

CONFIDENTIAL

The Machinery of Colonial Policing

*Categorisation, Surveillance,
and the Limits of Power in the
United Provinces*

CRIMINOLOGICAL INSIGHTS
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FILE REF: Proceedings of the Government
of the United Provinces

DEPARTMENT: Police

DATE: April 1917

SUBJECTS: Criminal Tribes, Dacoity,
Public Gambling

Summarising the official "Alphabetical Index to Proceedings," highlighting the department's focus on the "Criminal Tribes Act," gambling law amendments, and internal administration.

Colonial Law and Order: Police Proceedings of the United Provinces (April 1917)

A high-level overview of the administrative and enforcement priorities of the United Provinces Police Department.

Legislative Reform and Departmental Administration

Enforcement of the Criminal Tribes Act (III of 1911)

Systematic Settlement and Relocation

Police focused heavily on "settling" members of specific tribes into designated government settlements.



Expanding the Public Gambling Act

Officials debated removing geographical limits to better combat gambling evasion in rural areas.



Detailed Surveillance Mapping

Records meticulously documented gang relationships, previous convictions, and family connections for proclaimed members.



Personnel Management and Petitions

The department processed numerous appeals for reinstatement and rewards for specialized Jiu-litxu training.



Formal Registration Protocols

Male members of tribes like the Borasi Pasis were registered and restricted under Section 10.

Geographical Reach & Varied Proceedings



Criminal Tribe Settlement

Najibabad, Gorakhpur, Kashipur

Formal settling of tribe members and families.



Gambling Act Proposals

Agra, Muttra, Lucknow

Consultation on extending the Act's jurisdiction.



Police Force Training

Moradabad

Special payments for Jiu-Jitsu training modules.

Infrastructure and Expenses

Records include payments for tube well installations and legal defense costs for officers.



April 1917: Three Files, One Imperial Strategy

File 158-82/1913

Demographic Control

The Borasi Pasis
(Gonda District)

Classifying an entire sub-caste as a 'Criminal Tribe' based on regional conviction statistics.

Files 158-84 & 158-85

Network Surveillance

Purkazi & Loi
Dacoit Gangs

Mapping and restricting multi-caste organised banditry networks operating since 1909.

File 157/1916

Jurisdictional Expansion

The Public Gambling Act (1867)

A 17-district debate on extending geographical legal boundaries to combat modern transport evasion.

Over 50 pages of internal memos reveal how the colonial state maintained control through continuous legal adaptation.

The Statistical Criminal: Justifying Collective Restriction

Sir,—The district authorities of the Gonda district have submitted a proposal for the proclamation of certain "Borasi" Pasis in the Kauria police circle under the Criminal Tribes Act. They report that "Borasi" is a well known sub-caste of the Pasi tribe and that the term is sufficiently clearly understood to be used as a definition.

2. The figures submitted with the proposal show that of 290 adult male Borasi Pasis residing in police station Kauria 89, or over 30 per cent., are ex-convicts; for the rest of the district the figures submitted are 2,588 adult males, of whom 145 are convicts and it is therefore evident that the members of this caste residing in police station Kauria are more criminal than the other tribes.

In 1917, the Inspector-General of Police recommended proclaiming the Borasi Pasis of the Kauria police station as a 'criminal tribe'.

The justification was purely statistical, comparing Kauria residents to the rest of the Gonda district.

Police Station Kauria	----- =====	290 adult males. 89 are ex-convicts. (Over 30% criminality)
Rest of Gonda District	----- -----	2,588 adult males. 145 are ex-convicts. (Approx. 5.6% Criminality)

PROCLAIMED.
The remarkable extent of criminality justifies Section 3 of the Criminal Tribes Act.

The Architecture of Surveillance: Act III of 1911

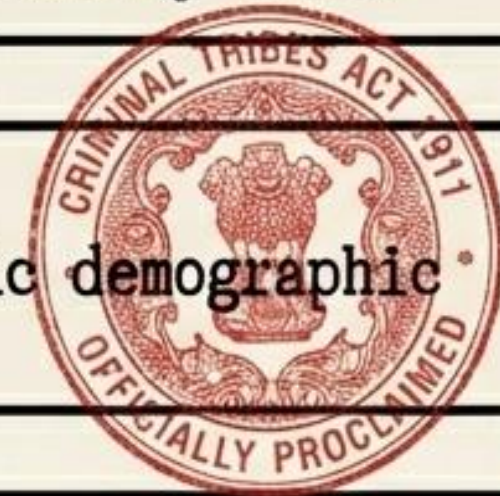
The Proclamation Pipeline

Step I: The Trigger (Conviction)
Imprisonment for a non-bailable offence after 1st January 1910.

Step 2: Section 3 (Proclamation)
The Local Government officially declares the specific demographic or gang a 'Criminal Tribe'.

