

THE ETHNIC COMPOSITION OF LEADING KENYAN GOVERNMENT POSITIONS

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In a previous paper¹⁾ I used the Kenya Government Directories for 1969 and 1972 to estimate the number of expatriate technical assistance officers and advisors holding key central positions in Kenyan ministries. These Directories, issued at three year intervals and sold to the public for 2 shillings 50 cents, contain the titles of most major positions in the Government and administration, the names of those presently filling the posts, a brief description of their duties, their office addresses and telephone numbers.

In Kenya, it is possible to estimate the ethnic affiliation, or at least the region of origin, of a person, by his or her name. Acting on the assumption that students of Kenyan affairs would be interested in an ethnic breakdown of high posts in the Kenyan regime, the following exercise was conducted: The 1969 and 1972 Directories were given to six Kenyan students (themselves from varying regions of the country) who were, in 1973 and 1974, studying in Canadian universities.²⁾ The students were asked to select from the Directories the positions they regarded as "most important", and then to note their estimate of the ethnic affiliation or region of origin of the holders of these posts.

A list of positions - 175 in 1969 and 174 in 1972 - was compiled, made up of:

- The President and the Cabinet,
- Assistant Ministers (members of parliament, but in a junior ministerial role),
- Permanent Secretaries (highest ranking civil servant in each ministry),
- Deputy Permanent Secretaries and Under Secretaries
- Provincial Commissioners (regional administrative heads, who are appointed by and serve as the personal representatives of the President),
- Deputy Provincial Commissioners, and the District Commissioners (the 41 Districts are the administrative sub-divisions of the Provinces),
- An "Other Posts" category, composed of armed forces

commanders, chief and assistant chief of staff, heads of the police, prisons, immigration, and personnel divisions, and a number of other posts which seemed to be clearly of national import.

The students then estimated the ethnic affiliation of each of the people holding these posts in 1969 and 1972.

Note that all of the students had to agree on the ethnic affiliation of a post-holder. If even one student disagreed, or simply expressed a major doubt on the listing of his colleagues, the post-holder in question was listed in the "Uncertain or Unknown" category. In the 1969 listing 14 of the total of 175 had to be put into this category; in 1972, 18 of 174 were so listed. These are not, I think, large numbers. They reflect in part the ease of linking name and ethnicity in Kenya. Moreover, the Kenyan educated class is not all that large in toto, and in many cases one or more of the students knew personally the politician or official in question.

Still, the breakdown no doubt contains some errors and mislistings. For example, the difference between some Kikuyu and Kamba, or Kamba and Embu/Meru names, is sometimes especially difficult to establish. Obviously, a submission of the lists to a much larger group of Kenyans, representing all areas and groups, would have been preferable. A larger number of referees was not readily available. Further, there appeared to be a solid feeling of certainty about almost all the listings, and I suspect (though, of course, cannot be sure) that submission of the list to a larger group of Kenyans would result primarily in a reduction in the numbers in the "Uncertain or Unknown" category.

The major finding of this limited exercise - that members of the Kikuyu group are disproportionately represented in these "highest" 175 posts in both years - should surprise no one. As is the case with a great deal of quantitative research in the social sciences, the utility of this effort derives not from any deduction of some major, non-obvious insight, but rather from the way it confirms empirically a widely believed

generality, and shows the degree, the extent to which the belief is actually the case. Furthermore, the exercise does reveal several minor, non-obvious findings which, I feel, are of special interest and which are discussed below.

Before proceeding to present and analyze the data, two important points need to be discussed. I must admit to having had doubts about the morality of even conducting the study, much less distributing widely the results. There are at least two good reasons for being wary. The first is that, in somewhat theoretical terms, studies of a nature such as this can easily lead one to wildly over-estimate the importance of ethnicity in explaining the mechanics of African political systems. The second is a more practical concern: ethnicity in Kenya in particular is an extremely sensitive issue and one must be cautious when dealing with materials which could fan the flames of communal tension.

