



"There are now 2,280 men and 91 women detained without trial in Kenya. They will stay there, apparently, until the Kenya Government pleases to end the emergency"

THE HORROR OF KENYA

WHAT is the truth about the detention camps in Kenya? Last week, Labour MPs demanded—not for the first time—an independent Commission of Inquiry. In the debate, they referred to letters which have been smuggled out literally by the hundred, making detailed allegations of brutality by warders.

Mr. Julian Amery, speaking for the Government, rejected the demand. He said that the camps had already been inspected by visiting justices, by a Parliamentary delegation, and by the International Red Cross. But he made no reply to earlier speakers who had shown what happens when these visits take place.

Mr. Victor Shuter is about to retire as a principal officer in the Kenya Prison Service. In a sworn affidavit, said Mr. Arthur Creech Jones, "he describes the most revolting and humiliating treatment in Manyani detention camp. He points out that collective punishments are imposed on the detainees and that arbitrary beatings are also given."

Two officers

When a visit was expected, said Mr. Shuter in his affidavit, "detainees were warned of unpleasant consequences if they made any complaints." He named two officers who gave such warnings in his hearing.

He also wrote: "On one occasion at Fort Hall reception camp, the inspecting committee was carefully steered past huts containing men who had injuries from being beaten up, and was told that the huts were empty."

When the Red Cross commission was due at another camp, "the legless man and two others who had their arms in plaster were sent off with some warders into the forest where they remained out of sight until after the inspection." (Several prisoners have written of seeing men's limbs partly or completely sawn off).

Steered away

Two years ago Mrs. Barbara Castle visited Kamiti camp. In the debate, she quoted a letter since received from an Englishman who was a prisoner at the time of her visit. He told her that, "after you had been safely steered away" the prison staff had a party to celebrate their successful deception. Some European convicts were among the guests.

At Manyani, an official form was provided on which detainees could complain to an Appeals Committee against their continued detention. Mr. Shuter, still testifying on oath, has named an officer whom he saw tearing up a batch of the completed forms.

Cases of ill-treatment, said Mr. Amery, are investigated by the Kenya authorities. How they unmask deceptions which were proof against Barbara Castle and the Red Cross—even making the big assumption that they want to—he did not explain.

Certainly the Kenya Government has never cracked down on those of its employees who behave like concentration camp guards. Though several detainees have met violent deaths, no warder has ever been charged with murder or even "causing grievous bodily harm"—only the slighter offence of "causing actual bodily harm."

Yet, though the great majority of allegations—so inquiring MPs are told—are "investigated and found to be groundless," official admissions reveal an astonishing state of affairs. As Mr. Creech Jones pointed out, the last report on Kenya prisons showed a threefold increase in corporal punishment. It told of riots, mutinies, suspicious deaths,



This girl was detained in the Kiambu reserve

and "prison officers admitting that they were guilty of beating up."

According to Mr. Amery, 73 prison officers were convicted in the courts during 1957 of ill-treatment of prisoners, indiscipline, or other offences. The year before, the figure was 56. "I pass over dismissals or ordinary reprimands," he added. This revelation might seem to show that abuses are frequent and their extent still unchecked. But Mr. Amery drew the opposite conclusion. It shows, he said, "that the Government of Kenya and the prison service in Kenya is perfectly capable of keeping its own house in order and is doing so."

What morale?

And he wound up with the customary argument: "An inquiry could only shake public confidence in the Government of Kenya and weaken the morale of the prison service."

What confidence can there be in a Government that permits these conditions? What is the morale of a service in which court cases and dismissals are

of more than weekly occurrence?

Who, in any case, are the men in the camps—these men who, as Mrs. Castle said, write "complaining of inadequate diet, lack of medical attention, the fact that they are put in leg irons, the fact that there have been illegal beatings and illegal collective punishments—a whole catalogue of horrors"?

Tory MPs describe them as the "hard core" of Mau Mau terrorists. In many cases, this is doubtless true—though these men are still human beings and British subjects who have been convicted of no crime.

But not always. At the height of the Mau Mau rising, there were 80,000 Africans in deten-

tion camps and 18,000 more in prison. They were rounded up in droves—once, 5,000 in a single day. Many of the arrests were, of course, made by guesswork.

There are now 2,280 men and 91 women detained without trial. Of these, 808 have been in the camps for over four years. They will stay there, apparently, until the Kenya Government pleases to end the emergency (declared in 1952).

But this means that 1,563 Africans have entered the camps since the guns stopped firing. No wonder that African members of the Legislative Assembly—who are not allowed to visit the camps—say that emergency powers of detention are used to hamper political opposition.

One long-term resident of Takwa Special Detention Camp is Mr. Okeno, formerly secretary of the Kenya African Union. Many efforts have been made, always without proof, to identify it with Mau Mau. Mr. Amery, last week, cautiously called it "the organisation from which, in a sense, the Mau Mau movement sprang."

