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Africa Review

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AFRICA REVIEW

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Namibia: Consequences of Shipanga's Return

The return of Namibian nationalist leader Andreas Shipanga to Namibia on 26 August could trigger a re-alignment of political forces within the territory and deepen the split in the leadership of the South-West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO). By establishing himself as a middle-of-the-road independent, the disaffected former SWAPO Minister of Information hopes to attract support from both sides of the political spectrum. Shipanga appears intelligent, ambitious, and politically astute and could develop a strong popular following.

Shipanga had been in Western Europe since he and 10 of his followers were released from detention in Tanzania last May. His frustration with exile politics and his inability to accomplish much more by remaining outside the territory are the main reasons for his return. Shipanga had been reluctant to go back to Namibia so soon after his release because he feared that he would be branded a South African stooge and that SWAPO's exiled leadership would target him for assassination. Last month Shipanga sent several members of his newly formed party--the SWAPO Democrats--to Namibia to organize his campaign and they subsequently urged him to return.

The biggest hurdle facing Shipanga is how much political support he can garner from his fellow Ovambo tribesmen who constitute about half of the Namibian population. Shipanga's new party is closely associated with the Namibian National Front--which is composed of a handful of white liberals and the leaders of several smaller black tribes. The inclusion of an Ovambo representation could transform the Front from an under-financed and politically marginal alliance into a serious contender for the control of any future, independent, Namibian Government. Although Shipanga identifies strongly with the Front which advocates a nonethnic and highly centralized government, he is reluctant to join it officially until he has established his own power base, primarily among the Ovambos.

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Shipanga hopes to attract Ovambo support in part by bringing disaffected SWAPO members in Greece, the US, Kenya, and India back to Namibia to work for him. The South African Government, which views Shipanga's movement as a moderate alternative to SWAPO, has offered to facilitate the return of Shipanga's supporters.

Immediately upon his return, Shipanga called for the release of SWAPO members now being detained in Zambia and South Africa, most of whom, he believes would support his cause. Shipanga claims that 1,800 disaffected SWAPO members are being detained by SWAPO in three camps in Zambia. SWAPO's exiled leadership denies such charges. Although one camp was disbanded early this year and another is a legitimate UN refugee camp, there are unconfirmed reports that about 580 disident SWAPO guerrillas are being kept under minimum guard at a third camp. SWAPO officials have invited the UN to inspect the first two camps but have not mentioned the third, which serves as SWAPO military headquarters in Zambia.

Shipanga is also spearheading a drive to petition South Africa to release Herman Toivo ya Toivo, who is a founding member and former SWAPO president now imprisoned in South Africa. Toivo is said to come from the same village as Shipanga. Shipanga says Toivo shares his disdain for SWAPO's exiled leadership--particularly Sam Nujoma--and maintains that Toivo would join forces with the SWAPO Democrats if released.

Shipanga believes his return might provide the catalyst for a split in the more conservative Democratic Turnhalle Alliance as well as in SWAPO's internal wing. The Alliance has become increasingly beset by personal rivalries and ideological differences since the assassination last March of its black president, Clemens Kapuuo. Under the leadership of Kuaina Riruako, who took Kapuuo's place as the leader of the Herero party in the Alliance, blacks are demanding the abandonment of ethnicity and consensus decisionmaking as the guiding principles of the Alliance. The consensus rule would in effect, give the white population in the territory (12 percent of the total) a veto over any decision by the black majority that affected the whites' interests. Dirk Mudge, the white leader of the Alliance, has refused to make such concessions, partly out of fear this

