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EDITORIAL

FOREIGN PARTICIPATION IN THE ECONOMY

THE PRESENT debate on the Ghana-Abbott Agreement has thrown into high relief the unspoken assumptions which underlie our acceptance of foreign aid. It has become quite clear that the present Economic Committee is so enamoured of foreign aid that, like the irrational, discredited Nkrumah regime, it is prepared to accept economic aid at any price.

This view, according to them, is justified on the grounds that our economy is so battered that to refuse to accept foreign assistance is to "rot by sitting on our pride". In the short-run the argument seems persuasive. But in the long-run it is a dangerous argument. In countries where foreign aid has made any appreciable difference to living standards—and this is the aim of economic development—foreign assistance was viewed not in narrow terms of "pride" and "rotting", but in terms of gearing foreign assistance to the manpower needs of the receiving country, to the difference it is going to make to the living standards of a substantial number of people—not to the living standards of a few—and its potentiality of promoting international friendship and co-operation in that its acceptance is not viewed by the receiving country as a substitute for subtle foreign political control. This is the spirit in which America salvaged Western Europe after the war with the Marshall Aid.

Another apparently attractive argument is that foreign assistance—especially management agreements—brings with it technical know-how. But for anyone who has done extensive travels in Western Europe and America, it can hardly be exaggerated to say that all countries all over the world need their best talents at home, and everything possible is done to entice them to stay at home. Whether in our universities, or industries or civil service, except those who are 'loaned' for short periods or are here for idealistic reasons—these are negligible in number—the best talents stay at home. This is the reason why Prof. Dike, ex-Vice-Chancellor of Ibadan University, said that good "brains are not exportable". This does not mean we should not accept those who do come; we should, but should be aware of their limitations—vis-a-vis their nationals back home and not extol the middling academic and technical qualities of the 'experts' in our midst to the skies.

A further principle which we should clarify is that foreign assistance should supplement, not replace, our own economic efforts. With the best will in the world no country can develop solely on the benevolence of another country. Even the United States, the country with the highest standard of living known to history, and the country which historically has given most foreign assistance, has its own economic problems—urban renewal, air and water pollution and the fight against the relatively small poverty in

that land of plenty. There is no substitute for our own national efforts.

It must also be made clear that foreign assistance, especially if it is private, poses problems of its own. State Enterprises are alien to the economic experience of most Western European and American businesses. Our State Enterprises are not only instruments of economic development but also of politics. It is for us first, to make it clear that there are many sectors of the economy where we invite private participation and give a free hand. Secondly, it has to be made clear that new nations like Ghana have peculiar problems which are not fully known to foreign businesses. It is not their fault, for their business is making money. In the Abbott case, for instance, it has to be said that Abbott Laboratories as a business is quite distinct in sympathy and outlook from the American Government and people. The American Government and most American leaders of opinion have a sympathetic understanding of the problems of new countries, but they do not control American businessmen. It is for our leaders to restrain American businesses so that they do not enter into contracts which are likely to generate anti-Americanism. Ghanaians, in this case, are being just pro-Ghana, in much the same way as Americans are pro-America and the British are pro-Britain.

In saying all this it might be assumed that we have developed a schizophrenic attitude to foreign assistance and aid—asking for foreign assistance and at the same time adopting attitudes and postures which scare foreign investment. It is true that we need foreign aid. But the attitude which apparently contradicts our fundamental need for foreign investment is understandable in the light of the corrupt alliance between Nkrumah's regime and British firms which made it difficult for the benefits of foreign investment to percolate down to improve living standards of ordinary Ghanaians. This alliance between investors and the ruling class which makes it difficult for the broad masses of the people to raise their living standard is indeed becoming a characteristic feature of developing countries, as in Liberia, for example, where it is so alarming that a group of American economists have brilliantly emphasised it in a recent book on that country entitled, **Growth Without Development**. Politically, such an alliance can lead to fascism of the type in that it is not "home-grown". In short, we should accept foreign aid, but on conditions which are likely to lead to equitable distribution of resources and the peaceful evolution of democratic institutions.

Africa

CONFLICT OF IDEALISM AND REALISM: NIGERIAN-BIAFRAN WAR

By

B. I. Chukwukere

THE hostilities between the Federal Republic of Nigeria and one of its former constituent parts, Eastern Region, mark the height of a clash between the **ideal** and the **real** in the political organisation of that country. One can neither understand the issues involved nor make an objective analysis of the irreconcilable view-points and stands of the two combatant sides unless one gets a firm grasp of the fundamental problems underlying the conflict. The main aim of this article is to tackle this basic question and attempt to clarify the position to the Ghanaian reading public. The writer therefore would like to state some basic facts which are so germane to the violent confrontation between Nigeria and Biafra, that all thinking Ghanaians ought to consider them in the assessment of the rights and wrongs of the belligerents.

Fundamental Issues

First, the war is not an **ideological** one: there is neither capitalism-socialism dichotomy, nor West-East alignment question, nor single or dual party system polarisation. Second, the quarrel is not, basically speaking, **economic** except in the sense that Nigeria now feels that without Biafra she is economically amputated. But Biafran secession—and this is what I want to emphasise—was not motivated by selfish economic interests like, for example, the Katanga case. Third, it is not Christianity versus Islam: religious wars of such dimension are somehow anachronistic in our time. Fourth, the war is not the culmination of conflicts between personalities with divergent ambitions for leadership and power. Colonel Ojukwu is not a subtle Machiavellian intent on carving out a small territorial unit where his influence could be effectively felt; nor is Major-General Gowon, irrespective of his meteoric rise from the rank of Lt.-Colonel, a sadistic Marlovian warrior, who obsessed with conquest enjoys the spectacle of Ibo extermination. Fifth and last, the struggle is **sociological**: a war of **ethnic heterogeneity**, nurtured over the years into deadly hatred and open antagonism, and aggravated by fundamental differences in the various groups' attitudes towards 'achieved' status and role.

Tribalism or Ethnicity

It is of importance that Ghanaian readers

should grasp the nature of this ethnic conflict—in popular phraseology, though scientifically imprecise, called “tribalism”. Why, for example, has this phenomenon produced such catastrophic results in Nigeria whereas in many other African countries, with diverse cultural and linguistic groups as well, no turbulence of like intensity has occurred? Viewed in this background one is tempted to predict, at least for the foreseeable future, that a hydra-headed problem faces Federal Nigeria even after her military objective of re-integrating Biafra might have been achieved, and this I very much doubt. In this background also the problem of after-war peace, most superficially and amateurishly discussed by the editor of the *Ghanaian Times* (October 9, 1967) will fall into proper perspective.

May I now argue the above hypothesis by analysing the fundamental issues centred around **ethnicity** in the former Federation? My deduction, succinctly put, will be that no constitutional devices which fail to decentralize power to the minutest details possible from Lagos—that is, establish a CONFEDERATION (whether of the former Regions or of the newly created States)—can lay the basis for curing the ills of that country. For if the major part of Colonel Ojukwu's ideas for a loose association, agreed upon at the Aburi meeting and since then given clear expression by many experienced and knowledgeable foreign friends of Nigeria with no vested interests in the country, had been accepted then the story would have been different today. Unfortunately this is like crying over spilt milk.

Behind the social, economic and political instability in sub-Saharan Africa today is mainly the failure of people in responsible positions to comprehend and admit the reality of ethnic diversities and the concomitant complex problems of differences in attitudes, sentiments, drives, responses and orientation. Nigeria for example, was at best a geographical (British) expression which, fortunate in some ways, grew into a potent and intricately interwoven economic unit. As a political homogeneity it has never existed except on paper, which is a fine and perhaps genuine—on the side of the architects—expression of the great ideal: unity-in-diversity. To relegate to the background the basic fact that the real Nigerian has always been first an Hausa (including Fulani) or Yoruba or Ibo—to mention just the three main ethnic groups (out of a possible 50 or more others) and only second a Nigerian—for that matter in a rather remote and academic manner—is to substitu-

te false idealisms for concrete reality. For one to ignore the simple fact that factors of social change, including colonial administration and urbanisation (the latter particularly) brought together people from these multiple ethnic or cultural groups, where attitudes to competition, self amelioration and achievement are as far apart as the geographic poles, is further to misunderstand the nature of the crisis in the war-torn country. In traditional Ibo society, for example, achieved status was exalted. The Ibos of today are no different; they are known to be talented, industrious, competitive, commercially shrewd and progressive and egalitarian. The last trait particularly makes them easy misfits in the traditional “feudal” kingdoms of the Hausa-Fulani in the North and the Yoruba chiefdoms of the West. In modern terms, therefore, the successful Iboman is either highly-educated or a wealthy entrepreneur—much of the business made outside Ibo territory.

