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Kenya Research project by Robert M. Press [see: Press, Robert M. (2006) *Peaceful Resistance: Advancing Human Rights and Civil Liberties*. Aldershot, U. K.: Ashgate.

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Interview conducted and recorded by Robert M. Press (bob.press@usm.edu; press.bob@gmail.com)

Interviewee: Malcom Harper, Director of the United Nations Association of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and former Field Director for Oxfam for East Africa (1968-1971) in Nairobi.

Location of interview: London at his office.

Date of interview: July 2002

Note: BP =interviewer (Bob Press); MH = respondent/interviewee Malcolm Harper. The interview was tape recorded. Transcription includes bracketed research notes made by Bob Press. The double ?? indicates something was not clear on the tape or uncertainty of spelling.

MH I first went to Kenya in 1968, just five years after independence. There was quite a euphoric atmosphere in Kenya. [After having seen the repression of apartheid South Africa] it was a delight to be in a country recently liberated from colonial rule to independence. And we had a great belief that there was a new dawn in Africa....It was political to some extent; it was social and economic. I had a very great respect for Kenyatta, who had been the leader of 'darkness and death' as the colonial government had said. And he'd come through all that and in the early years of independence he was talking very much about reconciliation, a new beginning, and pulling together harambee. And of course there was corruption. And there were one or two ministerial deaths in road accidents [and other circumstances] of which caused a lot of speculation. And in 1969 at 1 o'clock on a Saturday, Tom Mboya was shot down going into a chemist shop...in central Nairobi and he was clearly one of the shining stars of the new Kenya. I met him once or twice. He was a very, very impressive guy, he really was.

So there was this sort of darker side, if you like. And it was very difficult to know what was happening. And then in 1969 there were national elections. Shortly before election day, as I remember it, there was a riot in Kisumu in the West. One or two people were killed and Kenyatta banned the opposition party and made it virtually a one-party state, which we were all very uncomfortable with.

But part of the difficulty with multi-party politics or government in East Africa at that time – these parties don't really have an iota of difference ideologically. They have massive loyalties regionally, tribally, call it ethnically, culturally. So that in a way, the one party system like Julius Nyerere tried to develop in Tanzania, I think has a lot going for it, trying to get a national cohesion within that structure – a certain democratic right to choose your candidate...And Kenya never really enjoyed that approach to the one-party system. So there were these undercurrents and tensions the whole time.

BP So there really wasn't a whole lot of difference between one party and another in terms of ideology.

MH I don't think so. Was it a Kikuyu party, was it a Luo party; where did the Kalenjins fit? And then there were people like the Turkana to whom the whole thing was irrelevant. In any case – that wonderful story of the old Turkana waving down a vehicle near Lodwar, the District headquarters. This supposedly arrogant, young Kikuyu District Officer who thought himself in a punishment post saying, where are you going; where do you want a lift to? He said I'm going down to Kenya. [laughs heartily]

Then there was the problem of the Somalis in the northeast. There was the shifta war, which came to an end happily. So there were these undercurrents.

The story then that I would tell you... shows Kenyatta in the best light. This sort of story, minute in its way, shows why we were so confident that Kenya was going to make it. I had a very close friend... General Secretary of the Kenya National Freedom from Hunger Campaign (Michael Keith Foote??) And Keith had gone to Kenya in 1951, I think, to be a farm manager in Kenya. And in 1952 when the Mau Mau business began, he got drafted into the [British] defense force. It was conscription, into the military. He came out of the military and instead of going back to farming he joined the colonial civil service. And for a period of time he was the District Officer right up in the North, on the shores of Lake Turkana, where Kenyatta was in detention. Totally isolated. There was the old man [Kenyatta] in his prison, and Keith used to get... the Times [from London] and the old man was allowed the Hansard?? of the Kenya Legislative Council, which he read... and they would swap. After about 18 months, Keith was transferred elsewhere and they completely lost touch. At the time of Independence, Keith was District Commissioner of Busia, way over on the West, on the Kenya/Uganda border. And the President [Kenyatta] came to open a health center or a hospital. And he arrived and he took one look at Keith and he said "Ahh – Mr. Jailer, how lovely to see you again." And Keith thought, 'My God, this is going to be the longest and most difficult day of my life.' And the old man patted him on the back and had a laugh about it. And when he got up to speak to a very large crowd, he said... with his fly whisk... 'I want to introduce you to my jailer.' And everyone booed. And [Kenyatta] said 'No, no, no, he was a very good jailer; a very just jailer, and I want to tell you he's a very good District Commissioner, and I had to obey him when I was in prison and you must obey him – he's now your District Commissioner. And he really built this guy up.