To deal first with the theoretical issue, one must be aware of the well-reasoned, impressive and solidly documented arguments which view problems of ethnicity (or cultural pluralism, or sub-national nationalism, or "tribalism") in Africa as basically a creation of the colonialists. In this view,³⁾ ethnic problems in the independence era are readily apparent and very real, but they are viewed as something akin to a manifestation of "false consciousness". To place the emphasis of study on these problems is thus to obscure and mystify the more important determinants of political outcomes in African systems. These determinants, it is argued, are basically economic, and take the form of incipient class struggles, and/or complex patron-client relations.⁴⁾ Therefore (and this "therefore" takes the place of three or four pages of elaboration on the above paragraph which would be necessary in order to do the theme justice), it might be argued that putting forth a study such as this perpetuates the myth that ethnicity is the major causal factor in Kenyan politics, and that the study might help both Kenyans and observers of Kenya to overlook the more deeply rooted mainsprings of societal action.

This is a powerful argument. True, it is difficult to buy the notion that ethnicity would have been unimportant in the absence of imperialism, and it is equally difficult to see the concept of "false consciousness" as a completely satisfactory explanation of ethnic politics. Nonetheless, if one were attempting a full scale study of Kenyan politics it would clearly be misleading to concentrate on ethnicity to the exclusion of economic factors, to the exclusion of consideration of the relationships of the governing elite to national and international economic interests. Having said this, there would still not seem to be any absolute ban on the investigation of ethnic factors, since there is no necessary conflict between the view of Kenyan politics as being partly determined by economic relations and partly by ethnic ties. Such a view is not very methodologically neat and tidy, but its full elaboration would probably be a good description of reality. The point is that this small paper has no pretensions about explaining the totality of Kenyan political behaviour. It willingly admits that ethnicity is a secondary, perhaps even subsidiary factor. This does not mean that these relations are unimportant or unworthy of any consideration. Thus, the study is issued with the warning that ethnicity is only one dimension to be looked at in comprehending events in Kenya.

On the other, considerably less theoretical hand, one must also be concerned with putting out materials which are potentially inflammatory. That is, it is possible that the figures could be used by someone in Kenya as evidence that his group's position in high posts is poor, vis-à-vis the Kikuyu, or vis-à-vis the overall percentage of the population his group represents. In brief, it seems possible that the data could start a fuss.

Spokesmen for the regime could, and do, insist that their recruitment standards are based on education, skills, merit and experience, and not on ethnicity.⁵⁾ Moreover, they would reject, with considerable intellectual support, any idea that high government positions should be filled on a quota basis

according to the size of an ethnic group in the total population. They could, and do explain the high percentage of Kikuyu in top posts as being attributable to their fortuitous early lead in educational advancement, and to their continuing hard work. Since there is a great deal of sense in these arguments, why take the risk of raising a fuss?

One takes the risk (obviously, one can dramatize and make far too much of this; perhaps the notion of "a risk" is illusory) because the regime justifications do not tell all the story, and because it is at least remotely possible that materials such as these could assist efforts towards the regional balancing of Kenyan Government activities; efforts which might aid stability and equity.

This debating before the presentation of materials probably confuses more than enlightens. Suffice to say that in spite of considerable theoretical and practical concern about these data, it was ultimately concluded that they were of interest, some importance, and that their potential for doing harm was matched by their potential for positive effect.

Table 1 offers the basic numbers. The country total, and the ethnic and regional breakdowns, are estimates, made by taking the figures given in the 1969 Census and applying across the board the estimated annual rate of population increase of 3.3%. No doubt this process inflates the figures for certain groups and regions and depresses others. In the absence of regional or ethnic rate of increase figures, there was no choice but to use the national estimate of 3.3%. Or use the 1969 figures - themselves, of course, but estimates - which would have been acceptable for 1969, but which would have given a misleading impression of the absolute numerical size of the various units actually existing today.

Table 1

Estimated Kenya Population - End of 1973 - By Ethnic Group or Region

Total		12,460,226 (1969 Census total x 3.3 estimated rate of increase for 1970 through 1973)
Group	Number	Percentage
Kikuyu	2,506,952	20.1% of total pop.
Kalenjin ¹⁾	1,355,259	10.8
Luhya	1,654,844	13.2
Luo	1,732,608	13.9
Kamba	1,363,809	10.9
Coast ²⁾	676,410	5.4
Taita ³⁾	130,741	1.0
Kisii	798,987	6.4
Embu/Meru ⁴⁾	880,603	7.0
Somali ⁵⁾	284,363	2.2
Masai	176,388	1.4
Totals	11,560,964	92.3% of total population (the bulk of the remainder consists of various pastoral peoples in the relatively isolated north of the country)

1. "Kalenjin" refers to seven groups, all of whom live in Rift Valley Province and speak related "Kalenjin" languages.