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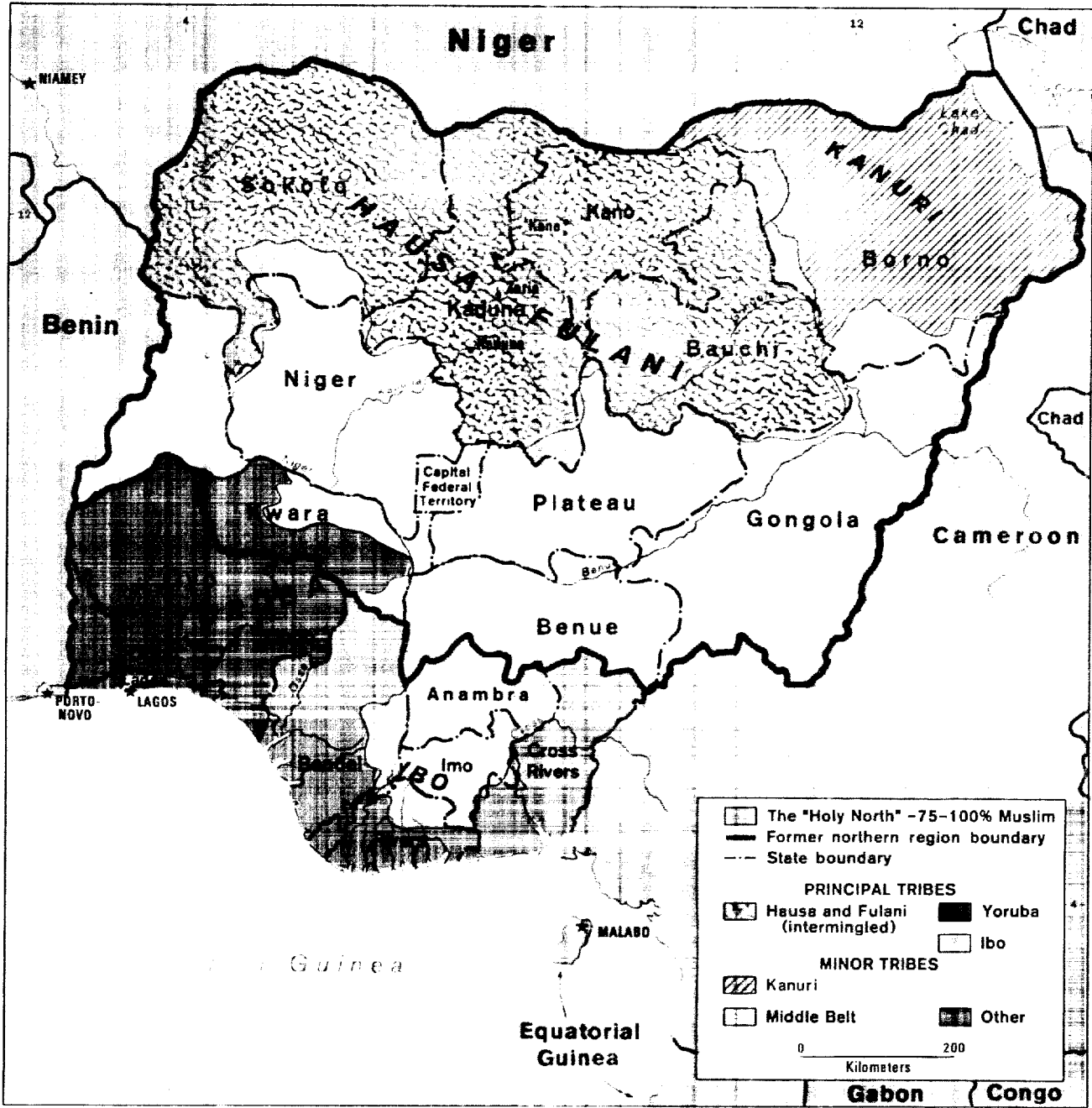
would seriously undercut white and conservative black support for the Alliance.

Riruako is said to have contacted representatives of the Front and of Shipanga's SWAPO Democrats to discuss the possibility of a coalition. One small tribal group is said to have already walked out of the Alliance in late June because of the ethnicity issue; three other groups are threatening to join forces with the Front.

Shipanga doubtless also hopes to capitalize on differences between SWAPO's internal wing and its exiled leadership. Members of the internal wing appear more committed to resolving the Namibian problem by peaceful means, primarily because they are well known locally and in a much better position to compete in territory-wide elections. Although we have seen no indications yet that any internal SWAPO members are considering joining forces with Shipanga, the chances for such a break will grow if the external leadership continues its terrorist attacks or reneges on its acceptance of the Western proposals. (SECRET NOFORN-NOCONTRACT-ORCON)

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Nigeria: Federal States, Tribal Groups, and Islam



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Nigeria: Communal Tensions

Communal tensions, stemming from the controversial decision last April by Nigeria's Constituent Assembly to delete the provision for a federal Islamic court of appeals, will not soon disappear whether or not the religious issue remains a burning national problem in the difficult months ahead. These tensions could easily spark violent episodes as the political scene heats up when the ban on open political activity is lifted this October. In the event of widespread mob violence, the military regime may be forced to cancel its plan to return Nigeria to civilian government by October 1979. The deciding factor will be the capability of Nigeria's embryonic civilian political system to operate successfully and to hold elections amid increased ethnic and religious tensions. This process will prove particularly difficult in the ethnically and religiously mixed states of Nigeria's "middle belt," which serves as a buffer zone between the Muslim far north and the predominantly Christian south.

