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POLITICAL CHANGE AND TRIBALISM IN KENYA
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POLITICAL CHANGE AND TRIBALISM IN KENYA

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POLITICAL CHANGE AND TRIBALISM IN KENYA*

I

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT OF KENYA POLITICAL CHANGE

1) Plural Society

Perhaps the most important sociological factor in Kenya political change has been its "plural society," by which I mean a colonial situation (that is, a socio-political relationship of dependence in which is found an imported dominant oligarchy 1) in which two or more racial groups prevail and each adheres to different cultural

patterns, with contact between them being restricted more or less to the realm of economic activity and production. 2 In Africa it was virtually inevitable that this type of colonial situation emerged in the Eastern, Central and Southern parts of the continent, for here are to be found large land areas ranging from 4, 000 to 8, 000 feet above the sea, and possessing climatic conditions favorable to permanent European settlement. Western Africa, on the other hand possessed few highlands and thus climatic conditions unfavorable to European settlement. Thus, with the exception of Dakar, Senegal, nowhere in this area did the European population exceed

*I am indebted to the Harvard Center for International Affairs and its Director, Professor Robert Bowie, for support of my African research. 1 Cf. Georges Balandier, "La Situation coloniale: approche théorique," *Cahiers Internationaux de Sociologie*, Vol. XI (1951) pp. 44-79.

2 Cf. J.S. Furnivall, *Netherlands India* (London, 1939) pp. 44-447. Furnivall first stated the proposition of a colonial "plural society" in the following terms: "A plural society: a society, that is, comprising two or more elements or social orders which live, side by side, yet without mingling, in one political unit... In Netherlands India, the European, Chinaman and Native are linked as vitally as Siamese twins and, if rent asunder, every element of the union must dissolve in anarchy. Yet they are so far from having any common will that among the Natives, the order numerically most powerful, there is pressure for dissolution of the tie even at the risk of anarchy."

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10, 000-12, 000 during the colonial era.

Europeans entered Kenya with the intent of staking out permanent homes for themselves from 1900 onwards, and some 50 years later they numbered 50, 000 as against some 5, 600, 000 Africans and over 150, 000 Asians (mainly Indians). The indispensable condition of such permanent settlement by Europeans in East Africa was, of course, access to a monopolization of large tracts of arable land. And with the assistance of the British colonial authorities and their political, military and economic power, such land was made available to Europeans, with the result that by the late 1930's some 9, 872 square miles of the 16,173 square miles that were defined as the Kenya Highlands had been alienated outright to Europeans. 1 This situation has persisted, more or less, to the present; and its economic and social significance in relation to the African majority may be gauged from the following observation on the extent of European land holdings in Kenya, as against the holdings of the single largest African tribe, the Kikuyu: "There now (1954) are 4, 000 white families operating plantations within the white reserves. The Kikuyu tribe has something more than

1, 000, 000 members. Its cultivable reserve amounts to 2, 000 square miles. After subtracting state forest area within the white reserve, the 4, 000 white families still have five times as much land as the 1, 000, 000 Kikuyu natives. 2

1 For details of Highlands, see *Land and Population in East Africa*, Colonial No. 290 (London, 1952) p. 7, et. passim.

2 Albion Ross, in *The New York Times*, (May 16, 1954).

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2) Socio-Economic Implications of Plural Society

Land, however, was not in itself sufficient for the establishment of the kind of permanent existence Europeans wanted for themselves in Kenya. For as Buell observed in 1928, "if the white man is to build himself a home as well as a fortune in the semi-temperate parts of Africa, he must have land and he must have labor."

It is in the demand and pursuit of this labor among the indigenous population (especially the Kikuyu where we encounter the basis of the sociological aspect of the particular type of relationship of dependence between blacks and whites, rulers and ruled, that has characterized Kenya's colonial society.

Alienation of African land was a major factor in guaranteeing African labor supply, for alienation necessarily limited the extent to which Africans (and especially the Kikuyu, who were most affected by the land alienation policy) could pursue their socioeconomic system that assumed a relatively unlimited supply of land. As the Kikuyu social anthropologist, Mr. Jomo Kenyatta, put it in his rather poetic, though no less realistic way: "(Land) is the key to the people's life; it secures for them that peaceful tillage of the soil which supplies their material needs and enables them to perform their magic and traditional ceremonies in undisturbed serenity, facing Mount Kenya." He observed
1 R. L. Buell, *The Destiny of East Africa* (New York, 1928) p. 7. (Italics mine).

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further that by the alienation of large tracts of land for exclusive European use, a situation is created which "gives one blow which cuts away the foundations from the whole of Kikuyu life, social, moral, and economic... By driving him from his ancestral lands, the Europeans have robbed him of the material foundations of his culture, and reduced him to a state of serfdom incompatible with human happiness."

In other words, since the European presence meant a permanent restriction of the land supply, many Africans could no longer exist by subsistence farming and thus turned perforce to wage-labor (or squatting in exchange for which they labored) on European farms, and eventually to wage-labor in the new colonial towns as well. Conceivably, the rise of colonial towns and the commercial and industrial activities associated with them, would eventually supply those technical, clerical, business and professional occupations that Africans who secured education in government or missionary schools could fulfill. But in the plural-type of colonial society, the European or general expatriate presence in control over the modern sector of society is necessarily too great and intensive to permit this. What was provided Africans in the way of education—(both formal and informal) did little more, than prepare them to perform the most rudimentary functions in the modern sector (e.g., domestics, unskilled labor, etc.) At best it provided a few literate functions for Africans (e.g., telegraph clerks, primary teachers, etc.) but the European control of expendi

1. Jomo Kenyatta, *Facing Mount Kenya* (London, 1938) pp. xxi, 317-318. For details of the complex dependence of Kikuyu socio-economic system upon an extensive land supply and implications of European land alienation

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tures on education was never relinquished enough to enable Africans the training necessary to assume more advanced tasks.

This situation, it should be noted, contrasted sharply with that in West Africa where, in territories like Senegal, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Elsewhere, a different colonial situation involving a less direct and intensive European presence, gave rise to a commercial, administrative, educated and professional African elite or middle class. Here, for instance, the first African lawyer was produced in 1854 (in Sierra Leone) and by the second decade of the 20th century Sierra Leone claimed about 20 lawyers, Nigeria 15, and Ghana 60. Kenya, on the other hand, produced its first African lawyer in the mid-1950's some three generations later than West Africa. And what is more, to the extent that the middle-class category has emerged in Kenya during the post World-War II period, it is a much less substantial social group in most of its characteristics, as against its West African counterpart. It is generally of poorer calibre, the professional component is few and far between (e. g., there are only several doctors as against some 200 in Ghana alone,) the commercial and business element is smaller and poorly financed (as against, say, the comparatively substantial commercial bourgeoisie in Nigeria and Ghana, or the rural planter bourgeoisie in Ivory cost) and so on. upon this dependence, see the testimony of Dr. L.S.B. Leakey to the Morris Carter Land Commission in 1931, published in *Report of Kenya Land Commission: Evidence and Memoranda, Vol. I* (London, 1934) pp. 666-683.

1. See Martin L. Kilson, "Social Forces in West African Political Development, " *Journal of Human Relations* (Spring-Summer, 1960) pp. 578ff.

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CHARACTERISTICS OF AFRICAN POLITICAL EVOLUTION IN PLURAL SOCIETY

II

1) Some Comparisons with West Africa

As expected, the foregoing socio-economic features that set off West Africa from Kenya necessarily produced important differences in political development. Whereas in West Africa the incipient middle class in territories like Senegal, Ghana, Nigeria, commenced its political evolution along Western-type or explicitly modern lines during the 1920's and 1930's and began to penetrate the central decision-making organs of colonial government-, in Kenya no such development occurs until after World War II. Between the two World Wars what there was in the way explicitly modern, middle-class inspired, political evolution was primarily an affair of the resident European community (and to a lesser extent, the Asian community) who monopolized all non-official

representation in the colonial Legislative Council until 1944, at which point the first direct representative of African interests was appointed.

There was, nevertheless, some movement among Africans before World War II towards an organized political expression within the framework of Kenya's colonial system. But the form, method and goals of this political expression were significantly different, in many respects, from what occurred in West Africa. As regards the composition of the prewar political organizations in Kenya for instance, the earliest of them were rooted primarily among the thousands of wage-laborers and domestics and squatters on European

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farms--a situation that compared stringly with the almost exclusively educated or middle-class basis of prewar political organizations in West Africa. There were, of course, a few educated or semi-literate Africans at the leadership of the prewar organizations in Kenya; but these persons were mainly minor clerks, telegraph operators, primary teachers, heads of work gangs, etc. They were not the lawyers, doctors, civil servants, and incipient business men who led the Aborigines' Rights Protection Society in Ghana (1898-1930's), the National Congress of British West Africa (1918-1946), the Nigerian Youth Movement (1936-1940's), or the Parti Socialiste Senequalis (1929-1940's) 2) Importance of Traditional Elements

The social basis of the prewar political organizations in Kenya influenced, in turn, their methods of operation and especially the heavy reliance upon traditional symbols, motifs, and even the vernacular in their attempt to influence the modern political process established by colonialism. This took the form, for instance, of using modified traditional oaths to bind members of a political organization whose aims were mainly modern in nature; or it took the form of a syncretistic fusion of traditional and modern or Western institutions, as was the case with the Thuku Movement 1 of the early 1920's or the Kiuyu Independent Churches in the 1930's (which were a medium of Kikuyu political expression.) 2 Similarly, the organ

1 See Papers Relating to Native Disturbances in Kenya, Cmd. 1691 (London, 1922) pp. 5-6, et. passim.

2 See F. B. Welbourn, East African Rebels (London, 1961).

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of the prewar Kikuyu Central Association, Mwigwithania, was published in the vernacular, as was the post war organ of the Kenya African Union, entitled Sauti Ya Mwafrika. 1 Versions of traditional songs, dances, social gatherings, etc, were also used for political purposes by Kenya African organizations, which included the collection of funds from peasants and rural wage-laborers.