I think that somehow was the *esprit*. And it's only a little incident. But it was to some extent the *esprit* under which we were living and believing that Kenya had a great future and it would all go very well. And all the sort of darker side was there, and there was a tussle. You could feel the tussle. And Mama Ngina, his latest wife was deemed, I think correctly, to be massively corrupt. She's very beautiful but massively corrupt. There were many, many stories about ivory poaching and a whole range of other [alleged wrongdoings]. The feeling was very much that the old man was slowly getting beyond [his prime]. He was able to curb the worst of the corruption, but as he got more aged, so younger 'wolves' began to take over, and she was one of them, I think.

Now at that time, Vice President Moi had a very solid reputation, not the least for immense efficiency and good time keeping. And as you know, time in Africa is a relative thing. But if Moi said he was going to show up to open a health center at 9 o'clock in the morning, he'd show up at 9 o'clock in the morning. And you'd all have to be there on time or you'd miss it. So he had quite a good reputation as a Vice President... a good bureaucrat and an efficient bureaucrat. And at that time, whether accurate or not, he did not have a massive reputation for corruption. And it may just be the old adage that 'power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely.' That's really, in a way, what has happened to Moi. And while I was in Nairobi those three years I did write one or two reports back to Oxfam saying... we were helping to build buildings and to train people and we were full of hope. I did write one of two reports saying under the surface there are these tensions and I think we have to be aware that we as ex-colonials can do almost nothing about it but we should be aware it's happening. And there may come a time when we actually have to stand up and be counted on some of these issues.

When I became Director of UNA [in 1982, when Moi was President; the year of an attempted military coup in Kenya], fairly soon after that I began to have one or two people like Wanjiru Kihoro knocking on the door to say we really are very concerned about human rights standards and what is happening. And as UNA we try to take up one or two issues, either with people like her or, if Amnesty

sent us a mailing about people who were prisoners of conscience, we would write about them. And then Wanjiri Kihoro was imprisoned and Wanjiru came to speak to me and said would I be willing to chair a campaign committee here in the UK that was calling either for him to be charged and tried in a public court or released. And we had quite a difficult time with the Kenyan High Commission which thought we were sort of interfering with the internal affairs of Kenya. I said well, I don't actually think we are. I think we are trying to argue the universal standards of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and all the UN stands for and we are taking up the issues with people who are condemned to death in South Africa and calling for the commutation of their death penalty to life imprisonment; and I'm sure you would support us in doing that from the Kenya High Commission, and when we see things going wrong in other countries, including our own in Northern Ireland, we take up the issue. So we're universalists in that way. They half understood it or half accepted it but wished we wouldn't

BP Was Bethel Kipligat here at that time?