Present Level of Tension

Communal strains so far do not appear to have reached a flash point. Varying degrees of tension between Muslim and Christian communities exist, however, in virtually all of the five predominantly Muslim and four middle-belt states that have been carved out of Nigeria's former northern region. Non-Muslim southerners, who work in the north and provide many essential services in this less advanced region, are much more sensitive to the possibility of communal violence than at any time in the past. The lesson that most Nigerians seem to have drawn from the Islamic court dispute is that the potentially ethnic and cultural divisions that led to the collapse of civilian government 12 years ago have remained unresolved under military rule. As a result, the attitudes of many Nigerians as they move into the most political phase of the transition to civilian rule are markedly more pessimistic than was the case a year ago.

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Earlier this year, tension was the highest in Borno State, dominated by Muslim Kanuri tribesmen who are regarded by other northerners as prone to violence. At that time, some 3,000 Christian Ibo tribesmen fled the capital of Borno State for their tribal homeland in southeastern Nigeria. The exodus was sparked by rumors and inflammatory tracts suggesting that Muslims were out for blood vengeance against Christians over the Islamic court issue. Possible violence was averted primarily because Muslim traditional religious leaders moved quickly to calm the populace and to urge restraint. This underscores the positive role these leaders could play when open political activity resumes, providing they see continued stability to be in the north's overall interest. The situation in Borno State has now eased, and Ibo families are slowly drifting back to town, but antagonisms remain just below the surface.

Yoruba tribesmen from southwestern Nigeria, who have replaced the Ibo in prominence in the north since the 1967-70 civil war, are also encountering hostility there. A Yoruba professor at a northern university told the US defense attache last June that many Yoruba had left the north and that others were planning to do so well before the scheduled return to civilian rule. The total number of southerners residing in the north is not known, but at least 50,000 Ibo are believed to be there.

The Problem of Mob Violence

Communal tensions and mob violence, at least among the sizable less-educated portion of the population, have always been chronic problems in Nigeria. The anti-Ibo pogrom in the north a year before the outbreak of the 1967-70 civil war is the best known example of mob hysteria in Nigeria. More than 5,000 Ibo were slaughtered and all Ibo in the north--some one million--fled to their home region.

Small scale incidents of tribal and religious rancor arise from time to time. For example, during Yoruba tribal festivals near Lagos last spring, three Muslim night watchmen were killed by celebrating Yorubas. A meeting of community leaders had to be called to calm tempers.

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In time of perceived political or social crisis, individual Nigerians tend to return to the safety of their own tribal areas in anticipation of communal violence. The size of such movements is one reliable indicator of how serious a given situation may be and whether tribal clashes are likely.

Under military rule and the ban on political activity, mob violence and communal tensions have generally been contained. The regime, aware of the potential impact of communal violence on national unity, has used its full power--military and police, public information channels, and local traditional rulers--to keep communal tensions in check. These techniques were successfully applied in the aftermath of a bloody coup attempt in 1976 when Nigeria's ethnic fabric was more fragile than at any other time since the civil war. However, a future civilian government, probably resting on a system of ethnically based political parties, may be reluctant to exert such firm control. In doing so, the ruling party could risk alienating its own sympathizers.

Political and Economic Impact of Communal Violence

Communal violence, pitting Muslims against non-Muslims, would severely set back northern efforts to build a broad ethnic party coalition as is required of contenders for power under Nigeria's new constitution. The constitution calls for a presidential system in which national candidates must demonstrate appeal across ethnic and regional lines. The winning presidential candidate must obtain a majority of votes nationwide and at least one-quarter of the votes in 13 of Nigeria's 19 states. Southern based parties must also look to the north for support to meet this requirement. Constitutional demands plus the threat of military intervention may be important factors in forcing political aspirants to exercise restraint and accommodation and in inhibiting communal violence.

The Muslim far north has the largest potential bloc of voters, with 18,230,000 registered voters, or 38 percent of the electorate. Northern strategy, assuming that one major northern party can be formed, will be to join forces as much as possible with the southern Ibo peoples

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with whom the north was united for a time during Nigeria's first experiment in civilian rule. Northerners are also looking for support among the population of the middle belt and among those Yoruba tribesmen who oppose the presidential ambitions of veteran Yoruba politician Chief Awolowo who is anathema to the Muslim north.