2. "Coast" refers to Mijikenda, Pokomo/Riverine, Swahili/Shirazi, Bajun and Boni/Sanye groups.

3. Includes Taveta.

4. Includes Mbere and Tharaka.

5. All Somali speaking groups.

Source: 1969 Census (Nairobi: Government Printer, 1970).

The footnotes to Table 1 explain how various groups were "collapsed" to form distinct categories. The "collapsing" of separate units to form the categories of Kalenjin, Coast,

Taita, Embu/Meru and Somali speakers no doubt lends a spurious aura of unity to groups which contain significant differences and divisions. It can only be said that, given the data available and viewed in the light of Kenyan experience, the end product appears to be a reasonable working list. Note that one can always argue that there are overlooked divisions within an ethnic unit; the Kikuyu themselves can be viewed in many instances as being divided into at least three major sub-groupings which compete for government dispersed goods and services. The point is that juggling figures to make them fit the needs of a specific study, needs for which they were not originally intended, is a risky business and the results must be interpreted with caution.

Tables II and IIa present the 1969 distribution of positions by ethnic group or region, Table II in absolute numbers, Table IIa in percentages. Tables III and IIIa do the same for the 1972 data.

These tables are the heart of this presentation. As noted, and as one would expect, members of the Kikuyu group predominate in both years. Perhaps not so expected is the sizeable Kikuyu increase in both absolute and percentage terms from 1969 to 1972. This increase is accounted for mainly by their rise in the Deputy Permanent Secretaries and Under Secretaries rank, from 10 in 1969, to 24 in 1972. In no position category was there an absolute decline in Kikuyu representation, through they remained numerically constant in the Cabinet, in the Provincial Commissioner ranks, and in the "Other Posts" category. Their sizeable percentage increase in the "Other Posts" category is attributable to the decrease, from 21 in 1969 to 14 in 1972, in posts so listed. Some of the posts difficult to categorize and put into the "Other Posts" listing in 1969 seem, by 1972, to have been regularized and made into normal DPS and US posts. This is only part of the answer, rather obviously.

Table II
Distribution of Positions by Ethnic Group or Region - 1969

Group	President & Cabinet	Assistant Ministers	Permanent Secretaries	DPSs &USs	Prov. Comm.	DPCs &DCs	Other Posts	Totals
Kikuyu	7	5	7	10	4	13	7	53
Kalenjin	1	4	2	0	2	7	1	17
Luhya	2	5	1	5	0	6	2	21
Luo	2	3	5	1	0	7	1	19
Uncertain or Unknown	0	4	0	4	0	5	1	14
Kamba	2	3	4	3	0	6	6	24
Coast	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	4
Taita	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	2
Kisii	2	1	0	1	1	1	0	6
Embu/Meru	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	4
Somali	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Masai	0	3	0	0	0	1	0	4
Non-African ¹⁾	1	0	0	2	0	0	3	6
Totals	21	32	19	28	7	47	21	175

1. This group is composed of those with British or Asian names. The group disappears by 1972; Tables III and IIIa contain no such listing.

Table III

Distribution of Positions by Ethnic Group or Region - 1972

Group	President Cabinet	Assistant Ministers	Permanent Secretaries	DPSS &USs	Prov. Comm.	DPCS &DCs	Other Posts	Totals
Kikuyu	7	6	9	24	4	15	7	72
Kalenjin	2	7	2	1	2	2	1	17
Luhya	2	8	2	0	0	5	1	18
Lu0	2	3	4	0	0	6	0	15
Unknown or Uncertain	0	1	0	5	1	8	3	18
Kamba	2	1	0	1	0	2	2	8
Coast	1	2	0	1	0	2	0	6
Taita	1	0	1	0	0	3	0	5
Kisii	2	1	1	0	1	1	0	6
Embu/Meru	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	5
Somali	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	3
Masai	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Totals	21	35	20	32	8	44	14	174