MH Then it was Sally Kosgei ?? who I think is relatively corrupt. She's now the head of the civil service in Nairobi. And I'm afraid she is –there are reports I get that she's in on the game. She refused to see us when we asked to go and talk about Wanjiri Kihoro's case. And our Association, for reasons which long precede me, we have all the Commonwealth High Commissioners are Vice Presidents of our Association. And we have an annual conference for two days and we always invite the Vice Presidents to come, including the High Commissioner. And at the height of the Kihoro campaign, a first or second Secretary of the Kenyan High Commission came to our conference... And in 1988 or 1989 I had to do my annual report verbally to the microphone in front of 200 [delegates, including] the man from the High Commission of Kenya. And I had a little section dealing with Wanjiri Kihoro [who by then was being tortured in a Kenyan cell], saying we had been active in this. And he [the Kenyan diplomat] came up to me afterwards and said: 'why are you so hostile to Kenya?' And I said we're not hostile to Kenya. We're trying to seek universal application of human rights. And I said, the sadness is...your High Commissioner has never answered any letters, and we've asked to go and see her [Kosgey??] to talk about this case and try to hear your point of view and put [forward] ours. We have total silence – stone wall. And so we're just carrying on. And we will carry on because we think it's not right anywhere in the world for someone to be incarcerated [without charge] And in 1987, when I'd been in Nairobi at the time I took all the clothes. I asked Wanjiri if there was anything I could do and she asked if I could take these clothes to the family and this vast bundle arrived, which meant I had to buy a second suitcase to get them there, which I delivered.

I went to see the British High Commissioner in Nairobi to take up with him what, if anything, the British could do on behalf of Wanjiri Kihoro in prison. And he said, well, its very difficult because he's not a British subject, but we do from time to time talk to the [Kenyan] Attorney General and say this is not doing your reputation any good...blah, blah, blah, blah. And I had received from Wanjiru before I went, some pretty conclusive evidence of some of the torture to which Wanjiri Kihoro had been subjected while in prison. And one of them was for 28 days or more he had a windowless cell. There was a trap door in the roof, apparently, through which they lowered the food. And the cell, for 28 days or more was several centimeters, several inches deep in water, so that he could either stand in the water or if he wanted to go to sleep he could sit in the water and get his backside wet and lean against the wall because he couldn't have any beddings; that would have been absolutely saturated. And the High Commissioner confirmed to me that that [version of torture] was his understanding and he was taking that sort of issue up with the Kenyan authorities...He was himself satisfied that the evidence of that happening had happened.

BP What kind of evidence was there?

MH Well, I think the fact that on one of his subsequent visits to hospital, his [Kihoro's] feet had started to rot. That sort of evidence. And we were saying to the Kenyan High Commission here: don't do this; we are basically your friends. We want you to be given a clean bill of health. Don't do this sort of thing. It does damage to the prisoner; it does damage to the people running the prison; and it does damage to your reputation and your legal and human rights reputation around the world. And we were saying it to other countries. We were saying it to Northern Ireland on occasion, to our own people. I think that's the role of an NGO – fearlessly ...

BP Do you feel that the representations the British [officials] were making [to Kenyan authorities] had any effect?

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MH I don't think they had great effect, because until the end of the Cold War, I think Kenya suffered or enjoyed a level of impunity. I think with Ethiopia and Somalia going into the hands of the Russians – and that meant that the Red Sea was in the hands of the Russians, and with Aden going toward the Russians, the British/NATO needed a safe haven somewhere down the East African coast and Kenya gave it to them...Ever since Independence, British troops have been on training exercises permanently in Kenya...And the joke was that that made the old man [Kenyatta] feel safer. There wouldn't be a coup because the Brits would move in and sort out any plotters...And Mombasa gave them a harbor. There were facilities that NATO felt they needed in that rather volatile Indian Ocean region. India itself was always sort of slightly pro-Russian...And Kenya, I think, quite successfully exploited that.

