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EDITORIAL

POLITICS AND ECONOMICS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

CONTEMPORARY history in general and African affairs in particular illustrate alike the deep tragedy which the inseparability of politics and economics can so often carry with it. In the contemporary politics of the Third World, especially, this tragedy is stark. Let us look at one or two matters in point.

A few days ago Radio South Africa announced that a local Anglo-American combine had just decided to invest (another?) £30,000,000 in its Rhodesian trade. In the immediate absence of facts proving or dis-proving this claim one can only speculate as to whether this is true or whether it is mere propoganda calculated to weaken resistance against the illegality of the Smith regime. It could well be either; and, if proved, neither possibility would be surprising.

Again, on October 12 a Johannesburg release warned Britain about the latter's Common Market membership struggles, with their threat of eliminating the Commonwealth preferences South Africa enjoys from Britain. Such an outcome, said Economics Minister Jan Haak, would necessarily result in a retaliatory loss to Britain of the Union's own preferences at present operating in favour of Mr. Wilson's hard pressed country. What is at stake in this "reciprocal threat" is eye-opening: Britain consumes 32.3 per cent of South Africa's total exports, as the Union's best customer, while South Africa helps the British economy with a (1966) total purchase of 4.8 per cent of the latter's exports. (No doubt there are some balancing factors not explicit in this "equation", but, as it stands, it begs the question: "who is bilaterally relying on whom for her balance of trade?")

Thus Britain, America, and other Western Powers are caught in a dilemma which, among individuals, would have profound moral implications but which in international relations, particularly those involving weaker nations with stronger, can easily be converted into a thick smokescreen, blotting out for the time being all moral vision. To change the figure: the "Great" Powers perform wonderful magic in almsgiving to and cheekpatting of the developing countries, with their right hand; and with their left they shuffle furiously and deal out swiftly among themselves the trump cards of international finance and capital.

So much so that they confuse and bewilder even astute (erst-while) Pan-Africanists like Dr. Banda, who, understandably pressed on all sides, does not now seem able even to distinguish between the politics of economic survival and the perils of political gamesmanship.

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To our Contributors

We would like to remind our prospective contributors about some of the rules governing contributions:—

The MAXIMUM length of articles is 4 pages quarto, typed double-space; letters should not exceed 1½ pages quarto, and should be exclusive to the "Legon Observer".

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Ali Mazrui replies his many critics of "Nkrumah—the Leninist Czar" in Transition 32



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Politics

THE CASE FOR DISQUALIFICATION

By

A. Radix

THE question whether ex-C.P.P. leaders and their active collaborators should be disqualified or disfranchised is so fundamental, not only to the future political system of this country but also to our whole way of life, that the debate it has recently engendered should be welcomed as a sign of a new awareness. Whatever so intimately affects our future is worthy of vigorous debate. For this very reason it is important that we should be clear about the issues involved. Such clarity can only be obtained by examining the question in the light of cool rationality, unencumbered by sentimentality.

The case for disqualification or disfranchisement is based on the very justification of the coup. For years the CPP had so mismanaged the affairs of the country, so damaged the economy, so dissipated public funds, so looted the public treasury, so oppressed the people and thus prevented them from rectifying its mistakes and undoing its damage—in short, the CPP had so abused its power that it became absolutely essential to overthrow it by force. Since the coup the country has been painfully trying to put things right, first by trying to get the economy back on the right path and, secondly, by trying to lay such foundations as would ensure, as far as humanly possible, that these misdeeds would not in future recur. The facts that were known before the coup and those that have come out since then make it clear beyond doubt that those who were directly responsible for these misdeeds have proved themselves utterly unfit to hold public office. Violence is done to the state if its future is entrusted into the hands of people who are capable of such gross and reprehensible misbehaviour.

The argument for disqualification or disfranchisement is not based simply on the ground that the culprits were guilty of betrayal of public trust. That, as has rightly been pointed out, is not enough to serve as a basis for disqualification or disfranchisement. The argument is based rather more properly on the ground that the CPP leaders were guilty of a type of betrayal of public trust that makes it impossible, if not dangerous, ever again to entrust the running of the country into their unworthy hands. The type of betrayal that is here contemplated is clear enough although it is not capable of precise formulation. (What important concept in politics or law is capable of such formulation?) It is not merely that the CPP

established a dictatorship or a one-party state; or that it appointed unworthy people, even convicts, to places of high responsibility carrying with them control over vast sums of money; or that, by making state corporations the prize-objects of "gaping sycophants", it ruined the economy of this country. It is not even the betrayal involved in making a Messiah of an ignoble and patent fraud that is the justification of disqualification or disfranchisement. It is something that is infinitely more reprehensible. It can best be defined by means of examples.

Examples of Fraudulent Practices

Consider this. A Prime Minister builds a country-house for £50,000 (NC100,000) of his own money—or so it was said. His own Cabinet then buys it from him—using public funds, of course—and then gives it back to him as a gift from the nation—an action that is later publicly defended by his Minister of Finance! In plain language, the Prime Minister has benefited by £50,000 taken fraudulently from the public coffers. The Prime Minister involved was Kwame Nkrumah.

Again consider. A government sets up a body separate from the Ministry of Education to put up schools across the country, although it could equally well use the Ministry for the same purpose. The Prime Minister then charges five per cent on all contracts awarded to put up such schools. This is the story of the Ghana Educational Trust Schools. Another example? A party forming a government establishes a party school and uses government funds for this. An ex-"pilot" boy is appointed head of this school, although it is by no means clear that he can even understand what is to be taught in the school; and he is paid a professor's salary, plus other perquisites that are denied to real professors. Almost all the teachers in the school are designated Senior Lectures and paid as such, although not one of them (at any rate the Ghanaians among them) would qualify for even an assistant lectureship in any of our Universities. A means of looting the public treasury—that is the story of the Ideological School at Winneba! One more example, M.P.s supposedly elected to stand guard over the interests of the country pass an amendment to the Constitution stipulating that no one can stand for the Presidency without the express consent of the current President! That was the amendment passed in 1965 by our illustrious parliament! One need not recount here the revelations that have been made by Commissions of Enquiry since the coup, from the use of Nadeco as a bribe-collecting agency to the use of high CPP officials for the collection of bribes, and the most fraudu-

lent conversion of public funds into private means.

All these acts, taken together, show a callous and calculated attempt to treat the economy of this country as the loot of a gang and to ensure in diverse ways that no one has the right and the opportunity to protest. **It is submitted that people who are guilty of such acts are utterly unfit to be entrusted with the government of this country and that it would be culpable negligence to entrust them with it.**

Disfranchisement and Disqualification Distinguished

So far no distinction has been drawn between disqualification and disfranchisement in the course of this argument. The distinction, however, is important. Disfranchisement means that those affected do not have the vote at elections; disqualification means that the culprits are not permitted to stand for election and are not qualified to be appointed to policy-making posts. The possession of the vote in a democracy such as we want to build in this country is a fundamental right; it is something a person must have simply by virtue of his citizenship. To deprive him of it is to deprive him of his citizenship and with this his duty to pay taxes and to obey the laws of the land. It is thus not easy to justify disfranchisement unless there is an intention to deprive those affected of their citizenship.

It would appear therefore that in a democracy nothing can deprive a citizen of his right to the vote. But this cannot be said of disqualification, for the recognition of a person's ability to stand for office is certainly not a right. To claim otherwise would make nonsense of elections. It is precisely because we all cannot be M.P.s and Ministers that we elect some of our fellow citizens to go to Parliament. It is because we cannot all be judges or managers of public corporations or University Lecturers that we look for some rational criteria to distinguish between those who are qualified to be appointed to these positions and the rest. Yet if standing for office were a right, everyone would be indiscriminately qualified for every post. No one has a right to be a Cabinet Minister or an M.P., any more than he has a right to a Principal Secretary or the headmaster of an elementary school. And a necessary qualification for an M.P. or a Cabinet Minister is that, in view of the trust placed in him, he should have a sense of responsibility and integrity of character above the ordinary run. Those who have already shown themselves incapable of possessing these qualities have thus disqualified themselves.

To prevent a person from standing for an office for which he is unfit is not to deprive him of any

right. In this particular instance, however, it is sometimes claimed that it is not the particular person affected who is denied a right but the electorate that is deprived of the right to choose whom they like. This argument cannot stand, for three reasons. First, a look at any number of electoral laws shows that the electorate has never claimed this particular right which is being claimed for it. It has always accepted, on various grounds, that certain people must be excluded from Parliament. Secondly, it must be recognized that in a predominantly illiterate society like ours, where elections are a recent phenomenon, the electorate must be protected against the corrupting influence of those who have amassed wealth through the corrupt use of their power. Nor should this protection be foisted on the people. For, thirdly, the provision disqualifying people should be submitted to the electorate in a referendum after consideration by a Constituent Assembly. It would of course have to be withdrawn if it is rejected in the referendum.

Arguments against Disqualification

An argument often brought against the idea of disqualification is that all of us Ghanaians contributed to the rise of the CPP and its maintenance, and that therefore we are all responsible for its misdeeds. We are all therefore guilty and it is wrong to punish some and leave others out. What about the police and the soldiers who enforced orders? What about the civil servants who carried out policies? And the intellectuals who either launched books or did not speak out? And, also, the ordinary people who did not either rise in a bloody revolt or vote the CPP out? For good measure, we may also ask about the cooks who had the opportunity of poisoning all the CPP big wigs but didn't. And the drivers and the aeroplane pilots who did not engineer fatal accidents. Or the farmers who by producing food helped sustain the dictatorship instead of starving the populace into a realization of its right.

The argument is persuasive. Granted that even unborn children were to some extent responsible, there is still the vital importance of recognizing degrees of responsibility. To fail to do this is to argue like a person with a bad conscience: fearing one's past one tries to drag everybody into the net somewhat indiscriminately. A band of burglars under a tough, domineering, unscrupulous leader burgle an old lady in the middle of the night. The pathetic cries of the old lady go unheeded by both those wide awake in their beds and those on the street in front of the old lady's house returning from the pictures. After some time the police turn up, chase the burglars and finally

arrest them. Is it sensible to argue that since those in their beds and those in the street, by failing to arrest the burglars, contributed to the burglary they are equally guilty with the thieves and their leader, and that therefore the thieves should not be punished? That is essentially what this particular argument against disqualification boils down to.

Yet the difference between those who take orders and execute policy on one hand and those who formulate policy on the other, the difference between those who work on the "outputs" of the political system and those who work on the "inputs", is as clear as the difference between day and night. Whilst not excusing any public officers who enforced clearly immoral or dangerous or illegal orders, or executed similar policies, they cannot be put at par with those who formulated the policies, built the system, and used terror and their control over the economy to browbeat the officials into enforcing their orders. It is not argued that anybody who ever joined the CPP should be disqualified. That would be unjust, vindictive and impracticable. What is being argued is that those who formulated the policies of the CPP or directly maintained the system, those who were the major political arms of that villainous party, should be disqualified: members of the Central Committee, Cabinet Ministers, M.Ps, Lecturers of the Ideological Institute, District Commissioners, high party officials and high officials of the so-called "integral wings" of that party, and those of the Rogue Dictator's personal security service (Ambrose Yankey's outfit).

