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G. G. KARIUKI IN THE DEVELOPMENT AND POLITICS OF LAIKIPIA COUNTY IN KENYA

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ABSTRACT

Godfrey Gitahi Kariuki, popularly known as G.G., is one of the longest serving political leaders in Kenya's post-independence history. Yet, like many of his political contemporaries, his contribution to the historiography of Kenya has been overshadowed by the history of leaders whose careers were defined in Kenya's colonial experience. The paper presents a short life history of G.G. Kariuki and his role in the politics and development of Laikipia County. The County has a diverse population comprising the Kikuyu, Kalenjin, Turkana, Samburu, a small population of the Maasai and white farmers. As such it is a County inhabited by pastoral nomadic and agricultural communities. It is basically a multi-ethnic and multi-racial County. The County over the years has experienced inter-ethnic and human-animal conflicts. G.G. Kariuki was instrumental in resolving some of these conflicts. Literature review involved the review of various biographies and autobiographies of Kenya and the rest of Africa. G.G. Kariuki may not have been a hero but his leadership and strategies especially on settlement schemes changed the course of history of Laikipia County. Data was collected by use of field interviews as well as thorough the examination of secondary sources collected from public libraries and the Kenya National Archives (KNA). The data was analysed qualitatively. The paper hopes to contribute to the historiography on the makers of post-independent Kenya.

KEY WORDS: Politics, Laikipia, County, Conflicts, G.G. Kariuki, Development

1.1 Background to the Study

G.G. Kariuki was born to Kariuki wa Waigwa and his second wife Wangui wa Ngumo at Lariak Estate in Laikipia in 1937. Kariuki, the fourth born, of the eleven children. The infant was named Gitahi, a name reserved for a warrior who rustled cattle from Maasai land and brought them to Kikuyu land. His was also given the name Ngumo, a traditional

clan name passed onto him from his grandfather (his mother's father) who was a wise and famous elder from Gathaihi location. G.G. Kariuki went through catechism classes in an Independent Church in Lariak Estate. It was the only African church, then, in Lariak Estate. Even though, he was not baptized, he was also given the name. From an early age he was known as Godfrey Gitahi or simply as Ngumo. Later, when he entered into politics, he came to be widely known as just 'G.G.'

G.G. Kariuki entered politics in 1959 when he, Kinga Mwendwa and Mark Mwithaga, a former Member of Parliament for Nakuru North, formed the Central Rift Valley Labour Party; and hence joining the movement for the formation of a national political party to lead the struggle for independence from colonial rule that was under way. G.G. Kariuki agreed to serve as assistant organizing secretary for Laikipia County:

My job was to inform rural workers about the work of the party in defending their rights and encourage them to join it. This went on upto 1960 when the party choose me a delegate to a conference in Kiambu to discuss the formation of a national political party.

The delegates of the various smaller parties struggling for independence met and unanimously agreed to form a national party, and KANU was born. In August 1960, G.G. Kariuki was elected district secretary of KANU for Laikipia District. He vied for a seat in the 1961 election to represent North Eastern Province, which included Turkana, Samburu, Isiolo and Marsabit, but lost to Peter Aleman.¹ He continued serving as the Laikipia KANU Branch secretary until 1967. In 1961, G.G. Kariuki was among those who went to Lodwar to see Mzee Jomo Kenyatta at his final stage of exile. After Kenyatta was released from jail he suggested that G.G. Kariuki should go to Ahus University in Denmark and study a course in Co-operative Management. However, when Mwai Kibaki later explained that elections were about to be conducted and that KANU would lose the Laikipia Parliamentary seat if G.G. Kariuki went away to study, G.G. Kariuki opted to stay and vie for the seat. He became the first Member of Parliament for Laikipia County in 1963. He had a lot to do for Laikipia County; his destiny had prepared him for this moment. But no one knew what really lay in his mind.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

G.G. Kariuki has been a key personality in Laikipia County politics since the late 1950s. His political life, activities, achievements and limitations as a politician and his life through his contributions to the politics and development of the County have not been fully exposed. Hence this paper focuses on G.G Kariuki's role in the politics and development of Laikipia County.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The paper is guided by the following objectives:

- a. To examine G.G. Kariuki's political career and contributions to the development of Laikipia County.
- b. To analyse G.G. Kariuki's role in promoting better inter-ethnic relations in Laikipia County.