Step 3: Section 4 (Registration)
Mandatory preparation of a register by the District Magistrate, documenting all members, present or untraced.

Step 4: Section 10(b) (Restriction)
Every registered member must notify police of their place of residence, any intended change of residence, and any intended absence.



When the Penal Code Fails: The Dacoit Networks

The Limits of IPC Section 400

Members of the Purkazi and Loi gangs were successfully prosecuted under standard penal codes in 1909 and 1910.

However, upon release, the state found no evidence they severed their connections.

Standard law was purely punitive, ending when the sentence ended.

The Preventive Pivot

Authorities pushed to apply the Criminal Tribes Act to these specific gangs.

Unlike the Borasi Pasis (targeted by demographic), these men were targeted by association.

The CTA provided lifelong, preventive surveillance.

very dangerous criminals, although preventive action has been taken against the gang, by prosecuting it under section 400, Indian Penal Code. But experience has shown that the members if left to themselves on their release would undoubtedly give a lot of trouble,

Anatomy of Organised Crime: Multi-Caste Networks

Profile 1: The Purkazi Gang

Leader: Faraghat, son of Murad Bakhsh (Shaikh)

Origins: Emerged in 1909. Modus operandi shifted from petty thefts to heinous crimes.

Scale: 22 verified members across Muzaffarnagar & Saharanpur.

Peculiarity: Pre-raid gatherings at 'Damdama' near the canal, 1.5 miles from Purkazi.

Diversity: Highly mixed. Includes Shaikh, Billoch, Julaha, Gujar, Qassab, and Fakir castes.

Profile 2: The Loi Gang

Leader: Nihal, son of Ganga Bishan (Chamar)

Origins: Formed 1909. Known for defiance, highway robberies, and serious burglaries.

Scale: 15 verified members.

Diversity: Includes Chamar Julaha, Lohar, Kassab, Sweeper, and Pathan castes.

No.	Names	Caste
1	Faraghat	Shaikh
2	Murad Bakhsh	Shaikh
3	Murad Bakhsh	Shaikh
4	Murad Bakhsh	Shaikh
5	Kumar Tulon	Shaikh
6	Murad Bakhsh	Shaikh
7	Murad Bakhsh	Shaikh
8	Murad Bakhsh	Shaikh
9	Murad Bakhsh	Shaikh
10	Murad Bakhsh	Shaikh
11	Faraghat	Shaikh
12	Jaunama at 'Damdama'	Shaikh
13	Gujar, from Purkazi	Shaikh

No.	Names	Caste
1	Nihal	Chamar
2	Nihal, son	Chamar
3	Ganga Bishan	Chamar
4	Ganga Bishan	Chamar
5	Ganga Bishan	Chamar
6	Loi	Chamar
7	Loi	Chamar
8	Loi	Chamar
9	Loi	Chamar
10	Nihal Bishan	Chamar
11	Lohar	Chamar
12	Kassab, Bishan	Chamar
13	Kassab, Pathan	Loi

