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APR 6 1949

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# Not Just Peanuts



British Inform. Service

Published in June 1948 by  
BRITISH INFORMATION SERVICES  
*An Agency of the British Government*



30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York 20, N. Y.  
907 Fifteenth Street, N.W., Washington 5, D.C.  
39 South La Salle Street, Chicago 3  
310 Sansome Street, San Francisco 4



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Printed in U. S. A.



# *Not Just Peanuts*

THE STORY OF  
BRITAIN'S GREAT AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT  
IN EAST AFRICA



*1948*

BRITISH INFORMATION SERVICES

NEW YORK



*African trainee*

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*Arrayed for battle: bulldozers in the Kongwa area vehicle park*



# *Not Just Peanuts*

1

*A* battle has begun in Tanganyika Territory in East Africa that is expected to spread over thousands of square miles of that land and to affect the lives of East Africans, residents of Great Britain, and eventually the whole world. Modified tanks, bulldozers, and other implements of war are on the field, battle lines have been laid down, and the first 10,000 of the peak army of 100,000 are now assembled and engaged in combat.

The enemy is nature, in the form of wild, uncultivated soil covered with stubborn bush; insect life, that has driven away men and cattle; and climate, which has bred inhabitants who have made few gains in their own battles against nature.

When the enemy is tamed and brought to work for man instead of against him, East Africa will have a series of vast mechanized peanut farms of some three and one-quarter million acres (over 5,000 square miles) and the world will have an extra three-quarter million tons of peanuts yearly to help fill the great gap between the present world supply and demand for edible fats and oils. This will mean more margarine, cooking oil, and salad oil for hungry people; more soap; and added meal for cattle, now particularly short in Great Britain. Even more important, the countries of East Africa, now relatively undeveloped and isolated from the rest of the world, will be

better equipped to help Western Europe get on its feet economically and themselves acquire the economic basis of future self-government.

The peanut scheme resembles military warfare in many ways: it is daring, success will be difficult, and the effects are likely to be breath-taking. But unlike other battles, it attempts to build up and create instead of tearing down and destroying.

In terms of size, it will form out of desolate, mainly uninhabited land, a series of farms larger than the acreage of peanuts picked and threshed in the whole of the United States in 1947. In terms of money, the British Treasury, i.e., the British taxpayer, is likely to spend considerably more than the original estimate of £25,500,000 (\$102,000,000) over a period of six years, though in the long run the business will more than pay for itself. In terms of extra supplies of fats and oils, it is expected that each person in Britain (who now receives eight ounces of fats weekly under a strictly rationed system) will, when the peanut farms are in full swing, get 35 per cent more fats than at present. In terms of benefits to the Africans, the hopes are that their hoe and ox economy will be transformed into large-scale, mechanized farming; that their increased income will make possible higher standards of living and better social services; and that eventually, through education and training, they will be able to assume control of the undertaking themselves.

The difficulty of winning this great battle can best be understood by inspecting the battleground and the inhabitants of the country who will furnish most of the army.


2

## *The Land Chosen*

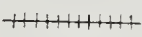
The field is Tanganyika and Northern Rhodesia, whose total areas are somewhat larger than those of Texas, California, Nevada, and Utah combined. Ninety-seven farm units are already planned there, each unit to equal 30,000 acres or about seven square miles. Tanganyika will have four-fifths