It is sometimes also argued, not always with logic, that only those who are convicted in the courts of law should be disqualified or disfranchised. Not to do so is to violate the rule of law or the due process of law. This argument is more a tribute to its professors' knowledge of legal rules than to their wisdom in dealing with a concrete situation against a particular background. For fifteen years the law of this country was moulded by the CPP, and it is not necessary to add that it was done in their interest. It is futile therefore to depend solely on this very law in trying to clip their wings; many of them will escape through the net. The only way to catch them in court is to pass *ex post facto* laws, that is, to pass laws now and backdate them to cover actions done in the past, or to backdate some of the laws passed by the CPP for others, as the N.L.C. did in the Leventis case. But no sooner is this done than a hue and cry is raised in defence of the rule of law, since *ex post facto* laws are

generally held to be incompatible with it. In reality the argument boils down to leaving the CPP leaders alone to enjoy their loot, and at any future date worm their way back to power. Clearly this will provide no warning to any future politicians who may be tempted to abuse their power, loot the public coffers, and terrorize the population into submission.

Three other objections are sometimes brought up which can be dismissed more easily: that disqualification is vindictiveness, that it sets a dangerous precedent, and that it argues a lack of tolerance. If vindictiveness were the reason, something more drastic than disqualification would be needed. It is elementary prudence which demands that those who have proved themselves utterly unfit for office should be prevented from laying any more violent hands on the office, and that a salutary lesson for future politicians should be set. The precedent that is being set is that a politician who grossly and manifestly abuses his power must be prevented from holding office again. There is nothing dangerous in this; on the contrary, it is an entirely happy precedent. As for tolerance, it is a universal virtue we must all admire and strive to achieve, but even tolerance must be exercised with restraint. It is foolishness, not virtue, to put a self-confessed thief in charge of vast sums of money, and a country that fails to enforce high standards of integrity on its leaders is doomed to eternal failure.

The Economy

IN OUR last issue, we published the first of a series of groups of articles on agricultural policy. Dr. La Anyane examined three issues—systems of agricultural production, marketing and farm prices, and food aid; and Prof. F. T. Sai dealt with food policy in an article, "Food, Nutrition and Agriculture" published in two instalments.

In this issue we present the concluding instalment of Prof. Sai's article and an article on Crops by Mr. Doku. In subsequent issues, other special contributors will deal with other aspects of agricultural policy.—Editor.

FOOD, NUTRITION & AGRICULTURE—II

By

F. T. Sai

(Professor, Ghana Medical School)

THERE is an overall deficit of calories, made worse in some areas by periodic food shortages.

The smallness of the deficit hides the plight of small children and special groups such as the school child who has to walk long distances to school, the woman who has to work long hours on the farm and heavy manual labourers with small incomes. A major problem is that of overall protein needs. The majority of the population does not appear to have enough protein, what protein they do have is generally from one source, and therefore lacks in some essential amino acid. Animal proteins hardly feature in many diets; and the protein problem is most serious for the pre-school child.

The theoretical basis of any food policy is therefore:

1. Increase the availability of calories to cover the present deficit, and make room for expansion to meet the population growth demands.
2. Increase the production and consumption of pulses and legumes which are better source of proteins than the staples and cheaper than animal foods, while starting on poultry and fishery expansion.
3. Increase the production and consumption of green vegetables and fruits by all especially by those in the savana type areas.
4. Identify the specially vulnerable groups and make special plans for their protection.

The Production of Calories

It is known that much of the staples and starchy roots produced in tropical Africa never reach human mouths at all. Lack of adequate distribution systems lead to high spoilage of foods on the farms. Insects, rodents and moulds destroy a sizeable quantity and in the end from 10-30 per cent of all farm produce is wasted. It would appear that the first need is to prevent all the avoidable losses through better collection and storage of food. It seems reasonable to suggest that at least part of the tropical farmer's unwillingness to produce too much food is due to the certainty that so much will be wasted. The farmer needs an incentive by way of remunerative prices.

Increasing the efficiency of the individual farmer and of his land should precede any other type of reorganisation for food production. The introduction of some simple but better hoes and harvesters, the selection of better seeds and the increased use of fertiliser will definitely increase the yield per acre.

There is an insidious situation to be faced in many parts of Africa. When a cash crop is introduced farmers flock to it. If there is no guidance

valuable land for food crop farming is taken over by cash crops. This is not necessarily bad if food crop production per acre is increased to make up the difference. However one only has to look at what the increase in tobacco growing is doing to the production of maize, millets and sorghums in this country to appreciate that a sound policy can only be evolved if cash crop production and food production are viewed together and some reasonable allocation of land made.



The bulky calorie-poor root-crops which are expensive to transport should gradually give way to the cereals.

Protein Rich Foods

Many varieties of pulses and legumes are grown in tropical Africa. Their production and consumption need to be stepped up. Like the cereals the wastage rate is rather high, and some improved methods of preservation, distribution and marketing are urgently required. Again cash payments for the produce will be the best reward for farmers.

Animal foods are a difficulty because of the disease problems. However, fishery development is possible. There should be a national policy to develop both sea fishing and fish farming in inland waters and artificial ponds. Poultry is another good source of animal protein. It has a satisfactory feed conversion ratio.

Piggery development is also possible. If these are tackled properly it should be possible within a short time to produce enough protein-rich foods for each individual to have about 20G of pulse and animal protein in a day.

Green vegetables and fruits are a problem for two reasons. They are not generally considered as food; and they are so perishable that they require a very efficient marketing organisation. They supply some of the much needed vitamins and minerals and they are to be encouraged. Both indigenous and European type vegetables can be grown. Useful fruits include citrus, mangoes and pawpaw.

It is one thing making enough food available but quite another thing ensuring that the food is consumed in the right amounts by groups requiring it. Weaning children have less than their share because their special needs are not recognised. There should be a policy to develop as rapidly as possible a cheap high protein weaning food. Formulas are already available which can be adapted and adopted. Investment in this area will contribute tremendously to the development of the next generation. If some evidence now coming forward is to be believed, protein/calorie malnutrition can result in retarded mental development, which no nation can afford. Similar developments should lead to the production of fortified foods for pregnant and lactating women. Industrial workers need some special attention and this may be provided through canteens and market co-operatives.

Education of the Planning Commissions and heads of Governments is just as essential as education of individual farmers. In between these are the large numbers of various levels of agricultural workers who require education to appreciate their role in executing policies. Lastly the consuming public is to be educated. The cultural or avoidance practices that lead to the rejection of some useful foods and the malfeeding of some groups should be identified and tackled. This education should take account of the economic possibilities. It may even require governments to review their wages policy or resort to food subsidies for special groups.

No nation can be built on an undernourished or malnourished population; and, as a basis for all development, the solution of food and nutrition problems should rank first. Undernourished and

malnourished children are unable to learn satisfactorily, the adults have a low working efficiency. Both are prey to diseases. The development of any nation's human resources must therefore start with an attack on the problem of food and nutrition. It is the surest way to break this vicious circle of malnutrition—low production—low food intake and malnutrition.

CROP PRODUCTION IN GHANA

By

E. V. Doku

IT IS common knowledge that in Ghana, and in many other tropical countries, a wide gap exists between present crop yields and what is attainable through the best adjustment of crops to their environment. For example, the national average yield of maize is about 600 pounds per acre, but yields as high as 4,000 pounds per acre have been realized with good management on proven varieties under conditions of higher rainfall in the forest zone. This yield, though high for Ghanaian conditions is, in fact, quite low by world standards. What has been said for maize would apply to most crops grown in this country; yields of almost all our crops could be more than doubled by the use of proven varieties, better cultural methods, fertilizers, insecticides and fungicides. Increased crop production is required not only to maintain and improve the standard of nutrition of our expanding population, but also to boost up exports and to reduce imports of crops we can produce locally. Full advantage is not taken of the knowledge and material available locally.

The absence of guaranteed food prices, assured markets, credit facilities, bonuses and other incentives is responsible for the general lack of interest in food and other types of farming as opposed to cocoa farming which has most of these facilities, and unless government policy towards other farmers is brought in line with that for cocoa, we cannot expect much progress in these other areas of production. Let us look at only two examples: tobacco growing is becoming more popular because it has an assured market; and many farmers find it more profitable than cocoa. The recent demand for dried cassava from Germany has resulted in a fairly large number of businessmen taking to cassava farming. Government should therefore endeavour to look into the problems associated with the marketing of agricultural commodities more seriously. For, periods of glut and low and unremunerative prices make farming unprofitable. Government's plans to

stability maize prices should be expedited and implemented.

A good deal of proven planting material of various crops have been always made readily available to farmers ever since scientific crop improvement began in this country in the early 1930's. Information on fertilizers, insecticides, and fungicides, etc., have also been made readily available, and not locked up in cabinets as is generally proclaimed. Even during the heyday of the C.P.P. when the Agricultural Extension Service was completely routed, this service continued.

Seed Multiplication

The most important division of the Ministry of Agriculture, apart from the Extension Division, should be the erstwhile Improved Seed Multiplication Division which is now a part of the Division of Farm Supplies. Multiplication and distribution of improved seed and planting material is a highly skilled and complicated job and should in no way be equated with the mere stocking and distribution of fertilizers, insecticides, fungicides etc., which, in addition to the multiplication and distribution of improved seed and planting material, is the job assigned to the division of Farm Supplies. It requires special skills, equipment and expert handling to ensure that pure unadulterated seed reaches farmers in good physical condition free from pests, diseases etc. and with expected maximum germination when planted. I would therefore suggest that the Improved Seed Multiplication Division is not only brought back, but also enlarged. Even before it became part of the Division of Farm Supplies it was too small to cope with the demands of farmers who were only then becoming seed conscious, and certainly the Ministry must not wait to be overtaken by farmers' demands before expanding that division.

After an initial period of exclusive government operation, licensed seed companies and individual farmers could take over the multiplication and sale of seeds on behalf of, and under close supervision by, the Ministry, to ensure that material of inferior quality does not find its way to farmers. The job of deciding which varieties to multiply for sale to farmers will still have to be done by the Improved Seed Division.

Farm Mechanization

There is also a Farm Mechanization Division in the Ministry whose job at present is largely confined to land preparation (i.e. ploughing, harrowing, ridging etc.) for farmers. Private contractors with tractors are invading this field and making excessive profit at the expense of the poor

farmers because the Division in the Ministry cannot cope with farmers' demands. By all means private contractors must be encouraged, but the division of Farm Mechanization should also participate more fully and thereby set standards for the private contractors and farmers' co-operatives that may be set up in the near future.

Research into Crops

Research into crops will also have to be geared to support increased production. The present research set-up needs reorganisation not only to meet this, but also to avoid duplication and ensure efficient use of personnel. Our crop research needs are really immense and the Crops Research Institute appears too unwieldy to function effectively and it might be better to split it into smaller Units each dealing with research into all aspects of producing one crop, or a group of related crops.

I would suggest three Units to deal with research into our main cereals, Maize, Rice, and sorghum and millet. There are no technical reasons why we cannot produce surpluses of these crops. Nigeria is producing her own needs of rice and maize and will soon be producing surpluses for export to Ghana!