“Push-Ahead” Spirit

Alongside these are a host of petty traders, clerks and non-government employees. Common to all Ibos is unrelenting effort to push ahead—take external examinations, practise thrift and invest for dividends etc. On the contrary the Hausas and allied ethnic groups in the North have remained predominantly Islamic in their way. One sure way to success, especially political, is a pilgrimage to Mecca and/or attachment to an overlord, in a master-client kind of relationship. Preoccupation with Koranic scholarship—*per se* a stimulating exercise, I think—mitigates against the adoption of ‘Western’ education and values, which however are the springboards of our modern institutions in Africa. The Ibos in Hausaland dominated the economy of the territory. On another level are the Yorubas: at the same time like and unlike the Ibos. Traditionally their social and cultural institutions, most of which centred around the **Obaship** (kingship) were well-developed and distinct. The modern Yorubaman is in many ways—surely many more ways than the Ibo—closely attached to his traditional culture and is therefore conservative. But like the Ibo he is invariably shrewd in business (particularly the Ijebu Yoruba) and also well-educated. In point of fact the Yorubas dominated the educational sphere (and consequently the professions and civil service) until the last two or three decades when the Ibos invaded the scene soon to outclass them. As a result the two groups are deeply suspicious of each other. They are competitors in a limited number of fields. In terms, therefore, of modern

social (includes political, economic etc.) existence the Yorubas and the Ibos are to a considerable extent alike in their attitudes and orientations, especially in respect of material possessions and status; but the former's close identification with their traditional culture marks a difference. For example, the successful Yoruba politician, though he may be a lawyer or doctor or businessman, would invariably take a chieftaincy title. In terms of our analysis this is a super-position of traditional values on a modern system where, literally speaking, the old traditional value is irrelevant. The Iboman, being a republican by birth and upbringing, and egalitarian to the core justifies his new position in terms of 'achievement' as measured by response to 'Western' cultural impact, which is now part and parcel of the existing order. The Hausa-Fulaniman sees both as worldly infidels, worse so for the Ibos who have remained solidly non-muslim.

Nigeria's Image in Africa and the World.

The foregoing offers us a skeletal framework for understanding the focal theme of ideal vis-à-vis reality in the Nigerian-Biafran quarrel. In the first place the public in Nigeria saw Ghana under the leadership of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah as an ideal African nation, where power emanated from one centre and was therefore effectively projected on the outside world.

Nigeria, though larger in size and number, potentially wealthier and economically better placed for rapid growth wielded no real effective power outside nor could her rulers set the stage for the formation of real national sentiments. To attain this Nigeria needed a really strong central government where efficiency could be streamlined and cumbersome regional constitutional devices easily discarded. That was the ideal. The reality of the situation, however, was that the Regional politicians had tremendous power to remain intransigent, if they chose, on even basic 'national' issues. Furthermore, the Lagos government was numerically dominated by Fulani-Hausa overlords and their clients who together with the politicians and rulers of the Northern Region indirectly sought to control the whole country. To the Ibos, Yorubas, Binis and others of the South an image of Nigeria stamped by the then Premier of the North, the Sardauna of Sokoto was intolerable. This conflict exploded with the military coup of January 1966.

Federal and Regional Power

Corollary to this basic discrepancy between what was and what was desired was the clash

between Federal and Regional power. The former was neither strong enough to overshadow the Regions nor sufficiently weak to make itself unattractive for politicians, who of course are all power-seekers. In the face of this delicate swing of the pendulum of political control, the socio-cultural situation of Nigeria made it obvious that the most realistic system was increased Regional autonomy to such an extent that the conflict at the Federal level would have resolved itself by ceasing to be. Something like the cantonal system of Switzerland, which provides for peaceful co-existence of three linguistic cultural groups—French, German and Italian—was what Nigeria needed to save it from disintegration. However, this would have meant a negation of the principle of streamlined central efficiency which the idealists of Nigeria 'giant' role in Africa and the world saw as indispensable. These two sets of conflicts reached peak height with the military regime of General Ironsi, an Ibo, which sought to formulate a unitary constitution for what was already a conglomeration of peoples, languages and cultures. One of the protests against Ironsi's measure was the massacre in May 1966 of Ibos resident in the North. Many of course fled to safety in their native homes.

It is important to note that up to the above point Eastern Nigerians had been the most forceful advocates—in theory and practice—of the ideals I have discussed above—unity, nationhood, image projection etc. They had received several shocks over the years but those were not traumatic enough to conduce to repudiation of the worthy ideals. However, the series of shocks that started in May 1966 with the massacre of Eastern civilians resident in the North, followed in July 1966 with the toppling of Ironsi's rule by organised Hausa-Fulani (including their clients, the Tivs especially) assassinations of Eastern army officers (predominantly Ibos) and soon followed by a greater Northern civilian-army combined pogrom against Easterners—all these, to any fair-minded and objective persons, amounted to a rejection as well as an affront. The Eastern reaction, after a series of futile attempts to get the Federal (which is in practice Northern) government to show remorse for these atrocities, was a positive assertion of a separate nationalism.

Affronted Protest

The Biafran secession, therefore, is a logical statement of a 'smaller' nationalism in the face of profound disillusionment with the search for a 'greater' and 'wider' nationalism. Unless O.A.U. members recognise Biafra's fight for separate

existence as the affronted protest of the rejected, unless they realize that military victory for Lagos will not even open the way to peaceful co-existence of Nigeria's numerous and diversified ethnic groups, then attempts to find solutions are bound to be nothing short of a fiasco. The O.A.U.'s approach to the raging problem is rather feeble and removed from the plane of concrete realities. It is, for example, all well and sound in principle to condemn secession and adhere strictly to a rather nebulous formula of "territorial integrity". But we should ask ourselves whether such a universal (African) formula, which does not take cognisance of the circumstances in each particular case, can bring any valuable and practical results. Nigeria as a large heterogeneous entity has always been and still is an ideal, but unfortunately an ideal that has proved itself too costly to pursue. The most important element in any organisation of peoples—the human factor—has rendered the ideal more of a mirage. Wisdom and respect for humanity demand that the quest be abandoned.

The author is an Ibo who received his education in the University of Ghana. He is now a lecturer in Sociology at the University College of Cape Coast. —Editor.

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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".

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

The Economy

ANIMAL PRODUCTION IN GHANA—II

By

L. N. K. Ababio

EXCEPT for fattening operations, livestock are most cheaply raised extensively on range land where human population pressure is least. Thus about 3/5 of our livestock are found in the Northern savanna. The 1960 population census presents interesting observations on our regional population density and urban locality distributions.

POPULATION DENSITY AND LOCALITY DISTRIBUTIONS

Region	Urban*	Rural	Total for Region	Urban as % of total	Density Pop./Sq Mile
Northern**	101,520	1,187,400	1,288,920	7.9	34
B. Ahafo	91,540	496,380	587,920	15.6	38
Volta ..	102,150	675,130	777,280	13.1	98
Western ..	365,100	1,012,450	1,377,550	26.5	106
Ashanti ..	276,780	832,350	1,109,130	24.9	118
Eastern ..	220,860	875,340	1,096,200	20.1	142
Accra Capital District	395,410	98,410	493,820	80.0	494
All Regions	1,551,360	5,175,460	6,726,820	23.1	73

* An area with a population of 5,000 or more is an urban area; if it has less than 5,000, it is said to be rural.

** At the time this census was taken, the Northern Region had not been divided into the North and Upper, and the Western included the current Central.

The table indicates that Brong Ahafo and the Northern Regions are the least densely populated with a relatively low degree of urbanisation. These are the main savanna lands also. Their ranch potential is vast if at least water for both man and stock is provided and well distributed to last through the long dry seasons. The Volta and Eastern Regions also have the potential for ranches but to a lesser degree. In the case of the East this is due to the relatively higher degree of urbanisation and population density; and in the case of the Volta, this is due to the relatively higher population density. It is clear therefore that the natural grassland areas of relative low value, not immediately required for non-agricultural ventures, are in the North, Brong Ahafo, and limited parts of the South-Eastern Volta plains. In view of this fact, the half-hearted way of pursuing the Southern and Northern small dam construction schemes is irresponsible and dangerous to the existing livestock farmers in these areas.

It is known that with better water supply for drinking, and fodder conserved for the dry season, the present level of local meat production can be at least doubled through halving the

period of maturity of the store animals. Should the state use available funds to help existing farmers to produce better to earn their living? Or should we use this money to invest in a new mammoth beef, milk, cheese and butter venture which is going to depend on the confinement of unadapted and susceptible exotic stock which must necessarily require more, and better than the average, facilities denied the local farmer? Anybody who proposes to keep the same number of livestock now subsisting on the whole of the Accra plains in only a mere fraction of the plains in order to feed us should be requested to foot every bit of the bill, including the cost of leasing the land, and to keep all the profit if any! Let us beware of adventurers and prospectors!

Marketing of Stock and Meat

An equally important way of promoting better animal production is through better sale promotion of stock and meat. The organisation and quality of the stock and meat market in Ghana is a direct reflection of the value we attach to animal production.

Trade animals are roughly truck-loaded or driven on the hoof from one part of the country to another without special care, before slaughter. They thus quickly lose anything from a third to half of the meat they take so long to put on. This, however, does not result in any monetary loss to the dealer: he can sell at the same high price any animal that is just barely breathing, and at a bargain. If live trade animals were sold by liveweight what a revolution this would bring in the husbandry, care, quality and quantity of stock, from breeding to the table!