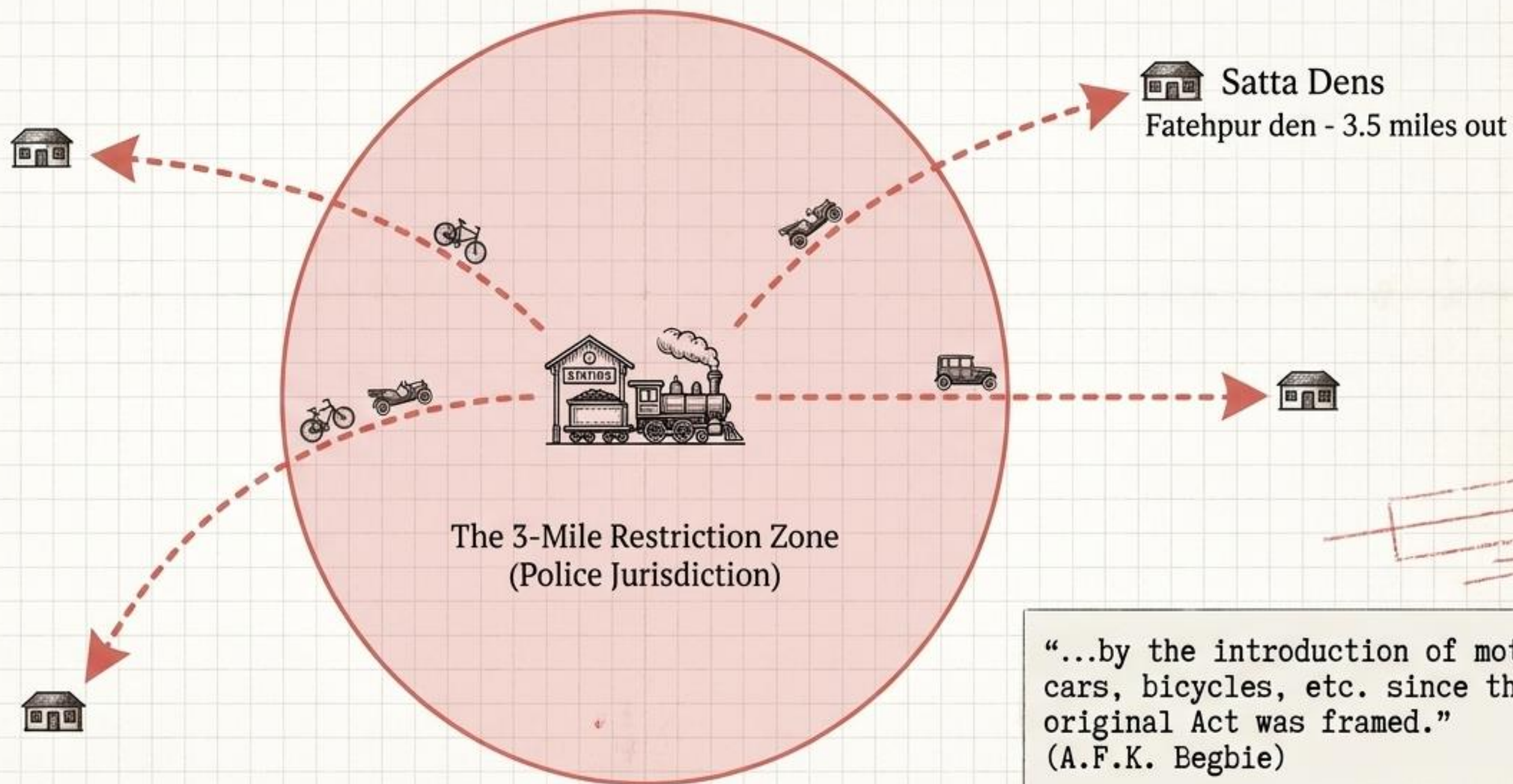
Matrix 1: Profiles in Proclamation

Dimension	The Borasi Pasis	The Dacoit Gangs
Primary Target	An entire hereditary sub-caste defined by geography (Kauria).	Specific, named individuals bonded by criminal association.
Basis of Evidence	Macro-statistics (30% conviction rate).	Micro-evidentiary (approver testimonies, shared 1909 convictions).
Social Composition	Homogenous (Pasi).	Highly diverse, cross-caste alliances.
Legal Lever Applied	CTA applied to future and past convicts en masse.	CTA applied specifically to the named individuals on the scheduled list.

TAKEAWAY: The 'Criminal Tribes Act' was a highly elastic tool, capable of restricting both demographic populations and specific operational networks.

The 3-Mile Loophole: Technology Outpacing the Law

The Public Gambling Act of 1867 restricted gambling houses to towns or places within three miles of a railway station. By 1917, the invention of bicycles and motorcars had rendered this geographical limit obsolete.



Matrix 2: The Gambling Act Debate

Should the Gambling Act be extended to all rural areas, or kept restricted to towns? 17 District Officers debated the expansion.

The Case for Expansion (Containment is Obsolete)

Argument: Dens simply shift slightly beyond the boundary.

View of Technology: Roads and transport have modernised; gamblers can quickly travel beyond the 3-mile limit.

Championed by: C. Silberrad (Gorakhpur) - Gambling brings associated crime; the law must follow the offence.

The Case for Restriction (Fear of the Police)

Argument: Expanding the Act to distant villages gives unchecked power to low-ranking officers.

View of the Police: Subordinate police will use the expanded law to threaten non-gamblers and extract bribes.

Championed by: P. Mason (Almora) - Wary of police using gambling fines as a "profitable relaxation."

POLICE DEPT.]

(63)

[APRIL, 1917,

First range.

1. Hamirpur.
2. Etah.
3. Bulandihahr.
4. Aligarh
5. Jalann.
6. Farrukhabad.

Second range.

7. Sitapur.
8. Kheri.
9. Budaun.

Third range.

10. Basti.
11. Fatehpur.
12. Ghazipur.
13. Janapur.
14. Cawnpore.
15. Fysabad.
16. Gorakhpur.
17. Saltaunpur.

The Enemy Within: Managing Police Oppression

Core Insight: The primary obstacle to expanding the law was not sympathy for gamblers, but the colonial state's acute awareness of systemic police blackmail.