Root Crops

Another research Unit is suggested for the root crops—cassava, yam, cocoyam, sweet potato (and Irish potatoes). Apart from cassava, yam, and Irish potatoes, research into the other root crops has been negligible. These root crops provide us with our main source of carbohydrates; and we import considerable quantities of starch for domestic use and for our textile industries when we can produce all our needs here from cassava alone!

There is also a need for a food legume research Unit; apart from groundnut (which should be regarded as an oil rather than a food legume crop) other food legumes like cowpea, lima bean (Apatram), and soya bean have received no research attention whatsoever. These food legumes supply us with vegetable protein, a cheap substitute for protein from animal sources which is either scarce or very expensive.

Vegetables like tomato, garden egg, Okro, pepper etc., also need to be placed under a research Unit. The production of these vegetables is too dependent on the weather with the result that there are great seasonal fluctuations in their production. There are the familiar acute out-of-season shortages with high prices, and what appears to be an over-production during the season with large surpluses which the canneries seem unable to utilize. This bumper season is, however, of a short

duration and we pay high prices for vegetables for the greater part of the year. It will be one of the duties of the Vegetable Research Unit to find ways and means of ensuring a steady supply of all vegetables all the year round.

There are also the annual industrial crops—the fibre crops: cotton, kenaf, *Urena lobata* and jute and sugar cane. I would suggest the establishment of a Fibre Crop Research Unit to handle the coarse fibres—Kenaf, *Urena lobata* and jute on which there is no research to back production now in progress, and another Unit for cotton. We have toyed too much with cotton in this country. In the early forties, a high powered mission sent to Ghana by the Empire Cotton Growing Corporation (E.C.G.C.) reported that cotton could be profitably grown here provided insect pests could be economically controlled. Since those days powerful and effective insecticides have been developed, some specifically against cotton pests. Recent research has confirmed the earlier report by the E.C.G.C. mission and since 1960 the Crops Research Institute has been conducting variety and agronomic trials to find out the best varieties for our conditions and the best methods of cultivation. They by now possess results that could be of some use to farmers wishing to grow cotton to feed our textile factories.

Very good and fruitful research work has been going on at Kpong on sugar cane (as well as rice) for some time, and it might be better to have one research unit based at Kpong for both crops. Both are irrigated crops and require more or less the same soils.

Of the tree crops, only cocoa has well been taken care of. We had not established an oil palm research unit when we broke away from the West African Research Organisation and did not establish one immediately after breaking off. The Crops Research Institute has recently established what might be described as the nucleus of an oil palm research unit with material imported from Nigeria. With the fresh wind of co-operation blowing between Ghana and Nigeria, might it not be better for both countries to pull their resources together again in the research fields of cocoa and oil palm? Incidentally, there was also a West African Rice Research Station in Sierra Leone in which Ghana and Nigeria actively participated. Could interest in this project not be revived to the benefit of all West African countries?

There is also rubber on which comparatively little work has been done. The Firestone Company

with which the Government recently signed a contract might be encouraged to establish a Rubber Research Unit in the country since it has the money and experience from neighbouring Liberia.

Other tree crops like citrus, banana, plantain, avocado pear, and coconut might also be handled by a research unit. Research on Citrus and banana has declined, and there has been no work at all on plantain.

The obvious question to be asked would be how we shall obtain the men, money and material for the several units proposed. It is suggested that by pooling the present resources of the Ministry of Agriculture, the Universities and the Crops Research Institute to be controlled by a National Agricultural Research Council responsible to the Ministry of Agriculture, we can make a good beginning. It would be better to have a well planned set up and work towards it, than to be overtaken by events before starting to do something in a hurry.

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I. M. Ofori

(University of Science & Technology, Kumasi)

EVERY Ghanaian who has anything remotely to do with land will welcome the news of the appointment of a Commission on Land Tenure. Here at last we are about to examine one of the thorny, and politically explosive, problems of economic development, for, land is one of the vital elements in the national economy, so vital as to prompt the saying that every capital combination is in fact a combination of land and other resources. An examination of the problems of land in Ghana will pay very rich dividends in the long run!

But one wonders whether by the appointment of a Commission of land tenure we are doing enough. The exact terms of reference of the Commission are not available to all of us except what the newspapers report. If the Commission is to examine tenure, one will seriously question why only that? If we define tenure as a broad term covering all those relationships established among men which determine their varying rights in the use of land, we shall see immediately that tenure or tenurial systems are just one of the many problems which comprise agrarian problems or reform, which in itself is part of the general problem of land reform, which is part of land policy. We are dealing here with many parts in a bigger hierarchy of problems, all connected with land and its usage and conservation in the national interest and prosperity.

It is reported that the Commission will "further enquire into other matters connected with land, which in its opinion, ought to be investigated in the public interest". This is a useful 'blanket formula' to indicate that the Commission is free to investigate other matters. But what is important and immediately relevant is: do the members of the Commission possess the necessary knowledge to investigate these other matters? The land problems of any country are many and diverse, and one can only, on the basis of the underlying principles, identify a few; allocation of land, redistribution of land, restraints on absolutism in the use of land, security of tenure, reconciliation of proprietary and state policies, social investment in land (e.g. establishing new townships) and private gain, and taxation of land, (both developed and undeveloped). There may be many more problems but even a cursory glance at these few will show the magnitude of the work involved in thinking about the land of any country in the twentieth century.

There is another dimension to the land problem. Any serious discussion of the problems enumerated above will sooner than later involve us in not only the problems of agriculture but also, perhaps more important, those of mineral working, industry, residence, transport, leisure etc. Perhaps these are covered by the blanket clause, "... any other matters ...". But can the Commission as at present constituted deal with them adequately?

Membership of Commission: Size & Professional Representation

Having accepted the principle of the need for a high-powered, intellectually-fortified body of men and women to examine the problems of land and its usage in a developing economy, we now have to devise ways of tackling the job most comprehensively and competently. With due respect to all concerned, I wonder whether the present Commission is the correct one. For one thing, the membership is too small; for another, the disciplines and professions represented are also too few. We must remember that work of this nature, touching on the fundamentals of our society, will take the best part of five years or more to complete. If what has been done elsewhere is any guide at all, we may have to remind ourselves that the Land Utilisation Survey of Great Britain under the direction of Professor Dudley Stamp took from 1931 to 1939; the Royal Commission on Common Lands under Sir Ivor Jennings did its work from 1955 to 1958; and the Nuffield Survey on the Common Lands with Dr. Denman, Professor Alan Roberts, and Hubert Smith, took four years to complete its study and issue a report. Nobody should expect our Commission to complete its task in anything less than 5 years! To expect anything less will be most uncharitable. After all, the members are all in other responsible posts already. We must therefore look for the right size of body to tackle the job.

What is required is not a Commission of six members but a Higher Committee on Land Policies and Usage of about 24 people drawn from as many fields and disciplines as are relevant—geographers, anthropologists, tax experts, land valuers, agriculturists, agronomists, economists, lawyers etc etc. This Committee should have a full time secretary under a distinguished Judge. Members of the Universities should be brought in more to contribute their research expertise and data. Since the work will take a long time to complete, sub-committees should be formed along the various fields of investigation. Periodic meetings will be arranged when the various sub-committees will report. The material collected will then be collated by the Secretariat of the Committee on Land Policies and Usage. By drawing more forces into the battle and by doing the job more systematically, we may succeed in producing something resembling a blue-print for the conservation of one of our most valuable resources, LAND.

A NOTE ON LAND TENURE

By

S. La-Anyane

LAND as an element of nature is inextricably interwoven with the institutions of a nation. The problems and policies relating to land depend not only upon the physical characteristics of the land itself, but even more importantly upon the customary and legal institutions, on attitudes and sociological factors within the community and on the stage of economic development of a people.

Under the assumption that the existing communal system of land ownership in Ghana will eventually give way to a private individual system of land-holding—a trend which is clearly in evidence at the present time—

land policy problems take the form largely of how to overcome the abuses, from a social and agricultural stand-point, of communal ownership while retaining its advantages. This is the starting point.

Land ownership or land tenure, be it communal or private, is a bundle of rights, including the right to use or abuse, improve or destroy, or dispose of the land owned. In the past when our society was underdeveloped and hostile environmental conditions dictated that communities band together for purposes of security and survival, the communal system of land holding was obviously justified. As the economy develops and commercial agricultural production supersedes subsistence farming, it becomes necessary, other things being equal, to encourage individualisation of land rights in a manner that will ensure that those who can economically derive the greatest benefits from farming have use of adequate farm land and facilities for farming.

There are other policy objectives which a new land tenure system must aim to achieve. It should eliminate disputes and litigation and make for the security of possession of rights in land; it should allow equitable distribution of rights in property and income, conservation and development of physical resources, highly efficient utilisation of productive resources, and finally realise a well-integrated community life and social compatibility. Existing tenure conditions should be measured, and tenure improvement programmes evaluated, against these objectives.

By and large, our current land tenure arrangements fall far short of these basic norms. This deficiency accounts for the backwardness of our agriculture and partly explains the inability of our farm people to feed the country adequately.

Reform

Several lines of reform have been suggested and tried in many countries. They include land settlement schemes for over-populated areas, introduction of improved types of farming, natural evolution of existing systems, and the registration of title to land.

Land settlement projects have not proved a success, and the evolution of existing tenure arrangements without interference has led in some countries to landlordism. As a long term basis for improving tenure arrangements, the registration of title should be given foremost consideration. This might start with the clan or family unit and finally develop to individual registration. The current widespread introduction of mechanised farming and improved husbandry practices will also no doubt encourage the improvement of land tenure arrangements.

An ideal solution of the problem of registration of title would be compulsorily to register all land by process of systematic, consecutive registration of blocks formed by parcels. But this method is costly in terms of time and staff requirements. A less expensive approach would be the adoption of a system of registration based partly on compulsion and partly on option, for example on compulsion when new dealings take place and on option otherwise. Alternatively, registration could proceed in selected areas. There is of course a difficulty to be found where there are no documents to evidence a right or no proper plans; but this need not deter registration. The simplest situation exists where both legal documents and cadastral plans are available. The need for a cadastral survey now cannot be overemphasised.

Observer Notebook

Departmental Heads and International Conferences

MANY heads of government departments, agencies and corporations behave as if they are the only people in their Unit who must represent the department at international conferences. A casual look at the newspaper will tell anyone that the departmental heads particularly prone to this habit. At any one time they are in London, New York, Washington, Geneva, Rome, or Tokyo. They always make it a point to attend any international conference or seminar organised in any part of the world, except Accra. One departmental head in the Ministry of Agriculture used to travel out of this country at an average rate of twice a month! He was in Ghana only long enough to prepare his estimates! And it is said that the Economic Committee of the N.L.C. had to restrain him last year.

This habit is undesirable for a number of important reasons. First, important administrative decisions always have to await the return of the substantive head. This is one explanation of the delays in implementing policy decisions of the government. Secondly, it is not always that the head is the best person for a particular conference. A junior person who has a particular interest in the subject, or normally deals with it, may be able to contribute far more to the discussions, and reap more benefit from the conference, than the head. Thirdly, while the head gets grey with experience, the younger or junior officials just stay behind the files and gather no experience. This lack of experience is always flung back at them when they talk of promotion. Apathy and low morale are the result.