Also, the condition in the local meat shops in the public markets, especially in the urban centres, ought to make a vegetarian out of any ardent meat eater. No cold rooms are attached, fly-proofs are torn, dusty and overgrown with cobwebs, the butcher table tops are dugouts—bloody and insanitary. Who is to protect the public?

Game Meat

Any discussion on animal production, especially in savannas and forests of West Africa, which ignores the role of game animals, is inadequate. The health and development of the people, particularly in the rural areas, would have been worse but for the game meat they get—the antelope, duiker, bushcow, rat, grasscutter, snail, etc. From very rough estimates, the average meat consumption in Ghana may be about 80 lbs. per

head per year. Out of this, domestic animals account for only about 20 lbs. The remaining 60 lb is provided from game. This accounts for the surprisingly healthy and robust life of our rural peoples and unskilled labourers in urban centres. In rural areas domestic stock are only slaughtered for food on ceremonial and festive occasions. Domestic animals are still looked on as capital savings, prestige signs of wealth, and valuable exchange in dowry.

Game animals living in the wild are very much subject to the natural environment including the destructive practices of man. There are many areas in Ghana now where game populations are drastically reducing as human interference advances. Large game animals are retreating further and further afield and even across borders. Indiscriminate hunting and bush burning are all contributory human factors depleting game populations. Natural factors such as our torrential rains and seasonal grazing shortage take a heavy toll of young wild stock. It is clear therefore that until domestic animals can be developed properly to contribute more, our game must be protected, for systematic harvesting. The control of hunting in at least the more remote and relatively uninhabited areas, is a must. Indiscriminate bush burning should be outlawed.

Milk Production

Milk production is a problem on which, in recent years, sentiments and blatant disregard for comparative advantage have blinded the few who should know the facts of life in Ghana. For one thing, the breed of dairy animal is not here. And, for another, the regular feed supply for the existing stock for body maintenance and mere growth is a problem; the average Ghanaian is not livestock-minded and lacks the essential skills of husbandry, let alone milking and hygiene. Milk is an excellent food; but one does not have to drink fresh milk at any cost. Let us first try to improve the environment of the present animals—better water and fodder conservation for the dry season, better tick and worm control—so that better animals and specialised animals can be kept more cheaply and safely.

It seems to me a sign of hysteria and lack of confidence in the Ghanaian experts who seem to beg for facilities to work with, that some planners should always grab copies of import figures for every food item and advocate its large scale production locally. The road to eventual success is through patient systematic application of science to local fundamental problems.

Professional Personnel

There is a dire shortage of veterenarians, animal husbandrymen with general agricultural training, range management men, fodder agronomists, and water engineers. There are too few of each of the above categories of specialists relative to the 600,000 cattle, 1,700,000 sheep and goats, 80,000 pigs, 3 million poultry and the few horses and donkeys in the country. To support these there is a relatively fair number of junior technical staff struggling as best they can in the field. To remedy this situation, all the country does is to devise ways and means of breaking up the Ministry of Agriculture into smaller ministries and departments, thus dispersing the scanty staff further and creating duplication and antagonistic interests. We must learn to make the best use of our limited trained man-power resources.

STATE FISHING CORPORATION, TEMA

Staff Appointment

SENIOR ACCOUNTANT

Applications are invited from suitably qualified Ghanaians for the post of Senior Accountant.

Qualifications

- (a) A.C.A. (Chartered), A.C.C.A., A.C.W.A., with minimum of three years experience;
- (b) Intermediate A.C.A., A.C.C.A., A.C.W.A., with minimum of five years experience;
- (c) Persons whose present basic salary is less than £1,200 or NC2,400 should not apply.

Method of Application

Application for forms should be directed to, The Personnel Officer, State Fishing Corporation, Tema.

Completed forms should reach the Chairman, State Fisheries Management Committee, P. O. Box 211, Tema, not later than 20th December, 1967.

Politics

THE CASE FOR DISFRANCHISEMENT AND DISQUALIFICATION

By

L. H. Ofosu Appiah

I FIND that the term disfranchisement stirs up in some people's mind ideas about vindictiveness and victimisation. This should not be so. The dictionary definition of "to enfranchise" for our present purpose, is "to give someone the right to vote at elections". To disfranchise is the opposite of to enfranchise, for it withholds the right to vote from a person. It has been suggested that disfranchisement is undemocratic. This does not fit the facts of democratic practice the world over. Every democratic country arbitrarily disfranchises a section of its citizens on grounds of age and sex. In Switzerland, for example, women cannot vote. In some countries the voting age is 18, in others it is 21. There is no suggestion that the state which fixes these limits is being vindictive or is victimising its citizens. It has also been suggested that if you are disfranchised you should not be expected to pay taxes. This situation does not exist anywhere in the democratic world. Women pay taxes in Switzerland; and those under the voting age pay taxes in every country, if they earn taxable incomes.

Punitive Disfranchisement

There are other types of disfranchisement and disqualification which are purely punitive and which form a part of every constitution. The question we are going to discuss falls under this category of disfranchisement and disqualification. We must now turn to the Ghana situation. The men who planned and successfully staged the coup of the 24th of February 1966 had three main aims: To end tyranny; to root out corruption, first in public life, and, hopefully, second, in civic life; and to establish and protect democracy and civil liberties. To achieve these objectives certain actions have been taken. Commissions of enquiry have been set up to probe the assets of individuals connected with the regime. One feature of these Commissions is that they do not embrace all those who should have their assets probed. It is quite clear that the probe should affect all C.P.P. functionaries whether they fell out with the Party before the coup or not. It should also include members of the opposition for the sake of dispelling doubts about their integrity. It should include top public servants who were involved in the administration of the coun-

try during the past regime. This is necessary to show the doubters that all of them are clean. Until then, the suspicion will exist; but that is undesirable, especially, since these men and women have to carry on the work of the future civilian administration.

Historical Examination

The next big step is to punish those responsible for the dismemberment of the democratic constitution which was agreed upon before independence. Since democracy has not had a chance in Ghana, it is a prerequisite for any future democratic constitution that all anti-democratic elements should be effectively checked. Disfranchisement and disqualification should be applied not to all supporters of the C.P.P., for that would be unrealistic and unjust. A line should be drawn somewhere. And my suggestion is to look at the question historically. First, we must take corruption. In addition to those who are found guilty of corruption by the commissions of enquiry, there should be an investigation going as far back as the Korsah Commission of 1953-4 and the Jibowu Commission of 1956. The Korsah Commission found that one Junior Minister had not maintained the standards required of a public servant, and he was accordingly removed. At independence he was appointed Minister of Interior. The Jibowu Commission stated that: "In the circumstances we do not see how the Government can escape the charge of conniving and condoning irregularities both in the C.P.P. and by Mr. Djin made against them." The British administration, to its shame, did not take any drastic action, and corruption became a way of life in our politics until the end of the regime. All those involved in the Cabinet should be disfranchised.

Civil Liberties

When we come to civil liberties, the Preventive Detention Act of 1958 should be our first line of demarcation. It was agreed upon by the Central Committee and the Cabinet, and passed by the C.P.P. majority in Parliament over the warnings of the Opposition and right thinking citizens. It was responsible for the misery and deprivation of hundreds of innocent citizens. With its passage the basis of the rule of law was knocked down, and those who were responsible for it must be disfranchised. Disfranchisement should touch those who in 1963 agreed to extend the life of the Preventive Detention Act. When the bill was introduced by Kwaku Boateng, it met with opposition from members of the C.P.P.; but to their shame they voted solidly for it. They must therefore pay

the penalty for this act.

It is too easily forgotten that the C.P.P. disfranchised the whole country in 1965. Apart from giving Nkrumah the power to enfranchise disqualified people, the Electoral Provisions Act of 1965 disfranchised those thrown into prison under the Preventive Detention Act. Then there was no voting in 1965, but there were selection for Parliament! Even fascists and Nazis still believed that elections were necessary and held them. It is also a fact that the C.P.P. forced a one-party state on the country through a farcical referendum. Those responsible must therefore be disfranchised. Finally, the Parliament which ruled, by an amendment to the Constitution, that the General Secretary of the C.P.P. should approve the nomination of any Presidential candidate must be disfranchised.

Methods

We now come to the methods of disfranchising or disqualifying these categories of citizens. Two methods are suggested. One is a public trial. This was the method adopted during the Turkish revolution of 1960. The members of the Cabinet and the Parliamentarians of the Democratic Party of Mr. Adnan Menderes were put on trial for a whole year. They were tried for corruption and crimes against the spirit of the Constitution. They were all found guilty. Fifteen of them were condemned to death, but three—the Prime Minister, the Finance Minister and the Minister of External Affairs—were executed, and the others, including ex-President Bayar, were sentenced to life imprisonment. The remaining 400 were sentenced to terms varying from four to twenty years and disfranchised. The democratic party was banned, and it was made illegal to make propaganda in the press for its revival. This method, if adopted in Ghana, will satisfy those who stress the due process of law. It will certainly catch all those who were guilty of excesses against the state.