Theoretical Framework

The paper used a combination of theories; The Great man Theory of History and Subaltern studies. The Great Man theory is associated mostly with the 19th century commentator and historian Thomas Carlyle (1795 - 1881). He expounded his ideas in a book called Heroes and Hero Worship. Carlyle set out how he saw history as having turned on the decisions of heroes giving detailed analysis of the influence of several such men as Shakespeare, Luther, Rousseau and Napoleon. The theory is based on two assumptions: leaders are born not made; great leaders arise in times of need. The theory was used in classical historiography in histories of Herodotus and Thucydides. In the 12th and 13th Centuries, the reigns of few energetic kings who transformed the royal court into a true center of power stimulated the writing of royal biographies. The Great Man view of history received further boost after the American Revolution of 1776. Following the revolution, biographers preferred the founding fathers as the teachers of the new nation and none seemed to fit that role better than George Washington.

Carlyle argued that ordinary people were those who for a long stretch of time had not been creators or actors but grey dull mass. In his view, hope for humanity sprang from the great men. To Carlyle, social institutions were of secondary importance as heroes could destroy them at will. One significant contribution of the Great Man Theory to the study of history was the argument that human beings influence the course of history. Instead of viewing history as a wholly determined process, the theory takes into account accidents and other unpredictable circumstances. The perspective emphasizes the actions of individuals as a driving force in human development. G.G. Kariuki may not have been a hero but he played a key role in the development of Laikipia County and thus changed the course of its history.

However the theory has some weaknesses. For instance, Herbert Spencer believed attributing historical events to decisions of individuals "was childish, hopelessly primitive and unscientific position." Rather he felt that the men Carlyle called great men were merely products of their social environment. He contended that the genesis of a great man depends on the long series of complex influences which has produced the race in which he appears.²

Thus instead of viewing some individuals as heroes endowed with superman powers, wisdom or inspiration as Great Man theory does we should focus on the historical situation that gave rise to such heroes. We should also look at cultural, social, environmental and economic circumstances that form the background to a meaningful leadership. The subaltern theory emerged in 1980. The term "subaltern" in this context is an allusion to the work of Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci (1881–1937). Literally, it refers to any person or group of inferior rank and station, whether because of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or religion. Instead, they focus on non-elites subalterns as agents of political and social change. They have had a particular interest in the discourses and rhetoric of emerging political and social movements, as against only highly visible actions like demonstrations and uprisings. In this case, G.G. Kariuki was elevated by his environment and the society at large.

1. 4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.4. 1 Research Design

The paper is largely qualitative. The paper has used ex post facto design. The design deals with the past and tries to reconstruct that past. Occurring events are analysed and figured out. After the fact that caused something to happen. As Shama observes, this approach eliminates the possibility that participants will be influenced by awareness that they are being tested. The treatment is not manipulated as it has already occurred.

1.4. 2 Data Collection

The paper has used both secondary and primary sources. Secondary data was collected from published works including biographies and the "Makers of History" series written by various Kenyan scholars. Documentary sources also formed an important component of this study. Published and unpublished works on G.G. Kariuki were examined. These works included books, journals articles, seminar and conference papers, theses and newspapers. Such works were obtained from the libraries of both public and private universities in Nakuru, Nairobi and the Kenya Parliament Library. Primary data was obtained from the Kenya National Archives (KNA) in Nairobi and field research. Archival materials examined included Laikipia District Monthly and Annual reports, land records from the Ministry of Land and Settlement, Parliamentary Hansard, newspapers such as the East African Standard and magazines such as the Weekly Review, Finance, Beyond and Society.

During field research, historical data was obtained from oral history based on eye witness accounts. Personal reminiscences were sought from persons who have had contacts with G.