One of the signs of a good and progressive administrator is his ability to prepare his junior colleagues for greater responsibilities.

The Aftermath of the Leventis Deal

SOMETHING is definitely wrong with the way that the assets of those ex-ministers involved in the "Leventis Deal" are being disposed of. The **Daily Graphic** in an editorial on the 5th of October discussed some of the major aspects which seem to be bothering observers. And officials would do well to consider the point raised in that editorial.

It does seem odd that Mr. F. O. Squire, until now relatively unknown in the auctioneering bu-

business, should have won a monopoly of this job in Accra, where better known auctioneers abound. Mr. Squire also lacks humour altogether, and is not punctual. And there was a feeling at the Krobo Edusei auction that Mr. Squire had agents in the crowd who were teasing up the prices for him. This may not be necessarily true, but Mr. Squire's own conduct of the auction does not inspire belief in the opposite. And is it true that he is under orders to withhold certain items from the auction?

This apart, many people believe that things would have been better if the properties to be auctioned were displayed for a pre-view for a number of days prior to these auctions, so as to give the public an idea of the range of goods. It is not too late to do this for the rest of the ex-ministers. Some would even suggest that the best way to sell these properties is to have them valued and priced properly and sell them in special shops. Surely this would not be against the law? Indeed it would give our brothers outside Accra and in the rural areas an opportunity to buy some of the things being sold.

Devaluation and our Students Overseas

IMMEDIATELY after Brig. Afrifa's announcement of the devaluation of the cedi on the radio on the 8th of July, 1967, Mr. Omaboe, Commissioner of Economic Affairs held a press conference to explain to the public some important aspects of this step. Mr. Omaboe said the government realized that certain people were bound to suffer some hardship, and promised that "everything possible will be done to help cases of genuine hardship...". On students studying abroad, the Commissioner said:

"The Government will take steps to ensure that no hardship is caused to students who are abroad on Government grants and scholarships by the change in the external rates. **Additional amounts will be provided to ensure that payments to them in foreign exchange terms remain unchanged.**"

So far, there is nothing to suggest that any steps have been taken to ensure that no hardship is caused to all the students affected. In some individual cases, where students have friends or relatives to act on their behalf, adjustments have been made for these students. But there are cases, many cases, in which students are suffering. Additional amounts (in cedis) have not been provided to maintain the level of foreign exchange

allowances and remittances. And the reason simply is that the necessary circular has not been issued by the Ministry of Finance to the different governmental divisions (etc) which make payments to their students overseas.

We would like to urge the Ministry of Finance to issue the necessary circular so that, where applicable, the exchange remittances are maintained. It does not help students for their cases to be treated on an individual basis where clearly all of them are equally affected. The Ministry of Finance should act immediately.

Show Business on T.V.

GHANAIAAN dance bands which attempt to entertain on the TV on Wednesday and Saturday evenings are becoming nightmares for audiences. Whoever gave these bands the idea that beatnik music with a lot of foolish wriggling is better than native Ghanaian or African beat with our graceful movements? Ninety-five per cent of the time is spent on crude and clumsy interpretations of the Slow Fox Trot, the Bolero, the Calypso, the Twist, and so on; and by the time they come to the "high life", they've forgotten how it's played. Throughout, there is a strenuous effort to look professional, by imitating some great name, like Ray Charles or Harry Belafonte or the Beatles. And when one sees these poor fellows tilting back their heads and straining their throats to reach fairly low notes, it is difficult for one to tell whether one should get annoyed and turn off the set, or just stay bored.

Let us see some imagination on the T.V.!

To our Contributors

We would like to remind our prospective contributors about some of the rules governing contributions:—

The MAXIMUM length of articles is 4 pages quarto, typed double-space; letters should not exceed 1½ pages quarto, and should be exclusive to the "Legon Observer".

Lengthy contributions are likely to be delayed or not published at all. Contributions not exclusive to the L.O. will not be published.—Editor.

Letters

"Gilbey's Gin"

SIR—We refer to the letter from the Public Relations Officer of the State Distilleries Corporation, published in your edition of 29 September, and wish to state that in our opinion, our advertisement for Gilbey's Gin conforms with normal trade practice. However, if the Public Relations Director of the State Distilleries Corporation is so particularly sensitive regarding our advertisement, we shall be pleased to substitute another word for 'made'.

Let us hope that the Public Relations Officer for the State Distilleries Corporation will now persuade his Managing Director to support your excellent publication by taking a similar advertisement for one of his own Trade Marks in your columns!

Finally, may we wish the State Distilleries Corporation every success with the introduction of their forthcoming range of products, which include the following completely new labels, devised, we are informed, by no less a person than the Managing Director of the Corporation himself; namely, Castle Bridge and Lawyer Gins, Petro Veliki Vodka, and Karl Heinz Schnapps (not to be confused, we hope, with either Karl Marx or Heinz Baby Food).

Wine & Spirit Distributors
(Ghana) Ltd.
P.O. Box 3412
Accra

Paul Danquah
(Public Relations Director)

Ghanaians in Nigeria Today

SIR—I should like our home government to know about the position of the Ghanaian in Nigeria today. Ghanaians, including diplomats, are no longer safe in Nigeria today. We are all being molested because we are supposed to have sympathies for Col. Ojukwu in the Nigerian civil war.

On August 9, 1967, I was detained and held at the Ikeja Army Barracks for more than two days; I shall not tell of how I was "squeezed." When I reported the matter to our High Commission, all that a top officer could say was, "We are also in the soup." And, indeed, as I write now, a High Commission official is in the hospital at Lagos, having been brutally beaten by some soldiers of the Nigerian Army. His crime? Only that, as immigration officer, he gives entry permits to Ibos to enter Ghana and freedom. The federal soldiers and those others who charge us thus have either forgotten that entry permits can only be issued on the presentation of passports given by their own government, or are too dim to think of that.

Ghanaians working in Nigeria are also losing their jobs every day, for the same reason.

It is time the Ghana Government reviewed its attitude to Nigeria.

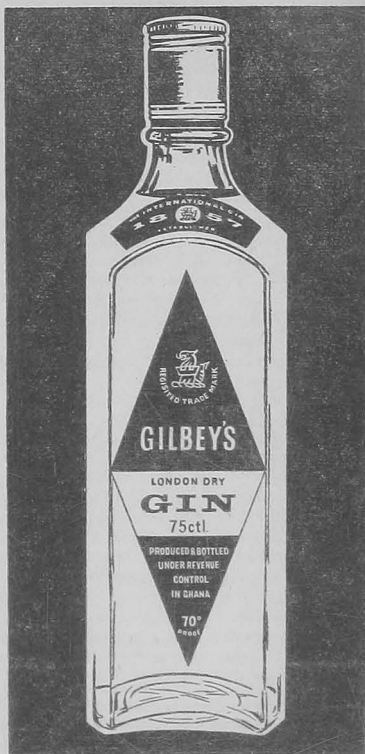
S, Aggei Motor Rd.
Yaba, Nigeria.

Janet Afreh-Kassam

SIR—I am a journalist resident in Nigeria and should like you to know a few things about Ghanaians in Nigeria.

One Saturday morning, I was rudely woken up by a scandalous news commentary charging the popular and

GILBEY'S GIN is made in Ghana



Gilbey's Gin is only one of the many fine drinks made by Wine & Spirit Distributors (Ghana) Limited. You can also get Henkes' Schnapps, Duncan's Whisky, Queen Elizabeth Gin, Reine Marie Brandy, Krimskaya Vodka, Mario Vermouth. All these fine quality drinks are made in Ghana.

Sole Distributors:

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P.O. BOX 3412, ACCRA. TELEPHONE 65898.

fearless **Legon Observer** with teaming up with the **Pioneer** and **Graphic** to aid Col. Ojukwu to win the civil war. The **Observer** was said to have poured a libation to ask the gods to help Biafra win the war!

On the day that Biafra seized the Mid-West, Ghana nationals resident in Nigeria were badly wounded. The Hausa troops (in federal uniform) who were detailed to arrest all Ibos in Lagos arrested non-Hausa Africans indiscriminately. I was arrested and handled roughly. I protested that I was a Ghanaian, and not an Ibo; and that was my worst mistake: I was caned thoroughly for that: "Na your radio de hep Ajukwa win de waa!" they said.

One of our diplomats, in his car FNCD 531, was badly beaten up in the streets. On 20 September, Mr. Affiakwa, our immigration officer, also in his diplomatic car flying the Ghana National flag, was soundly beaten up. He is still on sick-leave (27/9/67).

But that is not all. Nigeria is encouraging the publication of a "socialist" paper, **Advance**, which belongs to Kwame Nkrumah, and is hostile to Ghana. Ghana, according to this paper, is in league with the C.I.A. and is therefore a threat to Africa!

And while Nigeria is disrupting the education of Ghanaians in Nigeria, we actually award scholarships to Nigerians in Ghana!

Yaba, Lagos.

K. Kwabere-Abradu

University of Ghana Examinations

SIR—I have just learnt, with a painful shock, that final year students who were so unfortunate as to fail their exams have been refused re-entry into the University of Ghana.

I cannot understand why the authorities should have taken such a decision. To the best of my knowledge, final year students who fail their exams are refused re-entry only on the grounds of their past poor work at the University. Even so such students are always welcome provided they are prepared to pay for their board, lodging and tuition.

Now, this year, this fine practice has been thrown overboard. I have not yet met any final year student who failed his or her exam in June 1967 who has been offered a place. I do not know whether this is in keeping with the raising of academic standards. Many things contribute to a candidate's failure. Are the examiners saying that they have never come across a student who has been tipped for a second upper ending up with a "gentleman's" degree? Well, it does happen.

Let the authorities concerned note that:

- (1) Only a handful of Ghanaian parents can afford the NC480 fees for their children at the University;
- (2) It is very difficult to pass an exam at home while holding down a job and grappling with the syllabus at the same time. Why, these people could not make the grade when they devoted their whole time to it!
- (3) Some Departments, notably the Economic Department, change their syllabuses every year. It is therefore difficult for the repeating candidate who was taught to one syllabus to do a different one on his own.
- (4) Ghana is in an economic mess at the moment, but what does it amount to when the tax-payer's money is used on these unfortunate ones a year

more at Legon? It means we shall gain better qualified people at a little more cost whereas refusing to admit these people means that three years' money of the tax payer has been completely wasted.

I appeal to the Registrar and his colleagues to reconsider their decision. Besides anything else, it is a bad precedent, and it is morally discouraging, for now we can be sure that every year the tax-payer's money will be wasted since there will always be failures. Something must be done, and now, before college re-opening. **South Labadi Estate, Adjo Saah Amedvor (Miss Accra.**

The Devaluation of the Cedi

SIR—The devaluation of the Cedi was an ill-considered exercise which will have harmful effects on the Ghanaian economy. Here is why.

A country facing balance of payments difficulties, as Ghana is now experiencing, can resolve the situation either by reducing internal spending power, or, alternatively, by making the country's goods more competitive on the export market. The first policy involves high unemployment because domestic production is cut down; the second policy involves devaluation of the domestic currency, i.e., lowering the exchange rate of the domestic currency relative to other currencies so that the devaluing country's goods if other things remain unchanged, become cheaper on the world market. If the two policies are combined, that is, devaluing in conditions of high unemployment the effect on the balance of payments position is likely to be very potent. Thus, with unemployment in Ghana currently running at about 10 per cent of the working population, the cedi, theoretically, could not have been devalued in more ideal condition.