The other method is by political action. This was adopted in Germany and Italy. The soldiers who risked their lives must prevent a recurrence of the conditions which forced them to intervene in politics by passing a decree disfranchising and disqualifying certain categories of Ghanaians whose guilt is very apparent. This is necessary to protect illiterate villagers from the educated men like myself who are incapable of resisting injustice when it comes from a superior. This is to end the system in which educated public servants claim that they are balanced in their views and must therefore take unjust orders—provided the injustice is not done to them.

selves! To let loose the C.P.P. on the frightened villagers will be a big mistake which the military regime cannot afford to make. For the C.P.P. have allies among the educated men who do not want their assets probed and they will do everything to protect their position and to reverse what has already been done. We must not forget that in spite of our educated men we were not able to safeguard democracy.

Foreign Admirers

There has been some concern expressed by our foreign admirers in Britain and the United States over this question of disfranchisement and disqualification. Some educated Ghanaians tend to take foreigners' views very seriously and do not consider what goes on in those countries. We would point out that the U.S. did not, until the Supreme Court ruling of 1966, consider Communists as decent citizens, and before the Civil Rights Act of 1965 voting was a privilege which not all Negroes could exercise. With these points before us we would ask our foreign critics to be patient while we try to protect our country from tyranny and start a new and democratic tradition. We know how they looked on and regarded the excesses of the last regime as typical of Africans. They should give us a chance at least to imitate the good things in their own system by protecting our civil liberties from anti-democratic elements.

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Observer Notebook

The "Observer" and the Press Conference

ON 6 NOVEMBER 1967 the **Legon Observer** received an invitation, by letter to a press conference called for Friday, November 10, at 4.00 o'clock p.m. It was the meeting at which Mr. R. S. Amegashie, the Commissioner for Industries, was due to state the official view on the Abbott-Ghana contract.

That same day—of the arrival of the invitation—the Editorial Committee of the **Observer** was holding one of its regular meetings, and eventually recorded this Minute:

PRESS CONFERENCE—Vol. II, No. 23 to be out on Friday November 10th before 4.00 p.m. Members to make it a point to attend Mr. Amegashie's Press Conference on the Ghana-Abbott Contract.

The **Observer** had to come out before 4.00 p.m. and Mr. Amegashie's conference because we were going to carry more than one article—and did—definitely critical of the Agreement; and we wanted our arguments circulated as widely as possible among persons likely to attend the conference and ask questions, apart from ourselves.

By noon of Friday the 10th it was being strangely bruited abroad that the Press Conference had already been held, at 10.00 o'clock—six hours before the time officially stated in our invitation, reproduced hereunder:—

State Enterprises Secretariat
Negotiating Committee
Office of the N.L.C.
P.O. Box 1627
Accra
6th November, 1967

My Ref. No. SES. 001/ADM. 82A/Vol. 4/239

Dear Sir,

Negotiating Committee—Press Conference

I am to inform you that the Negotiating Committee has decided to hold a Press Conference at 4.00 p.m. on Friday, 10th November, 1967 in the Office of the Commissioner for Industries.

2. I would be grateful therefore, if you could delegate one of your top officers to represent your press at the Conference.

3. Your co-operation in the matter will be greatly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

(Sgd.) K. P. Agyekum
Secretary
Negotiating Committee

THE EDITOR,
LEGON OBSERVER,
ACCRA.

By 1.00 o'clock p.m. Radio Ghana was carrying broadcast reports of what Mr. Amegashie had said at his conference at 10 a.m. the same day. Nothing was heard announced about the scheduled 4.00 o'clock meeting, and the presumption among our small editorial group was that the Press Conference had been held and was all over, and that was that! Not one of us considered it rational that two press conferences could be held by the same person on the same subject on the same day.

But it was still important for the **Observer** to come out as early as possible on that fateful day, if only to act as a sabotage operation. So the editor and his assistants, as well as one or two other members of the Editorial Committee, made for the Liberty Press, where they were therefore congregated and concentrated throughout the afternoon. After triumphantly seeing the first few hundred copies of the paper off the press and circulating as many of these as they could before nightfall, they heard, to their utter astonishment, that the 4 o'clock Press Conference too had come off after all.

By this review of the remarkable record of the events of Friday, 10th November 1967, we do not expect, and do not desire, to be exonerated from blame for missing the second Press Conference, as we had done the first though not for the same reasons. We simply wished to explain the circumstances to those of our many followers who missed our members at both conferences and reacted in every way as if they considered this to have been another fall of man. We feel humbled by the nature of their concern, and wanted merely to put the facts before them, with our profound apologies.

"Three Women"

THE International Drama Group was on view again, last week-end, with two plays. The first, **Three Women**, is by a new Ghanaian writer, Ayi Kwei Armah, who is something of an Angry Young Man; the second was **A Yorkshire Tragedie**. The "Tragedie" goes back to Shakespearian dramatic modes and manners, and is in fact attributed to the great man himself.

This second offering has already had a fair "run" on an Accra circuit before, playing to clubs, pubs, "market" crowds, and university audiences, in the city centres and on the periphery. The reactions and the reception have been mixed, ranging from the expected giggling or even loud laughter at murder and mental torture, to

sober attention and mood matching mood. But on the whole **A Yorkshire Tragedie** has been viewed here by many as principally a barefaced histrionic **tour de force** with little heart in it—perhaps because of the style of acting—a vehicle mostly for the Calderes, Ian and Pat, the (too-roaring) husband and the tragedy-saturated wife in the play. More interesting for many in the large audience was **Three Women**, especially as a first presentation by a writer not yet seen or heard on the boards before Saturday night, the 18th of November 1967.

Three Women is a story of crude, archaic, often comic male domination, the story, if you like, of the enjoyment of power in one of its numerous manifestations—that is, the manifestation of both power and the love of it. The women run the gamut from supine acquiescence to the will of God, to "things as they are", and, most of all, to what one might here describe as the "receptacle-for-the-male-and-for-procreation theory of woman"—at the one extreme; to complete rebelliousness against all this submission and resignation, at the other; with, in between, the third woman, who is an eclectic, a sorter-out of conflicting positions, almost inevitably a ready-to-be-persuaded type.

All three are husbanded and dominated by one man, Barima. Only Donkor the complacent and satisfied one, loves Barima; Suro, the doubter, tolerates him but is open to persuasion against accepting her "slavery". Slavery is how their position is described by the third wife, Fahodzi, the rebel, who hates Barima's guts and eventually gets the other two to agree to "sanctions" against the husband. The murder-reduced-to-drugging-and-typing-up coup fails miserably but the tragicomic situation and its outcome gain for the women Barima's lofty concession of a new privilege to them: from now on they could eat with him at table!

Three Women is tightly constructed and was well produced by Patricia Calder and very adequately acted by the small cast of four: Albertha Watts as Fahodzi, Betty Bossman as Donkor, Mary Yirenkyi as Suro, and William Okae as Barima. Ayi Kwei Armah's **metier** is definitely intellectual and, in this play, hangs on a high degree of sex/procreation symbolism: this theme is announced and analysed repeatedly—some would say repetitiously—by Donkor in the beginning, when she likens woman to the mortar, sitting uncomplainingly on Mother Earth and receiving the pounding blows of the pestle . . .

This is a play of words rather than of action, and is to be judged as such. There are moments

in it when one felt a slight sense of impatience with the talk, or an incongruity among ideas, or apprehension whether a particular point was going to come off right or be spoilt; it may even be said that the tensions built up in the conflictual situations are not always sustained, not cathartic enough to satisfy. But then this is only a tragi-comedy, not meant to stretch anybody out on the emotional wrack. On the other hand the dialogue is educated, even deep in places; and certainly the play is well constructed and lucid. Much, it seems, can be expected from Ayi Kwei Armah in the future.

Letters

The Abbott-Ghana Controversy

SIR—I find Economics difficult, and "Stocks and Shares" often baffle me but I managed to follow A. Radix's article entitled "The Case of Abbott Laboratories (Ghana) Ltd." (Legon Observer 27 October, 1967). I am still not quite clear about some of the implications of the Abbott-Ghana agreement and I will like straightforward answers to the following questions:

1. Is it true that the terms of the agreement may make it impossible for me to prescribe an anti-blood pressure drug manufactured in, say, Britain, or Germany simply because import licences were deliberately not made available?

Irrespective of the fact that my experience tells me that the particular drug which happens to be manufactured in Britain or Germany is the most effective in high blood pressure? Am I then hemmed in to use Abbott's anti-blood pressure drugs for several years to come? Does the agreement imply that for years to come I should alter my practical pharmacology and medical therapeutics to agree with what Abbott-Ghana provides? Or is Abbott-Ghana going to manufacture all the drugs I like to prescribe? ... all the drugs Dr. B likes to prescribe? ... all the drugs Dr. C likes to prescribe? ... all the drugs Dr. D likes to prescribe? ... etc.

2. When a Civilian Government is "voted in, and Abbott-Ghana is sent packing does it mean Abbott-illinois will be paid the cost of our land, our buildings, our factory, etc?