G. Kariuki at home and in the constituency, among them chiefs, district officers, teachers, knowledgeable church elders, and other elders in the society, squatters, former-squatters and landless people. An interview schedule was employed to interview informants of both genders. All interview responses were tape recorded for accurate retrieval after the interview session. The interviews covered a wide range of topics related to politics, land and settlement and G.G. Kariuki's role as a member of parliament for Laikipia West constituency in post independent Kenya. The interviews covered the main areas on which the respondents were knowledgeable. Additionally, follow-up interviews were conducted for verification of tape recorded information. Interviews were conducted at both the individual levels and group levels for authenticity and objectivity. English, Kiswahili and Gikuyu languages were used in the interviews as would be appropriate to the respondents. Photographs of G.G. Kariuki in his political activities and his duties in the constituency were borrowed from his personal copies. This data was reinforced by oral history.

The paper used purposive and snowball sampling procedures to identify informants. Other informants were identified through snowball sampling technique. A sample of seventy one informants from Laikipia County was interviewed. The informants were interviewed from all the fifteen locations of the constituency. The informants from both genders were selected based on their knowledge, experience, relation and interaction with G.G. Kariuki in his socio-political activities in Laikipia County and beyond. Through snowballing a number of G.G. Kariuki's contemporaries elsewhere in Kenya were interviewed.

1.4.3 Data Analysis

Data analysis started from the time of data collection. At the end of the data collection, the data from the archives, oral interviews, and documentary sources was analyzed to provide a detailed description of the case. Identification of emerging themes sub-themes was done in relation to the study objectives. After a satisfactory collection of both primary and secondary data, all the main ideas were entered into fully classified forms of analysis in preparation for data analysis. Once all data was recorded into the first set of forms of analysis, the process of data reduction commenced. This involved recording of useful and relevant data selected from the first set into a new set. Thereafter, a thorough revision of recorded data followed to ensure that all necessary facts were incorporated. This helped to establish links, the verification of facts and drawing of conclusions and the writing of the paper. Secondly, the study employed a historical research method. According to Ogunniyi, "a historical research is a systematic examination of the past in order to understand the present and to look at the future wisely."³

In this type of investigation, the researcher depends largely on available data about past events and activities on which he/she cannot exercise any control. Consequently the conclusion is based upon logical analysis and inferences in terms of consistency and usefulness.. Qualitative method of data analysis was employed and then analyzed at two levels. That is, descriptive and thematic. Each objective was described as a theme. Documentary data was text analyzed while tape recorded information and collected historical materials analyzed based on the study objectives and research questions.

Interview data was analyzed through narrative inquiry and written in form of a story. This is because in the interviews the participants narrated their experience and views in the form of a story.⁴ Individual transcripts were coded to check the adequacy and consistency of the themes. Thereafter, the full interview transcripts were used as a basis to classify the data into several categories and sub-themes in relation to the paper's objectives.

1.5 Results and Discussions

This section illustrates G.G Kariuki's achievements in Laikipia County in the post colonial era. G.G. Kariuki was the first Member of Parliament for Laikipia County at the onset of independence in 1963. Informants stated that, G.G. Kariuki played a key role in the development of Laikipia County, arguing that, one could not speak of the development of Laikipia County without mentioning G.G. Kariuki. In other words, the life of G.G. Kariuki is synonymous to the livelihood and development of Laikipia County. By 1963, only a few primary and secondary schools existed within Laikipia County. G.G. Kariuki was instrumental in setting up schools to enable the children of his constituents to access formal education. Some of the Secondary Schools he helped establish are Rumuruti, Ngumo Secondary School, Gatero Girls, Mwenje, Njorua, and Njonjo Girls. Primary schools include: Rimururuti, Kiguro and Waigwa Primary. Among the respondents of the study were two teachers who stated that: "Teachers in Laikipia County are very lucky. It is one of the marginal Counties whose teachers receive hardship allowances in addition to their salaries. This was made possible by G.G. Kariuki." G.G. Kariuki also played a role in ensuring that students from his constituency accessed commonwealth government scholarships, offered through the ministry of education. These scholarships would be awarded with the influence of the Member of Parliament for each constituency. One of the beneficiaries had this to say: G.G. Kariuki would look for the bright students in the constituency, especially those from poor families. Regardless of tribe, scholarships would be offered for post secondary education in India. I benefited from this scheme as I studied a Bachelor of Science course in India.

