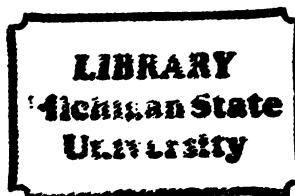This is to certify that the

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LAND POLITICS AND CLASS DEVELOPMENT
AMONG THE KIKUYU IN KENYA'S
PORVINCE, 1900-1963

presented by

JOHN ADE OTIENO

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for

PHD _____ degree in _____ SOCIOLOGY

Ruth Hamilton
_____
Major professor

Date ____8-27-84____

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LAND POLITICS AND CLASS DEVELOPMENT
AMONG THE KIKUYU IN KENYA'S CENTRAL
PROVINCE, 1900-1969

By

John Ade Otieno

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Sociology

1984

ABSTRACT

LAND POLITICS AND CLASS DEVELOPMENT
AMONG THE KIKUYU IN KENYA'S CENTRAL
PROVINCE, 1900-1966

By

John Ade Otieno

The primary concerns of this research study are
two: (1) to demonstrate the fact that the changes in the
Kikuyu traditional land rights, land use and land ownership
led to the changes in the general arrangements of the old
Kikuyu social order, (2) to show that the land reform schemes
in this region, not only led to the disruptions of the Kikuyu
tribal life, but brought the development of material in-
equality among these tribal people.

In the study, the examination of such issues as
changes in land rights, land use and land ownership were
found to be important for two reasons: (a) to provide in-
sights as to what took place in Kikuyu land, and (b) to
provide an understanding of the violent Kikuyu response to
unjust policies that made it possible for them to establish
an effective dialogue with the colonial settlers which led
to the establishment of political freedom and economic change
in the country. The researcher therefore: (1) explains the
manner by which the traditional land tenure systems were

changed, and (2) up dates the effects of these changes. The uprising in the late fifties demonstrates that conditions were intolerable.

The research largely rests on the premise that the demand for land exclusively for whites, and the establishment of policies that aided the whites by providing them with huge areas of land on one hand, and restricting the Kikuyu from participating in commercial production on the other, naturally triggered the general social revolution in the area. The issues became clear in analyzing the Kikuyu political involvement in the Mau Mau movement in the 1950s and 1960s. They are also clear in elaborating such issues as the policies of land alienation, of labour and of economic development. The research findings show that the development of social inequality among the Kikuyu people was due to: (a) the economic system established in the region that depended entirely on market system, and (b) the manner by which the settlement schemes were designed and carried out. Cash crop production destroyed the traditional agriculture that had seemed to be self sufficient and independent. Once these peasants realized the benefits of a cash crop economy, they quickly turned their attentions toward adopting and promoting the new economic system, without becoming fully aware of the consequences of market agriculture.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to both my deceased mother, Bati, and my beloved wife, Lucy A. Otieno. Their hard work helped finance me throughout my schooling. Their effort, patience, and love made this academic achievement possible.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER ONE

THE PROBLEM

<u>Introduction</u>

The study at hand concerns changing land rights and ownership in a predominantly agricultural Kenyan economy. It is argued that a series of historical events related to these changing land rights were instrumental in altering structural and conflict relations which have, in turn, produced what is visible today as class inequality among the Kikuyu in Kenya's Central Province.

Kenya's population growth and its scarce cultivable land have been its crucial problems since the arrival of the colonial settlers. The indigenous people had not previously felt this land pressure, before the colonial era, because the population was balanced naturally and competition over land was minimal until white settlement began. With the arrival of colonial settlers, Kenya's population consistently increased geometrically. In its first census, of 1897, by Arthur Hardinge, a British official, it was found that Kenya's population was about 2,500,000. By 1925 to 1939, its population was variously quoted at three to four million.

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Kenya's population census was taken in 1948 and revealed the country's population to be over five million. The growth rate from 1948 to 1962 was estimated at 2.8 percent per annum. Kenya's population increased over the years, until today, its growth is about 4.8 percent more than the gross national product which currently amounts to only three percent per annum. Now Kenya has 15.8 million people. The census of 1969 estimated Kenya's crude birth rate at 50.0/1000 and death rate at 17.0/1000.

Kenya has an area of 582,646 Km^2, which includes 14.789 Km^2 of inland water, but arable land is only 99,050 Km^2 and its density is about 133 people per Km^2. About 66 percent of Kenya has an average rainfall under 50 cm. a year and only 13 percent of the country receives more than 60 cm. of rainfall a year. Of all the provinces, the Central region's scarcity of land and overpopulation is the most serious. The region has a total area of 13, 173 Km^2 with arable land amounting to 9,240 Km^2. Density in the whole region is about 127 per Km^2, while the arable land is populated at over 181 people per Km^2.

The major focus is on land questions and changes that have occurred presumably, as a result of conflicts over land. Indeed, land policy in general in Kenya, and in the Central Province in particular, has long been the country's most sensitive issue. Land questions are not

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only sensitive, but vitally important because, for millions
of inhabitants of Kenya, land has always been a basic source
of livelihood. The land provides food and shelter and,
psychologically, represents the link between the living
and the dead. In particular, the Kikuyu in Kenya believe
that interference with the land constitutes the most repre-
hensible act that a man could do before God.

The shortage of arable land in this central region
of Kenya has created many problems. In the 1920s, for ex-
ample, many Kikuyu families were forced out of their home
areas to temporary residences on white farms. The short-
age of land in the region meant that the landless Kikuyu
not only became refugees on white plantations, but also
established themselves as squatters. Squatting became a
way of life to the Kikuyu people, often preferable to life
in their reserve areas. Through squatting on white farms,
the Kikuyu learned and adopted white farming methods. They
developed skills in cash crop production and learned the
marketing system. On farms owned by whites, a substantial
number of Kikuyu farmers mastered sufficient skills to
eventually become independent producers.

Land alienation or appropriation gave white settlers
access to a capitalist means of production in the area and
enabled them to acquire firm political power. The year
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domination, and was a period of frustration for the Kikuyu people. World War II had just ended and many white soldiers were anticipating rewards from their government. Great Britain offered settlement areas in Kenya to many of her officers. That brought about further alienation of Kikuyu lands, which created additional landless populations.

These stringent policies of land alienation brought from the Kikuyu people an aggressive response; in 1950 the Kikuyu anger exploded. Their frustration was expressed by coordinated defiance of British land policies. The Kikuyu moved quickly, taking oaths as a promisory note of unity in common struggle. The central land issues became an axis for political conflict and the vehicle that was to reshape Kenyan political, social and economic structure.

The immediate consequence of these conflicts was "land resettlement program," a paternalistic process which white settlers and their colonial office in England agreed upon as the best means to placate the Kikuyu. The plan was for land settlement programs to transfer land from European owners to African ownership to defuse the conflicts without altering the economic structure. Through these programs, "progressive" Kikuyu farmers were supposed to advance and somehow utilize their farming skills to lead the others toward what the settlers saw as progress, development, growth lifestyles equivalent to Western lifestyles.

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It soon became clear that this process of resettle-
ment, not only restricted opportunity to a favored few, but
created an atmosphere in which Kikuyu producers competed
among themselves. The Kikuyu learned not only to become
good farmers, but crafty land speculators as well. In con-
sequence, the Kikuyu became exploiters in the Marxist sense
and strong believers in land-grabbing which produced, in
turn, inevitable social inequalities.

Statement of the Problem

The central problem of this study is two-fold. First,
to show how changes in Kikuyu traditional land rights and
ownership came about as a result of the impact of colonial-
ism. That is, that the political and economic systems es-
tablished in the area made this transformation of the land
tenure system inevitable. Second, to show how colonial ap-
propriation of the Kikuyu land, which led to conflict, was
the foundation for the development of social inequality
among these traditional people. The analysis includes a
detailed case study of land settlement projects in Nyeri
District, the administrative headquarters for the region
and the district where social change began.

In order to delineate the effects of the colonial
presence, and colonial political and economic establish-
ments in the area, and corresponding and consequent Kikuyu
actions and reactions, it is appropriate to look first at

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East Africa are

the people themselves and the land in which they lived, long
before white settlers and planters arrived.

The Kikuyu People and Kikuyuland

The Kikuyu, as demographic studies reveal, are the
largest Bantu-speaking group in East Africa. The majority
of them are in Kenya and claim that they were the first
ethnic group to be reached by political, economic, and social
change. They were known for their agricultural activities,
although they combined cultivation with animal husbandry.
As far as when this highland people arrived in this Eastern
part of Africa, migratory movement into this part of the
continent varied. It should be noted that Kenya's popula-
tion can be divided into more than thirty ethnic groups,
generally classified by linguistic distinctions and varied
body postures. The major groupings identified are: the
Bantu, Nilotic, Paranilotic and Chusitic.

Kaplan and his co-workers (1976:85) have pointed out
that,

> Cutting across these linguistic differences
> is a far more important distinction deriving
> from economic adaptation to ecological con-
> ditions. Thus, on the basis of their economic
> activity, these linguistically heterogeneous
> people may be broadly grouped as agricultural-
> ists or pastoralists.

Kaplan points out that the dates of their arrival in
East Africa are speculative since there was no information

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corded during the time of the movements. Referring to

non-documented source, Kaplan notes,

> It is reported that the Bantu and the Nilotic
> groups might have arrived in the Eastern part
> of this continent by about the 14th or 15th
> centuries. The Paranilotic language speaking
> groups, on one hand, are said too, to have
> arrived at about the same time, but took set-
> tlement throughout the Rift Valley and around
> it. The Cushitic speaking people, on the other
> hand, in fact, came by conquiring the Horn of
> Africa, migrating southward. This group, as
> it has been reported, seemed to have arrived
> in this Horn region of Africa as early as the
> 11th and 12th centuries (Ibid).

> The Kikuyu are the largest Bantu speaking
> group in East Africa. They constitute roughly
> 20 percent of all Kenyans and 90 percent of
> the population of Central Province, which is
> an area of densely settled high country radi-
> ating southwest from Mt. Kenya and limited on
> the west by the Aberdare Range (Ibid).

ulation

The Kikuyu, like some other African groups, con-

ned themselves little with their strength, or lack of

ength, in numbers. Population was not counted nor was

roduction limited. Neither, did the Kikuyu allow the

e of his family to be known in public. Children were

ts and reproduction was a God-given blessing. Their

g on earth was a blessing and thus they were to re-

uce and fill the earth. Their population growth was

secret and measured only in its absence by the amount

he land left unoccupied. If there was a space of land

cupied, this was an indication to them that their

population was

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population was inadequate and more people were
needed.

It is likely that in the Kikuyu country, as in
the rest of the African countries prior to the arrival
of the whites and the advancement of technology, mortality
was extremely high. In the Central Province, small pox,
malaria and other tropical diseases commonly took many
lives. When the whites arrived in the area, they claimed
that the highland areas were empty. Small pox and malaria
were reported to have killed thousands of the Kikuyu pop-
ulation, a condition which had forced them to retreat to
other areas. Despite this claim of lost lives, nobody
knew how many Kikuyu had been in the region or how many
were left.   Their population remained secret both to
the Kikuyu themselves and to the whites, until the census
of 1962 was taken. According to this census, "The Kikuyu
population amounted to 1,925,365." (1966:18). Compara-
tively, this population still exceeded that of other groups
in Kenya, despite claims of lost lives then and during
the Mau-Mau uprising in the 1950's. The 1969 census put
the Kikuyu population at 2,201,632 or almost twice the
1962 census. (Kenya Fertility Survey, 1977-1978).

The point is that since the Kikuyu did not exper-
ience land shortage prior to white settlement in the area,
they argued that the shortage of land in their region was
not due to their population, but to the colonial policy

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with regards to land. It was this policy that had al-
lowed the expropriation of large tracts of land. The
Kikuyu argued that the expropriation of their land put
them in a peculiar situation--a condition which they
claimed could be understood only by them, and not by the
white settlers. They claimed that land alienation created
high density in their reserve. Supporting this claim,
the census of 1962 revealed over 174.3 persons per square
mile in Central Province. Giving the details of popula-
tion density per square mile in each district of Central
Province, Barber (1970-1971) has thus estimated as fol-
lows, "Kiambu, 860; Fort Hall, 498; Nyeri, 596; Embu, 351;
and Meru, 236 population per square mile."

The Land and Ecology

The Kikuyuland is geographically and ecologically
diverse and complex. Early scholars, travellers and mis-
sionary adventurers, including Sorrenson, have described
the region as a parallelogram.

> ...approximately 100 miles long and 30
> miles wide, bounded on the north by
> Mt. Kenya, on the west by the Abardare
> Range and the Kikuyu escarpment (the
> eastern escarpment of the Rift Valley),
> on the south by Ngong Mountain and the
> Masai Land Unit, and on the east by the
> Athi and Mbere Plains. (1967, p. 1)

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During the colonial era, as it appeared on the
nyan map, Central Province was geographically divided
to three main districts--Kiambu, Fort Hall (Muranga)
d Nyeri--Embu and Meri were regarded as part of the
gion. Today, Central Province has had two more dis-
icts added to it--Nyandarua and Kirinyaga--Embu and Meru,
the other hand, are now part of Northeastern Province.
total, Central Province has five geopolitical districts.
robi has remained completely separate and is the capi-
city for the country, just eight kilometers from
mbu.

The rich soil of the province and its proximity to
capital, gave the area economic advantages over other
es and drew settlers to it. Thus, this region became
at of conflict over its land and the geographical
hplace for African social and political movement, be-
e it was where most of the settlers sought to expro-
te valuable land. Central Province also linked the
e from the Coast with Uganda, giving it inherent
tegic importance. Control of this area implied con-
of Rift Valley Province and the route to Lake Victoria
ll.

Ecologically, the Kikuyuland is well watered for
s numerous rivers and ponds scattered at about half
intervals. Rainfall ranges from 30 inches to 60
s a year, depending on altitude. The Kikuyuland

region is relatively high, as Sorrenson has thus put it

this way, "The country's at an altitude that varies from

approximately 5,000 ft. to 8,000 ft. above sea level"

(Ibid). This altitude permits it to provide most of the

natural beauties--such as green grass, tall trees and an

enviable scenic landscape.

Summary

In a summary, then, of the Kikuyu people and Kikuyu-

land, before the influx of white settlers and subsequent

land conflict, the sparse and largely undocumented his-

torical picture presents a traditional, Bantu-speaking,

highland people. Centered in Kenya where they represented

percent of the population, this group comprised 90 per-

cent of the population of Central Province. Unconcerned

about population numbers, the Kikuyu concentrated on pop-

ulating every unoccupied space of their land, in celebra-

tion of the blessing of being on earth. Believing that

interference with the land was a reprehensible act against

all, the Kikuyu were ill-prepared to share their lands

with the white settlers when they arrived.

Kikuyuland, itself, was a factor in the land con-

flict inevitable under colonial rule. Its rich soil and

proximity to Kenya's capital, as well as its beneficial

placement along trade routes to the Coast, Lake Victoria

and Uganda, gave it economic, strategic, and ecological

importance that did not go unnoticed by white settlers and plantation owners. Thus the situation was ripe for the conflict and confrontations that resulted when white set- tlers arrived.

Overview of the Study

This study focuses on the general aspects of rural transformation in Kenya; the events to be discussed are in eight chapters. In Chapters One and Two the case for the study of the Kikuyu of Kenya, the land, the people and their social, economic and political structures prior to the coming of the colonial settlement is put forth. Chapter Three presents an historical and a conceptual over- view of the processes of settler development and the under- development of African agriculture. Chapter Four deals with land alienation: the background of political strug- gle and economic development among the Kikuyu. Chapter Five analyzes the villagization and land consolidation and registration as the conditioning processes toward land re- form. Chapter Six explains the nature of the One Million Acre Scheme and the problems of small farmers. Chapter Seven focuses on understanding the nature of change in Kikuyuland and in Kenya. Chapter Eight will present the researcher's views of the relevance of Kikuyu history to the study of sociology and, finally, the conclusion.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORY

Historical Lineage and Land Rights

Much of the history of the Kikuyu people, prior to
white settlement, was linked to their lineage system.
As a Bantu group of Kikuyu ethnicity, they believed they
were originally descended from the Gikuyu, their great
elder who, according to Kikuyu legend, founded their peo-
ple. The legend claimed that the Kikuyu people was a unit
formed by nine Kikuyu clans. As such, their social struc-
ture through lineage was depicted in their pattern of
settlement within their territory. Villages comprised
family units, each of which was built around some natural
landmark. This could be a tree, a beehive, a river, or
any feature that could provide a permanent physical land-
ark. Each family retained its own lineage as a given
identity.

Sorrenson (1967) described this arrangement. "Each
mily occupied a segment of the ridge, with its land-
ldings extending down one or both sides of the ridge."
. 4) Sorrenson categorized the Kikuyu family unit as
small unit of lineage. The larger and most important,

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it of lineage, however, was the Mbari or sub-clan.
ari was the most vital grouping system within the Kikuyu
ial structure because it was the one that traced descent
ough the male line. It is argued that the Gikuyu him-
f, as the founder of the tribe, could not be worried
ut his private property or the material wealth given
his Great Elder because, on his death, the lineage was
ed after him. In other words, the wealth would be
erited by lineage, not only to maintain the Mbari but
retain Mbari as the central unit by tying it to the
. In this way, change of Mbari could be accomplished
y by change in the land ownership.

Listing some of the rationale for the importance
he Mbari system to this tribal people, the Kikuyu
rs claimed that: (1) it provided security by uniting
, (2) it protected them by suppressing private pro-
ownership, (3) it remedied evil behaviors such as
ractice of appropriating land by the few and creating
essness, and (4) most importantly, it gave the Kikuyu
tem by which land (as a source of livelihood) could
intained for the generations to come. This, also
ns the source and shaping of many of the Kikuyu's
and traditions within the Mbari circle. During
esearch, discussions with some elderly Kikuyu, such
ngi, Kamau and Kariuki, all of whom came from Nyeri,
ed that Mbari was not only a system of land-owning

er se (as it was later viewed by some of the Western

cholars) but the nucleus of the social structure of the

ikuyu population. They indicated that, to a large extent,

ithin the Kikuyu community, everything depended on Mbari.

Western writers, however, viewed Mbari only as a

radition that applied to land. Most of them claimed that

age-set system formed the Kikuyu's social and political

ructures. Sorrenson, an outstanding scholar in the

kuyu's traditional land tenure practices, has indicated,

he Kikuyu rotation system of generation which was basically

age-set system, vested in the Kikuyu lineage, was mainly

gnificant in dividing authority within the traditional

a (elders' councils) which operated on the basis of age-

s and within a much more circumscribed locality, just

the Mbari was the important unit as far as land owner-

p was concerned." (1967, p. 5) To many Westerners,

i and the age-set system were two completely separate

gs. Yet, in a physical sense, Mbari was a form of

ly structure only to a limited extent. For example,

mily descended from Wambai would be known as Mbari

ambai, a subclan of Wambai. This subclan would be

ified not only by name designation but also by the

of land the Wambai occupied; the land and the sub-

were inseparable.

In the explanation presented here about Kikuyu line-

d land tenure, it should be noted that with such

societies as the Kikuyu, land tenure becomes controversial
in contacts with outsiders. It is controversial in that
the tenure system is understood by the in-group but not
clearly defined or apparent to others. This lack of ap-
parent definition created confusion and misunderstanding
between the Kikuyu and colonial settlers who were used to
clearly defined land ownership.

Concepts of Land Tenure

Generally, the concept of land tenure and its im-
plications is a complicated issue. To understand its com-
plexities, particularly among the traditional societies
of Africa, like the Kikuyu, it is useful to consult the
work of experts in land holding systems, such as Ratcliff,
Meng and others.

Because they intend to provide not only the re-
lationships between man and his piece of land, but also
the rights that each holder has on that piece of land.
Ratcliff explained:

> System of land tenure embodied those legal,
> contractual or customary arrangements whereby
> individuals or organizations gain access to
> economic or social opportunities through land.
> The precise form of tenure is constituted by
> the rules and procedures which govern the
> rights and responsibilities of both individ-
> uals and groups in the use and control over
> the basic resources of land. (1976:21)

Ratcliff holds that "land, without the dimension of tenure, is a meaningless concept. In using the very expressions "land" and "land tenure" one is more usually concerned with the complicated collection of rights to use space" (Ibid).

In Cheng's views, "man cannot live without land, from which he derives his subsistance. Land is, as a matter of fact, the mainstay of human life." (1961:1)

Economists like Karl Marx, for example, viewed land and land tenure strictly in an economic context. To Marx, land is defined in terms of (1) exchange value, (2) tenural pattern, (3) jurisdictional context, and (4) commodity or property. (Karl Marx, 1906)

Common to all these aspects is that they are subjected to the claims of rights. Therefore, to speak of land and land tenure means, in its real sense, the rights that an individual has to the land as well as the rights of other members to it (Ratcliff). Hallet (1960, p.13) stated, as well, "the term land and land tenure refer to the economic, legal, and political arrangements regarding the ownership and management of agricultural land." The Farm Foundation (1950, p.3), similarly contended

> tenure, is all the relations established
> among men regarding their varying rights
> in the control and use of land when sup-
> plying man his wants... Tenure is but
> one aspect of the study of how man organ-
> izes his productive activities and distri-
> butes the consequences of that activity.

Yet, according to Betrand and Corty (1962, p.6),

Land is undefinable until we derive it to a
'property', or more precisely, 'property in
land'. Property is a Latin adverb, meaning
'according to custom'. In the feudal period,
the term was used to imply feudal privileges
or relationships. Today, property is the
system of rights of a person or other social
unit in scarce values.

Betrand and Corty held, however, that

The concept of property must include more
than the idea of control over scarce values
and productive wealth. It must be under-
stood to mean the power relations, real or
potential, between persons holding property
rights and those persons who do not. (Ibid)

Marx saw land as a commodity or property and thus
d, "As a commodity land was an object outside us...
ng that, by its properties, satisfies human wants of
sort or another." (1906:41)   He favored private pro-
 rights.

For land as an essential commodity to enter
the market as exchange good, the owners are
naturally bound to place themselves in those
objects. The owners must thereby mutually
recognize in each other the rights of private
properties. This jurisdictional relation,
which expresses itself in a contract, whether
such a contract be part of developed legal
system or not, is a relation between two wills,
and is but the reflex of the real economic re-
lation between the two. (1960, p.35)

The most important point of all these arguments
.and is that they all seek answers to questions of

legality and ownership. The conclusions can only be that everything has to be viewed in its own context in order to make sense. This was what the colonial rulers intended to do in Africa, but what they actually did was to interpret land tenure and all the rights it involved only in terms of their Western experience and disregarded African experience and tradition.

Going deeper into the subject, Cagnolo asserted: "Personal ownership is interpreted very broadly, so that various articles, while the property of a person may easily be turned to communal use."(1933:30) The lack of the concept of individual holding among the Kikuyu, made it difficult for any family to have more land than was required. As has been pointed out by various observers, like Lord Hailey, the Kikuyu customary law was strict and unchangeable. He contended that their traditional law limited the amount of land that each family could own for subsistence (1943). This, in turn, made individual members safe from exploitation by their own members. Kenyatta has emphasized this claim

...the Gikuyu system of land tenure no man could claim absolute ownership of any land unless he or his ancestors have gone through the ceremony of marking the boundary, which was the Gikuyu form of title-deed. The boundary trees and lilies so ceremonially planted were highly respected by the people. They were well looked after and preserved. (1953: 40)

The colonial settlers failed to realize the signi-
ficance of the general theory that relates to land, that
holds that land is man's source of fulfilling both physio-
ogical and psychological needs. It thus becomes the axis
bout which human social, political and economic activities
evolve. To reduce this broad theoretical explanation of
and tenure, to a more specific explanation, Yudelman (1964,
16) explained, "In the African context, when speaking
 land and land tenure, we come to understand that the
rm is of special importance because the fabric of African
ciety is so closely linked to the land by custom."

Comparison of Kikuyu and
Western Land Tenure

In comparing tribal land tenure in Kikuyuland to
 system that was developed in Europe, we find that
kuyu land tenure before 1886 was, to a large extent,
ilar to that of other African tribes before colonization."
mau, 1978:3). In Africa at large, communalism was the
 system of land tenure known, except in North Africa.
g the Kikuyu, communal tenure was a matter of belief
 they treated the land according to the ways they re-
d themselves to it. Kikuyu land was a gift from God
 a man had no rights at all to abuse the land or to
ess it as a property. Conversely, the people of North

rica and Western Europe regarded land as property that
uld be owned, rented or mortgaged.

In Bohannan's (1967) views of land tenure, he argued
cisely that in African societies, the meanings of the
cepts "land" and "tenure" differ radically from Western
ges. The most important aspects of land occupancy in
ck Africa are relationships among men, not of man to
land, as the English terms imply. (p.101-115).

In Bohannan's and Kaman's views, African land tenure
asically viewed in terms of relationships. Kaman con-
s that "the word 'tenure' is used to describe that re-
onship which exists between man in society and land."
efore, he held that land tenure customarily refers to
an ideas concerning the holding of land. They indi-
the African's perception of the proper relationship
en man and land on earth. (1978:3).

In the Kikuyu country, the rights of use were vested
e individual holders, but the family controlled the
ship. Ownership here was not the Western concept of
ssion of the land, but ownership of the products from
Kiagayu has explained:

The access relationships enjoyed by dif-
ferent people over land show that what
was owned was not land, but a claim to
have power to do certain things. This
included possessing immunities against
the encroachment of others on one's rights,
claims, power and privileges. (1978:2)

Kikuyu rights of use of land were expressed variously,

t the most notable was to demarcate the area of tillage

grazing land with big stones buried along its borders

indicate not only the area of rights and privileges,

t also to signify that the holder had those rights under

e traditional guidelines. Although, the land was owned

lectively, traditional law recognized individual rights

that one's right to use the land allocated to him, was

atter of human objectives. Thus, individuals had ab-

ute rights over plants and crops; whatever was produced

m the land allocated to them.

ges in Kikuyu Land Tenure

Land tenure first became a problem when the Kikuyu

expanding their territory south and north. In the

h, since they had to acquire land from the Wandorobo,

u land tenure began to take different forms. One

was the _Githaka_ system--the purchase of an estate,

h land or other uncultivated land. Most of the land

t from the Wandorobo tended to be big in size. Leakey

:109) explained that "Some of the large estates bought

ly from the Wandorobo and never subdivided by sub-

t sales covered an area of up to 20 square miles."

yer of this land was symbolically known as Mwathi--

g ruler of the land.

The notable variation about land purchase in the
uth, known today as Kiambu district, was that land could
bought by individual members or by a group of brothers.
key has reported,

> If the land was bought by several brothers
> jointly... the senior brother, who was in
> charge of the negotiation on behalf of his
> brothers and himself, was the <u>Mwathi</u>, but
> the others had equal rights in the estates,
> subject to any special agreements made be-
> tween them at the time of the purchase. (Ibid)

An individual purchaser had the right of disposal
e saw it fit. In joint purchases, the right of dis-
l

> Was vested in the senior brother, who
> had carried out the negotiations. The
> other brothers had, however, some say
> in the matter, and they could claim the
> right to dispose of a part of the estate
> proportionate to the amount they had con-
> tributed to the purchase price. They
> could not, however, sell their portion
> without first offering it to the remaining
> members of the family syndicates, who would
> usually exercise their option so as to
> prevent subdivision of the estate. (Ibid)

Most revealing is that as the population increased,
cularly in Kiambu District, land tenure began to
e. The southern Kikuyu began to see changes in land
e the arrival of the white settlers. For example,
of the land units which had remained large began to
go subdivision into smaller units. Some units were

ubdivided further into one acre plots. Despite some of

hese early changes in the Kikuyu Githaka system, Kikuyu,

n the Twentieth Century insistently contended that the

ndamental changes in their traditional system occurred

ly after the colonialists had arrived and introduced

vere economic policies which drove large populations

f their lands. The Kikuyu believed, all evidence to

e contrary, that the establishment of the Githaka system

d not affect the Mbari system in any way, that it was

ri which had absolute rights over the land. The Kikuyu

not recognize the fact that their natural population

rease had any impact upon their land neither did they

ieve that Githaka had any impact on their Mbari system.

tead, they believed that the problem of shortage of land

due to the colonial settlement. They claimed that

ri system was only to protect the individual members

exploitation and from any encroachment by any member

another tribe. This claim was totally accepted by

of the Kikuyu political analysts. For example, there

support in The Report of Committee on Native Land Ten-

in Kikuyu Province (1929:67) which explained that

ri is simply the method of clan and patriarchal control

ssing themselves in relation to the land." The truth

e matter was that the Kikuyu perceived the world in

they existed in the form of beliefs rather than in

cal form. Lacking scientific knowledge, a Kikuyu saw

orld and explained it only through beliefs. He was

ot only a believer, but an idealist. Thus it was impossible

or the white settlers to understand the Kikuyu's land owner-

ip system.

Beliefs and Ideologies Toward Land

The Kikuyu believed that they were the descendents of

e Gikuyu and Moombi (or Mumbi) as their great ancestors.

cording to early Kikuyu legends, referred to in Kenyatta's

ok, "The tribe first established its homes around Kere-

ga, now known as Mt. Kenya." (1942:24) Kenyatta pointed

, "It was upon this mountain which the High God of the

uyu people dwelt, while performing His mysteries...The

dition says that it was on this mountain the Mwere-Myaga

eared to be the man Gekoyo or Gikuyu, the founder of the

be." (Ibid)

The legend claimed further that the Kikuyu God (the

Elder) had created Gikuyu and gave him a wife called

bi. Moombi had ten children, all of whom were girls.

frican societies, having only girls is considered a

e to the family, because once the parents were de-

ed, there would be no one to inherit the property. In

African societies, it was taken for granted that in-

tance of the property was ordained only to the men not

e women. This made it quite hard for a family that

ave all girls. The question then was, how could the

u and Moombi have a family unit that could extend to

tribe, since they did not have a male child? In the

uyu story, they descended from Gikuyu and Mumbi. Their

cendence thus had to be matriarchal because Gikuyu had

nale child. Gikuyu's ten daughters, except one, were

:ied. The Kikuyu explained this phenomenon as a matter

inged by God. They believed that it was through God's

:ruction, that the daughters brought their husbands to

 up residence in their wives' parents' homesteads. This,

urn, created nine clans which later emerged as the Kikuyu

e we see today.

This common belief among the Kikuyu linked them as

it. This common belief also made the Gikuyu declare

 the land was given to him by God (the High Elder), and

 it was the best possible. Based on this philosophical

.ism, the Kikuyu were conditioned to believe that they

always to remain together as a unit. This is not only

ter of historical fact, but a reality that still echoes

e memories of many people today. Evidence supporting

is found in the speeches of the late president of Kenya,

Kenyatta. As he rose to power in 1964, Kenyatta suc-

Ly stated,

> ...Never forget to give thanks to Mwenye,
> Nyaga, or Ngai, (the High God) for they
> say that when He was putting into shape the
> country that He gave us, He was not in hurry
> but took great care to make the country beau-
> tiful and fertile. He set mountains and hills
> in their proper places. He made the forests
> grow in abundance to beautify their slopes and
> provide grasslands for domestic and wild animals
> to graze in contentment. (Kenyatta, 1942)

Because of the region's beauty and plentiful rain-
, the Kikuyu people believed that their God favored them
se Gikuyu, the founder of the tribe, was a man of high
ct and God honored him and his people. For this rea-
he Gikuyu would say,

> Look what God has given us! The land
> with plenty of water, plenty of food,
> numerous hills and space for grazing
> out domesticated animals. Yet, compar-
> ing this to other places, God did not
> take his time to give everything they
> needed. (Ibid)

in saying this, the Kikuyu would address their God
ayers:

> O our heavenly Great Elder, we are
> thankful for the natural gifts which
> you have bestowed upon us, like the
> lands of our neighbours, some of which
> you passed over in a hurry, and threw
> one river here and another there, leaving
> the rest of the country dry and in many
> places unforested. (Ibid)

Thus the Kikuyu used their beliefs as an instrument
eir unity. They believed in equity among their own
rs and that their secrets should not be revealed to
iers.

To the Kikuyu, the land, as explained, was beyond
possession. Putting this perception in an objective
, Mbiti (1967:35) explained,

The land provides them with the roots
of existence, as well as binding them
mystically to their departed. People
walk on the graves of their forefathers,
and it is feared that anything separating
them from these ties will bring disaster
to family and community.

This psychological link of the Africans with the
d, suggests that to understand the African social, econ-
c and political life, it is necessary first, to under-
nd their beliefs. To the Africans, their beliefs sub-
tute for science. It is through beliefs that an African
explain the unexplainable. The African mind operates
cessfully in the world of belief. "To ignore these tra-
ional beliefs, attitudes and practices can only lead
a lack of understanding of African behavior and prob-
s." (Mbiti, 1970:1). Because of their beliefs, to the
ican people the individual land claim not only becomes
ossible, but also a practice that would create in-
ality among the society's members. This explains why
unalism was considered a master stroke for retain-
equality or equity.

Addressing the moral concern of the Kikuyu for social
ty, Kamau (1978:7) pointed out, "Land was communally
among the Africans because they believed in equality.
as believed (and reasonably too) that treating land
commodity subject to ownership could lead to enslave-
of some people by others." In other words, the Kikuyu

recognized, even before the whites came, that there

another system of ownership and it was this that they

not want to practice because they believed it would

to inequality. To the Kikuyu, inequality among their

ers was evil. They wanted their community to remain

way it was and, as the literature reveals, this was

table and inseparable from the land. The Kikuyu re-

to see himself separately from the land that pro-

him with water (because land is the container); the

that provided him with food, (because it is from the

that the Kikuyu grows his vegetables and provides

s for livestock), and the land which provided him with

ter (because it is on the land that the Kikuyu builds

thatched or mud house). The Kikuyu thus believed

their land was irreplaceable, for no one piece of

is like any other.

The fundamental thing that pervades the literature

erning man's perception of his own universe is his

ionship to land. Man's relation to land raises a

al question as to what right he has to claim land

ake it his possession. The answer to this question

ecome clearer as the subject of ownership is dis-

d and analyzed.

The Concept of Land Ownership As
Viewed by the Kikuyu

As we are dealing with the subject of ownership,
should indeed be understood is that the question of
is critical for several reasons. One major reason
s importance to the survival of man on this planet.
eakey (1927:8) has thus indicated "land is an essential
in the economy of population and, as such, it becomes
sirable asset, and the system of land tenure becomes
rimary importance."

Land ownership among the Kikuyu, as among the rest
e African people, was clearly understood, as a system of
nal ownership. The land was collectively owned; it
he Mbari but not its individual members who owned the

Hailey (1957:96) has given details.

In such socities which are characterized
by the traditional law, there is no op-
portunity for land speculation, nor for
the acquisition of large holdings...the
landlords are not renters, and tenants are
not tenants, in the English sense...the
native customary law strictly limits the
amount of land that the individual member
may hold to the amount that he requires
for the subsistence of himself or for the
family as a unit.

From a historical point of view, however, claims on
nd actions taken toward owning it as a property were not
ident. Men who claimed it and transformed it into
ty did so deliberately. Rousseau, in Ratcliffe (1976:9),

nted out, "original sin arose with the first man who
y fit to appropriate land from the rest of the community
delineating his own boundaries with stakes effectively
nouncing this is mine!" The main point here, is that
ership of land was always communal until such claims
e made. It was therefore, as Rousseau indicates, that
nership of land began to take a different meaning from
e previously existing system. It was such proprietory
itudes that have placed land in a special category;
category being the rights of ownership or use." (Ibid)

Despite the facts presented by Rousseau, among tra-
ional people, collective ownership was a defensive mech-
sm against the spread of the absolute ownership system
t emerged thereafter. The point is that African owner-
p must be interpreted within its context. Otherwise,
interpretations given it, would undoubtedly fail to
vide a true meaning as it was seen by the African people.
gayu (1978: 1)has pointed out, "there has been much de-
e among the western-oriented jurists and anthropologists
he legal status of property among the Africans." In
process, Kiagayu claimed, "These early researchers
d to fit Anglo-American jurisprudential terminology
that of the Africans. They wondered as to whether
cans knew of 'ownership' in the land, of the land
ure' and related terms." (Ibid). The problem of the
ial administrators, or of the "western-oriented jurists,"

understanding the African ownership system was, in sum-

y, a matter of cultural judgement or cultural misinter-

tation. It was cultural, because in the African owner-

system, the idea itself existed in the belief.

The ownership system of the African people always

ined a mystery to some western experts. But some, like

olo had little difficulty in understanding the system.

ting what he saw among the African people with what

ew about the world at large, Cagnolo (1933:29) said,

> The question of ownership is a distressing
> problem of modern society. Ownership is
> so strictly connected with the nature and
> free will of man that it might be said to
> be a necessary attribute of his. In fact
> we find it in all the tribes even the most
> primitive and savage.

It must be pointed out, however, that the African

hip system cannot be understood simply on a system

iefs, but must be understood as practiced. The

ownership practices shocked many foreign travellers

olo has demonstrated in his writing, saying, "It

urprise to the early Catholic missionaries who toured

Kikuyu country and found that the Kikuyu customary

ownership recognized both collective and private

p." (Ibid) Among the Kikuyu, ownership was granted

member. The members were granted the right to own

k, sheep and goats. Land remained a property of

inity. What needs explanation, however, is how the

icquired land.

Land Acquisition in Kikuyu Country

Among the Kikuyu people, the means to acquisition of
piece of land varied. Traditionally, collective owner-
ship was the only system recognized but this society was
static. Therefore, as the Kikuyu society changed, the
le structure was also found to have changed. The Kikuyu them-
ves recognized this as a natural phenomenon that was be-
d their control. Objectively, it was true that among
Kikuyu the known or approved method of acquisition of
perty was by what was known in Europe as primogeniture--
ritance by the oldest son in the family.

However, in some areas within Kikuyuland, particularly
he south, in Kiambu, land was acquired by purchase.
bu was purchased by the Kikuyu from the Wandorobo hunters
occupied this highland region before it came under
yu domination. Unfortunately these transactions were
recorded and knowledge of the date remains only spec-
ve. Most of the areas were purchased as Githaka--
e. Githaka land belonged to the purchaser.

The situation with regard to acquisition of land
ambu was very different than in the rest of the re-
Here, families who were poor, who could not afford
a piece of land from the Wandorobo, could become
s on the estates of wealthier men in the hope that

day they would acquire sufficient wealth to buy land

become the founder of the Mbari--the subclan.

Another way, particularly in areas where the Githaka

em was fully established, was what the Kikuyu called

i--meaning tenant at will. This has been described

eakey (1903:117) as follows:

> A man who was a member of a landowning
> family might have a well established
> 'homestead' of his own and not wish to
> move away, but at the same time, he might
> be suffering from shortage of arable land
> on the family estate. In such circum-
> stances, he would approach some friend
> or acquaintance who was the owner, or
> joint owner, of a large, newly acquired
> estate as yet underdeveloped, and ask for
> permission to have an area of the new land
> to clear and cultivate.

asking for permission to have an area to cultivate

other customary way of acquiring a piece of land.

r method, as it was understood in the Kikuyu tra-

al law, was by negotiation. The traditional law

d that the Kikuyu who was landless, or the Kikuyu

t that he did not have enough land or that his land

roductive, was to approach the person he regarded

lawful owner of land for which he wished to negoti-

e requirements for this procedure were as follows:

seeker had to make sure that everything was con-

roperly, mannerfully and with all respect, (2) he

ake sure that everything was clearly understood by

ties, (3) the land seeker had to be sure that he

comply with what the landowner required in order to
ven the land, and (4) the seeker had to agree to pay
nd, for instance, he could either agree to fell the
as a means of payment or he could take the land on
and pay gradually.

A notable characteristic of the Kikuyu people was
fairness in dealing with their own people. The Kikuyu
rought up to be considerate of others, particularly
ir own members. For example, the Kikuyu traditional
quired that in negotiations, both parties must be
satisfied with what they achieved. Any attempt to
or to manipulate the other was forbidden and tradi-
ly condemned. This held true for the Kikuyu acquisi-
the Wandorobo lands for simple reasons. The Kikuyu
d in the power of departed spirits. As Dr. Leakey
lained,

...if they took the land by force, the
spirits of the Wandorobo who were killed
defending their land...would bring super-
natural punishment upon the invaders, cause
their flocks and herds to die, their crops
o fail, and drought to destroy the land.
p.90)

eakey goes on, "once mutual agreement was reached
required price was paid, the whole procedure was
osed and endorsed by ceremonies as a preliminary."
He then explained, "if a land transaction took
hout a preliminary ceremony of adoption, neither

would feel in any way bound to honor the agreement...

hole proceedings would be outside the jurisdiction of

r the Kikuyu or the Wandorobo courts." (p.91) The

ion ceremony placed the land transaction on a legal

ng for both parties and made it absolutely binding

oth. Their land tenure system and the ways Kikuyus

red land were later reflected in their mode of pro-

on.

The Kikuyu Mode of Production

The land tenure system determined Kikuyu productive

ities. Their traditional economic activities, have

described by Leontiev (undated).

> Under conditions of primitive communism
> there could be no place for social groups
> living on unearned income. There was no
> exploitation of one part of the community
> by another...at that stage of human de-
> velopment, the instruments of labour were
> very simple, so that there could be no
> question of private property in tools;
> everyone was able to prepare for himself
> a spear, a stone, a bow and arrow.

In the traditional communities, Leontiev claimed,

> The population was very small in numbers.
> It was collected only on the territory of
> the tribe....The division of labour was
> quite primitive, the work was simply divided
> between the two sexes.... Each sex was
> master of its own field of activity and
> owned the tools made and used by it....
> The household was communistic, comprising
> several, and often many, families. What-
> ever was produced and used collectively,
> was regarded as common property....

Supporting this assertion, Leakey (1903:168) has

, "the men (the Kikuyu) used their cultivating knives...

ut down all the bushwood and undergrowth, and made piles

his ready for burning. This done, the bigger trees had

e felled with axes." (p.37)

To cultivate the land after clearing it, the Kikuyu

hoed it. Mostly, they used a big digging stick called

agao. The women would follow with the knives and short

ing sticks to break the soil into a soft gravel. They

the grasses and made sure that the roots were dug and

them into piles. The simplicity of their instruments

production and a lack of sufficient organization meant

Kikuyu were unable to produce a surplus. Whatever

cements they made went to feed themselves and produce

h to take them into the next season.

The Kikuyu, however, had the stamina to compete with

e and over the course of time it was evident that they

making progress in agricultural production. Their

ction relations eventually stimulated a semi-development

e material productive forces in the region. Despite

there was no development of technology and this led

failure to develop large-scale farming. This lack of

-scale agricultural development led Kamau (1978: 6)

ent that, "Africans were neither cultivators, pastor-

or hunters whose life was largely communal." Kikuyu

culture, however, was considered more advanced than

 neighbors. The single factor controlling their econ-

 relations was land. To lack a piece of land, to a

u, could be compared to a person with a body that does

ossess a soul. When the soul was absent, it was clear

 life was gone and the body would have to follow. To

uyu, a person without land was dead. It was not physi-

eath, in a literal sense, but rather a death of his

 to his family, his clan, and the people around him.

In addition to their skills as cultivators and the

tance of their vegetable farming activities, the Kikuyu

e were known for their intensive activity in raising

e, sheep and goats. This simply meant that the Kikuyu

 in a real sense, mixed farmers.

To some extent, raising cattle, sheep and goats was

d as just as important a function as being a culti-

. Raising livestock was essential because it helped

d a balanced diet and because the Kikuyu used the

tock for exchange. It was as money is to western peo-

d was used to purchase food and for the payment of

 price. When the Kikuyu had to buy a piece of land,

 goats or sheep that were used to pay for the land.

er words, the Kikuyu economy was a mixed economy based

iculture.

Miracle (1974) has explained that, "By 1895, (the

) were already long past being 'subsistence' farmers

any of the various senses that term is used." The pro-
ess in their agriculture was gained by intensification
d variations in crop produced. Miracle, further states,
ot only was there a considerable surplus being generated
most households, but there was a complex system of in-
rnal marketing." (Ibid)   "Because of the varied geo-
aphic, climatic, and soil conditions, Kikuyu farmers
ew many different crops, certain regions specializing in
rticular commodities and exchanging their goods with
her areas at large, periodical markets." (Tighor, 1976:
8)

        Nonetheless, by Western standards, the Kikuyu econ-
ic system, was considered primitive in many ways: (1)
lacked a system of economic organization that could ful-
ll the need for technology, (2) it was not an effective
ans of production that would be able to meet industrial
mand; (3) it lacked commercialization tendencies, (4)
lacked a system of hired labour, and (5) most of all, it
mained primitive in that it had the characteristics of
mitive development. Men and women worked in common
consumed the fruits of their joint labor. In pursuing
s subject further, it is appropriate to analyze how
or division was carried out.

The Kikuyu Division of Labor

The tribal social structure, according to Lloyd
34) was, "The basic social divisions are not between
ntal strata, defined in terms of wealth and power,
rtical divisions into descent groups, therefore, the
t of man's labor was largely his own, although he
have to support elderly kin and pay a relatively
amount to the chief.

Among the Kikuyu, Edmond Cariechi (1977:21) pointed

The particularly heavy duties which custom
laid upon the women were: raising the
children, providing enough food from their
gardens to suffice the whole family and
frequent guests; performing the greatest
part of the agricultural work; providing
water and firewood for domestic use; thatch-
ing and plastering the huts, carrying loads
(usually food crops and firewood) not only
to the homestead, but also to the market
places or other distant locations and back.

.ture and the rearing of the livestock, such as goats,

cattle and chicken were the men's main occupations.

family, a husband, wife and children constituted

omic unit, strengthened and controlled by the sexual

n of labor. The traditional law in many cases re-

that it was the men who attended to the livestock,

em to the field and brought them back home. In cases

asance or theft, the traditional law determined that

en's duty to handle the situation.

In addition to what has been mentioned as the men's
it was also their duty to cut timber for building and
irewood. The men were supposed to clear the farming
s and cut the grass for thatching. The most important
espected one, was that they had to protect the village
ts surroundings.

It was customary for the women to meet the needs of
husbands, families and homes. In other words, to
rm those duties usually described as domestic work.
on the other hand, were mainly concerned with outdoor
ommunity activities. The division of labor was rooted
cial organization of the society.

In this traditional community, these social roles
strictly defined. The late president of Kenya, in
ook, Facing Mount Kenya, wrote:

> From the homestead to the tending of the
> domestic animals, every sphere of acti-
> vity is clearly and systematically defined.
> According to tribal customs which govern
> the division of labour, no man would dare
> to indule in any [women's] activities ex-
> cept in an emergency, or otherwise, he
> would scandalize the women and it would
> be difficult for such a man to get any
> girl to marry. (Kenyatta, 1953:53)

In the words of a female informant in Nyeri: "In early days, particularly in Kikuyu, a man could not ch any duty that was supposed to be a woman's duty, if he did, it would be considered a taboo in the whole munity." She said that by the traditional customs, "a was supposed to be the protector, and the owner of the ily property such as cattle, goats, sheep and war imple- s. Women, in turn, were to rear children and see that r husbands were properly taken care of." (Wamboi)

In a small village in Muranga, an elderly woman about years of age said, "It was a great surprise to see that kuyu man today would do some work that ten to twenty s ago he could not think of doing." Her eyes wide surprise, she exclaimed that, "Things have really ged." The elderly woman argued, however, that things changing from bad to good. According to her, this ge that she observed was good because the Kikuyu men beginning to realize and to appreciate the usefulness omen. She concluded by saying that, "this change shall inue and one day, a Kikuyu man and a Kikuyu woman shall their roles equally without gender feelings."

Among the Kikuyu, the division of labor existed not between men and women, but also among age groups. The ion of labor here was arranged hierarchically depending

age rather than on skill. There was a warrior class.
eir duties were to defend and carry out raids and they
re the police. These people were supposed to be young
d physically healthy. The elders, on the other hand,
re the supreme commanders of justice. They were the
ecutives and they interpeted and applied the laws. They
re also the peacemakers. There was also a group who
aimed talents and powers ordained by supernatural beings.
s group was known as the magicians. They were the re-
lers of unknown forces. They claimed that they could
l the secrets of the raiders, and when they were to raid.
y also had those who were known as planners. This group
nned raids and were also the hunters. All of these
ies were performed by men. Women were not allowed to
ticipate in activiites that demanded strength or skill.
ead, Kikuyu social inequality, based on age and sex,
not only demonstrated in the division of labor, but
in their political system.

Kikuyu Political Structure

The Kikuyu people believed that they descended from
ikuyu (the Great Elder). The Gikuyu, on the other
believed himself the most perfect man and it was
hat reason that God gave him a beautiful land. The
also believed that he was the government, the super-
and the only leader of his people. The Kikuyu political

tructure was therefore rooted in the oligarchal type of
government. The Gikuyu governing body was a tyranincal,
despotic and above all, a rigid one.

Its rigidity was clear in its policies. Such policies
were: (1) denial of Kikuyu permanent settlement, the Kikuyu
were not allowed to settle in one place for a long time, (2)
encouragement of temporary settlement, for traditional law
required them to be ready to move anywhere for defense of
their beloved country, (3) a requirement that a man must
be ready to leave his family for as long as the government
wanted him. The Gikuyu, the Great Elder, believed not only
in a strong government but also a well disciplined army to
guard and defend the country from attack or raid. He de-
manded that the country be protected from the barbaric peo-
ple--the people he referred to as "the last choice of God."
This phrase meant "the people whom God did not want on earth,
but unfortunately were brought here and were settled in a
barren land, and now they are wandering all over the place
looking for a better land to settle, but they cannot find
one except the Kikuyuland." (Wanjoi)

In discussing the Kikuyu political system, it should
be understood that their political framework emerged after
the Kikuyu men revolted against the women. As has already
been mentioned, the Kikuyu women ruled with great terror.
The women inherited the political system of the Gikuyu--who
was despotic, tyrranical and fascist ruler in his time.

After his death, his lands and political power passed
o his nine married daughters, who passed it to their daugh-
ers. This matriarchal system prevailed for many years be-
ore the Kikuyu males revolted against it and destroyed it
nd forced it out of the Kikuyu social system. Prior to
his destruction of the matriarchal system, the Kikuyu women
ad not only enjoyed the privileges, but they also accumulated
great deal of political authority and social power that
reatened their male counterparts. (Oral history handed
wn in Kikuyu tribes).

At the peak of the Kikuyu women's political supremacy,
cording to oral history, the Kikuyu males felt oppressed.
ey felt that they had lost their pride in being men like
her men in patriarchal systems. As the Kikuyu men travel-
 to neighboring communities, they learned from them that
 was the men who were supposed to play the role of being
 administrators, the controllers and the breadwinners
 the family. The women, on the other hand, were claimed
 e subordinate to the men. Their duties were to take
 rs and to maintain the family home. This interaction
 the neighbors, consciously or unconsciously, led the
 yu males to act in their own behalf. They slowly be-
 politically conscious and began to ask critical ques-
 about themselves, their future, and what kind of
 ty the Kikuyu should have. The males began to become
 istic and chauvenistic. They started to believe that

as wrong for a woman to lead the family because, they
l, a woman was not naturally created equal to man, that
ruling of women over men was unnatural.

In justifying their move toward change, the Kikuyu
s argued that so long as the women were in control, the
yu as a unit would not be capable to defend itself
tarily against outside invaders. They claimed con-
ingly that the Kikuyu land was precious, so fertile,
physically beautiful that many people admired it, and
efore, it required a strong defense, and this defense
d be provided only if the males rose in power and took
the responsibility. Thus, the revolt succeeded with-
physical resistance. After the men's revolution was
essful, the Kikuyu nationalists formed what they called
ma ya Itwika" (the Council of Revolutionists) to draft
constitution. The first council was held at Mokorwe
athaka, a central location in Muranga District. In
council, it was declared that: (1) people shall ac-
a piece of land and develop it through ownership by
family, (2) a universal tribal membership was to be
lished as a means of unification, (3) membership was
by birth, not by wealth, (4) the government would be
hands of the elders, and (5) this position would be
mined by an age-set or age-grade system.

As a result of their new policies, the new govern-
ouncil also made some changes in other areas.

What the government did was to: (1) transform the
aditional matriarchal and matrilineal system to a patri-
chal and patrilineal society; and (2) transform the try-
nical government to a more democratic one. To do this
ccessfully, the Council of Revolutionists created a system
lled "Rotation of Generation." The Kikuyu community was
us divided into two communities--"A" and "B" communities.
" stood for the first generation and "B" for the second
neration under the names of Mwangi and Maina respectively.
e Rotation of Generations simply implied that the first
neration--Mwangi--came to power and ruled for a period of
to 40 years. Thereafter, a traditional ceremoney was
be performed, symbolizing that their rule was over, and
at the new generation, Maina, was ready to take over the
ninistration. The new generation would rule for a similar
iod of time, and then surrender their power and hand
over to Mwangi again. The process was circular in na-
e, but it is believed that this was the most democratic
tem that had ever been practiced (Leakey:1938).