Miles

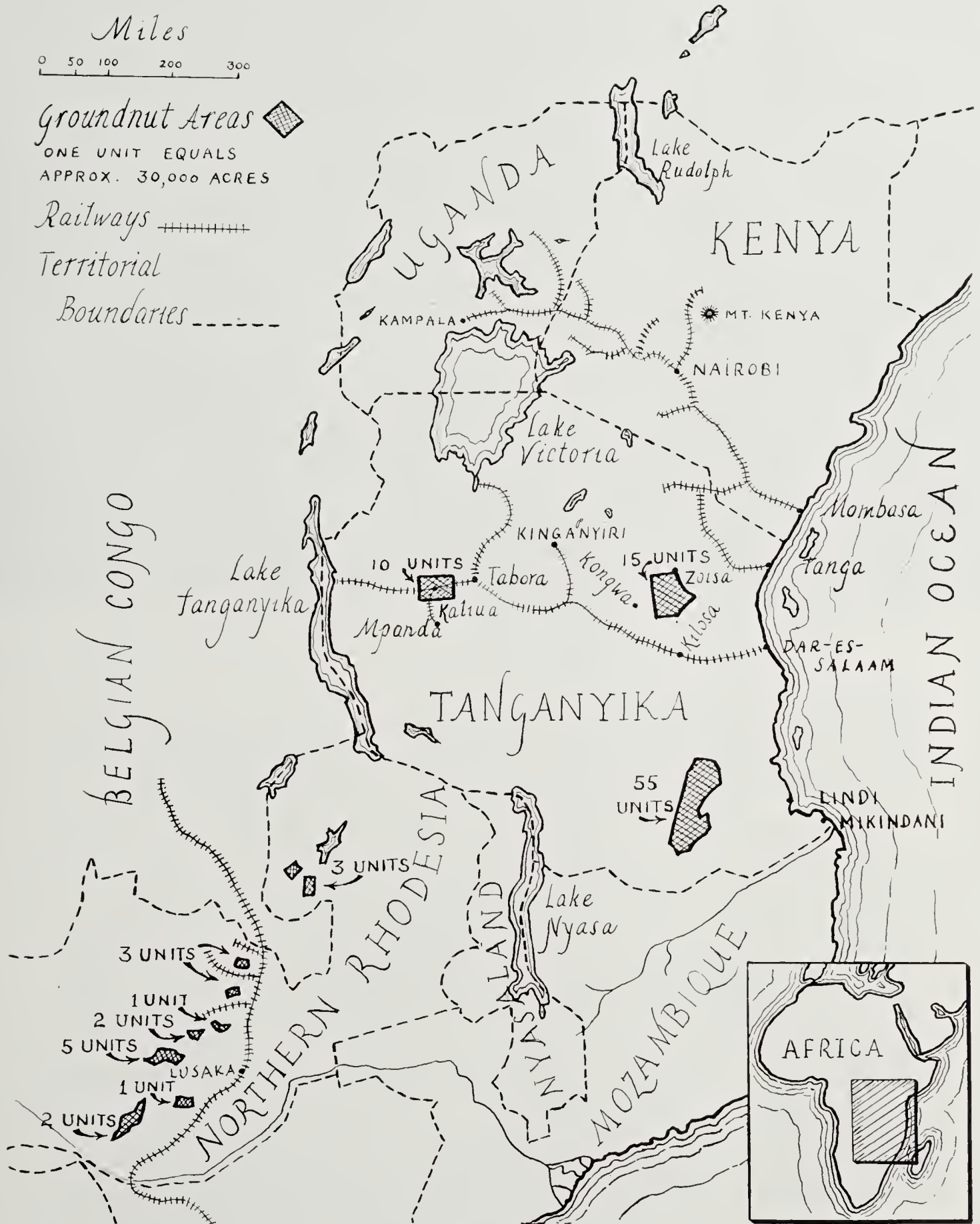
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Groundnut Areas 

ONE UNIT EQUALS  
APPROX. 30,000 ACRES

Railways 

Territorial  
Boundaries 





*. . . the enemy is nature*

of the whole area, and Northern Rhodesia the rest, though further sections in both of these countries, as well as a few in Kenya, may be chosen.

A visitor today finds the greatest activity in the vicinity of Kongwa, in the Central Province of Tanganyika, where the first area was chosen for development. This 15-unit plot is 240 miles from the east coast port of Dar-es-Salaam and sixteen miles north of the main line of the central Tanganyika railway. While the countryside is generally flat, there are a number of hills rising to 5,000 feet, with the Kiboriani Range in the southeast. The plains are thickly covered with thorny, often impenetrable bush, possessed of strong, stubborn roots, and the red soil resembles the surface of a hard tennis court, dry and porous, with a tendency to drain quickly. In the dry season the bush is covered with dust, the country burns brown, and whirlwinds of dust, hundreds of feet high, roll over the plains. In the rainy season, the forested sections are colored with flowers, and convolvulus climbing over the baobab and umbrella trees.

Roads, in the European sense, did not exist in the area before the beginning of the peanut scheme. Kongwa had one, so-called, that was little

more than a wagon track which usually disappeared with the rush of water down from the hills in the rainy season.