Table IIA
Distribution of Positions by Ethnic Group or Region - 1969 - in %

Group	President & Cabinet								Totals
	President & Cabinet	Assistant Ministers	Permanent Secretaries	DPSS & USSs	Prov. Comm.	DPCs & DCS	Other Posts	Totals	
Kikuyu	33.3	15.6	36.8	35.7	57.1	27.6	33.3	30.3	
Kalenjin	4.8	12.5	10.5	0.0	28.6	14.9	4.8	9.7	
Luhya	9.5	15.6	5.3	17.8	0.0	12.8	9.5	12.0	
Luo	9.5	9.4	26.3	3.6	0.0	14.9	4.8	10.8	
Unknown or Uncertain	0.0	12.5	0.0	14.3	0.0	10.6	4.8	8.0	
Kamba	9.5	9.4	21.0	10.7	0.0	12.8	28.6	13.7	
Coast	4.8	9.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.3	
Taita	4.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.1	0.0	1.1	
Kisii	9.5	3.1	0.0	3.6	14.3	2.1	0.0	3.4	
Embu/Meru	9.5	0.0	0.0	7.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.3	
Somali	0.0	3.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.5	
Masai	0.0	9.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.1	0.0	2.3	
Non-African ¹⁾	4.8	0.0	0.0	7.1	0.0	0.0	14.2	3.4	
Totals	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	

1. This group is composed of those with British or Asian names. The group disappears by 1972; Tables III and IIIa contain no such listing.

Table IIIa

Distribution of Positions by Ethnic Group or Region - 1972 - in %

Group	President & Cabinet	Assistant Ministers	Permanent Secretaries	DPSs &USS	Prov. Comm.	DPCs &DCs	Other Posts	Totals	Compared to % of total population
Kikuyu	33.3	17.1	45.0	75.0	50.0	34.1	50.0	41.4	20.1
Kalenjin	9.5	20.0	10.0	3.1	25.0	4.5	7.1	9.8	10.8
Luhya	9.5	22.9	10.0	0.0	0.0	11.4	7.1	10.3	13.2
Luo	9.5	8.6	20.0	0.0	0.0	13.4	0.0	8.6	13.9
Unknown or Uncertain	0.0	2.9	0.0	15.6	12.5	18.2	21.4	10.3	0.0
Kamba	9.5	2.9	0.0	3.1	0.0	4.6	14.3	4.6	10.9
Coast	4.8	5.7	0.0	3.1	0.0	4.6	0.0	3.4	5.4
Taita	4.8	0.0	5.0	0.0	0.0	6.8	0.0	2.9	1.0
Kisii	9.5	2.9	5.0	0.0	12.5	2.3	0.0	3.4	6.4
Embu/Meru	9.5	8.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.9	7.0
Somali	0.0	5.7	5.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.7	2.2
Masai	0.0	2.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.6	1.4
Totals	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	92.3% of total population

The Kikuyu percentage decline in the Provincial Commissioner ranks is attributable to the change of administrative status of the city of Nairobi, which in 1969 rated a Special District Commissioner, but by 1972 was listed as a Province, and had its own Provincial Commissioner.

The overall Kikuyu increase from 1969 to 1972 is matched by the dramatic decrease in Kamba representation (and in the disappearance of the non-African group). Other changes of potential significance: the Luhya lost 3 of the 21 posts attributed to them in 1969, the Luo 4 of 19, and the Masai 3 of 4. Attempting to account for the precise details of each increase and decrease is not the purpose of this exercise. In the main, the data speak for themselves, and an exhaustive analysis would, probably, ultimately involve one in some mystifying nit-picking. What is important are the broad points to emerge from the Tables, summarized by the last two columns of Table IIIa, which compare the total percentage of ethnic or regional representation in these posts to the percentage of the total population that group or region represents. Four related points are:

1. The Kikuyu were apparently in a solid position in these posts in 1969.
2. The Kamba were a distant and not very distinct second.
3. The Kikuyu advanced to a dominant position in 1972.
4. Excluding the small number of Masai, and the disappearance of the non-African group, the group undergoing the greatest decrease was the Kamba.⁶⁾

Following the line of regime rationalizations quoted extensively in footnote 5, one could argue that the situation described above, even if correct,⁷⁾ is fully justified because the educational lead and capability of the Kikuyu allow them to meet modern standards of civil service recruitment more easily than other groups. Moreover, given their lead at independence, and noting how the Kikuyu have invested heavily out of their own pockets for self-help secondary schools and other forms of education in the period since independence,

then one might say that even the quite substantial increase from 1969 to 1972 is explainable: there are simply more skilled, educated and experienced Kikuyu available than other Kenyans.