3. Tell me, Sir, have we at last an explanation and cure for the chronic drug shortages at Korle-Bu? Is the explanation restricted import licences? And is the cure to flood the market with the home-produced drugs at a cheaper price? But will the finished Abbott-Ghana labelled product which is yet to be imported be cheaper?

If it is true, Sir, that this Abbott-Ghana agreement interferes significantly with my prescribing habits, i.e. makes me forego well-tried drugs in favour of untried drugs, while I have the choice, I shall not hesitate to refuse to prescribe any drug marked 'Abbott-Ghana' and I am sure many doctors will react in the same manner. If, however, the dawn of Abbott-Ghana will mean the end of the frustrating, stereotyped answer one gets from the Korle-Bu Pharmacy "no soluble insulin", "no soneryl", "no chloroquin", "no furadan-

tin", "no syrup phenergan", "no oral penicillin", "no P.Z.1", "no folic acid", "no one-sixth molar lactate solution", "no giving sets", "no methyl-dopa", "no iron", "no codeine phosphate", "no antihistin syrup", "no ampicillin", "no cloxacillin", "no neomycin", "no endoxan", ...! "no this", "no that", then, in the interests of all ailing fellow Ghanaians, perhaps all I should say is: Welcome Abbott-Ghana!

Name and address supplied **Korle-Bu Doctor**
—Ed.

SIR—The Commissioner for Industries has so eloquently countered press criticism of the government's agreement with Abbott of Illinois. We are made to understand that our limitations made it impossible to offer any different terms to Abbott. We have not, however, been convinced that these terms are not wholly favourable to Abbott at the expense of the nation.

Now, assuming that we could not negotiate for more than these very prejudicial terms why could we not avoid the merger altogether? At least we have a Ghanaian pharmacologist who is qualified to be on the Board of Directors. Could he not be appointed the Managing Director and the complementary technical know-how hired to assist in running the factory?

In our association with foreign entrepreneurs, we should seek such help as can enable us to stand up on our own feet, because we want to do our own walking.
Bubiashie, I. K. Minta
Accra.

SIR—You are quite right to tell us what is happening in the affairs of Norcement, Abbott-Ghana and the Pioneer Farm Company.

But Radix's emotional concern over the possible demotion of Ghanaian pharmaceutical executives is quite misplaced. If money is invested in a manufacturing or farming business we must surely all agree that the investors will want to control their own affairs and employ the best executives they can get. Their ability, for everyone's benefit, is the thing that ultimately matters.

No, if Radix really wants to arouse our interest, why doesn't he stress the fact that, on evidence, the NLC is concerned mainly with big business? Where are the policies which aim to stimulate numerous small enterprises? Which Ghanaian economists have really studied indigenous economics in depth and speak with authoritative voices? Who is painstakingly researching into the sociological impediments to development? How many individuals or cooperatives in the country are creditworthy and comprise the nation's under-financed but capable entrepreneurs? Above all, where are the market organizers who will prime the pump of rural productivity?

Why worry if a few more Americans come to live in luxurious bungalows? The big concerns—and bigger potentials—lie elsewhere.

P.O. Box 3785
Kumasi

An Expatriate

The "Expert" on Ghana

SIR—As one of those interested in the establishment of an agricultural enterprise to grow food and fibre in Ghana and to provide processing and storage facilities for individual farmers I should like to correct

an impression left by the article from the IOWA STATE DAILY reproduced in your issue of November 10.

The man mentioned in the article was brought to Ghana for two weeks as a consultant on the production of maize. He was not, is not and will not be an employee of the project. Furthermore, the sentiments portrayed in the article are quite as abhorrent to those interested in the project as they were to your contributor.

Ambassador. Hotel
Accra.

Garland R. Farmer

The Case for Disqualification

SIR—I write to reinforce Mr. A. Radix's article which appeared in the *Legon Observer* of October 13-26.

The whole argument of those who want the FUNCTIONARIES (as distinct from the mass membership whom the functionaries deceived and misled) of the ex-C.P.P. banned from public life is this:—

(1) **Political Oppression:** That the ousted regime, far from making this country a land of freedom—the logical and legitimate expectation of the people at independence—irresponsibly and wickedly went out of its way to make this country a Hell to live in. We all know too well what this means. No elaboration is necessary at all.

(2) **Economic Ruin:** That the ousted regime, far from achieving the absolute possibility of making this country "the Japan of Africa" by open shameless pillage and piracy by its FUNCTIONARIES, mismanagement of our economic affairs, not only prevented this miracle from happening, but actually brought the country to what I consider complete bankruptcy (NOT near-bankruptcy), and left a massive debt for the present and future generations to pay. And most painful of all, while they brought untold hardship and suffering upon the ordinary run of Ghanaians, they themselves consciencelessly lived in rank affluence.

The argument is that now that this regime has been happily toppled, its PRINCIPALS should be made to pay for all this. The ordinary Ghanaian simply wants to see some general punishment meted out to the PRINCIPALS of that evil regime, and he is asking that as a general punishment, these people be banned from public life for the rest of their lives. This means that:

(i) these people should henceforth, as a matter of LAW, NEVER hold any public office, and

(ii) they should all lose the right to vote.

Surprisingly, some people say 'no' to this, saying that (1) this will be undemocratic, and (2) this will mean that the rulers at any given time who treat the predecessors in such a fashion also stand the chance of suffering the same fate one day, and this may become a continuous phenomenon.

I think this argument misses the point completely. We have specified for what cause these people should be punished. In fact, this is the nature of all true punishment: that it is meted out for a specified bad deed. There is nothing undemocratic about this, and what is more, ANYBODY who does that bad deed also equally stands to face the SAME punishment. It is not a reasonable argument to say that if you punish a thief, you stand the same chance of being punished one day if you too steal, and therefore you should not

punish the thief! Oh yes, I must be punished too when I too steal. This is fair enough, isn't it?

So the argument to ban the PRINCIPALS of the former regime from public life simply boils down to this: That as a matter of general punishment, they should be banned from public life; that any group of people who at any time happen to be in charge of the country's affairs who behave in the sort of way our ex-C.P.P. FUNCTIONARIES behaved, should also face the same punishment. So that it is not merely a question of vindictiveness against our former rulers. What is really being said is that IRRESPONSIBLE running of the affairs of the State such as we have witnessed SHOULD BE MADE A PUNISHABLE OFFENCE OR CRIME (whatever you call it). It is to be a general affair, not a particular case to be applied to the ex-C.P.P. rulers only.

Accra

F. W. Y. Agboku

George Padmore

SIR—A friend has sent me the issue of the *Legon Observer* (Vol. II No. 21) that contains an excellent and most interesting article on George Padmore. I should like to suggest that this article is expanded into a small book giving a fuller account of Padmore's life and work.

His relation to Kwame Nkrumah has always seemed to me most interesting. They formed a complement of opposites. Padmore was a well-read scholar and thinker; Nkrumah had very little brain but had the kind of pushing drive that got things done. When he agitated for "independence now", he got it, but he was dependent on Padmore for his ideas.

The importance of Padmore in this partnership was his integrity. He was absolutely unself-seeking. He wanted nothing for himself. He was virtually the only "adviser" whom Nkrumah could trust. Most of the others secretly wanted to dethrone him and take his place. (*Suro wo dofo*: Fear men and play with snakes)⁹ It was not till after Padmore's untimely death (1959, was it?) that Nkrumah, desperately lost, forlornly insecure, had to compensate for his mental destitution by building up an image of himself as Messiah etc. It was not till then that he started being corrupt and sacking money away against the day of his inevitable downfall. It was not till then that he set up his jujuroom in Flagstaff House (Padmore would have laughed his head off over that). It was not till then that he started taking all sorts of conflicting pieces of advice from Egypt, Israel, Russia, China, etc.

I think Mr. Kotei is right in saying that Padmore was not (at least as far as Ghana was concerned) a thorough-going communist. He knew, for instance, what a lot Ghana owed to its fleet of privately owned lorries and its fine body of enterprising owners and drivers. Nkrumah's attempt to push them right off the roads and substitute state-owned transport was an act which by itself could have brought about his downfall.

I think, too, that Padmore would never have claimed that he (or Nkrumah or any of their group) invented the idea of independence for the West African colonies. He was a student of history and he knew that in 1863 (or thereabouts) a select Committee of the House of Commons recommended that as Britain was getting nothing out of West Africa except death, she should withdraw as soon as those colonies were capable of

running their own affairs. Of course the administrators were hopelessly slow and stick-in-the-mud, except perhaps Sir Gordon Guggisberg who created Takoradi harbour, the Gold Coast Hospital and in 1925 Achimota, in which latter institution it was drummed into the boys every day in so many words that they were to be the leaders of Africa. Nor did Padmore, I think, fail to admit that the slave trade was a trade involving a buyer and a seller, both equally culpable. The Africans (among whom slavery was indigenous) sold their brethren to the foreigners in exchange (chiefly) for guns and gunpowder.

May I again congratulate Mr. Kotei on his article and urge him to expand it. For personal facts about Padmore Dr. Busby of Suhum will be very useful. He and Padmore left Trinidad for Britain together, I think, and were close friends.

Chillybridge,

Dr. M. J. Field

Dulverton, Somerset, U.K.