Kongwa's native inhabitants are Wagogo, or tribesmen of the Central Province of Tanganyika. They live in squat, flat-roofed huts, mud-walled and thatched and often surrounded by plots of sorghum, millet, and maize. Life for the Mugogo (that is, a man of the Wagogo tribe) and his family has remained almost unchanged from that of his father and grandfather and great-grandfather. For clothes the man wears a loin cloth and cowhide sandals to protect his feet when he goes into the prickly underbrush. His wife winds a yard or so of black cloth around her waist like a skirt, and the small children go naked. Africans working at the hospitals and mission houses usually adopt European dress; men learning to drive the bulldozers and other machines connected with the Kongwa farm may have shirts and shorts, like their European teachers, although many can boast only of burlap bags and blankets with armholes cut into them.

During the dry season (from early May to mid-November) the Mugogo looks after his few cattle, sometimes searching for pasture land miles away from his home. After the rains he repairs his house, cultivates his small garden of maize and millet, peanuts, sweet potatoes, or beans, with plenty of time left over for leisure and visiting with relatives and neighbors.

This simple existence is accompanied by primitive social customs, reliance on witch doctors by those who have not gone to school or been in contact with missions and hospitals, and high infant mortality and disease rates.

What is happening to this land and these people? How goes the battle?

3*How Goes the Battle?*

“Looking out of my window at Kongwa, I could see a valley that less than twelve months ago carried nothing but wild animals and a few natives grazing cattle. In that short time, regardless of incredible difficulties and disappointments, the whole vista has changed.”

So reported a British farmer on a B.B.C. broadcast one day in the spring of 1948 after a tour of inspection of the Kongwa area.

First of all, paths are cut through the virgin bush by bulldozers, which eventually carve the area into mile-square patches of thorn, surrounded by a road. Then the thorn is cleared, as well as the baobab trees, which sometimes grow ten feet in diameter, six to ten per acre. Terracing and contouring follow, then plowing and harrowing, planting and fertilizing.

The British farmer went on:

“Planting starts with a battery of ten African drivers drawing disc harrows, with a European leader. Six hours a day is their tour of duty—sufficient for anyone in the tropical sun with the dust rising in clouds. Then the combine-planters get on the job. I watched the African drivers at work, and their standard under extremely trying conditions is very high.”

Since his visit the scene has changed still more, for the first crop was gathered in May, when the yield was taken from 7,500 acres planted in December. The peanuts were plowed out and left on the stalks to dry in the windrows, then threshed by combine.

Not unexpectedly there were many hitches during the first months, chief of which were (1) shipping the needed heavy tractors and bulldozers to East Africa and thence to Kongwa, and (2) maintaining them once they reached the spot where they were to clear the bush and dig the roots. Since new equipment was not available, the managing agents had bought secondhand machines wherever they could, chiefly on the beaches of the Philippines and Hawaii, where the tractors had already taken part in the Pacific war.

Once the tractors were at work, they needed considerably more maintenance than new vehicles. To top it all, the extensive, tough and pliable roots of the Kongwa thorns and the many stumps of baobab trees would not yield to the normal rooting machines towed by tractors and it took weeks of experimenting to find a method of dealing with them.

By early March, 1948, over 400 tractors had arrived in Tanganyika, as well as 200 new Massey Harris tractors from Canada. In fact, the agents have now bought up more equipment than actually can be used immediately, because the surplus war stores could be purchased very cheaply, mostly for less than half their original cost.

An example of the ingenious utilization of apparently useless vehicles is the adaptation of the Sherman tank, of which many should soon be at work. The Sherman's armor has been removed, and the reconstructed machine, called the Shervick heavy tractor, has passed rigid tests and proved its value.



*Cut scrub is bulldozed to form windbreaks*

Three hundred and fifty of these otherwise useless tanks have been ordered for the later phases of the project.

A wide range of other kinds of machinery and equipment has been obtained: landing craft and cranes; jeeps and lorries; many kinds of tools; workshops; equipment for engineering the water supply; drugs and surgical stores; surveying materials; tents, huts, furniture, household and sanitary supplies; and building and electrical stores.

On the basis of the planting of seven small trial plots in January, 1947, the staff estimated that the average yield of hulled nuts over the whole area in 1947 would have been better than 900 lbs. per acre, even though some of the plots were on soils of low fertility. This is a considerable improvement over the estimates made before the work started, when 750 lbs. per acre was assumed to be average. The most fertile of the experimental plots yielded 1,580 lbs. per acre.

Although the cost of equipment has risen during the past year, a substantial increase in the selling price of peanuts has also occurred and is likely to hold for some years. It was originally thought that the peanut oil

would go for £30 (\$120) a ton. Now the price has advanced to nearly £70 (\$280). If such conditions obtain when supplies are placed on the market, the financial profit in the venture will have gone up, despite higher production costs.