I suspect this is basically true, though one is not certain if this argument can explain fully the very sharp Kikuyu increase, or even more troublesome, the Kamba decline. Even if one makes the very grand assumption that all Kikuyu presently in these posts advanced by sheer merit alone, there are still obvious political and social ramifications of the present imbalance.⁸⁾

To call the situation an "imbalance" pinpoints the dilemma, for it implies that something should be done to restore an equilibrium. This is a very difficult issue, primarily because the regime does not agree that an "imbalance" exists. Secondly, even if the highest decision-makers were to agree that the situation should be altered, the means normally available for correcting what is perceived to be an ethnic imbalance - changing or lowering recruitment standards, or devising formal or informal "quota" systems - have been found to be difficult to implement, emotionally charged and destructive of morale, and sometimes prejudicial to efficiency, even in industrialized countries which have attempted such programs.⁹⁾ The problems would no doubt be compounded in a socially fragile, economically weak young state such as Kenya, which critically needs an efficiently functioning administrative system. But even the most technically efficient and effective administrative system might be an insufficient barrier to instability, and might be a barrier to economic development, in the face of widespread public discontent over what was perceived as an unjust imbalance. Though it was hardly a model of efficiency, the pre-1967 federal civil service of Nigeria, and the discontent in the North over what was perceived to be "Ibo domination", is a case in point. The thrust of this discussion is that one must achieve some sort of balance between administrative efficiency and public acceptance. If, as I think is the case with the bulk of the Kenyan

public, it is not simply a question of what is being done by government, but also who is doing it, then some additions should be made to the standard criteria for administrative performance to take into account the ethnic or regional character of the administrative system. The result might no doubt entail some decline in effective performance. The gains might be in the fuzzy, difficult, but vital area of societal stability.¹⁰⁾

I must admit to the feeling that the above is in good part moralizing and guesswork, for while perceptions of ethnicity are no doubt the more powerful motivation, still, political instability can also result from administrative inefficiency. The causes of instability are not easily generalized, but I feel that in Kenya's case some - unmeasurable amount - of efficiency could and should be sacrificed for some - unmeasurable amount - of ethnic balance.

To retreat to somewhat more solid ground, it might be argued that the mere existence of an ethnic imbalance in leading administrative positions is by itself not terribly important, the perceptions of the "public" notwithstanding. If political representation in the legislature is proportionately allocated - and this is by and large true in the Kenyan legislature in toto, though of course not in the critical distribution of the Cabinet - then theoretically this should help dispel any existing sense of injustice.

This is fairly obviously a straw-man argument since it can be so readily demolished. First, even in relatively fairly distributed and functioning parliamentary systems, such as those in Canada and Belgium, a proportionate share of legislative seats has not by itself been regarded as sufficient representation by the minority. For example, the Québécois long knew of and complained about their relative lack of representation in the Canadian federal bureaucracy. Second, the issue is compounded in Kenya's case by the fact that parliament, and indeed all other representative, participatory, purely political institutions, is comparatively weak in decision-making terms vis-à-

vis the central bureaucracy.¹¹⁾ The power and authority of the executive-bureaucratic coalition is large, and it is known to be large by both the public and the members of parliament. There are good administrative and political reasons why this is the case, but it is the case.

The key question stemming from this is: does the ethnic imbalance in the Cabinet and in these powerful administrative posts lead to an imbalance in the distribution of government controlled goods and services? Not surprisingly, materials on this issue are difficult to find. Some insight into the issue can be gained by looking at the distribution of social services by Province. In order to interpret these, one must first know which groups live in which Province. Table IV provides this information.