As for the effectiveness of this manipulation of traditional forms for modern political purposes, and address delivered in 1929 by the Governor, Sir Edward Grigg (later Lord Altrincham), to the Kikuyu chiefs and members of the Native Council in Kiambu, leaves little doubt that they were quite effective: "To prevent the formation of associations for... this spreading of trouble

in the Colony, I have strengthened the Native Authority Ordinance, and I have approved of orders being issued under it to prevent the collection of money by natives without a permit... All you young men must be made to understand that Government will not tolerate lawlessness of any kind, and that you, Chiefs and Elders have the full support of Government in punishing it, whenever it occurs... One of the methods employed by the young and foolish members of the tribe has been to hold ngomas at which a song called 'Muthirego' or 'Mambo Leo' has been sung. In that song the Governor, the Government, the Chiefs and certain well known missionaries have been held up to ridicule. You all know better than I do how an ngoma at which this song is sung can be used to arouse the feelings of the young men"² Finally, it is important that in striking contrast to West African political

1. See F. D. Cornfield, *Historical Survey of the Origins and Growth of Mau Mau*, Cmd. 3030 (London, 1960) pp. 40-45, 50-55.

2 Lord Altricham, *Kenya's Opportunity: Memories, Hopes and Ideas* (London, 1955) p. 279.

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organizational evolution at this time, even the educated elements in the leadership of Kenya African political expression accepted the need to link it to traditional symbols and motifs. Kenyatta, for instance, gave poetic evidence of this in 1938 (at which time he was an official of the Kikuyu Central Association) through the dedication of his book: "To Moigoi and Wamboi and all the dispossessed youth of Africa: for perpetuation of communion with ancestral spirits through the fight for African Freedom, and in the firm faith that the dead, the living, and the unborn will unite to rebuild the destroyed shrines."¹ 3) Mass Influence upon Goals of African Political Organizations

There is still another crucial respect in which Kenya's plural-type of colonial situation influenced African political expression in a manner different from that in West Africa. Since it was the African peasant (who bought land alienation had been transformed into an Agrarian proletariat or European farms) and the urban or peri-urban wage-laborers who had greatest contact with the modern sector of colonial Society (rather than persons in middle-class type jobs and status, since Kenya's colonial system made little effort to produce this type) it is not surprising that the influence of these mass elements upon the definition of the aims and orientation of African political expression would be more apparent than it was in West Africa. This is not to say, however, that the few educated Africans who provided some of the

1. Kenyatta, *op. cit.*, p.v.

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leadership to African political expression in Kenya, did not themselves influence its aims and orientation. Being themselves educated and to that extent claiming some degree of social distance or differentiation from the masses, such Africans certainly shaped some of these aims to fit their own needs and outlook. However, the few educated Africans in Kenya were always much nearer the masses than

their West African counterparts, and if they were to employ political activity to advance their own needs they were circumstantially bound by the nature of Kenya's colonial situation to do so through rather close liaison with and dependence upon the mentioned masses, as against the more tentative and manipulative relationship with mass elements that generally characterized the political activity of educated groups in West: Africa.

As expected, the question of land--its alienation to Europeans, its consequent limited supply to Africans, the concomitant socioeconomic relationships between blacks and whites in a changing colonial society, etc. --became foremost among the aims and purposes of African political organizations in Kenya. This question was the one nearest to the 'concerns of the African masses, and one of its fundamental features was the high population density in the so-called Native Reserves--especially the Kikuyu--which in 1929 exceeded 500 persons per square mile in some Kikuyu Reserves and by 1944 density figures of 1, 000 per square miles were recorded. 1

1 Report of Kenya Land Commission (cited above) p. 200; C.K. Meek, Land Law and Custom in the Colonies (London, 1949) p. 77

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An equally important feature of the land question was found in the poor and depressed conditions of work and life among urbanized Africans in Nairobi, the capital city, for thousands who migrated there did so partly in response to the inadequate carrying capacity of the Native Reserves. Similarly related to the land question were the pass laws (or Kipandi) which required African males to possess pass-cards identifying them and the fact of their employment, so as to ensure the labor supply required to work European farms. A final feature of the land question was the situation whereby Africans living on poor Reserves at the subsistence level or below, or laboring on European farms not very much above subsistence, could observe at the same time vast areas of land reserved for European use, only 234, 055 acres of the total European area of 3, 804, 158 acres was under cultivation, or 6'16; and over a decade later, in 1934, only 11% of the European area was actually cultivated. 1

Thus, from the very first organized political expression among the Kenya Africans in the form of the Young Kikuyu Association 2 (YKA) some aspect of the land question was central to its political demands. As a contemporary observer summarized the YKA's views as presented by it to the colonial government during a strike in June 1921:

1 See House of Commons Debates, Vol. 314 (1935-36) p. 1495; A.

Schwarzenberg, A Kenya Farmer Looks at his Colony (New York, 1946) p. 27 2

The YKA was founded in 1921 and also known as the Thuku Movement, after its semi-literate leader, Harry Thuku.

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They complained of forced labor of girls and women. Their District Commissioner (so they reported--and he was present) ordered fathers and elders to send their girls out to work European plantations. If objection was made, it was

treated with detention at the Government station, a fine of goats--and the girls were taken. 'In the previous month 60 girls had been taken to a European estate... The registration (Pass) system was proving, in practice, intolerable. They were persecuted for a variety of offences under it. They were fined for cutting firewood... Their wages were going to be reduced. Their hut tax was too high. Paths which they had used from time immemorial were now being closed to them.k'

The successor body of the YKA, known as the Kikuyu Central Association (KCA) founded in 1922, also had some feature of the land question at the heart of its aim and orientation; and the same was true for the more conservative organizations of this period. In a memorandum to the British government in 1931, the KCA posed the following demands:

(1) That all land belonging to our tribe which has been alienated, including the land for Mission Schools, be returned to us. (2) That a sufficiently large area of fertile agriculture and grazing land be added to our present reserve with due regard to our present requirements and the future increase of our members.. (3) That no land should be alienated in the reserve for any purpose whatsoever to other than natives. (4) .. That permission be granted to us to purchase land from European s or Indians if and when the members of our tribe are able to do so. (5) That sufficient area of forest be placed at the disposal of each clan to which they can have access and cut fuel or timber according to their requirements which can be regulated by purely native councils. (6) That our livestock be allowed free access to all salt licks. 2

And, as noted, even conservative African organizations like the Progressive Kikuyu Party (formed by Harry Thuku in 1928 after he broke the radical Kikuyu forces) and the Loyal Kikuyu Patriots (a party of Chiefs and Headmen, led by Senior Chief Koinange) could not escape including 1 W. McGregor Ross, *Kenya From Within: A Short Political History of Kenya* (London, 1927) pp. 225-226. See also *Papers Relating to Native Disturbances in Kenya* (1922) 11 5-10.

2. Text of Memorandum quoted in George Padmore, *Pan Africanism or Communism* (New York, 1956) pp. 261-262.

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the question of nearest concern to the African peasantry at the center of their platforms--the land question. 1

This same situation of a major mass influence upon the aims of African political organizations in terms of the land question, was to persist during the postwar period, despite the fact that by this time the educated elements who provided leadership for these organizations were increasing both in numbers and quality. There was, of course, some evidence that the fact of an expanding educated social category was beginning to make itself felt as a distinct determinant of the aims of African political organizations. For instance, the original declaration of aims of the KAU² included for the first time among African organizations, the nationalist-inspired demand for self government (a demand that normally stems from the

more socially evolved and educated--in short, middle-class-groups in colonial society), the allied demand for more legislative representation, and the demand for expansion of African education. Unlike the declaration of aims of postwar political groups in West Africa, however, the KAU was still so closely articulated to the masses that it had little choice but to maintain those questions of immediate relevance to them at the center of its aims. Thus, the KAU's

1 See Report of Kenya Land Commission: Evidence and Memoranda pp. 95-180 378-38L'

2 The KAU was founded as a voluntary association in 1944 but became an explicit political body by 1946.

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declaration of its purposes in 1947 included the following:

That more land be made available both in the Crown Lands and in the highlands for settlement of Africans,

That the Kipandi with all its humiliating rules and regulations be abolished immediately.