One hidden asset not anticipated when the program was planned turns out to be the presence in Tanganyika of hardwood timber suitable for furniture and similar purposes. Sawmill machinery is being shipped to the area, and timber promises to be an important and valuable by-product of the clearing operations.

Working at Kongwa is proving unexpectedly attractive to the Africans, and there have been instances of men walking as far as 150 miles to join the staff. The labor force has been fairly static, though some of the men, when they accumulate a little money, tend to go away and spend it. It has been a welcome surprise, however, to discover the comparatively high

*A temporary cook-house area: mess tins and a spoon are issued to each man*



standards of skill and output of the African labor coming from primitive tribes, and with only a few months of training.

Some immediate, direct effects in the lives of those around Kongwa are already apparent, even though the full program of health, social, and educational development cannot be introduced until the farming stages are reached and the community becomes fairly settled. Medical services now exist in the Kongwa hospital, where there have already been over 20,500 attendances by African staff. This first of five such hospitals resembles a base hospital in a theatre of military operations. It has a fully equipped operating theatre, 200 beds, an ex-Royal Army Medical Corps surgeon, and plenty of African patients, for the novelty of hospital services continues to attract the curious as well as the ailing. Thirty-four medical appointments have been made, including doctors, nurses, health visitors, and a radiographer. Some of the 200 Africans chosen as medical auxiliaries and nursing staff have completed their training.

Each of the ninety-seven units in the project will be provided with a center for housing, medical care, nutrition and welfare, and also most of its staple foodstuffs. After hospitals, on the building list, come cook-houses and stores, and after that, living quarters.

During the first months at Kongwa, both the European and African staffs lived in tents. When their permanent buildings are completed, one family or three bachelors will occupy each house, placed on a plot of one-third of an acre. The first village is under way.

A dramatic episode occurred in the autumn of 1947 in the remote area designated for farms in Southern Tanganyika. A severe smallpox epidemic attacked the African population, with a mortality rate of 80 per cent of those contracting the disease. Previously only three medical men had served a tremendous area, and so far no doctor had reached this advance post. There was a sanitary inspector, however, of great energy and resolution, who, in a few weeks vaccinated over 11,000 Africans, and broke the course of the epidemic. This is a spectacular example of the impact of twentieth century medical methods on a primitive culture.

The Chief Education Officer took up his duties early this year. The system used in the Indian Army during the war, when hundreds of thousands of recruits were rapidly taught English, will be used on the farms in teaching African workers and their families. Britain is also receiving United Nations assistance in developing programs of education and social welfare. UNESCO is going to send a consultant to assist in developing plans,



*The first hospital resembles a base hospital in a theatre of military operations*

and will, in turn, share in the results of the British experiments, so that the material can be widely used in mass education programs.

The first demand for training Africans occurred when drivers for tractors and trucks were needed. The school taught 500 Africans to drive clearing tractors and 240 to drive agricultural tractors proficiently in a few months. Only very small proportions failed to qualify. Since 80,000 Tanganyikans had been Askaris (African soldiers) during the war, many on the farms had a head start in mechanical work, although other trainees had to be retaught from the beginning. With increased training facilities, the project will draw on the native population for skilled artisans like carpenters, plumbers, masons, electricians, and fitters.

In his own farming, the African plows to a depth of four inches, turning up the light soil in a layer that blows and washes away until the farmer is forced to move on and cultivate another plot, in the same fashion. He never uses manures; takes everything from the soil and returns nothing to it.

Soil conservation is of prime importance to those responsible for the

peanut farms. The research and control unit is conducting experiments on the spot into the best methods of crop rotation, soil fertilization, depth plowing, spacing, and time of planting. For some months a Chief Scientific Officer, chemist, soil chemist, agronomist, entomologist, and geologist have been at work. Careful planning to prevent soil erosion already shows results. The whole cleared area has been terraced and contoured at intervals of nine feet, and cut scrub has been bulldozed to horizontal lines nine feet apart to form windbreaks and prevent water run-off.

Seeing these methods of soil conservation, the Africans are, in the words of a recent British visitor, "beginning to understand this erosion problem."

