

“It’s a Battle for Information”: Mau Mau as the Boogeyman of Decolonization¹

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The decades after the Second World War saw the slow dissolution of European colonial empires. This era of decolonization was palpable throughout the world, but the African continent more acutely experienced significant struggles for freedom from foreign rule. Britain was the largest empire after the war, but it began to burst at its seams as its colonies fought for their independence through a variety of means. Throughout the Cold War, the British essentially lost all dominance on the African continent to freedom movements, as did most of the European colonialists. Countries like India managed to break free using non-violent and constitutional means, but for most parts of Africa this was not viable due to the tight colonial grip of the British.

Often European countries resisted these separation struggles with violent and inhumane methods, and due to their position in the world, could forge the narrative as they wished to influence other Europeans and Americans to remain passive about colonialism. The Kenya Colony was one British territorial possession in Africa that began a long fight for self-rule. Kenya’s struggle for independence included an

¹ *Selected Originals - Shadow Over Kenya*, video, (1954; Nairobi: Pathé News), online, <https://www.britishpathe.com/video/selected-original-s-shadow-over-kenya> (Accessed April 14th, 2018).

element of informational warfare, and the country finally prevailed in 1963. A part of this journey to freedom was a rebellion that came to be known as “Mau Mau,” a guerilla resistance to British rule that began in the early 1950s and lasted until independence.² The documentary company Pathé News produced many newsreels during the conflict that help to construct a British narrative that places Mau Mau in the role of the “boogeyman” of the Kenya Colony. The reels in question purposefully created anxiety surrounding the future of the colonies without British rule through a fear-mongering discourse of primitivism and barbarity on the part of Mau Mau against the civilization of the British. This, in effect, demonized Mau Mau in the historical narrative and helped further ideas about race and civilization that propped up colonialism and racial superiority that permeate even until today. This narrative has placed Mau Mau in the “uncivilized” camp, and as such sidelined a legitimate discussion of their movement and its effect on Kenyan history and colonial history more broadly.

The Mau Mau rebellion was most active in the highlands of Kenya in the areas of the Kikuyu people.³ Native populations slowly lost their land and the British put them into worsening economic positions during the decades of British rule as white settlers increasingly occupied the highlands

² David Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged: The Dirty War in Kenya and the End of Empire*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2005), 4.

³ Caroline Elkins, *Imperial Reckoning: The Untold Story of Britain’s Gulag in Kenya*, (New York: Henry and Holt Company, 2005).

and utilized native Africans as cheap labor. The colonists did this by forcing the Kikuyu to vacate land and then taxing them heavily, resulting in their being relegated to a continuous source of cheap labor. Mau Mau was a mass movement on the part of native Kenyans from many different groups who all began to resist British colonial rule through raids, attacks, assassinations, and sabotage.

The Kenyan colonial government declared a state of emergency in October of 1952, and it was then that the “Kenya Emergency” began.⁴ The British effectively instituted a gulag system, essentially imprisoning native Kenyans and forcing them to work, in accordance with their philosophy of divide and rule, which had placed captured Mau Mau and their sympathizers in forced labor camps throughout the colony. By the end of 1954, “the detainee population had risen to over fifty-two thousand – an increase of 2,500 percent from the beginning of the year.”⁵ This British repression of and hostility towards the Mau Mau, as well as Mau Mau’s resistance and attacks, continued until shortly after the Kenyans attained autonomy in 1963.

Throughout the conflict, the British could release news from the colony to the metropole and abroad through traditional means such as newsreels and newspaper articles. The Mau Mau had no such ability to influence public opinion, and little if any

way to change the narrative shipped abroad by the British. This means that much of the reporting during this time was biased against the Mau Mau, and highlights the atrocities they committed such as the murder of settlers and chiefs. However, historians such as Caroline Elkins and David Anderson have worked in recent years to bring to light the system of oppression and the atrocities the British committed as they combatted Mau Mau. Thus, it is integral to the history of Mau Mau to discuss the news and propaganda surrounding them at the time of their activities. It is clear from such discussion that race and its relationship to being civilized shaped much of public and international opinion on Mau Mau.