Dr. Field is the author of *Search for Security, a psycho-sociological book on modernization in Ghana*. Mr. Kotei, a lecturer in *Library Studies in the University of Ghana*, has done research on Padmore but his article is partly based on H. R. Hooker's *Black Revolutionary: George Padmore's Path from Communism to Colonialism*—Editor.

* This translation from the Akan is not quite accurate; literally it simply means: Beware of friends—Editor

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African Intellectuals and Western Tradition

SIR—I should like to make a brief comment on a subject that has been discussed by Prof. Ofosu-Appiah in his article *African Universities and the Western Tradition* (*Legon Observer* Vol. II Nos. 22 and 23) and also by the Vice-Chancellor in his public lecture entitled *The Place of the Humanities in a Modern African University* (Faculty of Arts Lectures Michaelmas 1967). The examination of the position of the African intellectual in relation to African and Western European tradition recalls a theme which became a subject of bitter intellectual and political controversy between the "Westerners" and the "Slavophiles" in 19th century Russia. Commenting on the historical and cultural backwardness of the Slavonic races, Peter Chaadayev, who originated the debate between Westernism and Slavophilism, wrote in his famous letter, published in the review, *The Telescope* in 1836:

... We are among those nations that do not fit into the structure of humanity, but are here to serve as a lesson to the world—at the present time, no matter what one may say, we constitute a gap in human understanding. In the beginning savage barbarism, then crude superstition and then a brutal and humiliating domination whose spirit was later inherited by our national rulers—that is the sad story of our youth. We have never known an age of uninterrupted activity and the natural play of moral forces. Our memory does not harbour any enchanting reminiscences and our tradition know no edifying examples. If you look back at the centuries of our history and at the enormous territory we occupy on this planet you will not find a single memory which could make you stop, or a moment which could speak of our past in a powerful and colourful manner. We have to have hammered into our heads the things which in other countries are a matter of instinct and habit..

Chaadayev was a brilliant young man, scholar, bibliophile as well as a dandy and a man of exquisite taste, who believed that the problem of the historical and intellectual backwardness of a Russia lying outside the frontiers of Western civilisation can only be solved by the 'westernisation' of Russia. Of course Russia was exposed to some measure of Western European ideas and culture at the time of Peter the Great. However, due to a lack of sober intellectual appreciation on the part of Russian intelligentsia and upper classes, Western influence on Russian society did not penetrate beyond its superficial forms and the ratio of western tradition was either perverted or lost in the process of assimilation. Trotsky observed that "the background nation not infrequently debases the achievements borrowed from outside in the process of adapting them to its own primitive culture. In this the very process of assimilation acquires a self-contradictory character. Thus the introduction of certain elements of Western tradition, above all military and industrial, under Peter I led to the strengthening of serfdom" (L. Trotsky: *The Russian Revolution*). On the other side of the debate the Slavophiles maintained the intellectual adequacy of the Byzantine tradition officially adopted by the ruling classes of the Slavonic peoples, and were looking up to Russia as the new cultural force which was going to replace the decadent tradition of the Latins and Teutons.

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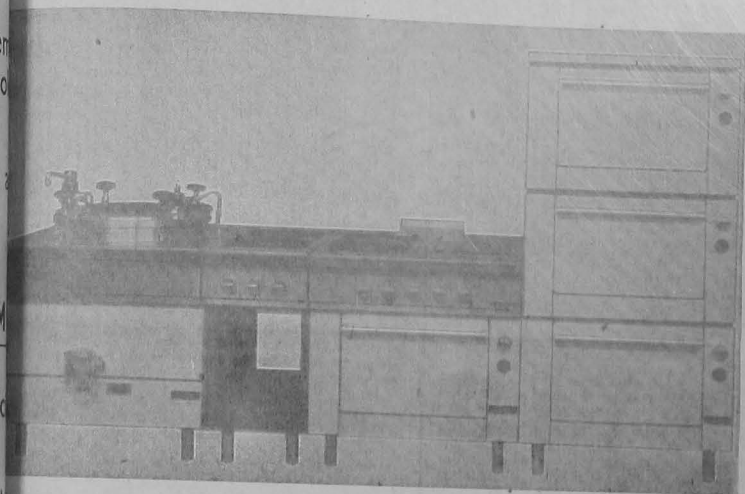
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In recent years the African scene has seen a similar debate between "Westerners" on the one hand and Africanists, nationalists and negrophiles in intellectual and political circles. The conflict is sometimes defined as between the "cultural snobism of the Western intellectual and the cultural chauvinism of African Nationalism" (A. A. Kwapong: **The Place of the Humanities in a Modern African University**) and the solution, we are told, lies in a *via media* or a synthesis of these traditions.

It may, however, be pointed out that our not too clear definitions of Western tradition and culture, the shoddy attempts to rehabilitate African culture and traditional forms after the trauma of colonialism in the form of tribal dances and anthropological superstitions, have resulted in more intellectual confusion. And this inner alienation of the intellect is reflected outwardly in the chaos of our contemporary social and political existence. I believe, Sir, that the task of the intellectual is essentially and humbly a semantic one: his is a question of correct interpretation, of rigorous definition and rationalisation of various tendencies. The question of selection, synthesis and development is a matter of social and historical processes.

Philosophy Department, Kwabena Archampong Legon.

Giving and Accepting Gifts

SIR—We Ghanaians are facing many problems in our attempt to reconstruct a new society. One such problem is "giving gifts" to men in authority. In our future constitution there must be a provision specifying the conditions under which gifts should be given and accepted by high government officials and Government Ministers.

It is surprising that men placed in authority expect to be given gifts as a matter of course when they are on tour. But hardly is it realized that "givers of gifts" often expect to influence the "receivers of gifts". The revelations of the various Commissions of Enquiry amply support my opinion. When we were a colony government officials were under strict instructions to reciprocate in kind or in cash whenever they were given any gifts. I suggest that similar conditions for accepting gifts be clearly stated in statutory form for all government officials and Cabinet Ministers in the future.

House No. NT 42 M. Nwi Nyamikeh
P.O. Box 337
Akim Oda.

Good Photographs for Calendars

SIR—It was on the 17th of April, this year, that Lt-Gen. E. K. Kotoka, was killed by two power-drunk Army Officers. The whole nation condemned the act, and the insurgents were killed by a firing-squad.

But a recent publication of 1968 calendars have the photographs of Lt. Yeboah and Lt. Arthur, the insurgents and the unwanted elements, flanking both sides of our Hero, Lt-Gen. Kotoka, all beaming with satisfaction. What does this mean? Do we have to remember these insurgents at all by hanging their photographs in our rooms? Why not build monuments in their honour instead? I personally believe this is just like publishing a calendar with the pictures of Job 600 and

the Lincoln bullet-proof car flanking both sides of the photograph of Gen. Ankrah. The General is wanted but the others are not to be remembered at all.

Publishers of calendars should use 'reasonable' photographs and not those of traitors, murderers and "white elephants."

May I ask that all these calendars be withdrawn from circulation before we see something worse.

P.O. Box 64, Yaw Assah-Sam
Kibi, Akim Abuakwa

Agricultural Research Papers

SIR—In your last issue Mr. Brian Wills stressed the need to create a sense of urgency in agricultural research and suggested ways of achieving the best use of research material. We would like to suggest another way—that is to get the decision-making elite to read research reports that are sent to them. It is very discouraging when, having spent months, sometimes years on what is claimed to be an urgent problem to find that the resultant cyclostyled research paper is neither read nor sometimes even looked at until it appears in an international journal a year or two later and even then it may not be noticed locally.

If the decision-makers are too busy to read research papers then at least they should delegate somebody to summarise and report on them. Until such a mechanism is put into operation there will be no sense of urgency in research, not only in agriculture but in many other disciplines and research will become less rewarding.

More and more lecturers at Legon are becoming government committee men. This is apparently more rewarding than research. If this state of things continues it will, undoubtedly, in the long run injure not only the University but the economy as well.

Legon Prof. R. Innes &
Mrs. Rowena Lawson

"Reward to N.L.C."

SIR—How come!, N.L.C. should be rewarded? So everybody who governs this country should be rewarded, just as the decadent C.P.P. politicians thought.

Learned Dr. Taylor, resident in U.K., is suggesting very urgently (L.O. Vol. II, No. 22) that a reward should be made to the members of the N.L.C. before the nation returns to civilian rule. If he, Dr. Taylor, wants a decorative position in Ghana before the return to civilian rule, he should say so openly. It looks as if Dr. Taylor has forgotten that members of N.L.C. belong to the public services. Thus, they have a duty to perform to the nation for which they are paid handsomely. I consider Dr. Taylor's proposition to be wrong!!

May I suggest to Dr. Taylor that he will be the first person among a lot, if this country returns to civilian rule, to write on "what went wrong" during the N.L.C. rule.

I am of the considered opinion that the privileges and responsibilities that go with the membership of the N.L.C. are such that any extra reward is unnecessary. Certainly, any soldier or policeman, who wishes to participate in a future civilian government, can do so; but that can only be done through the appropriate constitutional channels.