New roads and railways are linking up parts of Tanganyika where wagon lanes or no paths at all have run before. The new 16-mile branch railroad to Kongwa from Msagali on the Central Tanganyika Line was the first necessity, and is completed. Work has begun in the Southern Province on building a port with deep-water berths at Mikindani south of Lindi, and on the 120-mile railway connecting Mikindani with the area to be developed in Southern Tanganyika. The first berth at the fine natural harbor at Mikindani should be completed by the end of this year, and the new port will probably be usable by September, 1949. This will remove some of the heavy burden now borne by Dar-es-Salaam, where for lack of proper wharves all the transport must be done by lighters. The new railway is going to help open up the Tunduru hinterland, an area of tremendous potential economic value.

Extending the work to Southern and Western Tanganyika, where clearing work has begun, will lessen the danger of setbacks caused by drought in any one area.

In this first "experimental year," as Mr. John Strachey, Minister of Food, has called it, a great deal of experience has been gained in a field where there had been no pilot work for production on such a vast mechanized scale. It has not been an easy job for the Europeans or the Africans at Kongwa, particularly the former, who find the climate enervating and the living conditions primitive. However, their spirit of enthusiasm and determination remain high, and visitors all agree that the men on the job have worked wonders. Imaginations have also been fired in London where more than 100,000 men and women have applied for jobs on the project.

A Member of Parliament who has been to Kongwa reported to the House of Commons: "Anybody who has been there could not fail . . .

to pay some personal tribute to the very great work which has been done by the men and women who have been responsible for putting this great idea into execution. There is nothing more remarkable, in looking on this vast virgin forest which has so long defied the efforts of human beings to conquer, than the fact that this gallant little band — and it is still, both black and white, a little band — has made such progress as they have, in the matter of a few months, in taming these great forces of nature. They really deserve the utmost gratitude, both of this Committee and of the nation as a whole.”

Now how does all this fit in with the world picture?

*Piped water was a great luxury*



To the average consumer of peanut butter, salted peanuts, or peanut candy (the three widest uses in the United States) the food has no great significance beyond its agreeable taste. Few realize, for instance, that peanuts are one of the six basic food crops in the United States, that peanut production in the United States is worth three times that of rye, or that as a cash crop, in the state of Georgia, peanuts are a close runner-up to cotton.

Nobody was much interested in cultivating peanuts in the United States until the first years of this century when the arrival of the boll weevil from Mexico compelled Southern farmers to turn some of their attention from cotton to peanuts. In 1909, around 550,000 acres of peanuts were picked and threshed. By the middle years of World War II this figure had increased seven times.

In 1938, the United States was still far from being a leading exporter of peanuts. India, producer of nearly three-quarters of the quantity that entered into world trade, led the list. Senegal, China, Japan, and Nigeria furnished the next largest amounts. The biggest importers were France, Britain, Germany, and the Netherlands, countries which processed the nuts and then (except for Germany) were the largest exporters of peanut oil.

The war brought many changes in production and export patterns. India, the leading pre-war exporter, sent out none in 1946. British East and West Africa (including Nigeria) jumped into first place, followed by French West and Equatorial Africa (including Senegal). China and Japan dropped right out of the picture, leaving the United States in third place, although her exports were not high. The continent of Africa is today supplying most of the world exports of peanuts and peanut oil.

How many people living north of the Mason and Dixon Line would recognize a peanut plant (*Arachis hypogaea*) even if the peanuts on it had come to full maturity? The joke is that the nuts could not be seen, for they grow underground and therefore would not give away the plant's identity.

The peanut is not actually a nut. Rather it is a pea, belonging to the same family of plants as beans and garden peas, and therefore a vegetable.

Also called groundnut, earthnut, monkey nut, goober, and manilla nut, it is the fruit of an annual plant which at first glance looks like a robust clover. It grows to the height of one or two feet, and bears small yellow flowers at the joints where the leaves are attached to the stem. After pollination, the flower withers and the flower stalk elongates, forcing its way underground, where the pod develops some distance below the surface. Thus the soil where it is grown must be light enough to allow this process to take place.

The peanut is one of the most useful vegetables. Aside from being eaten as a fresh vegetable, it is used (outside the United States) primarily in making vegetable oil and oil cake or meal. It is one of the most important of the thirty different trees and plants used commercially for the production of vegetable oil, and produces the highest percentage of oil per acre of all the annual oil seeds.