Table IV
Ethnic Composition of the Kenyan Provinces

Central Province	<p>96% of all people in Province are Kikuyu; 73% of all Kikuyu in Kenya live in Central Province.</p>
Coast Province	<p>62% of all inhabitants are from those groups classed as coastal; 98.4% of all those peoples live in Coast Province.</p> <p>11.5% of inhabitants are Taita/Taveta; 95% of Taita/Taveta live in Province.</p>
Eastern Province	<p>54.5% of inhabitants are Kamba; 87% of Kamba live in Province.</p> <p>39% of inhabitants are Embu/Meru; 97% of Embu/Meru live in Province.</p>
North-Eastern Province	<p>96.4% of inhabitants are Somali-speakers; 95% of Kenyan Somali live in Province.</p>

(Table IV continued)

Nyanza Province	<u>63%</u> of inhabitants are Luo; <u>87%</u> of Luo live in Province. <u>31%</u> of inhabitants are Kisii; <u>95%</u> of Kisii live in Province.
Rift Valley Province	<u>51%</u> of inhabitants are Kalenjin-speakers; <u>95%</u> of Kalenjin live in Province. <u>15%</u> of inhabitants are Kikuyu; <u>15%</u> of Kikuyu live in Province. <u>7%</u> of inhabitants are Masai; <u>97%</u> of Masai live in Province. <u>7%</u> of inhabitants are Luhya; <u>10%</u> of Luhya live in Province.
Western Province	<u>88%</u> of inhabitants are Luhya; <u>80%</u> of Luhya live in Province.
Nairobi	<u>47%</u> of African people in Nairobi are Kikuyu; <u>9%</u> of Kikuyu live in Nairobi. <u>16%</u> of African people in Nairobi are Luhya; <u>4%</u> of Luhya live in Nairobi. <u>15%</u> of African people in Nairobi are Luo; <u>4%</u> of Luo live in Nairobi. <u>15%</u> of African people in Nairobi are Kamba; <u>5%</u> of Kamba live in Nairobi.

Calculated from the 1969 Census, Volume I (Nairobi: Government Printer, 1970), pp. 69-117.

It is only in Central and North Eastern Provinces that there is a nearperfect match of administrative division with ethnicity, though Western Province is not far behind. In both Nyanza and Eastern Provinces, two of the groupings offered

in this paper constitute over 90% of the Provincial population. The situation is relatively more dispersed in Coast, Rift Valley, and Nairobi respectively. Nonetheless, Table IV gives a good notion of provincial groupings. Table V presents some information on regional distribution of social services.

These limited materials are sketchy and inconclusive, but it seems clear that Central Province does fairly well. Though Coast Province has better ratios of population to hospital beds and medical practitioners, note that Coast Province includes the city of Mombasa, the second largest urban unit in the country. One suspects that if Mombasa were not included, Central Province's superior position would be much more clear. And one must add here the proximity of Nairobi, with its comparatively splendid social services, for those living in Central Province.

Again, as always, there are excellent non-political reasons for Central Province's lead, especially in education, though the Kikuyu people have also, since independence, worked for and contributed considerable amounts of their money to the building of hospitals. Moreover, the agricultural potential of much of Central Province makes it a natural site for government investment, both of an economically productive and social service nature. Are these sufficient reasons to explain these patterns of resource allocation? One really cannot tell from these materials, but they are certainly adequate to raise one's suspicions. More to the point, they are more than adequate to allow one to state that even if justice is being done in the strict, or economic investment sense of the term, it is not being seen to be done.

It is far easier to present tables than to interpret wisely just what they mean. Some in and outside Kenya could no doubt find in the data the final confirmation of their deepest suspicions concerning Kikuyu dominance. Others could explain away with little difficulty the situation on which has here been termed an "imbalance". What is clear?

Table V
Distribution of Social Services by Province - 1970

Province	Percentage of total population 1969	Percentage of school enrolment, 1970		Percentage of NHCI housing expenditure 1970	Number of people	
		Primary	Secondary		per hospital bed	per medical practitioner
Rift Valley	20.4	14.7	12.1	6.0	820	1 755
Nyanza	19.4	16.1	13.1	1.2	1 269	2 219
Eastern	17.4	20.2	13.6	2.4	834	1 734
Central	15.3	24.9	22.9	15.1	766	1 287
Western	12.3	13.1	10.1	2.9	1 033	3 569
Coast	8.6	6.3	9.3	7.2	511	707
Nairobi	4.4	4.4	18.7	65.2	152	84
North-Eastern	2.2	0.3	0.2	-	1 308	1 230
Whole Country	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	715	871

1. National Housing Corporation

Source: Employment Incomes and Equality. A Strategy for Increasing Productive Employment in Kenya. (International Labour Office, Geneva, 1972), p. 301.