An outbreak of communal violence would have negative economic consequences in the north, mainly by draining the area of skilled workers. Those already there would depart and others would refuse to accept work in the north. This would halt progress on many vital economic projects and set back the already slow pace of economic development in the north. (CONFIDENTIAL)

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Kenya: Economic Stake of the Kenyatta Family

The family and closest associates of the late President Jomo Kenyatta have occupied many of the key posts in the Kenyan economy and have accumulated extensive agricultural and commercial wealth during the 15 years of Kenyatta's rule. The Kenyatta clique of Kikuyu tribal leaders currently forms the only group in a position to mount a stiff challenge to Acting President Daniel T. arap Moi--a member of the minority Kalenjin tribal group--and his major supporter Attorney General Charles Njonjo. The clique's efforts to outmaneuver Acting President Moi have so far failed; their substantial investments in the Kenyan economy probably will deter them from making a blatantly unconstitutional move. For the longer run, a desire of the Moi-Njonjo group to increase its share of the economic pie and the growing public disenchantment with the Kenyatta clan's economic monopoly could foment political unrest. Mounting economic problems will reinforce pressures for a redivision of the country's wealth.

The Royal Family Jewels

Kenyatta's extended family boasts extensive holdings of farms, plantations, hotels, casinos, and insurance, shipping, and real estate companies. Besides occupying major public office, several members of the family fill influential posts in large industrial companies doing business in Kenya, including Lonrho (a British multinational corporation active in African agriculture) and the Ford Motor Company.

Family members and close associates control a large part of the land in the White Highlands, the homeland of Kenyatta's tribe, the Kikuyu. At independence in 1963, the British established a fund to help the Kenyan Government purchase farms from European settlers in this area and redistribute them among land-hungry African farmers. Although hundreds of African farmers were resettled through this scheme, some of the funds allegedly were

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used by family members and by Kenyatta's ministers to accumulate land. To protect the holdings of its members and the family, the government blocked every parliamentary attempt to limit land ownership.

Kenyatta himself owned only about a half-dozen properties covering roughly 4,000 hectares, mainly farms in the Rift Valley and in the district of Kiambu, where he was born. His fourth wife, Mama Ngina Kenyatta, however, owns at least 115,000 hectares including a 13,000-hectare ranch in the Kiambu district, two tea plantations at Matu and Mangu, and three sisal farms near the Tanzanian border. She also has considerable holdings in the resort areas around Mombasa and is involved in coffee plantations and in the Kenyan ruby mines.

Other members of the late President's family have also prospered under his rule. His son by his first wife, Peter Muigai Kenyatta, holds a seat in Parliament and is part owner of Inchcape, a trading company that handles, among other things, the Ford Motor concession in Kenya. Peter Kenyatta and his sister Margaret, the former mayor of Nairobi, also own large tracts of land. The late President's cousins include the director of Lonrho in Kenya, the chairman of the company that built the Mombasa-to-Nairobi gas pipeline, and Kenya's sole film distributor.

Besides their other activities, Mama Ngina and Margaret Kenyatta are probably the country's two largest charcoal and ivory traders--particularly lucrative businesses. Although the export of these items is banned because depletion of Kenya's forests and wildlife threaten the underpinnings of the Kenyan economy, both women have been able to obtain special licenses and are rumored to be involved in smuggling. For instance, shortly after a ban on ivory exports (except for tusks from elephants dead of natural causes or shot for control purposes) went into effect, the United Africa Corporation, whose chairman and chief stockholder is Margaret Kenyatta, received an export license for 1,250 baby elephant tusks.

Family Assets Threatened?

Should Moi, with the aid of Njonjo and other supporters, consolidate his position during the transition period

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and gain the presidency in his own right*--an event that seems likely at the moment--the division of economic power could begin to shift. Family ties to the transition government are tenuous. Although Njonjo and Finance Minister Mwai Kibaki are Kikuyus, both for the time being are principal figures in the Moi camp. Moi and Njonjo--both rumored to be involved in land and other business dealings--could capitalize on the widespread dislike of Mama Ngina and on public discontent over corruption to take over large shares of the family's holdings. Whether attempted as a first step toward widespread income redistribution or merely as a shift of resources in favor of the new rulers, such a move would almost certainly provoke a strong political response from the Kenyatta family.

Growing Popular Disgruntlement

The Kenyatta family's hold on the economy is increasingly resented. Public criticism has been fanned by open parliamentary debate about scandals and high-level corruption which has been widely publicized by the country's free press. Students and faculty at the University of Nairobi are particularly concerned about the uneven distribution of Kenya's wealth and income. They and, increasingly, the man on the street are very critical of the family's involvement in the charcoal and ivory trade, which endangers vital national resources:

- The destruction of Kenyan forests and scrubland for charcoal has reduced the habitat for wildlife and encouraged the encroaching desert, threatening tourism and the livelihood of most Kenyans who are subsistence farmers. In the last decade the country has lost 10 percent of its largest forest area, and one-fourth of the land now is classed as arid. As a result, soil erosion has increased; at the mouth of the Galana River, silt has risen threefold in a single year.