The formation of the "Njama ya Itwika" is believed
have taken placed approximately in 1800. Referring to
s new governing body, Professor Muriuki (1974:110) ex-
ined, "The social organization was patriarchal, decen-
ized and highly egalitarian. The Kikuyu operations were
sed in the life of the people, and therefore, it was

simple to pinpoint one person as having absolute poli-
al power." Stressing the same point, Kenyatta (1938:45)
been quoted as saying: "The emergence of the new poli-
al organization in the Kikuyu country led to power sharing
the most equitable manner. This new government was the
t democratic, fair and sincere to the welfare of the Kikuyu
ple." Kenyatta emphasized this by claiming that "a
ocratic government is one that is judged by its rules
erning it." (Ibid) Mutiso, however, viewed this change
political structure more carefully. To him "This age set
tem led to specialization in an authoritative body where
eldest age-set inherently monopolized the judicial and
icy levels of authority, while the younger age-sets cate-
ically monopolized executive positions." (1975: 5)
Njama ya Itwika was not democratic, as Mutiso put it,
ver was automatically granted and morally entrusted to
old folks of the community." (Ibid)

The importance of this Rotation of Generations ac-
ing to some elderly Kikuyu men who still have the mem-
of the Njama ya Itwika was that:

1. it prevented the political feud between
   those communities.

2. it satisfied Kikuyu needs by giving them
   equal political rights of representation
   in the Council of Elders.

3. it reduced their anxieties by laying out
   some specific rules that governed them and
   gave them protection.

4. it aided them by encouraging them to
   maintain the lineage system as a way
   of preserving what they called
   "Kikuyuness."

5. it essentially gave the Kikuyu people
   the taste of what a democratic govern-
   ment is like.

6. it also gave them a sense of being one
   community and taught them how to mani-
   pulate the minds of other people when
   necessary.

This traditional governing system, prior to the

ing of the white settlers to Kenya in 1888, is not just

bject of history, but a political system which many

tically minded Kikuyu of today are still hoping to

g back into operation. Kaplan, in evaluating Kenyatta's

rnment from 1963 to 1978, indicated,

Within the cabinet, five or six of the
seven Kikuyu members were generally most
closely relied upon by the president.
In the mid 1970's they held five of the
most important ministries and included
several men who were rivals or potential
rivals for the future leadership of the
country. Nearly all were from the presi-
dent's home district, Kiambu, closest to
Nairobi, and accusations were frequently
made by other Kikuyu that the Kiambu people
profited unfairly in competition for patron-
age as a result. (1976:230)

The only major difference between the Njama ya

a and the Kenyatta government of 1963 to 1978 was

the Kiambu leadership that was represented by Mwangi

t want to rotate with other Kikuyu from other districts

at were to be represented by <u>Maina</u>. Kenyatta's govern-
nt rejected the earlier sharing plan, which in turn,
eated resentment between the Kiambu and the remaining
stricts in Central Province and between Central Province
a region and the other regions in Kenya. Kiambu, being
e dominant political force in the region, deliberately
rked to widen the gap. The Kiambu people saw the govern-
nt as a property of the people of Kiambu. They called
emselves "the Royal Family."

The significant question, in dealing with the Kikuyu
cial systems prior to the invasion of the Western colonial
e, is whether the Kikuyu traditional social, economic
d political system survived as it came into contact with
e most advanced culture from the West. To adequately
lyze this situation, the next chapters are intended to
mine the following points:

1. the colonial land policy that was
   established in the area;

2. what happened to the Kikuyu land rights,
   land use and land ownership;

3. the conflicts that came about as a re-
   sult of the land situation; and

4. the changes that are presumed to have
   taken place during this conflict of
   cultures.

The Problem of the Research Study

The central problem of this research study is to examine the changing conception of land rights, land use and land ownership as a result of the colonial impact and the economic system established in the region, which in turn, gave rise to the nationalist political uprising, that further stimulated a new system of social order in rural Kenya. The purpose, however, is two-fold: (1) to advance a systematic explanation of the factors that have led to or contributed to social transformation in this rural community, and (2) to advance the claim that the changing land rights, land use and land ownership in this predominantly agricultural rural community, not only led to social uprising, but also facilitated the conditions which brought about the development of social inequality among these rural cultivators. In discussing these objectives, the central focus is an attempt to empirically test the following propositions.

Proposition One: Changes in traditional land rights, land use and land ownership were directly related to the colonial land and economic policies imposed upon the area.

Proposition Two: The expropriation of the Kikuyu lands and the colonialist's demand for cheap labor led to conflict over land.

Proposition Three: The conflict over land and
the establishment of land
reform created class inequality
among the Kikuyu tribe.

Methodology and Sources of Data

After describing the problem studied and the liter-
ature on changes in land rights, land ownership and land
use, it is the researcher's intention in this chapter to
present the propositions and to describe the methodology
of the research carried out for this study.

In trying to avoid vagueness, each proposition was
subdivided into specific statements.

(1) Proposition One. Changes in traditional land
rights, land use and land ownership were directly related
to the colonial land and economic policies imposed upon
the area.

Subpropositions of Proposition One are:

(a) the conditions that led to changes in land
rights were associated with colonial land
and economic policies,

(b) the conditions that led to the changes in
land use were associated with colonial land
and economic policies,

(c) the conditions that led to the changes in
land ownership were associated with the
colonial land and economic policies.

(2) <u>Proposition Two</u>. The expropriation of the Kikuyu

and and the restrictions on their development led to the dis-

uption of the colonial system.

Subpropositions of Proposition Two are:

(a) expropriation of the land from the Kikuyu
created insecurity and loss of tribal co-
hesiveness and peace,

(b) expropriation of land from the Kikuyu led
to conflicts over land,

(c) restrictions on Kikuyu land development led
to the disruption of colonial stability.

(3) <u>Proposition Three</u>. Conflicts over land and the

tablishment of land reform created class inequalities

ong the Kikuyu tribe.

Subpropositions of Proposition Three are:

(a) the conflicts led to political compromise
in establishing land reform,

(b) the design of the land reform schemes led
to inequality,

(c) the need for cash crops production exacerbated
social inequality among the rural Kikuyu.

In order to analyze the propositions adequately

scientifically, each proposition was discussed chrono=

cally, based on related gathered information. Testing

ese propositions and determining their validity was

primarily on the amount of material gathered. Each

e was compared with other materials. Field work also

to determine whether the testing was adequate. Dur-

eldwork, the researcher's notes were analyzed and

mpared with archival information. Each proposition was

sted in the light of related information gathered. The

eater the amount of information gathered, the more con-

dence possible in validity of the test. The methodologi-

l process undertaken was of the documentary research type,

pplemented with fieldwork. The procedures were conducted

 described below.

Methodological Framework

    Since the study dealt with social change per se,

 documentary research approach was viewed as the most

iable and scientific methodological process. Documen-

y research described digging out all the pertinent in-

mation from national archives and from documents issued

local and national governments. It is scientific in

 it rests on the most unbiased and reliably documented

rmation. The information can be tested against other

ting information. In the study of the Kikuyu people

ntral Kenya, both primary and secondary research were

ed out in investigating the subject.

dary Research

    This research covered documentary materials, written

y early travelers, explorers, missionaries and slave

s and included national, district and provincial

hives. Additional information came from British Land

ice files, publications of the Kenyan Agricultural De-

tment, library books, journal articles, professional

rs, and bulletins. Statistical information came from

Kenyan Central Bureau of Statistics, the National Geo-

hical Society and the Department of Geography at the

ersity of Nairobi.

ry Research

This research involved primarily fieldwork, including

nal interviews, oral materials and discussions with

nent and knowledgeable people in the area such as the

s, elders and primary and secondary teachers. The

y sources were of two different groups: (a) the

group that consisted of those who had no formal edu-

, but had knowledge about the subject. These people

lder and knowledgeable in local affairs simply because

d experienced the crises in the forties and fifties.

ge categories ranged from the fifties to the seven-

Talking with these people was extremely educative

seemed to remember almost every incident that had

l to them or to their relatives or friends. They

plain at length about the land case, the alienation

and, and the crises between families or between

yu and the government. This group included such

wledgeable men as the chiefs, the headmen, the subheadmen
other tribal dignitaries. The second group consisted
the so-called "educated elite", such as high school stu-
ts, school teachers, college students and professors at
university.

In order to carry out such interviews without con-
on and without redundancy, questions were formulated
uide the discussions that were consistent with the
ositions. Discussions were informal and the number of
icipants in each interview was small. In many cases,
number could not exceed two people. This way, the dis-
ions were kept short without wasting the participants'
. Also, in this way every subject could participate
ly. In most cases, primary sources were interviewed
e market place or at any place convenient to them where
could speak freely and comfortably. The routine was
et with women and men separately. Traditionally,
is appropriate because each sex can discuss any sub-
vithout offending the other. The questions were con-
ed as indicated below.

(1) Introduction questions:

    (a) What is your name?

    (b) How old are you?

    (c) Are you married?

    (d) How long have you lived here in the neigh-
        borhood?

(e) What do you do for living?

(f) Do you have children?

(2) <u>General questions related to land</u>:

   (a) Did the Kikuyu own land?

   (b) What was ownership to the Kikuyu?

   (c) Was land owned by individual members or held in common by one or more groups?

   (d) How did the Kikuyu regard land?

   (e) Could the people do without land?

   (f) Was land ownership in the days before colonization different from ownership today?

(3) <u>Specifics related to land</u>:

   (a) Do you own land?

   (b) If yes, how much? If not, why?

   (c) What is land to you?

   (d) Could you survive without a piece of land?

(4) <u>Questions regarding Land Rights</u>:

   (a) What designates a person as the owner of a piece of land?

   (b) If the land is owned by the clan, or the family, what rights do they have over the land?

   (c) Do you understand what I mean by the word "rights"?

   (d) Is the Kikuyu land registered? If yes, under whose name? If not, what designates that it belongs to a person or a group?

   (e) Were the Kikuyu satisfied with their own system?

(f) Do you find a difference in rights today? In other words, are land rights today similar to land rights in the days prior to the colonial era?

(5) <u>Questions related to Land Use</u>:

(a) How did the Kikuyu use the land, prior to the colonial era?

(b) What farming tools were they using?

(c) What crops were they producing?

(d) Were they producing them for their own use or for other purposes?

(e) Are you familiar with the crops you are producing today?

(f) Would you prefer to go back to the old system of land use or retain the new method? Can you explain?

(6) <u>Questions related to Colonialism</u>:

(a) Do you know what land alienation is about?

(b) What is it to you?

(c) Are you familiar with the land situation in this area?

(d) Do you know anyone in your family or a friend or a neighbor who lost his land or her land during the colonial era?

(e) Did this happen to you personally?

(f) If so, how much of your land did you lose?

(g) Did loss of your land affect you in any way?

(h) What did you do? And, what did the Kikuyu do collectively?

(i) Do you think that the Kikuyu's reaction to the situation was justifiable? If so, why?

(7) <u>Questions related to Land Settlement Schemes:</u>

   (a) What were the land settlement schemes?

   (b) Were they useful?

   (c) Were the Kikuyu pleased with these programs?

   (d) Did these programs solve any problems?

   (e) Did the majority of the Kikuyu benefit from them in terms of distribution of land?

   (f) Were you personally satisfied?

The questions were used only as guidelines and only collecting information. Since the information gathered om the interviewees were basically personal views, the ormation was compared with similar material gathered from documented information to make sure that the reliability the study was not subject to faulty memory or personal s but depended on material that had been fully documented.

<u>ection of Study Area</u>

The choice of Central Province for study was made he basis of the known and unknown conditions which have this region historically different. In the view of on (1955:116)

> The Kikuyu were not the only people in Kenya who were affected by the British land policy and economic system. On the contrary, the Masai, Kavirondos, Kamba, and Nandi people were also affected by the nature of colonial- ism. However, the case of the Kikuyu people was of special significance in that they possessed, at the time of the advent of the Europeans, what was probably the finest farming land in all of Kenya.

It was in Kikuyuland where the majority of the white set-
tlers settled in large numbers for many reasons. First,
Central Province is located between the road to Mombasa
on the Coast and the connecting road to Kenya and Uganda
in the West. The region is also located between two moun-
tains--Mt. Kenya and the Abardare Range--which have given
the region a natural endowment of agricultural potential.
Also, its location about 130 miles from the capital has
made the settlement there tranquil.

   More important factors were due to what Furedi (1974:
88) has indicated,

> The impact of European settlement in Kenya
> was mostly directed at the Kikuyu people
> because the Kikuyuland borders Nairobi,
> and the region is situated in a highland
> area. This made it impossible for the
> region to escape the white encroachment.

It must be understood also that the lack of experience
that the Kikuyu in Central Province had had with the out-
side world made them particularly vulnerable to the changes
brought by the white settlers. Thus, it is in Central
Province that the social, economic and political effects
of white settlement can best be seen.

   As a part of the methodological process history has
been viewed in this study as a tool, not only to enable us
to understand change processes but also to update them.

   It is argued here that rural transformation in the
Kikuyu land was a subject of history. As the subject is

and his own environment, it is not only a historical
er, but sociological phenomenon as well. Durkheim in
off's <u>Sociology and History</u> is credited with the fol-
g quote:

> To study the present from the point of
> view of the present is to be enslaved
> by all the momentary needs and passions
> of the day. It is necessary to go into
> the past to uncover the deeper lying
> forces which, though often unconscious,
> are so largely determinative of the social
> process. (1974:88)

Indeed, the researcher contends that to understand
xplain those forces that induce change, we need to
heavily on historical and sociological data. This
ause history and sociology are intimately inter-
d and interdependent. As a social historian, it is
ible to believe that one can possibly explain ade-
y and convincingly those forces that tend to reshape
our society without relying on socio-historical data.
levance, the need and the concern for historical
ciological sources is discussed in Appendix A.

Summary and Conclusion

The purpose of this study has been to analyze the
in the Kikuyu traditional land rights, land use
d ownership. Loss of the tribal land was, in a sense,
s of tribal identity and most of all, the loss of

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ective pride. For Kikuyu people, land was their security.
Western man is not secure without some savings in his
 account. To a Kikuyu, his piece of land represented
savings account. In times of crisis, the Kikuyu man
ed for help to his land. When he retired, he retreated
is piece of land where he rested for the rest of his
.

 In the study, it became clear that, as a result of
alienation of the Kikuyu land and being restricted from
icipating in modern commercial agriculture, unequal de-
oment resulted in economic, social and political spheres
hite settlers remained a superordinate, advanced group,
njoyed all the privileges.

This research study argued that the rural Kikuyu,
 to the advent of the colonial era, lived comfortably
eacefully, free from all restrictions. Their move-
was unrestricted and they managed to preserve their
l identity and kept their family ties intact until
 the arrival of the colonial settlers in the early
eenth century. It was then, the Kikuyu claimed, that
began to have problems related to land and to the
 and community as a whole. Most essentially, they
to have difficulty in keeping tribal life intact. As
lt, their community disappeared following dispersion
bal people into squatting conditions on white plant-
.

The evidence shows that the Kikuyu not only lost

tribal links and social activities that they had

ed for many centuries, but also lost their tribal

ity and became homelss and landless as well. These

tions forced the Kikuyu into defiance of the colonial

ies. Throughout the period, the land issue was the

al axis around which Kikuyu political expression

ed. The immediate response to such expression was

lative, impressive and designed to placate rather

satisfy. The whites and the Kikuyu both recognized

reform as the solution. The whites saw that providing

to the Kikuyu was itself a protective measure for

own economic establishment in Kenya. There is no

that this move benefitted the white settlers more

he Kikuyu who actually needed help.

The Kikuyu had different views about the consequen-

the land reform. They believed that land reform

provide them with land and that every Kikuyu family

benefit economically. They also thought that after

ment, they would go back to their old lifestyles.

eam was far from reality. Instead, the findings

at the Kikuyu became more divided than before.

onditions, however, helped them to become futuris-

ganized and better planners. They eventually be-

e best competitors in the new system. They adjusted

/ to modernity and became producers and the consumers

ducts from overseas.

Colonial life unexpectedly oriented the Kikuyu to

chniques of colonial farming. It must be said that,

the Kenyan ethnic groups, it was the Kikuyu people

arned the proper way of participating in those econ-

dvantages that once upon a time, were restricted only

white settlers. This reality became inevitable be-

of the Kikuyu experience. As we conclude, the ques-

osed is whether the drastic changes in the Kikuyu

order would have been possible if the white settle-

ad not taken place in this part of Kenya. Also, in

tudy there were two things that were evidenced: (1)

observed that transformation of the old Kikuyu order

the economic achievement of a new powerful progres-

rmers who had understood the situation better and

ed it, and (2) this benefit made by only a handful

le led to the development of inequality based on

l possessions among this rural community. Chapter

eals with land alienation as the source of land prob-

the region.

CHAPTER THREE

LAND ALIENATION AND PROCESSES OF DEVELOPMENT

To understand why the Kenyan highlands became a

jet for British colonial settlement from 1900-1960, and

these settlements were developed, it is necessary to

what were the internal forces in England that pro-

ed this migratory movement into Kenya for permanent

lement. Prior to becoming a world colonizer, England

ged from a feudal state to a nation state and from a

antile system to one of permanent settlement. These

ges, in turn, led to the establishment of a capitalis-

mode of production. Such changes were linked to extra-

nary forces at work within English social and political

ctures. One source of tension was the feud between

who sought to increase their power and wealth and

es that sought to increase their independence from

l barons. From 1763 to 1914, Europe was the seat of

in the world because it controlled Asia and Africa.

ianos et al., (1974:145) have explained as follows:

> By the 15th century,...the feudal system
> had broken down as trade developed and man
> learned more of the world, (so) he became
> less ready to accept serfdom and lack of
> social and economic mobility, and more ready

to question many age-old explanations and
beliefs. New attitudes developed. Humanists
became curious about man, his search for
happiness, and his place in the universe.
Rationalists, rejecting superstition and
theology as explanations and for occurrences,
urged man to use reason to solve problems
posed by his surroundings. (Ibid)

In Starvianos, Andrews, Sheridan, McLane and Safford's
:147) views:

When Europe began her expansion about 1500,
she was not a particularly wealthy or econ-
omically advanced region. The Europeans
were lucky because the problem was solved
with the discovery of the treasures of the
newly discovered lands, and the founding
of the African Slaves.

uthors said this caused a great boom in Europe's in-
ies. As a result, capitalism was born. Preston (1967:
aid that the increase in industrial development be-
a major internal force which moved the British in-
alist to look for more raw material to maintain this
ic structure. He claimed that "capitalism was not
ed, but evolved in the process by which mankind emerged
ts historic dependence upon an agriculturally based
y." (37). The development of a capitalistic mode of
tion in England became one of the major forces which
Great Britain not only to become the first industrial-
ation in Europe, but also a global colonial power.

Internally, British government was experiencing un-
ed development. Industry was growing faster than

culture. To assure the proportional healthy develop-
of industry, agricultural development was very necessary
two reasons: (a) to stimulate the economy and, (b)
ustain growth. But since British territory could not
ort the fulfillment of these two demands simultaneously,
ain looked for resources beyond its own borders. So,
r the death of feudalism, the emerging policies of
antilism encouraged trade and export as a means for
ering raw materials needed by Britain.

Mercantile System as an Economic Policy

Wilson wrote "mercantilism, in its innermost kernel,
othing but state-making--not state-making in a narrow
e but state-making and national economy-making at the
time." As Wilson saw it, "so far as the literature
oncerned, mercantilism is a mirror large enough to re-
t an infinite number of economic viewpoints." (1958:10)
mercantile system became so important to the history
:eat Britain because: (a) it shattered the feudal
omy; (b) it changed the country from a state of short
.y of raw materials to one of substantial supply and;
.t created the foundation upon which colonialism was

.

Before the emergence of the mercantile system, men
rope were forbidden to export materials needed by other

anufacturers. "The export of coin and bullion was pro-
ibited and numerous Acts for the encouragement of English
hipping were already in the statute book." (Ibid)   Accord-
g to Wilson, mercantilism was a system based on the bal-
ce of trade doctrine. As he put it, "We must alwaies take
re that we bie no more of strangers than we sell them...
r so wee sholde umpoverish our solves and enriche them."
ld English) (p.11)

The whole idea of the mercantilists was to export
re than they imported. Their philosophy of the new econ-
ic trend was as follows:

If we send out more commodities in value
than we bringe home, the overpluis cometh
in Coynej but if we bringe in more, then
the overphuis must nedes be paid for in
money, and this is the measure of in-
creasinge or diminishinge the Coyne, ex-
cept of that little which is found within
the realme. (Wilson)

cantilism, Buck (1942:3) said, "is more often used to
scribe the policies of states during the 16th, 17th and
h centuries than to identify the theories held by the
ocates of those policies."

An examination of internal European conditions,
ticularly when feudalism was at its peak, reveals that
re were at least three powerful forces at work which
e of paramount importance to the development of the
cantile system: (a) the rise of the nation-state, and

he intimate relationship between mercantilism and the
rowing strength of national institutions, (b) the com-
ercial revolution which contributed to the development
f national economic policy, and (c) the decline of the
edieval economy. It appears from British history that
ese factors forced the British government to look for
w materials lying at a distance.

Besides internal economic developments, Britain's
lationship with the European community became an inescap-
le factor pushing Britain to take risks in its effort
become a world power. In describing this relationship
re clearly, Horrock (1925:30) said:

> The definite establishment of mercantilism
> followed upon the result of the Hundred
> Years War, which had the effect of making
> England almost absolutely insular in regard
> to the continent, and the undoubted prevalence
> of mercantilism was ensured when that in-
> sularity had been made absolute by the loss
> of Calais. (Calais--seaport in N. France)

Internally, the Crown had begun to run out of re-
nue. Horrock said that,

> The influence of merchandise acquired from
> foreign lands had eased a domestic rise
> in prices. The expenses of government had
> increased and were continually increasing.
> The royal revenue had not been placed on
> such a basis as would be adequate to meet
> the unchanged conditions. (p.47)

he mercantilist system matured economically and

tically

> England drew closer to a free trade system
> and slowly but surely withdrew from her
> previous restrictive measure. Also, the
> middle class had grown stronger and the
> merchants had become politically powerful
> enough to force the Crown to lessen trade
> restrictions. For example, merchants
> advocated the removal of all restrictions
> in the interests of trade enlargement, a
> wider distribution of trade benefits, an
> increase in shipping, mariners, and in the
> wealth of all the land. (Horrock, 1925:47)

Mercantile doctrine, as Horrock put it, "dominated

ish economic policy until the latter part of the 18th

ury, but even before the end of the 17th century some

res of it were the subject of forcible attack." (p.85)

ed, the emergence of liberal economic thought in the

decades of the 18th century, as Rothermund (1981: 5)

ndicated, "marked the end of the age of mercantilism.

oston Tea Party of 1774 was perhaps the most conspicuous

e event which indicated that mercantilist policy had

ved its usefulness." A point worth mentioning about

economic and political processes is that the end of

ercantilist system was also the beginning of a per-

t occupation of these foreign lands by developing

trial giants. The new economic system that came to

as a result of the death of the mercantile system,

dentified by social and political historians as the

ial system."

The Nature and the Goals of the Colonial System

The term colonialism, as it appears in Webster's
World Dictionary, is, "the system or policy by which
untry maintains foreign colonies, especially, in order
xploit them economically." Under the colonial settle-
policy, not only was a system of domination created
protected by military imperialism, but also exploita-
through mining and plantation farming was begun.

Africa was a large continent strategically located
e Indian Ocean and Mediterranean Sea. Its conquest
ittle resistance except in West African countries
from South African natives. In East Africa there was
olitical organization like Ashanti in Ghana, so re-
nce was easily subdued.

The moves to conquer the entire continent, however,
d sharp conflicts within the competitive European
nity. This conflict over Africa led to its parti-
ng and further imposition of limitations upon the
enous people who, prior to the partition, roamed
y on their own accord. The date that marked the
ial foundation's partitioning of East African countries
80.   England, the leading colonizer, was forced by
of its rivals, Germany in particular, to make some
nents. The German chancellor, Otto Von Bismark,
y displayed his interest and concern. In 1884, Germany

e a protection agreement with the Sultan of Zanzibar
and, which lies off the coast of Tanzania.

In 1885, Zanzibar came within the German buffer zone.
this short-lived conflict between Britain and Germany
clearly understood, a final compromise was reached. This
romise involved mapping out the areas which were pro-
ed by Britain and those by Germany. Through this com-
ise, Kenya became a British protectorate, while Tanza-
came under German control. In brief, the procedures
rtaken by Britain and Germany led towards a systematic
nization.

What has to be understood, however, is that although
partition of the continent opened up the avenues to
ization, the British did not jusk walk in and take

The British government had to use military power to
own resistance from the local people. Pruden and
berg (1961:82) claimed that

    colonization of the weaker societies varied
    in the strength of the brutality applied to
    them. Some of these societies were colonized
    by force. In other words, the colonizers did
    so by using military power to put down any
    resistance or to expand other domains further
    to embrace everybody else. For example, the
    Chinese were demoralized by being forced to
    indulge in opium trade, where Africans quickly
    became pitiful victims of the lucrative trade
    in human slavery.

In Kenya, the defeat of the native people was
ed in two different ways: through Christianity and

d military force. *In military means, a good strategic*
rocess was employed; one group was pitted against another.
 this case, the British government allied with the Masai
ainst the Kikuyu. *Describing* this strategic method used
 the British, Kaplan (1976:21) pointed out that, "the
position of British control was handled very pragmatically
ring this early period. Some native leaders were ex-
nded special treatment to secure their friendship and
pport, and warring groups were played off against one
ther."

Despite this fact, the entry of the British colonial
repreneurs came later. Before inviting their farmers,
 British government made sure the land policy was clear.
y prepared the areas that were to be made available for
opean settlement. This was the first major task to be
omplished before inviting settlers.

It is interesting to note that Christian conversion
e to take the place of military force as a means to con-
 the natives. This was a transformation from a phy-
al approach to a psychological approach. The British
rned that a psychological approach was an everlasting
ory because they had used it in England during the
al period. It worked for them in England, and there-
, they applied the same technique in Kenya by trying
onvert the local people to Christianity and to teach
 to be loyal. Stavrianos (1974) and his colleagues

d, "the social and political system of feudalism and economic system of manorialism had reinforced and been nforced by the structuralism of the church."

In England, during the feudal period, peasants and fs worked on the manor owned by a vassal or lord. The fs were taught to accept their positions and they were d to obey the lord. Stavrianos said that the church, n its emphasis on faith and obedience to authority, orted manorialism for many years.

In Africa, Christianity was a political tool used he tribes to breed a sense of loyalty to the Crown. in being loyal, the Africans only found themselves ing a subordinate role in the new system. They were ht to believe that once one accepted the teaching of st, and obeyed the rules of the master, one would auto- cally go to heaven. As a functional element, Christianity like military power because it, too, worked as an opiate uppressing African resistance.

Fruden and Steinberg (1961:83) argued,

In the social field, the Europeans, consider-
ing themselves superior in every way to the
natives, often ran roughshod over native sen-
sibilities, stamping out harmless customs
that had long been sacred to the natives.
The Europeans often indulged in cruelties
and injustices toward the natives that were
the very opposite of the Christian ideals
that were being taught by missionaries.

Before the British government took over the admin-
istration, a private company known as the Imperial British
East African Company was in charge of managing the country.
This company, however, had failed to explore the interior
and to provide the motherland with satisfactory informa-
tion about the richness of the land. This failure of the
company led the British government to take over.

On the other hand, the missionaries were also trying
to find out something about the country. While the missionar-
ies' main concern was to convert people, they also made an
effort to familiarize themselves with the lay of the land.
The missionaries' growing knowledge of the natural resources
of Kenya eventually came into the hand of the imperial forces.

Mombasa serves well as an example of how Christianity
and exploitation go hand in hand. It was here where the
missionaries first settled before they penetrated to the
farthest areas in Kenya. It was in Mombasa where the Arabs
first landed seeking slaves and where the slaves were stored
before being shipped overseas. Finally, it was in Mombasa
where Fort Jesus was built.

Between 1846 and 1862, such well-known missionaries
as Krart and Johann Rebman established their theological
teaching in Mombasa. In his discussion of the role and
contribution of Christian missions in this part of Africa,
Curtis (1972:180) said,

With an unquestioned belief in their own
self-righteousness, and the depravity of
Africans, missionaries were determined to
change indigenous institutions and behavior
and thus saw themselves as Christian agents
of civilization. This meant that Africans
had to be taught different values, goals,
and modes of behavior.

s also said,

Missionaries naturally tended to identify
with colonial officials, with whom they
shared nationality, culture and a general
way of life, and it was they on whom the
missionaries frequently relied for protection
and contact with the outside world. (Ibid)

is point, Pruden and Steinberg (1961:82) have said,

If colonialism seemed to make the world
smaller by bringing its various parts into
closer contact with each other, it also
gave rise to increased rivalries and con-
flicts, both between the Europeans them-
selves as they competed for colonies and
between the natives and their conquerors.

eed of the Europeans for quick and easy wealth often

em to exploit the colonies ruthlessly.

The successful missionary activities in Kenya's

or made it easier for the colonial settlers to ex-

further those regions that had agricultural potential.

also true that colonial settlers used missionary

s to subdue the natives. In addition, because the

naries informed the Crown about the agricultural

ss of the interior, the imperial ruler moved in quickly

subdue the local people either by false promises or

rough military means.

Describing the methods and strategies used to sub-

e the people, particularly the Kikuyu peasants who had

upied the most fertile land, Turnbull (1962:25) said,

> Here the Kikuyu once farmed the rich and
> pleasant land of the Kenya Highlands, and
> where they accepted pieces of paper from
> the first white men in exchange, they
> thought, for giving the white man permission
> to fill the unused soil and take its fruits.
> But the white man thought in different terms.
> From his point of view the land had been
> paid for and bought and it was his to do with
> what he liked...and what he liked was to turn
> off all the Kikuyu 'squatters' and keep his
> land for himself.

er the British had taken over and subdued the local in-

bitants slowly but surely the British colonial administra-

s began the process of colonial settlement.

The Settlement Process

Actual settlement did not occur until 1802. This

after Lord Delamere, the most prominent British Lord,

visited Kenya in 1898. His trip to Kenya was recrea-

nal at first, consisting of hunting across Somaliland

ard Kenya.

In the process, Lord Delamere learned much from the

ernment officials such as Sir Charles Eliot (1901-1904)

Kenya, about this beautiful farmland. Delamere en-

sioned the future of Kenya. He saw that Kenya contained

jhland regions and temperate zones good for wheat and

>l, items which did well on the world market. He also

rned from the earliest settlers, who had already oc-

ied the area, about the agricultural potential in some

the regions of Kenya which they claimed needed only the

icultural experts to adequately utilize the land.

inning Permanent Settlement

The central province was one of the regions that

densely settled by the newcomers. This was primarily

ause of the richness of the soil and favorable climatic

litions. Describing this regions natural gifts, Horst

6:38) said,

> The south central portion of Kenya is a
> beautiful land of high plateaus stretch-
> ing between mountains. Mount Kenya, in
> this area, reaches a height of 19,040 feet,
> and is 80 miles north of Nairobi. The
> Gregory Rift, extending in an almost straight
> line to the south from Lake Rudolph, is
> an immense trench almost 3,000 feet lower
> than the mountains which enclose it.

(1964:403) explained these highland zones as "having

all of over 50 inches a year, bracing atmosphere and

siderable temperature range." Most of these areas are

ble for agricultural development.

Settlement was begun with the introduction of a

:y of what one would call agricultural apartheid. This

:y first gave control of the land to the whites and

id separated the land into two reserves: the white

he African reserves. The policy itself was known as

alienation. Like other policies, it served at least

functions: (1) It provided rich agricultural land

sively to the whites; (2) It provided encouragement

e idea of bringing more white settlers into Kenya for

ient settlement, and; (3) It isolated the Africans and

ied them into areas which had less potential than the

given to the whites. It wasn't until this policy of

ilienation was introduced that it became possible for

numbers of whites to migrate into Kenya.

In 1902, there were already about 500 whites in

Out of these, there were only about 20 who were

ly engaged in farming. But, after the introduction

l alienation policy, the numbers of European settlers

ed continually. For example, in 1906, there were

mately 700 new settlers. This number continued to

e until the European population grew to over 1,800.

beginning of World War I Europeans numbered over

vith about 3,000 regarded as settlers. Once the

of segregated settlement became clear, areas were

mes in order to distinguish them from each other.

ne became known as the White Highlands , exclusively for

hite people and the other was known as the African Re-

erves, exclusively for African people.

Geographically, the White areas and the African areas

re in the same regions except that most of the white areas

ad more agricultural potential than African areas.

After these areas were partitioned, the policy that

ided them was made clear. Detailing this policy, Sorrenson

963:7) said, "It was made clear and properly stated to

th parties that the Africans should not be allowed to ob-

in land in the so-called European areas." The White High-

nds remained exclusively for white farmers until the time

land reform in 1962 when the area was decolonized.

The permanent settlement of Whites in the region

determined by two factors: (a) it was the type of

nomic system established in the area. Explaining this

e of economic system, Feuser (1974:8) said, "In the

as which had been forced to become suppliers of raw

erials for the metropolitan countries, colonialism re-

d the natives to the status of proletarians who had to

in mines and in plantations." (b) it was the

of political system that came to exist in the area,

urpose of which was not only to promote certain econ-

structures but also to protect them. The function of

type of political establishment was not only to assure

otection, but also to link the colony to the mother-

nd.

White settlement, therefore, took different forms.

e was when wealthy individuals bought land and settled

ere. Apparently, most of these areas were large in size,

ch as Boedecker's Farm, Mr. Brink's Farm, Miss Coleyer's

rm, Mr. Smith Mackenzie's Farm, Mr. Day's Farm, and Mr.

rd Delamere's Farm.

Besides farms owned by individual holders, there

e also farmers owned by South African syndicates, stock

panies like Brooke Bond Tea Company, Church mission

ools and East African syndicates which were primarily

European origins. The Crown took some land for its

vants, when, in 1921, after World War I, the British

ernment set aside some land that was to go to British

rans. These settlements were known as the soldier set-

ent schemes. Initially, there were about 257 farms,

60 acres per veteran. The government later expanded

e farms to 1,053 farms covering 2.5 million acres.

The success of these farms depended on two main

ors. (a) It depended on the background of the settlers;

b) It depended on how ready the government was to pro-

financial and technical assistance to growers.

ackground of the Settlers

Immigrants from Europe came from different socio-

ic backgrounds. Some came from military barracks and

ad no farming experience whatsoever. Others came from
small towns, while others came from small farming commun-
ities. Some, like Lord Delamere, came from well-established
families who owned plantations or estates in England. Most
interesting about these European immigrants, however, is
that, despite their differences, they all came from a feudal
environment. They were the sons and grandsons of those who
had owned very large estates in England. They were the
descendents of the vassals and not the serfs.

These immigrants had their own visions and beliefs
apart from the generally accepted views on theology. Their
beliefs said that the world must be made good materially.
They believed in material wealth and power as an answer
to human misery. They saw the economy as the path toward
human improvement and in that they contended that the beauty
of economy is that of an exchange economy.

The immigrants believed that the Kikuyu economy,
practiced for many centuries, was an economic system
that had no future. They were materialists, and wanted
to be rich like their forefathers. They wanted to pro-
duce enough for themselves as well as a surplus to feed
the industrial workers. Their intention was to establish
an economic system that produced a surplus. It was for
this reason that when they began to settle the first thing
that was recommended as a necessary procedure to make the
settlement productive was the need for more land and more

tlers. "This demand for agricultural development," as
nett (1975:7) said, "created a strong feeling among the
tlers that the native should be made more amenable to
opean supervision."

As stated, the European immigrants had come from
dal states. So, when they arrived in Kenya, their dream
to establish an agricultural system similar to that
ch their grandfathers had operated under in England.
other words, their intention was to create a new England
Kenya. The new economic system came in the form of
ntations established in an enclave form.

ernment Assistance to Settlers

The recurring crop failures caused the government
become involved in assisting the settlers, the govern-
t had learned in the bad years that the settler economy
led to perform adequately because the government was
providing the necessary means for development. It
cluded that, for these farmers to be able to produce
ctively, it would require the government's commitment
roviding those elements that could stimulate the econ-
To do this, the government adopted the South African
omic model.

The South African model was, (a) to get the govern-
involved in providing land and financial and technical

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ans; (b) to protect the farmers' interests, and (c)

develop an infrastructure, such as roads, telephone

mmunication, goods, and means of transportation. In

nya, the government took the lead in standardizing the

ality of produce for export, emphasized farm planning,

troduced breeding crop plants that could fit the farmers

tter with the farming economy, helped protect crops from

sts and diseases, and developed research stations.

own (1968:40) has said that, as a result of these ef-

rts, "there was an increase in the overall value in

ricultural produce exported, from £4.7 million in 1945

£5.6 million in 1946 (19 percent.)" Brown also said

at,

> There were very large increases in the pro-
> duction of all food grains (approximately
> 87 percent), and of exportable cash crops
> such as sisal, tea, and coffee. On the
> livestock side there was an increase of
> about 300 percent in meat production and
> 130 percent in dairy products. (1968:60)

The ability of the government to commit itself to

viding aid to the farmers helped fulfill their dreams

establishing plantations in Kenya.

The Plantation System or Enclave Agriculture

According to Webster's New World Dictionary, "plan-

on" simply means "a colony or new settlement, an area

wing cultivated crops, an estate." The planters brought

h them the plantation system which demanded the produc-

n of only cash crops needed in the motherland. Cash

ps, in this case, are those crops oriented to the mar-

 rather than local use. Cash crops include cotton,

al, tea, coffee and sugar. Describing the origins of

 plantation system, the Pan American Union (1977) said,

> The plantation system had its New World
> origins in the context of European colon-
> ization. The plantation was one of the
> products of European control; one of the
> economic, social, and political instruments
> employed in tropical areas for the pro-
> fitable production of export crops. An
> economic orientation towards profit, in
> a setting of import-export relations based
> on market demands and regulations,....
> Europeans were the ones to implement
> methods of production suitable to meet
> the needs of the market. The New World
> colonists created the plantation as a re-
> sult of certain associated factors, namely,
> crop potential and the availability of
> land, credit, labor, and production tech-
> nology. (Ibid)

The creation of the plantation system in Kenya

ld not be regarded as the exception. The growers were

stocrats in Europe. They wanted to expand their aristo-

ic power beyond their homeland. The plantation system,

refore, occurred in every part of the globe, such as

s of Africa, Asia, the Philippines, Indonesia, Hawaii,

ya, and IndoChina. So, the plantation is to be con-

red as a cross-cultural phenomenon. It is a social

enomenon that involves production of export crops for

ofit.

It was the establishment of the plantations that

ought the region of Kenya as a colony into greater prox-

ity with the world economy. The establishment of the

ntation system led, on one hand, to the development of

sses of landed gentry with political and social power

, on the other, to the rise of a large class of un-

lled settled workers whose main contribution was to

ply cheap labor. What must be understood is that a

ntation is not an abstract phenomenon, it is an in-

tution and it is part of a social system. Edgar T.

mpson (1959:26) said that, "a system is a set of re-

ions forming a whole, an aggregate about which something

thought to be true which is not true of the member parts."

settlement institution, "it accommodates and settles

le of diverse backgrounds together on the land." (Ibid)

social institution, "It belongs in a class with the

, the ranch, the manor and other social forces that

itutionalize relations between human groups and the

." (Ibid)

In the following, Thompson describes the farm and

ation;

> The farm, is a human unit of land; that
> is, it is a piece of land which the farmer
> and his family have domesticated and made
> a member of the family as a working partner.

> On the ranch, the relations of men to-
> ward the land are mediated, not through
> crops, but through cattle and sheep which
> have to be followed and watched. Plan-
> tations (on the other hand) are relatively
> large landed estates based upon agricultural
> economies and governing a number of people
> on the principle of authority. (Ibid)

In Kenya, the plantations took the form of enclaves.
was enclaved in that the cash crops were produced only
the areas the white settlers occupied, leaving the
ican reserves in the form of islands. It was in these
ntations that the natives worked. The workers were
meant to be consumers in the economy in which they
ked and produced. The production was meant for the
ket which was beyond the workers' reach.

The South African Settlement Model

In South Africa, once the native people were sub-
by the South African whites in the 1800, the new
rnment established a new type of economic system quite
erent from that used by the natives. Colins (1971:59)
,

> Throughout the 18th century a slow but
> steady stream of colonists moved away
> from Cape Town and developed a pastoral
> economy in the hinterland, which was not
> unlike that of their black neighbors.

suceed in establishing this type of economic system, South
ican law quickly endorsed the idea of guaranteeing any
te in South Africa a sizable amount of land to till.
h the help of the government, South Africa managed to
vince the European settlers to come to South Africa and
e permanent settlements. Following this campaign to
g whites to South Africa, the government worked with
settlers to establish the capitalist system. It was
stem which required steady, cheap labor. The features
gave this system its essential capitalist character
as follows: (1) Wealth was concentrated only in the
s of the few--the plantation owners; (2) It was these
rs who had the means of production, that is, raw ma-
als, land, etc.; (3) The large population of African
le had no means of making a living except by selling
r cheap labor to the planters, and; (4) All production
not just for the personal use of the producers, but
r for exchange and for sale on the market. In other
s, the production was basically a commodity style of
ction.

When the settlement of the whites began in Kenya,
nglish officials recommended the use of the South
an settlement model and claimed it was the most ap-
iate and the most relevant. The white government then
mended and encouraged settlers from Europe, exactly
ame approach as used in South Africa.

It is interesting that the Kenyan government not only encouraged the settlers from Europe, but also greatly encouraged the white immigrants from South Africa. The campaign favored South African whites because they had more experience in agricultural farming. Bennett (1975:153) had explained this situation as follows; "the south African response was enthusiastic enough to require an unprepared Kenyan government to rush through surveys to make land available to the newcomers." This overwhelming recommendation for the white South African migration to Kenya led to 1,500 Europeans in the colony by 1908. The yearly increase in the number of the incoming settlers from Europe and South Africa led to a racist policy which promoted differential treatment between the foreigners and the native Africans.

Since the South African model emphasized the system of separate settlement between the whites and the Africans, and since the model required that rich land be set aside for whites while transforming the Africans into labor reserves, the white population in Kenya steadily increased. The census of 1948 revealed that the population of Kenya was 5,379,966. By 1961, this number had risen to 7,290,000. The census also revealed that there were 29,666 Europeans, a total which rose to 66,000 by 1961.

The increase in white settlers was possible for the following reasons. (1) The colonial administration, along with Great Britain, did believe that development in these

egions would not be possible unless a number of skilled
ealthy white settlers were allowed to come to Kenya and
ake the lead in agricultural development. (2) The con-
ention was that without the white leadership, colonial
evelopment would be unthinkable. The colonial officials
ere convinced that it needed only white farmers to de-
elop Kenya. It was this conviction that led Sir Mitchell
1952:27) to argue,

> What the economy of Kenya requries is not
> a restriction of European enterprise, nor
> of white settlement in the highlands, but
> the very opposite. The colonial officials'
> common views were that the continual oc-
> cupation by Europeans of the highlands,
> for the reasons outlined vital to the future
> of Kenya and the well-being of the African
> people. (Ibid)

Mitchell believed that certainly the problem was not
be solved by throwing good agricultural land after bad.
suggested that, given what had happened in his hemisphere,

> What we have here to do in this colony is
> not acquiesce in the destruction of still
> more land by defective economic and agri-
> cultural practices, but first to under-
> stand the problem which faces us...and
> then...to take the steps necessary to en-
> able the great majority of the African
> population to rise above peasant subsis-
> tence agriculture, to a higher form cap-
> able of supporting civilization. Nor is
> Kenya's problem to be solved by giving the
> highlands to development by an ignorant man
> and his wife with a hoe. (Ibid)

Mitchell held that, "the continual occupation by
Europeans of the highlands is for such reasons vital to the
future of Kenya, and to the well-being of the African."
(Ibid)   The point underlying the establishment of this
type of economic system cannot be fully understood without
understanding the egotism of the colonial settlers towards
development.   Their argument was based on the notion that
development in Kenya could not be possible without their
leadership.   This attitude found expression in the words
of Sir Mitchell.

> Nor can European settlement be much
> modified without prejudice to the econ-
> omic requirements of Kenya in financing
> its current requirements, and expanding
> for Africans the social services and
> standards they require. (Ibid)

The mechanism was to establish an agricultural base
in the area so that Kenya could serve not only as an arch
for strategy and for the British to have political and
economic control over Kenya, but also to make the fertile
highland regions produce and supply England with necessities.
The problem, however, was that the white settlers failed
to recognize the Kikuyu's attachment to their land.   Stress-
ing this point, Turnbull (1962:27) wrote, "what the whites
failed to realize was the tremendously deep ritual attach-
ment of the people to their land, the land of their an-
cestors."   Viewing this situation as critical, Turnbull
(1962:27) said,

The turning point was probably the reali-
zation that the meeting of the two worlds
was not going to lead to a union of much
benefit, through cooperation and mutual
respect, but was going to involve the total
destruction of everything of importance
to the African, including his beliefs and
result in a world primarily designed to
benefit the Whites and only perhaps in-
cidently the Africans. (Ibid)

Elaborating on this point, Fanon (1974:12) said,

Since economic exchange relations as an
element of integration are lacking, the
racial ideology assumes a special function
and becomes in fact an indispensable in-
strument in ensuring the cohension of the
colonial system, which is based on violence.
The superiority of the colonizers, mani-
festing itself through brute force and
legitimized in their own view by the alleged
racial inferiority of the natives...(Ibid)

l, the enclave economy established in Kenya had many

s. The most profound effect, still observable today,

s dual paths to unequal development.

Economic Policy and Planning: The Process
That Facilitated Dual Paths To Unequal Development

The economic policy that came to exist in Kenya,

tation farming was underway, was the policy which

two communities known as the White Highlands and

ican Reserves. The two communities developed un-

and came to be identified by their development or

elopment. The developed European farmland was known

the scheduled area designating development. The under-

veloped African area was known as the unscheduled area,

ch meant primitive, undeveloped and backward.

Knowing the utility of economic planning, the colonial

ernment concentrated exclusively on providing the settlers

h the information and farming methods. Discussing the

fulness of agricultural planning to development, Paul

ert (1963:70) said,

> Planning is essential for development;
> economic progress can be accelerated by
> the application of research and analysis,
> as well as by action based on the results
> of this research; and that such action is
> more effective if the process of develop-
> ment is considered as a whole and its
> different components are coordinated.

elaborated, saying,

> The nature and direction of planning in
> each country are thus determined by its
> political orientation. Planning in it-
> self, however, is a neutral technique,
> which can serve whatever purpose is de-
> sired. It is up to the planners to trans-
> late into concrete policies the general
> objectives formulated by the political
> decision-making authorities, to make the
> latter fully aware of the implications
> of their decisions and to indicate a
> possible alternative course of action.
> (Ibid)

The difference between the Scheduled and Non-

uled areas becomes clear when the farm size of both

is compared. The farm size is extremely important

economic development because if farms are too small

ize, they cannot support modern technical use. Any

of the application of modern technology in farm

vities leads to underdevelopment. So, to understand

of the factors that is presumed to have led to under-

lopment on the part of the Africans, Tables 3.1 and 3.2

included to provide the details.

3.1: THE DISTRIBUTION OF FARM SIZE IN THE EUROPEAN
     FARMING AREAS, 1954 AND 1960

	1954		1960	
Per Holding	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
than 200	462	14.6	685	19.0
99	477	15.1	499	13.8
,999	1,462	46.2	1,650	45.7
-4,999	500	15.8	500	13.9
and over	262	8.3	275	7.6
AL	3,163	100.0	3,609	100.0

: L.H. Brown. Agricultural Change in Kenya:1945-1960.

Besides unequal distribution of land as one way of

back the African cultivators, the colonial dis-

ation of the Africans contributed to unequal develop-

Even though the Department of Agriculture and Exten-

search Stations were created, they were all directed

BLE 3.2:   THE DISTRIBUTION OF FARM SIZE IN THE AFRICAN
           FARMING AREAS, IN 1960*

e (Acres)	1960 Number	1960 Percent of Total
s than 2.5	125,200	24.6
- 4.99	133,300	26.1
0- 7.49	78,500	15.4
0- 9.99	43,300	8.5
00-14.99	54,000	10.6
and over	75,500	14.8

s was a 1960 sample survey, in which a total of 509,8000
dings (about 55 percent of the total number in Kenya)
 used.

CE: L.H. Brown.   Agriculture Change in Kenya: 1945-
      1960.

ı noted that in Central Province 64.8 percent of hold-
 were less than 5 acres and one-fourth of the holdings
 less than 2.5 acres.

to serve only the settlers' needs. To hasten agricultural development in white farming areas, various fields of study were established dealing with plant breeding, soil chemistry, plant pathology, and entomology. On the other hand, the procedure used to develop African agricultural activities took a completely different path. First, the motive to expropriate the land from the Africans, and that confinement within their reserves were aimed to discourage them from being competitive.

Second, the exclusion of the Africans from this development procedure not only created a situation in which the Africans remained backward, but also made them believe that their survival was only possible by moving out of their reserves and becoming squatters on the white farms.

So, the supply of cheap labor to the white plantation farms was an essential factor for development of white agriculture. It was, at the same time, a critical factor for underdeveloping the native agriculture. This was because most able men were forced by law or by the new conditions to migrate onto the white farms. This situation was justified by the attitude of the colonial settlers that,

> The African in Kenya has not yet arrived at
> the level of education which enables him,
> of his own accord, to plan his agricultural
> economy successfully. He has little know-
> ledge of farming practices....no means of

> gauging the effects of external factors
> on this economy. In his case, therefore,
> it is essential that his general farming
> policy shall, to a large extent, be
> dictated to him in the light of the exper-
> ience and knowledge of officers of govern-
> ment responsible for his welfare. (Sorrenson,
> 1963:8)

Because of such a racist attitude toward African

ople, policy concerning the agricultural planning pro-

ss was created on the basis of racism. The hope for

velopment, particularly in the African agricultural quotas

mained unseen. Discussing the colonial economic ambiguity

Kenya, Mair (1974:428) has this to say:

> From the beginning of the commitment to
> establish European-directed agriculture
> in Kenya, there was ambiguity over which
> of two forms this would take. On the one
> hand, there was the traditional tropical
> plantation, utilizing European capital
> and managers, employing large numbers of
> unskilled native labor, and producing high-
> value tropical crops. On the other was
> the farming system of the temperate colonies,
> with European settlers practicing the cattle-
> raising and cereal-growing patterns of the
> metropole. The plantations would involve
> the settlers as an aristocracy with super-
> visory functions over the indigenous pop-
> ulation while the temperate agriculture
> system implied that the settlers were a
> separate community with separate institu-
> tions and territory, leaving the native
> population undisturbed.

What this demonstrates is that the idea behind the

nomic policies and planning in this fertile region of

ya was to exclude the Kikuyu from these developmental

:hemes. The aim was to make conditions tougher for the

.kuyu people so that they would be dissatisfied with their

'n reserves and seek alternatives on the white farms.

other insight into this subject matter was, as Padmore

936:100) wrote, "...with them came speculators and agents

joint stock companies. In 1911 the whites numbered 3,975.

n years later, 9,651; in 1926, 12,529; and today about

,000." Harris (1972:170), on the other hand, said,

> The highlands of Kenya, like those in
> Central and Southern Africa, led to de-
> liberate colonization schemes in which
> the British supported the apportionment
> of land to white settlers, the recruit-
> ment of cheap labor, and blatant racial
> discrimination. As farmers and herders,
> the Africans suffered greatly from land
> alienation which reduced their subsistence
> agriculture and forced them to work for
> Europeans.

In discussing the economic policies and planning

the Kikuyu province, one needs to understand that the

nomic policies and planning applied not only to the

of dividing the agricultural settlement into black

white, and confining the Africans into their reserve

a while allowing the whites to expand into suitable

as, but it also included the whole range of policies

icating the right to plant marketable crops, the op-

tunity to grow and sell, and most of all the right to

enate the land.