The international reception of Mau Mau can best be understood in the context of African-Americans during this period and the way they discussed, embraced, and shied away from this violent struggle for independence. In his work *Mau Mau in Harlem?*, historian Gerald Horne lays out how America’s burgeoning civil rights movement was inexorably related to the movement for Kenyan liberation. He writes about the ways in which black Americans looked to Mau Mau and Kenya favorably for a method of combating racial inequality. The title of the book was drawn from a Malcom X speech in which he called for a Mau Mau-like uprising in the U.S.⁶ Horne’s work discusses the broad connection between the situation in Kenya and the

⁴ Ibid, 35-6.

⁵ Ibid, 131.

⁶ Gerald Horne, *Mau Mau in Harlem? The U.S. and the Liberation of Kenya*, (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2009), 3.

African-American reaction to it, and mainly shows the ways in which black America felt comfortable embracing Mau Mau for what they represented.

However, the other side of this discussion reveals the ways in which African-American organizations and leaders condemned or refuted Mau Mau ideology based on their methods and the other side of the decolonization struggle they represented. The historical work *Proudly We Can Be Africans: Black Americans and Africa, 1935-1961* discusses the ways in which black America reacted to Mau Mau and highlights the backlash the movement created. The author, James H. Meriwether, recounts the narrative in the African-American press and highlights the negative press Mau Mau received due to their use of violence.⁷ He also points out an important reason this may have been. He writes about a response by the press to a massacre, stating, “The Kenyan government invited reporters to the gruesome scene to witness the carnage, and their press reports and photographs helped to paint a portrait of Mau Mau savagery.”⁸ Here it is evident that the African-American press, while generally sympathetic, did not have the same outright support of the Mau Mau uprising as individuals like Malcom X. This was due to the white government and press forging the Mau Mau’s narrative through informational exclusion or inclusion based on their desired

effect. This is reflected as well in the fact that in 1953, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) condemned the Mau Mau for their “terrorist methods.”⁹ This position was partly influenced by the news surrounding Mau Mau but also by the United States government who dictated that support of Mau Mau meant support of communism, a connection that was not based in reality.¹⁰

Knowledge of those who decide the predominant narrative is key to understanding the relationship between the average African-American and the Mau Mau. There were many mediators between information and the public, who all helped to create a narrative that even affected the black American perception of this movement. The government, entertainment media, and news were all affected by the informational warfare committed against Mau Mau. That is not to say there was no truth in what these groups were reporting, but their methods of reporting and intentional exclusion of information illustrates the narrative they created around the Kenya Emergency. The reach of this narrative was evident in the reaction of the African-American community, as more militant groups would accept that narrative even with the aggrandizement of violence. Moderates and conservatives were much more apprehensive to fully embrace Mau Mau and their representation abroad.

⁷ James H. Meriwether, *Proudly We Can Be Africans: Black Americans and Africa, 1935-1961*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 135-138.

⁸ Ibid, 136.

⁹ Ibid, 141.

¹⁰ Horne, *Mau Mau in Harlem?*, 115.

There were many moving parts in the information campaign against Mau Mau, not least of which was the emerging field of video news in the form of newsreels. The company Pathé News produced many newsreels during this period and has uploaded most of their collection of English news videos to the site www.Britishpathe.com. This collection contains Pathé newsreels about the Mau Mau and the Kenya Emergency, including a segment with a speech by Sir Evelyn Baring, the Governor of Kenya during this period.¹¹ These segments are invaluable to a discussion of the informational efforts made to combat the Mau Mau by the British and the discourse surrounding the struggle. The newsreels likely would have been played before movies and served as a form of video news for the British audience. While the newsreels presented were only a small proportion of the total news about Mau Mau, they still contain the general language of primitivism and civilization that can be seen throughout the discussion of Mau Mau at that time.

The seminal film in the collection is a speech by the Governor of Kenya, Sir Evelyn Baring titled *Selected Originals - Shadow Over Kenya 1954*. Baring's speech is laden with the rhetoric of the period about Mau Mau. Baring opens with the following statement,

I should say that everybody in Kenya, that is to say whether European, or whether they

are Asian, or whether they are African, who are reasonable and have a decent outlook on life, are faced with a threat. A threat in the limited area of the country, and a threat from one of the many African peoples in Kenya only. But all the same it is a serious threat. I think that threat has come about by the result of a conspiracy. A conspiracy that has been laid very deeply and has spread very wide and has been organized by a comparatively small number of very clever and very ruthless men, whose aim without any doubt whatever, was to obtain part of themselves.¹²

Baring's call for people "who are reasonable and have a decent outlook on life," regardless of race, allows him to shift the discussion from a worldview that posits white settlers are the cause of violence to one that posits fellow Africans are the cause of Africa's struggles. It also makes the point, then, that colonialism and all its trappings are "reasonable" as opposed to the "indecent" outlook of the native Kenyans. This thread of focusing on the Mau Mau as the instigators of violence against Africans is woven throughout the collection and highlights a key way that British officials and press managed to essentially project white abuse of native Kenyans onto African-on-African violence.

