

Brief from the Colonial Office on the future of Europeans in Kenya (17 October 1963)

Caption: On 17 October 1963, as preparations are made for Kenyan independence, the British Colonial Office drafts a note on the future of Europeans living in Kenya. It particularly focuses on their concerns with regard to security, citizenship and land resources.

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EUROPEANS IN KENYA

Brief for the Acting Prime Minister's Meeting
with the European delegation to Kenya Independence
Conference at 4.30 p.m., Thursday, 17th October.

The European leaders in Kenya, and indeed nearly all Europeans in the country, recognise that they no longer represent a political force there. But most of them will probably stay in Kenya if they can be satisfied that they will be reasonably treated by the Africans. The Europeans have therefore supported the Kenya Government rather than the Opposition. However they are naturally anxious to have an adequate sheet anchor out in case of squalls.

CITIZENSHIP

2. During the Independence Conference the Europeans have been particularly concerned about the citizenship provisions to be included in the Independence Constitution. If things go badly for them in Kenya they want to be able to come back to this country with full citizenship and nationality status. Although they have not yet been told of this, special arrangements are on the stocks which would meet the case. If the subject should be raised, the First Secretary is advised to say that he understands that the Europeans have very persuasively argued their case with the Colonial Secretary and the Kenya Government and they will not expect him to comment while the Conference is still continuing.

LAND FINANCE

3. As part of the Kenya Europeans' desire to be able to stay so long as things go well but to be enabled to leave

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if they do not, Mr. Welwood and his colleagues are seeking substantially more money for the land settlement schemes and a completely new sum of about £13½ million for the Land Bank in order to complete within the next five years the transfer to African ownership of all the remaining European mixed farming land in Kenya. If this subject is raised, the First Secretary is advised to say that he understands that these are new proposals which have only recently been put forward by the delegation while they were in London and that he understands they are being considered by the Colonial Secretary and his advisers. Meanwhile he cannot comment on them.

SECURITY

4. If the Europeans should raise the question of security in Kenya, the First Secretary is advised to take the line that the British Government will stand squarely behind the Kenya Government in its duty of maintaining law and order if anyone or any party in Kenya should act unconstitutionally or resort to violence. If asked about the future when the British Government are no longer responsible for Kenya, the First Secretary might take the line that although in certain circumstances the British Government would act to protect its nationals, the European leaders will realise that it is not possible to give them a general indemnity against things going wrong.

Colonial Office, S.W.1.
17th October, 1963.

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