There can be no doubt that the Kikuyu are disproportionately represented in the leading posts, though the ultimate causes of that disproportionate representation are debatable. The policy implications of this imbalance are difficult to establish in depth, but the few materials available indicate that Kikuyu areas receive a disproportionate share of some government dispersed goods and services. Even if there were no direct links between the Kikuyu holding positions of power and their home area's receipt of goods and services (I have to state openly that I believe the two are so linked), the sheer existence of the imbalance, and the widespread perception of its existence, pose a threat to the continued stability and development of the country.

NOTES

1. See "Expatriates in the Government of Kenya", Journal of Commonwealth Political Studies, Vol. XI, No. 3 (October, 1973), pp. 251-264.
2. These students wish to remain anonymous. Their contribution to this work is central and obvious.
3. I am thinking especially of the recent works of Professor Colin Leys on politics in Kenya, in which this notion is put forward in a most persuasive manner.
4. Colin Leys, Underdevelopment in Africa. 224 pp. Heinemann 1974. (forthcoming).
5. The following report of a 1973 Kenyan parliamentary exchange is typical of many. While lengthy, it indicates the way in which the situation is perceived by the "outs", as well as the justifications offered by the regime.

"An Assistant Minister in the Office of the President, Mr. Kamwithi Munyi... told Mr. Araru... that his Ministry did not keep records of staff by their tribes or areas of origin and so he could not tell him the number of people from Northern Kenya employed in the administration since independence. We are building one nation and we employ people on grounds of competence according to vacancies available and the Public Service Commission which recruits Government servants does not keep records of recruits by their place of origin. Mr. Kadir... told Mr. Munyi that he did not see why the Public Service Commission did not keep records according to areas of origin of recruits when in its form for application for employment applicants were asked to indicate their tribes. He wanted Mr. Munyi to assure the House that in future people applying for Government jobs would not be asked to give their tribes. Mr. Munyi said that the Public Service Commission did not ask applicants to give their tribe but their districts and locations. If the Member wanted this information not

to be given in the future, Mr. Munyi said, that was a different question. Mr. Munyi told Mr. Araru that there were D.O.'s (district officers) posts advertised and if he had any constituent he considered competent to take up one of the jobs he was free to bring his name to Mr. Munyi's office for processing in the normal way."

From the East African Standard, 17 May 1973, p. 2.

6. In spite of the just-stated resolve not to investigate causes of non-Kikuyu decreases, one obvious explanation for the Kamba decline is that some of the self-confessed leaders of the very abortive anti-regime plot of 1971 were Kamba.
7. One must admit again that six students sorting out ethnicity or region by name or acquaintance alone is a risky process.
8. To which some might reply: all the more reason not to stir up trouble by broadcasting widely ethnic estimates such as those in this paper. This would be an "ignorance is bliss" argument, to which the retort is: people in Kenya are neither ignorant nor blissful with regard to the present situation.
9. The United States' experience with equal employment opportunity programs, and the federal government of Canada's efforts at bilingualism and biculturalism are the obvious examples.
10. It seems that the Algerians (and no doubt one could find other examples) are very conscious of the political importance of the regional and economic make-up of their civil service. Speaking on the occasion of the 1974 graduation at the École Nationale d'Administration in Algiers, the Director, M. Sbih, took special care to

note that:

85% of ENA students came from the interior of the country;
 48% were from "less favoured regions";
 96% were sons of "chouhada", pensioners, lower-level civil servants, clerks, workers and peasants.

He concluded:

"Il n'est donc pas sans portée politique, de savoir que ces responsabilités, au sein de l'Appareil de l'Etat seront demain assurées par des Algériens venant de toutes les régions du pays et dont la majorité a pu bénéficier d'une démocratisation qui a permis de les placer là où leur mérite personnel les destinait."

From El Moudjahid (Algiers' daily), 22 June, 1974, p. 3.

11. For a discussion of this issue see J.R. Nellis, "Is the Kenyan Bureaucracy Developmental? Political Considerations in Development Administration", African Studies Review, Vol. XIV, No. 3 (December, 1971), pp. 389-401.