This narrative is one that framed the violence committed by Mau Mau against

¹¹ *Selected Originals - Shadow Over Kenya*, video.

¹² Ibid.

African loyalists as exceptional. It was also an attempt to garner support from the international community against Mau Mau due to their attacking their own people. This rhetoric went hand-in-hand with casting the war in Kenya as one that would cause the downfall of the empire. David Anderson in his 2005 work *Histories of the Hanged* addresses the perception of the war as one against whites, saying that: “Contrary to public perception, only thirty-two European settlers died in the rebellion, and there were fewer than two hundred casualties among the British regiments and police who served in Kenya over these years.”¹³ He then goes on the state that there were 1,800 African loyalist citizens killed and over 12,000 Mau Mau killed over the rebellion, which far outweighs European losses in both civilian and military capacity.¹⁴ Pitting Africans against Africans using the divide and rule method and then using the outcome of that mode of operation to justify why their enemies are barbaric is simply devious.

This tactic can be seen in the newsreels that are dedicated to the horrific Lari Massacre of March 1953. This incident was a Mau Mau attack on the loyalist citizens of the community of Lari, where 120 Kikuyu loyalists, mostly women and children, were killed in a surprise attack that targeted the families of prominent leaders and chiefs who opposed Mau Mau.¹⁵ This event itself has consistently been seen as an important turning point in the revolt by

¹³ David Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged: The Dirty War in Kenya and the End of Empire*, 4.

¹⁴ Ibid, 4.

¹⁵ Ibid, 126-131.

historians such as Anderson and Elkins, but the coverage of this event by Pathé News is not the kind of balanced assessment seen in Anderson’s work, which gives a full history of the tension leading up to the massacre as well as details that allow a serious inspection of such an event.¹⁶ There are two reels in question: one titled *The Mark Of The Mau Mau – Exclusive*, the other titled *Mau Mau – Lari Massacre Trial*. The second piece is a twenty-five second segment that simply states that a trial is about to take place for twenty-six individuals accused of having “brutally done to death” the victims of the Lari massacre.¹⁷ The first, however, is a full display of the carnage of Lari as well as the justice being doled out by British government officials in the trial.

The exclusive segment titled *The Mark of Mau Mau* goes into brutal detail about the victims, how they are suffering, and gives first hand reporting from the cameraman. This is extremely insightful, as the cameraman, William McConville, gives his reaction as a British citizen seeing this kind of news. As images of the accused prisoners roll across the screen, the announcer reads off McConville’s account which describes the prisoners as they “sat in their wire compounds, sullen and quiet.” The reel continues with pictures of women waiting to testify and the men being led into the court. McConville then expresses the intended anti-Mau Mau sentiment when he

¹⁶ Ibid, section titled “A Deeper History,” 139.

¹⁷ *Mau Mau – Lari Massacre Trial*, video, (1953; Nairobi: Pathé News), online, <https://www.britishpathe.com/video/mau-mau-lari-massacre-trial> (Accessed April 14th, 2018).

says, “Then the prisoners were marched to the courthouse, and for the first time I felt some pity for them, even if they were guilty, as they shuffled handcuffed together towards the dock. Later, when I had seen the victims of the Lari massacre for myself, there was not pity in my heart.”¹⁸ This set up for the exclusive and first-hand reporting for Pathé shows the way the reporter and the government wanted the Lari massacre to be portrayed, as the lead in builds false sympathy for Mau Mau rebels before solidifying the opinion on their barbarity and savagery.