Achimota Village
Accra.

Kweku Abakah

Does Ghana need the Atomic Reactor?

SIR—The opinion expressed about the above subject by Mr. Ephraim Jackson in Vol. II No. 20 of 29 September—12 October 1967 of the *Legon Observer* was very sound indeed. Immediately after the coup many problems or issues came up in Ghana, immediate needs and future planning as to choice and continuity of certain projects. The Atomic Reactor was one of the projects which agitated the minds of the new planners and their "advisers", and consequently received much publicity.

All that I would like to add is that if the present planners of Ghana want Ghanaians to reach the economic and social goals of our time—the Utopia of the welfare state every leader speaks about, then it will only be reasonable to continue such a project.

Much of the economic and social advancement of most countries in Europe is due to the peaceful uses of the atom, and much of human existence depends, today mostly on the fruitful results in Agriculture, Industry, Geology and Mining in a country, and if the 2 MV reactor will help Ghana to improve this, why not continue the project?

The N.L.C. must not underestimate the value of this project and leave it to the next civilian government whose birth we do not yet know, because it is not certain whether Ghana will return to civilian rule within the next twelve months.

Again it must be said that if the new government puts too much trust in the advisers, it will be realized in the long run that it would have been better if the government had acted upon its own. So far as economic and scientific advancement of a developing country is concerned the "advisers" will always like to pre-empt it with international politics and see that the developing countries become economic and scientific satellites of the socially and scientifically advanced countries.

Oslo Fylkeslags
Nordahl Bruns gate 22
Oslo, Norway.

J. Amouko-Addo

Accra-Tema City Transport

SIR—The concept of private enterprise that has characterized our new economic policy should by no means be extended to City transport. This is in reference to the declared policy of the Commissioner for Communications who wishes to denationalise Accra-Tema City Transport by licensing Private Operators. Accra is a comparatively small City and the Commissioner would only be organising confusion by introducing a multiple transport system.

Is the Commissioner selling out a rather lucrative State business to the Lebanese operators; or is he suggesting that we cannot find the men to manage and operate successfully a nationalised City transport; or is he implying that the State cannot raise sufficient capital to import suitable buses for Accra?

Methodist Book Depot Ltd.,
P.O. Box 100,
Cape Coast.

E. K. Ofori

Legon Observer's Shattering Defeat

SIR—The *Legon Observer's* Notebook (see Vol. II No. 22) takes up the various arguments one of its correspondents heard during his recent tour of Western Europe and America against Nkrumah's overthrow. Since the very overthrow of Nkrumah is so much

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REGISTRAR

linked up with the birth of the **Observer** and since its continued survival would seem to depend on the continued demise of Nkrumah's direct political role in Ghana, one would expect this issue of the justification for Nkrumah's overthrow to be a vital and crucial one deserving of the **Observer's** most serious attention whenever it should come under review.

The crux of the contention advanced by these American Negroes, Western Radicals and African Students abroad whom the **Observer** Correspondent met is that Nkrumah was the tide of African history and that by his overthrow, this tide has been most painfully turned. In other words Nkrumah stood as the symbol of Black Redemption, embodying the hopes and aspirations of the millions of Black peoples all over the world and thus, being a universal and not merely a Ghanaian phenomenon, Ghanaians had no justification for overthrowing him and thereby cutting off his monumental political mission to all Black peoples of which Ghanaians constitute only a part.

I submit that the **Observer** in its edition under reference failed miserably to counter this argument and thereby re-establish justification for its own existence. The paper seems helpless and totally unequal to the task and finds its way emburdened with a glaring contradiction which is a woefully sad commentary on the paper's intelligence. The first point in the **Observer's** defence is that the various arguments are unrealistic because they take an ideological standpoint "which is not amenable to evidence of any kind". From this what is implicit is made pointedly express in the next sentence which says that ideologies are divorced from reality". This is a clear-cut universal assertion about ideologies which categorically does not admit of exceptions. Yet in the same breath, and to the reader's utter amazement, the **Observer** goes on to assert that the only way to counter this pro-Nkrumah argument is to build up "an equally ideological stand", "based on the facts of the Ghanaian situation". Is it not amazing that after being told in a clear, unambiguous premiss that all ideologies are divorced from reality, the **Legon Observer**, by some curious twist of logic, would have us believe—and this in the same breath—that it is possible, where the **Observer** is concerned, to formulate an ideology that is in accord with facts?

The impression the **Observer** creates by this spineless defence is that it has actually been mightily overpowered by these arguments which view Nkrumah's significance in its wider continental aspect involving the great vital issues of the salvation of Africa from its damned condition and of the positive assertion of her peoples to the status of full human dignity rather than those arguments which emphasise the narrow and selfish interests of the Ghanaian home. I do not marvel at the **Observer's** evident capitulation, only I would wish that the paper would be honest enough to straightforwardly concede that it has been beaten, rather than to vainly and so unimpressively grope its way along in a manner which merely betrays its extremely hollow logical armoury. There is no doubt at all that this pathetically poor performance of the **Observer** constitutes its greatest defeat as a paper thriving on the aftermath of a coup which dethroned

Kwame Nkrumah. And I hope it has the honesty to accept its defeat.

c/o P.O. Box 1638,
Accra.

Opoku Agyeman

Editor's Note—

STRIPPED of its emotionalism, intemperate language, lack of intellectual maturity and clarity, failure to understand what was written and illegitimate and childish conclusions, the author seems to be saying, inter alia, the following:—

- i. that the **Legon Observer** owes its existence to Nkrumah's overthrow
- ii. that the Notebook failed to counter effectively the arguments put forward by the people the correspondent talked to
- iii. that the Notebook makes contradictory statements.

In the first place, the author sees what he calls the "crux of the contention advanced by these American Negroes, Western Radicals and African students abroad...". It is a crude over-simplification to see a crux in the Notebook article. Three positions were stated and the crux of each is entirely different from the other. One could, in a severe summary, combine the positions of the African and Negro but even here it has to be emphasised that while African students see Nkrumah in black African terms, Negroes see him in terms of black peoples all over the world. The two positions are different.

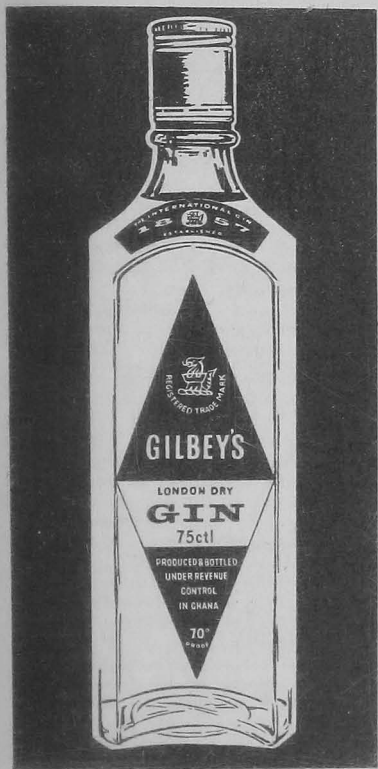
Secondly, the point of the Notebook article was simply to try to state the positions of the non-Ghanaians referred to for the benefit of the Ghanaian reading public. Our position in relation to these arguments has been stated in numerous articles and editorials. Any intelligent reader must have known these by now. The article's purpose was not to bore the Ghanaian public with the correspondent's counter-arguments. This would have been superfluous from our point of view.

Thirdly, it is clear from the Notebook article that the Negroes, African Students and Western radicals have only Nkrumah's foreign policy in mind when talking about Ghana and Nkrumah. But foreign policy does not exhaust the complex of ideas that was referred to as "Nkrumaism." Even if a person becomes enchanted with Nkrumah's foreign policy, it seems illogical to commit him to an approval of his domestic policy. Nkrumah's foreign policy does not logically entail, subsume or imply his domestic policies. The author fails to make this elementary distinction.

Fourthly, a Notebook article is not an occasion for a learned treatise on ideology. However, as the writer may probably know every political ideology is historically grounded on social and political experience; "class" in 19th Century Marxism and "race" in early 20th Century Nazism. But after its formulation it is not amenable to new facts, and new social and political experience. When this is grasped the rest of the article will appear consistent. This was the unspoken assumption of the Notebook article.

Finally, the inferences of the article are so emotional as not to derive legitimately from anything said in the article. We do not, for instance, refer to "narrow and selfish interests of the Ghanaian home". Whatever it means, loud talking abroad must be founded on solid economic achievements at home. This is what historically makes nations respected and makes political leaders stay in power.

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Book Review

THE ANGLO-AFRICAN COMMONWEALTH
(By Ali A. Mazrui, London Pergamon Press, 1967)

Reviewed by

J. A. Peasah

ALI MAZRUI is the Professor and Head of the Department of Political Science, Makerere University College. He writes from an African point of view though it appears that he does so not primarily for African readership but for a non-African one. He is a great believer in the potency of ideas and their tremendous impact on social events, or rather should one say, he finds it an intellectual duty to rationalise, systematise and articulate popular African slogans whose import tends to be deeper than some persons are wont to think. Mazrui's contribution to the debate on African politics is generally to offer a refreshing counter-weight against the rather overdone foreign analysis of the African situation, which tends to treat African activities as if they were nothing but instinctive reactions to inexorably harsh environments, fraught with tribes, hunger, disease and poverty. Mazrui seems to say, "We, Africans, are capable of abstraction and the idealising enterprise; we can conceptualise."