From peanut oil, four very important products are made: margarine, cooking oil, salad oil and soap. There are other fatty oils that can be used in making margarine, but peanut oil ranks first in importance after cottonseed oil. As a cooking oil, peanut oil is especially suitable for the deep-fat frying of potato chips or French fries, doughnuts, and croquettes, because it can take so much heat before it begins to smoke and scorch, and food can therefore cook thoroughly yet brown satisfactorily on the outside.



*Close-up of lifted peanuts*

In soap-making, too, peanut oil comes second among the fatty oils, being ranked only by palm oil. Britain's need for all these products is revealed by an inspection of her current rations of fats, meat and soap. A normal adult is entitled to eight ounces of fats weekly (four ounces of butter, three ounces of margarine and one ounce of cooking fat), twenty cents' worth of butcher's meat (of which one-sixth must be canned corned meat) and about one-half a medium size cake of hard soap.

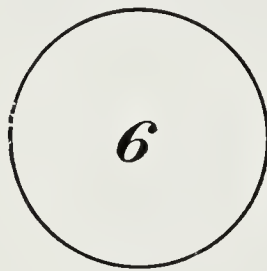
The residue from the peanut kernel contains about 45 per cent protein. This solid residuum, in the form of oil cake or meal, provides excellent cattle food, an item in very short supply in Britain today. Until recently it was believed that cottonseed provided the most valuable oil cake, but there are indications now that peanut meal surpasses it.

In the United States the entire peanut plant is sometimes fed to animals as hay, though usually it is only the tops of the plants. The shells have been thought to be of small commercial value, but in parts of the United States they have been used for fuel, three tons being about equal to one

ton of coal. In recent years research has also developed a cork substitute from the shells, and commercial development is expected before long.

This by no means exhausts the potential world uses for peanuts. The American scientist George Washington Carver discovered some 300 uses for the peanut, though unfortunately we do not possess accurate records for reconstructing all of these. From the peanut, Dr. Carver made experimentally and successfully: cheese, milk, coffee, flour, ink, dyes, wood stains, and insulating board, among hundreds of others.

The protein product of peanuts is suitable for making textile fibers. The Imperial Chemical Industries Ltd. in Britain have developed a wool-like fabric called Ardil, which is now being produced in a pilot factory; this will be in full-scale commercial production within a year. The process uses part of the peanut to make a fine fabric that will not shrink, is impervious to moths, and has unusual strength of fiber. There seems to be no end to the peanut's potentialities!



## *History of the Scheme*

Although some people think that democratic governments move slowly, the planning of the peanut scheme went ahead with surprising speed.

It was only a little over two years ago, in the spring of 1946, that the managing director of the United Africa Company, a commercial firm and subsidiary of Unilever Bros. Ltd., proposed to the British Government a plan for peanut farming in East Africa, whereupon a mission was appointed to visit East Africa and investigate possibilities. In June of that year the mission arrived in East Africa. On September 20 they had given their report to the British Government. By early December the Government had determined to undertake the whole project, and by January, 1947, an advance party of the United Africa Company had pitched its tents in Tanganyika and begun work, less than a year after the initial proposal of the project.



*Africans are being trained in skilled jobs*

Until a public corporation supported by public funds could be established in Britain, the United Africa Company conducted operations, acting as agents for the British Government, and claiming no remuneration for their services. All observers, including Mr. Strachey in the House of Commons, unite in praising them for their courageous and efficient management.

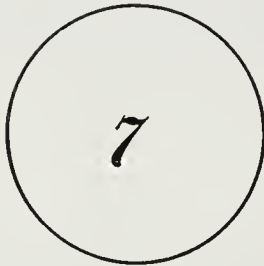
On April 1, 1948, the United Africa Company handed over responsibility to the Overseas Food Corporation, the new Government-sponsored organization established under the *Overseas Resources Development Act, 1948*. This is the first job for the corporation, whose general duties are to secure the production of food or other agricultural products outside Britain and to arrange for their marketing. It has a borrowing power of £55,000,000 (\$220,000,000).

That characteristically British institution, the public corporation, is very like the large private corporation in that it is run on business lines

and is expected to be self-supporting; but it is Government-sponsored. Before this, public corporations have taken over already developed industries or enterprises. Now they are to initiate production themselves because, according to Mr. Strachey, "the world would not tolerate much longer the leaving fallow of undeveloped areas and because . . . the Colonial people themselves will be the first to benefit from such development."