That the deplorable wages, housing and other conditions of African labourers be substantially improved and that the principle of 'equal pay for equal work' be recognized. 1

But unlike the postwar situation in West Africa where the less direct and less intensive European presence was more permissive to the demands of middle-class led political organizations, the colonial situation in Kenya was unwilling to make any fundamental adjustment to the KAU's demands, either those stemming mainly from its educated leaders and supporters or those emanating mainly from the peasantry and urban wage-laborers. Within nearly a decade after World War II, for instance, the educational demands of KAU little affected the expenditure differential between African and European education, with 4612, 581 being spent upon some 6, 341 European school children (30, 000 total population) in 1952, as against 4. 731, 674 on some 362, 218 African children. This situation compared with an expenditure in 1936 of 18, 814 on 1, 839 white school children (or 425 per child) as against 480, 721 on 100,720 African children (or 16 shillings per child). Similarly, the KAU's demand for major steps towards self-government and for an African legislative majority, was only admitted to the amount of six nominated African members of the unofficial side of the 1952 Legislative Council, as against 14 Europeans, 6 Indians, and 2

1 Text of Declaration quoted in George Padmore, Africa: Britain's Third Empire (London, 1949) pp. 231-232.

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Arabs; and the official side had 26 members, with one African appointed to the Executive Council. This compared, it should be noted, with the existence at this time of unofficial African majorities throughout most of British West Africa (and with some qualification, also in French West Africa). Finally, there was little

attained between 1945 and 1952 as regards the alleviation of the many-sided land question.

Thus, whereas the more permissive response of the colonial situation in West Africa enabled the educated elites that led the postwar political movements to maintain the untutored masses under their influence, in Kenya the educated elements of KAU proved unable to maintain the masses behind a constitutional approach to postwar political change. Instead, the leaders of KAU were outflanked by a competing leadership group which sprung from the masses themselves, and this group was not particularly inclined towards the constitutional political forms that the leaders of KAU were generally disposed to follow. It was this competing leadership group that directed Kenya's exceptionally vast array of massbased voluntary associations or politico-religious sects and secret societies, most of which--though by no means all, as some observers suggest--were found among the Kikuyu. Among these bodies were the Anake wa Forty--The Forty Group of semi-literate young men--(Kikuyu), the Kikuyu Karanga Schools Association, the Kikuyu Pentacostal Church, the Dini ya Msambwa--the Cult of Msambwa--(Kikuyu and Kavirondo), the Dini ya Jesu Kristo--the Cult of Jesus Christ--(Kikuyu), the Dini ya Roho--the Cult of the Holy Ghost--(Luo), and the Dini ya Mboja (Kipsigis).

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Though religious in format, embracing both received Christian forms and indigenous religious practices, these associations, sects, and secret societies were attempts on the part of partially modernized peasants and wage-laborers to adjust to and transform the socio-political problems emanating from the colonial situation. In doing so, they were often and necessarily anomic phenomena--expressions of the uprooted and disturbed--relating to their most difficult problems of adjustment and transformation in riotous, violent, and rebellious terms. From the very beginning of postwar political development in Kenya, this political feature was by far the most important aspect of these sects and societies, as Farson was the first to point out in his prophetic commentary on them in 1949, several years before the Mau Mau Movement: "It may be argued that I have attached too much importance to these sects. I don't think so, and I think that most of the D. C. 's etc., in Kenya will agree with me; at any rate most of them did when I was there. The political aspect of these cults has already been made plain from the three that I have just described. And, shielded by that mantle of being a religious cult, these sects can go a long way--right up to the riot point--before the political reason for any outbreak is disclosed. Meanwhile, as the D.C. of Kiambu said in his report, the African native could hardly have conceived a more effective method of self-protection for not cooperating with the Government." 1

1 Negley Farson, *Last Chance in Africa* (London, 1949) pp. 239, 218-239. For further data on these sects and societies, see Corfield, *op. cit.*, pp. 39ff; Welbourne, *op. cit.*, pp. 113-168; D.H. Rawcliffe, *The Struggle for Kenya* (London, 1954).

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Confronted with a relatively unpermissive and unwilling colonial situation, the KAU and its educated leadership had little alternative but to give way to the direct, anomic, political action of the politico-religious sects and societies, whose main strength was found among the Kikuyu. As Canon Beecher, who had observed the rise and behavior of the politicoreligious societies among the Kikuyu for many years, put it: "... Sooner or later he /Kenya/ had to come to terms with a more intractable elements, the deracine section of the tribe which composed a very large part of the increasingly unstable population of Nairobi and of the other 'new' towns.... The price of their incorporation in the movement /i.e., KAU/ was a preparedness to use violence.... I This violence and direct political action took the organization form of the Mau Mau Movement, whose format differed little from the sects and societies that preceded it 2 (save Mau Mau's military organization in the form of the Kenya LandFreedom Army) and whose main thrust, like their's, was to surmount the depressed, desparate, and frustrating social situations created by colonial rule. 3 Its aim was to remove the power of the settled

1 L. Beecher, "Aftdt* MauMau- -What?", -International Review of Missions, Vol. 44 (1955) pp. 205-206.

2 Cf. Welbourne, loc. cit.

3 Cf. L. S. B. Leakey, *Mau Mau and the Kikuyu* (London, 1955). Unlike some observers who view Mau Mau as a savage, atavistic movement, Leakey's account suggests that Mau Mau was an understandable response by a colonially uprooted people to a social system that provided no effective means of integration into a new, coherent way of life: "I do not believe.., that the movement could have achieved its present position if the genuine grievances which I have outlined in some of my chapters had not existed in the minds of a large part of the Kikuyu population." *Ibid.*, p. 105. Cf. Peter Worsley, "The Anatomy of Mau Mau," *The New Reasoner* (Summer, 1957) pp. 13-24.

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Europeans (including the colonial government, since it was linked with the settled Europeans at every major point of power and of restraint upon the African population 1) and to regain the land alienated by them. Although in pursuit of this goal, Mau Mau's military action resulted in more African than European deaths, this did not mean it was not fundamentally an anti-European rebellion. The Africans killed by Mau Mau were those unable or unwilling to join forces with its anti-European goals, and so terrorist liquidation was often their fate, as it tends to be in most colonial rebellions. 2 The Mau Mau Movement was, of course, eventually defeated by government, but this took more than five years, during which time the Kikuyu rebels showed much skill at combatting superior military and police forces.

1 As regards the relationship between the settled Europeans and colonial government, Lord Hailey observed as follows in 1938: "Our... immediate concern here.., is with the influence exercised by European interests in the development of policy in regard to the African section of the community That the Government should have given considerable weightage to European interests was inevitable in

view of the part which has been taken by the European community in building up the national economy of Kenya.... The influence of European interests has been shown in the follow directions.

(a) The composition of the political and local government institutions of the Colony; (b) the reservation of lands for European settlement; (c) the relative expenditure on the 'settled' as compared with the predominantly 'native' areas, and on certain public services such as those of Education, Health, Agriculture or Animal Husbandry; (d) certain differential legislation, such for example as that embodied in the system of Registration Certificates applicable to Africans, or the local by-laws confining the residence of Africans to Government or Municipal Locations in the urban centres." Lord Hailey, *An African Survey* (London, 1938) pp. 88-89.

² Cf. Brian Crozier, *The Rebels: A Study of Post-War Insurrections* (Boston, 1960) pp. 178-179, et. passim.

³ Cf. Corfield, *op. cit.*, passim.

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IV

POLITICS OF DECOLONIZATION IN PLURAL SOCIETY

1) The European Factor

Interestingly enough, the first serious measures towards decolonization in Kenya were begun during the height of the Mau Mau rebellion, especially in 1954 when, under the pressure of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Sir Oliver Lyttelton, a Council of Ministers was created which had one African nominated member, along with three Europeans, two Asians (all unofficals) and six officials. I Politically, what this indicated was that the Mau Mau Movement had undoubtedly accelerated the time table of decolonization, which involved a major intervention of the colonial authorities to establish a constitutional situation that would enable Africans to turn from rebellious to peaceful channels of political change. Mau May also contributed to a new political situation at the level of the institution of machinery for peaceful political change, in that it helped divide the European population over the question of permitting peaceful outlets to African political pressures. An important segment of the European population accepted, or at least acquiesced in, the so-called Lyttelton Constitution of 1954, and this, in tarn, provided a basis for further constitutional advances for Africans within several years. This occurred in 1957 with the adoption of the socalled Lennox-Boyd Constitution which increased African legislative representation from eight to fourteen, as against Fourteen Europeans (hence the

¹ See *Proposals for a Reconstruction of the Government*, Cmd. 9103 (London 1954).

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destruction of the "parity" proposition whereby any African legislative advance was matched by equal European advance, irrespective of the existing European position)' and also placed three portfolios in African hands-Housing, Education,

and Community Development, the latter being grouped under one African Minister.

As expected, the 1957 Constitutional change split the European population, with one section of it following Sir Michael Blundell and his United Country Party (UCP) which endorsed, though weakly, the so-called "multi-racial" propositions underlying the Lennox-Boyd Constitution, and the other section cohering around the Federal Independence Party (FIP)-a conservative apartheid-oriented group--and around an independent group headed by Group Captain Briggs. When these groups first tested their strength at the 1957 General Election, the liberal Blundell group failed to gain a majority of the fourteen European seats, while Griggs' independents proved more representative of European opinion, gaining eight of the European seats. Subsequently, Briggs' independents and the PIP merged to form the United Party in 1959, and Blundell's UCP was also dissolved and regrouped under the name of the New Kenya Party.