Beside interethnic and human animal conflicts, the Counties has also many cases of thefts. The education system in Kenya prepares the youth for what is termed as white collar jobs in urban centres. In actual fact it does not prepare the rural youth to be able to cope with the prevailing rural life or give them the basic skills to enable them get a good or well paid technical jobs. In view of this situation the school dropout at all levels find it difficult to be assimilated in the country's economy. The system of Craft Training Centres caters for a national policy which helps the youth to play their role in the society by equipping the youths with the necessary skills in technical fields. "G.G. Kariuki helped establish a number of craft training centres such as Igwamiti, Rumuruti, Kinamba and Muthengera even though the Centers are poorly managed and the structures are not well maintained." Water is an essential commodity for all living things. Most areas of Laikipia West are semi arid (marginal lands) hence the need to be provided with water. Besides dam constructions, G.G. Kariuki started two major water supply schemes in the district. The Nyahururu settlement water supply scheme covers two administrative locations of Nyahururu and Igwamiti. Some of the areas within this supply scheme are also supplied with piped but untreated water from the supply lines of Laikipia County Council. The Laikipia water supply scheme supplies Muthengera, Marmanet Forest locations and the adjoining areas of Gituamba location. The Marmanet water supply scheme which was started in 1980 supplies water to Muhotetu, Gaiti, Melwa and a larger part of Rumuruti Location. This has helped to curb water shortage problems, especially when rivers Ewaso Narok, Nyarachi, Ol'Arabel, Melwa and Kisuria dry up during dry seasons.

In 1970, having witnessed difficulties that his constituents were facing with regard to land acquisition and settlement, G.G. Kariuki in collaboration with the local authority leaders convened a meeting at Muthengera to discuss the possible solutions to the problem. The meeting was chaired by Councillor Wahome Gichachi. In a speech at the gathering, G.G. Kariuki spoke of the need to start a land buying company:

An uneducated man with an empty stomach cannot be expected to understand either the economic or the moral aspects of education. He must have land first to till and thus get his daily bread. But you know Kenyatta alone cannot give you everything. All things we must do together. You and I must work together to develop our country...what about when the old man goes? It may be that when he does go, we will see that his greatest service was bringing Kenya to a position he is no longer needed. Nonetheless Kenyans believe not in the work of one man but an effort by many...

Those at the meeting agreed to start a land buying company. A board of Directors was appointed with G.G. Kariuki as the Managing Director and Chief Trustee, Solomon Kiguro the secretary and Mutahi Maina as treasurer.

In 1971, women in Laikipia County were encouraged to form self help groups in order to solve their domestic problems. The groups did a lot; for example, they helped pay school fees for the poor families, helped furnish houses and paid hospital bills. When the land company was registered, women groups were invited to buy land in shares. Each person paid 1520 shillings which was worth five acres of land. Two hundred shillings was also needed to offset the registration fee, bringing the total amount of money to be contributed to Ksh.1720.

At Mwenje (ex -Columbus), the company purchased 16,000 acres and settled 3000 families by 1975. However 6,000 acres were to be exchanged with forest land but it was never done. In 1973, the company bought 51,000 acres at Sipili. Initially there were 102,000 acres; the other 51, 000 acres went to the Kihika Kimani led Ngwataniro Farmers Company. In 1974, the company bought 35,000 acres at Ndurumo; 1500 at Marmanet (ex- Cunningham), 3000 at Gatero (ex –Campellcross) and 1,600 acres at Igwamiti (ex-Litif) and later bought an additional 1,000 acres in the same area for Nyakinyua women group. By 1982, 10,000 families had been settled; and by 1983 the company had settled 20, 000 families. This was a big success. Through negotiations with several banks, G.G. Kariuki was able to access loan facilities to help pay for members who could not raise the required amounts. Those who did not have the Ksh.1, 720 were required to pay only twenty shillings to be allocated five acres of land.