The second half of the reel has McConville visiting the hospital treating the victims. This is a gruesome and horrendous video, showing small children in body casts, injured women, and even one small child with deformed face from the fires the Mau Mau had lit in the huts when they attacked. The reel, as expected, portrays the horror of the attack and the victims being treated by the white hospital staff, as well as the loyal Kikuyu who came to donate blood even with the Mau Mau death threats against collaborators. This all culminates in our narrator McConville changing his stance after the music crescendos and shots of the same prisoners in the dock are shown. He says, “No, there was no pity in my heart. If these were the murderers, then I like all in Kenya would expect swift justice. Too long has this proud and faithful land suffered from the Mau Mau’s crusade of evil. Justice

¹⁸ *The Mark Of The Mau Mau – Exclusive*, video, (1953; Nairobi: Pathé News), online, <https://www.britishpathe.com/video/the-mark-of-the-mau-mau-exclusive> (Accessed April 14th, 2018).

must, and will, be done.”¹⁹ The rhetoric changes completely by the end of the reel. What starts as potentially unbiased reporting is shaken to the core, and it is now palpably anti-Mau Mau. That is not surprising under the circumstances, but the feelings conjured up by the Lari Massacre were subsequently channeled into strong support of the anti-Mau Mau movement.

Anderson summarizes the propaganda use of the Lari Massacre quite aptly and the Pathé News reporting fits right into his model. He writes that “At Lari, Mau Mau became something evil, to be despised and detested. This was how Mau Mau would forever be remembered.”²⁰ This was a passive process that eventually entered the discourse more seriously. If Lari marks the time when Mau Mau tale became one of “primitive barbarism,” as Anderson argues, then this sort of discourse should also be more prevalent in newsreels in the Pathé collection that were produced after March 1953, when the massacre occurred. Most of the reels in the collection, including the two above about the trial and the hospital, were produced after the Lari Massacre. That timeline of the sources possibly shows a growing interest in the conflict as that is when Pathé News sent McConville to report.

These newsreels, however, show the opposite of what Anderson suggests, as it just proves that discourse on primitivism was present before the Lari Massacre, and simply continued with possibly more fervor

¹⁹ *The Mark Of The Mau Mau – Exclusive*.

²⁰ Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged*, 177.

after. When watched in chronological order, the reels show a trend not of an increase in primitivist rhetoric, but rather of an uptick in the use of the moniker “terrorists” to describe Mau Mau, as well as more usage of the term “evil.”²¹ Anderson is therefore correct in saying that this is when Mau Mau became synonymous with “evil” in the news. Also of interest is that other terms to identify Mau Mau in the news were often “murderers” or occasionally “gang,” both of which carry a less organized or ideological motivation than “terrorist.”²² While the moniker “terrorist” may point to a sort of respect of the Mau Mau or a deeper understanding of their operations, it is more likely that it was simply used to drum up more fear from viewers. The primitivist and paternalistic tones come through strongest in the earliest two reels, *Mau Mau Disorders in Kenya* and the first *Lyttleton in Kenya*, both made and released in 1952 at the beginning of the conflict.²³

²¹ In the 12 videos with sound, the term terrorist is used more consistently after the Lari Massacre, and the term evil appears in three videos after the Massacre and not once before.

²² *Kenya Report*, video, (1953); *Mau Mau Victims Funeral*, video, (1953); *Mau Mau - Lari Massacre Trial*, video, (1953); and *The Mark Of The Mau Mau – Exclusive*, video, (1953); (Nairobi: Pathé News), online, <https://www.britishpathe.com> (Accessed April 14th, 2018).

²³ *Mau Mau Disorders In Kenya*, video, (1952; Nairobi: Pathé News), online, <https://www.britishpathe.com/video/mau-mau-disorders-in-kenya> (Accessed April 14th, 2018), & *Lyttleton in Kenya*, video, (1952; Nairobi: Pathé News), online, <https://www.britishpathe.com/video/lyttleton-in-kenya-a-1> (Accessed April 14th, 2018).

The Pathé News newsreels contain language and rhetoric surrounding the Lari Massacre that continued the focus on African-on-African violence as a part of the strategy of divide and rule. Thus, it is next important to examine the most overtly racist language of the reels. The earliest reel in the collection, titled *Mau Mau Disorders in Kenya*, is a rundown of the beginning of the conflict, when important loyalist chieftains were killed. If the use of the easy-going term “disorders” is not enough to show that at this point the British government was not too concerned about this conflict, the reel also labels Kenya as simply a “troubled colony.”²⁴ This segment also calls Mau Mau a “band of fanatics” and a “secret society.”²⁵ This all points to a lack of gravity on the British side about Mau Mau at this point and shows they still hoped that Kenya would come under control again after some minor policing action. The second reel, however, takes on a more patronizing and paternalistic tone and has overt racist language.