In view of the primitive state of agriculture in East Africa, the low level of economy, and the difficulties of transportation, some observers have wondered that Britain should have decided to promote such a vast scheme of farming. It should by now be clear that the project offered such opportunities for helping to solve certain world problems, not only of food but of a social and economic nature, that the complexities of the African scene could not be allowed to stand in the way of the program.

Let us examine in detail the factors that dictated the promotion of the plan.



## *The Factors*

### SHORTAGE OF FATS AND OILS

Of all food shortages in the post-war world, one of the most acute in Europe is that of fats and oils. In many European countries, consumption in 1946 was less than half that of pre-war. Countries producing fats and oils like India now tend to use more of their own products, and the shortage falls severely on countries who have no domestic or colonial production.

The situation would not have been so desperate if the decline in the world peanut-oil supplies had been compensated for by a great rise in the production of other edible oils and fats, for, to some extent, certain of the vegetable oils are interchangeable. But this compensation did not occur, and the world need remained critical.



*Guided by radar and carrying a survey camera instead of bombs, British Lancasters help to map an uncharted section of East Africa. The Royal Engineers and Royal Air Force have already surveyed 150,000 square miles of new country in Central and East Africa in a project that aims to discover land that can be developed into food growing areas.*

#### EAST AFRICA'S SUITABILITY FOR GROWING PEANUTS

East Africa's tropical regions offer extensive new land and excellent conditions for peanut farming. The plant needs a growing season of three to five months without frost, much sunshine and high temperatures, moderate rainfall, and a light soil, all of which occur in the areas chosen. Moreover, few people live in these regions because of tsetse fly and poor water supplies. There is therefore no problem of moving families away from their land. The climate in the areas chosen is generally healthy,

although in some sections, like Kongwa, precautions must be taken against malaria. Clearing the bush will help to remove the tsetse, and thus eliminate the danger of sleeping sickness for human beings and trypanosomiasis for cattle.

### BENEFITS FOR EAST AFRICA

The plan can scarcely fail to have the widest effect on East African life. At its most successful, it will bring about a revolution in health, standards of living, methods of work, and philosophy.

It is not a serene pastoral life that will be revolutionized. It is an existence now threatened in many areas by famine, tsetse fly, disease and ignorance, and too often attended by witch doctors and superstitious tradition.

Sir Philip Mitchell, Governor of Kenya, who spent more than twenty years in Tanganyika, writes: "Primary production by African peasants is already on the decline. Populations working under that system are going to find it increasingly difficult in supporting themselves at their present level. There have, accordingly, to be found measures to enable the African cultivator in appropriate cases to break away from his economically weak and primitive form of cultivation. Where this cannot be achieved no amount of benevolent assistance for social services can avail to improve the lot of the people. . . ."

Tanganyika should more than double her exports when the scheme gains full speed, thus increasing the quantity of goods which the country can buy. The revolution in methods of working is expected to spread to other phases of African economy. Only by the widest application of mechanical cultivation is it likely that the country can become rich enough to afford the tremendous public expenditure needed to improve the condition of the mass of African people.

The mind can scarcely put an end to the possibilities. One obvious consequence will be an increase in stock-farming because of the abundance of good fodder in the peanut plant, the disappearance of tsetse, and the abundant pasturage on the grass leys which will cover roughly half the total acreage of the peanut farms in due rotation. Factories to crush the peanuts and expel the oil will doubtless appear sometime in the future.

It is not fantastic to think that agricultural progress and the growth of communications will lead to exploration of the mineral wealth of

East Africa. Coal, lead, copper, phosphates, gold, diamonds, almost all minerals known to men are found in the region, and some day there may be underground development of these resources on a scale as vast as the peanut program in the surface soil.

Increased capital, millions of acres of new land brought under production, higher standards of living and education, progressive farming methods and skilled workers, new means of communication, new industries and products — all these are a dream only just beginning to materialize. Parts will come true fairly quickly; parts must develop through years of resolution and patience. Authorities see growing out of the plan, which has been described as “the most important single act of Government in the history of British Tropical Africa,” a new era for the East African population. In accordance with British Government policy, Africans employed by the undertaking will be encouraged to take responsibility for running their own welfare services, and later to share in managing the agricultural, commercial, and industrial aspects. The British Government, in outlining the scheme originally, declared their intention of arranging that the undertaking should be transferred to the African people at a time and on terms to be agreed in the light of experience of the working of the project. In other words, final

*Cleaning the planting area*



control by the people, possibly on a co-operative basis, is dependent on the emergence of skilled and trained African staff. This last scene of the dream may be far off, but it is a not unattainable ideal.