Economics of Land Alienation
─────────────────────────────

Zwanenberg (1975:275) has said,

> The pre-industrial phase of capitalism
> in Kenya was introduced by the external
> forces of the imperial power. It was
> the colonial state which determined the
> form and the mode that capitalist pro-
> duction should take. The decision to
> develop and support capitalist plantations
> was a decision taken by the state. This
> mode was capitalist in that it produced
> commodities for the market, employed wage
> labor and was dependent on finance capital.

As a part of the effect of economic planning, the
policy of land expropriation or alienation was one of many
devasting situations to the Kikuyu. It took the land from
the Kikuyu and made them landless. The policy created a
peculiar situation in which not only the old Kikuyu tra-
ditions such as kinship and brotherhood could no longer
exist, but it also forced them to seek employment in the
white farms. It radically transformed the Kikuyu social,
economic and political structures.

On the other hand, it can be argued that the policy
did indeed profit the white settlers by providing them with
plenty of land to accommodate the plantation system. It
gave them not only political control, but also economic
control. The whites became the main producers in the area.
Because of this policy, they controlled agricultural pro-
duction until 1960. Discussing their superiority in farming,
Brown (1968:36) said,

> Despite the relatively small proportion
> of the different classes of land in European
> hands (about 20 percent of the high potential
> and 3 percent of the semiarid and arid lands),
> these areas produced at least 83 percent of
> the agricultural exports in 1945; even in 1960,
> despite strenuous efforts to develop the high
> potential African land with cash crops, the
> European areas still produced about 85 per-
> cent of the exports, or about 75 percent of
> the gross agricultural production.

The economics of land alienation can also be under-
ood by its effect upon the traditional social structure
d the economic power it provided to the foreigners. (1)
changed the Kikuyu land tenure, land use and the rights
olved; (2) It created unequal development between the
tlers and the domestic community; (3) It kept African
icultural development within subsistence levels; (4)
gave the whites economic power; and, (5) It provided
m with the opportunity for development. The policy also
thered this inequality in that the whites were the em-
yers, and the Africans were the employed. The whites
e the landed gentry and the Africans were the landless.
 this came about as a result of the economics of land
enation.

Needless to say, the economics of land alienation
nulated not only inequality between the white settlers
 the African cultivators, but it also had a side effect
 traditional African order. This process weakened

can kinship ties.   As Ranon (1974:9) quoted

n,

> By breaking up the age-old patterns of
> their agricultural economy, and by forcing
> shifts to the production of exportable
> crops, Western capitalism destroyed the
> self-sufficiency of their rural society
> that formed the basis of the pre-capitalist
> order in all countries of its penetration,
> and rapidly widened and deepened the scope
> of commodity cultivation...

The selfish interest of the colonial power has never

in doubt.   To this, Platt (1973:4) said,

> Both plantation economies and colonies of
> settlements were developed as complementary
> economies to the mother country, supplying
> in return for manufactured goods, food stuffs,
> and raw materials of the kind unavailable at
> home.

, therefore, claimed,

> Having access to this area of Kenya, the
> British exported even larger quantities
> of manufactured goods, and imported more
> food stuffs and raw materials.   The Empire
> increased by many thousands of square miles.
> (Ibid)

(1979:109) had this to say,

> Economically, a colonial possession means
> to the home country simply a privileged
> market whence it will draw the raw materials
> it needs, dumping its own manufacturers in
> return.   The economic policy is reduced to
> the rudimentary procedures of gathering crops
> and battering them.   This is literally a
> policy of exploitation in the preferable
> sense of the word, a policy of condemning
> them to anaemic depletion and stagnation which
> gradually reigns over the colonies, condemning
> them to anaemic weakness and breaking any spirit
> of creative initiative.

Compared to what the Kikuyu received as a result of

and alienation, one can easily conclude that they were sim-

ly the victims of economic regulation. The Kikuyu suffered

social loss. They bore the burden of structural violence,

ental stress and constant degradation. Instead of the

ikuyu being able to stay in their own areas and make a

iving, they could not because the living there was intoler-

ble and unacceptable. The only choice, therefore, was to

eave. As Kilson (1955:122) quoted Kenyatta,

> At present, there are about 60,000 Kikuyu
> who have been dispossessed of their lands
> without compensation. This has forced these
> Kikuyu to become wanderers--homeless and
> landless. Today they can be seen alternately
> wandering or squatting on European farms all
> over Kenya. This oppression has disorganized
> the Kikuyu, and many have fled to neighboring
> tribes, thus causing great loss to the Kikuyu
> community.

enyatta further explained,

> We find that we have not only lost land,
> but we have also lost tribesmen, because
> some of the Kikuyu ran away when their land
> was taken, and they have become squatters.
> Their sons hear about Kikuyu, but some of
> them do not know where Kikuyu is. They
> think where they are now is Kikuyu, where
> as it is a European farm. We consider that
> this is a matter which (has) been a great
> disadvantage to the Kikuyu people because
> it has disorganized the tribe. (Ibid, p.121)

Under the economics of land alienation, the majority

the African farmers did not develop beyond the subsistence

level. The farmers could not become plantation owners.
In fact, a plantation farmer represented a class of honor.
This position was preserved for white farmers only. The
difference between plantation and subsistence can be seen
in various ways. For example, the two systems are differ-
entiated in terms of, farm size, labor requirements, the
level of capitalization, the intensification of farming,
and the crops produced and the reasons for their production.

In a broader sense, Keith (1979:67) said that,

> A plantation requires large land areas
> to come into being, land which can be put
> to use for maximum profits. It needs the
> land for purposes of agricultural commodity
> production. It deprives its laborers of
> economic alternatives to participate in
> their farming activities. It pre-empts the
> agricultural resources to any independent
> agricultural activities and most importantly,
> it bars its own cultivating land.

A subsistence economy is associated with tribal
agriculture. In tribal agriculture, as Lloyd (1972:34)
as claimed,

> Positions of authority and wealth are open
> to all, or at least to most, of the members
> of the society. The basic social divisions
> are not between horizontal strata, defined
> in terms of wealth and power but vertical
> divisions into descent groups defined in
> geneological terms. With land, the basic
> resource, corporately owned, every man can
> obtain sufficient return for his needs.

As a result of the economics of land alienation,
ural Kenya was not only developed to feed the urban dwellers

but, most importantly, the plantations, or what some econ-

omists would call the enclave economy, was becoming domin-

ant. So, rural areas began to operate as centers that

linked the colony with the motherland. And, as the de-

velopment of these enclaves was increasing, African sub-

sistence agriculture was steadily declining and was al-

most obsolete in terms of sufficient production. On top

of this all, the settlers defended and justified their

lack of concern for incorporating or integrating traditional

practices into their economic system.

The Justification of the Settler Economic Alienation

First, the prevailing attitude of the settlers to-

ward the Kikuyu farmers was that they were primitive cul-

tivators and not peasant farmers. In quoting Marshall D.

Sahlin's description of the differences between primitive

economies and peasant economies, Wolf (1966:3) wrote:

> In primitive economies, most production
> is geared to use of the producers to dis-
> charge of kinship obligation, rather than
> to exchange and gain. A corollary is that
> defacto control of the means of production
> is decentralized, local, and familiar in
> primitive society.

Wolf saw peasants as rural cultivators:

> ...that is, they raise crops and livestock
> in the countryside, not in greenhouses in
> the midst of cities or in aspidistra boxes
> on the windowsill. At the same time they
> are not farmers, or agricultural entrepreneurs
> as we know them in the United States.

> In primitive society, producers control
> the means of production, including their
> own labor, and its products for the cul-
> turally defined equivalent goods and ser-
> vices of others. In primitive society,
> surpluses are exchanged directly among
> groups or members of groups; peasants,
> however, are rural cultivators whose sur-
> plus are transferred to dominant group
> of rulers that uses the surpluses both
> to underwrite its own standard of living...
> (p.2-3)

Viewing a primitive cultivator and a peasant farmer in the

way he did, the colonial settler manipulatively exploited

the opportunity by trying to justify himself as an economic

man and contrarily viewing an African cultivator as in-

competent. These justifications gave the colonist an op-

portunity to racially segregate the natives from their

traditional economic development and denied him the rights

to advance.

As the settler consciously and unconsciously de-

fended himself and his policy of segregated economy, what

actually had come into being was what social anthropologists

call "racism".

Racism and the Process of Underdevelopment

The Kikuyu were the victims of economic racism.

The process that undermined Kikuyu economic development

can be summarized thusly:

1. Land alienation policy

2. Demand for labor

3. The exclusion of the Kikuyu from participating
    in cash crop production

4. The racist attitude which regarded the Kikuyu
    people as primitive cultivators instead of
    peasant cultivators.

All these difficulties for the Kikuyu, in one way or another,
resulted from settlers' beliefs. They believed that it was
their duty to lead the natives out of their primitive living
conditions. The white settlers, along with the administra-
tors, believed, in Willoughby's (1923:222) words, that, "The
whole world belongs to them by virtue of their superior
civilization, and that in Europeanizing the earth they are
fulfilling their own destiny and bestowing favours upon other
races."

The processes of development and underdevelopment in
the Central Province, cannot become clear unless one under-
stands the white attitude towards the area's inhabitants.
Besides the economic racism employed by the settlers, the
white population thought of themselves as superior. When
they established their economic system, racism was immediately
put in place to complement enclave economic development.
Racism became part of the process to facilitate dual de-
velopment and justify it. Racism supported the belief of
the settlers that, (1) they were superior and thus had to
take the lead in development; (2) the native duty was only

to supply labor to the whites; (3) the dual economy was the
solution to economic planning; and (4) once the natives
were given their little share rather than integrating them
into this economic complex, they would be satisfied and
secure in preserving their traditional way of life. Since
the Africans and whites were different in their thoughts,
lifestyles and in their perceptions of the "good life,"
the white settlers continued to maintain this difference.

It was this perception that the white settlers could
not hide. This world view not only affected the Africans
economically, but it also became clear that as a result of
economic deficiency, the Africans' survival was jeopardized.
It was this that led Dr. Gordon (in George Padmore's book,
1936) to admit in his report,

> Child mortality among natives ranges from
> 125 to 400 per thousand in Kenya, as com-
> pared with 68 per thousand in the United
> Kingdom. Furthermore, 95 to 100 percent
> of African children under ten years carry
> traces of chronic malarial infection. In
> some districts, over 70 percent suffer from
> hookworm.

The settlers had argued that their main purpose was to ex-
clude the Africans from economic opportunity. As Sorrenson
(1963:1) reported "Africans were practically at the genesis
of things." This statement was, in fact, justified by some
of the prominent colonial officials such as Sir Charles
Eliot (The former Commissioner of the East African States),
who, in 1905, declared, "The Africans were in the state of
Adam and Eve before the fall." (Ibid) For that reason,

the alienation of the African people from their own land, and the failure to be integrated into the economic development was justified.

Describing the racist colonial behavior in a global sense, Router (1966:25) said,

> When an invading horde has conquered a
> foreign group and imposed itself as a
> ruling class, a difference in racial
> appearance is a factor of importance in
> the resulting political and social or-
> ganization. The external marks of the
> conquered group become a convenient badge
> of servitude, or determine the individual
> social status. They serve also to justify
> the exploitation of the subject group, the
> conquered group being always looked at as
> of inferior race.

Nonetheless, in Kenya, racism was by nature an institutional matter aimed at the indigenous African people. The settlers, throughout the period had used their argument very effectively. To them, racism was an appropriate tool which they systematically used to justify their action on issues, particularly land. In the following discussion, we shall see how the colonial rulers acquired the land and how they convinced the British government to go along with their demands.

The settlers and the administrators, along with the British government, worked together and demanded that all cultivatable land had to be reserved for whites. This operation was carried out by various methods. Some Kikuyu

land owners were forced to take different settlement areas
that were not admired by the white settlers. This removal
of the owner of the land was later reinforced by what was
known as an "occupation rights" policy. This policy was
based on the premise that if the land was not in use, it
would be automatically regarded as no man's land and if a
white settler wanted to claim that empty land to be in his
possession, he had the right to do so. This policy actually
gave the settlers absolute rights to encroach on any pro-
perty without any legal restrictions. The "occupation rights"
policy did not respect the Kikuyu traditional cultivation
system which was a nomadic-style shifting cultivation.

Traditionally, the Kikuyu had two or three differ-
ent plots or pieces of land at different locations. This
way, the Kikuyu cultivator could cultivate one or two pieces
of land for a year or two, leaving others fallow. Then he
would shift to the ones that had not been used. It was
through this process that the Kikuyu lands remained fertile
and productive. However, under the "occupation rights"
policy, if Kikuyu land was not in active use, the white
settlers could claim that the land was no man's land and
possess it legally. Solly (1960:74) explained:

> To sir Charles Eliot (the former Governor of
> Kenya), there was only one answer to the
> problem; fill the empty spaces with European
> farms. Then land would be used for the bene-
> fit of all, and trains would run at a profit
> instead of a loss.

This means of land alienation, was however, not well

ved in the House of Commons, particularly by the Labor

. The debate on land alienation without considering

an affairs, turned out to be a serious matter. To

nce the Conservative and Labor parties, Eliot accumulated

arguments to present to his boss in England to persuade

o sponsor the migration to Kenya. The Governor had to

nce the House of Commons (a) that there was enough land

he settlers, and (b) that the land was fertile enough

he settlers to utilize economically and be able to pay

the 5,000,000 needed for railroad construction.

For this reason, Eliot took a hard line in reporting

oss in trade,

> The exports of the protectorate yielded
> L165,000 while the imports were valued at
> L443,000 which meant a yearly loss of over
> L200,000 that would have to be met somehow,
> and unless white settlers came into the
> country, it would have to be met by taxing
> the African peoples out of all proportions...
> (Ibid)

<ing this line, Eliot convinced the members of the

of Commons and succeeded by acquiring all he wanted.

One problem of the issue over land expropriation

ıya is that it became almost impossible to isolate

ım racism. Racism was part of the strategy employed

ermine native rights to land and it is difficult to

tand the alienation process without first understand-

e attitude of the settlers toward the native inhabit-

111

The white settlers viewed the African people on the
continent as monolithic. This white racist attitude to-
ward non-whites was not a myth, but a reality that existed
in their conscious minds and in their perception of their
destiny. That perception held that "...the planet con-
tained a large number of 'backward' nations or 'minor races'
('lesser breeds without the law,' in Kipling's phrase)
which could never complete with the dynamic white Western
world."

Summary

In brief. racism had numerous effects and a few of
these can be listed as follows. (1) It was itself an in-
fectious disease to African's life and stability; (2) It
hurt African economic development by saying that Africans
were incompetent and unprepared to abandon their tradi-
tional living which had kept them from accepting change;
(3) It created a dual economy since the African cultiva-
tors could not be integrated into a different economic sys-
tem; (4) It provided the opportunity for the white settlers
to advance their economy by using cheap African labor; and
(5) It justified the settlers' values which denied three-
fourths of the population the chance to share the skills
and technology for extracting material resources.
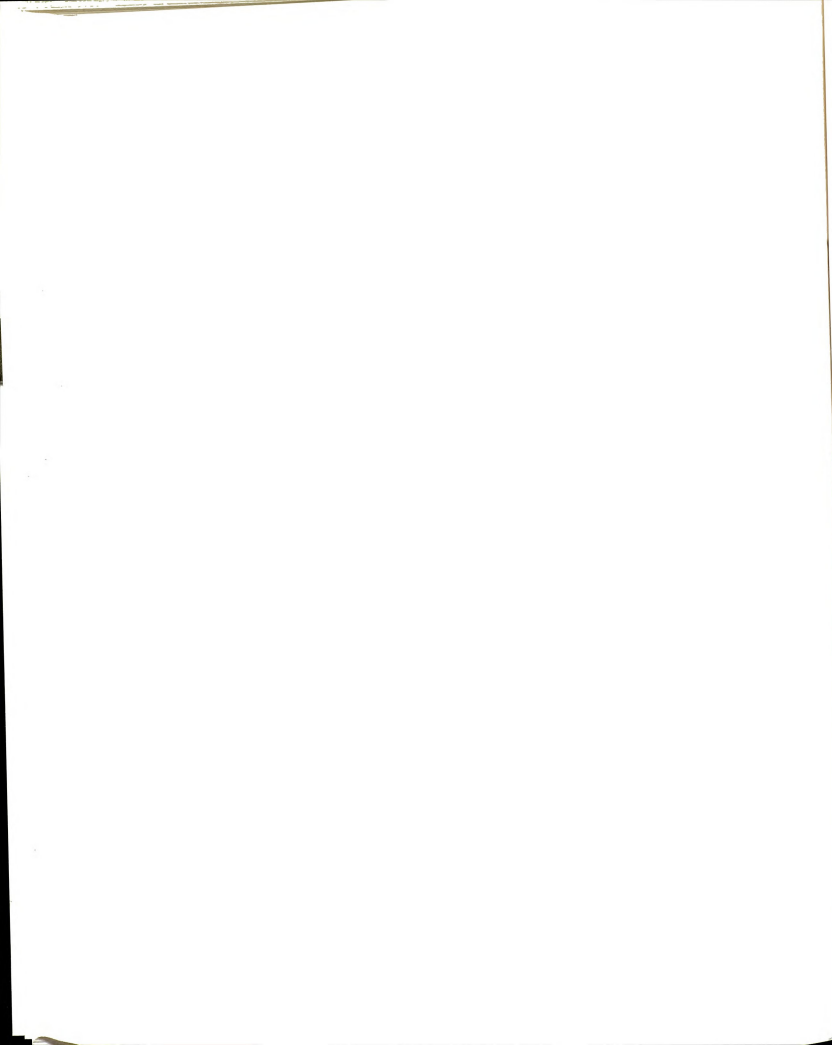
CHAPTER FOUR

LAND ALIENATION: THE GROUNDS FOR POLITICAL
STRUGGLE AND CLASS DEVELOPMENT AMONG THE KIKUYU
1903-1960

The first African-British contacts in
the Central Highlands set the stage for
the Creation of Colonized Societies. They
revolved around the suppression of overt
resistance to British domination and were
followed by the alienation of African land
to incoming settlers.... After pacification,
large amounts of African land were appro-
priated by incoming settler farmers, mainly
between 1903 and 1911. (Robert L. Tignor,
1976:15)

Conflict over land is the central theme of this

pter as Kikuyu did not experience land shortage until

er the arrival of the European colonial settlers. The

es, on the other hand, claimed that when they arrived

he area, the land was unoccupied. The Kikuyu, they

med, had retreated to safer areas because of malaria

tropical diseases that had killed many of them. Be-

e of the Kikuyu retreat, the settlers contended, the

they appropriated was virtually no man's land.

The point that needs emphasis is that, since the

lers' objective was to alienate the good arable land

their own agricultural advantage, this policy not

became the foundation for the settlers' adventure,

ut it also became the axis at which the Kikuyu founded

heir political expression. Land alienation; as it is

sed here, may be viewed as a violent act since the pro-

ess involved the taking of property by physical and psycho-

ogical force.

The land question in Kenya was of serious importance.

or someone to hurt an African man, let him take the land

ay and leave him landless. Land is where an African's

o resides. Expropriation of the land was tantamount to

struction of his manhood, because worldwide, land is

sential to human survival. Ratcliffe (1976:11) had this

say:

> Since land, through the media of loca-
> tion, communication and the provision
> of complementary services, as well as
> being the basis of agriculture, can be
> identified as a function of virtually
> all forms of production, its availability,
> management, and allocation between com-
> peting uses is a prime determinant in the
> economic performance of a community.

The essential nature of land is not only recognized

the traditional societies but by the industrial societies

well. As Leontier (undated:16) has put it, "in order

produce, land, factory buildings, machinery and raw

erial are needed." All these depend on and come from

land. The land is the mother--it is the source of all

ural production and where the factory is built. That

why land plays a key part in human life.

Describing the settlers' reaction to the land, as they arrived in Kenya, Buell (1928:298) has explained:

> When the white man first passed through this part of East Africa, he saw vast areas of land, parts of which were apparently uninhabited by any native tribe. A Foreign Office Report in 1902 spoke of the protectorate as having a climate that is excelled by probably no other in the world...a rich virgin soil...(and) a good supply of a cheap labor...

Essentially, the economic motive was the main determinant of the future of land in Kenya. Before the formal process to alienate the Kikuyu land began, there were already internal and external forces at work that the white man needed the land for development. They also required it for accommodation. Internal forces were that the British loan for railroad construction had to be paid back on schedule. Since Kenya's economy depended on land, the settlers argued that they had to possess the land in order to utilize it effectively.

The Settler's Success in Alienating Land in Kenya

The imperial power had already engaged herself in economic enterprise in these East African communities. Britain had provided a loan amounting to about 5 million pounds to help construct the Uganda-Mombasa railroad. A

ilroad branch which connected Nairobi with the Kisumu
adquarters of Lake Victoria was also underway and the
itish government was a major investor in East Africa.
ficial approval of settlement came about when Sir Charles
iot, Commissioner of Kenya from 1900 to 1904, expressed
s opinion that white settlement was inevitable. There-
ter, he encouraged Britons to come to Kenya and take
rmanent settlement. The idea to settle in Kenya was
cided by the British officials. The White immigrants
ewed their settlement in Kenya as a gift from God. Kenya,
ey claimed was to become a white man's land.

Official action allowing white immigrants to take
rmanent settlement in Kenya and the construction of the
anda-Kenya railroad provided greater access to the colon-
lists to advance their political and economic encroach-
t into the regions. Once, these means were available,
question of who should have power over these good land
as became a focal point for political, economic, and
ial struggle. The whole issue became a social class
uggle between the landed gentry, who possessed land and
sessed the imperialistic power to protect their interest,
those who were landless and powerless. Leontiev (un-
ed: 15) has defined the issue of social class.

> It is what permits one part of society
> to appropriate the labour of another.
> If one part of society appropriates all
> the land, we have the classes of land-
> lords and peasants. If one part of
> society owns the plants and factories,
> shares and capital, while the other part
> works in these factories, we have the
> classes of capitalists and proletarians.

The process of land alienation has already been

sented in Chapter Two. Before describing the class

uggle, it is germane to examine how much land was taken

y from the African people. The figures presented here

lect the success of colonial alienation. Land grabbing

he colonial settlers in Kenya was not an accidental

omenon, but customary behavior of an imperial power,

ied out during these days on a global scale. Wood's

6:603-4) findings show,

> In Kenya, 9,000 settlers occupied 16,700
> square miles of land. This literally meant
> that 7,036,814 acres were owned by only
> 9,000 settlers... In Rhodesia, some
> 250,000 wealthy whites controlled half
> of the best land, while about five million
> blacks shared the rest, while in South
> Africa, the white 20 percent of the pop-
> ulation had control over the best 87
> percent of the land.

The size of the land alienated to the European

lers did not necessarily imply that the land was

ized. Comparing the number of the white population

the land alienated to them, the amounts were more than

y could effectively use. However, the reason the white

tlers had so much land alienated to them was, as Lubembe

68:28) indicated, "... a deliberate policy to try and

strate the Africans so that they could not have the op-

tunity to rise from the low level of living."

Radical land alienation in Kenya did not take place

il about 1918 to the late 1930s. In the early period,

1 1902 to 1918, the process to alienate land was con-

ative in nature and those who were to receive the land

 carefully selected. Only those people from Europe

 considerable capital and skills, like Lord Delamere,

 allowed to acquire as much land as they could buy.

example, Lord Delamere is said to have possessed more

 100,000 acres for himself. It was not until after

d War I, that large numbers of European settlers began

eek land in the colonies. It was also during these

s that it was determined that they were needed in the

nies in order to exploit the agricultural land for com-

ial purposes.

To demonstrate the amount of land alienated in Kikuyu-

, we need to have a clear picture as to how much of

was alienated in Kenya as a whole. For this to have

ng, it is pertinent to know how the land was classi-

According to L.H. Brown (1968:34),

> Kenya is a country of approximately
> 225,000 square miles, of which 5,191
> square miles is open water, and 219,800
> square miles is land of various cate-
> gories.... Ecologically, about 172,160
> square miles (79%) of the land area is
> semiarid or arid, having less than 30
> inches of rainfall per annun. Of this,
> 134,172 square miles has less than 20
> inches of rainfall and can be called
> semi-desert or desert. The land receiving
> more than 30 inches of rainfall per annun
> totals about 47,640 square miles and of
> this 5,171 square miles is in forest re-
> serves. About 840 square miles is other-
> wise allocated.

efore, the actual land suitable for agricultural pur-

s and with higher rainfall areas amounted to 41,630

e miles.

Brown showed that of the total land surface of Kenya

12,200 square miles or 5.5 percent had been alienated

ropean or Asian farmers by 1960. Of this, about 4,640

e miles was semiarid or arid ranching land, leaving

square miles with 30 inches of rain or more (p.36).

4.1 shows the number of occupiers and the areas under

ation and acreage cultivated in the years 1920 to 1923.

Through Table 4.1 we learn that European settlers

not large in number but occupied large areas of culti-

le land beyond their ability to utilize them. Through

able we also see that some acreage was totally unused.

upon the clues from Table 4.1, it may be speculated

he failure of the settlers to utilize much of the

ted land effectively was one of the factors that led

	1920	1921	1922	1923
Number of occupiers	1,182	1,346	1,386	1,466
Area under occupation (in acres)	3,157,440	3,333,106	3,804,158	3,985,371
Acres cultivated	176,290	206,959	234,055	247,319
Percentage of cultivation to occupied areas	5.58	6.21	6.15	6.88
Average acres cultivated per occupier	149	154	169	186
Pastoral acreage per occupier	961	983	1,047	1,092
Total acres developed per occupier	1,110	1,137	1,216	1,278

SOURCE: The East African Red Book, 1925-1926 (Nairobi, East African Standard Ltd., 1925).

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their failure to acquire as much political power to con-

l the country, as did their counterparts in Southern

lesia and South Africa. Confirming this fact, Sander

igh (1977:118) has stated, "the European population [in

'a] was small, geographically scattered, and politically

ded."

Table 4.2 is included here to provide the details

creage under European control and the principal crops

n in the colony from 1920 through 1924.

Tables 4.1 and 4.2 provide the extent of land alien-

n in Kenya in general. More specifically, land aliena-

in Kikuyu country was more acute and, thus, destructive

le social well-being of the Kikuyu people. Geographi-

', Central Province is smaller in size than Nyanza or

Valley provinces. Yet, it had the largest population

le country. Population density per square mile in

u was 860; Fort Hall, 499; Nyer, 596; Embu, 351; and

236 (Barker, 1971:7). Most importantly, in Central

nce agriculture was the source of living and the alien-

of land was literally a genocidal threat to the Kikuyu

e.

Land Alienated in Kikuyu Territory

Statistically, it has not been clear as to how much

vas alienated by the whites from the Kikuyu people.

er, some pieces of information are available that

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|	1920	1921	1922	1923	1924
Total acres under occupation on the 30th June each year	3,157,440	3,333,106	3,804,158	3,985,371	4,449,180
Number of occupiers	1,183	1,346	1,386	1,466	1,715
Total acres in crops on June 30th	147,550	169,685	205,897	238,762	297,337
Acres under cultivation but not planted on June 30th	28,740	37,274	28,158	35,557	49,651
Total acres under cultivation on June 30th	176,290	206,959	234,055	274,319	346,988
Maize	32,109	53,395	75,444	99,764	141,147
Wheat	4,613	7,858	13,696	15,429	20,910
Barley	586	1,091	932	818	725
Coffee	27,813	33,813	43,359	32,249	60,054
Sisal	30,698	31,050	37,118	39,026	45,323
Flax	24,174	14,227	10,209	5,889	2,133
Coconuts	9,262	10,120	9,378	8,808	8,924
Sugar	691	2,616	3,787	4,193	5,263
All other crops	19,636	19,635	20,786	21,003	19,320
Less catch crops	2,023	4,120	8,812	8,427	6,442

SOURCE: The East African Red Book, 1925

provide a sketchy understanding. During the field research
in 1980-1981, it was implied by the district cfficer in the
region that the most sensitive documents concerning land
were destroyed by colonial administrative officials as
Kenya was on its way to becoming an independent state in
1963. Although this piece of information is somewhat spec-
ulative, it was supported by the feeling extant in the 1960s
that, because of the large amounts of land alienated by the
settlers, the British government would not be pleased to
let such records be made public.

The area of the entire province is equal to 11,034
square miles, but the data of 1923 is limited to the amount
of land alienated in the Kiambu-Limuru areas. In Sorrenson's
(1963:4) findings, "In Kiambu and Limuru districts, approx-
imately 11,000 Kikuyu lost 60,000 acres cf land." Tignor
(1976:27) provided further details,

> The total amount of unequivocal Kikuyu
> land encroached upon by Europeans was
> 125 square miles, 16 of which had been
> abandoned after 1895.... Of this total
> over 93 square miles were in Kiambu dis-
> trict...alienation occurred at Kikuyu sta-
> tion (7.5 square miles), Ngaw to Chania
> River (17 square miles), Limuru farm block
> (77 square miles), Crown land reserves near
> Sabasaba (1 square mile), Nyeri block (6.75
> square miles), and various enclaves of land
> turned over to the missions inside the re-
> serves (2 square miles).... In Kiambu the
> Kenya land commission estimated that the
> total number of families who lost land was
> 1,594 or 7,950 individuals at an average
> figure of 5 per family. (Ibid)
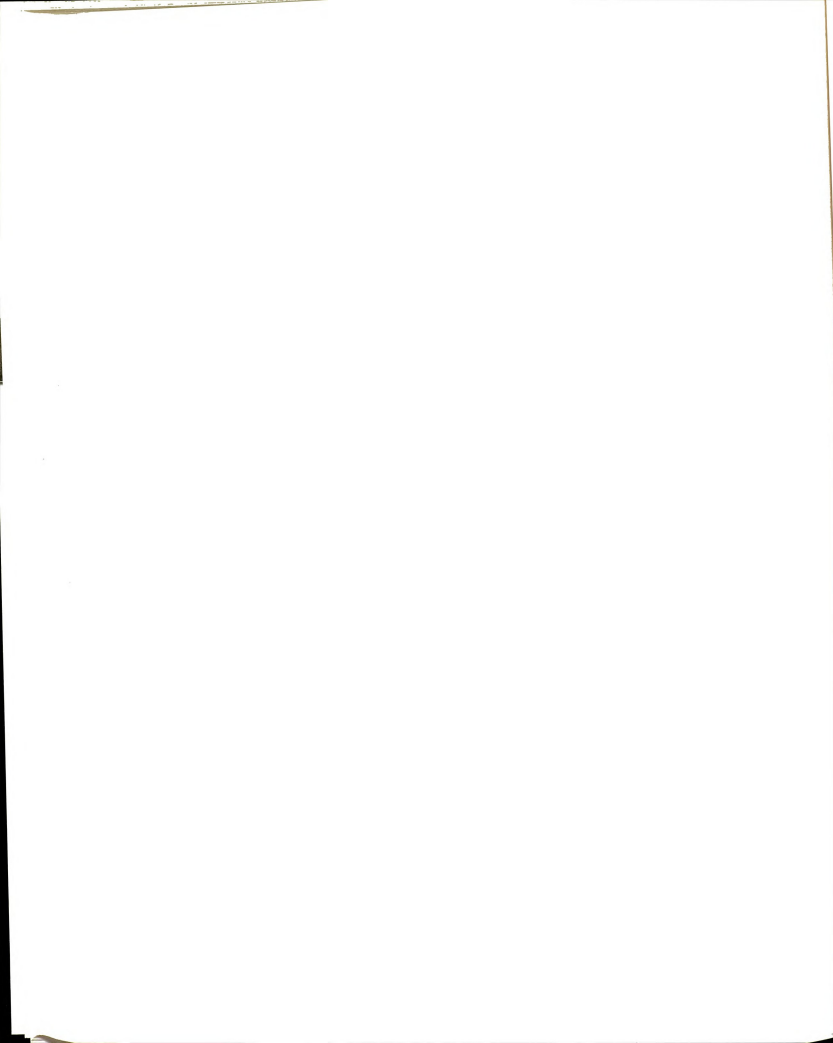
There were several methods and strategies by which

was taken from the Kikuyu. One way be "occupancy rights"

ch has been discussed. Another was by what the white

tlers called the legitimate Land Alienation Act. This

luded the right to confiscate and false agreements.

ncr explained,

> False agreements were made with the Kikuyu
> elders. The individual or the government
> would ask a Kikuyu family to sign a piece
> of paper which stated that the new occupier
> was only holding the land temporarily. Yet,
> the family did not realize or understand that
> the peace agreement was permanent. To the
> whites, this agreement meant a transference
> of the land permanently. (Ibid)

This displacement of large numbers of the Kikuyu

ilation tended to create laborers. The white farmers,

ugh their long experience in South Africa, in Southern

lesia and elsewhere in the colonies, realized that by

ving the Africans from their land they were left with

one alternative--to labor on the white farms.

Labor as a Tool for Economic and Political Gain

The labor problem in Kenya during the colonial era

a source of frustration to the settlers. This pre-

talist mode of production in the colony was established

r two assumptions. First, it was believed that to de-

o the colony and retrieve it from what the colonialists

ermed a primitive state, fertile land had to be reserved

or the whites as only they had the technology necessary

o develop the colony. Second, it was also assumed that

o be able to establish a firm and stable agricultural sys-

em in such a primitive environment, the planters had to

ave a constant supply of cheap labor.

The literature supports the realization of the first

ssumption. The second assumption had three consequences.

1) It created a proletariate class of landless persons,

2) It provided an opportunity for the establishment of

apitalist mode of production; and (3) It created the cir-

umstances of the wage labor system. Working for wages

as previously unknown to the Kikuyu people. Their unit

f labor was the extended family and payment was the sus-

enance derived from the fertile land.

The wage labor system was first introduced when the

ailroad was built from Uganda to Mombasa between 1896 to

01. According to Tignor (1976:97) "by 1905 the railway

d engaged 3,000 Africans, most of whom provisioned them-

lves and worked on ballast and timber cutting, and by

15 the railway had 5,745 Africans...." As the settlers

adually came into the age of commercialization, more

ricans were employed on farms and the methods of acquir-

g labor became increasingly harsh and ruthless. Pro-

ssor Buell claimed "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 labor." (Ibid)

The point confirmed here is that the settlers who
had succeeded in convincing the imperial power to set aside
the land for them, believed they could pressure the govern-
ment further to collaborate in means for recruitment of a
cheap labor supply. To convince the Liberal labor party
in England and to avoid antagonizing the administrators and
colonial secretary in London who were already in their po-
litical pockets, the settlers deliberately advanced their
philosophy more systematically. They claimed,

> There is no doubt that the future success
> or failure of the country depends entirely
> on the methods that will be employed in
> dealing with native labour. The country
> must look for its development to the labour
> of the natives, and if proper steps are
> not taken, with due care and forethought,
> to render the natives content and their
> labour easily, available, and if the laws
> dealing with natives are not framed in a
> wise and liberal spirit and enforced with
> a firm hand, the future prospects of the
> country may be irretrievably damaged.
> (C. White, 1971:111)

The objective of the settlers was clear, they wanted a
forced labor policy. In fact, a drive toward the intro-
duction of forced labor, was viewed by many officials as
legitimate move toward meeting the settlers' demands.
They saw it as expedient for the economic development.

As a result, ways were created to make a labor sup-
ply available. A few of these were: (1) recruitment by
the chiefs; (2) through a labor office; (3) through the
district Commissioner's office with cooperation from the
federal government and (4) through coercion. The most ex-
tensively used means was through the chiefs.

Given absolute authority, many chiefs exploited
their power by forcing Africans to leave their home villages
to go work on white farms. Lousdale (1968:119) explained,
"The chiefs and headmen were urged to use their power and
influence to coerce their people in these labour matters...
thereby causing general mistrust and demoralization...."
Other exploitive means were applied persistently in assuring
the settlers a reliable labor supply. Huxley (1946:88)
pointed out: "the Africans were recruited in various ways.
Sometimes, it was through compromise or through persuasion
but most of the time, it was brutal and dehumanizing."
One justification popular in these times was the belief
that it was through compulsory labor that the African male
could be made responsible.

In 1960, the Settler Committee and the Colonists'
Association persuaded the British Parliament to pass the
Master and Servants Ordinance. This was a South African
model which contained an obligation to work once a contract
existed. If a worker failed to report, he would receive

heavy fines or imprisonment. Beyond this institutionaliza-
tion of labor coercion other statutes were passed that
firmly entrenched the concept of wage labor in East Africa.

The Master and Servants Ordinances of 1906, 1910

The Master and Servants ordinance was intended to
protect an employer against workers who failed their duty
to work. In the settlers' views, a contract between an em-
ployer and a worker was virtually an agreement but to the
Africans, it was an enforced condition. The worker was
ordered to work for three or six months a year. In turn,
the employer would give him a blanket and food, and at the
end of his work he would be paid. Most of the contracts
favored white settlers rather than the Africans. L.W. White
(1971:112) said the Masters and Servants Ordinace gave em-
ployers two things: "(1) they were allowed to pay their
men partly in kind: the blankets and food they gave them
were reckoned as part of their wages; (2) if a man broke
his agreement by leaving the farm before his time was up,
he would be imprisoned by the government."

Following the Master and Servants Ordinances of 1906
and 1910, there were other ordinances dealing with labor.
These included the Resident Native Ordinance of 1918, the
Ordinance of 1920 and the Labor Circular of 1919.

The Resident Native Ordinances of 1918, 1920

Before the war broke out and during it, much of the Kikuyu population migrated onto white farms as squatters. The squatters paid for the farming and grazing rights guaranteed to them by their masters and relationships between them were clearly stated and understood. The squatters were renters and could pay either in crops or livestock or in labor. Eventually, however, many European owners did not want these relationships in rent to continue and preferred that all rent be paid in labor. Later, the relationships based on payment in money were halted by the Ordinance of 1918. Thereafter, the law demanded, as L.W. White has put it, "No African was to live on a European farm unless he worked for the farmer 180 days in the year; if he was unwilling to do this, he must go back to the Reserve." (Ibid) This choice amounted to no choice at all for most squatters to whom conditions in the reserve were intolerable.

The Ordinance of 1920 required that all African workers be registered. It also required that African workers carry registration certificates with them when they went to work.

The Labour Circular of 1919

It is reported that when Sir Edward Northey, Sir Belfield's successor to the Governorship of Kenya, arrived as governor of Kenya in 1919 he was convinced that European interests must be paramount at all costs.

There were two main problems that Mr. Northey recognized. First, that the rapid increase of the Indians' migration into Kenya was becoming a major threat to the security of the white settlers in the country. Secondly, he acknowledged that for white agriculture to develop, a steady supply of the African cheap labor was required. Therefore, in a circular issued soon after his arrival, Northey made his concerns plain to the Indians of Kenya. "His Excellency believes," said the document, "that although Indian interests should not be lost sight of, European interests must be paramount throughout the protectorate." (Ward and White, 1971:117)   With regard to labor questions, Northey gave instructions as follows:

(1) All government officials in charge of native areas must exercise every possible lawful influence to induce able-bodied male natives to go into the labour field.

(2) Native chiefs and elders must at all times render all possible lawful assistance on the foregoing lines...

(3) District Commissioners will keep a record of the names of those chiefs and headmen who are helpful and of those who are not helpful, and will make reports to me from time to time for the information of His Excellency...

(4) District Commissioners will, as often as occasion requires, hold public meetings at convenient centers, to be attended by the native authorities. At these meetings, labor requirements, replaces, nature of work and rates of pay must be explained...

(5) Employers or their agents requiring labor will be invited and encouraged to enter freely any native reserve and get in touch with chiefs, headmen and natives.

Beyond these instructions, Northey's personal attitude toward nonwhites, particularly Africans, worried the African community and the liberal politicians in the British House of Commons. The governor made it plain by stating that the African people were inherently lazy, and thought it would be bad for them to be allowed to stay idle in their own reserves. Northey's circular aimed to re-introduce Major E.S. Grogan's tough policy. Grogan, a Colonial official in 1900, had advocated: "A good sound system of compulsory labour would do more than raise the nigger in five years than all the millions that have been sunk in missionary efforts for the last fifty...then let the native be compelled to work so many months in the year..." (Kilson Martin, 1955:128)

Having read Grogan's policy of 1900 carefully, Northey followed it up with his Circular of 1919. He stated:
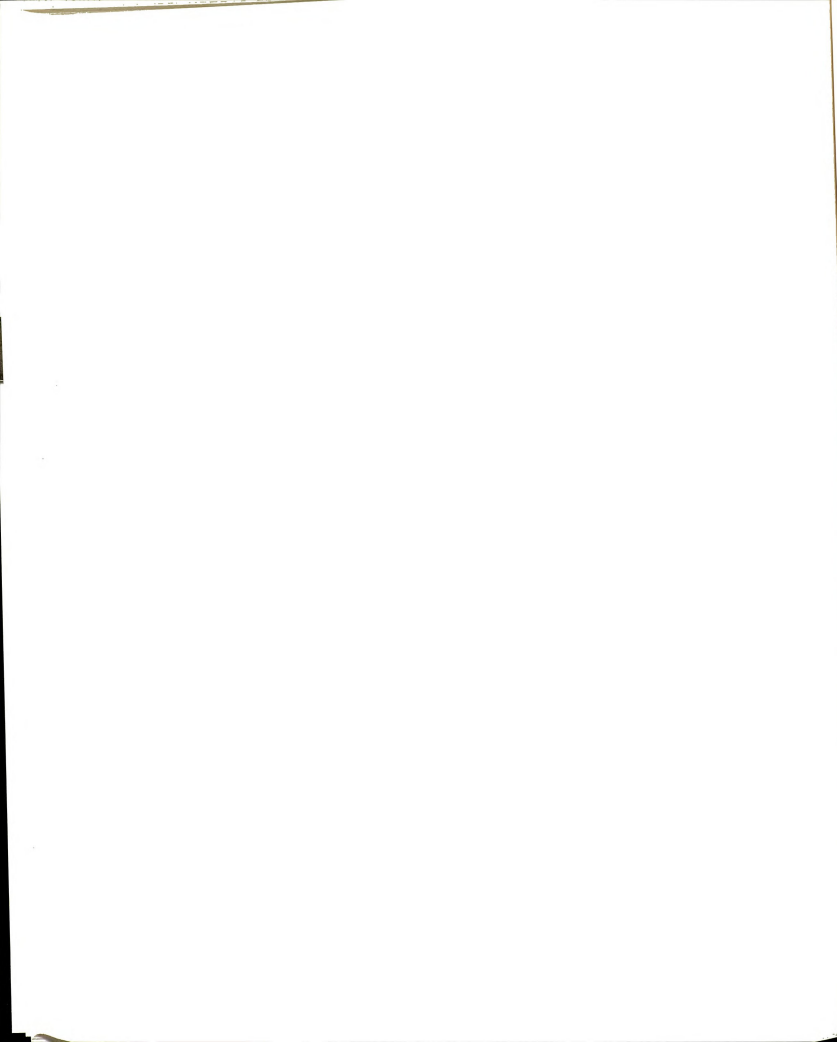
Is it our duty to allow these natives to
remain in uneducated and unproductive idle-
ness in their so-called Reserves? In think
not. I believe that our duty is to encour-
age the energies of all communities to pro-
duce from these rich lands the raw products
and foodstuffs that the world at large,
and the British Empire in particular, re-
quire. This can only be done by encourage-
ment of the thousands of able-bodied natives
to work with the European settler for the
cultivation of the land...I believe there
is a great future for this Reserves...can
be properly organized." (Kilson, 130)

These early policy proposals by Grogan in 1900 and

Northey in 1919, made it possible for the administration

to go about creating labor for the plantation owners with-

out cost. Many Africans, not only were forced to leave

their reserves, but the policies created unbearable con-

ditions on the reserves which made the Africans volunteer

to squat on white plantations as an alternative.

African Squatting on White Farms

To many Kikuyu, squatting became a way of life;

the white settlers encouraged it. Leo (1976:52) described

this phenomenon in the passage below.

Settlers required labor and they fre-
quently held areas of uncleared land
which could be prepared for farming
operations by allowing African families
to practice their shifting methods of
cultivation. The absence of many European

farmers during the First World War,
the early years of uncertainty re-
garding methods of farming, and doubts
as to profitability, accentuated the
need for labour which was cheap in
cash outlay and since there was little
prospect that farms would be brought
immediately into full production, the
uncontrolled use of part of the farmer's
land was held out as an inducement to
the African to offer his service.

Initially, most of the squatters recognized squat-

ting as a way to improve their worsening economic condi-

tions. The land was plentiful and they were given fair

contracts by their employers. For example, they were

given five to six acres of land and a limit of twenty-five

to thirty sheep and goats for which they were expected to

work for ninety days a year. The squatters competed vig-

oriously in production. By 1921, there was plenty of labor.

In fact, during that year labor supply exceeded demand.

From 1923 to 1929, a large proportion of the Kikuyu

people regarded squatting as a progressive move. Every

individual Kikuyu family attempted to move onto white farms

and become squatters. But, the development of European

commercial farming eventually changed this economic re-

lationship. Among the plantation owners a drive began to:

(1) establish a system of resident labor; (2) replace the

system of squatting with a system of wage labor; (3) re-

duce the numbers of livestock from thirty to fifteen; (4)
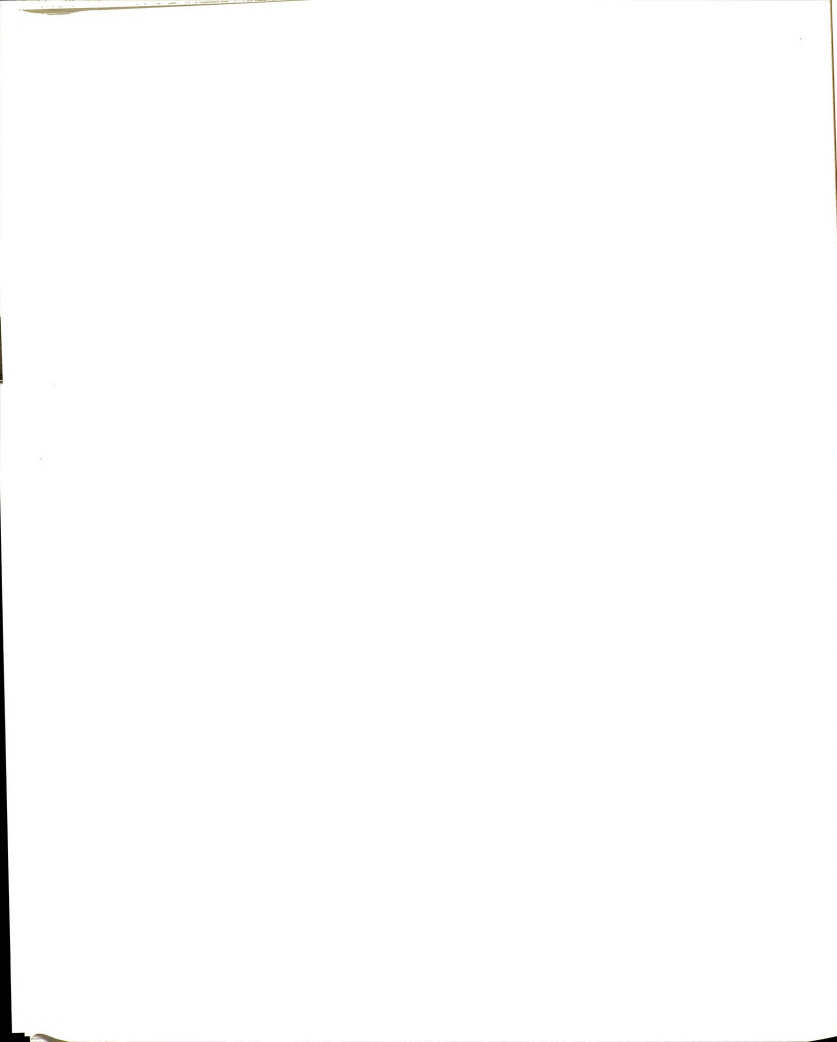
reduce plot size from six acres to one and a half acres;
and (5) increase the number of days worked from ninety to
270 days a year. This left the squatters with a choice of
accepting these changes or returning to their reserves.

As the situation was, most squatters could not see
any point in going back to the reserves. Conditions on
the reserves were intolerable and they were still better
off on the white farms. Only a handful of Kikuyu went back
and the rest decided to stay on the farms, where many squat-
ters had become independent producers.

"In the early days of European settlement the Kikuyu
squatters fared well and many of them became successful
independent producers.... But, as they entered into the
commercial age, settlers' attitudes changed." (Furedi,
1974:490) Commercial agriculture assured the settlers
that development was becoming real. Furedi explained
"With the help of state intervention, development took
place in all sectors of European agriculture. In the
plantation sector coffee and sisal emerged as important
cash crops, in the arable areas maize and wheat..." (Ibid)

Brown (1968:52) has given examples of this commer-
cial development,

> In European areas, for instance, the
> number of work oxen fell from 82,000
> in 1948 to hardly any in 1960...there
> was a steady intensification of farm
> mechanization. Relatively new tractors
> were available in 1945, but by 1954 the
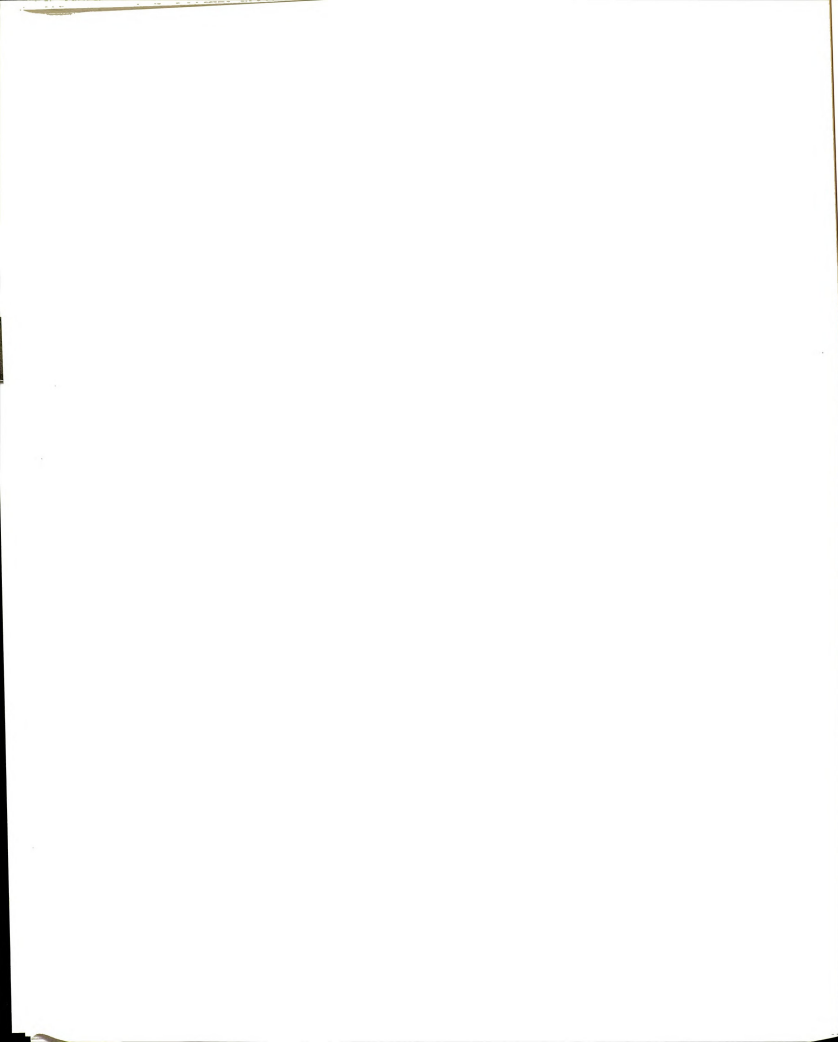
number had risen to 4,799. The number
increased to 6,403 by 1960 and there was
a commensurate steady reduction in the
acreage of cropland per tractor from
219 in 1954 to 169 in 1960, indicative
of the steady intensification of farm
practices. (Ibid)

With economic growth, European farmers sought to
shift the existing relationships of European landlord and
Kikuyu tenant to those of employer and paid laborer (Furedi,
1974). Efforts to eliminate the Kikuyu squatter as an in-
dependent producer led to a bitter struggle which was not
fully resolved until the settlers agreed, not only to come
to terms with the Kikuyu by adopting land reform programs,
but also to guarantee independence to the Kenyan people
in 1963.