Lyttleton in Kenya is the story of the Colonial Secretary for the British government, Oliver Lyttleton, visiting Kenya to assess the problem of the “fanatical natives.”²⁶ He tours the capital of Kenya, Nairobi, and visits African workers and elders. The narration for the video, however, shows the mindset of the colonial government and white British colonists about the situation of colonialism and the

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ *Mau Mau Disorders In Kenya*.

²⁶ *Lyttleton in Kenya*.

increasing resistance to white minority rule. The narrative is that,

“Britain has brought much good to Kenya; her standards of living are growing still higher as more of her people learn the lessons that the white man has to teach. But if the Mau Mau were to succeed in their mission, then the natives fear their colony may return to its former primitive state.”²⁷

This language is classic imperialist paternalism. It has a tone akin to a father speaking about an unruly child, saying that at the end of the day the Kenyans will recognize the benefit of their subjugation and be willing to submit to authority. This is willfully ignorant of the history of land appropriation and the continual abuse of native Kenyans. This narrative does change over time, as the reels for Pathé News after the first two released usually lack any explicitly racist rhetoric, or literally attempt to counter the argument.

In the official reel *Shadow Over Kenya*, which has a snippet of Sir Evelyn Baring’s speech, the announcer attempts to counter claims of developmental negligence on the part of the British. After Baring speaks only a few lines of his longer speech, the announcer says that “Vicious plans have been made to aid the African and to build a new future for him. The criticism that Europeans ignore the welfare of Africans is being countered by a higher standard of

living.”²⁸ This language is like the segment above, which places the weight of the civilization-dole onto the shoulders of Europeans for the “betterment” of Africans. The reel states that its goal is to counter any criticism of the regime by showing their improvements in the next few shots, including that “new homes replace the shacks,” with those new homes looking quite redolent of a tenement apartment building. The language of paternalistic responsibility, development, and civilization are all laden with racist undertones that are all too prevalent during this period, and these reels are just a few of the ways that British citizens and others abroad got their information about Kenya and Mau Mau.

However, the reels do reveal the extent to which Mau Mau was viewed as more and more evil over time by both the creators of the news and, by extension, those viewing the segments. In the later reel, *Amnesty Offered to Mau Mau*, Governor Baring goes to a meeting of tribal Kikuyu leaders in “traditional costumes” to offer Mau Mau members amnesty and let the Kikuyu loyalists know he is doing this (to note: Baring, usually seen in a suit, is wearing a bright white military governor uniform). This is apparently not well received by the Kikuyu leaders, who are supposed to have compared this amnesty to “offering Hitler an amnesty in 1943.”²⁹ This

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ *Shadow Over Kenya*, video, (1954; Nairobi: Pathé News), online, <https://www.britishpathe.com/video/the-shadow-over-kenya> (Accessed April 14th, 2018).

²⁹ *Amnesty Offered To Mau Mau*, video, (1955; Nairobi: Pathé News), online,

stance from the loyalists likely echoed many people's sentiments at this point in the conflict, as all the news that has been coming out of Kenya has been about atrocities like the Lari Massacre. This language actually "advances" the Mau Mau away from simple "bandits"³⁰ to a well-organized European group akin to the Nazis.

When viewing the Pathé collection, the actual rhetoric is extremely useful as it is exactly what the reel wanted the audience to hear, but the visual side of video news is just as important for their message. There are many videos that have not yet entered this exploration because they lack sound. These videos are extra film that did not make it into the official reel and are basically a collection of excess footage of the Emergency. It is easy to see that in most videos that made it into the theaters, the imagery is often of grateful Africans, native Kenyans in their villages, and colonial officials watching them do a traditional dance while standing uncomfortably on the side in their suits.³¹ These images were meant to invoke ideas of African "backwardness," and when Africans in modern clothes were shown, it was during the trials and the segments about how Europeans were improving their lives. The imagery was not shown, however, would tell

<https://www.britishpathe.com/video/amnesty-offered-to-mau-mau> (Accessed April 14th, 2018).