Even though G.G. Kariuki's settlement efforts aimed at ensuring that all members of the different ethnic communities in Laikipia were settled, they were viewed as skewed in favour of one community in that members of his Kikuyu were the major beneficiaries. "Only the Kikuyu got land in Laikipia County and other communities were told to go back to their original homelands and buy land there." This could have been as a result of the fact that the Kikuyu, better organized from the onset, had formed land buying companies and cooperatives that allowed them to easily reach agreement with several European farm owners to the effect that they were the only people to whom the land would be sold to once sufficient funds were collected from the members. By the time the other groups, especially the Kalenjin groups, realized what was happening, and by the time they organized themselves into cooperatives and companies, a lot of land had already been bought fully by the Kikuyu. Laikipia County has a diverse population comprising the Kikuyu, Kalenjin, Turkana, Samburu, a small population of the Maasai and white farmers. Thus one can correctly say it a district inhabited

by pastoral nomadic and agricultural communities. It is also a multi-ethnic and multi-racial County. Conflicts that occur in Laikipia County are of two types: inter-ethnic and human – wildlife conflict. The Kikuyu community is usually attacked by the Pokot and Samburu who are mainly in search of pastureland, while the Tugen from the neighbouring Baringo district fight them over land and political reasons. The Pokot raids the Turkana and the Samburu and vice versa. The main reason for such attacks is the need to increase their herds. The elephants are the main animals that invade the maize farms. Pastoral nomadic subsistence is based on assets of two main kinds: domesticated animals and grazing rights. Pastures and water are used communally. The local society has communal right to use their resources, but the sense of ownership even communally does not seem to be entertained. When a stranger moves in with his cattle or to cultivate the land the local people will complain of the danger of disease and depletion of pasture in the first case and the appropriation of pasture in the second; but not against the appropriation of soil, land as such or even the presence of the stranger on land which he has no right communally with others. Though conflicts have always awakened in the county, G.G. Kariuki did what he could to restore peace among the warring communities. As several informants affirmed: G.G. Kariuki had the advantage of expressing himself in Kikuyu, Turkana, Maasai and Samburu languages. He would visit the fighting communities and talk to them in their languages. People loved him as an elder and would listen. Other times he would visit the village elders who would then talk to their people. He would always air the grievances of people in the media; he does it even now when he is not in parliament. A bit of peace was experienced during the time he was in parliament, we always counted on him, he was our care taker and we miss him.

For a long time residents of Laikipia have been in conflict with elephants. The wild animals have killed maimed and wrecked havoc on private farms. They invade especially during the harvesting season. The elephants inhabit the Marmanet, Rumuruti and OL-Arabel forests.⁵

Two informants observed:

To solve the conflict G.G. Kariuki decided to construct an electric fence from Olmoran to Laikipia ranch. The fence cost almost ten million. The fence helped in preventing the elephants from invading the farms, but the forests in the constituency need to be fenced to curb the problem. The estimated cost was about eighty million.

The residents however contend that G.G. Kariuki could have done much more for them in terms of solving conflicts. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that conflicts have become endemic in Kenya. The conflicts have led to slow down of the democratization process in

Kenya. The search for a peaceful, just and environmentally and socially sustainable society is a journey which the leaders are called upon to make in Laikipia County and Kenya as a whole.

The notion of rural electrification is of immense economic and social value within the framework of the development of the nation. By 1978, rural electrification had developed in various locations in Laikipia As one respondent stated:

G.G. Kariuki should be credited for getting Laikipia West constituency connected to electricity. It was a dark world, and insecurity lingered, but we can now proudly say we have electricity. The main areas that benefited from this scheme were; Nyahururu, Kinamba and Rumuruti. Major schools also benefited through the installation of electricity. Students no longer strain to use pressure lamps in their evening studies; and even laboratory experiments that require power have been made possible. Some of the schools that benefited were Ndururumo High School, Njonjo Girls High School and Gatero Girls High School, among others. Another area where as a Member of Parliament for Laikipia County, G.G. Kariuki was the provision of medical facilities. By 1978, he had spearheaded the construction of a number of Health Centres such as Sipili, Igwamiti, Muthengera, Muhotetu, Mwenje, Changutii and Ol Ndoinyo. Olmoran, Salama and Mutara dispensaries. And later, through his sustained efforts the government constructed a County level hospital in Nyahururu dispensaries. He also assisted in the construction of a children's ward (Harambee Ward) at the hospital to ease congestion in the dispensaries and for the provision of better services to the residents. Despite the high economic potential of Laikipia, farmers still face many challenges. As one of them remarked:

Although G.G. Kariuki should be credited for the good work of settling the landless in Laikipia district; that was all he did for us. We do not have a market a ready market for our farm products. We harvest our pineapples, eat them or sell them at throw-away prices. The nearest town we can sell them is Nyahururu, and the products still fetch too little.