The Kikuyu Struggle to Regain Their Lands

Scholars of social change wonder whether the Kikuyu
could have raised their political consciousness and under-
gone social change if land alienation policies had not been
introduced. The answer is simple; the Kikuyu, as tradi-
tional people, would not have become brave enough to vio-
late their traditional ways of living for the sake of
change if they had not been forced to do so.

As the large Kikuyu population had been driven out of their lands and transformed from proud landowners to paupers, relationships between these landless, unemployed people and the settlers grew unavoidably tense. The Kikuyu needed to regain their land but, to the whites the land they had alienated had belonged to nobody. It had been empty land. Each group claimed the right of occupancy.

Thus the Kikuyu had lost their shambas (plots) and in this process, had lost much more. They had become a landless class on land of which they had once been proud. The Kikuyu had also lost their family identities since they were no longer living on their traditional plots. Not only that, they had lost their Mbari (subclan) ownership. When the government had subdivided such farms as Mbari ya Itinga, Mbari ya Wahathi, Mbari ya Bera and Mbari ya Njuma, it was an act displacing the Mbari members. The Mbari families were forced to seek help from their relatives and friends or take permanent settlement on the reserve.

The question then, was what must Kikuyu do to re-gain their ancestors' fertile land, that they felt was stolen from them by the settlers. It is this critical question that will be pursued further in this chapter. Furedi (1973/74) has explained, "The squatters' resistance of 1929 was but a first step in the activities of this agrarian movement to defend its position."
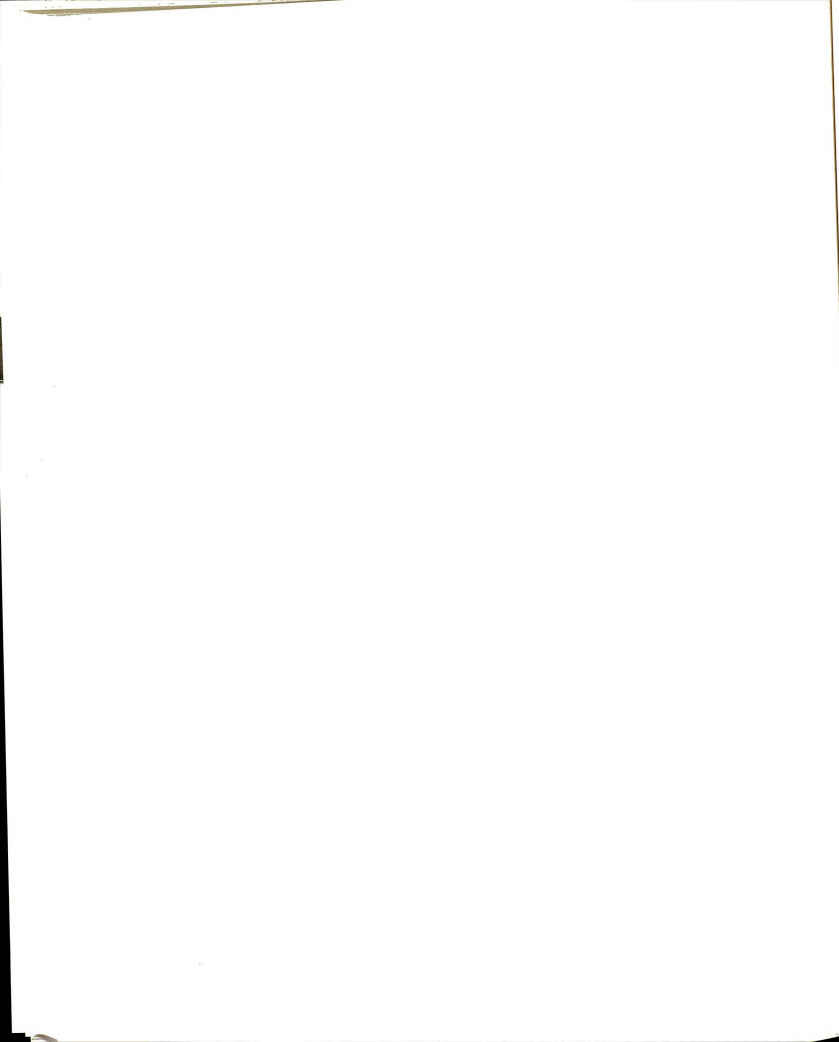
From the social contact between the Kikuyu and the settlers, the Kikuyu learned how to organize politically. They learned that for them to resist oppression and to make the oppressors understand that the land must be returned, they had to organize and use politics as a tool.

For example, in 1920, the Kikuyu Association was formed under the leadership of Harry Thuku, a Kikuyu government-employed telephone operator. In the following year, it was renamed the Young Kikuyu Association and its members included the former president of Kenya, Johnstone Kenyatta. According to Fred G. Burke (1966:206), "This embryonic political organization protested the increase in poll taxes and the Kipande registration system." Three years later, it was renamed the Kikuyu Central Association(KCA) and led by the prominent Kikuyu leaders, Joseph Kangethe and Jesse Kariuki.

The Association's demands for return of the land and an end to racism were unwavering. In 1929, when Johnstone Kenyatta was secretary, the KCA pressured the government to set up a commission to investigate their grievances about land. The government assented but it was several years before the Commission was set up in 1933, under Sir William Morris Carter. Carter had served as Chief Justice of Uganda for many years and was considered an experienced and honest man. Since he had studied African land law as
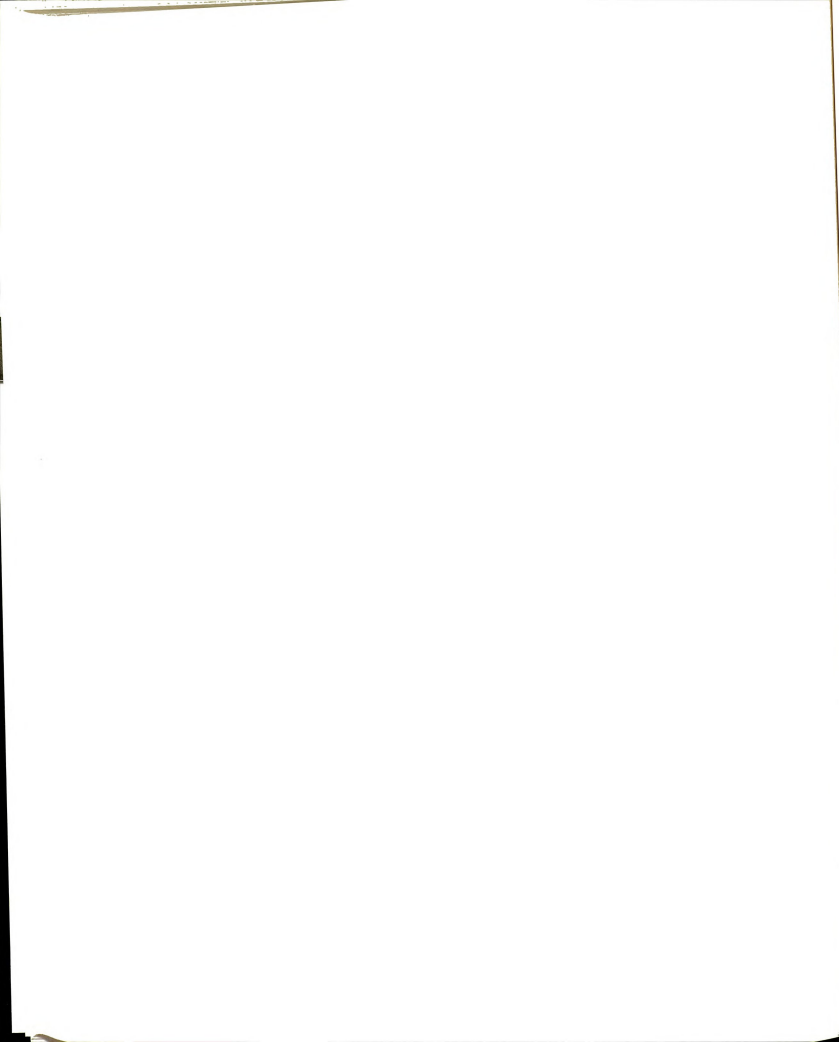
early as 1906, he was regarded with great respect and,
later events notwithstanding the Kikuyu expected a fair
decision.

The Carter Commission Investigation

There were at least three problems to be investigated.
First the Commission was to investigate the Kikuyu claim
that their ancestors' land was alienated from them and that
they had acquired these lands from Wandorobo by purchase,
not by driving them out. The government had alleged the
Kikuyu had no rights to the land as they had driven a weaker
tribe out and simply taken it over. Second, the Commission
was to investigate whether the Kikuyu had a system of land
ownership prior to the coming of the white settlers. Finally,
it was to determine how much land was then in the possession
of the Kikuyu and then make its recommendations.

According to L.W. White and E.F. Ward (1971:122),
"the Commission made a thorough study of the subject of
land in Kenya. It heard oral evidence from 487 African
witnesses and over 200 other witnesses; it received letters
from 400 Africans, and considered about 200 statements which
Africans made to their district officers..."

The Commission's findings were clear. It concluded
that in 1895 the Kikuyu had held 1,519 square miles of land,
and between then and 1902 had added another 275 square miles;
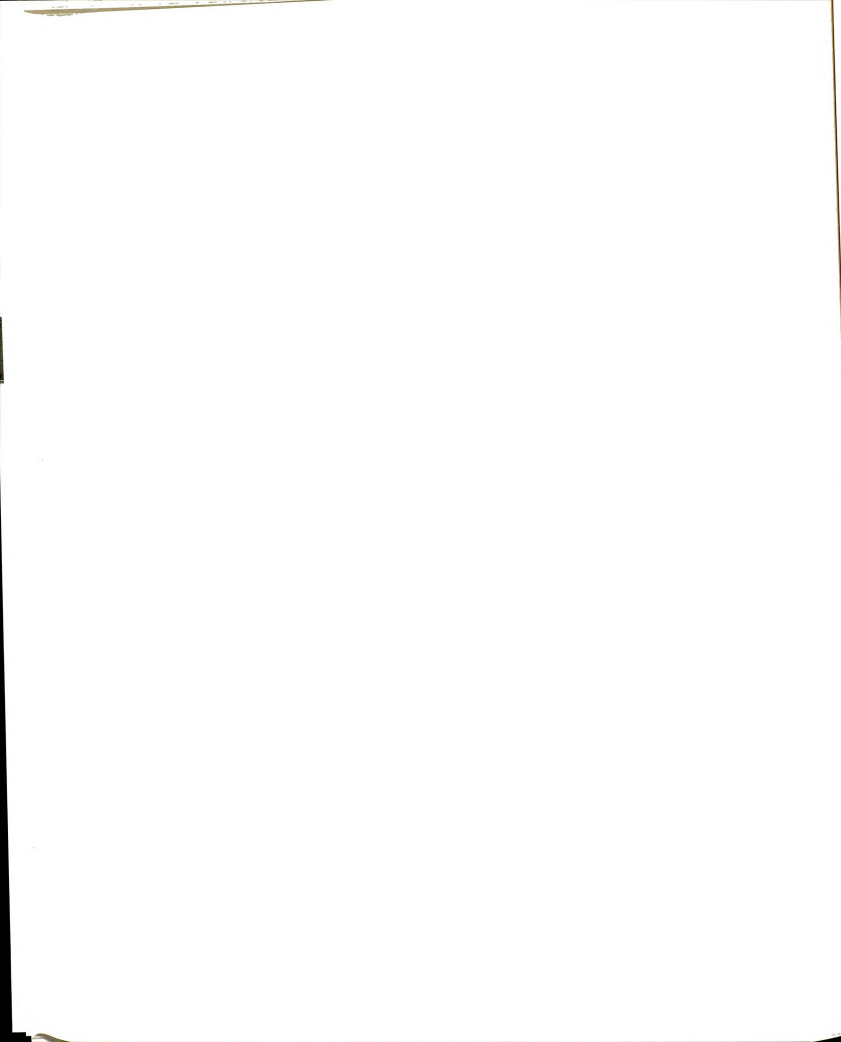
so that their total holdings before European settlement be-
gan, totaled 1,794 square miles (White and Ward, 1971).
The Commission suggested that of this area, only about 109
square miles had been alienated to the Europeans and that
the government had already compensated the Kikuyu 265 square
miles of land. So, according to the Commission, the Kikuyu
should not have been dissatisfied. The Commission, however,
did not see that the 265 square miles given to the Kikuyu
in compensation was less valuable, less productive than the
land which the Kikuyu had lost.

Even more distressing to the Kikuyu was that, as a
result of the Commission's recommendation, the boundaries
of the African reserves were fixed, just as were the boun-
daries of the White Highlands. At the time of the report,
the Europeans possessed a little more than 10,000 square
miles, but after the report, boundaries were fixed at 16,000
square miles. The Commission also contended that government
compensation of the Kikuyu must be based on individual merit
of each person's case.

To many observers, such as Sorrenson (1967) and
White and Ward (1971), the Commission's report was biased
and unfair, especially in the case of Kiambu where sufficient
evidence was available to support the claim of the Ithaka
(estate) ownership that had been widely practiced.   The
Commission also failed to recognize the Kikuyu land tenure
system and accept that the Kikuyu had acquired their land
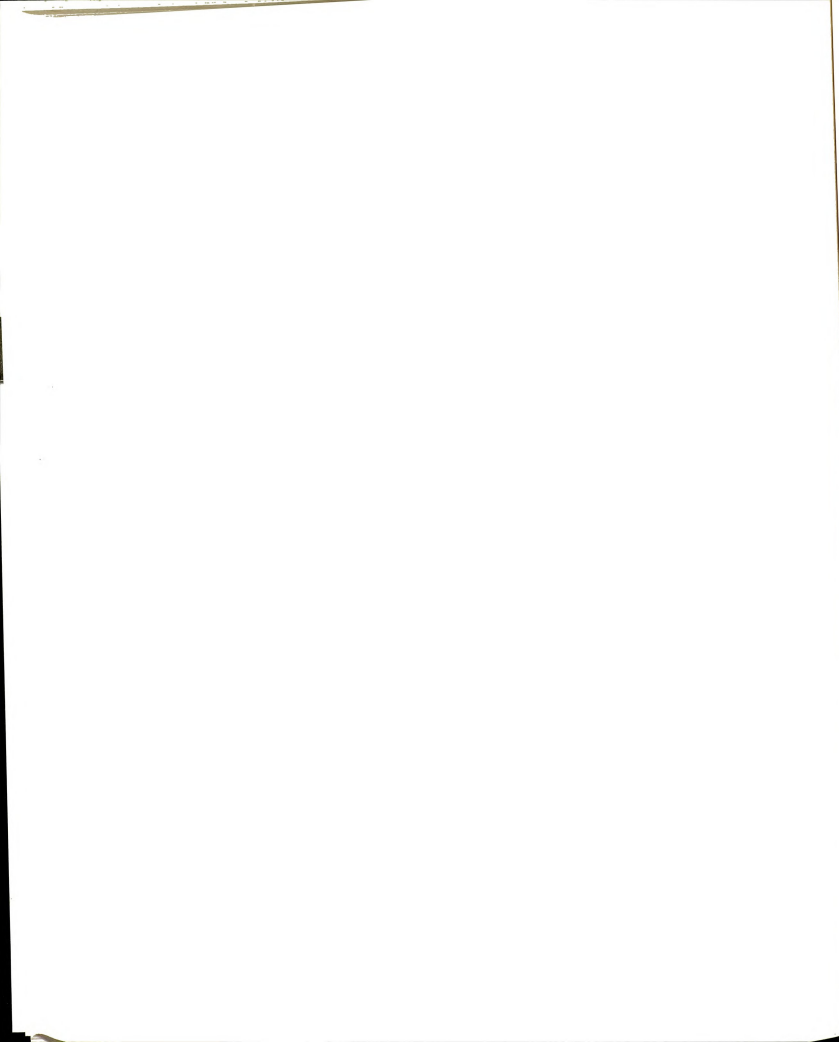
by purchase. Neither did the Commission adequately re-
solve the problem of compensation.

This failure to treat the Kikuyu grievances fairly
accelerated a decision to resort to violence. Thus, in
the period from 1946 to 1952, not only did tension rise,
but also many rural proletarian and urban unemployed began
clandestine activities. Former Kikuyu politicians, such
as Johnstone Kenyatta, resumed their leadership and a mix-
ture of political and armed struggle against injustice be-
gan. Here Johnstone Kenyatta and Jomo Kenyatta refer to
the same person. Johnstone was a Christian name given to
Kenyatta prior to his rise to political prominence. After
he became a national political figure, he changed his name
to Jomo designating his political consciousness and his
dislike of Colonial rule.

Nationalism and Political Struggle

When Kenyatta came back from England in 1946 after
he had lobbied in Europe, he was no longer regarded as the
Kenyatta of 1925. In his early political involvement,
Kenyatta's activity was limited to the vicinity of Central
Province. While he was lobbying in Europe, he met many
well known black politicians such as George Padmore, Marcus
Garvy and Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana. When he took leadership
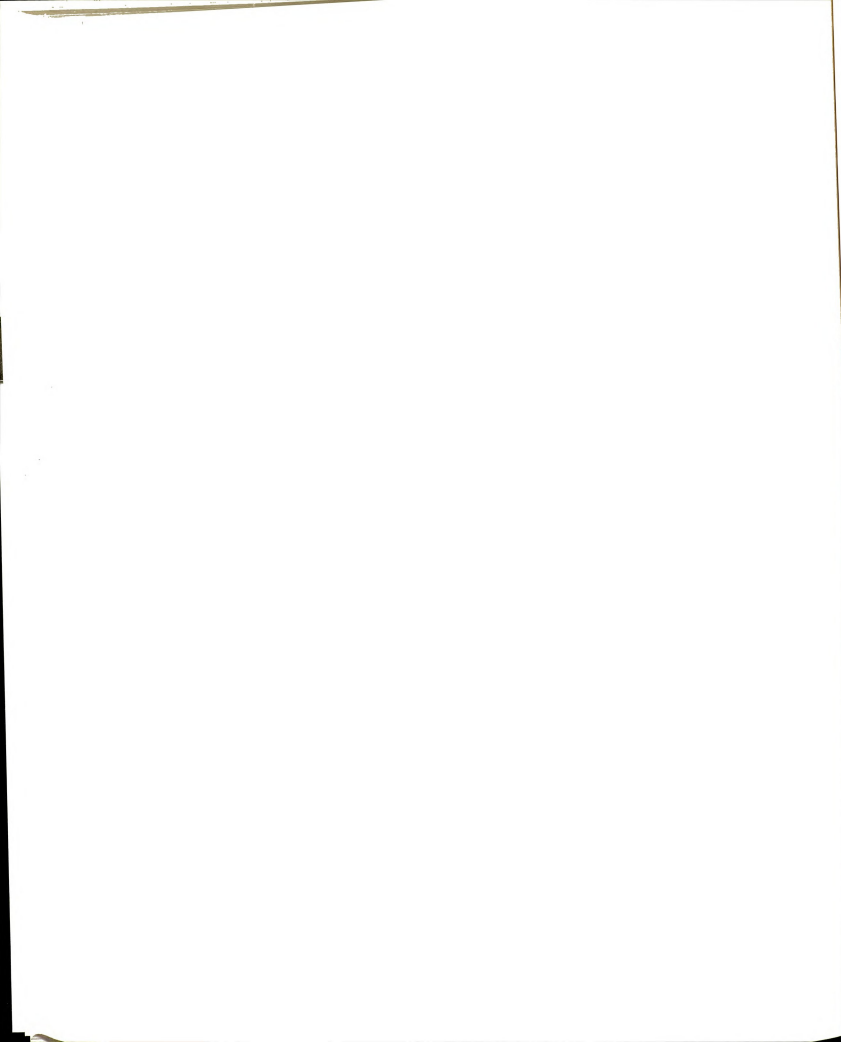
as General Secretary of the Kenya African Union (KAU) in 1946, Kenyatta had become a nationalist. After he had been away for a long time, Kenyatta discussed Kenya's situation from a transethnic standpoint, but much of his writings dealt only with the Kikuyu and Kikuyu nationalism.

During the transitional period in Kenya, 1950-1960, urban proletariat and rural nationalists joined efforts against the imperial rule. In rural Kenya, the land issue was the focal point for political opposition, in the urban areas, low wages, unemployment and lack of housing were the key issues.

In Kenya, rural politics differed from urban politics only on the issues that affected them. The objectives were the same. The rural peasants felt that they were dehumanized by the policies regarding land and labor and victims of those policies which made them landless and squatters on the white plantations. They felt that their rights were jeopardized and their traditions were destroyed. They argued that their rights to their traditional system were violated. The urban dwellers, on the other hand, argued similarly that their sufferage was not resolved. They complained that many workers had no shelters, that they were underemployed and that they were underpaid. The urban workers complained about inhumane treatment by their employers. They demanded to be given work benefits. It
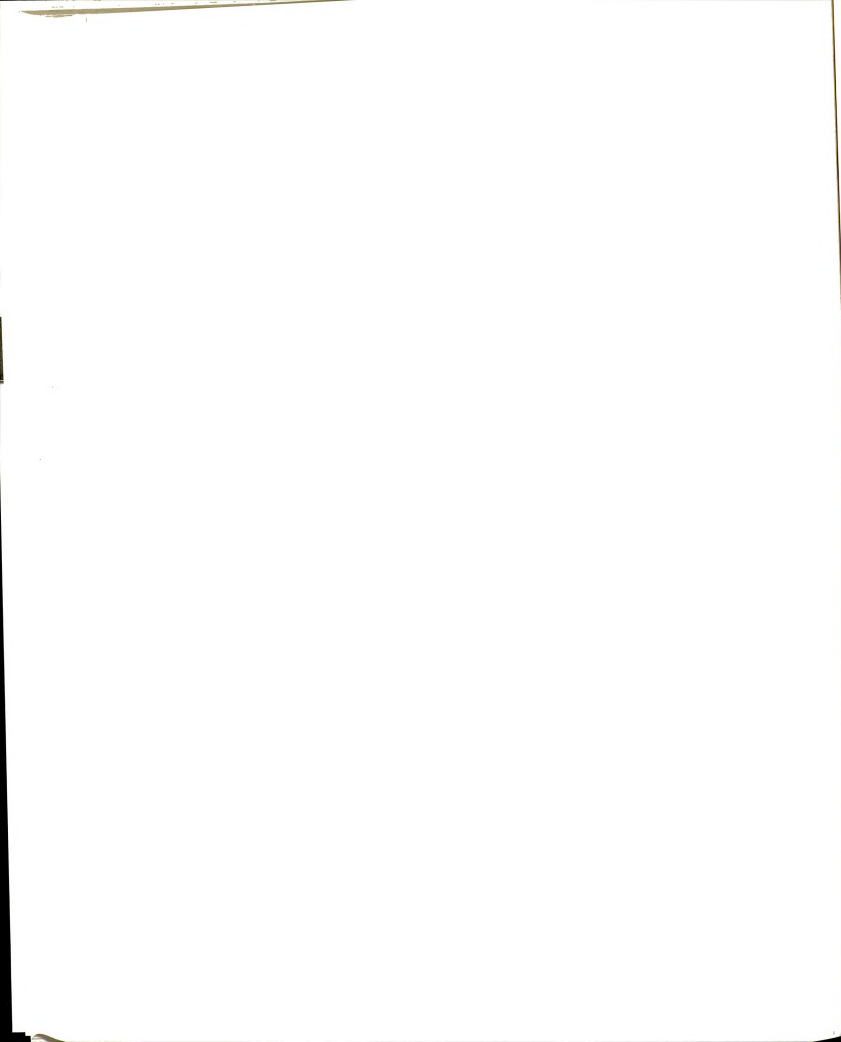
was these elements that made the urban workers and the rural
peasants think they shared a common problem and made it
possible for them to join in a collective effort against
colonial rule in the 1950s. It was the urban dwellers
who supplied the strategies. They led the rural Kikuyu
in various ways, for example, in providing ideologies of
rural unity and rural involvement. The urban dwellers
were more organized and to some extent, more educated, than
the rural population.

Of the situation on the white farms, Furedi (1973/
74:501) wrote, "The movement on the farms was led by the
most skilled and articulate of the squatter community.
These local leaders commanded widespread respect from
Africans in the farms.... This respect and influence was
used to mobilise support for the Mau Mau." The term Mau
Mau, first came to public attention in 1948. As yet, no-
body has defined it or provided an exact meaning, but in
the minds of many Europeans in Kenya, the term came to
be associated with the secret activities of the Kikuyu,
like oath-taking. It was not until 1950 that security
forces began to discover secret organizations bearing the
name Mau Mau.
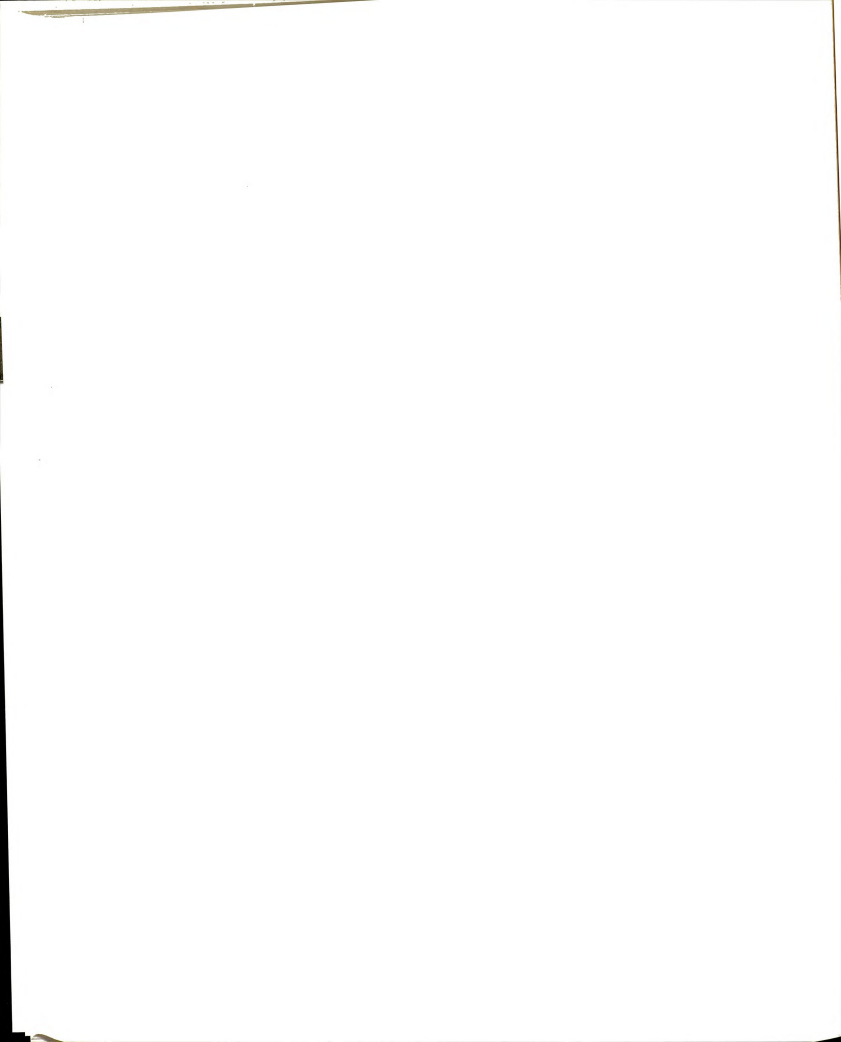
In Central Province during this period, the members of the Mau Mau organization were bound not only by their ideology and commitment for change, but more so by oath-taking. The Kikuyu believed that solidarity, oneness, power and devotion for reaching their objectives could not be attained without psychological initiation. In the rural areas, since the squatters initially lacked ideology to unify them like their urban counterparts, so oath-taking became a unifying element and their commitment.

By 1952, oath-taking had spread to every Kikuyu family whether they were rural or urban, whether they were squatters or urban working class. Oaths provided the link between rural Kikuyu and the Kikuyu living in Nairobi. Stressing this point Furedi contended, "The relative sophistication of the Nairobi militants enabled them to give a lead to the Kikuyu in the rural areas. Between 1947 and 1951 the Nairobi militants formed close contacts with activists in Kikuyuland and in the Highlands (Ibid).

As the Mau Mau increased in membership and in effectiveness of the pressure they put on the settlers, the leaders spread their activities in the farms, recruiting forest fighters and urban terrorists. For example, on the farms, the Mau Mau began their campaign by sabotaging white farms and livestock dairies and extended it by occupying the white farms illegally. For example, a native court officer (KNA,
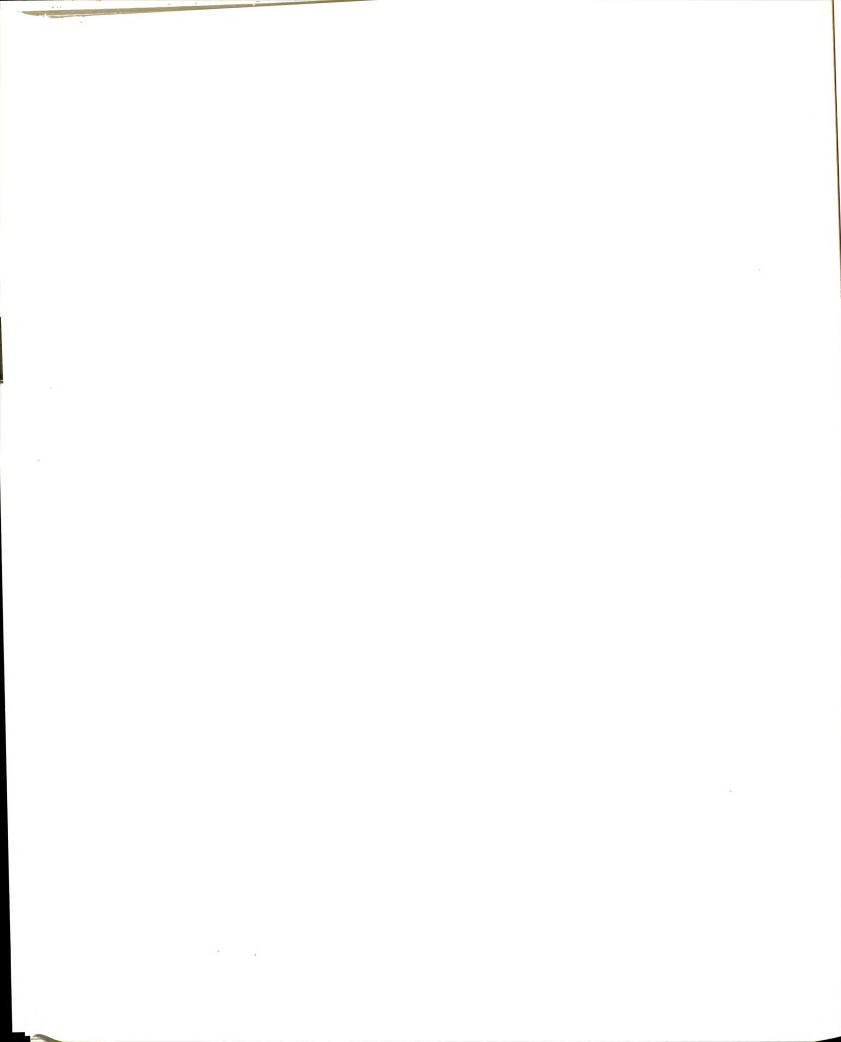
1948) wrote in reference to a complaint by Mr. Hodson, the Provincial Commissioner, "Hodson has recently filed actions in the Resident Magistrate's Court, Nairobi, under Section 18(9) of the Resident Laborer's Ordinance for the removal of four Africans from his farm, who were residing there without contract." This became a daily routine.

As a result of such social action, a Kikuyu Loyalist movement emerged. There were those Kikuyu who called themselves <u>Watu wa Mungu</u> (God's people), who fought against the Nationalists and sided with the Colonial government. According to a report by Josiah Njango, Division Chief of Dagoretti, there were four divisions of people who armed themselves against the Kikuyu nationalists in support of the existing government. Njango listed these as the Christian people who followed the African Inland Mission; Karinga, who were also former members of the above Church; the God's people, and the pagans. The groups formed what today might be termed a rainbow coalition against the nationalist insurgents. They claimed that they were defending Jesus Christ's mission against the devils and that nationalists were engaged in secret activities such as attacking the supporters of the Colonial government and destroying white estates such as Ondiri and Gumoes Farms. Proof of such activities came in a letter of October 10, 1932 from the District Commissioner to the Provincial Commissioner, reporting, "About 200 newly planted coffee trees were uprooted in one night." (KNA File No PC/CP, 8/7/2, 1932-1934).
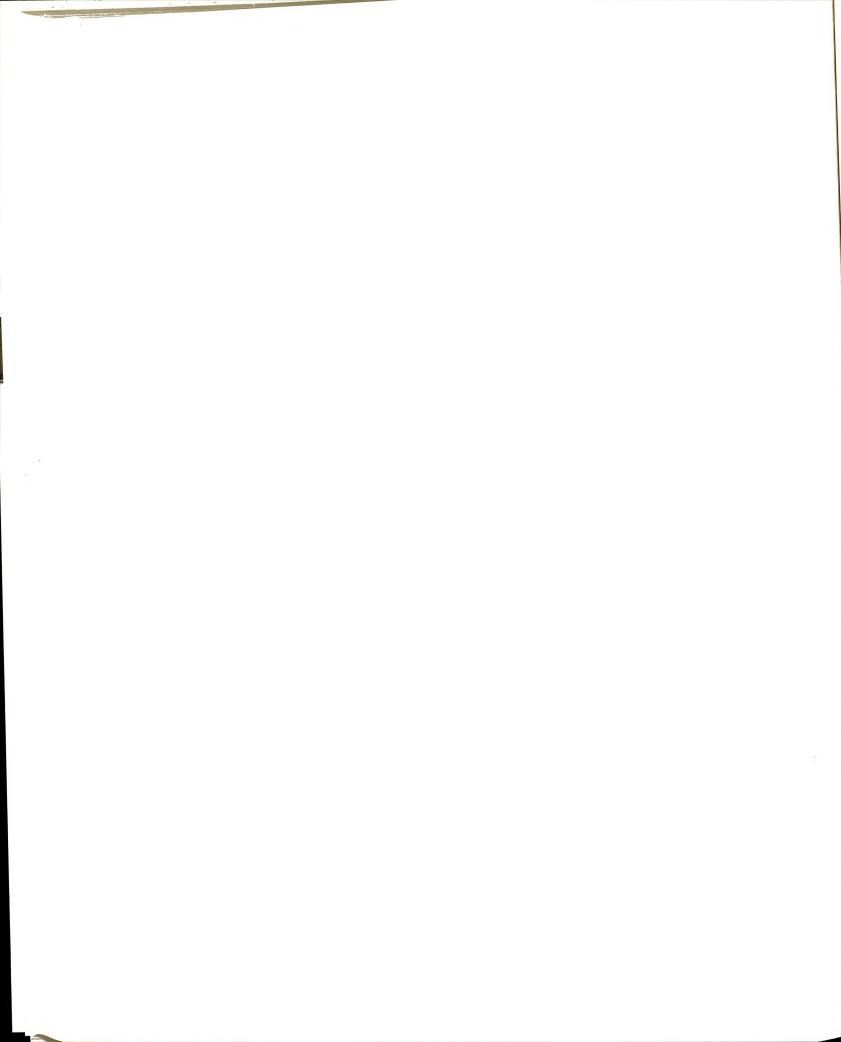
Destruction of the settlers' farms, machinery, live-
stock and crops worried the officials and the government's
national expenditures rose substantially. Between 1952 and
1960, both parties lost lives and properties. Despite heavy
losses among the nationalists, they were convinced that the
Colonial government would not give in unless the destruction
continued, in spite of a repressive declaration of a State
of Emergency in 1952.

The declaration of a State of Emergency made it possi-
ble for the white government to deal effectively with the
rebellions and make the chiefs function effectively. As
Fanon (1963:62) said,

> The Colonial system encouraged cheiftaincies
> and kept alive the old Marabout Confrater-
> nities. Violence...was closely involved in
> the liquidation of regionalism and of tribal-
> ism. Thus the national parties showed no
> pity at all toward the caids and the customary
> chiefs. Their destruction was preliminary
> to the unification of the people.

Fanon argued that at the level of individuals, vio-
lence was a cleansing force that freed the native from his
inferiority, despair and inaction and made him fearless
and restored his self-respect.

In Kenya, it was only after the violence broke out,
that white government began to make compromises. Fanon
noted, "This idea of compromise is very important in the
phenomenon of decolonization, for it is very far from being

a simple one."(Ibid) Compromise involved both the Colonial system and the Young Nationalist bourgeoisie. During the crisis, the settlers were listening to the bourgeoisie Africans' claims and eventually acted to make compromise. In 1961, the Lancaster House Conference was held in London to discuss the land problem in Kenya and to guarantee political independence for the people of Kenya. The irony of this political compromise was that the radical nationalists were excluded from the Conference and they were unrepresented. It was the bourgeois nationalists who made compromises with the Colonial masters. The results of the Conference failed to satisfy the radical nationalists, it was beyond their comprehension that the petty African bourgeoisie could endorse a compromise that so favored the colonizers.

The compromises made were in five parts.

1. The Lancaster House Conference agreed to grant political independence but with little change in economic structure.

2. It agreed to grant majority political rule but not to disarm minority economic power.

3. It agreed to decolonize the so-called White Highlands and to set aside at least one million acres for settlement, but refused to distribute the land freely.

4. Since the colonizer realized the expense of settlement, the British agreed to provide loans, grants and technology at the expense of the Kenyan government.

5. It was agreed that the loans provided to the Kenyan government would be extended to individual settlers as loans to buy farms, as a settlement procedure.

Politically, this procedure benefitted the
colonizers and did harm to the colonized. It bene-
fitted the colonizers by creating divisions among African
political leaders and by isolating the Loyalists from
non-Loyalists. It functioned as a pacifier to the
larger population of Kikuyu people, in order to create
a stable society in which multiracialism could exist
and a stable African middle class dominate the poli-
tical arena. To provide security to the nation and
the white farmers, the Colonial government proposed
an idealistic program of land reform.

Summary

The bloody confrontation that aimed at destroy-
ing existing colonial economic establishment in the
region created a rationale for compromise between the
government and the native nationalists. This compro-
mise allowed the government to promulgate partial
land reform by providing village homes and consolidat-
ing plots of lands to form more viable economic units--
as a means to bring about stability in the region.

Chapter V brings this process of land reform up to date.

CHAPTER FIVE

LAND REFORM, VILLAGIZATION AND LAND
CONSOLIDATION: A CASE STUDY IN NYERI

Before discussing land reform in Kenya, two important
questions need to be answered. First, what is land reform?
Second, why was land reform considered by the colonial govern-
ment to be an important element in the political crisis be-
tween the Kikuyu and the white settlers?

To respond to the first question, Thomas Paulini has
analyzed definitions provided by such specialists in the
field of land reform as Warriner (1969), Bergmann (1974),
Gutchman (1974), Jacoby (1971) and the United Nations (1972).
He then evolved a concept of land reform and its purposes
as a "program of measures which change the ownership and/or
possession and utilization of land radically in favor of
the real cultivators and which consequently brings about
a redistribution of land." Agrarian reform is defined as,
"a program of all those measures which bring about an ir-
reversible redistribution of all production means needed
for agricultural production." (1972:27)   Dorren Warriner
(1955) said "Land reform, in the traditional and accepted
sense of the term, means the redistribution of property in
land for the benefit of small farmers and agricultural workers."
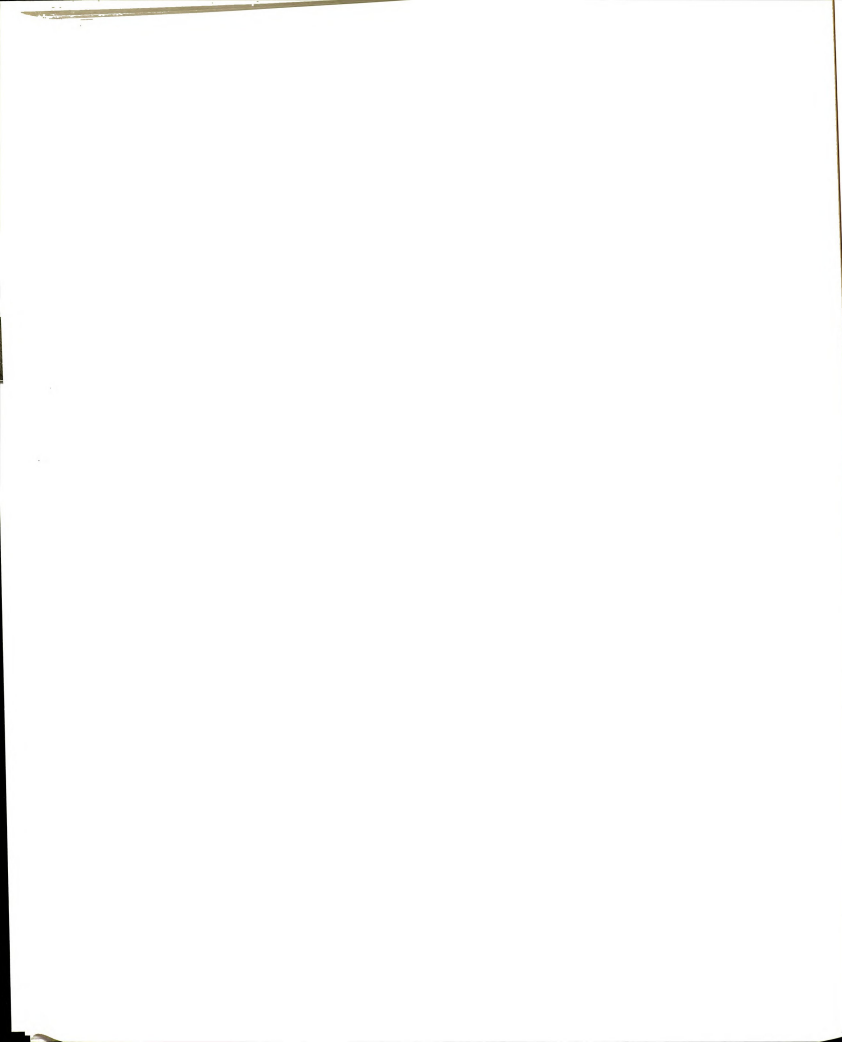
By its nature, land reform is regarded as a product
of violence. "In its most essential appearance (manifesta-
tion), an agrarian reform consists at least of a seizure
of the land which was appropriated by one or more social
classes and its transfer to one or more other social classes."
(Gluckman).

Huntington has related "the emancipation of the serfs,
for instance, stimulated some local uprisings and acts of
insubordination in rural Russia." To explain, he argues,

> Where the conditions of land ownership
> are equitable and provide a viable living
> for the peasant, revolution is unlikely.
> Where they are inequitable and where the
> peasant lives in poverty and suffering,
> revolution is likely, if not inevitable,
> unless the government takes prompt measures
> to remedy these conditions. (1970:375)

Therefore land reform was (1) a rehabilitative meas-
ure, (2) had a stabilizing effect on the political system,
and (3) was a promoting factor. In other words, land re-
form is used, as Huntington says, "...to promote individ-
ual land ownership and to bring into existence a class of
support for the leadership." (Ibid) By tracing the
history of mankind, it becomes clear that land reform
is the most prevalent social change that occurs in the
world as men continue to demand such changes. According
to Huntington's analysis, almost every country that has
experienced some sort of political and social violence, has,

in one way or another, also undergone land reform. For ex-
ample, "In Korea the American-sponsored distribution of
formerly Japanese lands in 1947 and 1948 did much to reduce
rural instability.... In Mexico the land reforms following
the Revolution were a major source of the political stability
which prevailed in that country after the 1920s." (Huntington).

In Kenya, land reform was undertaken on three differ-
ent levels, each with its own objective. It started with
the concept of villagizing the Kikuyu. What this meant was
that the Kikuyu settlements prior to the whites in Kenya
were always of a homestead type, villagizing them was con-
sidered a legitimate process to bring them into a village
setting. The second level was land consolidation and regis-
tration. Since the Kikuyu had already been removed from
homestead dwellings to village homes, consolidating their
previously scattered plots was considered not only necessary
but an economically viable procedure because by consolidating
their plots they could accommodate modern technology. Most
importantly, it was at this stage that the actual radicali-
zation of their land tenure began. The Kikuyu communal ten-
ure was radically transformed into a free hold system, mean-
ing that land had to be registered under the individual
holder. The third level was known as the One Million Acre
Settlement Scheme and was intended to bring effective changes
in rural Kikuyuland.

To begin with, the British introduced land reform which initially appeared under the title of villagization in 1953. This was soon followed by Land Consolidation and Registration in 1954, introduced by Swynnerton and later known as the Swynnerton Plan. This was further complicated by a One Million Acre Settlement Scheme that appeared under the title "The Decolonization of the White Highlands." By 1961, the program was under way and supposed to be in its final stage. To understand the nature and effects of land reform we need to first understand the Villagization and Land Consolidation and Registration programs as pre-requisites to the One Million Acre Settlement scheme.

Russell King (1977:339) explains, "The year 1960 was a turning point. The Mau Mau Emergency, which ended then, had produced considerable disruption, including the forced 'villagization' of over a million Kikuyu."

The consequence of land reform, as history witnesses it, were not as effective as had been hoped. Enlightening us in this crucial situation, Huntington said,

> Despite its initial revolutionary excesses,
> [land reform] has not tended to promote
> the communication of the country. It ap-
> pears rather that the peasantry, whose pos-
> session of land now gives them a stake in
> the prosperity and stability of the state,
> serves as a check on the more radically-
> minded workers. In Venezuala as in Mexico
> and Bolivia, landed reform made the political
> climate 'more conservative' and increased
> 'the political influence of a basically
> conservative sector of the population'.
> (1970:376)

In Kenya, land reform ended the uncertainty of
traditional tenure and provided improved incomes based
on cash cropping. Its least publicized objectives--creat-
ing a stable middle class built around Kikuyu loyalists
to forestall further subversion was largely achieved.
What consolidation did most effectively, was consolidate
the position of existing landowners. About 2.7 million
hectares of land remained in large farms, including 800,000
hectares (more than half) of the former White Highlands,
while fifty percent was in small holdings, covering four
percent of agricultural land, less than two hectares in
size (King, 1977).

The Process of Villagization

According to Raymond Apthorpe, village settlement
in Kenya referred to the emergency grouping of huts for
those made landless and destitute by subdivisional settle-
ment, as well as to the habitations constructed for former
forest dwellers (Figure 5.1). Apthorpe also used villag-
ization "to refer to the punitive measures brought against
one million Kikuyu by the colonial government after Mau-
Mau." (1968:5)

Nganga described that people in a sublocation were
put into one area surrounded by a five foot furrow as
shown in Figure 5.2

FIGURE 5.1: The Kikuyu Village Settlement in Nyeri

SOURCE: _Optima_, Volume 7, March 1957.

FIGURE 5.2: The Change of Homesteads to Village Homes

SOURCE: _African World_, September 1955
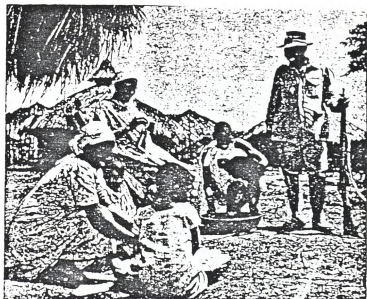
*A Kikuyu headman chats with the women folk
in a new village*

FIGURE 5.3: The New Village and Social Setting

SOURCE: <u>African World</u>, September 1955

*A meeting of Kikuyu leaders in one of the new villages
near Nyeri*

FIGURE 5.4:   A Village Meeting Concerning Land Consolidation
              And Registration

SOURCE: <u>African World,</u> September 1955
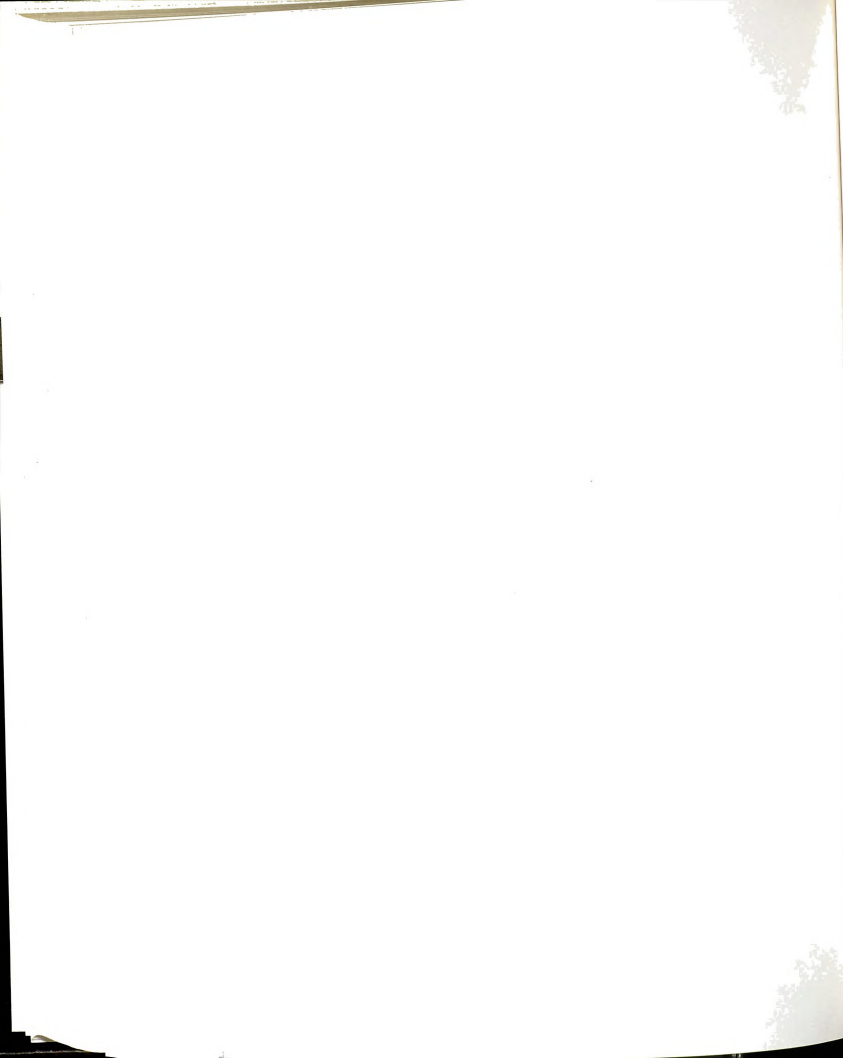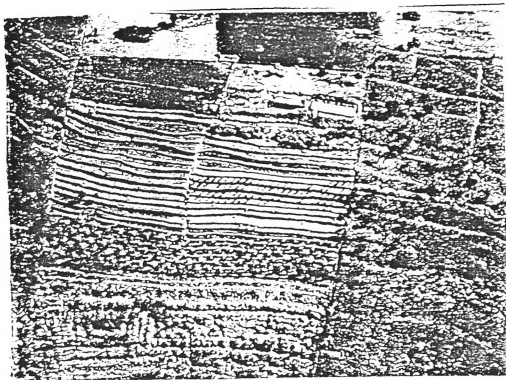
29 A landscape transformed: terraced and consolidated farms in the Fort Hall district, and a new village on a ridge

FIGURE 5.5: The Villagization and the Process Toward Land Consolidation in Fort Hall

SOURCE: _Optima_, Volume 7, March 1957

> The furrow was filled with sharpened
> sticks planted at the bottom with the
> sharp ends pointing upwards. A mass
> of barbed wires was also put all along
> the furrow. The village had one entrance
> which was located at the Home-Guard posts.
> (1970:369)

The villages were usually located on a hillside to give

the Home-Guard at his post access to detect anyone trying

to defect to trying to feed freedom fighters with infor-

mation, a typical colonial strategy.

Initially, these village settlements were not ef-

fectively challenged by Kikuyu opposition leaders because

the majority of the radical leaders were either serving

jail sentences, had been detained or killed or had es-

caped to the forest to help the forest fighters. Some

who had completed their jail terms and had managed to re-

join the other Kikuyu, recognized the establishment of

these village dwellings as essential for security. Many

of the Kikuyu had already given up the struggle and even

those who were ex-detainees preferred village homes to

finding themselves caught between homelessness and living

hidden in the forest.

Given their vulnerable conditions, the Kikuyu pop-

ulation needed the villages and the settlers exploited

the situation. The villagization program was carried out

successfully and accepted without resistance.

In the villages, former Kikuyu detainees, along with those who were hired as Home-Guards, formed what might be called a rainbow coalition to exploit the settlements and enrich themselves. To them, village settlement was a matter of economic opportunity.