³⁰ *Mau Mau Disorders In Kenya*, video.

³¹ *Lyttleton in Kenya*, video, (1954; Nairobi: Pathé News), online, <https://www.britishpathe.com/video/lyttelton-in-kenya> (Accessed April 14th, 2018).

an entirely different story of the Kenya colony.

There are two reels that did not make the cut into the theaters, likely due to the level of militancy it showed on the part of the British in Kenya. The films, one labeled "*Operation Anvil*" in Nairobi and the other *Operations Against Mau Mau*, both contain footage of troops in the field. "*Operation Anvil*" refers to the military and policing operation carried out in which thousands of Mau Mau supporters or suspected sympathizers were rounded up in Nairobi and arrested, then moved to the early stages of what became the gulag system.³² The reel itself shows this mass arrest being carried out as thousands of troops move through the city. The camera captures the clearing of buildings, Africans being rounded up, and prisoners being processed.³³ It makes sense that none of this footage would find its way into the news going out of Kenya, as that was not the kind of optic that the Kenya Colonial Government wanted of the situation. The other film shows British troops going through villages and rounding up suspects, as well as patrolling the forests.³⁴ Both reels are not seen in any other report in the collection, indicating that there may be more official releases out there, or

³² Elkins, *Imperial Reckoning*, 121-125.

³³ "*Operation Anvil*" in Nairobi, video, (1954; Nairobi: Pathé News), online, <https://www.britishpathe.com/video/operation-anvil-in-nairobi> (Accessed April 14th, 2018).

³⁴ *Operations Against Mau Mau*, video, (1954; Nairobi: Pathé News), online, <https://www.britishpathe.com/video/operations-against-mau-mau> (Accessed April 14th, 2018).

perhaps this footage was not made into any actual reporting on this side of the conflict.

The most obvious set of footage that highlights the informational campaign's one-sided nature is an appalling reel titled *British M.P's In Kenya*. This reel coincides with the visit of a party of M.Ps led by Walter Elliot mentioned in *Shadow Over Kenya*, so this footage did not make it into that segment nor did it warrant a segment of its own. It shows the group visiting the countryside, but more impressively it has footage of the prisons in which the Mau Mau fighters and sympathizers had been placed. There are shots of an M.P. talking to prisoners through a fence, prisoners doing hard labor, and aerial shots of the prison complex.³⁵ This is a side of the Kenya emergency that never made it into the public perception of the conflict. Elkins calls this system of prisons the “untold story” of the Mau Mau Uprising in Kenya, and the fact that this footage was produced but intentionally hidden backs up that claim. So, for all the rhetoric, imagery, and defense the Pathé News collection included for the British side, what the agency excluded at the time is almost more telling of their complicity with the creation of the British narrative of Mau Mau.

As Sir Evelyn Baring says in his speech for Pathé News, “It’s a battle for information.”³⁶ Sir Baring was referencing

³⁵ *British M.P's in Kenya*, video, (1954; Nairobi: Pathé News), online, <https://www.britishpathe.com/video/british-m-ps-in-kenya> (Accessed April 14th, 2018).

³⁶ *Selected Originals - Shadow Over Kenya 1954*, video.

the idea that Kikuyu needed to come forward and report on their fellow tribesmen so the British could root out Mau Mau, but as always, his words bear more weight in the face of their history. The narrative created by the British and continued by news organizations around the world was not untruthful. The press laid out facts and reported information they had. What the news did that made the narrative questionable was omit, exaggerate, and utilize language that would create anxiety and fear in both Africans and Europeans.

The reach this discourse and reporting had abroad was evident in the reaction of the African-American community, as even their press grappled with the reports coming out of Kenya. The employment of words like evil, terrorist, development, and primitive all have shaped public perception of the Mau Mau movement more than any firsthand accounts from members or Kenyans since. The collection is one of propaganda, which based its appeal to fear using racial ideas and the looming threat of loss of power in Africa. The British citizens who consumed these reels participated in a system of oppression that still permeates society. This system labeled anyone fighting for freedom in Africa as extremist and inhuman. The power of news, especially video news, is something that the world is grappling with today, and the example of the Mau Mau narrative can still serve as a guide in the 21st century as we confront issues affecting post-colonial populations and other race-based schisms in modern societies.

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