



How many rhino have been speared?

Does game in the Crater face imminent extermination?

What about buck, and animals other than the 'big five'?

Are the rumours of wholesale slaughter true?

This is the script of a broadcast by Lt. Col. P.G. Molloy, Director of Tanganyika National Parks, on present conditions in the Crater Highlands and Ngorongoro.

NGORONGORO — THE TRUTH

I am very glad of this opportunity to sort out the many reports and rumours on conditions in the Crater Highlands, and in particular in the Ngorongoro Crater, which have been circulating in East Africa and have appeared in varying forms in the press and on the air, since the National Parks relinquished their jurisdiction over the area on 1st July.

On that date the administration of the Crater Highlands and the eastern end of the Serengeti Plains was handed over by the National Parks, not, as one hears it said, to the Masai, but to a newly-formed body called the Conservation Authority. This body consists of five Government departmental officers and four local Masai chiefs under the chairmanship of the District Officer at Ngorongoro. Three of the officers concerned are already stationed at Ngorongoro and houses will shortly be started to accommodate the other two. In addition, it is intended that one or more pasture research officers shall be provided out of a grant of £20,000 from the Nuffield Foundation.

The precise manner in which the Conservation Authority will function and how it will conduct its relationship with other interested parties, for instance, the present and future managers of the Ngorongoro Lodge and the European and African farmers whose livelihood is dependent on the water stored in the forested Highlands, remains to be seen, but it is understood that Government has clear plans on the subject.

What I am mainly concerned with at the moment is to put the recent rhino spearing in the Crater into correct perspective.

To those who believed that the withdrawal of the National Parks from the Crater Highlands would condemn the game of the Ngorongoro Crater to extermination, these spearings are indicative of the beginning of the end. To others, however, including the Parks Trustees, they indicate as yet no more than the expected reaction of the more irresponsible Masai elements, who firmly believed that the 1st July marked the dawn of the golden age when all control over killing of game would lapse.

In fact, a Game Ranger took over the



Photo: Donald I. Ker

conservation duties of the Park Warden before the latter left the area and he and the District Officer have spared no effort to investigate on the spot each spearing and death as it was reported. The fact that the spearings continued was no reflection on their efforts but was a severe reflection on the general Masai attitude.

Pleas of self-defence, although difficult to disprove, are singularly unconvincing when it is realized that, to our knowledge, 17 rhino only were killed in the whole Crater Highlands during the previous $7\frac{1}{2}$ years of the Parks jurisdiction.

This was fully appreciated by His Excellency the Governor, who referred to the spearings in his speech to the Masai Olkiama on 27th August as "a disgraceful thing to have happened" and one which has brought the Masai into "odium and disrepute." He threatened to withhold the benefits the Masai expect to receive from the conservation scheme unless this slaughter was stopped at once.

There have been no further incidents and one hopes this state will continue. I would urge all lovers of wild life to be cautious in making capital from these spearings. It is doing no service to game conservation to pass on rumours that all the Ngorongoro game is being killed off or driven out. In fact, we have daily reports from visitors, apart from the observations of our own experienced staff, which show that the elephant, buffalo, rhino and lion, and all the customary plains game, are there and on show in the same or even greater numbers than during the same month in previous years.

It is quite untrue that any lions have been killed since 1st July. It is quite untrue that the Masai and their cattle are flooding into the Crater—why indeed should they do so now, when legislation exists to control them, while during the Parks jurisdiction they did not, when

Schedule of known killings of big game in the Crater Highlands

1st January, 1952 - 30 June, 1959.

| | | | |
|------|------|------------|---------------------------|
| 1952 | Nov. | 1 Elephant | Olmoti |
| | | 1 Rhino | Nainokanoka |
| 1953 | Feb. | 3 Rhino | Crater |
| | | 1 Leopard | |
| | Mar. | 1 Rhino | Crater |
| | Apr. | 1 Rhino | Crater |
| | Aug. | 2 Buffalo | Salei |
| | Oct. | 1 Rhino | Crater Convicted 4 months |
| 1954 | Sep. | 1 Elephant | Salei |
| | | 1 Elephant | Endondol Conviction |
| | Nov. | 1 Elephant | Rotian |
| | | 1 Rhino | Rotian |
| | | 2 Buffalo | Rotian |
| 1955 | July | 1 Rhino | Nainokanoka |
| | | 1 Lion | Oibabai |
| 1956 | Feb. | 1 Hippo | Crater |
| | Oct. | 1 Rhino | Lorien |
| 1957 | Jan. | 1 Rhino | Embulbul |
| | May | 1 Rhino | Embulbul |
| | Aug. | 1 Rhino | Nainokanoka |
| | Dec. | 1 Rhino | Nainokanoka |
| 1958 | Dec. | 1 Rhino | Crater |
| 1959 | Jan. | 2 Lions | Crater |
| | Mar. | 1 Elephant | Lemala |
| | Apr. | 1 Rhino | Lemala |
| | May | 1 Lion | Crater. |

they could not have been stopped had they wished to enter?

It has already been published that the National Parks will continue to manage the Ngorongoro Lodge until the Park closes on 31st March and that it will reopen under commercial management on 1st July next year. Prospective tenderers need as yet have no fear that they will find a Crater devoid of game and a Lodge without tourist attraction.

Ngorongoro is still unique and is still

magnificent and I am confident that informed public opinion can keep it that way indefinitely.

SUMMARY—

5 Elephant
16 Rhino
4 Buffalo
4 Lion
1 Leopard
1 Hippo.

NOTE.

Apart from the two convictions noted, all accused pleaded self-defence and were acquitted or no case was brought for lack of evidence.



ALAN ROOT took this unusual study of wild life in the Ngorengoro Crater.

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