These rogues, known as Loyalists recognized these village schemes as a way to acquire wealth. Since most of the land was empty, its owners having been killed in the war, jailed or escaped into the forest, the empty land was available for exploitation. Nganga (1977:368) explained, "Some Home-Guards took this opportunity to enrich themselves. They could make false accusations against others, who would be imprisoned or detained and their property such as sheep, cows, cattle, chickens, ironsheets from the houses would be carried away." The Loyalists used all kinds of methods of acquire property that belonged to their fellow Kikuyu.

To make matters worse, those Loyalists were trusted by their masters (the white settlers) to the extent that whatever they reported was taken as true. Thus they used their masters' trust to enrich themselves. Once a Loyalist made a report on a fellow Kikuyu, the master or the government would take punitive measures, often killing the accused without any legal procedures. To the government, these sentences were considered precautionary measures toward stabilizing the situation. The Loyalists looked at the matter
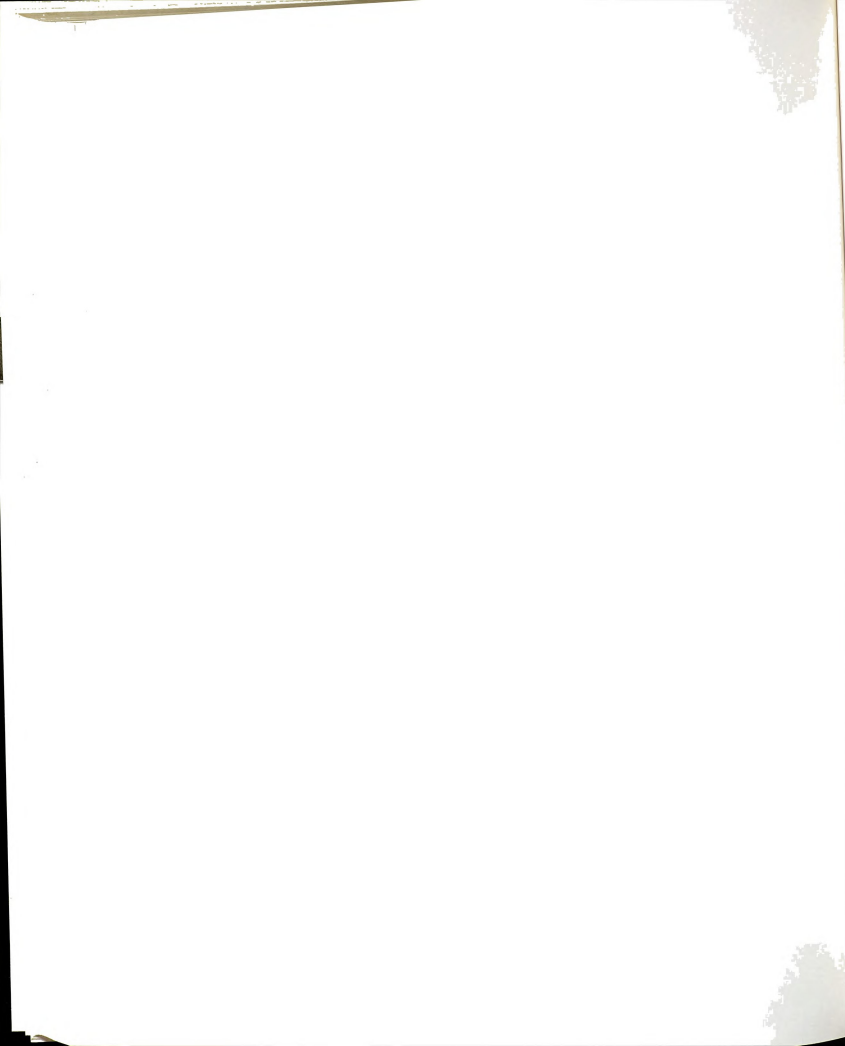
as a means of trying to accumulate wealth from those whom they considered devils, satans and heathens.

Frequently, the accused were those who had large pieces of land, large numbers of goats, sheep and cattle. In his statistical estimates of the properties confiscated by the Home-Guards or the Loyalists, Nganga noted, "In the three month period of September to November, 1954, 250 persons in Kikuyu had 1,072 cattle and 2,061 sheep confiscated and sold, and also under the Forfeiture Ordinace the land of 4,000 people was confiscated." (Ibid)

Despite these facts a large Kikuyu population stood behind the villagization project, even though the settlements were only benefitting a few Kikuyu. The hostile situation in which the Kikuyu had found themselves, was responsible for their acceptance of this village settlement program.

During this transitional period, many Kikuyu families had suffered much from human brutality. Blundell (1954: 107) said, "The number in the forests and in the gangs varied according to estimates between 5,000 and 7,000. Casualities due to military action or the action of the security forces were 7,700 to 7,900. Those inflicted through the courts were about 700. Deaths of the Kikuyu by their own actions numbered 1,200 to 1,300." Colonial law also demanded that before a Kikuyu adult was set free, he or she had to go through detention camps. The detention camps

served as pipelines for screening the "clean" and the "un-clean" Kikuyu. Elspeth Huxley (1957:10) estimated, "Up until the end of April, 1957, some 27,000 Kikuyu, Embu and Meru men and women had passed through the camps set up for detainees, and a further 26,000 were still under detention."

In this situation, it is not surprising that Kikuyu population stood firmly in support of land reform programs. Even though the pressure for land was much greater in Kiambu district, Nyeri became the learning district in initiating change. It was here that land reform was first executed.

Nyeri: A Case Study of Land Reform

Research was conducted, using Nyeri, to systematically analyze the development of social inequalities among rural Kikuyu. Such analysis involved assessment of the political and social strategies undertaken by the British Colonial government.

Nyeri is a northwestern district of Central Province which covers approximately 336 square miles. Situated 30 miles south of the equator, the eastern side is dominated by Mt. Kenya rising to 17,040 feet, and on the west by the Aberdare Range rising to a little over 12,000 feet. Nyeri Hill lies within walking distance of what was traditionally called Gethuri Hill. Southern Nyeri is Kikuyuland, the location of the traditional Kikuyu native reserve areas.
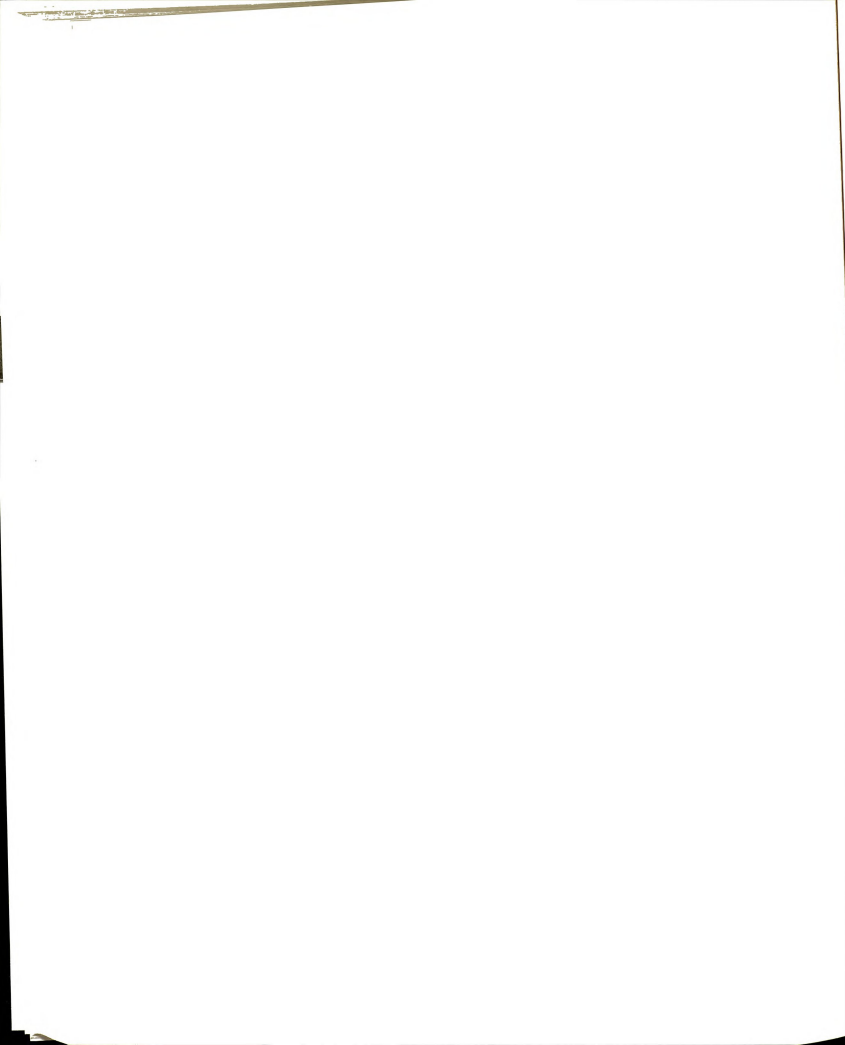
To the north of Nyeri town is fertile farm land character-
ized by large coffee plantations.

Nyeri is geographically located in a strategic posi-
tion in the heart of the Kenyan highland areas that pro-
vides it with good agricultural potential and attractive
scenery. Its fertile hilly plateau lies between Mt. Kenya
and Aberdare Range. It is one of the most densely populated
districts second only to Kiambu district.

The Economic System

The economic system in Nyeri, as in other districts
in the province, before colonial settlement, was tradition-
ally oriented. Land was the center of socioeconoimc acti-
vities and it was owned communally by family or kinship
groups. Held by the Mbari (clan), the tribal land was re-
ferred to as Bururi wa Gikuyu--Kikuyuland.

Nyeri rainfall ranges from 35 to 70 inches per year.
Characteristically, the district has seasons that geograph-
ers call long and short rainy seasons, which provide super-
ior conditions for profitable agricultural production.
Until the 1950s, farming in Nyeri was mainly at subsistence
levels with primitive agricultural practices and a rudi-
mentary tenure system.

In primitive societies, producers control the means
of production, including their own labor, and exchange labor

and products for equivalent goods and services of others.
Surpluses are exchanged directly among groups or members
of groups. A primitive system is thus different from others
in its features and organization. "A corollary is that de-
facto control of the means of production is decentralized,
local and familial..." (Holff, 1966:3) Wolf (1966:2) has
explained that:

> (a) economic relations of coercion and
> exploitation and mastery are not created
> in the system of production; (b) in the
> absence of the incentive given by exchange
> of the product against a great quantity
> of goods on a market, there is a tendency
> to limit production to goods that can be
> directly utilized by the producers.

In Nyeri, livestock (sheep, goats and cattle)
were part of agricultural wealth. Mixed farming predomin-
ated and livestock was used for supplying meat, milk and
hides for clothing. Livestock also served as currency in
exchange or land purchases, dowry and other payments.
As with land, ownership of livestock was both individual
and communal. It was individual in that each member of
the family could own a sheep, a goat or a cow. It was
communal in that when an individual married, his property
especially land and livestock, automatically became com-
munal property.
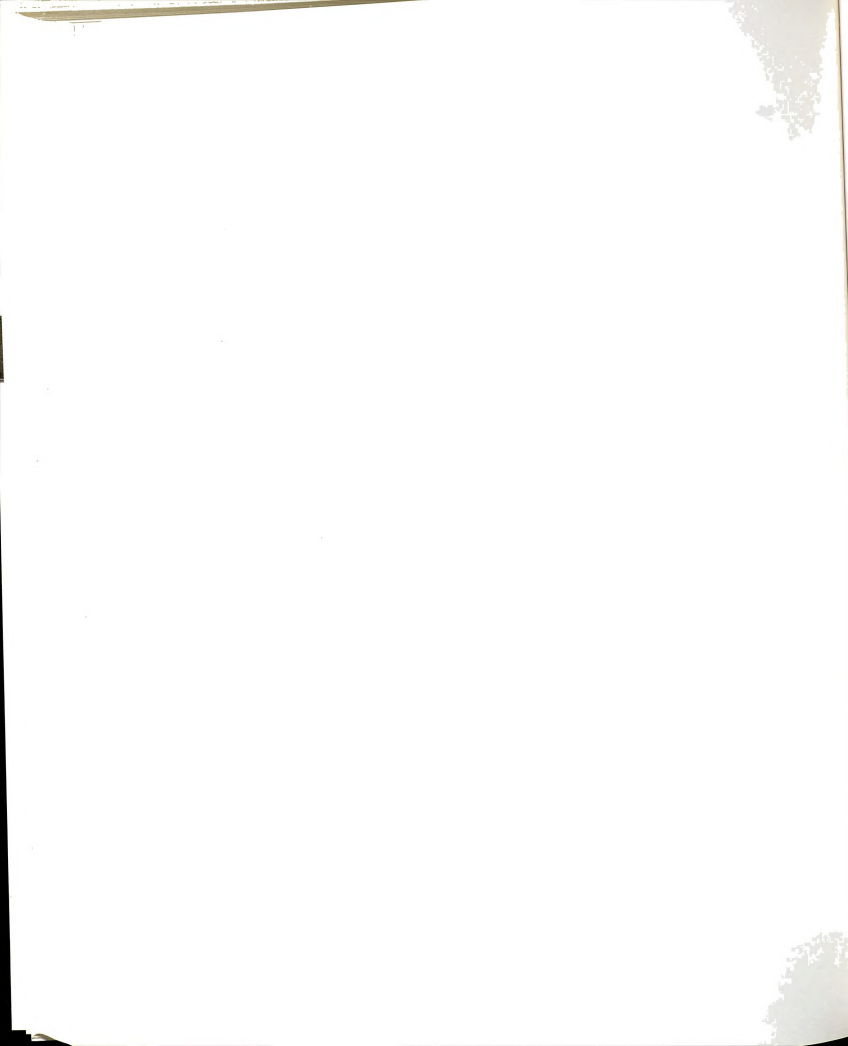
Political Structure

Kenyatta has characterized Nyeris' political struc-
ture as "An extreme democracy, for everyone properly quali-
fied had the right to take part in the government of the
community...[the African] could take part in national af-
fairs, ranging from the village Council of Elders, through
the District Councils to the National Council." (1953:75)
Most important, however, is that the family unit remained
as the core of social and political structure. The poli-
tical system was structually an age-set system and basically
decentralized. This age-set system was known as the Matiika
System.

In general, the Kikuyu age-set system or Matiika
was similar to the age system in Masai society. The Nyeri
Kikuyu arrived in this district to find the Masai already
settled there with a fully established social system. In
their division of labor and political structure, the Nyeri
Kikuyu were divided into: (1) the warrior class, (2) the
Anaka (unmarried) class, (3) the Kiama (elder group) and
(4) the medicine men.

In a political sense, the warriors were the soldiers
and the executives. The Kiama--the Elder group--were married
males who had paid their fees to join the rank of Kiama.
Their role was to legislate and make judicial decisions.
Not only the Elder had the privilege to be appointed to the

Council, but also those men belonging to the priesthood and the medicine men.

The interaction between those Nyeri Kikuyu and the colonial settlers is taken as a point of departure. After the arrival of the settlers, the Kikuyu learned that their subsistence economy was being transformed to quasi-commercial agriculture and that their simple society was becoming a more complicated structure. The dramatic change in the region became apparent during the Mau-Mau uprising. Mboya (1963) said that had it not been for the Mau-Mau, perhaps these changes [land reform] would never have taken place. In support of Mboya, Kilson asserted,"Since the outbreak of the Mau Mau uprising in Kenya in October 1952, the economic, social and political complex in this colony has shown signs of gradual but definite change; with Mau-Mau acting, per- haps, as a stimulus to change, the British Colonial govern- ment has introduced several significant and far-reaching social, economic and political policies." (1957:559)

Nyeri District

Nyeri, the Central Province headquarters led the process toward change. At the beginning of the colonial era, Central Province comprised Meru, Nanyuki, Embu and Thika. At the time of settlement, Embu, and Meru were in- cluded in the Northeast Province. Today, there are five
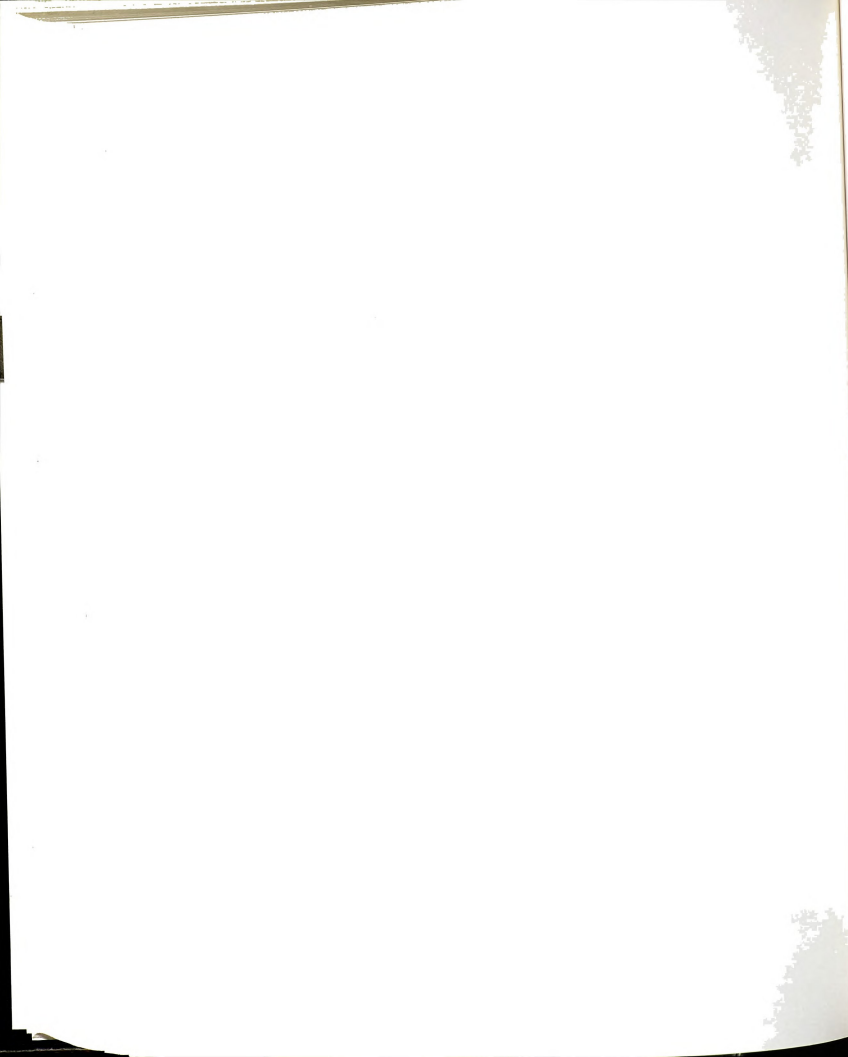
districts--Nyeri, Nyandaru, Fort Hall, Kiambu and Kirinyaga.
As the subject of Nyeri district's leadership in social
change is discussed, analysis of other districts in the
Province is necessary. The analysis of other districts is
important because what happened in districts like Kiambu
and Fort Hall, defines whether or not Nyeri's leadership
was successful.

The Gaki, as the Nyeri Kikuyu were called, migrated
northward from Muranga and settled in three different areas--
Mathira, Mukurwe-iniothaya and Aguthi--all of which were
placed under the South Nyeri Reserves by the colonial ad-
ministrators. The Mathira Kikuyu who migrated into those
areas were a combination of the Naia and the Masai who have
lived in that area ever since. Those who migrated into
Othaya were headed by a clan known as Aithiegni. The
Aithiegni clan was one of the nine major Kikuyu clans.
This group settled in and around Gikondi in Mukurwe-ini
and from there spread throughout the district.

Change: As It Occurred In The Area

There were both internal and external forces at work
in Nyeri which propelled the people to take the lead toward
land reform and social change. The Nyeri people, like the
rest of the Kikuyu in the region, had in one way or another
experienced colonial brutality, colonial disorder, and colonial
demand for change.
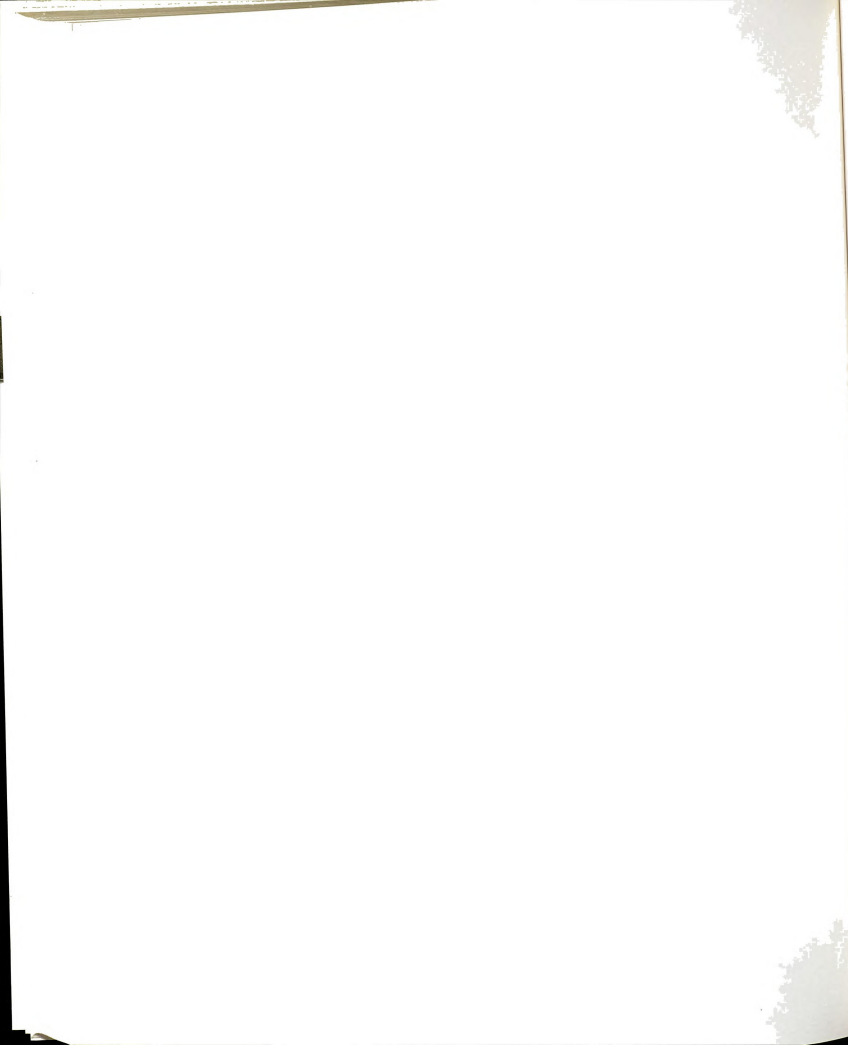
Prior to the settlement schemes, the most fertile lands in Nyeri were under white possession. "Over 200 inhabitants occupied an area of one square mile while a single white settler owned the same area of land all by himself." (Ngundir, 1973:74)   Internally, then, the Nyeri Kikuyu were experiencing intense land shortage. Providing additional information about the acreage owned by single white families, Ngunjiri notes that a Mr. Swanson (a colonial settler) occupied about 640 acres of land near Nyeri district; a Mr. Maxwell, a a prominent colonial planter, owned about 120 acres; a Mr. MacDonald had 640 acres, and Mr. Scott and Mr. Hales had the same amount. In total, these five white settlers occupied about 2,680 acres in Nyeri.

As it is estimated that there were over 400 white farmers in the district, one can imagine how much land the Nyeri people had lost. Therefore, land shortage and population pressure played an essential part in forcing the Nyeri population to look for alternatives. In addition, it is hypothesized that the native chiefs in Nyeri were mostly land owners. With their leadership, land reform was made acceptable.

Local Leadership in Nyeri

Generally, those who have been given credit as diffussionists were the progressive farmers. These people

facilitated, promoted and became change agents. They were

the vanguards against strong Kikuyu traditionalism and

social pressure to resist change. The diffusionists were

the Home Guards or Loyalists who collaborated with the

Colonial government. Most of these people were government

workers. They were those who squatted on white farms and

learned how to till the farm by using tractors. Some of

them were chiefs' son and chiefs' relatives. Many had tilled

the white plantations and saw the advantage of holding land

individually. These people were ready for change.

Collectively, these leaders were referred to as pro-

gressive farmers and they were the ones who led the masses

in the change process. The change process, as it is viewed

by C.M. Arensberg and A.H. Neihoff (1971:82),

> is regarded as the transfer of a new idea or
> technique from one cultural group or subgroup
> to another, as one of the types of diffusion....
> It is pictured as a situation in which some
> representative individual or group is deliber-
> ately planning to introduce the new idea and
> will interact with the prospective recipients
> until such time as the innovation is involun-
> tarily accepted and integrated into their cul-
> tural pattern.

Some of these individuals were Chief Muhoya of Nyeri,

Elind of Nyeri, Senior Chief Njiiri and Ignatio of Fort Hall

District. They included Chief Makimei of Chura Division of

Kiambu District. When village settlement was introduced,

Chief Muhoya of Nyeri took the initiative and accepted the
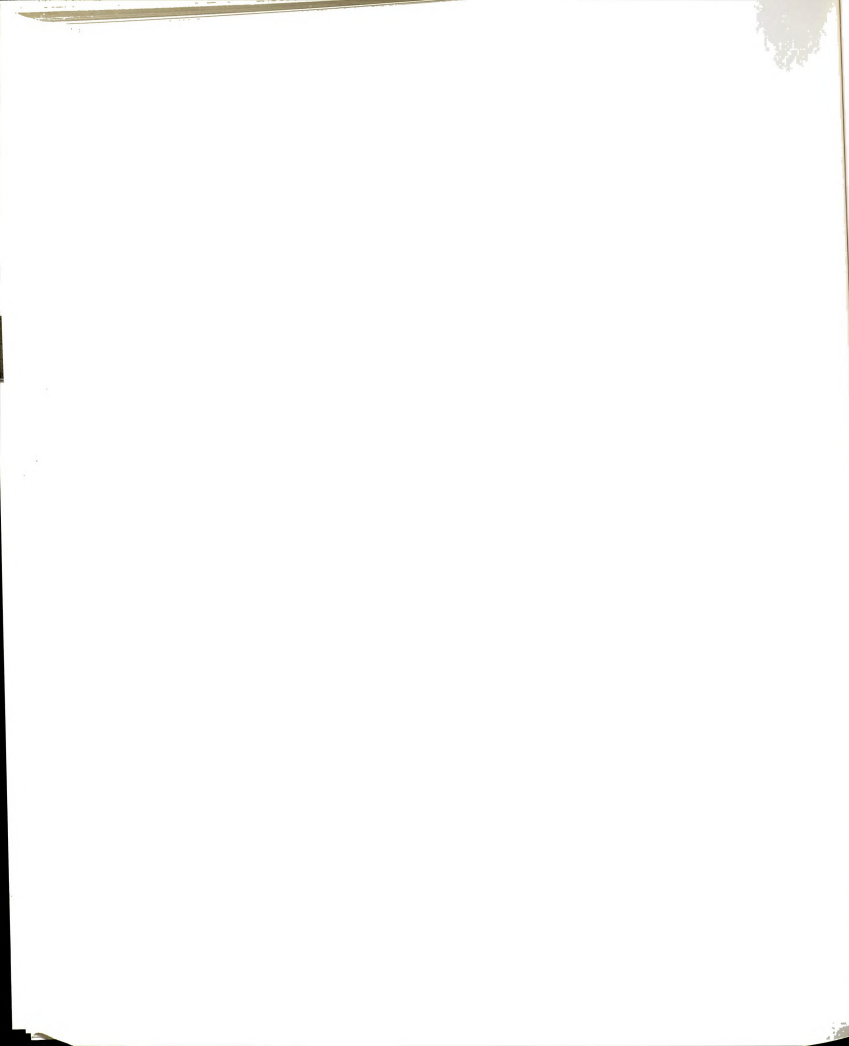
program willingly and immediately. He endorsed the program to villagize the people in his district and when Land Consolidation and Registration were undertaken, Chief Muhoya, once again took the lead.

With his ambition and, the support of the Colonial government, Chief Muhoya became the chief organizer toward change, thus Nyeri became the center for social change. Muhoya was quickly followed by other progressive farmers from other Kikuyu districts.

Villagization in Nyeri

Chief Muhoya's leadership toward change was fully assisted by the Colonial government. In fact, they made it certain that the project was to succeed.

The Nyeri District Village Settlement Project was launched cautiously at the beginning of 1954 with a small plot scheme in each of 12 locations. This enabled the government to try several lay-out patterns and gauge local opinion. At the same time, an intensive propaganda campaign was launched, explaining the general social and economic advantages of village life. Since these villages in Nyeri were to be used as a model, and to assure the confidence of a majority of the Kikuyu, the government built them hurriedly. For example, "Between January and December of 1954 nearly 200 village units were completed, and occupied by some 165,000 souls, i.e., approximately 825 men, women and children per village unit." (Hughs, 1955:171)

The cooperation of the so-called progressive farmers, was a great deal of help to the Colonial government. In financing such an expensive project, the government actually convinced many Kikuyu leaders that village settlement was essential and economically viable. Soon the Fort Hall district became a part of the project since the Nyeri settlement had already provided an understanding of how to go about resolving any complications.

According to Elspeth Huxley (1953:104)

> By the end of 1955 scarcely a single family homestead survived. Nearly a million men, women and children had been moved into some 845 so-called villages, each one sited on a hilltop where it could be defended; each one accessible to water and built according to standards which, though not be European notions very advanced, and certainly lacking all aesthetic charm, at least provided latrines and windows for each family.

Despite this, land was still an issue. Many Kikuyu people still had no land to build a house, no plot to cultivate and had no idea as to when this land problem would be solved. As the Kikuyu population became increasingly restrictive about the land situation and resentment grew toward some of those Kikuyu who had accumulated too much land, the government also grew worried. The theory underlying these settlements was that their success would not only promote white government's image, but also make it easier for the authorities and the people to live in harmony as villagization lessened fear and doubt toward the government.

The government had determined that the establishment of village life, would automatically provide for (1) collapse of the old Kikuyu social order which was held by homestead dwelling, (2) the Kikuyu family would become a nuclear rather than an extended one, (3) village living would eventually break the legendary ties of the old system, (4) village dwelling, itself, would support the system of individualization. The Colonial government was therefore fully aware that if the village program failed, it would automatically mean the failure of any project that the government intended to provide in the future.

Therefore, when the government had learned that the village program was not meeting the expectations of those who had initially supported it, it swiftly proposed land consolidation and registration, not as a substitute, but as a supplement. This was to be a way to maintain the expectations of the progressive farmers and consolidate their lands into units for commercial purposes.

In Nganga's (1977:370) words, "Land Consolidation meant that an individual's fragmented plots were gathered into a single holding and then registered under a title deed."

The decision to consolidate the fragmented land was taken after the government had done an extensive investigation of villagization problems. As a result of this investigation, the Governor of Kenya, Sir Phillip Mitchell,
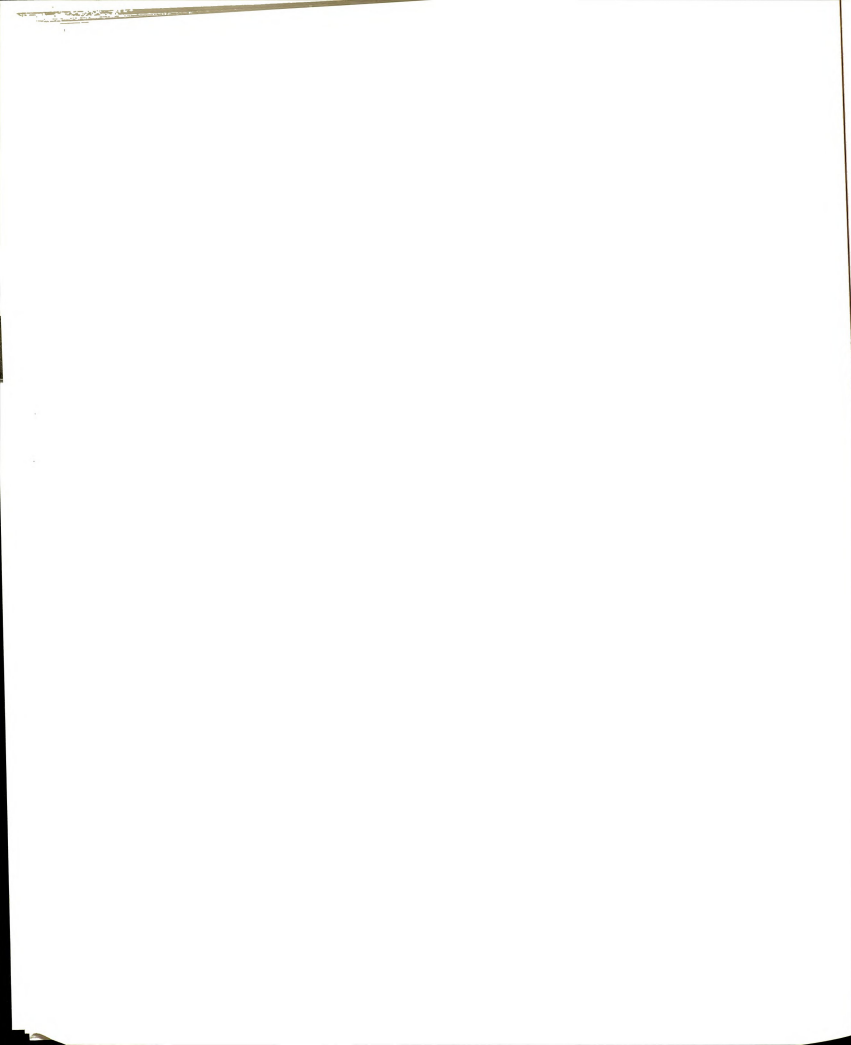
in 1951, determined that the main problems in Kenya in general, and in Kikuyu in particular were social and agrarian and not nationalistic. Both white settlers and the African progressive group jointly agreed that land consolidation was essential. As the idea was debated, more and more Kikuyu peasants began to accept it.

Land Consolidation and Registration in Nyeri

Land consolidation and registration in Nyeri was aimed at five objectives:

1. improving the Kikuyu economic conditions by intensifying the development of agriculture,

2. giving the progressive Kikuyu legal rights of ownership of the land they had illegally acquired,

3. destroying African communal ownership and individualizing the Africans by giving them land under title deed,

4. giving the African farmers what the government called secure tenure, and

5. readdressing the importance of the villagization program.

Despite a previous acceptance of individual land ownership in Kiambu, land consolidation and registration was introduced first in Nyeri where villagization had been first introduced. Sorrenson (1967), in his article "Land Consolidation in Nyeri," said, "In 1942 the Nyeri Local Native Council passed the Land Registration Rules, designed
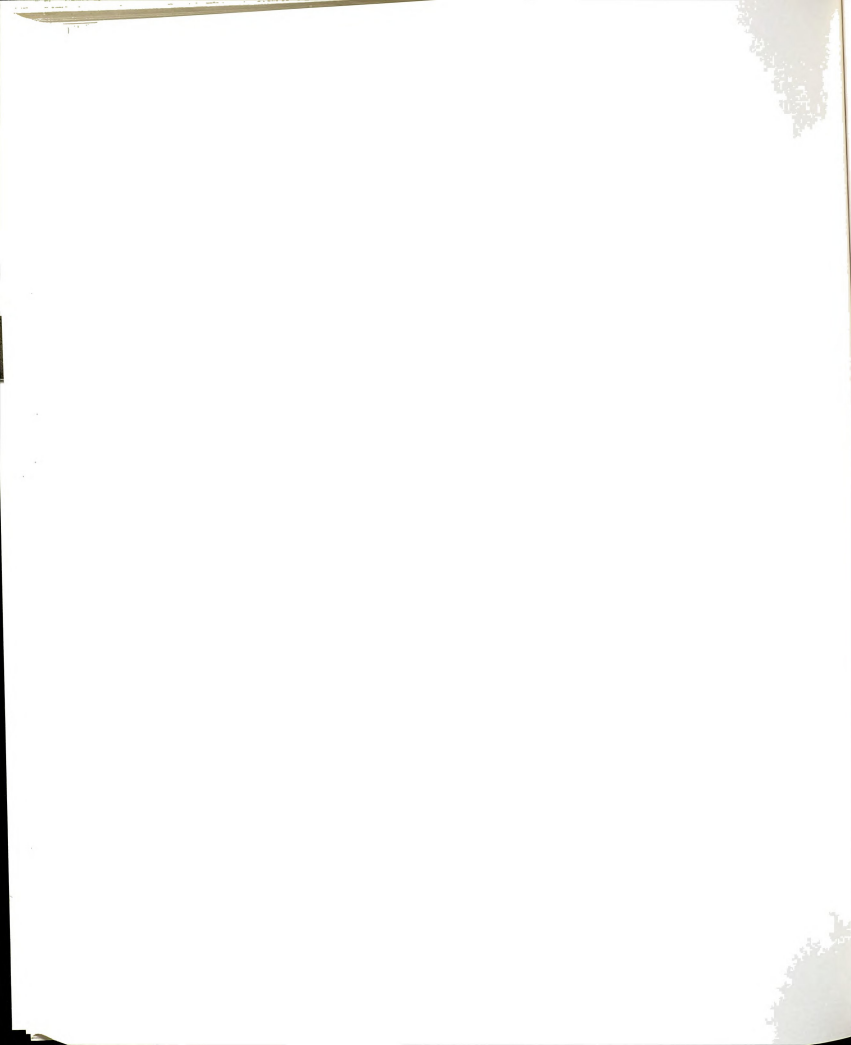
as a step towards a comprehensive system of registration."
The main purpose of the rules was to encourage the progres-
sive farmers to consolidate their fragmented plots. The
reasons for selecting Nyeri were twofold. First, there had
already been some attempts to consolidate holdings, so the
government needed only to follow up with grants of titles.
Second, the Nyeri people had already approved the program,
so the government did not have to spend extra time and money
trying to persuade the people to accept the program.

According to reliable sources, Chief Muhoya of Nyeri
had begun land consolidation experimentation as early as
1945. It was during that time that Muhoya had consolidated
the land of his own Mbari. Muhoya was a man who was totally
pragmatic. He believed in the saying "clean your house be-
fore cleaning somebody else's," and wanted to see that change
was successful first in his own towns and villages.

Acreage Consolidated and Registered

If success of Nyeri is measured by the number of
acres consolidated, Nyeri succeeded in its leadership to-
ward change. Sorrenson (1967:147) has provided this evid-
ence:

> By the end of the year fragments had been
> measured over about one third of the dis-
> trict--over 32,020 acres in North Tetu
> division, 24,865 in Othoya, 20,639 in Mathira
> and 2,862 acres in South Tetu...less than
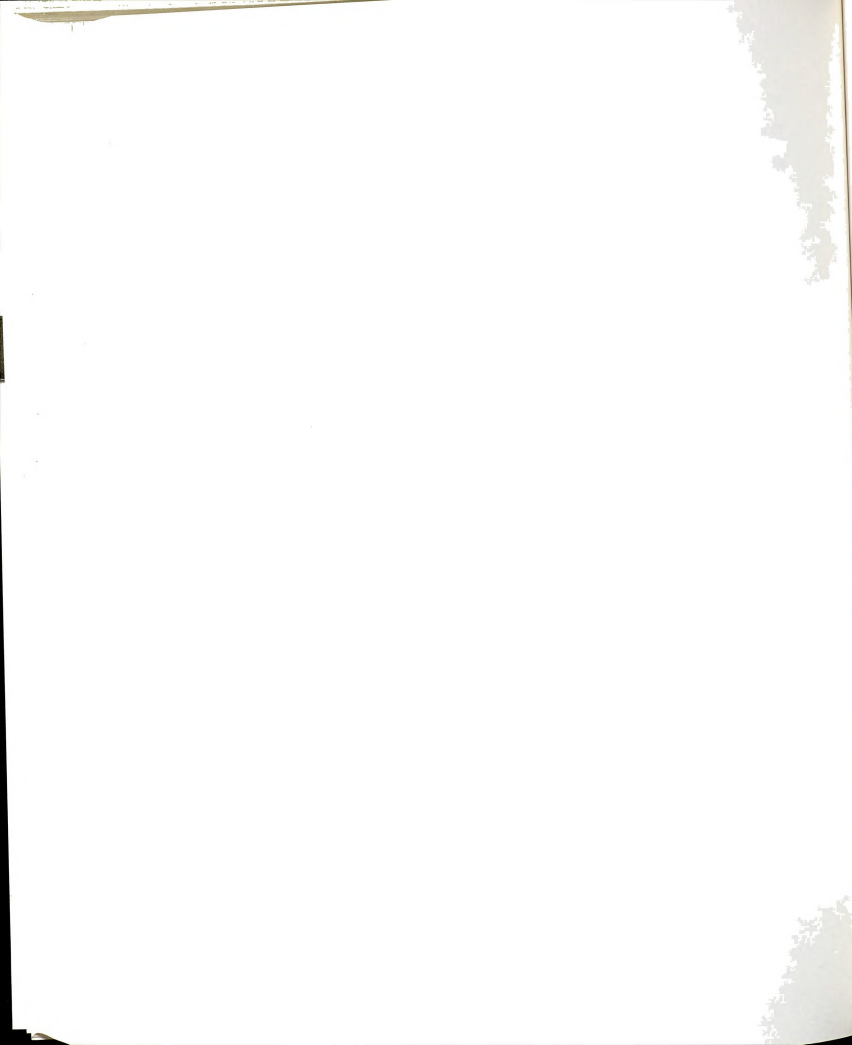
> 6,000 acres had been demarcated by the
> end of 1965 [but] demarcation of the
> whole district totaling some 220,000
> acres was completed in June 1959. Al-
> together this had involved the measure-
> ment of land, subsequently consolidated
> into 43,107 individual holdings, about
> half of them of three acres or less.

The process to consolidate the district did not take long. Virtually the whole operation was carried out within three years, two years short of the target date set in November 1955. Nyeri's achievement was only bettered by that of Kiambu where consolidation of a slightly larger area was accomplished in just over two years.

Harbeson has given a wider picture of land consolidation in the whole of Kenya. "At the end of 1959, 1,314,658 acres of land had been consolidated. Of this area, 820,049 acres were in Central province, while an additional 350,594 had been consolidated in Nyanza. In Central Province about 117,746 freehold titles had been issued." (1973:39)

For the details of the operation in Central Province, Tables 5.1 and 5.2 are provided to show how much land was enclosed and registered in each district and the amounts spent in the program.

Procedures of Consolidation and Registration

Initially, consolidation officials had to make sure that the objectives of the settlement scheme were specified and made known to the people. The stipulations between government officials and the native settlers were:
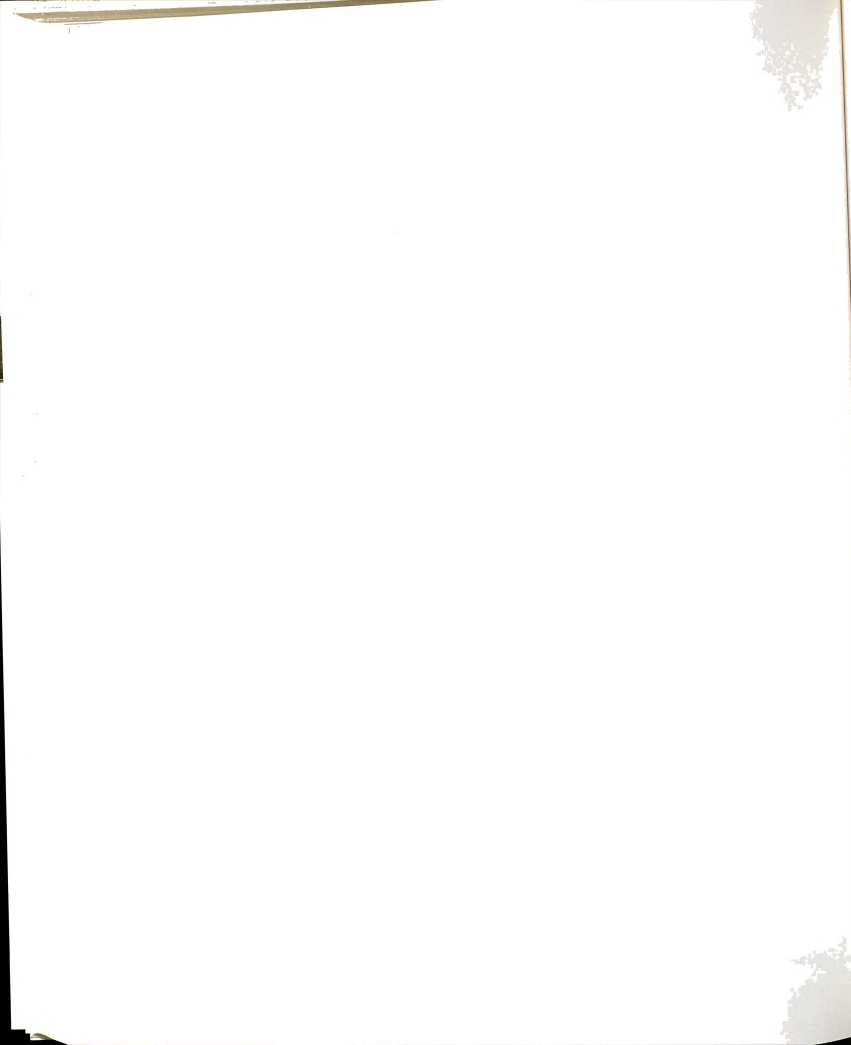
TABLE 5.1:   ENCLOSURE AND REGISTRATION OF AFRICAN FARMS IN
             KENYA (UP TO JUNE 30th, 1961)

District	Enclosure Acres	Enclosure Farms	Registration Acres	Registration Farms
Kiambu	238,412	37,408	238,412	37,408
Fort Hall	226,725	64,778	159,745	45,712
Nyeri	201,386	43,593	201,386	43,593
Embu	311,000	44,417	262,298	36,541
Meru	21,424	4,762	---	---
Total Central Province	998,947	194,958	861,841	163,254

Source: Journal of Local Administration Overseas, Vol. 1,
          1962.

TABLE 5.2:   EXPENDITURES FOR CENTRAL PROVINCE REGISTRATION
             1960

Expenses	Expenditures (in pounds)
Kiambu	171,926
Nyeri	158,841
Staff paid headquarters votes	45,000 (approximately)
Total	375,767

Source: Journal of Local Administration Overseas, Vol. 1,
          1962.
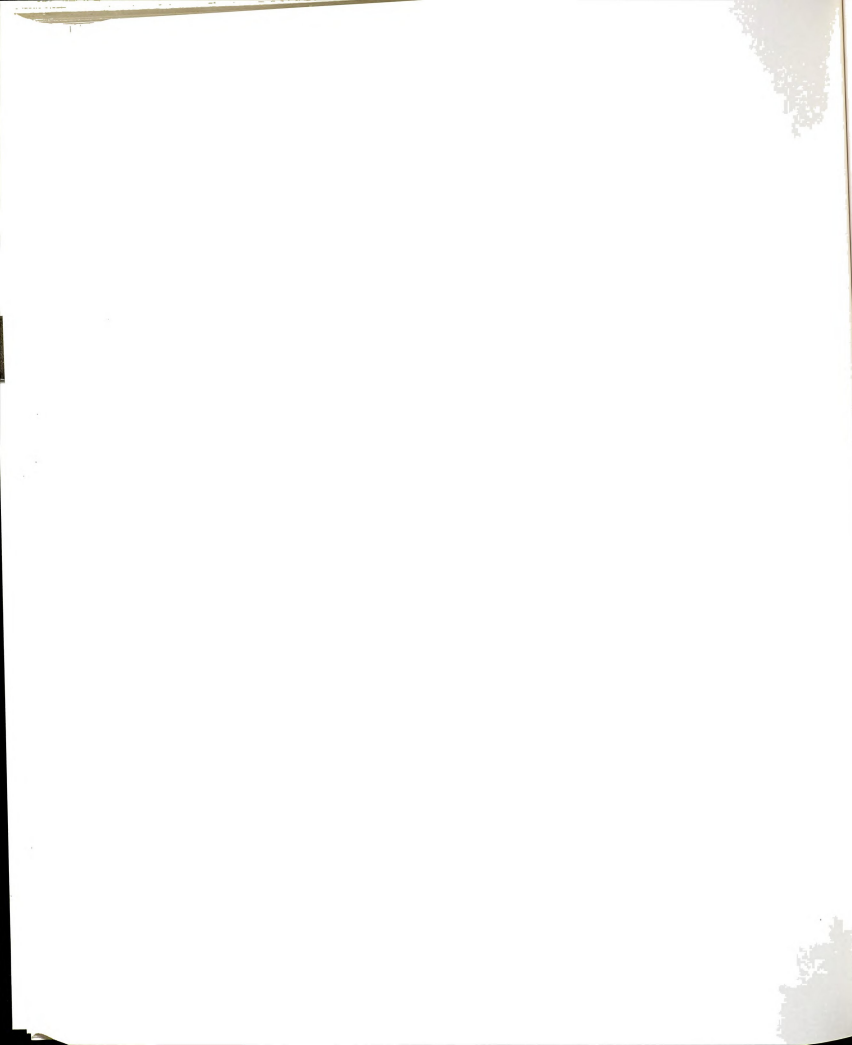
1. separated fragments were to be consolidated into one holding

2. major customs, such as communal holdings, were to be abandoned

3. the boundaries between different clan areas, where the requirements of consolidation demanded were to be abolished, and

4. land holding based on individual title was to be the only system allowed.

Apart from individual contractual agreements, land consolidation and registration was a matter of principles based on agreement of the people concerned and was not carried out in any area where there was opposition of any kind. The authorities made sure that land consolidation teams were informed about each division of the three Kikuyu districts. Fragmented holdings were measured and recorded to compute the total acreage held by each family or individual.

To avoid confrontation with the people, the authorities made it mandatory that the choice of consolidation area must depend on some cooperation by the people involved and be accomplished only when people showed their willingness to have their land consolidated. As Pedraza (1962:84) has explained,

> Consolidation is carried out area by area, and these areas may vary in size between 1,000 and 3,000 acres. Before measurement can begin, the team must effect exchanges of land, so that the fragments of each man who is to be settled in the area to be consolidated are concentrated in the area.
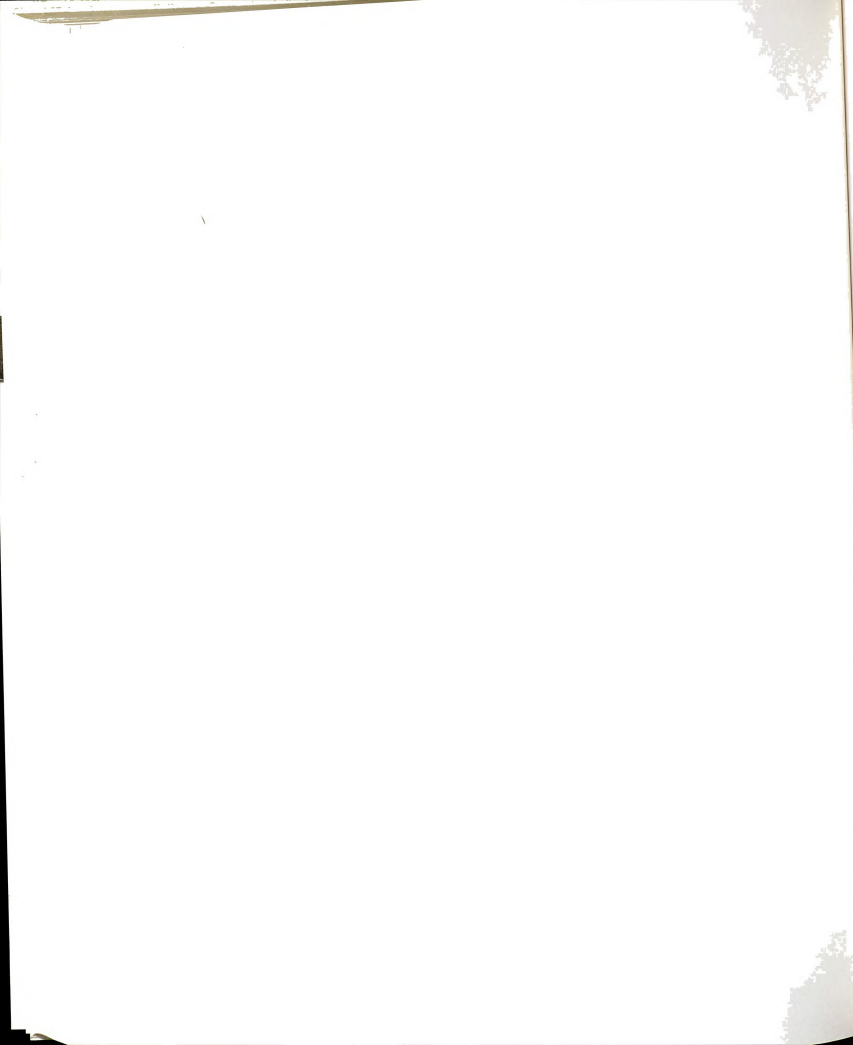
Evaluations of Land Consolidation and Registration

Flexibility by the authorities and the support of the progressive farmers made a success of land consolidation and registration that would have not been possible without the leadership of people like Chief Muhoya. In the views of some students of African land settlement programs, including Nganga, however, the program and its effects were negative for Africans. According to them, the process led to:

1. enriching the more progressive Kikuyu and thus impoverishing large numbers of the Kikuyu whose deprivation should have been alleviated

2. freehold tenure which provided legal rights to those people who had previously amassed the land that belonged to those who died or were sentenced to jail

3. giving land to only those so-called intelligent and capable individual farmers in order to maintain the system of individual holding

4. destruction of nationalist political unity and its influence on village dwellers

5. quarrels among families over the land.