POLICE DEPT. [APRIL, 1917.]
Evidence A (Almora District):

"I must confess that I have always regarded prosecutions under the Gambling Act with a certain amount of suspicion... the honest officer looks upon such cases as a profitable relaxation to be pursued only when he has leisure." (P. Mason, Deputy Commissioner)

1018, SERIAL NO. 8.
Evidence B (Agra District):

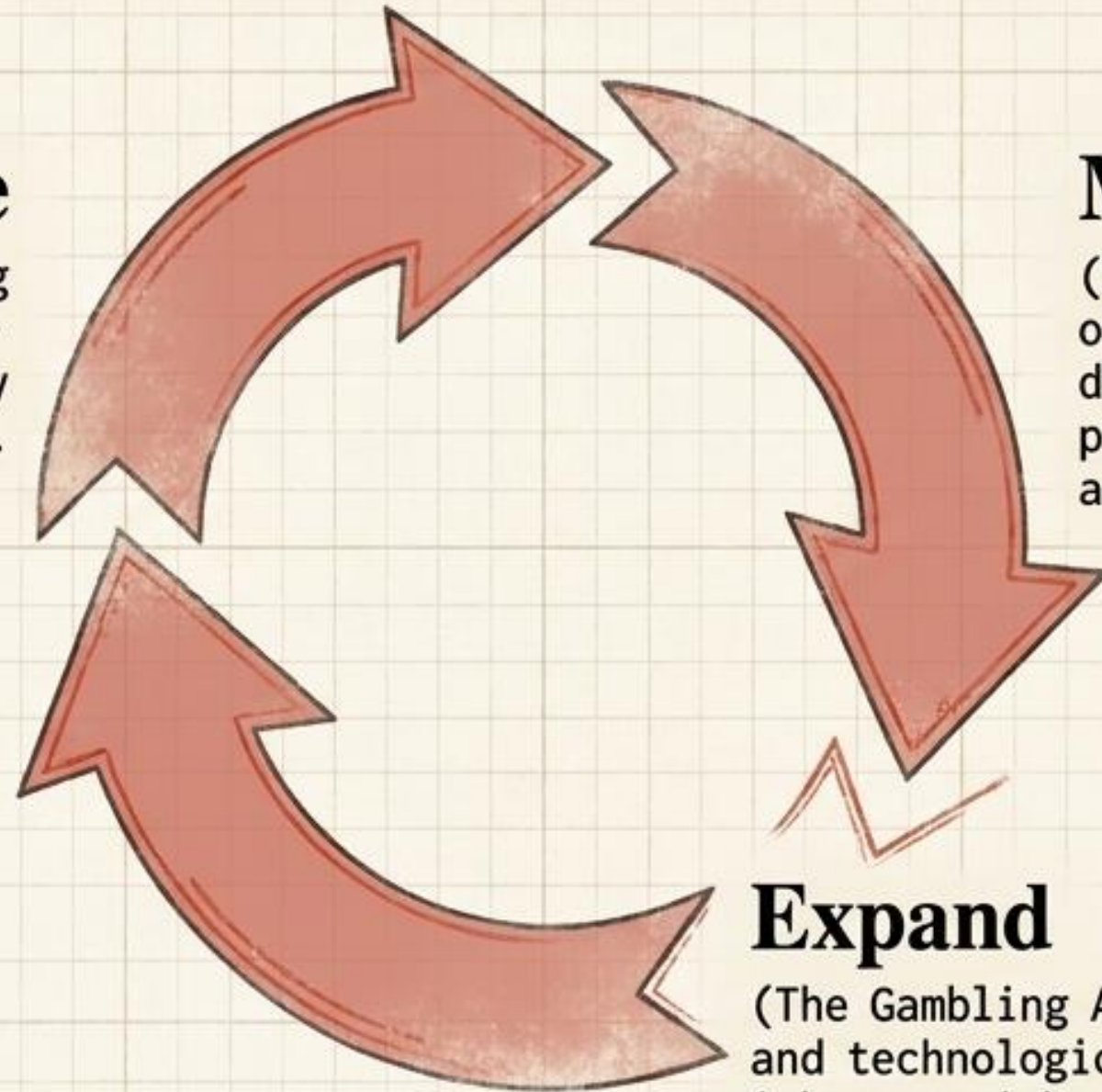
"The police, I am afraid, still blackmail the runners of the dens... I cannot give an opinion about other big cities but I believe the superintendent in charge of them will agree with what I say."
(A.F.K. Begbie)

Conclusion: To expand state control over the populace required empowering a police force the state inherently distrusted.

The Triad of Colonial Order: April 1917

These seemingly distinct files represent three synchronised mechanisms used to maintain the Empire.

Categorise
(The Pasis) Transforming demographics into manageable statistical risks. Erasing individuality for administrative convenience.



Map
(The Dacoits) Tracking specific operational networks across jurisdictions. Utilising perpetual, preventive surveillance to break associations.

Expand
(The Gambling Act) Continuously closing geographical and technological loopholes while balancing the inherent risks of empowering local enforcers.

The bureaucratic ledger reveals a state perpetually in motion—constantly defining, tracking, and legally enclosing its subjects to maintain an increasingly fragile order.