And it meant that some of these other issues [i.e. human rights] were rather played down. And by about 1987, there was a woman...she was the country representative for Kenya [for Oxfam] and she actually wrote a very confidential report on the human rights situation in Kenya. She was British. The report was for Oxfam...During the course of the discussion, one or two of us said, what are we going to do with this report; this is really quite frightening...the sort of thing she was talking about in the report was when you went to vote in an election you had to line up behind the picture of your candidate, so it was quite obvious if you were a Moi or an anti-Moi. It was all lots of things like that. And two of us said: you know, this report is dynamite. And Oxfam said, quite understandably, well, we have an operation in the country and a Kenyan staff we are employing. It's very difficult for us from outside the country to come out with a lambast against the government of Kenya for its human rights operation because we have to...protect our local staff. The expatriate staff will be thrown out of the country...and therefore there is a dilemma, which I accept. And I don't think NGOs are always very good at passing confidential information on to those who don't have a foothold in the country in order to get the issues raised without being directly implicated themselves.

Anyway, it was agreed...since I work here and the Foreign Office is five minutes walk away over there that I would go and see the head of the East Africa Department in the Foreign Office, having sent them a confidential copy of the report to talk about it. And there was a really hard line...civil servant who came on saying: Well, there's cases [like this] throughout the whole of Africa. Why are you choosing Kenya. You're a great friend of the system of Julius Nyerere, what about people in Tanzania who have been in prison without trial, blah, blah, blah.

And I said, well, yes. Sure, and we're quite happy to take them up. But this is a report on Kenya. And this is very frightening; and if it's accurate, we are on a potential powder keg. And he just wanted

to rubbish it. He just didn't want to talk about it seriously. And Kenya was our friend, Kenya was our ally. We had to keep [good relations with] Kenya, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. Now whether after I left he said: my God, we must do something about this – I don't know. But I think he didn't because there was never any comeback from the foreign office...I think they just didn't want to upset the apple cart with Kenya. [This was in 1987 or 1988]. It was sort of the remnants of the Empire of Evil, the free world against the rest. [laughs]

BP Do you have any evidence that that [stand off policy of the British in Kenya] ever changed after the Cold War?

MH There was an election in Kenya where the Commonwealth had observers [1992 – and they did a whitewash with very few people looking at very few areas] and came out with really quite a strong criticism of these elections when they were not free and fair. And I think that did have a certain, even a short-term influence on governments such as my own.

BP I recall the Commonwealth visitation was very brief and came out practically endorsing –

MH Well, there was one that was a bit of a whitewash; then there was another that was better [??dates] It may have been a bit later. But from a British perspective in 1992, we had only just finished the Thatcher era, and the Thatcher era [which ended at the end of 1990??] The Thatcher era had really been fairly disastrous for human rights, not only nationally but internationally. And Reagan had had the honesty to say that human rights were important but not that important and were not going to influence the way we think in the way that Carter had allowed them to influence policy making. And Thatcher very much mirrored that broad approach.

327 Now, there were individual ministers in the Thatcher government for whom that was not the situation. And one of them was Lynda Chalker [??] who was the Minister for Overseas Development for a number of years. And she, at least you could go and talk to her about these issues [human rights], but she didn't have very much clout if push came to shove in influencing government policy. [She was in office in the late '80s – but continued; now a senior World Bank consultant for Southern Africa; reachable through House of Lords or WBK.] She was fairly good [on human rights].

Thatcher's whole approach to Africa was the constructive engagement with South Africa was what mattered because if the South African economy expanded, that would have good benefit and results for the rest of Africa. And [John] Major was so tied up with [the European Union and didn't pay much attention to Africa.] Who has paid much attention [to Africa] in the last decade?

BP Did Chalker effect any changes in terms of the British policy toward Africa?

MH I think she was willing to go and say to people like Moi: You've got to go and clean up your act. But how much influence she actually had, I'm not convinced about it.

BP...But didn't British position change after the Cold War. Before – you described that very clearly; but after the Cold War, I mean the whole dynamics change.