Nganga (1977:372) explained, "In the absence of a man's relatives he could consolidate all their land in his name if he had the support of the committee members." Once the land had been registered, family attempts to reclaim ownership rights always resulted either in physical or court
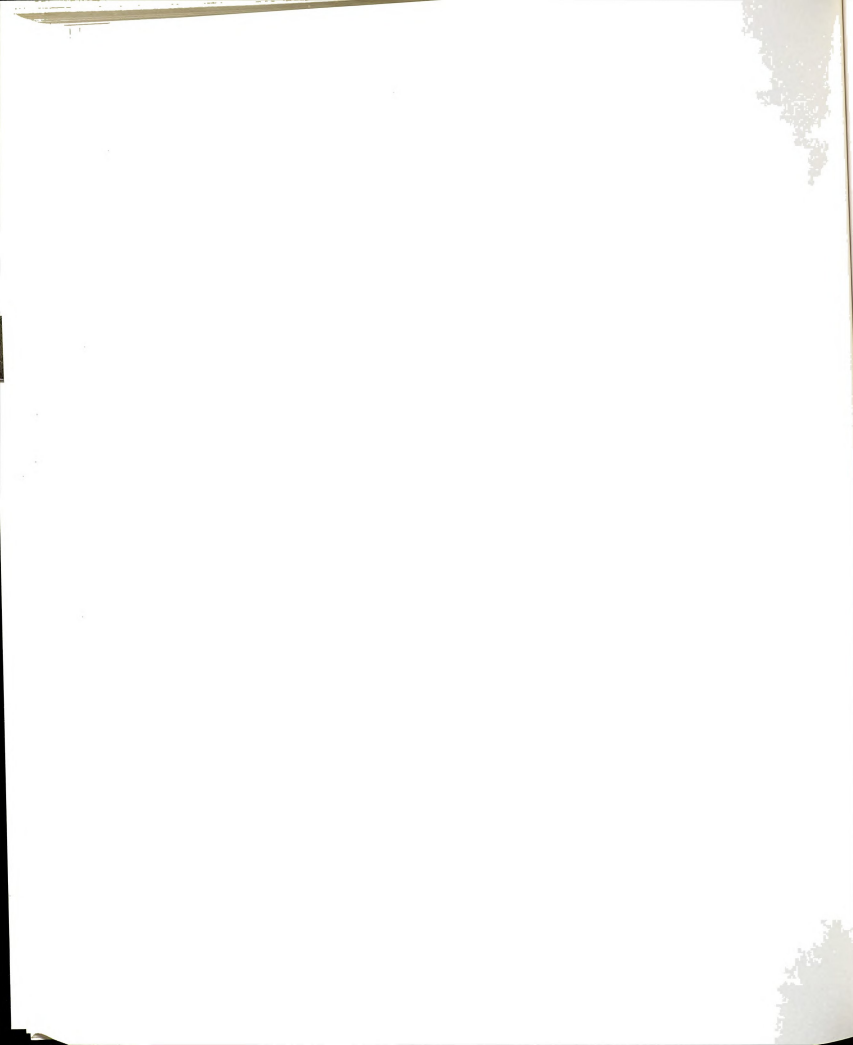
battles. Once a case went to court, the person who re-
claimed, had very little chance to win it because he had
no legal documentation in terms of western system of land
holding. He would not be able to prove his case, unless
it was an unusual case. For example, in his article, "Land
Reform and Economic Change Among African Farmers in Kenya"
(1970:9) William J. Barber, said, "In Kiambu District of
the Central Province, it was estimated that some 200,000
shillings were spent on court fees in land disputes in
1951...some 600,000 shillings changed hands in the bribery
of witnesses appearing in such cases."

Corruption was another of the problems that arose
in the land consolidation and registration program. De-
marcating officers created most of these corruption prob-
lems. Nganga explained,

> A person's land, for instance, could be
> 200 yards by 400 yards on the ground, but
> the official could record 150 yards by
> 300 yards. The person's land would then
> be demarcated at the smaller size while
> the official would have in "office" a
> plot of 50 yards to 100 yards which he
> could sell to X (1977:368).

As the registration went on, many Kikuyu families
became disillusioned with the program. There were com-
plaints from the landless and from their political sympathi-
zers that the majority of the Kikuyu had been betrayed by
the government. They argued that, prior to consolidation
it was the white settlers who occupied most of the fertile
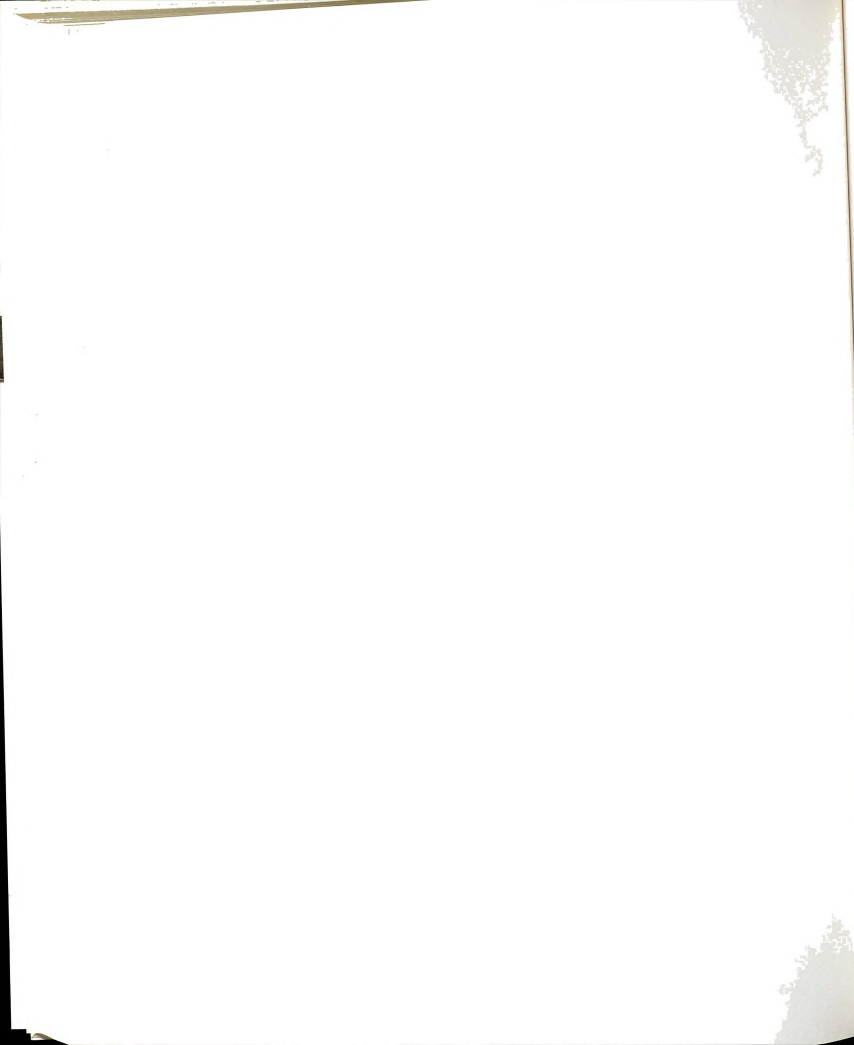
areas, but now just a few Africans controlled all the wealth in land. They argued that the program had promised an equal distribution, but what resulted was inequality not equality.

By 1960, Kikuyu complaints were beginning to put the pressure on the bourgeoise Africans and the government. More important, the government understood that for Kenya to be stable and have a stable government, the land question had to be answered before independence. The Colonial government was quite aware that if Kenya became independent before the land problems were solved, the life and security of every white settler would be in jeopardy.

Summary

Land reform in the Central Province of Kenya took place after a bloody protest by the Kikuyu who were victimized during the land alienation era. The program initially provided village homes and consolidated segmented lands that had become economically worthless. The intent was that such consolidation into larger units would provide the basis of a sound economy.

Under these conditions, the government was forced to examine the possibility of decolonizing the areas previously owned exclusively by whites and declaring the area available for resettlement. In 1961, a decision was taken and one million acres of land were set aside for settling
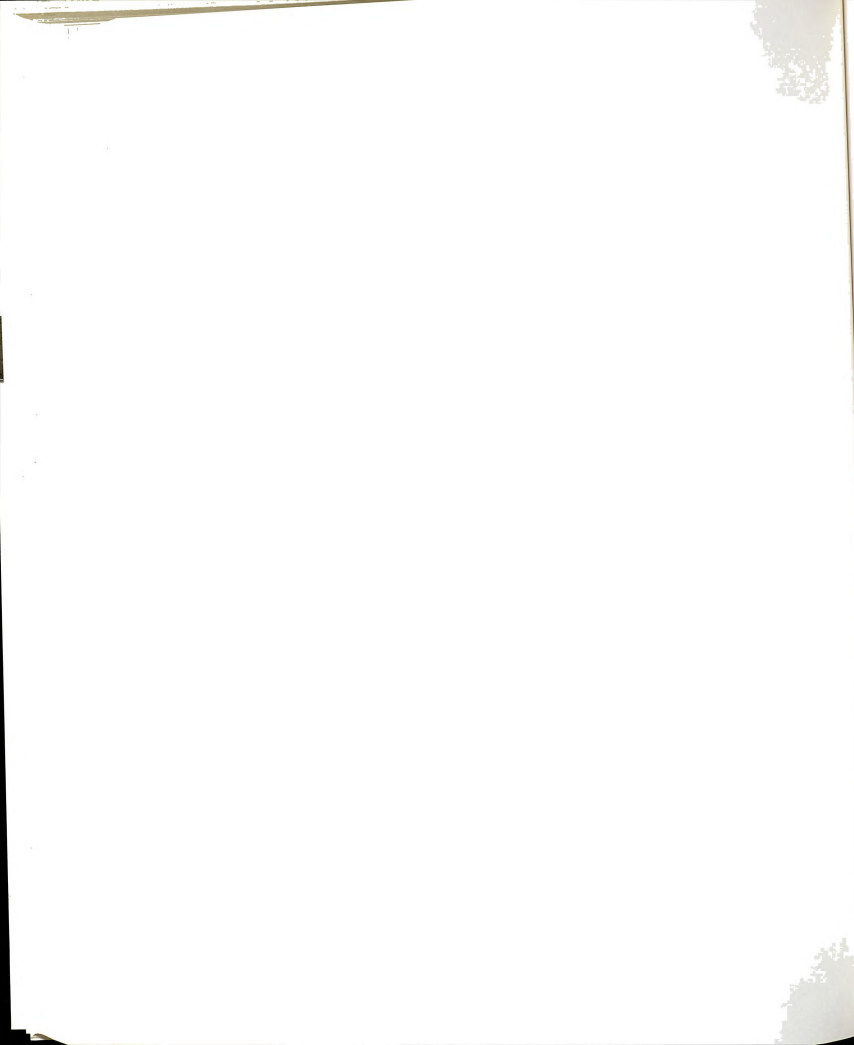
landless families. The events, process and effects of this
One Million Acre Settlement program are examined in Chapter
Six.
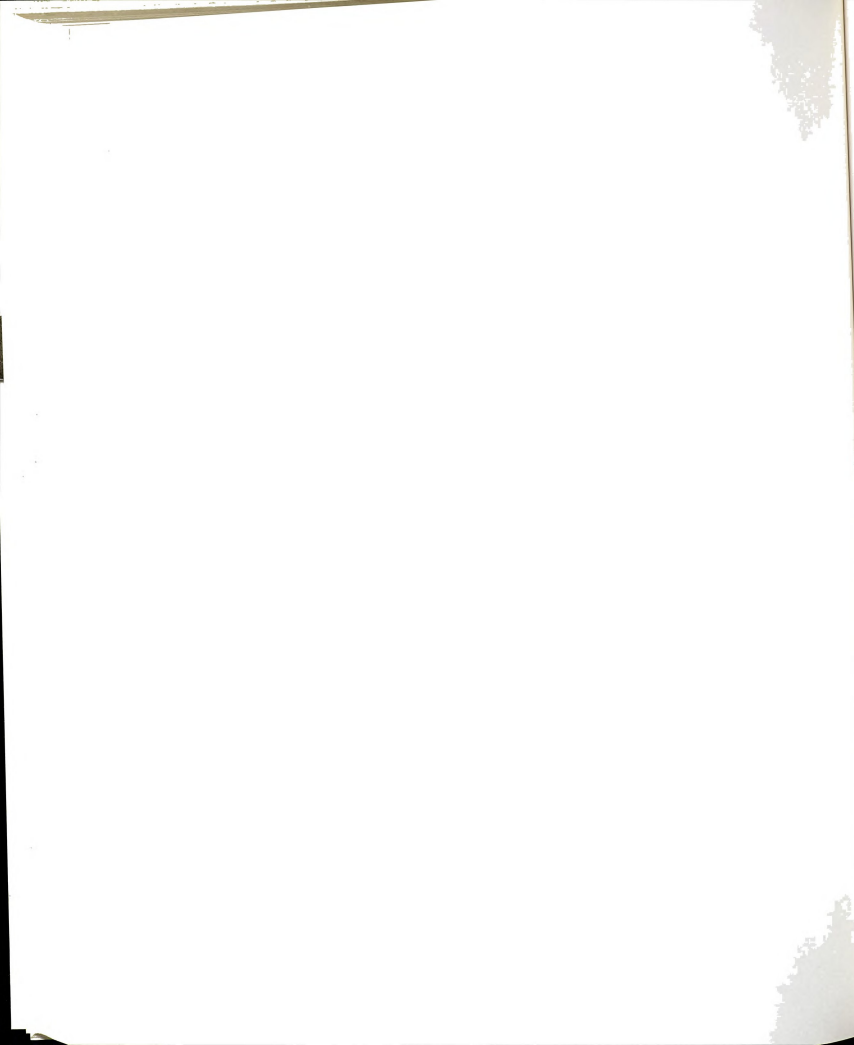
CHAPTER SIX

THE KIKUYU AND THE ONE MILLION ACRE SCHEME

Kenyan history reveals that the years from 1953 to the mid-1960s were a time of social unrest, a time when many rural peasants, particularly the Kikuyu of Central Province were going through social, economic and political change. The majority of the Kikuyu population had been driven off their lands and were living without hope. About 60,000 families from Kiambu alone had lost about 11,000 acres and were roaming the white farms seeking a place to live securely.

Other thousands were aimlessly moving into the urban areas with nothing to do. It was these circumstances that has led social historians, social anthropologists, economists, psychologists and others to argue that the Kikuyu political explosion was a reflection of the conditions they were experiencing.

Trying to normalize these inhuman conditions and avoid further Kikuyu explosion, the colonists found they had to loosen up rigid rules and confront realities. Their efforts marked the beginning of actual social change in Kenya. It was a move to alter the old order, especially the existing land tenure system. The problem that confronted

the colonists was that this required changing the land owner-
ship system, making land available to indigenous local people.

   Without other alternatives, decolonizing the former
"White Highlands" was inevitable. In 1962, a one million
acre settlement scheme was initiated that had its roots in
the villagization of the Kikuyu in 1953, and efforts to con-
solidate segmented Kikuyu lands in 1954-55.

The Plan for Settlement

   The strategy was introduced by the Department of
Agriculture under Swynnerton who was then its Assistant
Director, and became known as the Swynnerton Plan. This
plan became the most celebrated program in the history of
Kenya, even though, as Harbeson (1973:34) put it, "...it
was devised in great haste, at least in part because the
prospect of thousands of unemployed Kikuyu returning to
their home land from Tanganyika and other areas of Kenya
worried the colonial administration."

   The Swynnerton Plan proposed four requirements to
resolve Kikuyu land problems and improve their economic
conditions: (1) It required changes in land ownership from
the customary communal tenure to a freehold system involving
the enclosure and registration of existing rights; (2) it
required that 1.2 million acres be set aside to settle land-
less and unemployed families; (3) it required that preference
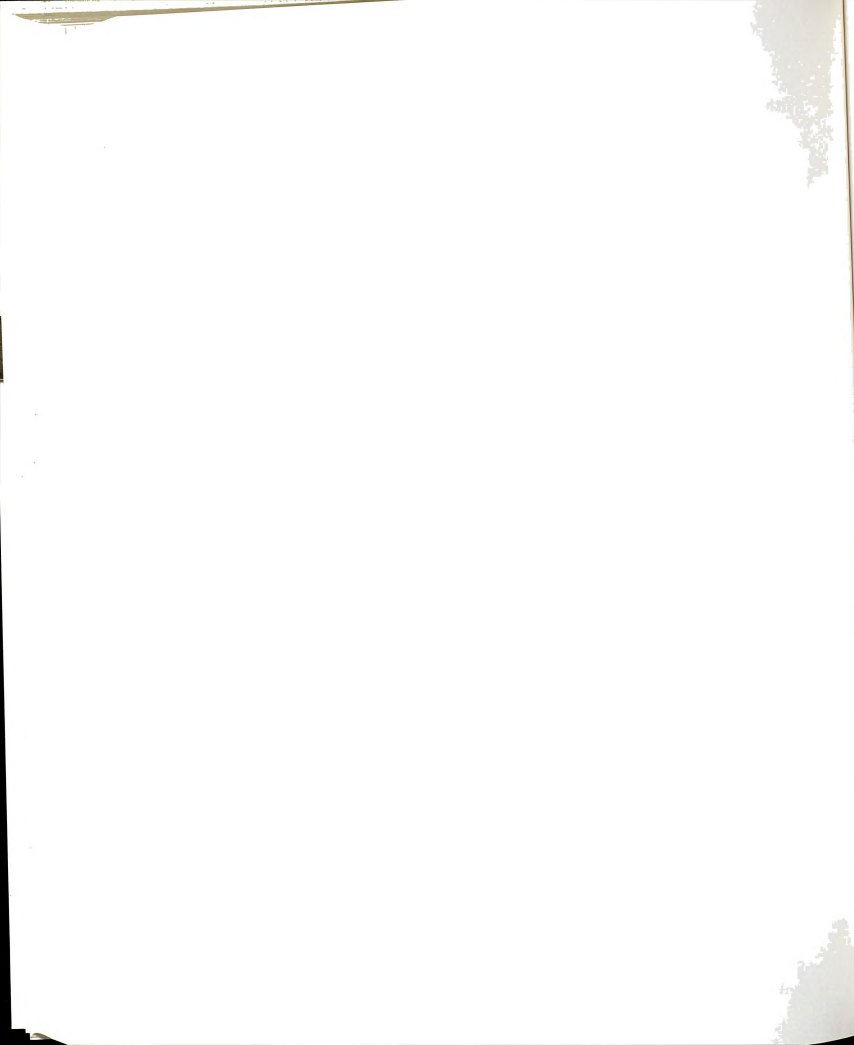
be given to progressive Kikuyu farmers in providing them
the necessary means to develop; and (4) it initiated change
in government policy.

All four requirements of the Swynnerton plan were
approved by the Colonial government, but the program was
too expensive and the Colonial government knew that the
African government would not be able to carry it out with-
out British aid, financial and technical. During the Lan-
caster House Conference in 1961, guidelines were drawn for
the settlement.

The format was as follows:

(1)   farms previously owned by colonial settlers
      were to be acquired by purchase

(2)   a loan was to be given to the Kenya govern-
      ment at 6½% interest; since Kenya had not yet
      acquired its independence, the Colonial govern-
      ment acted on its behalf

(3)   it was agreed that the loan would be used
      only to purchase 1.2 million acres that had
      been set aside for settlement

(4)   the British government would not only act
      as mediator, but would also be responsible
      for the settlement

(5)   it was required that after land or a farm
      was bought, it was to be subdivided into
      plots for settlement

(6)   these plots were to be acquired also by pur-
      chase

(7)   the new settler would receive loan at 7½%
      interest to enable him to acquire the plot.
      This loan was to be paid at the due date.
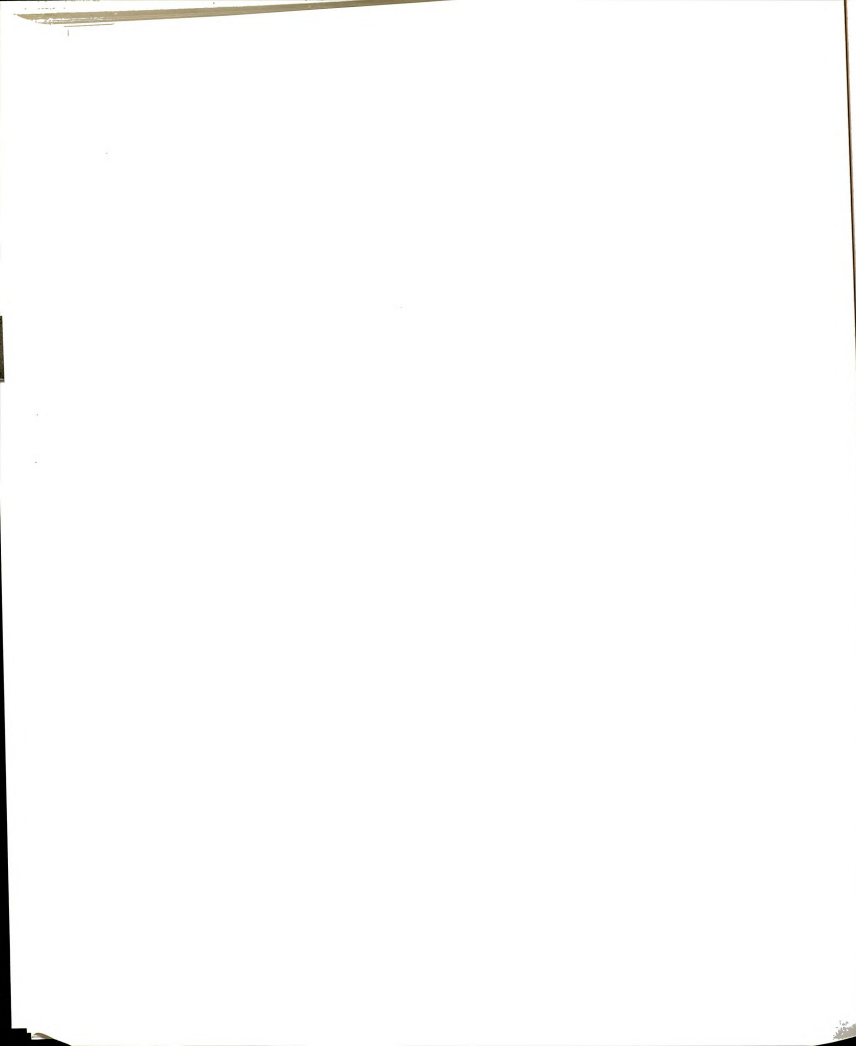
The land question in Kenya was not only economic but political as well. In examining the procedure that was designed to settle the African landless, after the One Million Acre Settlement land was purchased, it became clear that the British government had a hidden agenda in promoting the scheme. Presumably, their main intentions were political and were as follows:

(1) to quiet the Kikuyu political leaders by agreeing to partially decolonize the former "white highlands."

(2) to convince the Kikuyu that a One Million Acre Scheme, unlike Villagization and the Land Consolidation and Registration Scheme would provide what the Kikuyu people really wanted.

(3) to convince the Kikuyu that this scheme would allow the new settlers to obtain a net annual income of between twenty-five and seventy pounds, and

(4) to divide this settlement land into two categories--High Density and Low Density, which perpetuated inequality in ownership of land.

The problem was that the Kikuyu masses and their political leaders were not fully informed about the nature of the land owned by the white settlers in the highlands. The white highlands were divided into two separate agricultural zones: (a) a zone which was extensively developed with plantation activities and (b) a zone that was underdeveloped and known as mixed farm land. The highly developed zone covered approximately 4,260,000 acres and the mixed farm land comprised 3,440,000 acres of land.
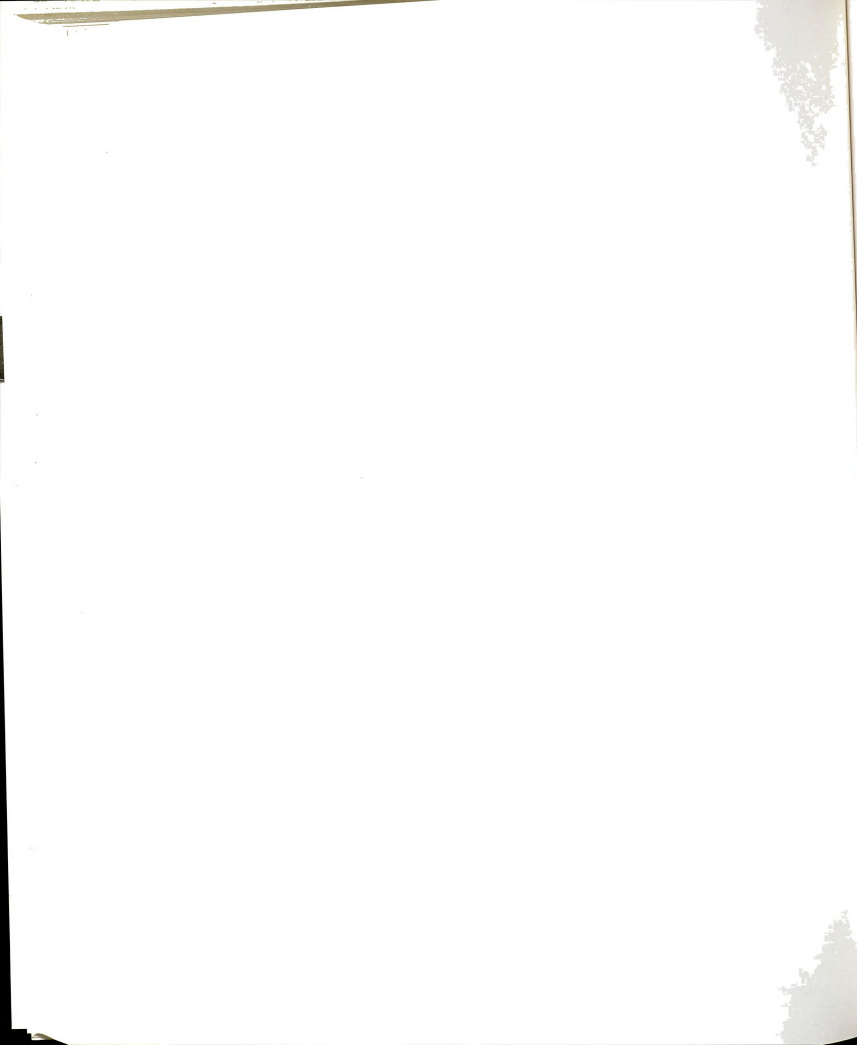
To keep the white settlers' economy undisturbed, the British government decided, under the guidelines drawn at the Lancaster House Conference, to decolonize the under-developed, mixed farming zone for settlement. It was out of this 3,440,000 mixed acres that 1.2 million acres were set aside to settle thousands of Kikuyu families. Originally, it was agreed that the One Million Acre Scheme would not be subdivided into plots to become economically useless. The aim was not to create a subsistence level economy but to eliminate it.

In practice, the policy to eliminate a subsistence farming economy was never carried out, particularly in the high-density area where land was divided and subdivided into smaller plots to accommodate as many families as possible.

To divert attention from this and calm the fears of the white settlers, attention was focused on multiracism with Kenyatta at the forefront of this campaign. Kenyatta had to travel to the white community to assure them of the safety of their lives and property. For example, the Prime Minister accompanied by several dignitaries, was invited to deliver his first speech in Nakuru (the main center for the white planters). Kenyatta, speaking as the head of State and as an African nationalists, said;

Kenya is large enough and its potential
is great. We can all work together to make
this country great and show other countries
that different racial groups can live and
work together...some European farmers are
worried about their future....I say to you
today that we want you to stay and to farm
and to farm well in this country. Let us
join hands and work together for the better-
ment of the land. I beg you to believe that
this is the policy of the government--we
must work together and try to trust one
another. (Kenya Weekly News, February 28,
1964)

Kenyatta's speech in Nakuru assured the white settlers
that their staying in Kenya was welcomed and was expected
to promote the economy. The Kikuyu population, particularly
the landless and those who had come in from the forests,
waited for their reward since they were the ones who had
fought the war against the colonial settlers. The Colonial
government then needed to do something for Kenyatta, to dis-
pell the Kikuyu's suspicion of him as a betrayer. The answer,
of course, was to return some land.

Aware that Kenyatta, as a spokesman for the Kikuyu
and the head of State, had already committed himself to the
course of the Kikuyu problem, the Colonial government, with
all its financial might, decided to go ahead with the ex-
pensive one million acre program and to see to it that most
of it was completed before independence in 1963. The pro-
cedure was to set aside 1.2 million acres for settlement
with the intent to settle over 300,000 families, most of
whom were landless, poor and unskilled peasants.

According to a report by Maina and MacArthur (1970: 427) the smallholder settlement program had four main objectives. The first was essentially political--"to diminish the preponderant influence of the settler farmers in the former scheduled areas by allocating some of the land to Africans." The second was social--"to settle on the land people who had previously been landless and had been unemployed, or living and working as they could..." The third objective was both technical and economci--"to introduce, under supervision, a significant number of farmers to advanced systems of production, so that they would increase total production from an average of £4.5 per acre to around £8.5 per acres and repay their land purchases." The fourth objective concerned broad national issues--"to improve the political and social climate in the country as a whole and to help to ameliorate the unemployment situation, and also to help to create a realistic market for land, so that European farmers who might wish to sell out could expect to be paid a reasonable price."

In a more concise explanation, Harbeson (1973:198) explained the smallholder settlement program in this way, "...to facilitate the transfer of power and to increase the chances of political stability after independence."

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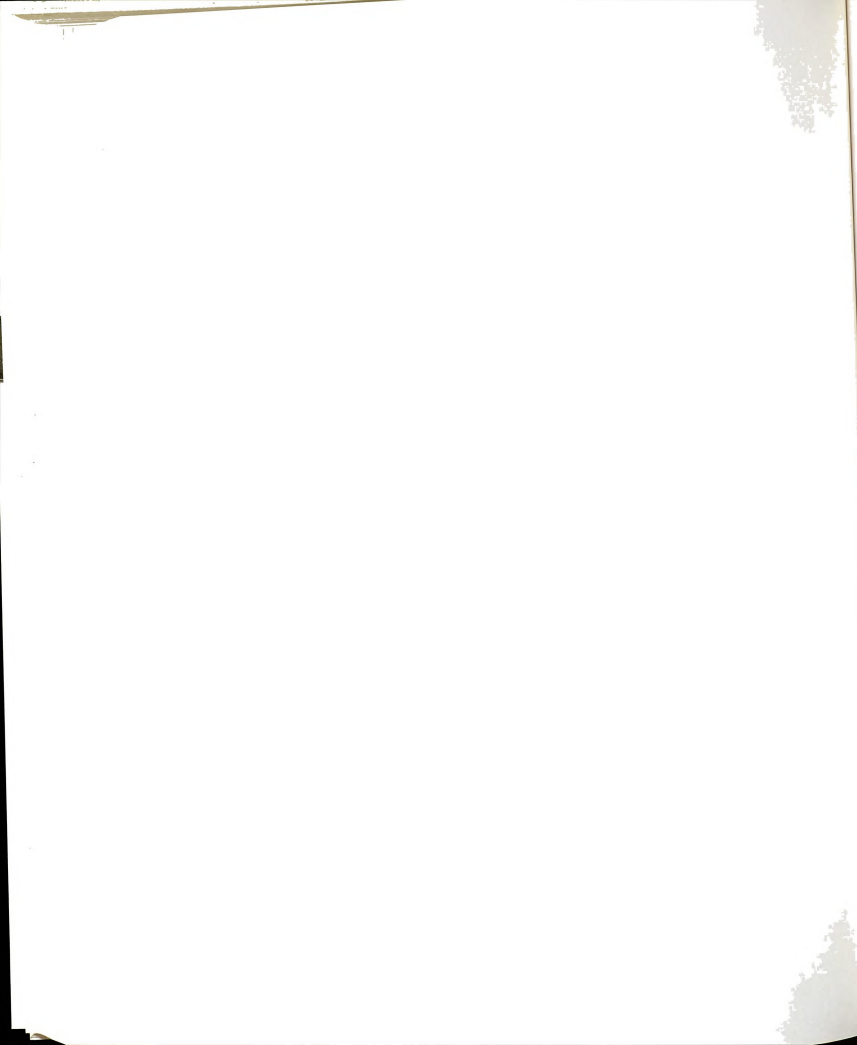
Philosophy Underlying the Settlement Scheme

The philosophy supporting the One Million Acre Settlement Scheme came from the development school of thought that held, as Harbeson (1970:202) stated, "It is essential,...not only to farm it on the right system but with the right people. Land should belong to the people who can farm it best, whatever their race, color and creed." This idea was echoed by Swynnerton who spoke of the need to intensify the development of African agriculture.

However, in the view of other observers, like Teresa Hayter, the One Million Acre Scheme was an attempt to program the African rural peasants and to transform their social structure, attitudes and perhaps their ways of life to fit the realities of the Western capitalist system rather than aiming at elevating the rural people from their ignorance, poverty and disease. They felt the basic objective of the Colonial government with its land settlement scheme was only to create security for the whites. To let a few progressive Kikuyu become wealthy and powerful while at the same time driving a large proportion of the people into poverty (Meek, 1952:9).

Establishment of the One Million Acre Scheme opened up avenues of socioeconomic inequality among the rural peasants of central Kenya.

Effects of the One Million
Acre Settlement Scheme

The effects of the One Million Acre scheme were:
(1) to create a more permanent dependent relationship of
Kenya on Great Britain, (2) to create false hopes that
the Kikuyu population would benefit economically
and would be made secure in their land tenure and (3) to
to create an atmosphere in which only a few Kikuyu pro-
gressive farmers could move ahead in their economic acti-
vities while leaving behind a large number of landless and
unemployed.

The effects for the British government including its
allies and the World Bank, that had agreed to sponsor this
expensive project, were more political. They were credited
with establishing a more stable society that would not be
identified as Marxist, in which racial harmony would be
possible and where white property would not be in jeopardy.

By providing a large amount of money to the new
government headed by Jomo Kenyatta, a dependency relation-
ship was extended beyond independence that made Kenya loyal
to the British Crown. An image was also created that the
British government had kept faith with the Kenyan people.

As a result of this, Kenya not only remained de-
pendent but also became a consumer of British manufactured
goods as well as a producer of the raw materials required
by the European common market.

The term "dependence" has become a euphemism for an exploitive relationship between the rich and the poor countries (Wallerstein, 1974:1). Kaufman, Chemotsky and Geller (1971:25) explained, "Although many writers speak of 'cultural' or 'political' dependency, the concept is derived and updated from Leninist theories of imperialism, and remains essentially economic in character." The basic concept sounds as though they were describing the relationship between Great Britain and Kenya. "The basic thesis is that the industrialization of a few Capitalist, 'metropolitan' countries has, as its corollary, the creation of 'satellite' nations which are locked, through an international division of labour, into a subordinate status within the 'world capitalist' economic system." (Ibid)

Like other satellite nations, Kenya lacked the resources to create or choose alternative ways of responding to the constraints brought by Great Britain and the international environment. By examining the methodological process through which the One Million Acre Settlement scheme was carried out, it is possible to begin to understand how this project enhanced the development of class inequality and why it made the country what it is today.

Operational Procedures in Settling The Kikuyu

First, the One Million Acre Settlement scheme, like Villagization and Land Consolidation and Registration, was
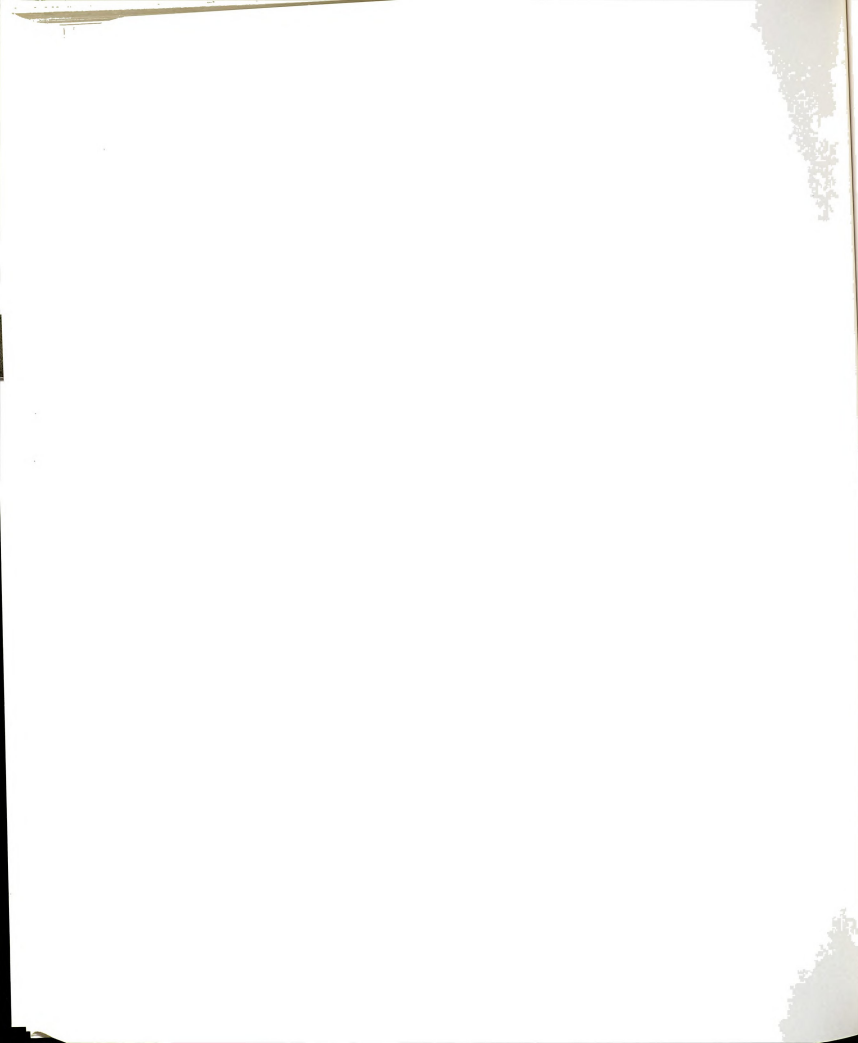
conceived in the hope that it would provide a better economic life for most of the African population, particularly the 87 percent who were rural cultivators. Many problems plagued its operation, most traceable to the failure of planners to organize it along the lines of a self-help project. The advantage of self-help, according to James A. Christenson (1980:183) is that "...people themselves determine what is to be done and in the process learn both how to achieve this specific task and the process through which they may accomplish future goals." Instead, it was foreign experts, foreign technicians, and foreign idealists who became the organizers and sponsors of the project, and they were the decision-makers for all the operational procedures. The natives, on the other hand, were not included to provide their ideas and make decisions affecting themselves. Thus, the operation of the scheme reflected Western rather than African thought, plans, capabilities and ideals. As Raymond Apthorpe (1968:7) stated,

> The Colonial administrator saw himself
> as organization man whose task it was
> to apply the cutting edge along the line
> of least resistence, to etch the nick point
> into the peneplain of subsistence society,
> as it was seen. Organizational man was
> rational not tribal, modern not tradi-
> tional.

The success of the model used in Nyeri helped to make the program acceptable to other Kikuyu districts. The

social action approach, which was employed in Nyeri and later in the other Kikuyu districts, sought to redistribute power and basic functions such as decision-making and leadership were changed slowly. Progressive leaders, such as the chiefs, were allowed to lead their people and to make some necessary decisions regarding change.

According to the British, the One Million Acre scheme was designed to meet political ends by providing land for the landless. This political intention created a split between the British government and the World Bank on the first settlement plan. The World Bank wanted the settlement plan to have economic objectives as its first priority. Harbeson (1973:78) showed "the negotiation of the first scheme to resettle Africans in the White Highlands, replacing European farmers, was jeopardized by anxiety on the part of the World Bank (IBRD) and the Common Wealth Development Corporation (CDC) that political changes might threaten economic productivity and their investment in the settlement problem."

The second resettlement scheme, in which a million acres of European farmland in the Highlands would be subdivided and resettled by 30,000 landless, unemployed Africans and their families, was not expected to contribute much to the economic development of Kenya. Rather, its objective was to alleviate the political problem posed by the Kikuyu landless and unemployed.

Hayter (1971:57) has indicated, "The intention of those who were responsible for setting up the scheme in this way was to ensure the creation of a stable prosperous enterprising and conservative small and medium peasantry."

The settlement scheme, however, divided land into three zones, i.e., the High-Density, the Low-Density and the yeoman or assisted-owner zones. Figure 6.1 shows the physical regions of Kenya with the Central Highlands circumscribed as Area B. Figure 6.2 shows the boundaries of the "White Highlands" and the location of the various types of settlements. The British and West Germans sponsored the High-Density and the yeoman areas, paying £2,297,000 and £1,218,000, respectively. The World Banks (the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and the Common Wealth Development Corporation (CDD) sponsored the Low-Density scheme. The IBRD paid two-thirds of the costs and the CDC paid one-third. The extent of their involvement and the estimated final costs of the program are shown in Table 6.1. In 1962, on-site work on the settlements was begun.

Low Density Areas

For settlers to qualify for settlement in a Low Density area, they had to have: (a) experience in advanced agriculture and (b) the ability to contribute fifty Kenya pounds (later £100) of their own capital. They were required to
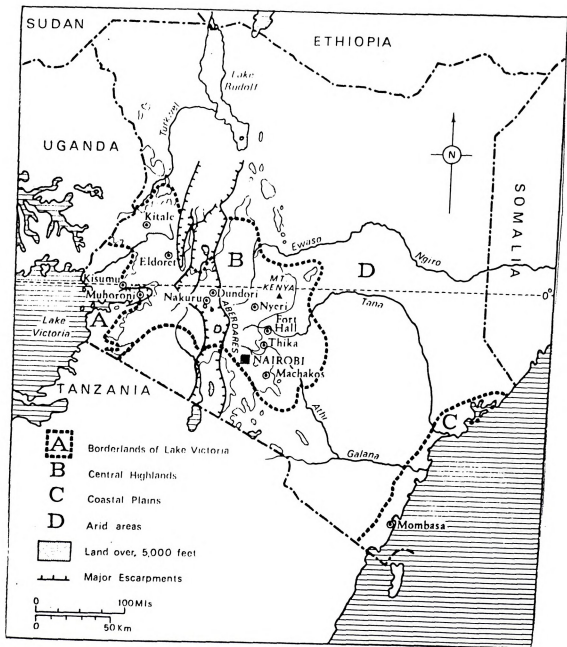
FIGURE 6.1: The Physical Map of Kenya
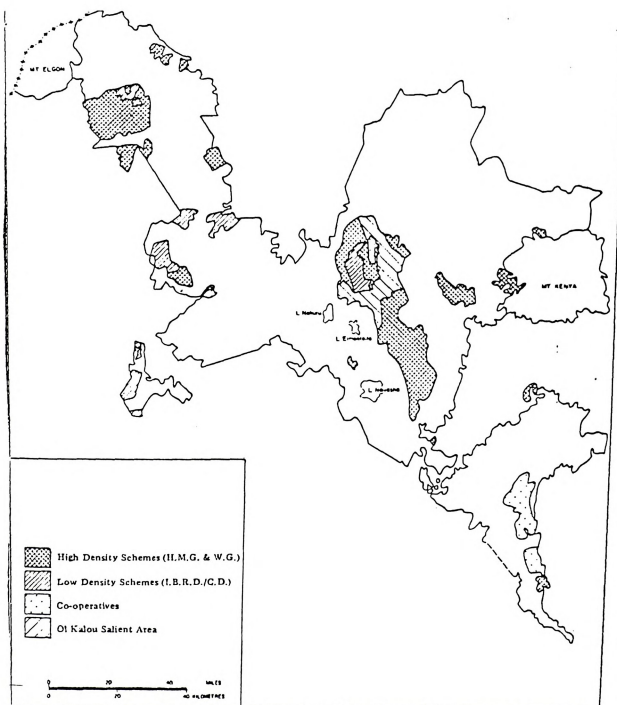
FIGURE 6.2: The Kenya Highlands and the Areas of Settlement Schemes

SOURCE: Richard S. Ogendo. East Africa Publishing House, 1971
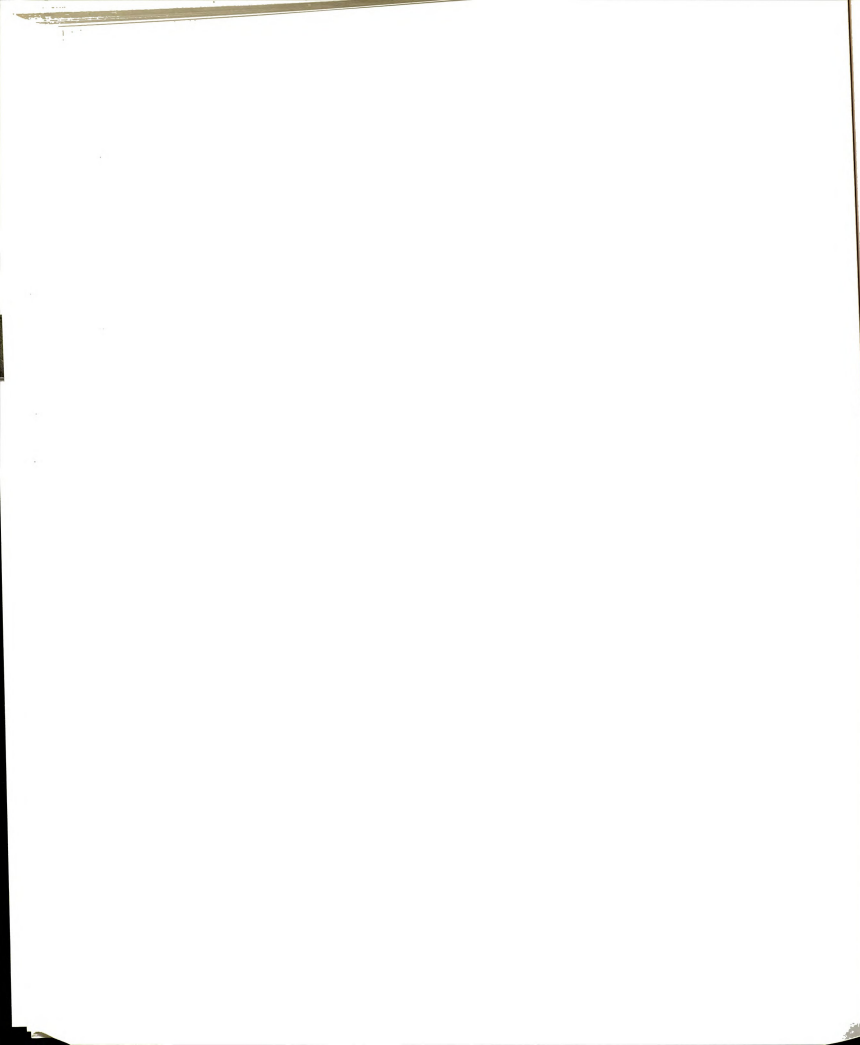
TABLE 6.1:   ESTIMATED FINAL COSTS OF KENYAN SETTLEMENT PROGRAM
             (£000)

Type of Cost	Grants	Loans	Total
(1) Low Density (IBRD/CDC) schemes:			
Land Purchase	664	1,327	1,991
Development Loans	---	2,263	2,263
Total	664	3,590	4,254
(2) High-Density, Yeoman and Other Schemes:			
Land Purchase	2,944	5,880	8,824
'Compassionate' farms	255	620	875
Yeoman schemes	---	291	291
Nandi Salient	150	---	150
Total	3,349	6,791	10,140
Development Loans	---	1,218	1,218
West Germany	---	1,223	1,223
Land Bank, etc.	---	2,297	2,297
U.K. Government	---	4,738	4,738
Total	3,349	11,529	14,878
(3) Other Costs:			
All Other Costs	6,654	----	6,654
(Less) Farming Profits	- 32	----	- 32
Total	6,622	15,119	6,622
Net Cost of Entire Programme	10,635	15,119	25,754

SOURCE: A.H. Bunting, Change in Agriculture, (Praeger Publishers, New York), 1970.
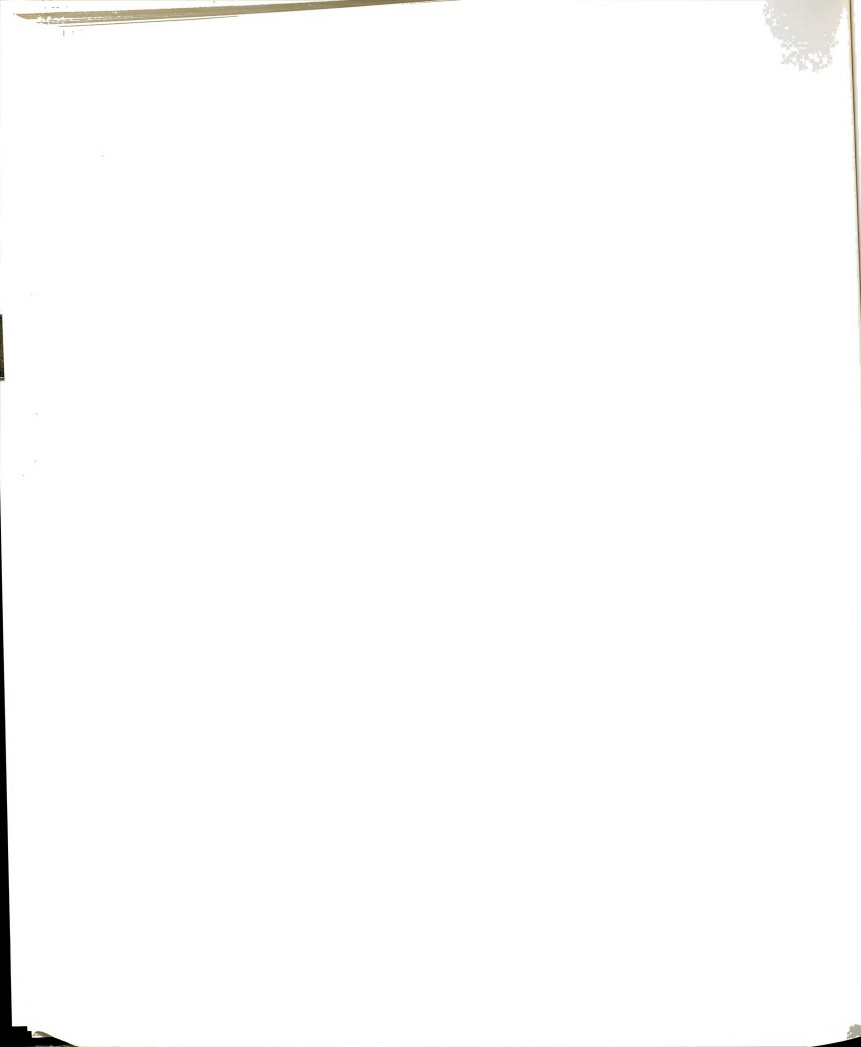
have a down payment of 1,380 shillings, 700 shillings was a deposit on the land, 500 shillings was for the purchase of one grade cow, and the remainder covered legal fees connected with the transfer of the land (King, 1977:341; Pagett, 1968:13).