There is, however, one very important factor operating on the Ghanaian economy which makes me very sceptical about any really lasting benefit coming out of the devaluation of the cedi. This is the position cocoa occupies in the Ghanaian economy. The plain truth is that about 60 per cent of Ghana's total exports is based on cocoa. In fact the Ghanaian economy as a whole has hardly passed beyond the level of subsistence. And as many economists have argued, devaluation in essentially primary producing economies is unlikely to bring in much foreign exchange earnings.

The reason is that such economies generally depend upon one major exportable crop—cocoa in the case of Ghana—for a substantial part of their foreign exchange earnings. The price of this crop on the world market is usually determined by forces outside the influence of the producing country. Devaluation in such circumstances cannot therefore be expected to bring in much foreign exchange earnings. In fact all the informed commentaries on the devaluation of the cedi ("The Economist", "The Financial Times", "West Africa") come to the same conclusion—that foreign exchange earnings from the sale of cocoa will not be greatly affected by the devaluation of the Cedi.

The devaluation effect on other exporting industries in Ghana, e.g. gold, diamond, etc. (with the possible exception of timber) is also likely to be marginal because any extra sales resulting from devaluation will most likely be offset by the high cost of imported industrial raw materials.

This being the case, one is bound to ask why the cedi was devalued. According to Mr. K. Gyasi Twum, Principal Secretary of the Ministry of Finance (vide "West Africa" 19th August 1967) "devaluation was necessary because of unemployment and because domestic costs and prices and taxation had made it unprofitable to start some mining ventures..."

Surely we need a better explanation than that! As I have pointed out elsewhere in this letter, deflating the economy, i.e. high unemployment, is the invariable accompaniment of successful devaluation. If the aim of the devaluation is to find a solution to the present unemployment in Ghana then devaluation is not the way, to use. The only way devaluation could be expected to solve the present unemployment is if the devaluation could create an export-led boom. But this is unlikely to happen because of the prominent position cocoa occupies in Ghana's total exports. As for the reference to "taxation", surely, if Ghana's tax system has such a crippling effect on industry, we do not need to devalue the cedi in order to bring about a change in the tax system.

In the right circumstances devaluation can be a very good economic policy for correcting a deficit on a country's balance of payments. I believe, however, that in the light of the stage of Ghana's economic development and the composition of her exports, the devaluation of the cedi was ill-advised. Ghanaians are going to be subjected to the inevitable short-term effects of devaluation (rising prices affecting the cost of living and, via that, a lowering in the standards of living) without any reasonable assurance of any long-term benefits accruing to the Ghanaian economy.

96 Manwood Road,
London, S. E. 4
U.K.

S. K. O. Banin,

The Ghost of the "Lincolnite"

SIR—I apologize for the delay in commenting on two items in your issue of 1-14 September, 1967. My copy reached me rather late.

Your attempt to connect Nkrumah's megalomania with Lincoln University, if it was meant as an exercise in wit, was very feeble; as a joke, it was certainly in bad taste. In either case, Sir, it was unworthy of the *Legon Observer*.

Professor Boateng's letter, despite his transparently elaborate efforts to demonstrate his loyalty to the government, deserves much wider publicity. It was a timely reminder that in so many things, the exiled spirit still haunts Ghana, and on account of this we may one day falter.

The late Olympio of Togo set African Presidents an example in humility which few, if any, of them have followed. He sometimes went about, particularly on election days, on a cycle through the streets of Lome, preceded by none of this fanfare. It should be possible for Ghana's Presidents to go about their official duty without disrupting traffic or humiliating law-abiding citizens who are also going about their duty.

It is crucial at this stage of our country's history to discourage any attempt at hero-worship, and our Presidents should be the first to set the example. Surely we cannot have forgotten so soon that this was one of the late Messiah's strategies for sustaining his image in the public mind.

University College of Cape Coast,
Cape Coast.

S. K. Opoku

The Services of Accra-Tema City Council

SIR—The Communications Commissioner has disclosed that the Government has granted the Accra-Tema City Council permission to issue licenses for the operation of suitable private buses on certain prescribed routes between the suburbs and the city. This is decision long overdue in view of the dismal failure of the City Council's transportation system. We can only hope that this plan is implemented very soon.

The plan can alleviate some of the transportation difficulties which the public encounter, notably, the situation in which men and women with babies struggle violently in order to board 'tro-tro' trucks.

We hope that in the very near future private companies would also be entrusted with the task of clearing and cleaning the pyramidal filth and fly-infested public disposal dumps which decorate street-corners in Accra.

C 160/10, Accra New Town,
Accra.

Amoto Forson

That was amusing

SIR—It was reported in the local dailies and also blared on the radio the other day that the Commissioner for Finance has announced that for the convenience of the general public the price of an air letter card has been increased from eight and a half new pesewas to nine new pesewas. This new rate is purported to secure a round figure for the cost of air letter cards.

This means that the public are called upon to endure unnecessary hardships with a smile. The Commissioner must realise that it would have been more convenient for the general public if the half new pesewa had been waived off the air letter rate.

Gradually, life is becoming more and more frightfully unbearable in this country, and the Commissioner's inference that exorbitant prices of goods is convenient for the general public is amusing indeed.

Accra

K. Mensah

V.R.A. has Bilharzia

SIR—I just could not believe my eyes when I read from the dailies recently the name given to the newly-christened boat of the Volta River Authority—"Bilharzia", perhaps the weirdest and most ridiculous name ever given to a boat.

Whatever prompted the Authority to christen the vessel after the name of a disease will surely remain a mystery. Just think of it! Were those connected with the christening of the boat attracted to the disease or were the crew of the boat going to be plagued with bilharzia?

Did the V.R.A. have to try this name on the public before changing it?

C99/1 Chatfield Ave.,
Accra.

K. A. Saso

Return to Civilian Rule

SIR—It is to be doubted whether a perfectly healthy economy can now be considered a pre-condition for the resumption of normal elective government. Nor can the "cleaning up of politics" be completed with any speed. It follows from the latter that the point about the former C.P.P. should be taken up and put into effect. The suggestion that they "be excluded for a shorter or longer period from public life, even if they are not

fearless **Legon Observer** with teaming up with the **Pioneer** and **Graphic** to aid Col. Ojukwu to win the civil war. The **Observer** was said to have poured a libation to ask the gods to help Biafra win the war!

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A country facing balance of payments difficulties, as Ghana is now experiencing, can resolve the situation either by reducing internal spending power, or, alternatively, by making the country's goods more competitive on the export market. The first policy involves high unemployment because domestic production is cut down; the second policy involves devaluation of the domestic currency, i.e., lowering the exchange rate of the domestic currency relative to other currencies so that the devaluing country's goods if other things remain unchanged, become cheaper on the world market. If the two policies are combined, that is, devaluing in conditions of high unemployment the effect on the balance of payments position is likely to be very potent. Thus, with unemployment in Ghana currently running at about 10 per cent of the working population, the cedi, theoretically, could not have been devalued in any ideal condition.

There is, however, one very important factor operating on the Ghanaian economy which makes me very sceptical about any really lasting benefit coming out of the devaluation of the cedi. This is the position cocoa occupies in the Ghanaian economy. The plain truth is that about 60 per cent of Ghana's total exports is based on cocoa. In fact the Ghanaian economy as a whole has hardly passed beyond the level of subsistence. And as many economists have argued, devaluation in essentially primary producing economies is unlikely to bring in much foreign exchange earnings.

The reason is that such economies generally depend upon one major exportable crop—cocoa in the case of Ghana—for a substantial part of their foreign exchange earnings. The price of this crop on the world market is usually determined by forces outside the influence of the producing country. Devaluation in such circumstances cannot therefore be expected to bring in much foreign exchange earnings. In fact all the informed commentaries on the devaluation of the cedi ("The Economist", "The Financial Times", "West Africa") come to the same conclusion—that foreign exchange earnings from the sale of cocoa will not be greatly affected by the devaluation of the Cedi.

The devaluation effect on other exporting industries in Ghana, e.g. gold, diamond, etc. (with the possible exception of timber) is also likely to be marginal because any extra sales resulting from devaluation will most likely be offset by the high cost of imported industrial raw materials.

This being the case, one is bound to ask why the cedi was devalued. According to Mr. K. Gyasi Twum, Principal Secretary of the Ministry of Finance (vide "West Africa" 19th August 1967) "devaluation was necessary because of unemployment and because domestic costs and prices and taxation had made it unprofitable to start some mining ventures..."

Surely we need a better explanation than that! As I have pointed out elsewhere in this letter, deflating the economy, i.e. high unemployment, is the invariable accompaniment of successful devaluation. If the aim of the devaluation is to find a solution to the present unemployment in Ghana then devaluation is not the way, to use. The only way devaluation could be expected to solve the present unemployment is if the devaluation could create an export-led boom. But this is unlikely to happen because of the prominent position cocoa occupies in Ghana's total exports. As for the reference to "taxation", surely, if Ghana's tax system has such a crippling effect on industry, we do not need to devalue the cedi in order to bring about a change in the tax system.

In the right circumstances devaluation can be a very good economic policy for correcting a deficit on a country's balance of payments. I believe, however, that in the light of the stage of Ghana's economic development and the composition of her exports, the devaluation of the cedi was ill-advised. Ghanaians are going to be subjected to the inevitable short-term effects of devaluation (rising prices affecting the cost of living and, via that, a lowering in the standards of living) without any reasonable assurance of any long-term benefits accruing to the Ghanaian economy.

96 Manwood Road, S. K. O. Bania,
London, S. E. 4
U.K.

The Ghost of the "Lincolnite"

SIR—I apologize for the delay in commenting on two items in your issue of 1-14 September, 1967. My copy reached me rather late.

Your attempt to connect Nkrumah's megalomania with Lincoln University, if it was meant as an exercise in wit, was very feeble; as a joke, it was certainly in bad taste. In either case, Sir, it was unworthy of the *Legon Observer*.

Professor Boateng's letter, despite his transparently elaborate efforts to demonstrate his loyalty to the government, deserves much wider publicity. It was a timely reminder that in so many things, the exiled spirit still haunts Ghana, and on account of this we may one day falter.

The late Olympio of Togo set African Presidents an example in humility which few, if any, of them have followed. He sometimes went about, particularly on election days, on a cycle through the streets of Lome, preceded by none of this fanfare. It should be possible for Ghana's Presidents to go about their official duty without disrupting traffic or humiliating law-abiding citizens who are also going about their duty.

It is crucial at this stage of our country's history to discourage any attempt at hero-worship, and our Presidents should be the first to set the example. Surely we cannot have forgotten so soon that this was one of the late Messiah's strategies for sustaining his image in the public mind.

University College of Cape Coast, S. K. Opoku
Cape Coast.

The Services of Accra-Tema City Council

SIR—The Communications Commissioner has disclosed that the Government has granted the Accra-Tema City Council permission to issue licenses for the operation of suitable private 'buses on certain prescribed routes between the suburbs and the city. This is decision long overdue in view of the dismal failure of the City Council's transportation system. We can only hope that this plan is implemented very soon.

