Weir (Unofficial member)

Report published: (officially) March 1962, although the version which was first submitted to the Secretary of State was dated 20.11.61.

First meeting of the Committee took place on 20 November 1961

Tanganyika

The Post Elections Committee, 1959 Tanganyika (Ramage Committee)

Committee appointed: 17 March 1959

Terms of Reference:

'FIRST. – Having regard to the fact that it is not intended that parity of representation on the Legislative Council should be a permanent feature of the Tanganyika Constitution, and bearing in mind the need for adequate representation of the main minority communities and the desirability of keeping the total number of Elected Members to a figure not greatly in excess of the total number of Representative Members; to recommend what, if any, changes should be made in the existing provisions for representation by Elected Members in the Legislative Council; what , if any, changes should be made in the present number of constituencies and their boundaries; and what, if any,

changes should be made in the present system of tripartite voting.

SECOND.- To recommend whether there should continue to be members of the Legislative Council representing such interests as the Governor may think fit, and, if so, to recommend how many there should be and how they should be selected.

THIRD.- To recommend whether, within the general principles of qualitative franchise, any changes in the present qualifications for candidates and voters would be desirable; and if so, what those changes should be.

FOURTH.- To consider whether a Territorial Council composed of representatives of the Chiefs and of others, whose experience and wisdom would enable them to make a valuable contribution to the deliberations of such a Council, should be established, and to consider its composition, powers and functions including the power to consider any Bill referred to it by the Governor before the conclusion of the second reading of the Bill and to report upon it to the Legislative Council; and to make recommendations accordingly.

Committee members: all members chosen by the Governor, subject to Colonial Office approval:

Sir Richard Ramage (Chairman)

Chief H. M. Lugusha (Deputy Chairman)

Mr J. Baker (Elected member)

Mr M. K .Barghash (Nominated member)

Mr P. Bomani (Elected member)

Lady Chesham (Elected member)

Mrs J. Davies (Nominated member)

Mr W. E. M. Dawson (Nominated member)

Mr G. W. Y. Hucks (also Secretary)

Mr Al Noor Kassum (Elected member)

Mr R. M. Kawawa (Elected member)

Mr J. Keto (Elected member)

Chief Maruma (Nominated member)

Mr M. N. Rattansey (Elected member)

Mr L. N. Sijona (Elected member)

Report is undated but published on 15 December 1959

Uganda

The Constitutional Committee of 1959 (Wild Committee)

Terms of reference announced: 17 November 1958

'Strict terms': 'To consider and to recommend to the Governor the form of direct elections on a common roll for representative members of the Legislative Council to be introduced in 1961, the number of representative seats to be filled under the above system, their allocation among the different areas of the protectorate and the method of ensuring that there will be adequate representation on the Legislative Council for non-Africans.'

'Additional matters': 'In his announcement on 17th November 1958, His Excellency the Governor went on to say that during the course of their work and hearing of evidence this Committee would no doubt receive expressions of view regarding the size and composition of the Legislature and also possibly of the

Government. He said he must make it clear that these are matters on which a very special responsibility lies directly with Her Majesty's Government and cannot be settled here in Uganda; but nevertheless he would value any advice the Committee may wish to offer him on these subjects although they are outside their strict terms of reference, as this will assist him in advising the Secretary of State not only on the Committee's recommendations arising from their terms of reference, but also on any other related issues that may be brought before the Committee.'

The Committee sat from 13 April 1959 to 26 October 1959

The Committee's report was presented to the Governor on 05.12.59

Committee Members:

J. V. Wild, Chairman

A. A. Baerlein: Nominated Representative member

T. B. Bazarrabusa: Government Backbench

K. Ingham: Government Backbench

H. K. Jaffer: Government Backbench

C. B. Katiti: Indirectly Elected African Representative member

Erisa Kironde : Buganda

Erisa Kirya: African Representative Directly Elected member

G. B. K. Magezi: African Representative Directly Elected member

Baluma Mukasa: Buganda

W. W .Kajumbula-Nadiope: : African Representative Directly Elected member

A. M. Obote: African Representative Directly Elected member

C. J. Obwangor: African Representative Directly Elected member

G. Oda: African Representative Directly Elected member

C. K. Patel: Nominated Reprenentative Member

Secretary: F. K. Kalimuzo

(Information on type of member taken from draft telegram from Crawford to Lennox Boyd, 02.02.59 TNA, FCO141/18285).

The Relationships Commission of 1960 (Munster Commission)

Terms of Reference published: 14.09.60, and appointment of committee announced: 15.12.60

Terms: 'To consider the future form of government best suited to Uganda and the question of the relationship between the Central Government and the other authorities in Uganda, bearing in mind (a) Her Majesty's Government's known resolve to lead Uganda by appropriate stages to independence and to this end to develop stable institutions of government which will properly reflect the particular circumstances and meet the needs of Uganda; and (b) the desire of the peoples of Uganda to preserve their existing institutions and customs and the status and dignity of their rulers and leaders; and (c) the special relationship that already exists between Her Majesty's Government and His Highness the Kabaka's Government and

the native Governments of Bunyoro, Ankole and Toro as set down in various Agreements that have been made with the Traditional Rulers and the peoples of Buganda, Bunyoro, Ankole and Toro, and to make recommendations.'

Commission visited Uganda: Munster: 8-22.12.60, 15.01 – 08.02.61; Wade: 15.01.61- [not known]; Marshall: 24.01.61- [not known].

Commission reported: 02.06.61

Commission members:

Lord Munster, Chairman

A.H. Marshall

H.R.W. Wade

The Lost Counties Commission of 1961 (Molson Commission)

Terms of reference published and Commission announced: 20.12.61

Terms: 'Having regard to the paramount need for the people of Uganda including Buganda to move together into independence in conditions which will ensure them peace and contentment, to investigate allegations of discrimination of the kind contained in the Omukama of Bunyoro's petition and grievances referred to in the Munster Report concerning areas of Buganda which are named below, to receive representations from those concerned and to advise whether any, and if so what, measures should be taken to deal with the situation. The areas are the counties of Buyaga, Bugangazzi, Buruli, and Bugerere, and portions of the counties of Singo and Bulemezi.'

Commission visited Uganda: 08.01.62 – 29.01.62 (Listowel and Ward) -31.01.62 (Molson)

Commission reported: May, 1962, although was submitted to the British Government on 02.03.62

Commission members:

Lord Molson

Earl of Listowel

Viscount Ward of Witle

 Zanzibar

The Constitutional Commission, Zanzibar 1960 (Blood Commission)

Blood appointed: 28 March 1960

Terms of Reference:

'After consultation with representative members of the Legislative Council and other leasers of political opinion in Zanzibar, to make recommendations for constitutional advance. In framing the recommendations regard should be paid (a) to Her Majesty's Government's view that the legislature should become predominantly elective in character and that the executive should be reorganised to permit the establishment of a ministerial system: (b) to the following principles which should not be departed from:- (i) the position of the present dynasty should be safeguarded and guaranteed; (ii) the principle of Zanzibar citizenship should be safeguarded; (iii) the aim should be to promote development on non-racial lines; (iv) there should be a common roll of electors: (v) there should be no change for the present in the franchise.'

Report dated: 28 May 1960

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DO157

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KV2

PREM Series

PREM1

PREM5

PREM11

FCO Series

FCO141

T Series

T220

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HAKI files

MSS13 files

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