MH Yeah, but I think – my experience has been that Cold War loyalties remained or Cold War friendships remained in place for some time. I mean governments are quite slow to change. In the last

ten years I've done much more work on Angola than I have on Kenya, and the whole issue of Savimbi and Unita and the UN sanctions. The UN has not really been very effective in Angola. Lynda was quite good on those issues. She took a terrible shine – a mutual shine, I think – on Samora Machel?? in Mozambique. They got along like a house on fire. And she was friendly with a whole lot of African Presidents, she really was...I think her values were quite good. She wasn't in the Cabinet; she was a Minister. You know the Conservatives took away the Ministry for Overseas Development and made it the Overseas Development Administration, and it was a department of the Foreign Office, not a separate Ministry. She was actually under, she was a Minister of State under the Foreign Secretary.

BP...So do you think the efforts by, say some of the international organization or some of the combined efforts of donors, including the British, perhaps bringing them along reluctantly, had any effect in term so noticeable change in Kenya?

MH ...people like the World Bank have begun to say, excuse me, if you want to get more help, you ought to clean up your act, and so on. Now, where the pressure from within the World Bank is coming – whether it's the United States, whether it's the Brits, I don't know. But it's coming from somewhere...And the British have occasionally put their name to 'guidance' to Moi to clean up his act.

BP On corruption, yeah. Human rights hardly ever gets mentioned. I think it's because the original charter of the IMF and World Bank –they don't talk about any mandate for political change. [MH agrees].

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MH Well the Bank was set up to help Europe, wasn't it? I'm not sure it was actually a permanent body, really?? No, I think it was set up to sort of do the Marshall Plan. I mean at that time the rest of the world was an Imperial world. So the 100 + developing countries now in the UN were looked after by their French, or British, or Portuguese masters.

BP ...The Kenyan government had a public relations firm here that was fairly active.

MH Yes. And what was the name of the man who ran it? He used to run foul of me.

BP Did you have contact with that firm?

MH Yeah...They were putting out statements and holding soirees and so on. Everyone once in a while I would get invited to go to one, and I used to go, you know. But it was never possible at them to ask the questions that you felt needed to be asked.

BP Were they, in effect, a kind of counter force to the kinds of organizations that Wanjiru Kihoro and others were trying to form here to put pressure on the British government?

MH I think...they were trying to paint a creamy, public relations image that Kenya was wonderful for tourism...and [so on]. It was the place to go; it had never had a coup d'etat. It was a thriving democratic capitalist country...

BP... You had these two forces: a Kenyan lobby lobbying for human rights, talking to people like yourselves and others in the Foreign Office, running up against the kind of stonewall opposition that you did [at the Foreign Office]. But then you had the other organizations – the PR firm, the Kenyan government itself. I was wondering if they sort of equaled out or whether, in fact, there was more momentum on one side than the other...

MH [Ask Amnesty that question]. My broad perception is that we on the non-governmental side, doing advocacy work on human rights in Kenya did not get very far. I think there was a certain brick wall and this was a country to be nurtured [by the British and not criticized]; it was a friendly country. And you had instability in Ethiopia, you had instability in Somalia, you had instability in Sudan, you had some years the Amin years in Uganda and the post-Amin instability. Kenya was seen as a haven. And business and other interests wanted to keep it that way. And I think they were very profound. And to be fair [emphasis] to the government of Kenya, whether for all the right reasons or wrong...if you take the capitalist sort of model, they were clever at doing quite pleasant, low cost housing for the lower level sort of civil service, and teachers, and nurses, and so on, so that when I go to Kenya...[to the homes of friends], they're really quite nice, little houses, you know. They've got a little garden – a shamba – and so on. They get very worried about the level of street crime. They [their homes] all look as if they were the African version of Fort Knox [with high security gates and walls]

But they [the Kenyan middle class] did buy in that sort of urbanized, middle...to lower middle class civil servants and others who actually had a bit of a stake in not rocking the boat. Therefore when a Wanyiri Kihoro came along as a student activist, there was quite a lot of – ‘Oh, we don't want to get involved with that because we got enough out of this game that we don't want to rock the boat. And you know, in a way, full marks to the Kenyan government for doing that, even if their reasons for doing it were not decency but self preservation.