The plan can alleviate some of the transportation difficulties which the public encounter, notably, the situation in which men and women with babies struggle violently in order to board 'tro-tro' trucks.

We hope that in the very near future private companies would also be entrusted with the task of clearing and cleaning the pyramidal filth and fly-infested public disposal dumps which decorate street-corners in Accra.

C160/10, Accra New Town, Amoto Forson
Accra.

That was amusing

SIR—It was reported in the local dailies and also blared on the radio the other day that the Commissioner for Finance has announced that for the convenience of the general public the price of an air letter card has been increased from eight and a half new pesewas to nine new pesewas. This new rate is purported to secure a round figure for the cost of air letter cards.

This means that the public are called upon to endure unnecessary hardships with a smile. The Commissioner must realise that it would have been more convenient for the general public if the half new pesewa had been waived off the air letter rate.

Gradually, life is becoming more and more frightfully unbearable in this country, and the Commissioner's inference that exorbitant prices of goods is convenient for the general public is amusing indeed.

Accra K. Mensah

V.R.A. has Bilharzia

SIR—I just could not believe my eyes when I read from the dailies recently the name given to the newly-christened boat of the Volta River Authority—"Bilharzia", perhaps the weirdest and most ridiculous name ever given to a boat.

Whatever prompted the Authority to christen the vessel after the name of a disease will surely remain a mystery. Just think of it! Were those connected with the christening of the boat attracted to the disease or were the crew of the boat going to be plagued with bilharzia?

Did the V.R.A. have to try this name on the public before changing it?

C99/1 Chatfield Ave., K. A. Sasa
Accra.

Return to Civilian Rule

SIR—It is to be doubted whether a perfectly healthy economy can now be considered a pre-condition for the resumption of normal elective government. Nor can the "cleaning up of politics" be completed with any speed. It follows from the latter that the point about the former C.P.P. should be taken up and put into effect. The suggestion that they "be excluded for a shorter or longer period from public life, even if they are not

actually in gaol" needs emphatic support. Once this has been done a sanitary period would have been instituted and so the legal cleaning up processes can proceed without limiting the freedom of Ghanaians to express themselves in a political fashion.

Let us all recognise that the reason for political peace in Ghana lies in the fact that all our people expect the original N.L.C. programme to be steadily followed without any artificial delays. If new and uncertain reasons are given for further delays the mood of the Ghana people will become unpredictable—as unpredictable as the coup of 1966.

Already there is a state of political doldrums in the country which the appointment of Commissioners seems to have aggravated rather than relieved, as many in Ghana expected. It is probably the fact that the appointment has come 12 months later than it should have that this sense of a lack of political mobility has set in.

To surge forward and away from this state of affairs the Top National Council with the N.L.C. in the van has to announce publicly and without delay a timetable for political action, which ought to have as an essential tenet, that the Ghana Elected Legislature shall be in being and in session before Christmas 1968.

Let us Hustle!

65, Alexandra Ave.
Luton,
U.K.

K. A. Taylor

Opinion

INDUSTRIALIZATION AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

By

Michael D. Quist

OUR planning should not be centred around the main cities of the country, but must embrace the regions as well. This should make it possible to stem the flow of boys and girls who gravitate towards the urban areas after each school leaving year.

This may be achieved by delegating some of the implementation of our national economic and industrial rehabilitation plans to Regional Authorities and, from them, to the Local Council Units.

The responsibilities of the Regional Authorities and Local Councils, apart from political maintenance of law and order, should now include planning for agricultural and industrial extensions, geared to the increase of productivity in planned secondary industries to facilitate the absorption of school leavers and also arrange for the training of skills and management within the scope of the national planning.

The above suggestion looks toward welfare standards and is also geared towards the transition to industrialization through which our presently developing economy should pass.

This transition should involve a reorganization of our society in such a way that:—

1. A sufficient pool of savings is regularly available and mobilized to sustain a steady increase in per capita **Real Output** and, if possible, per capita **Real Welfare**;
2. Institutions will exist for utilizing this pool of savings for investments which maintain an orderly and consistent structure;
3. Those controlling the structure of production are technically and psychologically prepared to introduce new applications of science into the economy;
4. A working force of requisite skill and discipline are obtainable in industry.
5. Finally, the economy is capable of producing sufficient food to maintain the minimum standard of welfare required for the operation of the labour force.

Having attempted to identify the conditions that should prevail during and after this transitional period, attention should now be drawn to the method whereby a Regional and/or Local Industrial Development Organization of the Regional Authorities or Local Councils can help in achieving the establishment of secondary industries in their localities within the framework of the national policy.

Functionally, this proposed Local Industrial Development Organization should be designed to:—

- a. **Strengthen and diversify** the council or regional areas' economic and industrial base;
- b. cover their areas and, where possible, co-operate with adjacent regional or local councils to avoid duplication and wastage;
- c. engage in such activities as the acquisition, development and disposal of industrial sites and facilities.

These considerations are necessarily bare and broad in outlines, and will have to be viewed according to the geographical, economic and social peculiarities of the areas concerned.

Structure of the proposed Organization

The proposed Local Industrial Development Organization (LIDO) is envisaged more as a sub-committee of the Regional Authority or Local Council concerned and should, preferably, have honorary Board of Directors appointed according to their training and experience and, in the case of the Regional Authority, should represent the principal political sub-divisions.

These development groups may rely upon their appointed members to execute the development programme, or, for more effectiveness, to employ a professional or experienced industrial manager.

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as a member of the Regional or Local Authority staff to act as executive manager.

The functions of the LIDO, apart from the three above mentioned, should also include:—

1. the pursuance of promotional objectives;
2. the improvement of the area's industrial complex (if any);
3. the guaranteeing of a healthy economy through the provision of adequate job opportunities.

Financing and Management Machinery

The manner in which the Industrial Development Organizations are to raise funds and the extent to which their funds are adequate for the purposes for which they are organized, shall be discussed here. The proposals are that these Organizations' objective would be to provide Local Risk Capital for:—

- (a) New projects considered safe risks and economically vital to the area.
- (b) Promising industries that cannot qualify for medium or long term loans from Commercial Banks.
- (c) Regional and Local Councils' own construction of buildings and plants for new industries.

It would be necessary, therefore, to set up Legislative Enabling Acts in each area as a lending agency. The manner in which funds could be raised for these organizations is by creating a Credit Pool subscribed to (voluntarily) by the economic units operating under the various sectors of Ghana's economy that are resident in the regions.

The region will then allocate this Credit Pool to the Local Councils according to their investment needs and the feasibility of the projects envisaged. The economic units contributing to this Credit Pool will include Banks, Insurance Companies, Private Trading Companies, Building Societies, Professional Practitioners, State-owned industries, State & Privately owned industries, Service Clubs.

Subscriptions to the Credit Pool could be in the form of PLEDGING a percentage, say 2 to 5 of the various economic units' Capital and Surplus, which would be called up as and when they are needed.

No attempt is being made in this article to analyze the legal implications connected with this, but the effect of the suggested constitution of the Regional Development Capital or Credit Pool through small percentage subscriptions is to act as a cushion against losses and also spread the volume of Capital requirements evenly over the regions.

Governmental incentives, both to subscribers of

the proposed Regional Capital Fund and the industries to be set up by the Regional Authorities and Local Councils, could take the form of tax exemptions in the case of the subscribing units on the amounts actually paid out of their pledge; and in the case of the Councils' approved industrial units, complete tax exemptions until the units have accumulated sufficient funds to repay their initial investments to the Regional Industrial Fund.

Regarding management skill, it is possible that apart from advice coming from the appointed Board of Directors and the services of the professionally qualified Industrial Manager mentioned above, the subscribing members of the fund might second personnel to assist the new units for short periods in the early stages.

Since the objective of this proposal will be to assist in the industrialization and rehabilitation of the economy of the Regional and Local areas, it is anticipated that no dividends shall be payable to subscribers pledging a percentage to the pool until an approved project has been able to repay its loan from the pool and in turn pledge its share of the pool's requirements. However, the benefits that would accrue to every business or profession in the area will be very rewarding in terms of increased business activities, due to the check of labour migration and improved economy of the locality and, more important, in the satisfaction of knowing that a contribution has been made to the total reconstruction and rehabilitation of the country's economy, and by the fact that we all would have identified ourselves with the various communities in which we are doing business.

Portrait

GEORGE PADMORE, BLACK REVOLUTIONARY

By

S. I. A. Kotei

THERE has been widespread controversy on the question whether George Padmore's anti-colonial zeal stemmed from genuine ideological convictions, or whether he was only a barnstorming adventurer and water-front rabble rouser of doubtful political persuasion. His detractors are of opinion that Padmore pursued his objectives with such blind determination that he often had to falsify the evidence in defence of his theses. Also his restless nature made it impossible for him to concentrate on any one theatre of the war against colonialism; instead he stumbled along from one crusade to the next, collecting precious little moss for his pains. This is to say that Padmore was unstable and therefore ineffectual.

It is indeed true that the diffuseness of his political especially during the early phases of his career

(1933-40), made it difficult for a proper assessment to be made of his impact on the fight for negro emancipation. It is further argued that since many other persons and movements were simultaneously concerned with the same questions which exercised his mind and provoked his reactions, his ideas were nothing more than mere variations on contemporary themes; furthermore, although he may have been more articulate than most other nationalists, it could not be claimed that Padmore invented any new solutions to the colonial problem then or afterwards. If anything Padmore was better known for his greater sense of urgency and the missionary fervour with which he tried to disseminate current ideas, than for the novelty of his approach to the colonial question.

Critics of Padmore's instability are however prepared to concede the difficulty, for a professional journalist dedicated as he was to the colonial problem in its entirety, to escape involvement simultaneously, with such closely related themes as independence for the Gold Coast, forced-labour in the Portuguese Colonies, the Mau Mau affair, trade unions in Liberia, and constitutional crises in Nigeria and elsewhere. By logical and racial extension he became involved also with the plight of the American Negro, the West Indian Federation, and the Indian question all at one fell swoop. Apparently Padmore thought that he had to express his ideas in universal terms and engage his battles on many fronts at once, otherwise he would not succeed in destroying the multi-headed colonial hydra against which he fought. Thus he sought every opportunity and medium of expression to issue virulent tirades against the white Herrenvolk for any policies which seemed to have been designed to keep Black people in subservience.

To his Ghanaian critics especially, Padmore was given to excessive adulation of Kwame Nkrumah, while on the other hand he showed extreme impatience, even rudeness, to the "gradualist" professional elites and natural rulers of the Gold Coast. (This allegation is justified in his *Gold Coast Revolution*). By so doing it is said that he helped to build up that distorted image of Nkrumah which misled millions of Ghanaians into believing that the Osagyefo was cut out of a different mould from the rest of us simple mortals.

On the credit side Padmore's admirers have summed up his total achievement in the label "Father of African emancipation", and "elder of the anti-colonial family". It is claimed that he gave the Pan-Africanist movement qualities which it had previously lacked, namely determination and drive; this he did by introducing a new dynamism into an organisation which under Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois had only sought a certain accommodation with the sovereign powers.