From this point onwards, the political position of the European parties tended to depend less upon their conflict with African interests than upon the evolution of political fragmentation within the post-Mau Mau groups. This fragmentation--which presently borders on fratricidal tribalism--stemmed partly from the nature of Mau Mau itself (especially its tribal composition) as well as the history of Kenya African political development

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since World War I.

2) The Tribalist Factor

Like all earlier political organizations in Kenya, the African groups that emerged in the post-Mau Mau period (i.e., post 1957-58) were closely linked to mass forces and pressures. These forces, however, were now lacking in a more or less coherent front against European rule. Rather, they were characterized by intra-African sources of conflict, most of which centered around the ethnic or tribal, as well as regional, characteristics of the African population. As already noted, as a result of the Mau Mau rebellion the ultimate direction of Kenya's political change as an all-African political system was more or less decided upon in 1957. This meant, among other things, that the decline of European power was now mainly a matter of time. Thus, the issue immediately confronting the politically relevant African groups became a question of which Africans would ultimately succeed to the declining European power position. In arriving at a resolution of this question, it was virtually inevitable that tribal or ethnic forces would emerge as an important political variable.

This is particularly true when it is recalled that throughout the period of African political evolution since World War I, the Kikuyu- - the largest and most modernized of Kenya's tribes --played an overwhelmingly predominant role. From the rather spontaneous formation of the YKA in 1921 to the outlawry of the KAU in 1952, both the mass support and leadership of these African organizations were found mainly among the Kikuyu, who were affected

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more than any other tribe by land alienation and by the general process of socio-economic change characteristic of Kenya's colonial system. In fact, even the politico-religious sects and secret societies seem to have occurred first and were more prevalent among the Kikuyu masses, with the first ones having their activities recorded in 1914 by the District Commissioner in the following terms: "One or two dissatisfied spirits... bringing up every form of grievance that had occurred during the years that have passed."

The point to be made here, therefore, is that with the 1957 Constitution's indication of a probable all-African government sometime in the near future, the hitherto Kikuyu predominance in African politics was bound to be challenged. It is virtually a law of colonial political change that at the historical point whereby a decision is made (as it was made in Kenya in 1957, or in Ghana in 1951, etc.) to prepare, however slowly, for the ultimate transfer of political power from colonial to African hands, the main focus of political conflict within a given colonial territory shifts from one of European-African conflict to intra-African conflict. And since in most African territories the stage of modernization attained by the 1950's was still far from having destroyed the tribal or ethnic basis of social relationships among

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Africans, this basis emerges as a primary factor in the intense intra-African competition that normally characterizes African politics during the

1 Quoted in Welbourn, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

2 In fact, much of the framework of colonial modernization actually strengthened the tribal or ethnic basis of African relationships. This was especially so in Kenya where the local units of administrative and political control conformed so closely to the prevailing tribal complex. See Lord Hailey, *Native Administration in the British African Territories, Part I* (London, 1950) pp. 105ff.

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decolonization or representative government phase.

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Kenya's cultural complex, it should be noted, had certain features which tended to render the tribal-based political competition that emerged from 1957 onwards (and especially after the 1960 Constitutional Conference) a more embittered affair than has been the case elsewhere in Africa. The main reason why the Kikuyu (1, 500, 000 pop.)--and next to the Kikuyu, the Luo (850, 000), Kamba (690, 000), Meru (366, 000), Embu (230, 000) and Kisii (287, 000)--were most affected by the process of colonial socio-political change in Kenya, was that they were agricultural peoples who either inhabited land necessary for European settlement or were capable of being easily transformed into agrarian laborers on European farms and wage-laborers in: new colonial towns. On the other hand, the minority tribes³ in Kenya such as the Masai (67, 201), Turkana (76, 930), Kalenjin-speaking tribes⁴ (900, 000), some Coastal tribes--e.g., Galla, Giriama-et. al., were pastoralists (TMIo-Hamites) and as such were less affected by the establishment and evolution of the plural-type colonial society. Consequently, in the contemporary situation the minority tribes have little basis, as regards their

experience under colonial rule, for possessing any close identify or sympathy with the Kikuyu and other agricultural (mainly Bantu) tribes.

1 For a discussion of this proposition, see Martin Kilson, Political Change in a West African State (forthcoming volume).

2 Material on Kenya's tribal groupings may be found in John Middleton, The Kikuyu and Kambs of Kenya (London, 1955); Hailey, Native Administration in the British African Territories, Part I; Report of East Africa Royal Commission, 1953-1955, Cmd. 9475 (London 1955).

3 The pastoral groups are called "minority tribes" only in relation to the agricultural groups as a whole, who comprise over half the total population of 5,500,000 to 6,000,000 Africans.

4 The Kalenjin-speaking peoples, who constitute the second largest tribal grouping, comprising the following sub-tribes: Nandi, Kipsigis, Elgeyo, Marakwet, Tugen, and Suk.

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For instance, the Nilo-Hamitic pastoralists have not confronted the same kind of land pressures experienced by the Kikuyu both in the past and currently. Instead, they are mobile peoples by definition and have been permitted to roam beyond Kenya's borders to find grazing grounds in Ethiopia, Tanganyika, and Uganda. Moreover, the minority tribes like Masai and Kalenjin have not experienced the same sort of relationships with the European dominant minority (e.g., as squatters or wager-laborers, domestics, etc. on European farms) that have been so crucial in shaping the Kikuyu and Luo attitudes towards Europeans. And, of course, the Kikuyu--as well as Luo, Meru, Embu, Kamba--have been in greater contact with urban life in Nairobi and elsewhere, including such features of urbanization as education, wagemlabor, cosmopolitanism and all this implies, etc. In short, the agricultural and _ pastoral tribes have evolved more or less in isolation of each other and along relatively distinct paths, and this situation greatly influences their contemporary relationships.

Some evidence of this is provided in a recent public opinion survey among some 1,200 Africans chosen from twelve Kenya tribes. One of the questions asked these Africans was to state which tribes worked best together in everyday life, and the responses showed that interviewees belonging to pastoral tribes preferred to work with members of similar tribes (e. g., Kalenjin preferred Masai, Masai preferred Kalenjin) and vice-versa for the

1 See *infra.*, pp. 25-26.

2 Baluhya, Coastal, Embu, Kalenjin, Kamba, Kikuyu, Kisii, Luo, Masai, Meru, Somali, and Taita.

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interviewees belonging to agricultural tribes. More specifically, of the 100 Kalenjin respondents 91% stated that Masai worked best with Kalenjin, and of the 100 Masai respondents 73% said Kalenjin worked best with Masai. On the other hand, 52% of the Kamba respondents said that Kamba worked best with Kikuyu, and 55% of Kikuyu respondents said the same thing. It is equally important to

note that respondents belonging to the agricultural tribes saw the pastoralists as preferring to work with each other, and vice-versa. Thus, 80% of the Kalenjin respondents said the Kamba worked best with the Kikuyu and 45% of the Kalenjin said the Luo preferred Kikuyu; while 65% of Kikuyu respondents stated that Kalenjin worked best with Masai and 71% of Kikuyu respondents said that Masai preferred Kalenjin.

The different patterns of colonial development between the agricultural and pastoral tribes has also produced important jealousies, or points of envy, that mark much of their contemporary relationships. This is partly suggested, for instance, by the responses recorded in the aforementioned survey to the question, what tribe has made most or least progress in education and economic activity? 85% of the sample chose the Kikuyu as their first choice for most progress in education and 72% chose Kikuyu as first choice. 1 Public Opinion Poll on Tribalism in Kenya, Poll N.', 8 (Nairobi: mimeographed. The Market Research Company of East Africa, 1961) Appendix, pp. 4-7. Since this survey will be referred to again, it is necessary to present some details of the 1, 200 subjects surveyed. They represented 12 major groups of Kenya's tribes. By age group, 35% were in 17-24 year range; 45% were 25-34 years old; 13% 35-44 years old; and 7% 45 or over. By occupation, some 20% were laborers; 15% clerks; 9% civil servants; 18% employed in private industry; 1% professional; 11% self-employed; 15% unemployed; and 9% identified as "other." By education, some 15% had no education; 71% had some primary education; 6% completed the G. C. E. School Certificate or more; and 8% did not state education. By sex, 93% were male and 7% female. Finally, 50% of the persons resided in rural areas and 50% in urban areas. Ibid., p. 1, Appendix, p. 1.