The low-density areas were comparatively well planned; the farms were of good size, able to support agricultural mechanization. Since the farm size was sufficient for potentially profitable agricultural activity, target income was 100 per annum. Each farm contained 100 families in an area covering about 5,000 acres (approximately fifty acres per family). By June 1966, about 4,600 settlers had been settled in Low Density settlement areas covering approximately 230,000 acres. These areas, as well as the Yeoman and High Density areas were classified as Low Altitude, High Altitude and Plantation lands (Figure 6.3).

In total, there were about thirty-two low density areas (including those devoted to the Yeoman Scheme). They comprised a total of 61,838 hectares converted from about 134 formerly white farms at a price of £1,532,522. The Low Density scheme received a disproportionate share of the government attention and funding. It is also claimed that the Low Density farms had a great amount of investment per acre and therefore, the farmers had more opportunity to earn larger returns overall. This concern reflected the objectives of the developers, as is noted in the Farm Economic Survey Report No. 27 (1971, p.10), "the Low-Density

FIGURE 6.3: THE STRUCTURE OF KENYAN LAND REFORM 1962-1970
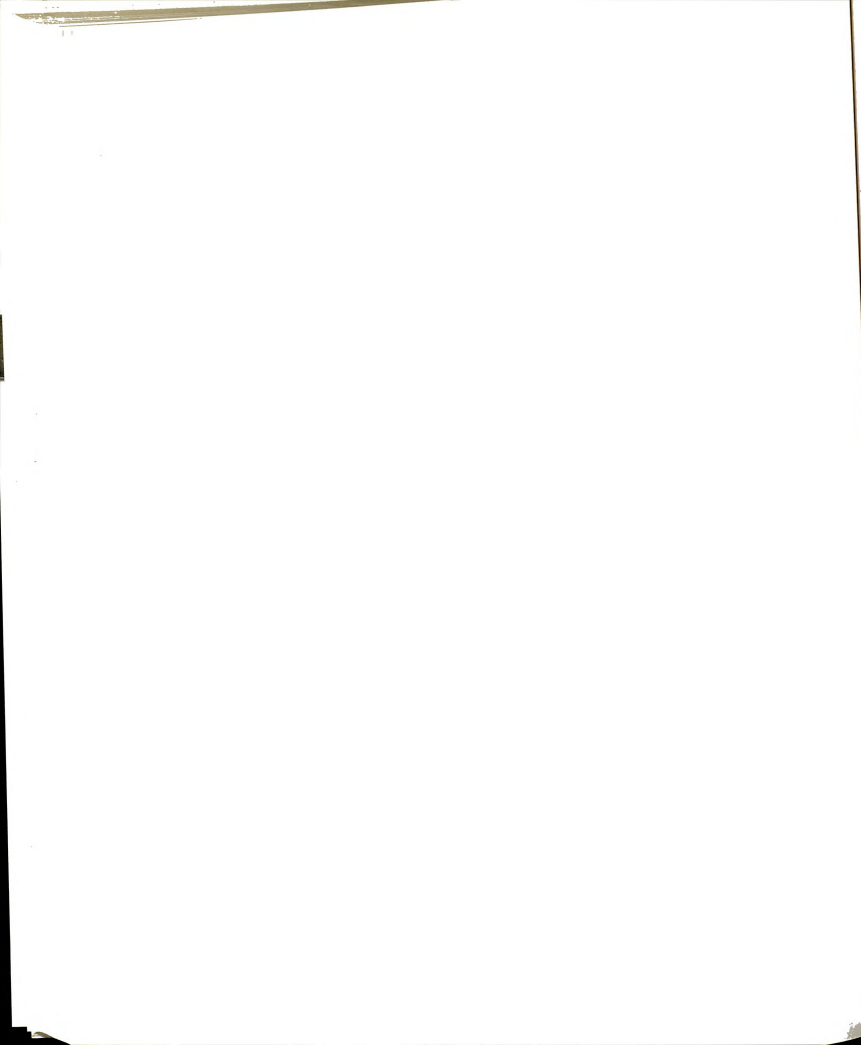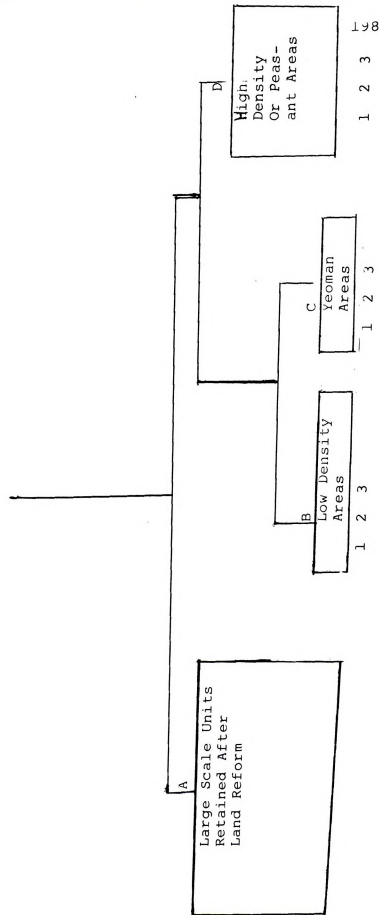
KEY:

(1) low altitude lands without a plantation crop

(2) high altitude lands without a plantation crop

(3) lands with a plantation crop

Schemes therefore reflected the intention that these farms should provide substantial increases in output since the land was also of high potential."

High Density Areas

In the High Density, or One Million Acre scheme as it was known by its settlement title, there was very little concern given to economic improvement. This scheme was designed to settle the landless, the poor and the unskilled and expectations of economic return did not exceed seventy pounds annually with most settlers targeted at twenty-five or forty pounds. The High Density scheme lacked an economic development concept because its initial objective was to gain the political confidence of the masses. To accommodate as many as possible, the farms were subdivided as many times to meet the immediate needs of the landless Kikuyu. Harbeson has explained how this scheme fit into Kenya's overall land reform policy.

> The program for the unemployed and landless
> was intended as a token of government sympathy
> that might yield some favorable side effects
> in maintaining civil security; but land policy
> as a whole was to be oriented toward economic
> growth, the interests and capabilities of those
> who already possessed land, and long-term in-
> crease in political stability and national in-
> tegration (1977:97).

Since the aim was to serve as many families as possible, high-density lands were divided to the extent that they managed to accommodate approximately 35,000,000 smallholder

families. Each settlement had 3,000-4,000 settlers on about
4,000 hectares, averaging ten to thirteen hectares per fam-
ily (King, 1977:340). Each plot was further subdivided into
a half acre for the homestead, two acres for subsistence
crops, a half-acre for fodder, four acres for grass and the
rest for cash crops. The original net income target was
about twenty-five pounds annually, equal to subsistence
level. This was subsequently raised to forty pounds and
later to seventy pounds. While a majority of the plot
holders eventually reached the lowest target, few ever
reached seventy pounds (Table 6.2).

By June 1966, there were a total of eighty of these
areas covering a total of 308,321 hectares. The number of
settlers eventually increased to 27,690 families.

Yeoman Areas

The Yeoman areas were for experienced farmers with
substantial amounts of capital. The planned net income was
£250 per annum (Bunting, 1970:430). In the Yeoman settle-
ments, there was no racial division, an African, an Asian,
or a European had the right to buy Yeoman area land and
proceed with settlement as he wished. Yeoman settlement
areas were provided for experimental purposes, the govern-
ment wanted to prove that Africans, Europeans and Asians
could live in harmony. This "experiment" lacked validity
in its conception since it excluded poor people, but did
provide a means for wealthy people of all races to obtain as
much good land as they wanted and could afford. Yeoman

TABLE 6.2: TARGETTED NET INCOME AFTER SUBSISTENCE AND FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS HAD BEEN MET, 1964-1968

Target Income in areas specified	Total Number of Farms in the Income Group (Number)				Proportion of Farms Reaching This Target Income (Percent)			
	1964/65	1965/66	1966/67	1967/68	1964/65	1965/66	1966/67	1967/68
High Density								
L 25	333	297	70	39	6.3	20.8	17.1	69.2
40	763	924	275	242	13.6	14.7	27.1	21.1
70	70	721	310	331	5.7	6.2	13.2	14.5
Low Density								
L 100	145	416	336	248	7.5	15.8	12.5	19.8
Yeoman								
L 250	--	--	35	32	--	--	8.5	25.0
All Farms	1,311	2,358	1,026	892	10.7	13.1	17.0	20.5

SOURCE: Farm Economic Survey Report, 1970, No.27, p. 134- . The Central Bureau of Statistics of Kenya.

settlers had to have at least £200 to invest. Practically, the Yeoman Scheme was for those farmers who had at least £500 to £1000 to contribute toward a net earning capacity of £250 annual return. Approximately a quarter of the yeoman settlers had reached the targetted income by the second year of program operation (See Table 6.2).

Effects of Land Reform: The Case of Nyeri

The effects of the processes of land reform in this Kikuyu region of Kenya were examined through a case study in the Nyeri District that was carried out by the researcher in 1980-81. In Nyeri like other districts in the Kikuyu province, settlement was carried out by divisions under a land control board headed by a District Officer. The District Officer managed settlement affairs within the parameters of his district and held a meeting once a month concerning land within each Division. Divisions were further divided into locations and sublocations. Every registration was named after the location to prevent any confusion and make operation easier. For instance, Ruguru is the location of Mathira Division.

The planning for settlement in Nyeri was done under the auspices of the Board of Agriculture, a Board whose members were white settlers or officials sent directly from England. Africans were "represented" only by a liberal white settler. This placed African people in a disadvantageous position, powerless to make decisions concerning
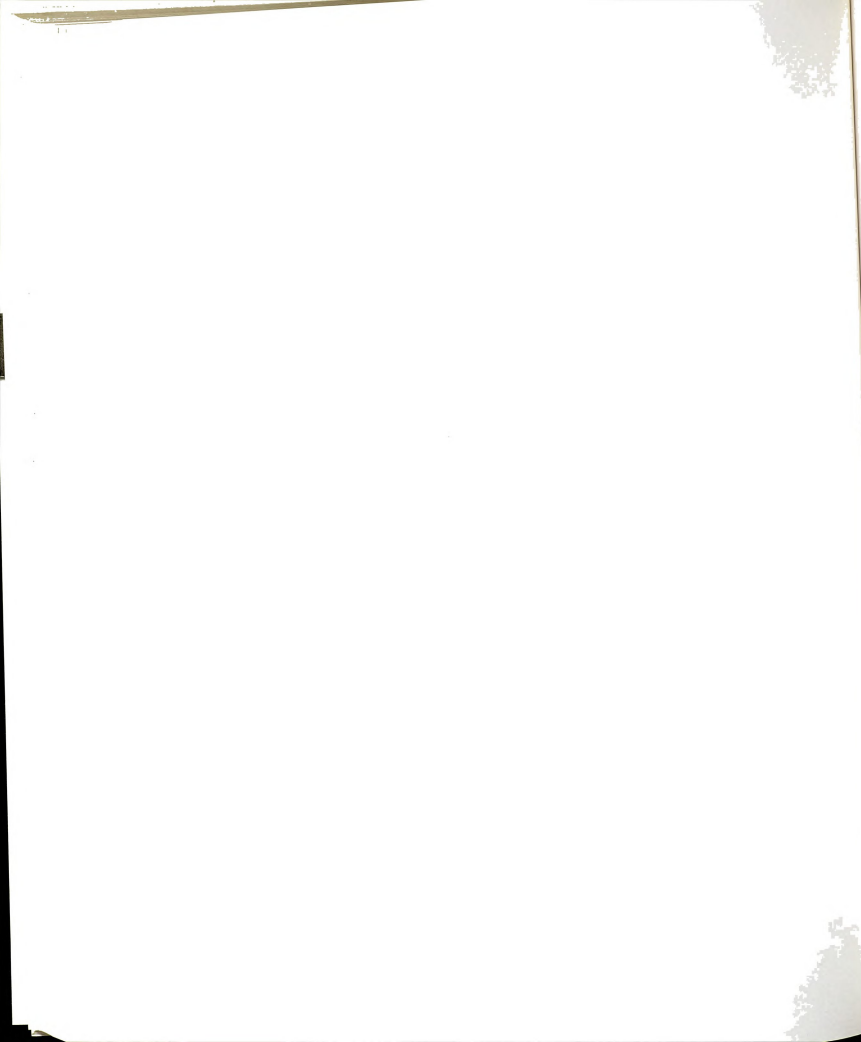
their own welfare, since they were neither on the Board nor

in the Kenya legislative council. The Board was composed

of the following individuals.

(1)   A chairman appointed by the Minister for
      Agriculture.

(2)   Six persons--two of whom are to be members
      of the Board of Agriculture (scheduled areas)
      appointed by the Minister for Agriculture

(3)   The Director of Agriculture

(4)   Three persons--appointed by the Board of Agri-
      culture (non-scheduled areas)

(5)   One Senior Technical officer of the Agricultural
      Department and one Senior Finance Officer of
      the Treasury

(6)   The Chairman of the Board of Agriculture
      (scheduled areas)

(7)   Not more than two other persons appointed by
      the Minister for Agriculture.

The Board's functions were to (a) purchase land and

(b) approve and initiate the settlement schemes.

However, since the One Million Acre scheme had to

be completed before Kenyan independence, a separate minis-

try was created--the Ministry of Land Settlement and Water

Development, established in 1962. Within this Ministry, a

Department of Settlement, under the control of a permanent

Secretary to the Ministry, was charged with planning and

coordinating the settlement schemes. The Department was

to push completion of the One Million Acre scheme and worked

jointly with the Board to implement its decisions.
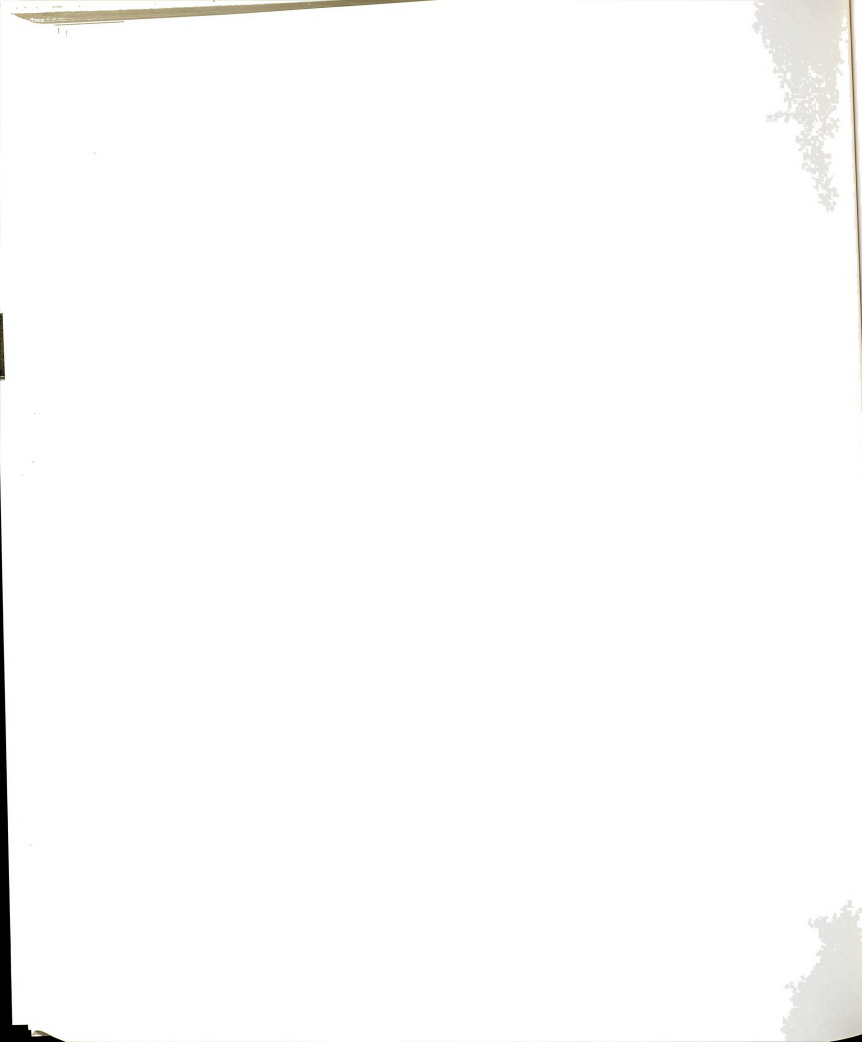
The case study in Nyeri revealed that the Board decision to target the income from small farms at only twenty-five pounds and their relentless subdivision by Department officials, eventually meant the failure of many who received land. This subdivision meant that many plots were too small to produce at more than a subsistence level. As an example, Table 6.3 shows the acreage and production on the former Labura farm in Mweiga.

Another example was the Maragwa farm, made up of five formerly European-owned farms, to comprise an area of about 57,000 acres. After this farm was bought for settlement, it was subdivided into ten acre holdings. Each small holding might be subdivided as follows:

```
          1/2  acre homestead
          2    acres subsistence crops
          1/2  acre fodder
          3    acres cash crops
          4    acres for grass
Total    10    acres
```

The essential problem of land reform, especially the One Million Acre Settlement plan, was its failure to provide for sound agricultural production. Almost from the beginning, controversy surrounded decisions about plot size in the High Density areas. Predictions from the Minister for Lands and Settlement were that, "the settlement scheme will increase production by 50 percent, in comparison with the European-owned farms...and increase the numbers

TABLE 6.3: FRAGMENTATION OF THE LABURA FARM IN MWEIGA
1967 and 1968

Plot No.	Name of the Owner	Acres	Produce 1967	1968
327	W. Wamungunda	15	120 bags	Failure
328	N. Makara	16	Failure	Failure
329	N. Mwinga	19	25 bags	153
332	W. Mathai	20	32 bags	156
333	W. Ndegwa	9	30 bags	60
334	M. Watrome	20	60 bags	225
335	D. Ndirangu	21	190 bags	95
342	J.B. Ndungu	20	15 bags	222
341	Mungororo	27	38 bags	218
340	K. Thigiru	--	5 bags	151
339	E. Gathii	--	99 bags	30
338	G. Kamau	37	Failure	31
337	N. Karuga	12	99 bags	Failure
336	M. Karari	15	99 bags	--
337	G. Wangu	--	10 bags	--
334	W. Njoki	10	60 bags	115
331	D. Githogiri	22	65 bags	223
349	S. Muchwa	20	29 bags	88
359	G. Migiri	10	37 bags	88
358	J. Kirungi	24	109 bags	368
357	F. Warui	21	100 bags	316
356	Christopher	9	59 bags	89

SOURCE: Government Document, Land Development, File No.
4/30, 2/5/75.
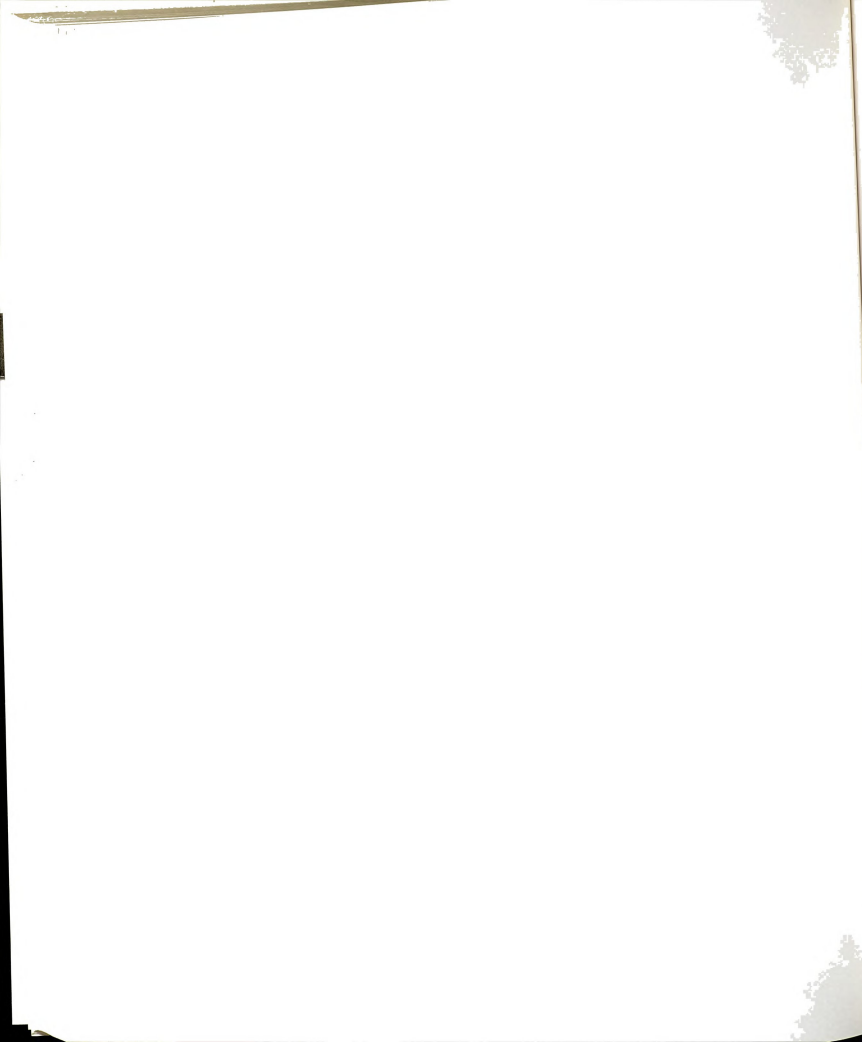
living off the land by 50 percent." (Angaine, *Kenya Weekly News*, 2/21/63). On the other hand, Mwendwa, the Minister of Labor, advised "All farming land should not be divided into small plots for anyone who wanted them," and he favored "working the settlement schemes on a co-operative basis." (Ibid)

Analysis of the case study in Nyeri, revealed that the One Million Acre Settlement scheme failed to effectively provide for the economic necessities of the people involved. This failure reflected on the way in which this attempt at land reform was carried out, its subdivision of land into plots too small for anything but subsistence farming. It still remains that settlement schemes in Kenya are essentially important. As Oates (1964:9) argued, "The settlement schemes are however so vital to the future of Kenya, that [lack of] progress in this field will have an adverse effect on everyone in the country."

An editorial in the *Kenya Weekly News*, even as it admitted the failure of the One Million Acre Settlement, looked to future land reform efforts...

> The original hope that the Million-Acre
> resettlement scheme would take the steam
> out of the Kenya Kettle has...totally
> vanished. The problem now is to start
> and to finance the new scheme. Ministers
> who are horrified with the results of
> the old one, instead of fragmenting European
> farms, hope to fuse them into co-operative
> units. But also they now genuinely wish
> for much European wheat and dairy and meat

farming, as well as for the plantations,
to continue to maintain the economy.
Subsistence farming produces little tax
revenue and few exports (February 21, 1964)

Summary

In the foregoing review of the plans, methodology, implementation and effects of the One Million Acre Settlement scheme, it was apparent that the essential portion of the plan failed because formerly landless and unemployed Kikuyu were provided lands too small for economically viable agriculture. This scheme, as well as failing to provide effective land reform for the majority of Kenyans, also created an insidious environment in which the development of class inequality among Africans was unavoidable, the topic of Chapter Seven.
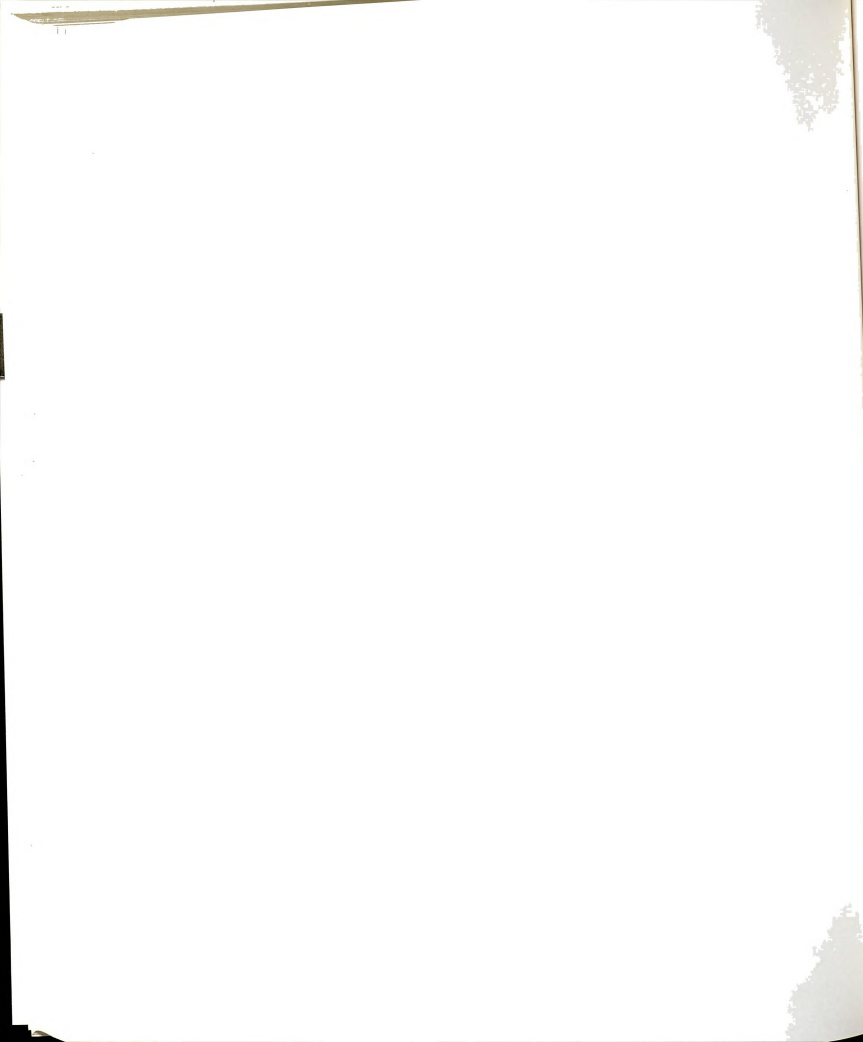
CHAPTER SEVEN

TOWARD AN UNDERSTANDING OF ECONOMIC
AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN KIKUYULAND AND IN KENYA

As Kenya underwent rural transformation, the agricultural ways of life began to change. After the two World Wars, social contacts were vastly enlarged by more rapid communication, by a great variety of mass media, and by increased social mobility. Farming, which had been largely a family enterprise in which even young children played an essential role, evolved into a highly specialized industry (Stadfield, 1972).

The main objective of the British was the establishment of long-term stabilization in their efforts to protect British interests. With their economic dominance established in the region since the colonial era, they moved to protect this by trading in their political dominance. They transferred political power to the Africans so that their economic dominance would remain intact.

In order to do this rationally and peacefully, the British government created a system which retained individual land holding as the only legal system and the only way in which security and development could be provided. They also allowed for the social formation of a stable African
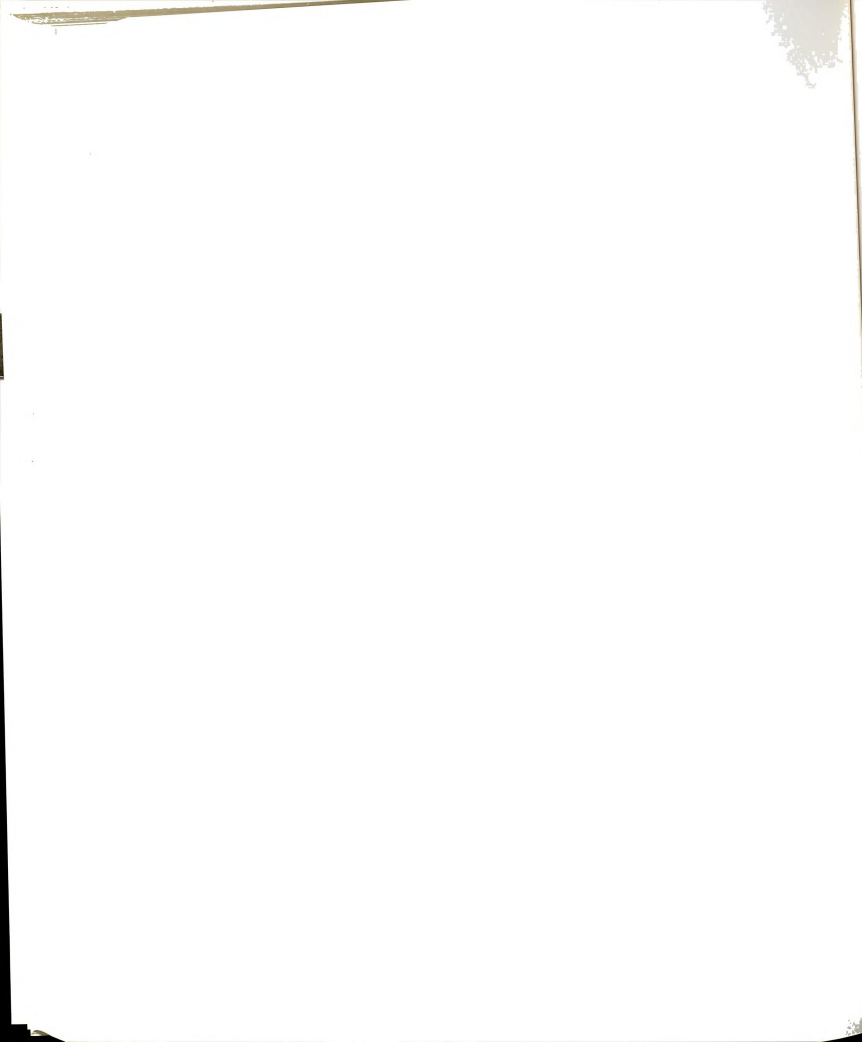
middle class. Social formation, as defined by Samir Amin
(1973/74:66) is "concrete structure organized and character-
ized by a dominant mode of production which is interconnected
with a complex set of other modes of production that are
subordinate to it."

Before this subject is pursued further, it is appro-
priate to restate the propositions to be tested. It was
hypothesized that: (1) change in the conception of land
rights and land use was a direct consequence of the colonial
land policy; (2) change in conception of land ownership
(mbari) was a direct consequence of the colonial land policy
and (3) change in political rights to land was a direct con-
sequence of colonial land policy.

The general theoretical view of the colonial rulers
in Kenya maintained that communal ownership was the main
obstacle to the development of African economic activities.
They contended that the system did not provide security in
tenure and security in land and argued it was necessary to
change from communal ownership to individual ownership.
This was viewed as the best method toward development. Thus,
the colonial objective was to create a system which would
free land from corporate or communal holding. For example,
Parsons (1971:33-43); Odoulu (1966); Branney (1959): and
Barrows (1973) have indicated that corporate tenures fre-
quently operated to constrain or block rural development
projects seeking to increase the income and well being of
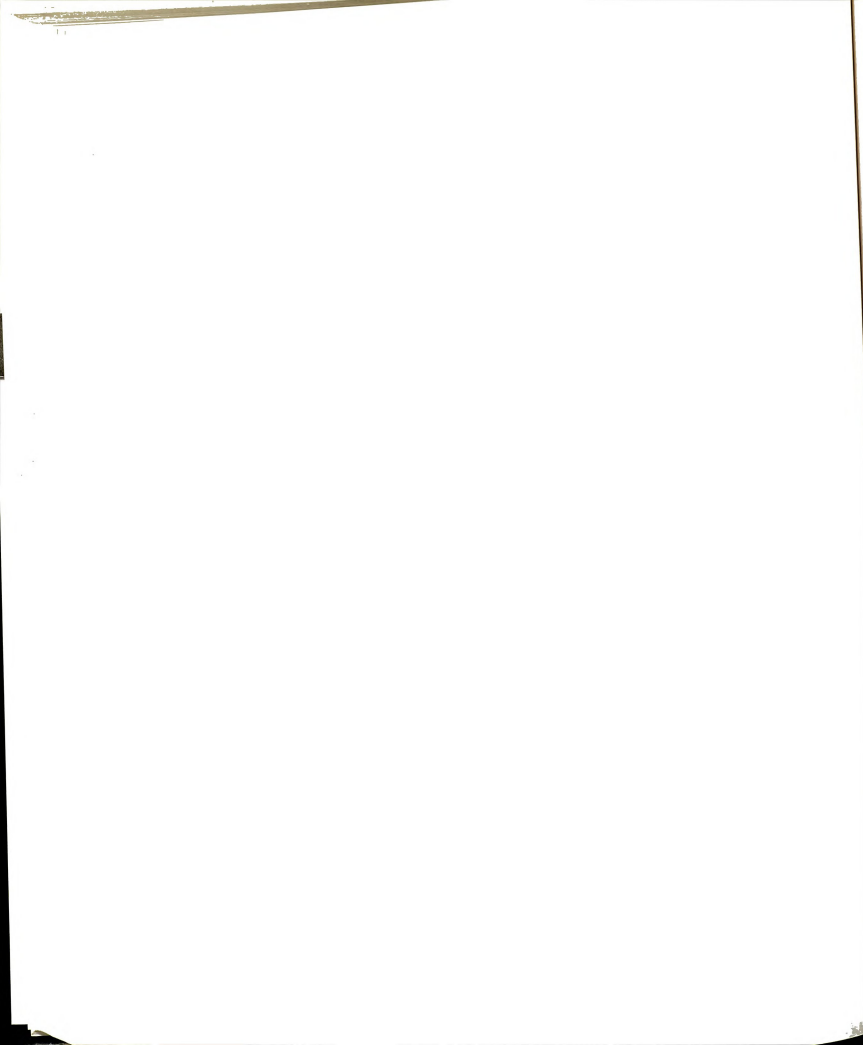
Africa's small-scale farmers. It was believed that communal ownership served the community interest, but not the individual members of the community since it deprived individuals of rights and motivation to utilize their plots efficiently.

Chichilnisky and Cole (1978:8) held that, "innovators and progressive rural entrepreneurs who can use land as a commodity are held to be crucial factors in the development process. Their appearance is blocked by corporate patterns of land use." (Ibid) The view toward private or individual land holding was that private tenure would be better and superior to collective tenure in that it had the ability to respond and to promote change and to provide security in land. It was believed that private ownership allowed progress, that when "ultimate land rights lie with the community, farmers are often too insecure to adopt innovations or improve farm land." (Ibid)

In Kenya, the white settlers believed that there was a need for a well defined system of land rights, land use, land ownership and political rights, so that the native Africans could develop like their European counterparts.

> Rapid economic development in Africa south
> of the Sahara depends on the nature of the
> contribution which agriculture makes to this
> development. For agriculture to make its
> full contribution, land tenure arrangements
> must be brought in line with the requirements
> of a market economy. An important step in
> this direction is to treat land as if it were
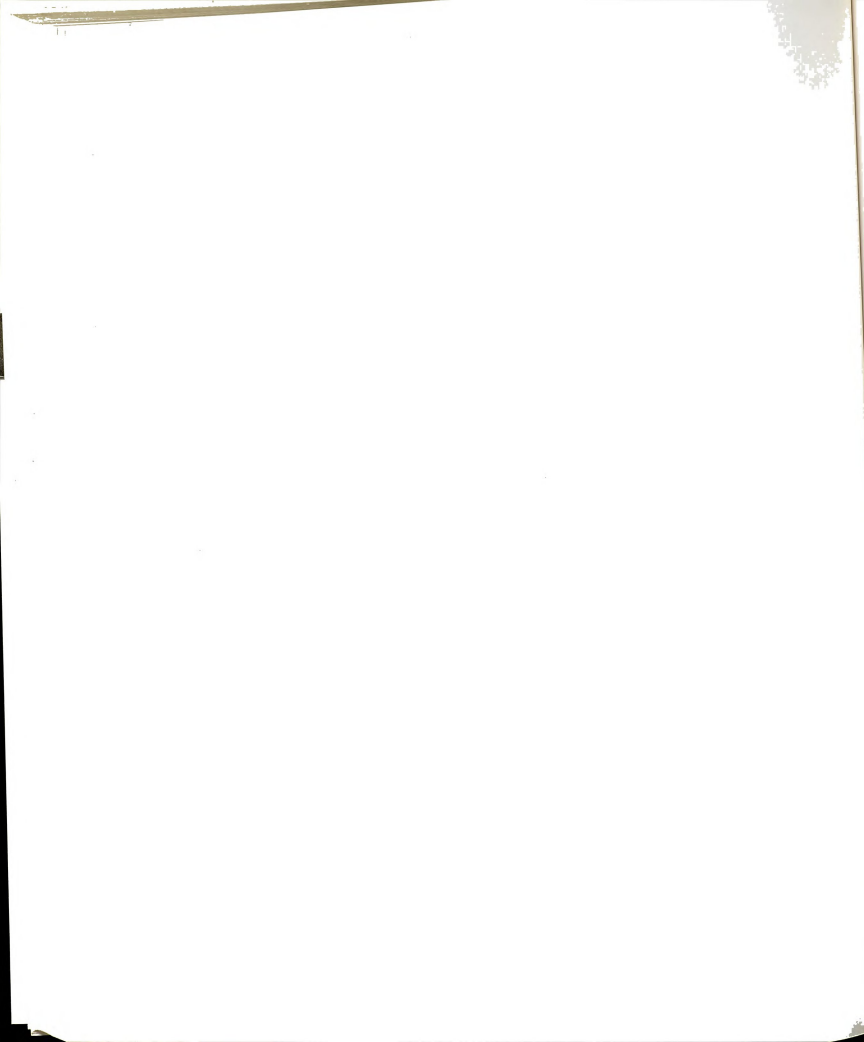
> a commodity and the effective agent to
> encourage this is the new African state...
> it is therefore suggested that among the
> strategies for the achievement of increased
> agricultural productivity and output, the
> new African states should devise land tenure
> policies which will (a) break the present
> local sovereignties over land by making the
> nation rather than the local community the
> unit of collective action; (b) make per-
> formance rather than social status the
> criterion of land use and land ownership
> and (c) treat rights in land as if they
> were commodities. (Victor C. Uchendu in
> Chichilnisky)

Since the colonists believed that any development
was dependent on change in land tenure, it was difficult
for Kikuyu politicians to convince their colonial rulers
otherwise.   Bohannan (1960) explained that Western think-
ing toward land, "assumes a notion of land as a measurable
entity divisible into thing-like parcels by means of tech-
nical processes." Most African societies visualized land
primarily "in terms of social relationships in space. Thus,
they axiomized, so to speak, the spatial aspects of their
social groups and provided themselves with a social map."
(p.439-447)

With this intimate relationship of the society and
land, any drastic alteration in the African land system,
automatically destabilized the over-all social formation.
Bohannan explained the impact of the changes in rural Africa,
particularly among the TIV, plateau Tonga and the Kikuyu in
Kenya.
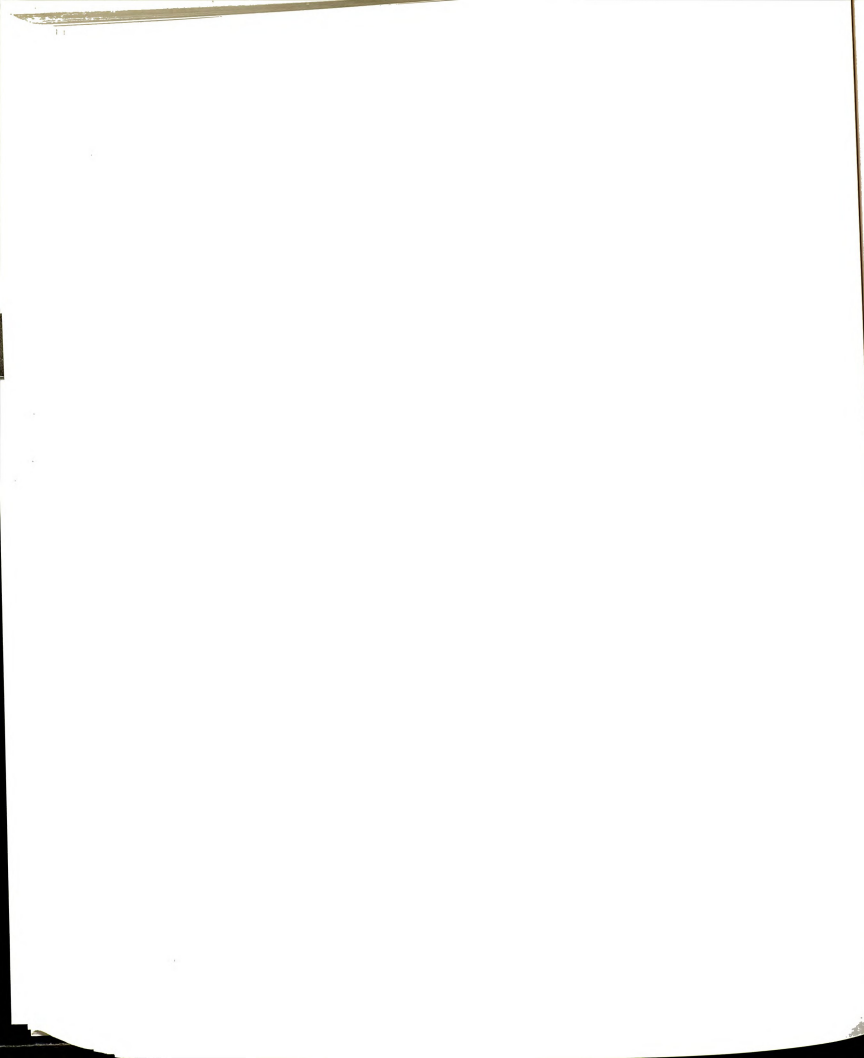
> Africans are moving toward the Western
> concept of bounded parcels of land; that
> new forms of relationships between men
> and land, such as individual ownership
> of land, are evolving.... Social groups
> which in the past had merely a spatial
> dimension are now being turned into terri-
> torial groups, because they are assumed
> by European-dominated legal systems to be
> 'juridical' persons. (1960:115)

Knowing that land was the only major element that kept the Kikuyu social unit together, the British deliber- ately initiated moves to disunite their community. The first move was to detribalize them by expropriating their land and making them landless. Alienating land from them also implied the destruction of their homestead dwellings. Thus, in a physical sense, the Kikuyu were disunited.

The second step was that the Kikuyu, having lost their land and their homesteads, were rearranged in the colonialists' patterns. In 1953, this rearrangement began with villagization. This move to provide the Kikuyu with village homes was a symbolic gesture to prove that the Kikuyu homestead system was dead and that the Kikuyu peo- ple were already in transition toward a new social struc- ture. Dalton (1961:167) explains, "As the process of in- teraction gathers momentum, there is a more radical absorp- tion, the old group values give way to a growing individual- ism and the strains between the old values and the new be- gin to appear."
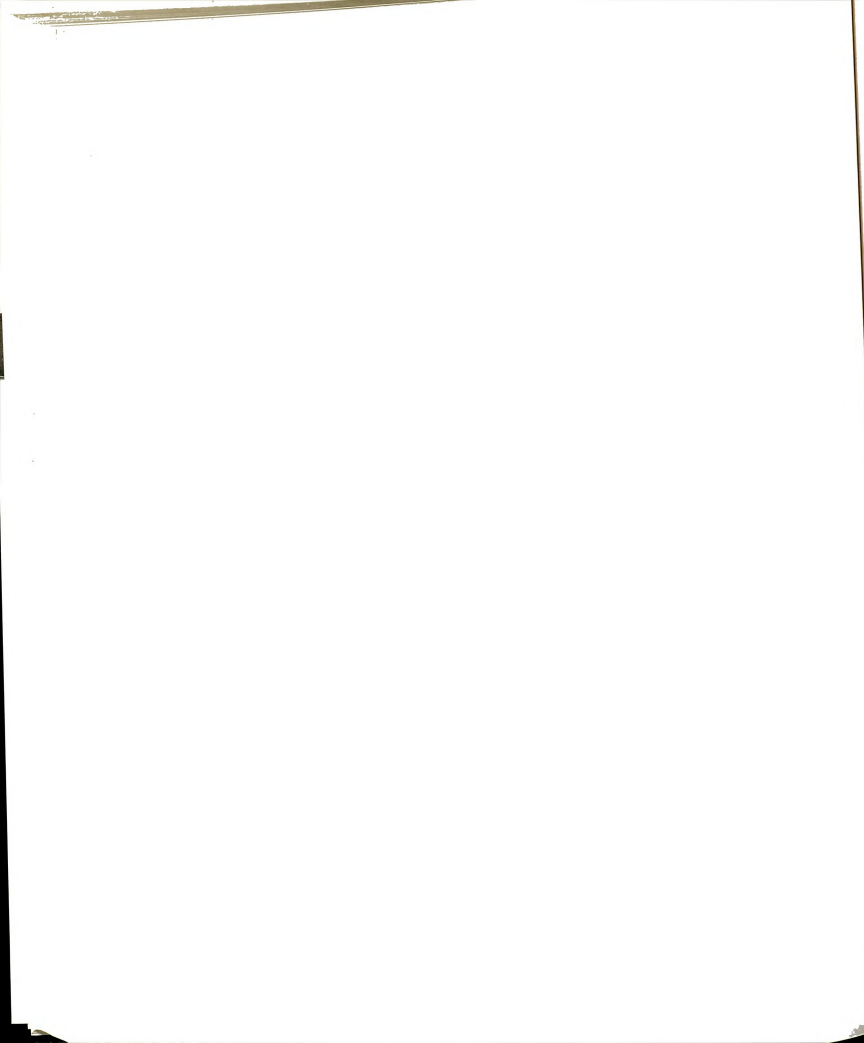
The social arrangment of people, however, does not
change without a change in their political order. As pointed
out in previous chapters, the Kikuyu political organiza-
tion, throughout the centuries prior to white settlement,
remained within tribal boundaries. As change took place
in their rural community, the political system that was
based on age-grade factors became more and more dependent
on legislative behavior, in which the idea of representation
was the prominent philosophy. The intention of the colon-
ialists was not to deny the existence of the Kikuyu politi-
cal order, but to change this old order. The old political
order of the Kikuyu emphasized their exclusiveness and re-
inforced Kikuyu solidarity. Since the colonialist needed
a political system that would be helpful to white interests,
a new political system was created.

In the new system, only those Africans who were
"progressive" and loyal to the existing order were given a
chance to represent the masses. Wallerstein (1966:575) has
explained, "Since the colonial powers were interested in
political loyalty, they aimed at maintaining a relatively
passive type of obedience and identification, and were al-
ways ready, whenever possible, to utilize existing tradi-
tional loyalties or to transfer them to the new setting
without much change in their basic social and cultural or-
ientations."

Realizing the strengths of British efforts toward individualization, the Kikuyu readily adopted the new system without resistance. As Bascon and Herskovits (1959:4) stated, "...in Kenya the Kikuyu were so eager to adopt European ways that, when frustrated in their desires, many resorted to the violence of Mau Mau." This readiness of the Kikuyu to adopt the new colonial social and economic system may be explained by "the evolutionary dogma that every social condition far removed from it through a series of transitional stages, will consistently embrace the hypothesis that property sense so highly developed with us was wholly or already wanting in primitive society, that it must have evolved from its direct antithesis communism in goods of every kind." (Lewis, 1920:205)

Dalton (1967:76) claimed that colonialism destroyed the culture and society of which the indigenous African economy was an inextricable part. "If destroyed materially poor but unusually integrated ways of life, wherein economic and social processes were mutually dependent and reinforcing."

The colonialist had learned that true change of this kind would be possible only when the Kikuyu landless and unemployed were provided with land. Thus they advocated adoption of the free world system. Change in Kenya had to pass through four stages of evolution on the road to civilization. These stages of horizontal evolution progressed from
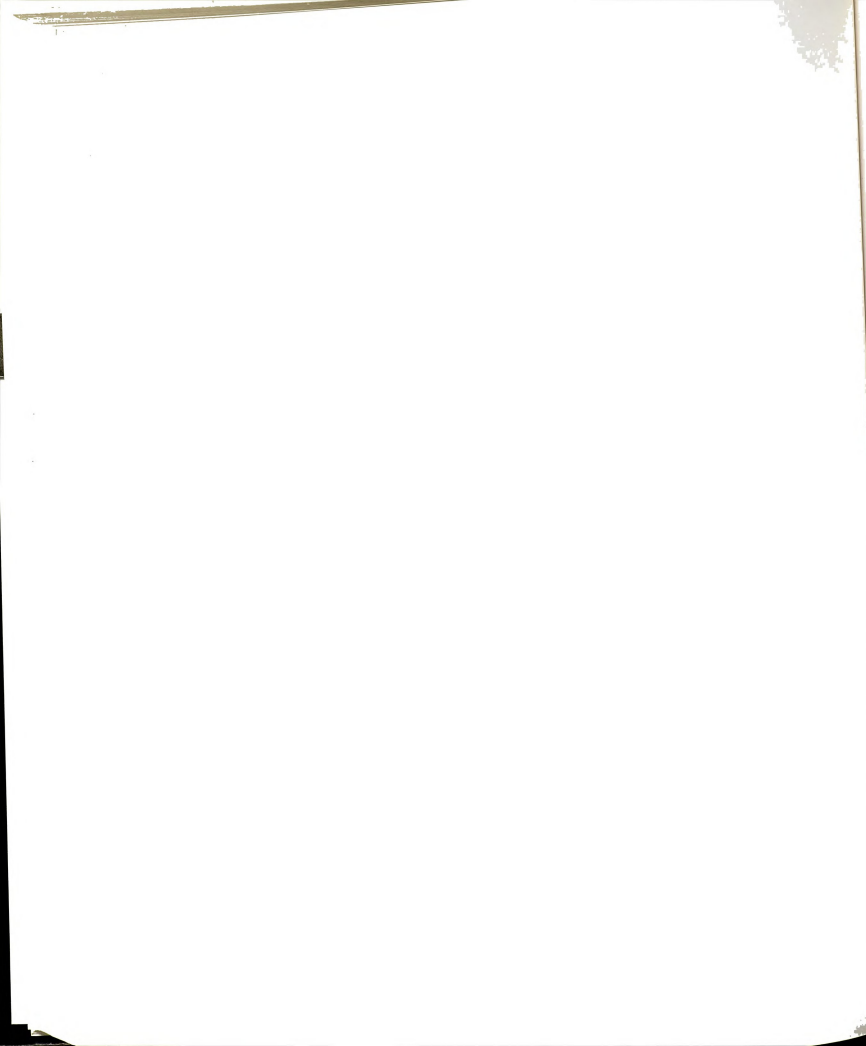
tribal society on the reserves, to laboring for European farmers, to urban employment, and then to professional occupation. This progress roughly followed from Villagization (1953) to Land Consolidation and Registration (1954), to the One Million Acre Scheme (1962-70) and, then the effects of the process.

The benefits of establishing a stable African middle class, as far as the Colonial government was concerned, were that this middle class group would have property to protect and would therefore, seek help from the whites and that this relatively affluent group of Africans would divert the hostile attention of the masses toward their own people instead of focusing it on the expartriate economy. Table 7.1 is provided here to give a comparison of selected settlement designs. In the table, the Yeoman areas (Zone III) were not included, so the table shows the High Density Zone (I) and the Low Density Zone (II) only. The Yeoman Zone (III) was excluded because these farms were established for experimental purposes, as explained in Chapter Six.