## 8 *Britain's Colonial Policy*

A third consideration was Britain's policy for her colonies and dependent territories. The peanut project fits extremely well with Britain's policy of helping her colonies and dependent territories to develop and improve their conditions, so that they can achieve economic stability and responsible government as soon as possible.

This is by no means the first project Britain has undertaken as part of her plan to advance her territories. Under the most recent *Colonial Development and Welfare Act* the British taxpayers are spending a total of £120,000,000 (\$480,000,000) over a period of ten years for the welfare of their overseas dependencies. Another Act, the *Overseas Resources Development Act, 1948*, provided for the establishment of two public corporations to promote overseas development. The smaller of these is the Overseas Food Corporation now in charge of the peanut program. The larger, the Colonial Development Corporation with a total borrowing power of £100,000,000 (\$400,000,000), has been organized to undertake any kind of development designed to increase the productive capacity of the colonies in trade or otherwise.

### RESPONSIBILITIES UNDERTAKEN AT HOT SPRINGS CONFERENCE

In deciding to carry out the scheme, the British Government was influenced greatly by the resolutions which it, along with forty-three other nations, accepted at the Hot Springs (Virginia) Conference in 1943. The signing nations agreed that they had obligations to their people and to one another

“to collaborate in raising levels of nutrition and standards of living of their peoples.” The first step mentioned was “to increase the acreage under crops for direct human consumption.” There were also resolutions about training scientific workers and rural leaders for service in agriculture, about conserving land and water resources, and the development and settlement of land for food production. To attain these goals requires planning and action. By such projects as the peanut farms, Britain is taking the objectives off paper and translating them into reality.

#### AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT RELATED TO E.R.P.

The importance of Africa to the economic recovery of Western Europe grows increasingly evident as the world spotlight continues to be focused on this troubled spot. In fact, the development of Tropical African resources may be vital to the final establishment of a strong and peaceful European continent.

Ernest Bevin, British Foreign Secretary, linked the two when he was describing his concept of Western Union to the House of Commons last January. He said he was concerned not only with Europe, but also with Europe's overseas territories, naming Africa first of all. These territories have raw material, food, and resources badly needed by Europe and much of the rest of the world. “If we get the plan (E.R.P.),” he summarized, “we intend to develop the economic co-operation between Western European countries step by step, to develop the resources of the territories with which we are associated, to build them up a system of priorities which will produce the quickest, most effective, and most lasting results for the whole world. We hope that other countries with dependent territories will do the same in association with us.

“We shall thus bring together resources, manpower, organization, and opportunity for millions of people. I would like to depict what it really involves in terms of population whose standard of life can be lifted. We are bringing together these tremendous resources which stretch through Europe, the Middle East and Africa, to the Far East. In no case would it be an exclusive effort. It would be done with the object of making the whole world richer and safer.”

Sir Stafford Cripps, Chancellor of the Exchequer, believes that the future of the sterling group and its ability to survive depends in part

upon a quick and extensive development of Britain's African resources. "The further development of African resources," he said last autumn, "is of the same crucial importance to the rehabilitation and strengthening of Western Europe as the restoration of European productive power is to the future progress and prosperity of Africa. Each needs and is needed by the other." By developing the potentialities of Africa, Europe will be not only helping herself to get back on her feet, but assisting Africa to reach out toward stability.

It is hard to decide where the greatest attraction of the project lies: in the magnitude of its size, its pioneering aspect, its promise of increased supplies of fats and oils, or its tremendous contribution to the social and economic prosperity of African peoples. It is a compound of altruism and realistic business, a means of carrying out world and colonial responsibilities and, at the same time, providing more food for home consumption. Here is one answer to the question of what Britain is doing to lead her dependent territories to prosperity and eventual self-government, and to help herself and Western Europe along the road to recovery.

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Full details of the peanut project are given in the following British Government documents obtainable from Sales Section, British Information Services, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York 20, N. Y.

*A Plan for the Mechanized Production of Groundnuts in East and Central Africa* (Cmd. 7030). 35 cents.

*East African Groundnuts Scheme; Review of Progress to the End of November, 1947* (Cmd. 7314). 10 cents.

*House of Commons Parliamentary Debates*, November 6, 1947, and March 11, 1948. 20 cents each.



*The first harvest*

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