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for most progress in economic development; whereas 57% chose the Masai as first choice for least progress in education and 63% chose the Masai for least progress in economic development. More specifically, of the respondents who were members of pastoral tribes, the Kikuyu were chosen overwhelmingly as the most educationally and economically advanced: e.g., 85% of Kalenjin chose Kikuyu for education and 45% for economic progress; 79% of Masai chose Kikuyu for education and 92% for economic progress; and 85% of Somali chose Kikuyu for education and 78% for economic progress.¹

Furthermore, just as the Kikuyu are envied by the pastoral groups for their superior educational and economic progress, they are also rather disliked socially. Thus, the foregoing survey reports that in reply to the question which tribe do you least like to live with, 46% of the respondents belonging to the 900, 000-strong Kalenjin (the second largest ethnic group next to the Kikuyu) named the Kikuyu, 27% of the Masai named the Kikuyu, and 37% of the respondents belonging to Coastal tribes named the Kikuyu. And, of course, the pattern of these responses tended to correlate with the agricultural-pastoral division already noted: e. g., 29% of the respondents belonging to the agricultural Kikuyu named the Kalenjin as the tribe they like least to live with and 29% named the Masai; and 40% of the Luo named the Masai, while 15% of the Luo named the Kalenjin. It is noteworthy,

however, that the Kikuyu appear to be the agricultural group least liked by the pastoralists: e.g., the Luo, who 1 Ibid., Appendix, p. 13. As regards the tribes considered to have made the least progress in education and economic advancement, the respondents generally chose the Kalenjin, Masai, or Somali.

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are the second largest agricultural tribe, were named by only 12% of the Kalenjin respondents as the tribe they least liked to live with, and only 12% of the Masai

1 named the Luo. (As shall be noted below, this situation is of some relevance to the political party life-up in Kenya today, in which the Kikuyu and Luo are allied in one of the two major African parties--the Kenya African National Union--with the other party--the Kenya African Democratic Union--representing primarily the pastoral groups. 2)

It should also be observed that the Baluhya, who are the fourth largest tribe and the third largest agricultural group (736, 000 pop.), constitute an important exception to the foregoing pattern. Living in the northwestern part of the Nyanza Province--and thus beyond the White Highland areas of the Rift Valley Province and the Central Province--the Baluhya underwent a pattern of colonial development rather different from the Kikuyu and other agricultural tribes. 3 They have thus come to identify very little with the main agricultural groups: e.g., 68% of the Baluhya respondents stated that they least liked to live with Kikuyu and 21% named the Luo, who live in the southern part of Nyanza Province. Instead, the Baluhya have come to identify more with

1 Ibid.

2 See infra., pp. 46-49.

3 Northern Nyanza Province where the Baluhya live has always been more productive than other areas, and to that extent has enabled the Baluhya to remain relatively free of the colonial sector dominated by Europeans, whereas the Kikuyu, Embu, Meru, Luo et. al. had to enter this sector for their livelihood. Hailey observed in 1951 that Nyanza (and especially the north) "is as a whole the most favourably situated from the standpoint of native production.... The favourable conditions of soil and climate have resulted in a progressive increase of agricultural production.... The Province is now the largest producer of native maize." Hailey, Native Administration.... pp. 147-148.

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the pastoral tribes, some of whom are their neighbors to the northeast (e. g., the Nandi). Thus, in response to the question which tribe do you most like to live with, some 32% of Baluhya named the Kalenjin (none named Kikuyu, Luo, Embu, and only 4% named Kamba and 4% named Meru) and some 47% of Kalenjin

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respondents named the Baluhya as the tribe they most liked to live with. And, as shall be noted presently, there are important political questions on which the Baluhya identify with Kalenjin, Masai, and other pastoral groups. This situation

suggests, ironically enough, that the indigenous sources (as against those stemming from the colonial pattern of development) of the tribalist-based differences in Kenya's development social and political system may be overcome in time, insofar as the agricultural (and Bantu) Baluhya and pastoral (NiloHamitic) Kalenjin have close relationships despite their different cultures. In fact, the indigenous differences may also be seen as a not insurmountable barrier between Kenya's tribes in the case of the Kikuyu-Luo relationship, for the former are Bantu and the latter Nilotes.

3) Politics of Tribalism

a) Political Attitudes and Tribalism

As might be expected, such social and cultural differences as those that the foregoing analysis suggests prevail among Kenya's main tribal groups, cannot help but have an overwhelming impact upon the political process. This may be gauged partly from the fact that on nearly every major problem confronting Kenya's political system in its final stage of decolonization or transfer of power 1 Public Opinion Ibl on Tribalism in Kenya, 1961, Appendix, p. 13.

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from colonial to African hands, the response of the African population is tribally oriented or determined, which in turn reflects the different socioeconomic and political experiences of tribal groups during colonial rule. Perhaps the most politically sensitive--indeed, explosive--question confronting the present Kenya government is that of regionalism (or federalism) versus a unitary (or centralized) state; and with few exceptions, the reaction of the major population groups to this issue is largely tribal. Thus, the 1961 public opinion survey data presented in Table I show that in response to the question whether tribal boundaries should be retained to the exclusion of other tribes, 68% of the Kalenjin respondents said yes,

RESPONSES

Yes

57% 63% 9% 68% 20%

23% 53% 67% 55% 59% 59% 3516

TABLE I

TO MAINTENANCE OF TRIBAL BOUNDARIES

No Not Total

Stated

39% 17% 91%

32% 77% 77% 47% 33% 36% 87%

37% 27%

4% 20%

3%

9% 4% 4% 38%

100% 100% 100% 100% 100% 100% 100%, 100% 100% 100%, 100%, 100%

Opinion Poll on Tribalism in Kenya,
Tribes

Baluhya Coastal Embu Kalenjin Kamba Kikuyu Kisii Luo Masai Meru Somali
Taita

Total 43% 50% 7% 100%

(Source: Public
1961, Appendix, p. 15.)

(30)

55% of the Massat said yes, 59% of Somali said yes, and 63% of the respondents belonging to Costa. tribes said yes. On the other hand, the respondents belonging to the large agricultural groups were overwhelmingly opposed to the maintenance of tribal boundaries and thus, presumably, to the regionalism or federalism that this implies: 77% of the Kikuyu said no, 77% of the Kamba, 91% of Emba, 89% of the Meru. (The Baluhya, of course, supported the Kalenjin and other pastoral groups.) It is noteworthy, however, that 53 % of the Kisii (287,000 pop.) and 67% of Luo (850,000 pop.) supported the maintenance of tribal boundaries to the exclusion of other tribes.

These two groups are agricultural, and as noted, normally support the Kikuyu, Meru, Embu, Kamba, etc. on most issues in Kenya's politics, and are in fact allied with them in the Kenya African National Union, supplying this party most of its votes in the 1961 General Election. However, on the question of land and tribal boundaries, the Kisii and Luo have good reason for supporting their maintenance, because the Kikuyu (and also the Meru, 366,000 pop., and Embu 230,000 pop.) have experienced the greatest land shortage and population pressures and thus are naturally inclined towards a more liberal view of access to tribal lands, including Luo and Kisii lands.

A similar tribal-centered response may be seen from the data in Table II and Table III which show the responses to two important political questions included in the 1961 public opinion survey. The questions were: 1) Should each tribe be represented equally in the

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Legislative Council as at present? 1 2) Should each tribe be represented proportionately (by population) in the Legislative Council?

TABLE -II

RESPONSES TO EQUAL REPRESENTATION IN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Tribes	Yes	No	Not	Total
Stated				
Baluhya	79%	21%	-	100%
Costal	63%	17%	20%	100%
Embu	45%	55%	-	100%
Kalenjin	83%	17%	-	100%
Kamba	45%	48%	7 %	100%
Kikuyu	35%	68%	-	100%
Kisii	82%	18%	'	100%
Luo	44%	49%	7 %	100%
Masai	75%	17%	8 %	100%

Meru	8%	80%	12%	100%
Somali	93%	7%	-	100%
Taita	50%	23%	27%	100%
Total	5%	36%	6%	100%

(Source: Public Opinion Poll on Tribalism in Kenya. 1961, Appx.,p.14

As for the first question, the response again revolved around the agricultural-pastoral axis, with 85% of Kalenjin replying yes, 75% of Masai, 93% of Somali, and 63% of respondents belonging to Coastal tribes replied yes. On the other hand, 68% of the Kikuyu replied no, 55% of Embu, 80% of Meru, 48% Kamba, and 49% Luo. (The Baluhya again supported the position of the pastoral tribes.) It is significant that the Kisii, who are political allies of the Kikuyu in the Kenya African National Union, responded 82% in favor of equal tribal' representation. The main reason for the present pattern of vitually equal tribal legislative representation is to be found in the 1961 electoral constituencies which the colonial authorities created in such a way that they conformed to the existing tribal structure of the population. The intent of this was, preseumbly to conteract the Kikuyu population predominance.. cf. George Bennett and Carl Rosenberg, The Kenvatta Election:-Kenya 1960-1961 (London, 1961) pp. 47-56, 'T39,204, et. passim.