BP So they had something to lose and they could at least recognize that things were bad but not wanting to go out on the streets [MH Yes; absolutely] And they had more than in [many] other countries.

MH Yes. And there were strong arm goals?? in the GSU [General Services Unit, a paramilitary police force used by the government to break up opposition rallies deemed illegal by the government, among other enforcement duties.] And they used them. Certainly at the University they were using them in my time.

[Marxist ideology of key activists hurt them internationally]

BP Was the fact that many of the Kenyan dissidents were [unclear] and in exile as well as some who were there had Marxists leanings – at the time there wasn't a lot to choose from ...did that in a sense take away from some of their clout in terms of making a voice for human rights?

MH Yes, I think it did. I was never close enough to know how genuinely Marxist they were or how far they were being branded Marxists by those who wanted to oppose them. It was probably a mixture of the two. Someone like Wanyiri Kihoro and Wanjiru [his wife] were not Marxists. They were very good, thorough democrats...I do get quite concerned as to how far Wanyiri has actually been able to sustain the values he upheld as a student when he was incarcerated and how far he has come to terms with – power and the reality of power. I just don't know. I never see him now.

[Comment: in the Cold War, it was to the regime's advantage to label dissidents as Marxists, given Western diplomatic and donor concerns about an aggressive Soviet Union]

BP If you look at some of the literature, they do have Marxist symbols, and they will tell you that they basically have a Marxist background. And I just wondered if that –

MH It wouldn't have helped their cause.

BP I guess in the United States it would have hurt their cause. Whereas here [in the UK] –

MH I think they would have piffled?? It – just said, well, they're young, radical Marxists [laughs] in a slightly sort of patronizing way. They would sort of use it to rubbish them...

[unrelated item of interest: the Archbishop of Canterbury Michael Robert Runson?? Told Harper that Margaret Thatcher did incredible damage to the social fabric of the British society, that some of it would take a long time to repair. He set up a commission that produced a paper called Faith in the City about the isolation and desolation of urban and peri-urban housing estates: high unemployment, high juvenile crime, truancy – “in a way they were ghettos.”

They produced a consensus report – including one or two Thatcherite economists And the day that report was published, in 1986 if I remember rightly, there was a conservative member of Parliament who said this was Marxist theology.

MH [continuing on Marxism in Kenya] If you're branded as a Marxist...you weren't, as they said in the Thatcher years, in the real world.

End of side A, tape 1 of 1

Start of side B.

MH...One of the issues that became more and more evident to me in the work I was doing in Kenya was this basic division between the settled agricultural groups in Kenyan society and the semi-nomadic pastoralists. So you had the Nihilistic people...of the Rift Valley and you had the Bantu people of the Central Highlands and so on. Really, looking back on it now, I don't think it was ...nastyness, but the great bulk in the burgeoning Africanized civil service were from the settled agricultural tribes or regions of Kenya, and they really didn't understand the culture and the traditions of the pastoralists. And they saw them as slightly [some would say greatly] as sort of pig-ignorant, backward. And a culture of indifference or occasionally hostility, but not often hostility – indifference. We were just beginning to pick it up.

In the Turkana District in the north in the latter part of the colonial years, there had been a guy called Whitehouse, who for about 12 years had been the District Officer based in Lodwar. And he then retired from the civil service and settled down at Kitali in the northwest. He was a Brit. But he actually became – he was made a sub chief – of one of the Turkana clans. They had a dispute over grazing or water rights or whatever. They'd call Whitehouse back to help find a solution. It was a very interesting guy. And once you began to get African administrators, Lodwar would be seen as a punishment post [See account at top on Lodwar and the hitchhiking Turkana]. There were always a few mavericks in the colonial era – I'm not saying this is necessarily a good thing, but it's the truth; there are always a few mavericks who just love to go into the furthest reaches of the bush. And the thought of having to go to Nairobi was sort of like going to the dentist. They were just happy to be in the bush, in the remote, rural areas. Whitehouse was one of them. Whereas almost without exception, when I spoke to African Administrators in somewhere like Lodwar they saw it as a punishment. The one thing they wanted to