Life and Career

George Padmore was born in 1903 or 1904 and christened Malcolm Ivan Meredith Nurse. His student life in America was one long hot summer of campaigning and organising demonstrations in which he denounced "just about everybody and everything (but especially British imperialism) in fluent, ringing rhetoric". During this period he became increasingly enamoured of Communism finally joining the *American Communist Party*, in order, as he explained several years later, "to render in a fuller way some aid to my Negro brothers in Africa".

In 1929, the *enfant terrible* of Negro student politics

left America for Moscow under the sponsorship of the Communist Party. He lectured on colonial problems at *Kutvu University* and became the leading light of the *Profintern* on questions affecting trade union organisation in the colonies. Simultaneously Padmore served in various executive capacities on the following bodies: —*Moscow City Soviet*, *International Trade Union Committee of Negro Workers* and the *Communist International*, rubbing shoulders with communist greats like Kaganovich, Bukharin, Stalin, and Losovsky. Padmore is often said to have been brought out of social obscurity and political impotence to enjoy eminence in Ghana. But as Professor Hooker observes in the book cited below, those who accuse him of relishing, and possibly, abusing his influence in Ghana do not "know that he once had access to even greater authority" in a country, be it said, where the political and administrative hierarchy is the most exclusive in the world.

Most of his time in Europe was spent on editing the radical *Negro Worker* (1931-37) which according to him was the "very first international journal for the Negro in all continents concerned with his troubles, needs and pain". Contributors included I. A. Wallace-Johnson, Jomo Kenyatta and the Russian Africanist Ivan Potekhin. The rest of his time was devoted to organising trade union congresses, the most significant of which was the *International Congress of Negro Workers* held in Hamburg in 1930 when 5 out of the 8 countries represented were West African countries.

Padmore's career in the Communist Party began to suffer a serious decline from about August 1933 when the *International Trade Union Committee of Negro Workers* was liquidated, "in order not to offend the British Foreign Office" [Padmore]. For the same reason he was asked to modify his anti-colonial campaigns against Britain and other Western powers so that they conformed with Russia's own change of attitude to the Allied powers.

When later, in 1935, the Franco-Soviet pact was ratified he was specifically asked to omit from his articles any references to France's "militarisation of subject peoples". This confirmed Padmore's suspicions that the Communist Party had often made use of colonised peoples as pawns in their political manoeuvres. Despite this, he was prepared to toe the party line so long as it served his own purposes. The introduction of the above 'deviationist' policies, however, precipitated his disenchantment with communism and forced him to resign from the Party, and to leave Russia in 1935 for Britain. (He was not expelled).

Long before this defection, observers had speculated on the extent of Padmore's communist convictions. It was suspected that he had not at any time been entirely devoted to the cause of Communism. Instead, he was first and foremost a Black chauvinist, and second a political strategist who exploited his membership of the Party to achieve specific goals. Intellectually, Padmore was said to be a "non-communist Marxist" [see Nelkin on George Padmore in *African Socialism* etc. by Friedland and Rosberg p. 71]; in other words, he believed that the Marxist interpretation of history was largely applicable to the colonial situation; from this assumption it was possible to propound a Pan-Africanist ideology which would "set out to fulfil the socio-economic mission of Communism (although) under a *libertarian political system*" [emphasis mine]. This communist overtone probably accounts for his continued use

of Marxist dialectic and phraseology in subsequent attacks on colonialism. According to John MacNair of the British Independent Labour Party, Padmore was simply a "genuine socialist and therefore libertarian and international. He was in complete opposition to all forms of totalitarian (whether) Nazi, Fascist, Stalinist or Imperialist".

Padmore found Britain an ideal laboratory to test and argue his theory of Pan-Africanism. His arrival coincided with a period of intense intellectual enquiry among his leftist friends into the merits and demerits of current political systems and theories, such as Liberalism, Socialism, Communism, Fascism, and Imperialism. The object of these exercises, as far as he was concerned, was to consider what was acceptable to the cause of Pan-Africanism and reject the harmful. It seemed essential that a theory of Pan-Africanism should be formulated to give a sense of direction and dynamism to the movement. UP till then, the Pan-Africanist movement had been dominated by the cosmopolitan bourgeois, proto-nationalist, elites most of whom were non-Africans, and who, according to the Father of Pan-Africanism himself, were without any coherent "body of doctrine". Their ideology was of the reformist kind, as it only sought to bring about "a broader co-operation with the White rulers of the world"—which was obviously incompatible with Padmore's own thinking. Instead of "Co-operation" he recommended elimination of the "White rulers".

In his own words "Pan-Africanism seeks the attainment of the government of Africans, by Africans for Africans". Having achieved this, the next logical step would be to replace all the undesirable institutions inherited from colonialism, with traditional African substitutes. For instance, socialism (a modernised form of communalism) was recommended as a substitute for capitalism, not only because socialism was indigenous to the traditional African way of life, but because it was a more efficient system for the socio-economic transformation of independent Africa. Finally, to enhance the full flowering of the "African man", all independent countries would merge into a "Pan-African Association of States".

When all the above elements are brought together, Padmore's Pan-Africanism will be seen, not entirely as an original synthetic ideology but rather as an amalgam of Chilembwe and Garvey's "Africa for the Africans" a re-definition of previous thought on African socialism brought to maturity at the Dakar Colloquium, and a forecast of the African unity concept of the 5th Pan-African Congress.

Padmore and Africans

To air these views, Padmore cultivated the friendship of both African nationalists and foreign sympathisers then living in Britain. In the process, he became involved with Fenner Brockway of the Movement for Colonial Freedom, the Fabian Colonial Bureau and other leftist organisations. He consorted also with Wallace Johnson, the fire-brand of the West African Youth League, Jomo Kenyatta, the burning-spear of the Kikuyu Central African Association, Azikiwe, and Joe Appiah of the West African Students Union, Nkrumah of the shot-lived West African Secretariat; all of whom, according to Richard Wright, came to Padmore "seeking information, encouragement and help, and George gave of his days and hours expounding the intricacies of politics". He was also the "intellectual progenitor of such revisionist historians as J. Kariuku". For most African nationalists then living in London Padmore's flat at "22 Cranleigh

House was the headquarters of anti-colonial agitation during the 1940's and 1950's". If this was indeed the case, then it would seem rash to suggest, as did a reviewer in a recent number of *West Africa*, that Padmore did not know Africa and Africans well enough to pose as an Africanist. He must have suffered a sense of alienation on account of his foreign origins, but surely it is reasonable to suppose that his association with the above persons and organisations would have taught him a great deal about Africa? He appeared in fact to have been so well informed that he wrote altogether 10 books and pamphlets plus innumerable other articles containing an "amazing amount of information on the conditions of blackmen in 3 continents", some of which books were banned by the colonial governments in Kenya, the Gold Coast and elsewhere, supposedly because they were "vile and obnoxious" literature!

Certain persons have expressed considerable astonishment at the fact that Padmore's first contact with the Gold Coast dated as far back as the early 1930's, and not 1957 when Nkrumah invited him to attend Ghana's independent celebrations: some time in 1932 the then Secretary to the Gold Coast Aborigines Rights Protection Society (ARPS), Kobina Sekyi, wrote to Padmore asking for copies of the *Negro Worker* to be sent to interested persons in the Gold Coast. Later on, the Asamankese-Akim-Abuakwa stool lands dispute between the ARPS and Nana Sir Ofori-Atta was publicised in the *Worker*. Several other letters were exchanged between these two persons, in which Padmore was mostly concerned with ways and means to convert the rather passive political life of the Gold Coast into a revolutionary movement for independence. Pre-occupied as he was with strictly legal issues, and unable at the time to make a clear distinction between land-rights and constitutional rights for the Gold Coast, the spokesman of the ARPS prevaricated a great deal on the question of independence. [See Padmore-Sekyi correspondence in the Ghana National Archives at Cape Coast].

In 1934 George Padmore met Dr. J. B. Danquah himself a veteran "agitator", who had come to London to lead a constitutional delegation to the Colonial Office. Padmore quickly seized this opportunity to form an ad-hoc committee to draw public attention to the constitutional anomalies existing in the political life of this country.

The most exciting period of Padmore's political career so far as Ghana and the Pan-Africanist movement were concerned, started with his appointment as Political Adviser on African Affairs to the Ghana Government. The hardly concealed hostility of the Ghanaian bureaucracy to George Padmore at that time was due probably to the suspicion that his advice often led Nkrumah into taking extreme measures in solving both local and foreign problems. Actually many observers are now agreed that rather than having been Nkrumah's evil genius, Padmore exercised a most humane influence on the ex-President of Ghana.

The Bureau of African Affairs to which George Padmore was appointed the first General Secretary was meant, essentially, to carry out the following functions. First, as an operational base for launching the African independence movement. It will be recalled that Lumumba returned home from the All African Peoples Conference (1958) to address a mass meeting in Leopoldville (Congo Kinshasa) resulting in an out-break of serious rioting in the city, an event which more than any other

It cannot be ruled out that Ghana and Gambia are being used by unfriendly foreign powers to achieve their selfish objectives in Nigeria. Should this be the case, these two countries know that they are playing a role which is not only shameful, but dangerous. In an attempt to help bring about the disintegration of Nigeria (which God forbid), Ghana and Gambia will only succeed in destroying themselves. Nigeria is too big a bone for two small dogs to toy with.

Africa and the world have seen and accepted Nigeria's temporary problems as strictly internal. General Gowon is solving them in a way that will bring the greatest good to the greatest number of Nigerians. It is only rebel Ojukwu who is trying fruitlessly to destroy the great and happy future that lies ahead of one united Nigeria.

In spite of Ghana and Gambia, and any other country who will openly support rebellion, Ojukwu is on his way out. And in spite of Ghana and Gambia, Nigeria will continue one united country which will remain the hope of democracy in Africa.

Drama

THOUGHTS ON CREATING THE POPULAR THEATRE—II

By
K. E. Senanu

The Resources of Our Traditional Dances

OUR dances have the scope of expressing the most realistic imitation of action—such as we see in the pantomime of the felling of the trees in *The Lion and the Jewel*—as well as the most abstract form of celebrating that which is happening within us. It is true that we have not yet developed the vocabulary to accurately describe both the movements and the meaning of our traditional dances. But this is the kind of verbalizing which the theatre audience does not need, simply because communication through "that which is done" (dromenon) is immediate and adequate without any further explanation. Nobody who has communed with dancers at a funeral, need to be told what he has gone through. And the essence of the theatre is this ritual participation.

The question is how to handle a script like *The Lion and the Jewel* so that the verbal communication dovetails smoothly into the "dance-spectacle", and the dance becomes an organic part of the total production. This, I suggest, requires a vigorous attention to the underlying life of the play, the evolving action, the sub-textual meaning which binds all parts of the play together.

The Problem Restated

Speech, as has been said, is a highly specialised activity in human life. Verbal utterance is the overt issue of a greater emotional, mental and bodily response and it is prepared for in feeling and awareness or in a mounting intensity of thought which the words spoken sometimes reveal. But although speech is a very abstract form of human action its basis in bodily emotion is undeniable. The central problem of the theatre when it handles written scripts is to translate speech, especially at its most translucent, into bodily actions and movements which communicate, as precisely and directly as possible, the emotional basis, the sub-

textual meaning of the script.