(32)

Thereason for this ould appear to be that the Kisii are the smallest of the main agricultural groups, which means that under the present arrangement they at least are secured some representation whereas another arrangement would be much less favorable. This same situation probably Influenced the sizeable Luo response of 44% in favor of equal representation, for although they are a very large group compared to most other tribes (only the Kikuyu and Kalenjin have larger pupulation--1,600,000 and 900,000 respectively) the Luo (850,000 pop.) are half the Kikuyu, who are also the most socially and politically competitive group confronted by the Luo. As for the second question, it is again appazent from Table II that

RESPONSES TO

TABLE III

PROPORTIONATE REPRESENTATIONS IN
CfTTMT(TT,
LEGISLATIVE

Tribes	Yes	No	Not	Total
Stated				
Baluhya	57%	43%	-	100%
Coastal	25%	60%	15%	100%
Embu	64%	31%	5%	100%
Kalenjin	17%	83%	-	100%
Kamba	71%	29%	-	100%
Kikuyu	78%	23%	-	100%

Kisii	76%	18%	6%	100%
Luo	53%	47%	-	100%
Masai	28%	60%	12%	100%
Meru	95%	5%	-	100%
Somali	41%	59%	-	100%
Taita	35%	35%	31%	100%
Total	53%	41%	6%	100%

(Source: Public Opinion Poll on Tribalism in Kenya, 1961, Appendix p. 14)

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the pastoral tribes tend to be rather homogenous in their response to major [olitical questions, for 83% of the Kalenjin replied no to proportional representation 60% of Masai, 59% of Somali, and 60% of the respondents belong to Costal tribes relied no. The agricultural groups, on the other hand, favored proportional representation: 77% of Kikuyu replied yes, 71% Kamba, 64% Embu, 95% Meru, 53% Luo, and 76% Kisii. Claiming well over half of Kenya's population, these agricultural tribes would obviously predominate a system of proportional representation, whereas the pastoral groups recognize that they would fare much worse under such an arrangement as compared to the present system.¹

b) Political Parties and Tribalism

Structurally, it is in the political parties where the politics of tribalism in Kenya has become most firmly based. Far more than any other institutions, political parties have been the main carriers of the near fratricidal tribalism so characteristic of Kenya politics, and it is necessary to analyze their relationship to contemporary political change.

Although the 1957 constitutional change provided the first indication that colonial government had accepted the principle of ultimate transfer of political power to an all-African Kenya government, this position was later confirmed and substantially elaborated at the Kenya Constitutional Conference in London, February 1960.

The main

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See *infra.*, pp 43-44

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result of the 1960 Conference at Lancaster House (at which representatives of the African, European, and Asian communities were present--viz. The United Party, New Kenya Group, Asian and Arab Elected Members, and African Elected Members) was the extension of the constitutional machinery of government in the direction of greater African participation and control. ¹ This involved the establishment of a new TLegislative Council of 65 elected members, 53 of hbm would be elected on a common roll and 12 would be so-called National Members. The 53 common seats were divided between the several communities, with 20 reserved for non-Africans (viz., 10 Europeans, 8 Asians, 2 Arabs) and the remainder were open seats which, given an extended franchise for africans, were guaranteed to be held by Africans. As for the 12 National Members, they would

be elected by the 'Legislative Council sitting as an electoral college, and would represent proportionately the three racial communities: 4 Africans, 4 Europeans, and 4 Asians. In addition to these changes, the Executive body was reconstituted in favor of Africans, with the new Executive body was reconstituted in favor of Africans, with the new Council of Ministers consisting of 12 Ministers, 8 of whom would be unofficial and 4 official. Furthermore, of the 8 unofficials, 4 were to be Africans, 3 Europeans and 1 Asian.

It is within the foregoing constitutional framework that the present party system in Kenya evolved, and its specific character took shape during the General Elections in March 1961. ² With the

¹ See Report of the Kenya Constitutional Conference, Cmnd. 960 (London 1960) pp. 7-8 et. passim.

¹ Data upon which the following analysis of Kenya's parties is based are found in the following sources: G.Fo Engholm "Kenya's First Direct Elections for Africans, O Parliamentary Affairs (Autumn, 1957) pp 424-433 G.F. Engholm, "African Elections in Kenya, March 1957," in W.J.M^oMackenzis

(35)

conclusion of the 1960 Constitutional Conference in agreement satisfactory to the three racial communities ¹ the Emergency restrictions established in 1953 were removed, and especially the restriction against the formation of territorial-wide political parties or organizations among Africans. A crucial point about the lifting of the latter restriction was its timing, for it occurred precisely at the point where tribal fragmentation of Kenya politics was becoming an established fact.

Although the Emergency period of 1953-1960 was characterized by a relative absence of legitimate African political activity, thus activity never ceased. This was particularly so during the period of the IS57 Lenox-Boyd Constitution for the first General Election involving all racial communities was held in March, 1957 on the basis of the Constitution, and a degree of African political activity was permitted. The colonial government, however, used its power to define the limits and scale of the African political activity, as well as the groups within the African community who would be permitted to participate in the Election. Being itself aware of, and disenchanted with, the Kikuyu predominance in modern politics, and armed with the fact that the Mau Mau rebellion originated among the Kikuyu, the colonial government employed its power to limit the Kikuyu role in the Election and to favor the pastoral and Kenneth Robinson (eds.) *Five Elections in Africa* (Oxford, 1960) pp. 291-461; George Bennett and Carl Rosberg, *The Kenyatta Election* (London, 1961); *East Africa and Rhodesia* (1959-1962 issues).

¹ The United Party, led by Group Captain Briggs and representing the conservative segment of the European community, refused to join the more liberal New Kenya Party led by Sir Michael Blundell, in accepting the 1960 proposals. See Report of the Kenya Constitutional Conference, 1961. pp. 8-9.

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groups. This was achieved partly through franchise procedures which gave the vote only to loyalist Kikuyu (i.e., those Kikuyu known to authorities as outwardly loyal to the government during the Mau Mau rebellion, or those who could demonstrate such loyalty) thereby disfranchising a major segment of the politically conscious Kikuyu; and through a manipulation of electoral constituencies in a way that deflated the Kikuyu population advantage as against other tribal groups (eg., the heavily populated Central Province where most Kikuyu live was given only one representative 1)

What is equally important about the control of the colonial government over the structure of the 1957 Election and its influence upon the subsequent pattern of African party development, is that the 1957 campaign was carried out by African political groups which could not operate beyond the confines of the District of their origin. It is this provision, combined with the establishment of the 1957 electoral constituencies along District tribal lines, that helped generate an array of essentially tribally-based political parties that participated in the 1957 Election and later formed the organizational pillars of territorial-wide parties, once they were permitted. During the 1957 campaign, at least a dozen District-tribal parties emerged to contest the Election, among which were the Nairobi District African Congress (mainly Luo), the Nairobi People's Convention Party (Kikuyu and Luo), the Kisumu Highlands Abagusil Association, the Taita African

See Engholm, "African Elections in Kenya, March 1957," *op. cit.* pp. 404-407

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Democratic Union, the Nakuru African Progressive Party, the South Nyanza District African Political Association, et. al. Furthermore, the restriction upon territorial-wide parties continued throughout the next three years, with the result that political groups formed in preparation for the next General Election were also fundamentally tribal in composition. For instance, during 1958-1959 a number of political groups were formed among the Xalenjin-speaking people, all of which were based upon the sub-tribes comprising the Kalenjin: e.g., the Baringo Independent Party, the Nandi Independent Party, the Elegeyo-Marakwet Independent Party, etc.

Thus, given this three-year experience of local, District-tribal political activity, it was to be expected that the formation of territorial-wide parties after the 1960 Constitutional Conference would be significantly influenced by this experience. Moreover, this influence tended to revolve around the agricultural-pastoral division that I have already analyzed as the framework within which the tribalist factor in Kenya politics has evolved. As might be expected, the first effort to found new nation-wide parties occurred among the more socially modernized agricultural groups, the Kikuyu and Luo which took the form of the Kenya African National Union (KANU) founded in March-April 1960. It should also be noted that the initiative to found KANU came primarily from the urban, Nairobi-centered Kikuyu and Luo, whereas an important feature of pre-Mau Mau political expression among the Kikuyu was the high degree of mass, rural

initiative in African political behavior. The main point to be made here, however, is that KANU was primarily an affair of

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I the Kikuyu and Luo. and although an attempt was made at its foundation to embrace representatives of non-agricultural groups (e.g., R. Ngala, a Giriama from Kilifi on the Coast, and D. Arap Moi, A Kalenjin *(Tugen) were elected first Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer, but declined the posts) KANU has not succeeded in this. Besides the Kikuyu and Luo, the other main agricultural groups that supported KANU were the Embu, Meru, Kamba, and Kisii, who together with Kikuyu and Luo comprise 70% of the total population of Kenya and whose electoral constituencies now embrace 15 seats in the Kenya legislature. It is noteworthy, Moreover, that the Baluhya--who are the third largest agricultural tribe, second largest Bantu tribe, and fourth largest of all Kenya tribes--"did not join the Kikuyu, Luo, and other agricultural groups in KANU, even though one of their members was made Deputy Secretary of the party (namely, Arthur Ochwade). However, neither did the Baluhya join forces with the pastoral groups in their political party, despite the fact that the Baluhya prefer these groups and respond to the major issues in Kenya'politics in the same was as the pastoralists (e.g., in the 1961 public opinion survey, 32% of the Baluhya respondents named Kalenjin as the tribe they most liked to live with, while none named the Kikuyu, Luo, Embu, and

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only 4% named the Kamba and 4% named Meru.,' Instead, the Baluhya moved I The Nairobi People's Convention Party, the Nairobi District African Congress, and the Kenya (Nairobi) Independence Movement were the three main Kikuyu-Luo organizations that merged to form KANU. The Kikuyu founders of KANU were Dr. J. Kiano, an economist, James Gichuru, former President of KAU, and Dr. Mungai Njoroge, a medical doctor; and the Luo founders were Tom Mboya, Secretary-General of the Kenya Federation Rf Labor, Oginga Odinga, founder and President of the Luo Thrift and Trading Corporation, and President of the Luo Union, and Argwings Kodhek, a lawyer.