*The constitution calls for a presidential election within 90 days of the president's death. In the absence of an opposition party, the candidate of KANU (Kenya Africa National Union) will be proclaimed president.

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- Ivory smuggling is taking a heavy toll on Kenyan elephant herds, the main tourist attraction. Figures for 1973, the last time a comprehensive survey was made, indicate that poaching resulted in the slaughter of 10,000 to 25,000 elephants in that year. Recent reports indicate that in Tsavo National Park--Kenya's largest park--the elephant herd has been reduced to only 2,000. Moreover, allowable Kenyan exports of high quality heavy ivory from mature bull elephants is down, leading to speculation that animals over the ages of 30 to 35 are almost extinct.

With the economy headed for balance-of-payments problems in the next several years after more than a decade of 5-percent growth, austerity measures may be in store, and popular discontent could grow. Kenya's payments accounts are under pressure from several sources; Nairobi has already considered applying to the IMF for assistance:

- Falling prices for coffee and tea--the country's major exports--are adding to the current account deficit. In addition, heavy rains damaged this year's coffee crop.
- Security worries due to Somali irredentism has put Kenya in the market for increased arms purchases. A US survey team has recommended a 10-year package to expand and modernize the Kenyan military at a cost of \$560 million to \$1,190 million. The first phase of the modernization is scheduled to be completed by July 1979 and will cost Kenya \$49 million. Almost all of the program would have to be funded by Nairobi.
- Collapse of the East African Community last year adversely affected the balance of payments. Kenya lost its major African trading partner, Tanzania, which accounted for 10 percent of Kenyan exports, and tourism has suffered from the closure of the Tanzanian border.

The new government may find itself forced to cut back on consumer imports and on development programs to pay for increased military purchases and keep the payments deficit

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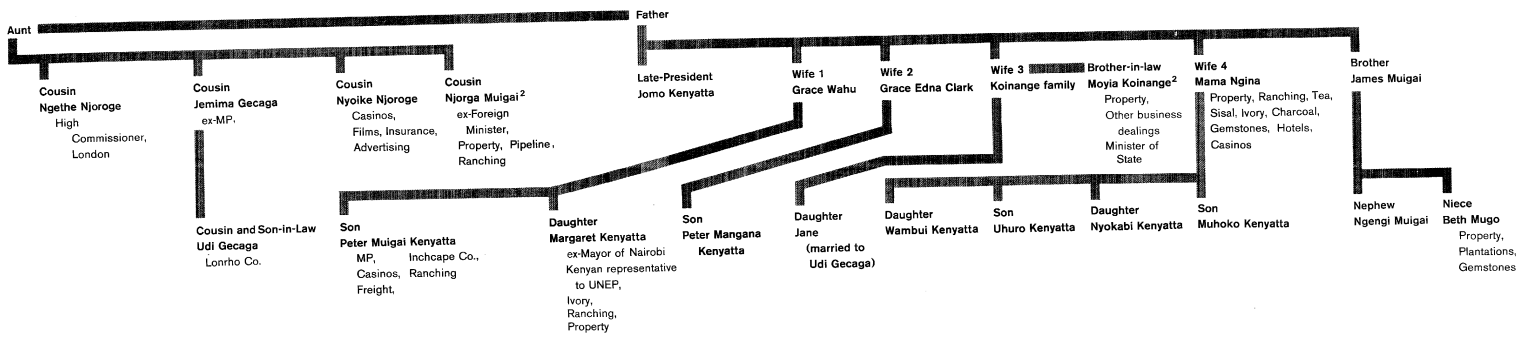
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manageable. A cut in consumer imports would add to shortages that presently exist, especially for sugar and meat, besides aggravating inflation. If the development effort slowed, unemployment--especially in the cities--would likely rise, fanning the discontent of urban dwellers already cynical about the concentration of wealth in a few hands. Urban unemployment currently is severe, especially among university and secondary school graduates, half of whom cannot find work appropriate to their educational levels. (SECRET NOFORN-NOCONTRACT)

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Kenyatta Family, Inc.¹



1. Other family members own property, but those listed above are most active in the Kenyan economy.
2. Possible challengers to Acting-President Moi.

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