In 2000, some 2000 members made attempts (that seem futile at the present) to start a maize Milling Company in Nga'rua. As one informant pointed out:

We realized that if we organized ourselves and collaborated with the various co-operative societies in the constituency, we would find a market for our products. The main aim was to buy maize from farmers, mill the maize and pack the flour in to bags. Then later we would sell it back to the local people in the district and beyond. But the company has never taken off. We had all the necessary facilities like the machines and capital but still we could not do anything without electricity. It was G.G. Kariuki who helped install a generator for the company.

The period between 1979 and 1982 represents some of the most significant moments in the life of G.G. Kariuki. It is arguable that during this time G.G. Kariuki was no longer a political nonentity. He was now a player not only in the local politics but also on the national front. He was named to President Moi's cabinet as Minister of State in the Office of the President in charge of Internal Security and Provincial Administration.

With regards to G.G. Kariuki's rising political star on the national front, life in Laikipia West constituency changed; it became more dramatic and lively. As two informants recollected: An airstrip was constructed in Rumuruti. Moi became a regular visitor in Laikipia district and at G.G. Kariuki's home. G.G. Kariuki's 'circle of friends' would be taken to trips overseas, for instance, to India and America. The Nyakinyua women group would dance their hearts out for the president and in return they would receive a token of lessos and money.

In conventional wisdom, it becomes reasonable that a man who speaks ill of you should be your enemy or at least that you should feel he is your enemy. In the case of G.G. Kariuki, there was such a man, a fervent critic named Wagathia. Wagathia always felt G.G. Kariuki was slow in his way of doing things; even when he was settling the landless in Laikipia; it was not enough in the eyes of Wagathia. One day, while addressing a crowd in Losogwa, G.G. Kariuki asked for a matchbox. He removed a stick from it and broke it into pieces. And in his usual dry humour said, "This is the way I will break Wagathia. Let me hear no more of his lies fostered by hate and envy." This was at the heyday of his power.

This power came with considerable changes in G.G. Kariuki's personal fortunes and those of his family. He entertained guests from all over; indicating the changing fortune. As two informants noted:

G.G. Kariuki made a happy home. He did not lose touch with his family. He would in most cases spend his weekends at his home in Igwamiti. He would be at ease with the elders with whom he always had discussions centered on the welfare of the co-existing communities in Laikipia County and their unity. Equally, he welcomed many visitors and guests from as far as Turkana and Samburu Counties. Thus he not only served his own constituents but also other people from the Rift Valley.

Laikipia West constituency experienced his generosity as a minister; he participated in many fundraising activities. In 1980, for instance, he donated more than a million shillings to various self help groups and invited various guests from within and outside the district who donated money and materials to self help groups and schools. At personal level, G.G. Kariuki had by 1979 began to accumulate wealth. He had bought large tracks of land in Laikipia County and established businesses in Nyahururu, Nakuru and Nairobi.

1.6 Conclusions and Recommendation

G.G. Kariuki's personality has been shaped by the Kikuyu ethnic group. He is sympathetic and reserved. However, he does not shy away from sharing with his hosts regardless of their social status. This is a quality that won him a lot of respect and admiration from many residents of Laikipia County. Between 1963 and 1979, G.G. Kariuki remained a colourless political nonentity mainly concentrating his political activities within Laikipia County. During this time he became deeply engrossed in his project of settling the landless in the County. In colonial times, land in the County which was part of the White Highlands, was a preserve of European farmers and ranchers. This state of affairs effectively relegated Africans into landless squatters. This state of landlessness had been one of the core reasons Africans had fought the British for independence.