get the hell out of the place as quickly as possible. And that did not make for good, strategic development and planning. And it meant they didn't try to understand what made the Turkana tick, and why. They tried, in a sense...to encourage settled agriculture down the river [lake] banks and fishing and so on [in contrast to their traditional cattle raising]. And I remember there was a drought about 1965 in the Turkana District in northern Kenya before I went to East Africa. And they set up these 'maskini' or destitute camps along the lake shore, and tried to encourage the Turkana from over-stocking ...and at [//] they set up a little cooperative [Norwegian?? See Hardin]. And they were actually drying the fish and taking it by lorry to eastern Zaire...The Turkana were going out and doing the fishing and getting money for fish they sold to the cooperative. And then we did an evaluation of what they were doing with the money. What were they doing? They were buying camels and goats and cattle and sending the kids off in the bush to tend their animals. That's their whole culture, their way of life. It wasn't fishing. Fishing was just a means to an end. The real end was having the cattle and the camels and the goats...

And then to try to get them to do riparian?? Agriculture – you know there was the Turkwell River and another big river...these were very much seasonal rivers. Upstream there was always water but as they went through the Turkana plain into Lake Turkana, slowly they would dry out during the dry season. And what they were trying to do during the dry season where there was enough water was to encourage riverside agriculture. And I went to see one of these schemes in 1970 [laughs] with the head of the irrigation department of the District. Because we went in the dry season, the river was actually dry. But if you dug down there was water underneath, which they do. And they had these donkeys that were lifting the water to irrigate this land. And I [asked]: what's the objective on this land. And he said the objective is to grow vegetables and so on for the Turkana to enjoy. But, he said, to date we've managed to get enough donkeys to lift enough water, to grow enough grass to feed enough donkeys to lift enough water [laughs heartily]. And the Turkana [thought] this was a crazy idea.

They also tried – there was another scheme which with Oxfam we were involved with, which was better. And in a way it did try to meet the cultural and other sort of traditional rights of the people. A lot of the small rivers were very seasonal. The rains would come in on the western side of Turkana toward the Ugandan escarpment. And they would rush down and slowly sink into the river beds and the river beds would run dry...They built a big dam. When the water rushed down into the valley, it would hit the dam, and then they would grade an area of land and build bermes ?? and the water was forced to zig zag around the bermes?? It wouldn't evaporate. And also, they sowed grass seed and the water because it was not rushing down was actually helping nurture and germinate the grass seed. And then they got some good grazing areas. That would be of interest to the Turkana. And they actually took a lot of interest in that.

[Comment: it might also exacerbate the over-grazing in the area, especially around water sources]

The next step was the Turkana would hear that there was great grazing at [place name unclear] and [they would go there with their cattle]. They would charge inand strip the place bare in six weeks. So then they had to start fencing it off and restricting access to it. Then the element of corruption came in: how do I get in there. But at least it was an attempt to think the Turkana are animal husbandry people, they are nomadic grazers. How do we actually get the natural resource of water better regulated to give them what they need. And that seemed a much better idea than trying to grow vegetables down the river bank.

BP It raises a very good point, that development lacked cultural knowledge. And also that there was this divide, as you pointed out, which, when Moi came in, actually you have to admit that the guy does have

a lot of supporters. Maybe only 36%, but its enough to win a plurality [as he did being re-elected President in 1992 and 1997] and very often it's these folks who felt completely unrepresented before.

MH Well, he's got the Kalenjin...who are frightened of the Kikuyu taking over again. And I presume the Luo, if the Kikuyu take over, so they might be sympathetic.

END of Interview.