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The Growth Of Mau Mau From Our Nairobi Correspondent The administration and the forces of law and order in Kenya are passing through a period of exceptional strain. There are two main causes. First, a steep increase in crime in urban areas. Secondly, the rapid growth of subversive political activity among sections of the Kikuyu tribe, particularly on the part of members of a society, banned by the Government, known as the Mau Mau. The Kikuyu, one of the largest tribal groups in the colony, are intelligent and precocious; and though many of them are still addicted to witchcraft and ancient tribal customs, they have quickly mastered the superficial techniques of western politics-mass meetings, delegations, resolutions, petitions. The principal African political organization in East Africa, the Kenya African Union, is almost wholly Kikuyu in composition and thought. The nationalist objectives which this movement seeks to achieve by constitutional methods, the Mau Mau plans to reach by means of terrorism. It is an openly subversive, essentially primitive underground movement, and its story is a sharp reminder that 50 years are but a moment of time among the African peoples. Some 30 years ago a political organization was formed among the Kikuyu to advance political aims and to exploit the so-called "land-hunger" in the tribe. It was called the Kikuyu Central Association. The movement developed without clear direction and deteriorated into an anti-British, anti-Government organization which was proscribed at the outbreak of the last war. It did not die and there seems to be little doubt that the Mau Mau Society and some other less active secret organizations are its offshoots. The Mau Mau began to be heard of some four or five years ago, and before long, though little public notice was taken because few except the Kikuyu knew what was going on, it was spreading through the Kikuyu lands and into the area of white settlement in the Rift Valley district. Expansion was by means of an "oath" ceremony, but a long time passed before details of the oath or the ceremony, or the aims of the society, became known. RESORT TO MURDER In recent times, after the Mau Mau had obviously reached the stage at which the relatively few fanatics had willingly joined but the masses were either not interested or not disposed to join, the movement came to the surface with acts of terrorism. These included setting on fire the huts of loyal and law-abiding members of the community. The Mau Mau did not stop short of murder when it wanted to dispose of an informer, and the weapon of terror was increasingly used to discourage opposition and to hamper the work of the administration and the police. It is probable that the stage has already been reached at which the Kikuyu peasant considers it safer to be inside the society, however reluctantly and passively, than to remain outside. Recent outrages committed on the farms of British settlers, in which cattle and sheep have been slaughtered brutally, illustrate both the boldness of the Mau Mau agents and the mentality of men only a short step removed from the savage in spirit and method. On Tuesday of this week Chief Waruhiu, who had served the Kenya Government for over 30 years and who recently denounced Mau Mau, was shot dead on a main road seven miles from Nairobi. As a sequel to this outrage the Government has extended the curfew to the whole Kikuyu reserves on the outskirts of Nairobi. This new order comes into force to-night. Hundreds of arrests have already been made in town and country since the Mau Mau leaders whipped up their campaign this year. But these are just the small-fry and a few fanatics, and the colony's prisons' could very easily be filled without halting or even seriously weakening the movement. Strange stories have been told in

court of occasional defiance of the Mau Mau by courageous women as well as men, and there have been exhibitions too, of contempt of the colony's courts of justice by young Kikuyu who refused to testify or to recognize the authority of the courts. In a recent case a Kikuyu woman whose husband was a member of the Mau Mau told how she had been beaten into unconsciousness and dragged to a mid-night ceremony after refusing to take the oath. But such acts of heroism are still rare. Kikuyu thieves and gang burglars are believed to be joining the Mau Mau because the oath of secrecy gives them additional security from detection. In an immature community the police-Africans included-have not yet succeeded in establishing themselves as the friends, guardians and servants of the people to whom those in trouble instinctively turn for aid and protection. The oath which members of the Mau Mau society take, willingly or under compulsion, binds them not to disclose information about the organization to the Government or to Europeans; not to help Europeans or to sell land to them (only natives in any event are permitted to buy African land); to create conditions which will cause white people to leave the colony. and not to inform against the society or any of its members. The leaders of the movement have cleverly and shrewdly founded it upon an exact knowledge of the psychology of their own people and the fears and emotions which remain in the inner recesses of the African's mind, no matter how close his association with western civilization or its forms of "education." The Kikuyu has always been afraid of the unknown, of witchcraft and evil spirits, and oaths and curses, and afraid of the consequences of ignoring or defying them. The oath ceremony is not standardized but it follows a general pattern and is usually carried out in a hut or other building around midnight. Members of the community who are expected to require "persuasion" are told they are invited to a drink party, and indeed hospitality of this kind in a house nearby has often been part of the programme. A sharp rap on the door of a hut late at night announces the arrival of the summons to attend and should the victim refuse to go, or show reluctance, he or she will be dragged to the ceremony and beaten if necessary. INITIATION RITES Sentries are posted some distance from the place of ceremony to give the alarm should the police or other strangers arrive. Lieutenants of the chief officers of the society in the area concerned escort the initiates to the ceremony. When they pass inside they are told to cast off anything made of metal and all European-style clothing. It is supposed that the meaning of this is the rejection of outward evidence of the "alien" civilization. Passing through an arch made of green twigs and leaves, the initiates are put in charge of the small group who administer the oath. A circlet made of grass is placed on the victim's head or round the neck, and other loops on the wrists. A banana flower into which has been poured blood from a sacrificial goat, freshly killed, is passed round the heads of the initiates after some earth has been mixed with the blood. Then a stick which has been dipped in the mixture is held by each person as they take the oath. The figure seven occurs frequently in the ceremony. In some cases the blood and earth is passed round the heads of the initiates seven times, in others they have to walk in a circle seven times, and sometimes they bite goat meat seven times or take seven sips of blood. At some ceremonies the eyes of the goat, taken from their sockets, are placed on either side of the flower or other receptacle for the blood and earth, and sometimes the contents of the stomach of the goat (goats are sacrificed at all the main Kikuyu ceremonies) have to be tasted. These barbaric rites are usually carried out in a hut where darkness is relieved by a very dim light, and the setting can have a powerful effect on the minds of some of the less enlightened peasants. Initiates are expected to pay an "entrance fee" which is sometimes as much as two or three pounds, a large sum for most Africans. What happens to what must by now be a very large fund is not known. AIMS OF THE MOVEMENT The Mau Mau is able to cast its net wide. The Kikuyu have

spread from the Kenya coast to Lake Victoria, to Uganda and parts of Tanganyika. The tribe provides many domestic servants for Euro-peans, and there are Kikuyu clerks in every Government department. There is no doubt that the Mau Mau movement has spread to all areas where there are Kikuyu in any numbers, and that in most places there are " cells " actively propa- gating its ideas. The aims of Mau Mau are clear enough. While the Kenya African Union conducts a campaign above ground for political power and authority, the purpose of Mau Mau is to step up the pace of political change by menacing the authority of the Government and fostering trouble at all levels and by all means. It is unhappily true that the Kikuyu are suffering from too large a dose of civilization and its freedoms administered too suddenly. They are encouraged by the attitude of people and organizations outside Africa who, for reasons sometimes honest but sometimes evil, want to see political power trans- ferred rapidly to Africans because they are Africans, and who undermine the security and prestige of British settlements in the process. Thus a first ossential in Kenya to-day is the restoration of respect for law and order, There must then be fuller studv of social problems and needs, and an effort to strengthen the best elements in the African community. If stabilitv is to be maintained, there must be more attention to the development of economic resources and the creation of a new and better social order. There must also be less loose talk about politics to people so manifestly immature in such affairs. The final article in the series on Soviet military strength appears on page 5, THE GROWTH OF MAU MAU POLITICS AND TERRORISM IN KENYA