In Laikipia the land question was a complicated one; when the white settlers arrived in the early 1900s it was inhabited by the Maasai. The colonial government introduced land laws and policies that alienated the Maasai from Laikipia to give way to white settlement. In the subsequent years, other communities started moving into Laikipia owing to a number of reasons. The Kikuyu, for example, emigrated into Laikipia in search of employment (having lost their own land), to escape conscription into the army and also with the encouragement of the settlers who were increasingly in need of labour. The Turkana and Samburu, on the other hand, moved into Laikipia for grazing purposes. At independence, as the settlers started leaving there was need to find a way to settle these communities that were laying claim on the land in Laikipia.

In 1970, in collaboration with local leaders in the County he convened a meeting that culminated in the formation of the Laikipia West Farmers Company. This land buying company under G.G. Karuki's leadership played an important role in the resettlement program in Laikipia County. G.G. Kariuki thus became a champion in settling the landless in Laikipia District and had helped establish more than fifty land buying companies in Rift Valley province. Through his persistent efforts he assisted in the settlement of about 20,000 families in Laikipia. He equally was involved in solving inter-ethnic and human wildlife conflicts in the County.

Despite all the good work he undertook towards the settlement of the people in Laikipia, his efforts are seen to be skewed in favour of his Kikuyu community. The settlement programmes he initiated in the district largely benefitted the Kikuyu and hence the rest of the communities residing in the region like the Maasai, the Turkana and the Samburu were not beneficiaries of the settlement schemes. In the aftermath of all this weaknesses, all the other

conflicts that existed amongst the communities living in Laikipia, some of which arose out of skewed allocation of land and other resources remained unresolved in his time as the MP of the area. He also favoured his family, friends and mainly people from the areas that voted for him in the distribution of resources leaving out any areas opposed to him.

The period between 1979 and 1982 was the highlight of G.G. Kariuki's political career. During this period, he and Njonjo teamed up with Moi to form a mighty triumvirate of power never before witnessed in the history of Kenya; allowing him to enjoy unequalled access to the president. He bought large tracks of land in Laikipia County and established businesses in Nyahururu, Nakuru and Nairobi and even influenced the construction of an airstrip in his constituency. Moi became a regular visitor in Laikipia County and at his home. He entertained guests from all over; indicating the changing fortune. Laikipia West constituency experienced his generosity as a minister; he participated in many fundraising activities. In 1980, for instance, he donated more than a million shillings to various self help groups and invited various guests from within and outside the district who donated money and materials to self help groups and schools.

In the contemporary politics, G.G. Kariuki has been described in the media as a 'polished martial artist, capable of reinventing himself'. He has launched a party that he hopes will change the Kenyan society for the better. He feels change can only happen through a revolution. The Party's manifesto will be written from the views of the people (from the grassroots). However, the party, Mkenya Solidarity, still remains unknown to the Kenyan masses. His story is the history of a colonial heritage, compulsion to rebel, interpretation of reality, treachery and disillusionment. His political career epitomizes the ups and downs that are the lot of many politicians in turbulent Africa.

As a recommendation, there is need for further research on ethno-political conflicts, Mungiki and the status of the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Laikipia County as well as comparative studies of G.G. Kariuki and his political contemporaries.

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List of Informants

	Name	Age	Location	Date
1.	Stephen Macharia	87	Nyahururu	Several Times
2.	Stephen Muraya	90	Nyahururu	30.12.08
3.	John Mutemi	88	Nyahururu	30.12.08
4.	Joseph Kinyanjui	78	Rumuruti	31.12.08
5.	Mary Njeri	75	Rumuruti	31.12.08
6.	Agnes Chepkorir	80	Rumuruti	31.12.08
7.	Albert Mwangi	90	Kinamba	2.1.09
8.	Mary Wambui	67	Kinamba	2.1.09
9.	Waigwa wa Kariuki	89	Kinamba	Several Times
10.	Waigwa Mukuru	96	Kinamba	Several Times
11.	Solomon Kiptang	90	Rumuruti	Several Times
12.	G.G. Kariuki	75	Nairobi	Several Times
13.	Karani Njirigu	76	Nyahururu	23.2.09
14.	Wahome Gichaci	78	Nyahururu	Several Times
15.	John Kang'ang'a	80	Kinamba	Several Times