Given the nature of the high and low density settlements, variations in production among the Kikuyu farmers became unavoidable. Even within Zone I (high-density areas) where land was subdivided into subsistence level plots, production varied greatly depending mainly on the altitude
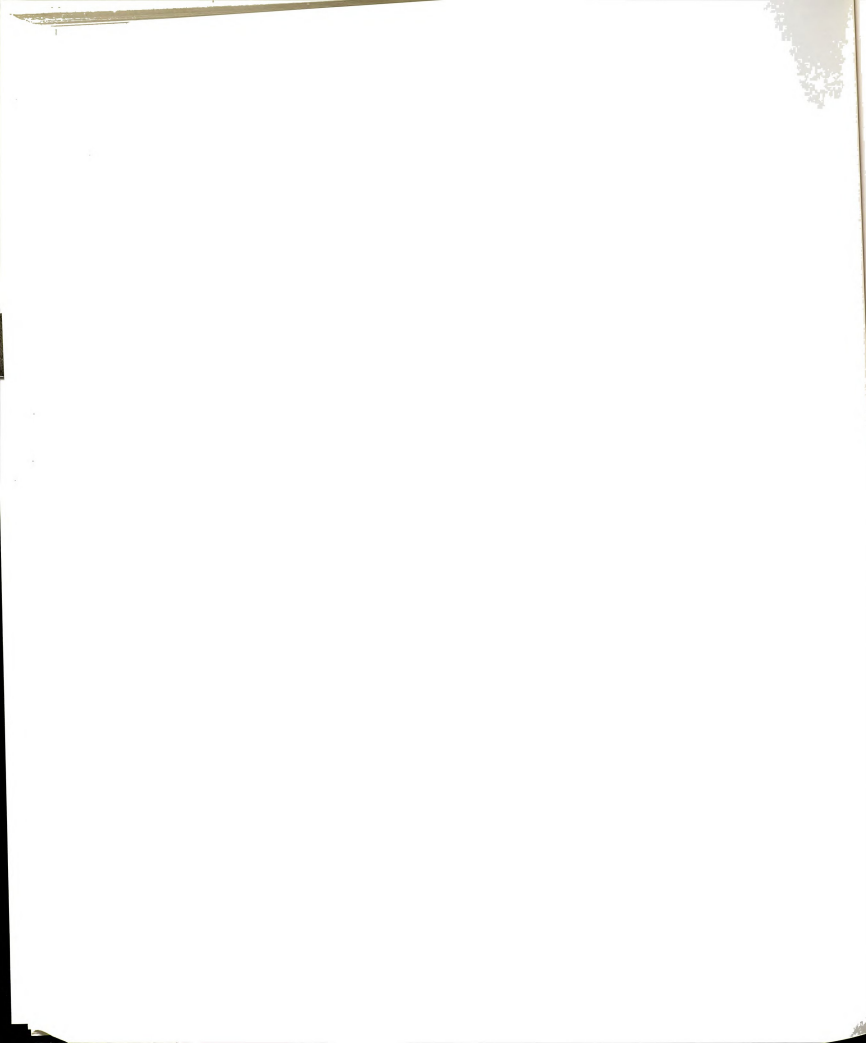
TABLE 7.1: COMPARISON OF SELECTED SETTLEMENTS IN ZONES I
AND II, JUNE 30, 1968

Settlement	Designation	No. of Farms	Average Farm Size In Acres	Target Net In-come (£)
#223 Simbara	Low Density High Altitude	81	47.1	100
#225 Pesi	Low Density High Altitude	89	55.6	100
#286a Kikuyu Estates	Low Density Low Altitude	38	16.5	100
#224 Shamata	High Density High Altitude	509	19.8	25
#227 Wanjohi	High Density High Altitude	598	13.7	25
#279 Maragwa Ridge	High Density Low Altitude	238	24.2	25

SOURCE: Ministry of Finance & Ecnomic Planning, Farm Economic
Survey Report #27, Nov. 1971.
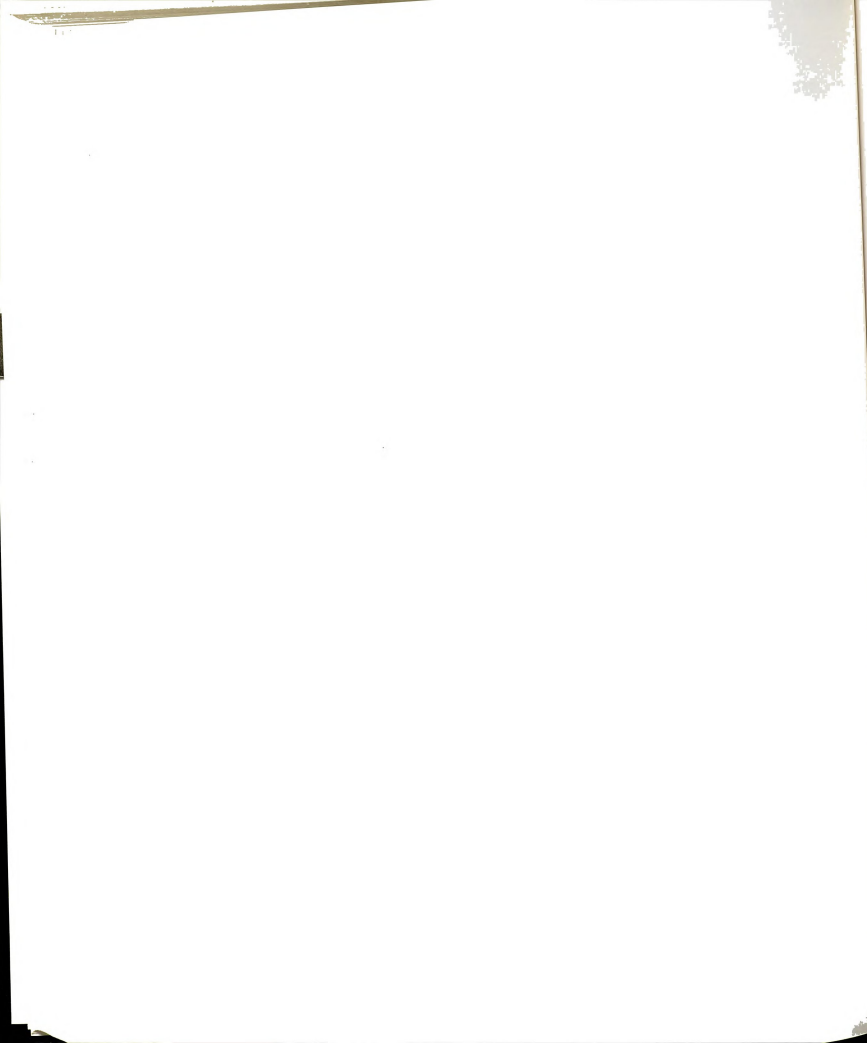
of the land, the crops produced and the fertility of the land. Leslie Brown (1965:24) has pointed out, "What I have seen bears out my general hypothesis, that where the land was itself capable of responding to more labour-intensive and capital-intensive methods, and where the settlers have the necessary industry, there has been an increase in production."

To understand the etiology of these variations in production that facilitated the development of class inequality among Kikuyu, it is apparent to analyze Figure 6.3, The Structure of Land Reform 1962-1970, in Chapter Six. In a diagram, the settlement areas are designed by the letters "A", "B", "C" and "D". Furthermore, each area, except those retained by white farmers, is designated as (1) high altitude, (2) low altitude, or (3) areas with a plantation crop. "A" areas were not part of the One Million Acre Settlement program. These farms belonged exclusively to whites who had owned them for a long time. They were too big and too expensive for new settlers without large capital and extensive skills to maintain.

Describing the size of the farms in these areas, Etherington (1963:24) reported, "...the area of the land scheduled was 7,700,000 acres, consisting of 3,593 holdings. Of these, 2,813 or 78.0 percent, were under 2,000 acres and amounted in area to 1,980,000 acres. In the next bracket were 501 holdings of from 2,000 to 4,999 acres, which comprised 13.9 percent and amounted to 1,460,000 acres." Most

of these were mixed farms specializing in cereals, livestock, dairy, produce and pyrethrnum. Oates (1964:9) pointed out that the mixed farm area amounted to 3,440,000 acres of the total 7,700,000 acres of the scheduled areas. This left the purely agricultural plantation crops with a total 4,260,000 (7,700,000 - 3,440,000) acres.

In the settlement scheme, the production conditions were sluggish and unpredictable. Many problems confronted the new settlers, including not knowing what crops to plant in the high altitude areas. They also feared depending on one crop. Most of them were unskilled farmers and lacked capital and knowledge of land utilization.

Such practical problems not only made it difficult for the new settlers to advance their agricultural production, but it also made it very difficult for them to meet the target net income expected. Such problems, including subdivision of farms, particularly in the High-Density areas made production in those areas inferior compared to pre-settlement production.

> Certain areas in Kenya that used to be exporters of food are now hard put to cover their own needs. In 1936, when I was responsible for the organization of the marketing of African produce, the District of Fort-Hall, Nyeri and Embu railed 300,000 bags of maize. I wonder how many bags were railed in 1963. (Kenya Weekly News, 1963:9)

Also, most of these farmers were loaded with debts. They had been loaned the money to start with. Unfortunately
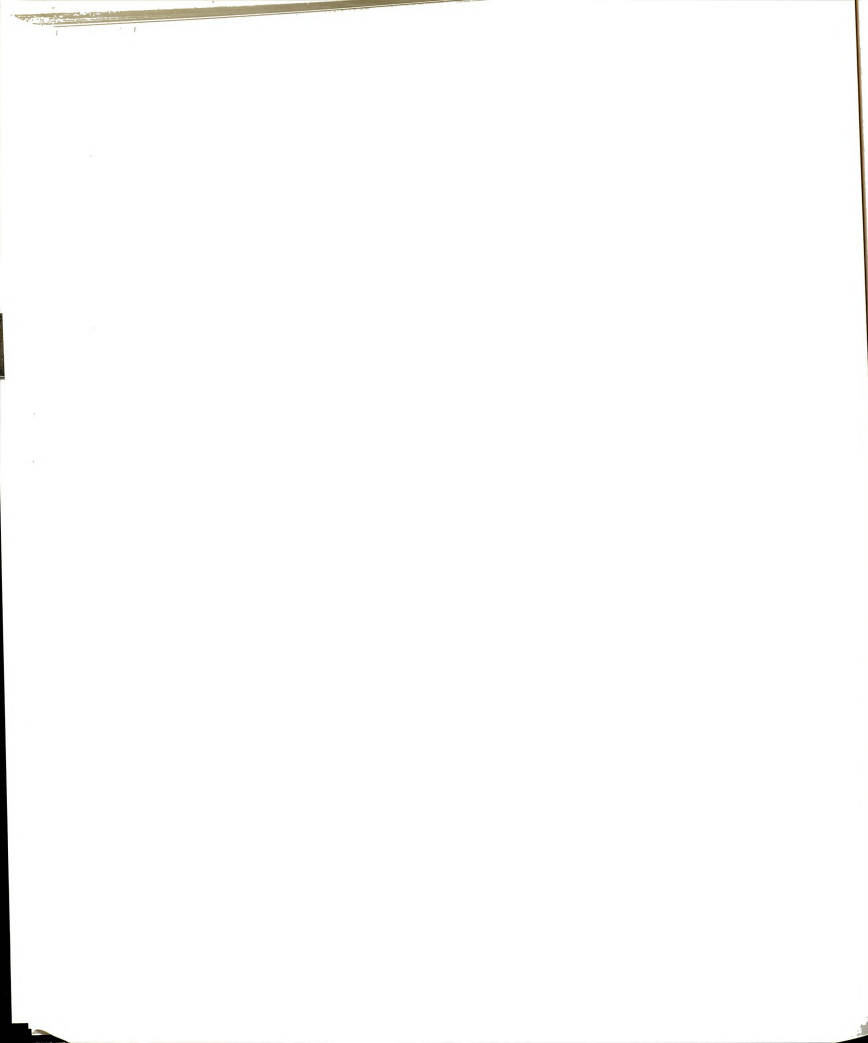
many of these settlers were unable to repay loans at the
high rate of 7½ percent interest.

Thus, most of these farms, whether in High-Density,
Low-Density or in Yeoman areas had difficulty meeting their
target net incomes during the years 1964/65 - 1967/68. A
survey by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning
yielded the results presented in Table 7.2 about the pro-
portion of farms that managed to reach the target incomes
expected.

Despite the fact that most of the new settlers had
no technical knowledge, the proportion of farms reaching
their target income increased annually as shown in the table.
The table shows that even though the proportion of farms
reaching the target income increased annually, this propor-
tion accounted for only twenty percent of the farms in 1967/
68. Specifically, the increases occurred in the High-Density

TABLE 7.2: THE PROPORTION OF SETTLEMENT FARMS REACHING THE
            TARGET INCOME 1964/65 - 1967/68

Target Income (£ Per Farm)		Proportion of Farms Reaching the Target Income in Percentages			
		1964/64	1965/66	1966/67	1967/68
25		6.3	20.8	17.1	69.2
40	High Density	13.6	14.7	27.1	21.1
70		5.7	6.2	13.2	14.5
100	Low Density	7.5	15.8	12.5	19.8
250	Yeoman	--	--	8.5	25.0
All Farms		10.7	13.1	17.0	20.0

SOURCE: Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, _Farm
         Economic Survey Report, No. 27,_ 1971.
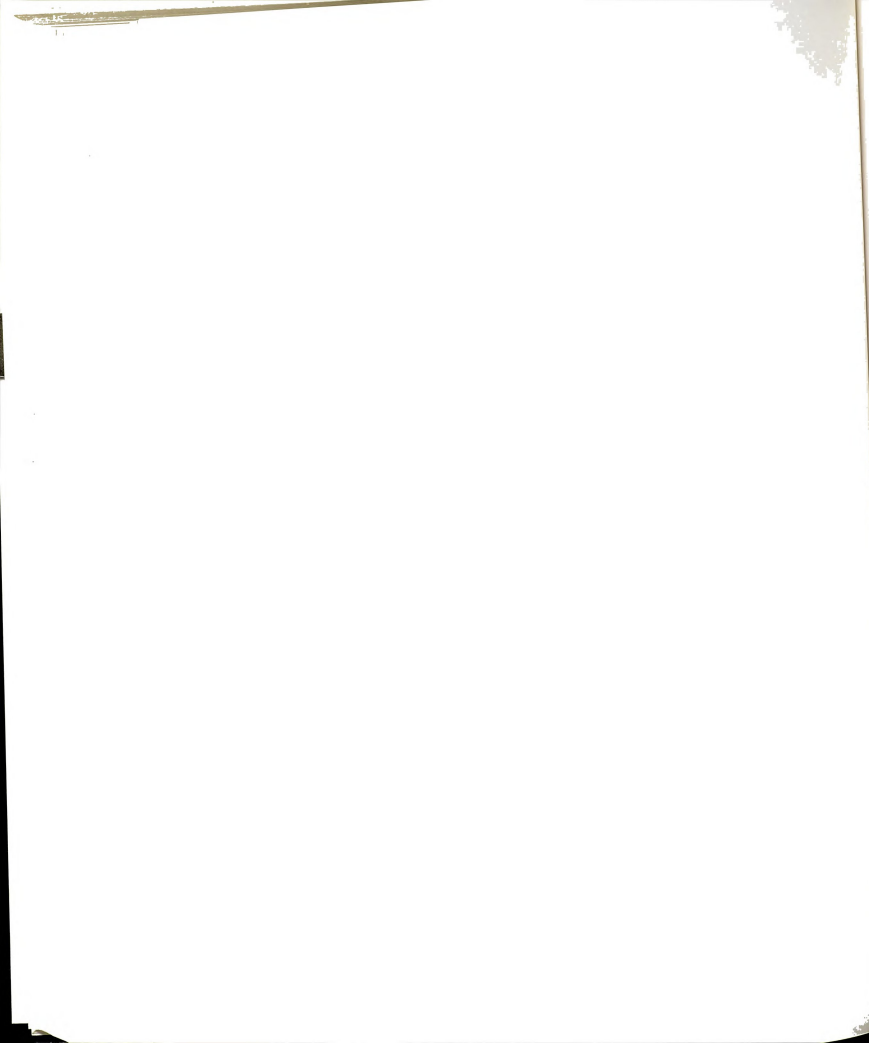
farms, with targets of £25, £40 and £70. Profits per acre on these farms grew substantially from -4 shillings in 1964/65 to 137 shillings per acre in 1967/68. Most of this occurred in those farms at high altitudes.

Similarly, in the low altitude, High Density Areas, the profit per acre grew steadily, except for plantation crop farms. On the plantation crop farms, net profits fell from 9 to -4 shillings per acre between 1964/65 - 1966/67. This was more because of increased cost than output. The study reveals that production in the settlement areas depended very much on the size of the farm and the input. The Farm Economic Report No. 27 pointed out, "From farms within the 10-19.9 acre size range and above, output per farm rose steadily contributing to an increase in profit per farm in all size ranges, with the exception of those farms in the 40-49.9 category."

The research finding is that small size farms did better than the larger farms in the settlement areas. The smallest size range, for example, of farms less than 10 acres, were mostly found in Nyandarna and Kiambu districts. These farms were successful in their performance because they had access to markets in the Nairobi area. To illustrate this discussion, Tables 7.3 and 7.4 are provided here to show the variations in farm size, output per farm, costs per farm and net profits per farm. Table 7.4 shows the relationship between farm size and inputs of capital and labor.

TABLE 7.3: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FARM SIZE AND PROFITS, 1967/68

Farm Size Range in Acres	Number of Farms	Average Farm Size in Acres	Output Per Farm	Cost* Per Farm	Net Profit per Farm	Output Per Acre	Costs Per Acre	Net Profit Per Acre
			In Shillings Per Farm			In Shillings Per Acre		
Less than 10	64	7.3	4635.5	1540.3	3095.2	632	211	424
10-19.9	364	13.8	3450.0	1531.8	1918.2	250	111	139
20-29.9	131	23.5	3666.0	1645.0	2021.0	156	70	86
30-39.9	120	34.7	5586.7	3296.5	2290.2	161	95	66
40-49.9	79	44.4	5017.2	2752.8	2264.4	113	62	51
50-59.9	71	52.3	5125.4	2562.7	2562.7	98	49	49
60-69.9	11	64.5	6321.0	3612.0	2709.0	98	56	42
70 or more	53	124.8	13852.0	6240.0	7612.8	111	50	61
All Farms	893	30.5	4778.0	2278.0	2500.0	156	75	81

*Includes loan interest payment

SOURCE: Farm Economic Survey Report No. 27 (1971)
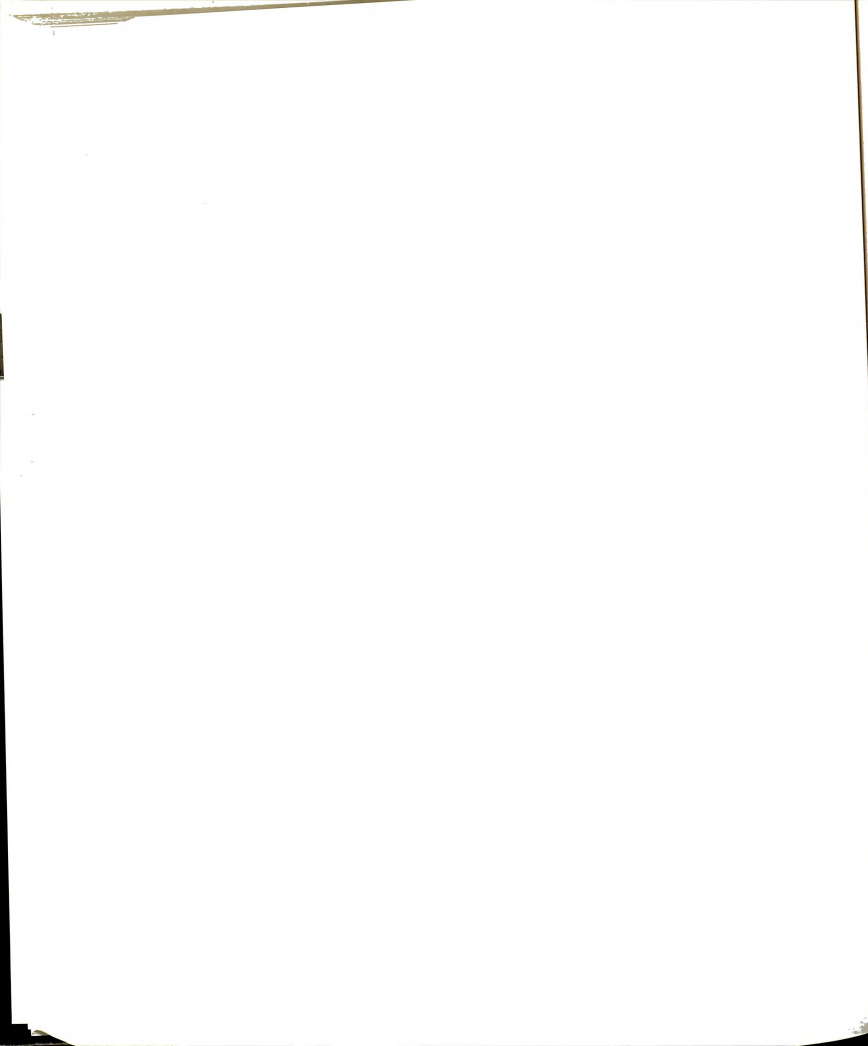
TABLE 7.4:   THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FARM SIZE AND INPUTS
             OF CAPITAL AND LABOR ON THE SETTLEMENT SCHEMES,
             1967/68

Farm Size Range (Acres)	Average Farm Size (Acres)	Capital Investment		Labor Availability*	
		Per Farm (Sh.)	Per Acre (Sh.)	Per Farm (No.)	Per 1000 Acres (No.)
Less than 10	7.3	12374	1695	8.0	1109
10-19.9	13.8	8329	597	7.1	526
20-29.9	23.5	9471	403	7.5	315
30-39.9	34.7	13568	391	7.5	218
40-49.9	44.4	13897	313	7.3	163
50-59.9	52.3	14435	276	7.7	148
60-69.9	64.5	16834	261	8.7	133
70 or more	124.8	27581	221	11.6	93
All Farms	30.5	11670	382	7.7	252

*Defined as the total number of people available for work
 on the farm i.e., includes family and hired labor.

SOURCE: IBID
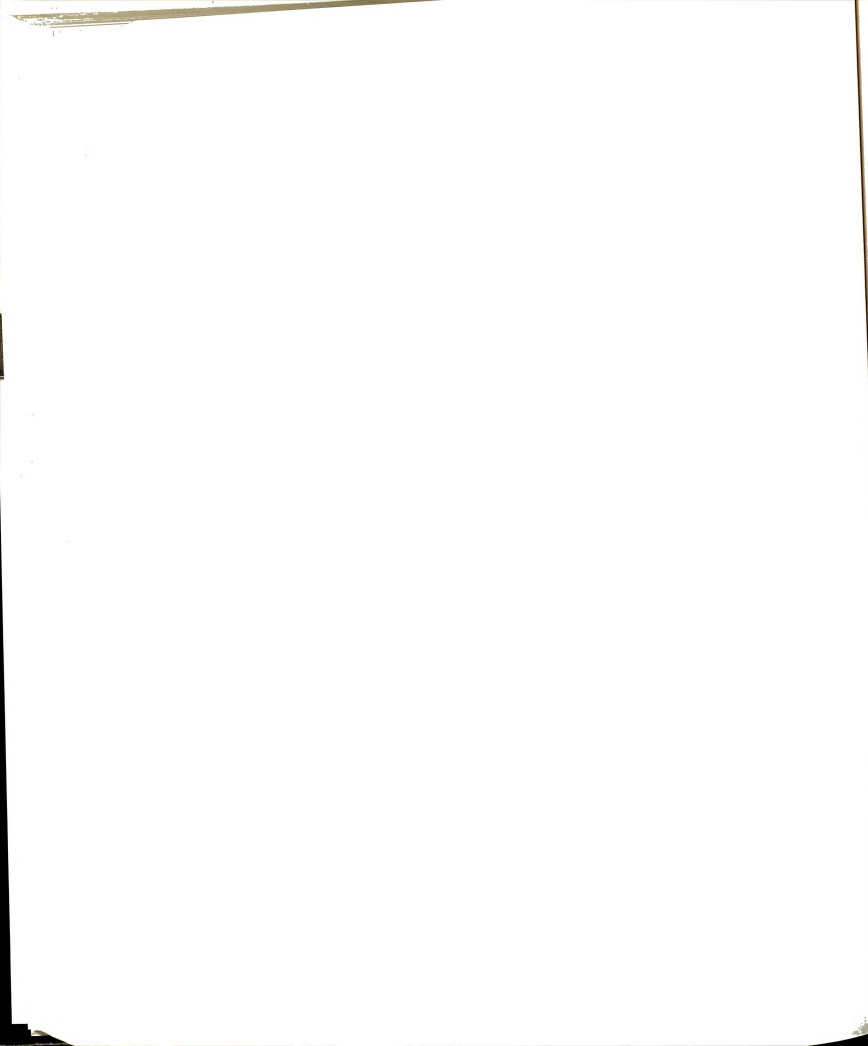
The findings of the survey reveal that the larger the farm the less intensive the farming system, so that output per acre fell as farm size increased. However, there were several factors that hindered productivity on most of these small farms: (1) the decline in prices of commodities, (2) costs increased more than the output, (3) climatic factors, (4) failure of the government to provide education and applied technology and (5) a lack of capital and risk-taking in the enterprise by the farmers themselves. The planners also over-estimated the capacity of the new settlers. They did not consider the farmers' lack of farming and management skills. Most of these farmers began their farming heavily in debt and were required to begin repayment within the first six months. The study also found that most of the small farmers were concerned primarily with meeting subsistence level requirements.

Despite these problems, the study reveals that productivity in the High-Density areas tended to be higher, particularly on farms at high altitudes. According to the Farm Economic Survey Report, No. 27, 7500 feet was chosen as the dividing line between high and low altitudes. This was because 7500 feet was the minimum altitude for profitable pyrethrum production and the maximum for maize. Only dairy cattle, pyrethrum, potatoes and sheep could be produced on the farms above 7500 feet. Pyrethrum became the chief product.

Maize and dairy cattle, on the other hand, were grown on the farms below 7500 feet. Other products were sugar cane, coffee, tea and sisal.

As rural production in those cash crops began to mature, the Central region began to acquire the features of capitalism. The features that give capitalism its distinct character are: (1) wealth concentrated in the hands of a few people who become the owners of means of production; (2) a large population of landless or working class people, who have no means of acquiring a living except by selling their labor on the farms or in the industrial sector; (3) almost all production has ceased to be of personal use to the producers; (4) the purpose of production is mainly for exchange (e.g., commodity production).

What was also developing rapidly in the Central region was class inequality among the people who had once been considered classless in the Marxian sense. This was due to the rising value of land and dependence on production for sale. The barter system had disappeared and commodity exchange developed to the universal exchange system.

The system of labor had also changed. After land consolidation and registration, and after the settlement of more land from the White Highlands, there was more wage labor. Only under capitalism does commodity production by wage labor become the dominant form of production. Dalton

(1967:156) reported, "Most of the Kikuyu have come to de-
pend on production for sale as their primary source for
likelihood: market exchange had become the dominant mode
of transaction; commercial production has become more im-
portant than subsistence production."

Marapa (1972:55) viewed the situation in a broader
context and explained the emergence of African classes,

> ...the Colonial presence violated the tra-
> ditional African customs, mores and beliefs
> enough to cause the emergence of a class
> system among the Africans....It was at the
> height of this struggle that Colonialists
> found it to be in their interest to crack
> the once-upon-a-time tight doors and admit
> some members of the African intelligentsia
> into the hall-ways of the inner chambers of
> Colonial interests. ...the Colonialists
> found it to be in their best interest to set
> up dikes, as it were, which would contain
> the floodwaters of African liberation. The
> policy of blackemization provided these
> necessary dikes. The purpose was to un-
> leash a decolonization process that would
> surrender political controls and yet in-
> sure the retention of economic influence.
> (p.58)

What the One Million Acre Settlement had done was
provide land to the landless and provide the opportunity
for the rural Kikuyu farmer to get a sense of cash crop
production and private land ownership. These foundations
gave the Kikuyu a start in capitalist production which
further faciliated the emergence of a class structure.

"Class", in a Marxian approach, is found in the
realm of property relations. Marx saw the concept to have

meaning only in the relations of production. Marx believed that a person's relationship to the means of production and property was the most decisive impact of inequality. He saw that in capitalist society, there were two opposing classes: those who own land, and those who do not. Inequality, according to Warwick Armstrong (1981:99) in Moscovitch and Arover's book "is sociologically a polite way of saying 'class'. Class is an ideologically charged word and justly so, for it points to the central organizing force of the kind of society in which we live."

Inequality is dependent upon one's theoretical perspective. In Marx's view, "the relation of production is fundamental: that is, a person's relationship to the means of production and property, be it that of owner, worker, or something other, carries the most decisive impact on inequality." (Anderson, 1974:78) Although Marxist views recognize other types of inequality--creating factors that must be considered important, a person's relationship to the means of production creates the kinds of inequalities that are most crucial and which circumscribe the nature and limits of other aspects of inequality. And, this normally occurs due to change.

When change occurs, everything involved is also changed. In other words, since the Kikuyu social, economic and political framework was linked with land, since land

was the social unit and the source of livelihood, once the
concept of land, i.e., ownership system, its uses, and the
rights involved were in the process of change, the Kikuyu
social system had to change as well. Throughout the period
of land consolidation and registration, the Kikuyu farming
implements, i.e., hoes, axes, machete and metal-tipped dig-
ging sticks were abandoned and replaced by commercial mach-
inery such as tractors.

These changes created inequality, not only between
people but also between regions of Kenya. Kitching (1980:
318) stated,

> By 1968 there were over 133,000 liscensed
> smallholder coffee growers in Kenya cover-
> ing some 270,000 acres of land. The bulk
> of those, were in Central Province, Kiambu,
> Nyeri, Fort-Hall (now Muranga), Kirinyaga,
> Embu and Meru, with the main concentrations
> elsewhere being Kisii district, and lesser
> degree Bungoma and Machakos. Of the 133,052
> acres under smallholder coffee in Kenya in
> 1968 no less than 99,500 acres (over 75
> percent) were in the Central Province which
> included at this date (in 1952), Meru and
> Embu districts and over a third (48,400)
> acres were in the three Kikuyu heartland
> districts of Kiambu, Nyeri and Muranga.

Inequality is not something to be measured by tech-
nical devices, but is visible to the naked eye (Beteille,
1977). Hoivik (1971:120) explained that it may be measured
in several ways.

> The study of social inequality is not a
> study of a limited part of society, as
> for example, the economics of transport
> or the sociology of religion. It is the
> study of a pillar that runs through most
> social institutions. Inequality refers
> to the distribution of some good or evil
> in a society-income or infant deaths being
> typical examples, implying that complete
> income equality between individuals or
> families is theoretically possible.

Summary and Conclusion

In this study, there are three things that have
been observed. First, the Kikuyu social structure was
violated and was disrupted as they were forced from their
land and made laborers on the White plantations. Second,
the Kikuyu staged a bloody social protest as they lost
their land and kinship system. Finally, their social pro-
test compelled the government to make an effort to appease
them by setting up land reform programs. This situation,
in turn, created material inequality among these rural
cultivators. This phenomenon was summed up by Kitching as
follows:

> After 1952 there was speeding-up of
> the process of differentiation, parti-
> cularly after independence when some
> African households gained privileged
> access to the resources of the state.
> With this speeding-up, there was also a
> widening of the relative gap between the
> richest and the poorest African households,
> as some gained access the very highest in-
> comes and to forms of wealth which had pre-
> viously been monopolized by European and
> Asians (1980: 315)
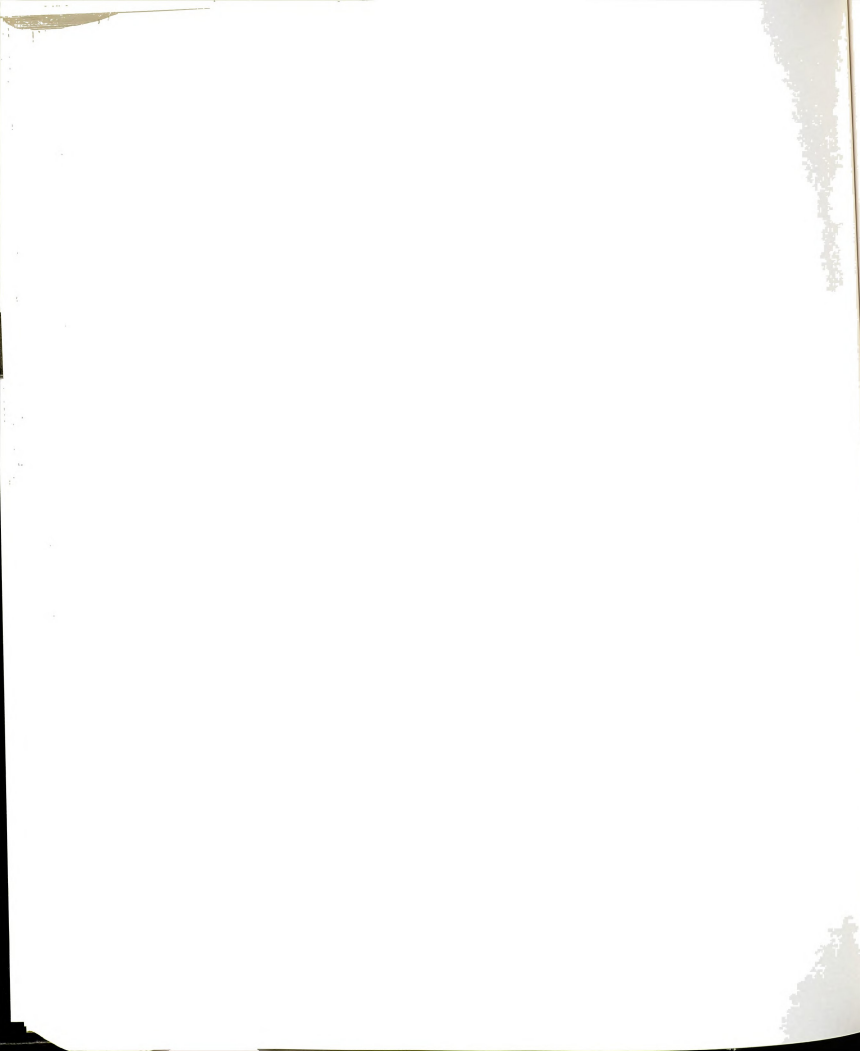
It is concluded therefore that this observed material in-
equality among these highland people was a result of the
types of economic systems that were established in the area.

The Contribution of the Study

The most significant thing that should be under-
stood is that in most Third World countries, Kenya in par-
ticular, there is a great lack of materials and literature.
This lack of written materials makes it difficult to carry
out any solid research study. Such problems can be mini-
mized only by more research studies such as this. It is
hoped that this study will serve as a modest contribution
to knowledge in the area.

Suggestions for Further Research

Kenya's restrictive law on land data is that any
document dealing with land may not be made available to
the public until twenty years have passed. Thus, as a
researcher, I had no access to documents beyond 1960 and
up to the present. Due to these restrictions, this study
has not been able to demonstrate the following:

1. The situation of the Kikuyu now. In other
    words, the case study in Nyeri was not able
    to bring the reader up to date (1980-81).
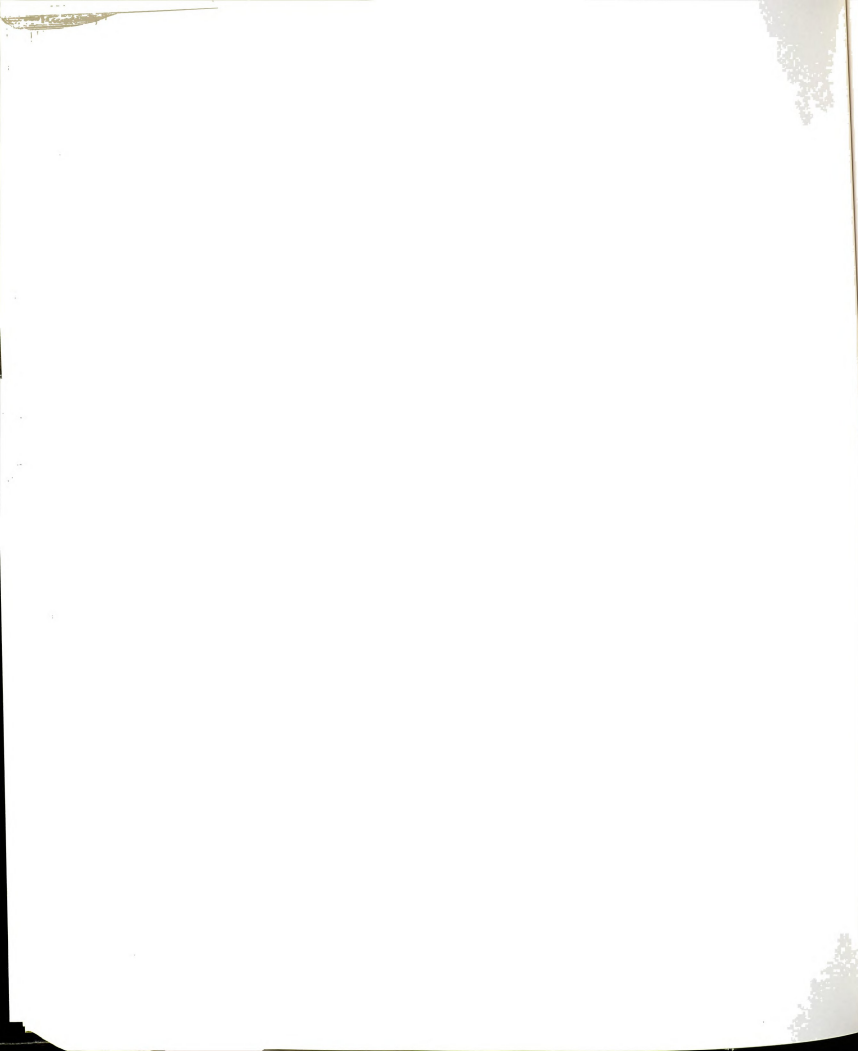
2. The number of Kikuyu who are working on White farms, the number of whites who are still in the region and the proportion of the land they possess.

3. The annual incomes of the rural farmers and the numbers of them who are prosperous land owners.

Because of these inadequacies on the part of this study, it is suggested that more research studies are necessary to update the information presented here.

Other questions have been outside the scope of this study and it is suggested that they be examined in future research. One of these is the experimental yeoman areas created at the time of the One Million Acre Settlement Scheme that were to be an exercise in interracial living and production. It is suggested that this experiment be examined to determine its outcome. Another area that needs examination is the effect of the migration of many of the young Kikuyu to the urban areas for work. Are present KIkuyu farms worked only by older family members and how will land remain in family hands when they are gone?

As we conclude the argument presented here, the question that one would ask is, how does such a study as this which derives its findings purely from historical data get classified as a sociological study. In trying to answer such a critical question we need not to look at history or sociology as separate entities but rather as inter-related disciplines.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

As a student of history and sociology, I realize

that history and sociology and their contents and objectives

are related and similar. One reason is that history and

sociology are both products of nature and of human beings.

It is man that makes history and creates sociology and

vice versa. Man is a social being. It is man who makes

history. Both history and sociology occur to us by exper-

ience, and we are part of them. Russell Major (1966:6)

claimed, "The knowledge we get from history is used in the

same way as the knowledge we get from our own experiences."

History tells us about the past that we need to know before

the present can be analyzed. Sociology, on the other hand,

John and Erna Perry (1974:2) said,

> helps us untangle the social web, helps
> show us how and why we are part of it.
> Sociologists try to dig below the surface
> of the social structures we have made--
> parts of the social web--and build up a
> body of knowledge that will help us recog-
> nize and improve our relationships to others
> in the same web.

The commonality is that history helps us to under-

stand people--so does sociology. In this sense, one may

argue logically that for a sociologist to analyze societal

phenomena comprehensively, or to argue sociologically, one

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must have a knowledge of history. Strasser (1976:1) has
this to say, "The inquiry into the sociological discipline
is legitimated only by its own historical development."
Popenoe (1971:5) states

> A sociologist, like an historian, is
> interested in all kinds of study, over-
> laps in many other disciplines. Like
> the historian, he wants to learn about
> the wars that destroyed cities in ancient
> Greece. Like the politicians, he tries
> to predict the way citizens will vote
> in an election, etc. But the sociologist
> focuses on an aspect of each of these
> areas which is the other's specialty.

To many scholars the relevance of history to socio-
logy and our need of them in our study of human society and
behavior is undoubted. The writings of such social thinkers
as Karl Marx, Max Weber, Emil Durkheim, Charles Darwin and
many others bear this out. From their writings, we learn
that history lays the foundation and provides the sources
upon which our approach to understanding our society is
based. As an example, Darwin's Origin of the Species, which
appeared in 1859, was actually a product of many combina-
tions of history, biology and sociology. The history of
it was, as Gluckman (1963:209) has explained,

> In order to know why an event is as it is,
> and not something else, we must know its
> history. Even in a physicist's laboratory
> experiment, the bringing together of selected
> events and the control of external conditions

contribute a particular history which enables the experiment to test only those interdependencies he wishes to determine.

Darwin's sociological explanation only helped explain the structural similarities or patterns--his sociological model made his biological findings closer to human nature. This sociological theory was important in that it provided an understanding of these relationships. The actual data of his study, although biological, was historical in nature. Similar studies bear out this unity of history and sociology. Durkheim's works are an obvious example. Most of his works draw heavily on historical and ethnological sources. They are organized in a historical framework, such as his work in the sociology of the family, his treatment of the division of labor, his sociology of education and his study of socialism.

According to Durkheim's views, "The true sociology is history." In a conclusive statement, he says:

> Perhaps, it is true, the busy sociologist
> will find this procedure uselessly compli-
> cated. In order to understand the social
> phenomena of today--isn't it enough to ob-
> serve them as they are given, vain eradica-
> tion to undertake research into their most
> distant origins? But this quick method is
> full of illusions. One doesn't know social
> reality if one only sees it from outside
> and if one ignores the substructure. In
> order to know how it is, it is necessary
> to know how it has come to be, that is, to
> have followed in history the manner in which
> it has been progressively formed. In order
> to be able to say with any chance of success
> what the society of tomorrow will be--it is
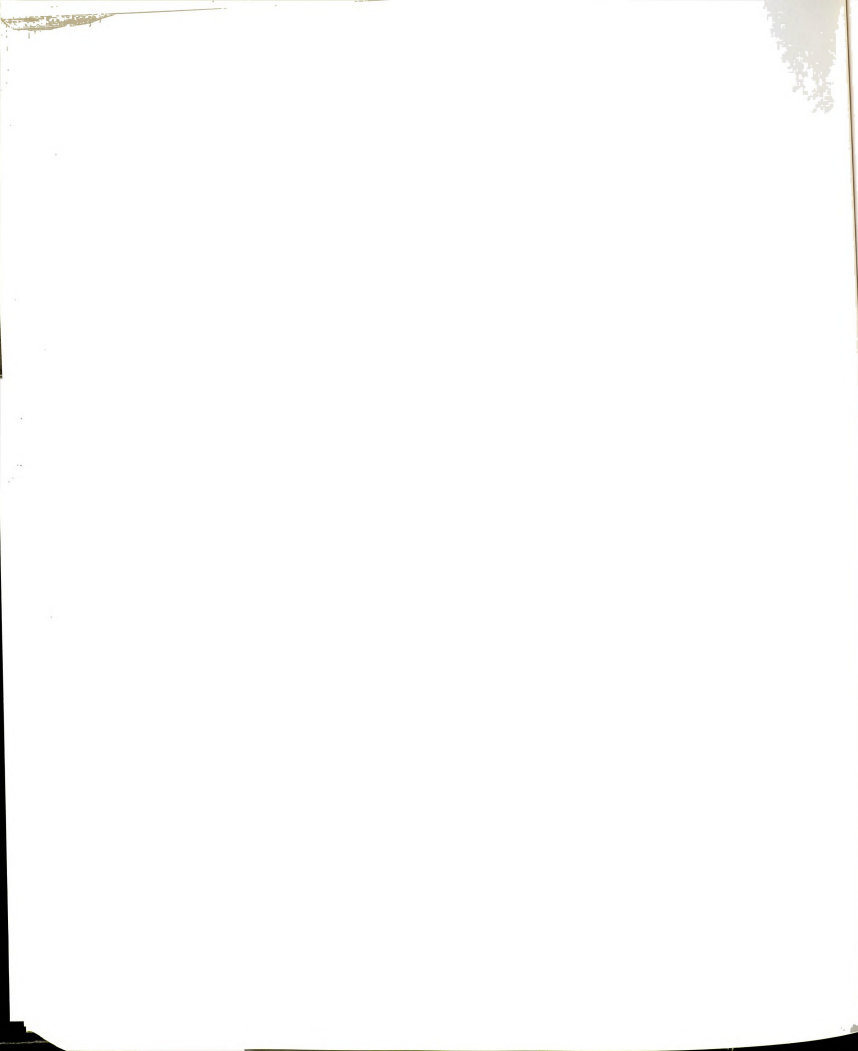
indispensable to have studied the
social forms of the most distant past.
In order to understand the present,
it is necessary to go outside of it.
(Bellah, in Boskoff, 1964:86-88)
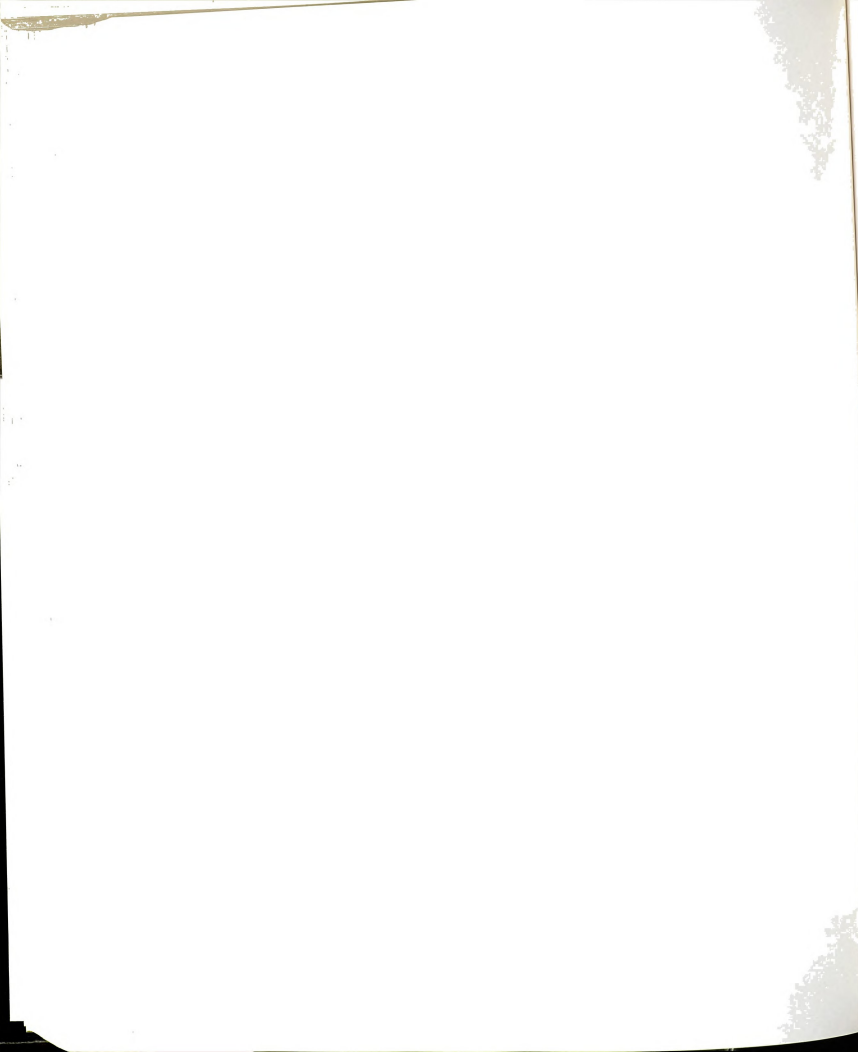
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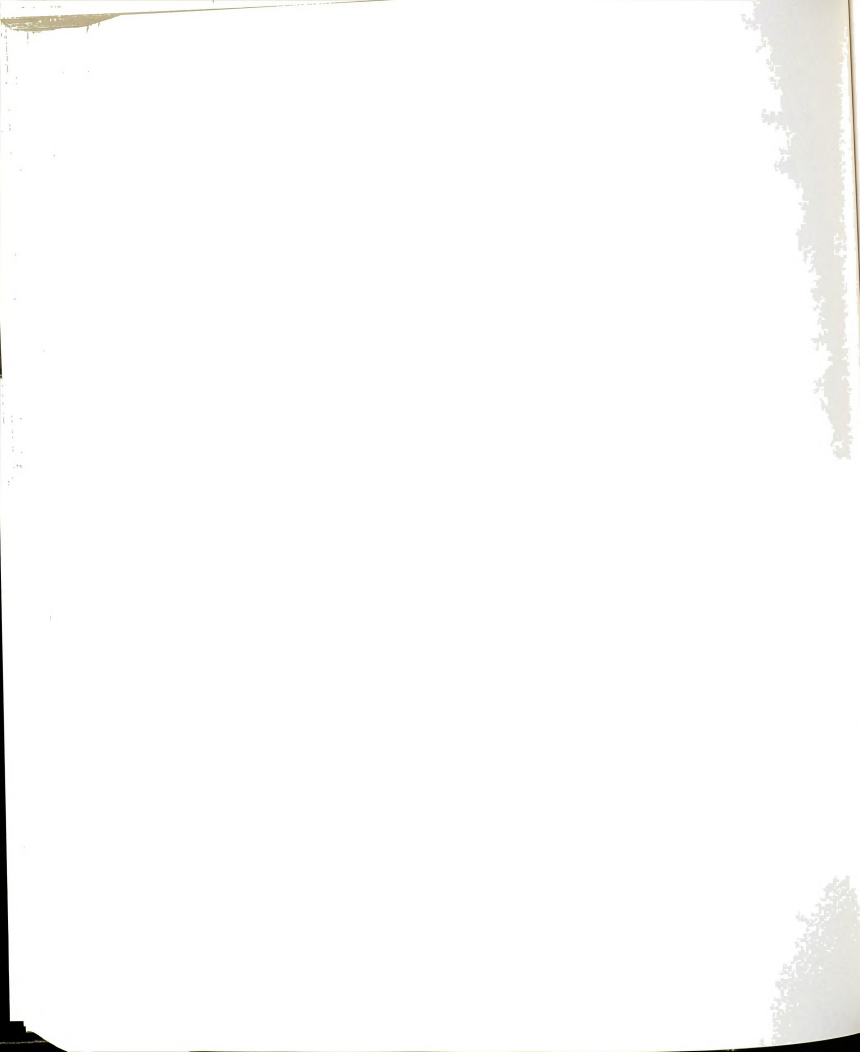
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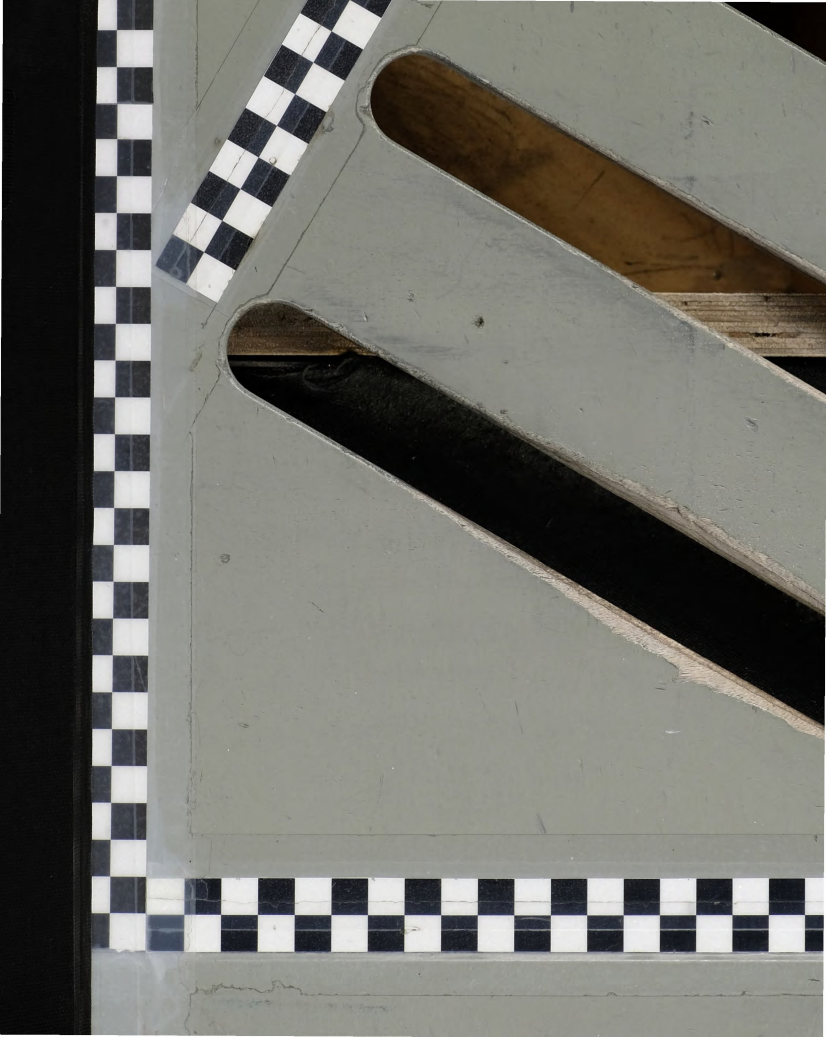   Weekly News, Feb. 8, 1963.

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