In *The Lion and the Jewel* we have a script which presents a variation on an archetypal theme: the rivalry—in this case, mainly sexual—between youth and old age. Wole Soyinka makes this familiar theme to the theatre relevant to West African life by making the representatives of youth, Lakunle and Sidi, also the advocates of a very questionable form of progress. When the play opens Sidi is ready to accept some of the new-fangled ways of the comic village school-teacher Lakunle. Her acceptance opposes him; but both Sadiku and the Bale remark the school teacher's influence on her thoughts*. Thus in spite of the apparent disagreement between Sidi and Lakunle, over kisses and the bride-price, they both represent youth against the cunning old rake Baroka. At the end of contest however it is the cunning of old age which wins against youth.

The Sub-textual Meaning of the Script

The play thus proceeds by a series of dramatic reversals: In the morning scene, Lakunle and Sidi turn youthful courtship into a battle of wits between the sexes, made grotesque by the flamboyant language of the village school-teacher who is hopelessly in love with the illiterate village beauty. Lakunle comes off very badly in this contest and the scene ends with dance which celebrates Sidi's vanity, the triumph of her youthful beauty over ineffectual manhood.

The triumph of course is premature and the Bale, who joins the general celebration with meaningful glances at the flushed village beauty, proceeds to lay his plans for the seduction.

Sub-textual Meaning and the Dance

We need not recount the rest of the details of the action on the play. For our concern is with those nodal points of the plot, those moments in the unfolding action, when speech cannot adequately express what the characters are undergoing and when the dance, the bodily movement to music, objectifies the life of the play.*

There are four such moments in the course of the play: the first is at the end of the morning scene when Sidi celebrates her renowned beauty; the second, at the beginning of the night scene, when Sadiku performs the spell, followed by a dance expressing her supposed emasculation of the Bale; the third moment is the wrestling-match, between the Bale and his court wrestler in which the Bale effectively demonstrates his prowess and anticipates his seduction of Sidi. The final moment is the dance which celebrates the cuckolding of Lakunle and the marriage of Sidi and the Bale.

These are all ritual moments, moments of celebration, which dances, carefully choreographed, ought to project. We become aware of them as we pay attention to the underlying life of the play, to that struggle between youth and old age, between the comic image of the evolve and crafty traditionalism.

(1) In fact it is because she is first seduced by the glamorous ways of the city, which Lakunle advocates, that she later capitulates to the old Bale who speaks, at the crucial moment, in the very tones of the village school-teacher.

(2) In some ways the play itself celebrates this potency and superiority of the dromenon, the thing done, over the thing said. The Bale seduces Sidi foremost by demonstrating his prowess in the wrestling match. This is why the wrestling ought to be choreographed to make explicit its sub-textual meaning. Mr. Opoku does not take much trouble over this match which becomes drawn-out and tedious.

factor precipitated independence for the Belgian Congo. Roberto Holden, Felize Mounie and other political leaders, also returned home rejuvenated from the AAPC. Second, the Bureau was meant to transplant the Pan-Africanist movement from alien to African soil so as to achieve greater cohesion and realism. Thus, the Conference of Independent African States (1958) which Padmore was instrumental in convening, did once and for all disprove the fiction of the language-barrier between Franco-phone and Anglo-phone Africans, and furthermore helped to iron out the age-old differences between Arab and Negro Africans. Not so successful was the abortive Ghana-Guinea-Mali Union, although one might say that it was after all, only a feasibility study in practical Pan-Africanism. It however redeemed itself by provoking the establishment of other more meaningful socio-economic unions.

Thirdly the Bureau was established to bring about dis-affiliation of Africans from foreign-sponsored institutions such as the All-African Trade Union Federation (AATUF) which tried to break its links with both the WFTU and the ICFTU. A Pan-African Union, of Journalists, Farmers and Women's Organisations were also formed subsequently. What happened at the Bureau afterwards were never anticipated by Padmore; they were distortions and abuses of original ideas and ideals for which he should not be held responsible.

It is probably best to leave judgement on all Padmore-inspired movements to the safe perspective of history. However, any provisional assessment of his role in the anti-colonial and Pan-Africanist movements will find it hard to condone a recent decision to remove the name "Padmore" from the title of a library that was named after him in Accra. The Stalinists could be excused striking off Trotsky's name from their records; and so could the Khrushchevites their treatment of Stalin—on political grounds. One wonders whether the above decision was also based on political grounds, that is, disenchantment with the Pan-Africanism of George Padmore, or whether it was just not properly considered. George Padmore deserves every form of recognition except epitaphs of doubtful merit.

Miscellaneous

Below is the commentary which was read over Radio Nigeria, Lagos after Mr. Hartley's speech at the U.N. Following this commentary, both the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ghana High Commission in Lagos issued statements denying any intention of bad faith, and Mr. Bonsu, Commissioner for Information, made a special trip to Lagos to explain Ghana's attitude.

This was recorded by a member of the L.S.N.A.

—Editor.

NIGERIA'S DUBIOUS FRIENDS: GHANA AND GAMBIA

By
Atiamo Elegbo

(Commentator on Current Affairs, Radio Nigeria)
AFRICA and the whole world received that terrible jolt a few days ago when it was reported that Ghana and Gambia attempted to raise the question of Nigeria's internal problems in the General Assembly of the United Nations. As the report went, the Nigerian delegate, Chief Simeon Adebó, promptly objected to this clandestine

move, making it abundantly clear that it was incompatible with respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Nigeria and not a step calculated to promote African Unity. This was an extremely fitting answer to a treacherous move by two countries who have been regarded all along as the traditional friends of Nigeria, a friendship which dates back to the colonial era.

Ghana's Hartley and Gambia's Njie were clearly traitors at the United Nations, to the Commonwealth and the Organisation of African Unity, when they attempted to raise the Nigerian question, because these two bodies have seen and accepted the conflict as Nigeria's internal problem.

Since the crisis in Nigeria began, almost all Ghana newspapers have always been giving out distorted versions of the events in Nigeria. The papers have always tried to show up Ojukwu as the defender of an oppressed people whereas this is far from the truth. The papers have been suggesting, recently a negotiated peace which, if accepted, will amount to accepting Ojukwu's rebellion. All along, it was thought in Nigeria that these papers were expressing opinions which the Ghana Government did not share. But the fact that Mr. Hartley attempted to take a stand which obviously had Government backing, in New York, puts the whole issue of Ghana's attitude in a different perspective.

This raises, more than ever before, the question of the suitability of General Ankráh as a member of the group of six Heads of State who are coming to consult Nigeria on the crisis. The inference one can draw from what happened at the United Nations is that General Ankráh has clearly taken sides. When such a man is allowed to come to Nigeria, he is coming only to fish in troubled waters. Will such a man be a fit and proper person to represent an organisation which its delegate at the United Nations had blatantly betrayed?

What is happening now leaves genuine friends of Nigeria to wonder what the General was actually up to when Nigeria met at Aburi, with him acting as the peace maker. The painful conclusion one is led to come to is that General Ankráh was, in fact, wanting to preside over the disintegration of Nigeria, a country Ghana has always envied for her size and potential. If, as people have now started to believe, this was the role General Ankráh had assigned himself to play, the General needs reminding that one of the forces which worked against Nkrumah and which eventually helped in his overthrow was his subversive activities against other African states. The question might be asked: Is Ankráh trying to take up from where Nkrumah ended? Certainly the Chairman of Ghana's National Liberation Council will not want to go the same way as the dictator he had helped to overthrow.

Gambia's own attitude is also difficult to understand. It is extremely baffling what this micro of a state which has a population of not more than that of Lagos is up to. It is equally baffling why the leaders of a country which has proved unable to open and maintain an office at the United Nations since she obtained her independence years ago will want to engage in subversion. One would have thought that the country's leaders will think more about their unprogressive economy which Britain still has to prop than dabble in the internal problems of another, more progressive, country. This is clearly the case of the rat wanting to give lessons about survival to a fully grown elephant.

Affinities to the Classical Greek Theatre

The central characters involved in these moments must have the technical ability to make the transition from the verbal drama to the drama as celebration. For them to remain stage-managers, calling for a dance troupe to celebrate what they themselves are supposed to be undergoing is to make the dance merely decorative. Just as in the classical Greek drama, they must be the leaders of the dance. For, as characters in the verbal drama, they are only the focal point of what the rest of the dance-chorus is supposed to be undergoing.

Technical Difficulties

To be aware of the perennial and archetypal drives which are involved in this play is to begin to understand something of its appeal to a varied audience. But it is also to be sadly aware of how amateurish and unstructured most of the directing, the choreography and the performance was. It is true that the producers were faced with a great deal of technical difficulty, i.e. actors whose awareness of their bodies, voice projection and sustained emotional involvement were quite unequal to the demands of the complex roles they were playing. Mr. Opoku, for example, was faced with a stage on which it was extremely difficult to define a meaningful space for dancing. But the central problem which the production never quite solved is to work out a significant and organic relation between the verbal drama and the dance. There is no simple formula for this. Each script will raise new problems. But a producer, on the look-out and plumbing the depths of the script, will take hints and pass them on to a creative choreographer.

Towards the Concept of an adequate Drama School

If I am right in suggesting that the production of *The Lion and the Jewel* offers a guide-line for the development of a really virile and indigenous theatre, then there is an overwhelming need for a re-orientation in the kind of training we give to our professional performers. I have no doubt in my mind that the roots of that training must be in the dance. We cannot therefore have a separate dance-school and theatre-school recruiting students with differing qualifications as is the case now at Legon. This is a very outmoded system of training people for our indigenous theatre. The results of this system are obvious in the production under review. On the one hand, we have dancers whose bodies are trained and expressive but who are incapable of playing roles in the verbal drama; and, on the other hand, we have people trained for playing roles in the verbal drama who are scarcely aware of what they are doing with their bodies.

It is true that in spite of its many technical shortcomings the Wilson-Opoku production of *The Lion and the Jewel* offers a very entertaining evening—thanks to some superb sense of timing and performance from George Awoonor-Williams, as Lakunle, and to the "dance-spectacles". But success in the theatre is not fortuitous, it requires conscious artistry and hard work. And unless dance research, dance teaching, academic study of the theatre and the drama go hand in hand with performing, there is no hope of our getting rid of the mess in which most production in our playhouses find themselves. Of course we can choose to continue imitating the sterile forms of the verbal drama; but then, we must reckon with empty auditoriums.

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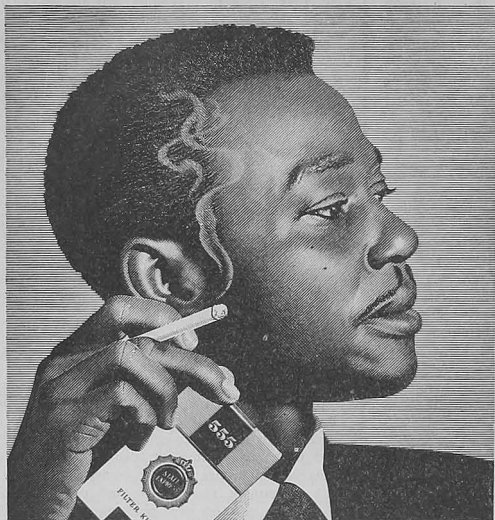
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