(39)

to form, in July 1960, the Baluhya Political Union (BPU) whose leader was Musa Amalemba--and educated Baluhya who practiced journalism in Nairobi--and the BPU contested the second General Election in 1961 in its own right. Nevertheless, the pro-pastoral orientation of the Baluhya was not discarded as a result of their independent political action.

Shortly after KANU's formation, the main pastoral groups responded to the new political situation by forming the Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU) in June, 1960. Like KANU, the founders and leaders such as R. Ngala, Masinde Muliro, D. Arap Moi, and T. Arap

Towett, were well-educated urban-dwellers, as were other members of the party's political elite. This may be seen, for instance, from the educational attributes of

KADU's official candidates in the 1961 Election: for 40% of them had some higher education, as did 60% of

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KANU's candidates. Furthermore, just as KANU built upon the existing political groups that had formed among the Kikuyu and Luo during the 1957-1960 period, so did KADU build upon an array of political groups that had evolved among the pastoral tribes. However, unlike the Kikuyu and Luo political groups which were largely urban, the pastoral political groups that formed the basis of KADU were mainly rural. Consequently, KADU leaders have had to make their appeal for mass support along more parochial, tribalist lines, as against the more national orientation Bennett and Rosberg, *op. cit.*, Table 3, p. 141.

(40)

tion of KANU's appeal--though it too has its tribalist bent.

Of the pastoral groups that formed KADU's support, the Kalenjin contributed more than any other tribe. Under the leadership of D. Arap Moi the Kalenjin had formed several District-Tribal parties during 1958-1959, and in March-April 1960 these parties merged to form the all-Kalenjin Political Alliance which later entered KADU as its single largest tribal-political component. Other pastoral groups who contributed to the organization of KADU were the Masai United Front, led by J. K. Tipis and John Konchellah; the Coast African People's Union, led by R. Ngala; and the Somali National Association. Several important pastoral elements; however, did not enter KADU, and have since become a political issue for both KANU and KADU, for these elements have espoused secessionist tendencies. Prominent among these secessionist pastoral elements, have been the Northern Province Peoples' Progressive Party, the Somali Independent Union, the Rendille United Front, and the Boran Muslim Welfare

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Association. KADU; however, has compensated its failure to embrace these groups insofar as the agricultural Baluhya (736,000 pop.) have inclined more towards it than towards KANU.

On nearly all important political issues, the BPU has supported KADU's position, and particularly on the issue of regionalism versus unitary government--the most fundamental issue between KADU and KANU. This issue centers around the question of tribal land boundaries, and

1 For the position of these groups, see *East Africa and Rhodesia* (March 8, 1962) p. 667.

(41)

in the 1961 public opinion survey some 57% of the Baluhya respondents supported the maintenance of tribal boundaries to the exclusion of other tribes, as did 68% of Kalenjin, 55% Masai, 59% Somali, and 65% of Coastal groups. The KANU tribes, on the other hand, opposed these boundaries: 70% of Kikuyu opposed them 77% Kamba, 87% Meru, and

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91% Embu. Another factor which contributes to the Baluhya's pro-KADU position is that Masinde Muliro, KADU's Deputy Leader, is a Bukusu, who are related to the Baluhya and live in North Nyanza (which

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Muliro represents in the legislature.) At any rate, the Baluhya seem so strongly anti-Kikuyu that this alone would appear enough to keep them at least in a neutral position between KAJU and KABU, and at

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best active supporters or members of KADU. In the 1961 General Election, for instance, one educated Baluhya--Arthur Ochwada-- stood in North Nyanza as a KANU candidate, and was viewed as "a tribal traitor" and badly defeated, being the only one of five candidates

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to lose his deposit.

V

A CONCLUDING NOTE: TRIBALISM AND THE APPROACH TO INDEPENDENCE

1) Minority Government of MaJority Tribes

Since the second General Election in 1961, the tribal-oriented party politics characteristic of the post-Mau Mau period has shown no 1 Public Opinion Poll on Tribalism in Kenya. 1961, Appendix, p. 15.

2 See Hailey, Native Admnistration p. 149; Engholm, loc. cit., p. 453

3 In the 1961 public opinion survey, 68% of the Baluhya respondents said the Kikuyu were the most unfriendly tribe; and when asked which tribe constituted the greatest security problem in Kenya, 79% of Baluhya named the Kikuyu, as did 88% of the Kalenjin respondents. Public Opinion Poll on Tribalism in Kenya. 1961, Appendix, pp. 11-12.

4 See Bennett and Rosberg, ep. cit., p. 175.

(42)

sign of ending. Rather, it has become more fierce and petty, with strong indications of verging on civil war, either before or shortly after independence is secured. An important contributor to this situation has been the peculiar governmental arrangement that followed the 1961 Election, whereby KANU gained 67.4% of the valid votes and 19 of the 53 seats in the legislature, but refused to form the government because the colonial authorities did not accept its demand for the immediate release of Jomo Kenyatta, who had been imprisoned since 1953. Consequently, the minority African party, KADU (which gained only 16.4% of the votes but 11 seats, a situation that reflected the anti-Kikuyu bias of the 1961 electoral constituencies) agreed to form the government in alliance with Blundell's New Kenya Party (which gained 3.3% of votes and 4 seats) the Kenya Indian Congress (which gained 1.2% of votes and 3 seats) and the

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BPU (which gained 3.3% of votes and 1 seat.) KADU's Leader, R. Ngala (Giriama) became Leader of Government Business and Minister of Education in

the new government, and M. Muliro (Bukusu from North Nyanza) and T. Arap Towett (Kalenjin) also assumed portfolios as

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KADU members. As for the European and Asian parties, three leaders of the New Kenya Party received portfolios (with the Ministry of Agriculture going to Sir Micheal Blundell) and the Indian Congress' leader, A.B. Jamidar, also received a portfolio.

As was expected, this government (which was basically a dangerous affair insofar as it involved a minority government representative mainly of pastoral groups, as well as Europeans and Asians, ruling over the I Election data are found in Bennett and Rosberg, op. cit., pp. 204ff.

2 Musa Analemba of the BPU was made a Parliamentary Secretary.

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majority agricultural groups who in fact won the Election) lasted less than a year, and after the Kenya Constitutional Conference in London during February-March 1962, a new coalition government was formed. This government Involved a new Council of Ministers

in which portfolios were divided equally between XANU and KADU (7 each)

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in addition to two official Ministers (viz., Defence and Legal Affairs). 2)

KADU's Regionalism

Although the 1962 Conference resulted in a more stable government than its predecessor, it did not alter very much of the tribalist character of party politics. Eversince the 1961 Election this politics moved ever nearer the point of tribal violence and warfare, with KANU on the defensive and expressing its Kikuyu-Luo tribalism (or tribal interests) In terms of demands for the return

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of European lands to Africans, while KADU utilized its position'in a minority government to press an offensive on behalf of an independent Kenya government whose operative units would be based upon a tribally defined regionalism, KADU's regionalist offendve took several forsm, the most significant of which--as regards the political struggle between pastoral and agricultural tribes--was what KADU's Plan for National

i As regards he tribal complexion of the new Council of Ministers, both KADU and KANU sought to include tribes outside their normal supporters. The 7 KADU Ministers were R. Ngala, Minister of State (Giriama), D.A. Mot, Mipister for Local Government (Tugen-Kalenjin), T.A. Towett, Minister for Lands, Surveys, and Town Planning (Kipsigis-Kalenjin), M. Muliro, Minister for Commerce and Industry (Bukusu-Baluhya), B. Mate, Minister for Social Services (Meru), W. Havelock, Minister for Agriculture (European), and A.B. Jamidar, Minister for Tourism, Forests, Fisheries and Wild Life (Asian). The 7 KANU Ministers were Jomo Kenyatta, Minister of State (Kikuyu), T. Mboya, Minister for Labor (Luo), P. Chokwe, Minister for Works and Communications (Rabai). L. Sagini, Minister for Education (Kisii), J. Gichuru, Finance Minister (Kikuyu), F. M. Mati, Minister

for Health and Housing (Kamba), and B. McKenzie, Minister for Land Settlement and Water Development (European). See East Africa and Rhodesia (April 12, 1962) P. 785.

(44)

Unity (issued September, 1961) termed a "definite Regional representation in the Central legislature based on equality of representation of each Region...(and) Amendments to the Constitution to be effected

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only by a large majority of the people in each Region." Linked to these demands was a further KADU demand for a tribally defined Council of Ministers which T. Arap Towett, the Kalenjin leader in KADU, characterized as follows: "Recently T suggested that the best and most balanced Council of Ministers for Kenya should include the following people: One Kikuyu, one Kamba, one Meru, one Luhyia (Baluhya) one from the Northern Frontier District (Somali) and one Coast rural representative...; but few people supported this view--because they (i.e., KANU) are all selfish and want to dominate the others

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once they are in power."