For speeches

Okeno was arrested in the early days of the emergency, charged with complicity in the rising, and acquitted by the Kenya Supreme Court. In a recent letter to James Johnson, MP, he denounces violence as a means to gaining reforms and calls Mau Mau "this beastly movement."

Mau Mau men, the authorities say, are released when they show themselves reformed. Okeno, by this test, has qualified in advance. As Mr. Johnson said: "He is not alleged to have taken any unlawful oath. He is not alleged to be a terrorist. He is not accused of sedition."

The vague accusation has been made against him: "You made inflammatory speeches against the Government of Kenya and Europeans." Neither Okeno, nor Mr. Johnson, nor anyone else, can get details of what speeches are referred to. He has twice been screened. The second time, he was told that he would be released. But one condition was made: he must not take part in any political activities. It was not illegal activity from which he was barred, but any political activity.

Mr. Amery began his speech by promising to deal with this case. But he merely said, without giving any reason: "It has not been possible to recommend release." It is hoped, he said, to move Okeno from the camp to a place of "enforced residence," where his wife may join him.

In other words, he is a political prisoner, who has already served a six-year sentence—for making speeches.

As for the detention system, Mr. Amery justified it by this argument: "One of the reasons we have been able to release as many detainees as fast as we have done is that the detention powers still exist . . . were we proved wrong, we still had power to take them in again."

The House of Commons agreed to the state of emergency and the detention powers because an armed uprising was in progress. It was never contemplated that even Mau Mau men, let alone political opponents of the settler Government, would be held for years without trial when the country is at peace and supposedly moving towards self-government. This is indeed a strange way to train Africans for democracy.

The story of Kenya stinks in the nostrils of anyone who understands the meaning of the word "justice," as it stank in the nostrils of MPs who had just voted for a tribunal because two policemen were suspected of beating up a boy in Thuro.

It is more than time for a Commission of Inquiry to go to Kenya, with full powers to cross-examine, to make snap visits, and to assure witnesses that they will be protected from victimisation.

The questions

by
EMRY HUGHES

IT HAS been an intensely interesting and fatiguing experience, following Mr. Macmillan around Russia and watching his reactions to the friendly welcome he has received everywhere from the curious crowds who have gathered to see the British Prime Minister.

Not a boo! not a hiss; not the slightest sign of a hostile demonstration anywhere; not even a clenched fist. Nothing but people standing about in the snow and the cold, interested in the visit of the Prime Minister, for they think it may be the end of the cold war.

As he walked through the crowd at Kiev the Prime Minister kept repeating: "I wish you success." "I wish you success." He received a much more cordial reception here than he would have got in working class Glasgow.

Later on we went with him to visit a collective farm about 20 miles out of Kiev. The people here might have come straight out of a Tolstoy novel and seemed strange in the glare of the television cameras.

I think the visit could not have been over-prepared, for the slogans of the recent Communist Party conference were still on the walls of the hut where the Prime Minister met the leaders of the collective farm to listen to their progress report.

On the wall, as a suitable background, were two posters of Marx and Lenin, with red slogans painted in Ukrainian and Russian. . . . "Forward to Communism under the leadership of the Communist Party."

MAGMIL

GOOD evening. Let me say first how pleased I am to be in Moscow. I have been hoping to pay this visit ever since I became Prime Minister, but for a considerable time my Government could not do anything that might displease President Eisenhower, whom we had double-crossed at the time of Suez.

I have now, at last, obtained permission to come. Of course, I cannot negotiate; but I can appear on television, which is much easier and more enjoyable.

It is wonderful to see what great changes there have been since I was here in 1929. At that time all our wisest statesmen, such as Sir Winston Churchill, were predicting the collapse of the Soviet system. Now you are the second industrial power in the world. As an English proverb says, "You live and learn."

With us, the period of rapid expansion of our basic industries is a thing of the past. Some people refuse to recognise this and would like Britain to produce more; but you need not fear that they will get their way so long as I am Prime Minister. I am proud to say we are enabled to place an ever-increasing proportion of our people in a state of Total Leisure. Under my guidance, the figure has reached a new record of 620,000. Many others, let me add, are in a state of Partial Leisure.

We have few natural resources except for coal and some iron ore. Progress is being made in ensuring that these resources become even fewer.

I have just announced the closing of 36 pits, and miners will revert to the Total Leisure which they do not enjoy since my party had a small majority.

Our scientists have been harnessing atomic energy to man's needs. In 1956 an atomic power station under Hall linked with a plant at Windscale.

Let us should be about the latter, let you that it has since and had to be closed spent on the development of atomic energy every cent can spare after making weapons.

You may have heard our wonderful establishment, Aldermaston. So perhaps become that thousand people go to see it every year.

Since the end of the war have built over 200 new houses. At the reached a record of 1957, which was a year in my becoming Prime Minister. I have now, of course, a decline in house-building. Originally, these houses allocated mainly to the most need. But now they are for people who do not need them.

To obviate any shortage, we have people in rented houses to pay more—considerably, in fact, than any of us are doing.

Indeed, at the substance