Besides espousing these demands which, if instituted, would seriously affect the political power of the large agricultural tribes like the Kikuyu, the KADU leaders coupled them with threats to remove, after independence, all Kikuyu settled in Kalenjin and other non-Kikuyu areas. A further threat employed by KADU leaders was to intimate resort to war if the regional demands of KADU were not adopted at the 1962 Constitutional Conference. Mr. W. Arap Murgor, a Kalenjin (Elgeyo) leader 1 Text of Plan quoted in Robert A. Manners, "Regionalism in Kenya," Spectator (February 2, 1962) p. 131. Other features of KADU's Plan for National Unity were as follows: " The subject over which the Regions would have control as reflected in the written Constitution, would include I) Land; (2) A definite number of essential services such as education to Secondary level, etc.; (3) The appointment of Public Servants in the Regions."

2 Taita Towett, "Regionalism or Dictatorship for Kenya," East Africa and Rhodesia (November 23, 1961) P. 292.

(45)

of KADU and Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Defense and Internal Security, told a party rally of 5,000 at Eldoret that if KADU's regionalism was rejected at the 1962 Conference, "I will sound a whistle to my people declaring civil war. When we go to London, remain calm, but when you receive my telegram prepare with

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bows and arrows, because we shall be fighting for our freedom."

Masinde Muliro also intimated at this rally that KADU would resort

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to force of some sort if their regional scheme was rejected; and similar threats were made on other occasions by KADU leaders and

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government officials.

3) KANU's Weakness

KADU succeeded at the 1962 Constitutional Conference in securing

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most of its regional demands, in return for which it accepted 7 KANU members in a new Council on Ministers which also included 7 KADU members and two official members. Given the latter two members, effective power remained with KADU and it continued to employ it, in combination

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with threats of civil disorder on the part of pastoral groups, to overcome the population advantage of the agricultural tribes behind KANU. As suggested, in this endeavor the support of the Europeans, Asians, and colonial authorities has been crucial, for the strategic position of these groups in the economy, administration, and in the police and military establishment is indispensable to the

1 Quoted in East Africa and Rhodesia (January 18, 1962) p. 490

2 Ibid.

3 Cf. Manners, *op. cit.*, pp. 131-132.

4 See East Africa and Rhodesia (April 12, 1962) pp. 784ff.

5 Upon his return from the London Conference, W. Arap Murgor declared that "he would now tell his people to 'put down their spears and arrows' though they might still be needed 'to protect us against those K.A.N.U. people who have been sent to Communist countries to be trained to fight and wreck the Government.'" Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 785

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attainment of KADU's goals. And since KANU's goals, as presently known, are more conducive to the maintenance of much of the post-colonial strategic (i.e., political and military) and economic interests of expatriate groups (i.e., both the British government and metropolitan interests generally--e.g., firms operating in Kenya, banks, etc.--as well as the settled European and Asian communities) it is not surprising that the power and influence of these groups are employed as much

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as possible to KADU's advantage. It is, in fact, virtually a universal feature of colonial political change that during the period preparatory to the transfer of political power, the continuing influence and power of colonial government and of expatriate interests generally, are used to facilitate the assumption of political power

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by African groups most receptive to these interests.

Beyond this crucial assistance from expatriate elements; however, KANU has had the further advantage of important sources of schism and conflict within KANU's Kikuyu-Luo alliance. Though the Kikuyu and Luo have shared important experiences under colonialism in Kenya (especially

as laborers in Nairobi and other colonial towns) that underlay their

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In this connection, it is interesting that European political leaders associated with KADU have not hesitated to manipulate tribalist elements in furthering KADU. For instance, at the above-mentioned KADU rally at Eldoret, Rift Valley Province, in January 1962, Mr. Wilfred Havelock, then Minister for Local Government, and presently Minister for Agriculture, is reported to have "told the crowd that most people in Kenya did not want a Kikuyu to dictate to them from Nairobi. Europeans were prepared to act as trunboys on a Kenya bus driven by Africans--but not with Kenyatta at the wheel." At the same meeting, Mr. Rhoderick Macleod, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Education and brother of Iain Macleod, former British Secretary of State for the Colonies, declared that "I remember that you Kalenjin fought in the Second World War, and that you fought to preserve your liberty against Mau Mau when pregnant women and little children were being butchered." *East Africa and Rhodesia* (January 18, 1962) p. 490.

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For a discussion of this proposition, see Martin Kilson, *Political Change in a West African State* (forthcoming volume).

(47)

political alliance, there are differences among them which could tear the alliance asunder. One of these--whose political significance stands at the very center of current negotiations of Kenya's future political system-- is the question of maintaining tribal boundaries to the exclusion of other tribes, for as shown in Table I some 77% of the Kikuyu interviewees in the 1961 public opinion survey said they opposed such a policy (as did 77% of Kamba, 91% Embu, 89% Meru) whereas 67% of the Luo supported it. As suggested earlier, the Luo recognize that the Kikuyu have experienced the greatest land pressures and other frustrations stemming from the colonial policy of land alienation. Consequently the Kikuyu are seen as naturally more inclined towards a more liberal view of access to tribal lands, including, of course Luo lands in South Nyanza. Related to this situation is the Luo recognition of the large influence of the Kikuyu's population in the politics of an independent Kenya, claiming as they do some 20% of the total population. On the other hand, the Luo are themselves only half the Kikuyu population, and it is this situation which presumably motivated the favorable response of 44% of the Luo interviewees in the 1961 survey to the question of equal representation in the legislature, whereas 68% of the Kikuyu opposed it and only 32% favored it. (49% of Luo opposed equal representation and 7% were undecided).

Another politically relevant difference between the Kikuyu and Luo is the way the pastoral Kalenjin (900,000 pop.) and Masai and others appear more favorably disposed towards the Luo as against the Kikuyu. Thus, as noted earlier, in the 1961 survey some 46% of the Kalenjin named the Kikuyu as the tribe they least liked to live with, whereas

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only 12% named the Luo and only 12% of the Masai named the Luo. It is likely, of course, that the fact of the Luo being Nilotes, rather than Bantu like the Kikuyu, may contribute to this greater preference among the Nilo-Hamitic Kalenjin and Masai for the Luo. A final difference or source of schism within KANU centers around the leading political personalities in the party, whereby the Luo Mboya and the Kikuyu Kenyatta are involved in a keen--even fierce--competition for power. The organizational structure or machinery of KANU is controlled mainly by Kikuyu political activists, many of whom dislike and distrust Mboya and have used this machinery (especially the KANU Youth Wing) to undermine Mboya's influence and to urge his

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removal from a position of leadership. It is also believed that KANU's machinery is being used by supporters of the Land Freedom Army-- the military organ of the former Mau Mau Movement-- to rebuild its organization and influence among the Kikuyu. Whatever the validity of these claims, a segment of the Luo leadership in KANU has openly attacked their Kikuyu colleagues on grounds of an attempt to assume dictatorial controls within KANU and to employ it for revolutionary purposes. In these terms, Mr. W. Niguda, a Luo supporter of KANU, led a group of pro-KANU Luo to form the Luo Political Movement in August, 1962, whose purpose would be to function as a Luo pressure group within KANU and act, in Niguda's words, as "a warning

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to Kikuyu tribesmen in K.A.N.U. to abandon dreams of domination."

Accordingly, it is not unlikely that the Luo Political Movement will prove the basis of a separate Luo party which would probably ally with

1 Cf. East Africa and Rhodesia (November 23, 1961) p.287

2 Quoted in East Africa and Rhodesia (August 23, 1962) p.1230. A resolution passed at the founding meeting of the Luo Political Movement read as follows: "Whereas hitherto good relations have existed between the Luo community and members of the Kikuyu tribe, as is evident in our associa-

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KADU.

In any event, the tribal factor in Kenya politics has secured an influence and foundation quite superior to that in many other African countries, and all evidence suggests that it will prevail for some time to come. It will certainly be re-inforced by the proposed governmental system for an Independent Kenya, given its

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decentralization of major powers along regional-tribal lines. Under these circumstances, one can therefore expect a new Kenya government to be confronted with important problems of stability and security, and in meeting these it is likely to involve an authoritarian use of political power in a manner comparable to that experienced by a number of African states where tribal-regional political forces

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have proved sources of political Instability.

Martin Kilson,

Lecturer of Government,

Harvard University,

November, 1962

tion in KoA.N.U., we as a community have viewed with great concern the widespread intimidation, oathing, secret meetings, and gun manufacturing by members of the Kikuyu tribe, apparently aimed ad dominating other tribes of Kenya. This meeting resolves that unless the situation improves rapidly a meeting of the Luo community will be called to launch a separate party." Ibid.

I For details, see East Africa and Rhodesia (April 12, 1962) pp. 784ff

2 Cf. Martin Kilson, "Authoritarian and Single-Party Tendencies in African Politics," World Politics (forthcoming issue, January 1963)