Naturally, then, Mazrui is keen about the import of African political language. At times, he seems to take the Marxist line that "Life is not determined by consciousness, but consciousness by life" and that "Language is as old as consciousness, language is practical consciousness . . . for language, like consciousness, only arises from need, the necessity, of intercourse with other men." Consequently, African political leaders found themselves in situations in which the language of John Locke and Mahatma Gandhi described their life so aptly that they could do nothing but borrow and employ such language. This situation was one of resistance. "Gandhi is associated with the doctrine of non-violent resistance. Locke is associated with the related doctrine that one need not obey a government which is not based on consent." (pp. 11 & 12). It is true that the class element is absent in such an analysis but one cannot deny the emphasis on some element of "linguistic determinism," or the fact that language is a rationalisation of objective situations.

At other times, the un-Marxist "ideological" Mazrui reflects on African "mythical" language which does not describe present reality but defines

a hope and interpretes an obscure past. And, therefore, the African, like the British, has his "romantic self-images". Britons are sustained, according to Mazrui, by the "myth of sophistication", while the African thrives on the "myth of innocence", with its dual meaning of "not knowing" and "not guilty". In short, the African is ready to learn and pick the best out of the experience of other continents while displaying his guiltlessness in regard to his intercourse with other peoples. As against this guiltlessness one has to balance the British "myth of maturity" which has deceived the British into committing the wrongful act of trespass on other people's land for the sake of building a great empire, whose history is chalked by the blood of innocent natives. Myths, like slogans, one would say, should be contrasted with rational conclusions, thought some myths are not completely unrelated to some type of misunderstood or distorted reality. In any case, myths help to perform the dual function of guiding the shaping of reality and environment, and sustaining psychological balance. We can, therefore, come to the conclusion that in the major part of the book, Mazrui is sounding the bell that the African situation is the resultant of the interactions of unfulfilled ideas, tolerably rational calculations and the African natural environment.

One need not quarrel with such a commonplace conclusion but one finds it difficult to accept all the steps, as presented by Mazrui, leading to it. Some of his arguments in the book clearly strike one as far-fetched or insufficiently founded. For instance, it is only through extreme flexibility of imagination that Mazrui could link the African's admiration for ancient African empires and his deference to British royalty with the prevailing phenomenon of one-man rule in Africa. It is very plausible to do this but one wonders the extent of the fruitfulness of such an exercise, if it is done out of the context within which these individuals emerged. Was it the result of pure hero-worship, of sheer intimidation and terrorism, of a rationalised desire for redeeming prophetic dictators who could destroy the temple and build it in a day, or of pure royal awe?

"Osagyefo" (or redeemer) could certainly be a royal title. A redeemer is not necessarily a king, as the Author himself realises since he describes redeemers as "quasi-monarchical". Perhaps the German "Der Fuhrer" was also quasi-monarchical. The fault here is that Mazrui fails to draw a distinction between monarchical rule in its "primitive" sense of rule by one man and in its

conventional sense of rule by one man by dint of that man's awe-inspiring familial ties. If every reverence for a leader is simply royal, then the late J. F. Kennedy was a royal or quasi-monarchical President. Perhaps Mazrui would agree with this and therefore he is not incapable of talking of "monarchical republics" in Africa (pp. 103 & 104). Similarly Mazrui fails to realise that the exile of the Kabaka in 1953 had repercussions in Africa primarily because he was a recognised and accepted African leader, who symbolised the African's defiance of foreign rule, in the same way as the confinement of Joshua Nkomo and Rev. Sithole has present repercussions in Africa. Monarchy explains the leadership in the one case but in the other, it does not. The overriding fact is one of recognised leadership. Monarchy in its conventional sense is certainly admired in Africa but so are other types of leadership. An analysis that discovers monarchy in any type of strong and perhaps popular leadership is certainly a bemused one.

Mazrui advances his other arguments in some such fashion. Shakespeare therefore had impact on African political language and activity. Whether some African leaders saw themselves as Julius Caesars trying to prevent Brutuses and Mark Anthonys is a problem one would gladly leave to Mazrui to ponder on. In my view, Nkrumah's refusal of life presidency was dictated by sheer prudence and expediency; the men who applauded on that occasion knew that he would have been a fool to accept that offer. Likewise, Nyerere's establishment of a one-party system was also dictated by his belief that only that system would perhaps ensure his rule and unite his people. He need not have read "Julius Caesar" to know that possible opponents would be like Mark Anthonys on platforms. The English-speaking African leaders might have sometimes spoken Shakespearean language but their audiences heard them in African dialects because the latter might never have been able to write their own names, let alone read Shakespeare. Oratory, surely, is important but its impact is determined by the extent to which it strikes familiar notes. The familiar notes here are the African reality. Lowliness may be young ambition's ladder; however this is a universal truth which one could have perceived either through practical experience, or African bedtime stories or African proverbs.

At any rate, Mazrui makes it quite clear that the Commonwealth as it now exists cannot do without race equality. In this, he agrees with Gordon Walker that the "Commonwealth will

complete its fulfilment and maximize the co-operation of its members for its inherent moral ends when it becomes in truth and without inhibition a Euro-Afro-Asian Commonwealth".

Mazrui's book is well-written and, in many respects, it is intellectually provocative. It is worth having on the shelf.

Tributes

WILLIAM ESSUMAN-GWIRA SEKYI POPULARLY KNOWN AS KOBINA SEKYI

By
E. E. Appiah

November was the month, seventy five years ago (1892), when Kobina Sekyi was born in Cape Coast. He died there in 1956, aged 64 years. Below is a tribute to Sekyi, a man of towering intellect and unique character, and one of the most unusual personalities ever produced in this country. This article is by a declared life-long admirer of Sekyi who chooses to use a pseudonym ("E. E. Appiah") but has given us his correct name and address.—Editor.

Born on the 1st of November, 1892, Kobina Sekyi never ceased to glory in the fact of his having come from a stock that was "alpha double plus". His father was the late Chief John Sekyi of Cape Coast and his mother the late Wilhemina Cleland of Elmina and Accra, popularly known as *Ewuraba*; both of them were connected with royal houses among which were those of Akwamu and James Town, Accra. Thus Kobina was fortunate in his early home-life featuring the influence of his mother and the healthy discipline of his father, the *Patria Potestas*. He himself set a high value on the contribution of these factors towards his upbringing.

After his elementary education, he went to Richmond College (now Mfantshipim School) where he later became one of a group of boys known as the "Faithful Eight". These boys stoutly held the fort by organising their own studies at the school when there was no teacher, till the time when the Revd. W. T. Balmer arrived to take charge.

In 1910, at the early age of 18, he left the Gold Coast for the United Kingdom, where he entered University College, University of London, obtaining his M.A. Honours Philosophy degree in 1916. He entered the Middle Temple in 1916 and was called to the Bar in 1918. In that same year he returned to the Gold Coast, bringing with

him a most distinguished academic record.

On his arrival in England in 1910, Mr. Sekyi had set his heart not only on winning academic distinction but also on emulating the British in their way of life. Clothes, dancing, playing the violin and the piano—these were some of the aspects of English life which gripped his imagination. He was meticulous about these and strove in every way to acquire that polish which was assumed to characterize the English gentleman.

This picture, though it does indicate in outline something of the brilliance and versatility of Kobina Sekyi's younger days, does not really portray the essential man. He was something much more than a distinguished scholar or an erudite lawyer. If there was one quality more than another which impressed itself upon all those who came into contact with him, it was his honesty. Added to this were his love of country and an unflagging allegiance to what he recognised as right and just. He possessed a mind that was bold, decisive and independent, a will that was as determined and inflexible as it was persevering. There was a solidity about him, a rock-like quality, that inspired confidence.

When he arrived back in his country in 1918 he believed that the things that England stood for were noble and uplifting. He was content to belong to the British Empire, and even felt towards it a duty of obedience and respect.

But this was soon to be modified, for the Gold Coast to which he returned was a place under the heavy incubus of colonialism; a place where the people had little or no scope to develop whatever talent might have been latent or native in them. Sekyi's eyes became open for the first time to other truths. No longer did the outer shell of Western sophistication satisfy his mind or stimulate his senses; instead, his zest for the things of the West was transmuted into an appreciation of and admiration for the culture of his nativeland. Henceforth it was good-bye to Savile Row garments and welcome to the national attire and native culture.

He threw himself with earnestness into the battle then being waged, rather feebly, for the emancipation of the people of the country from the thralldom of colonialism; he became one of the foundation members of the British West African Congress on whose platforms he, a mere strapping, not infrequently astonished his hearers with his masterful and masculine eloquence.

When the Congress ceased to be what it was intended to be, Kobina Sekyi continued the struggle against colonialism. He never tired of fighting against anything that savoured of oppression.

When he smelt oppression, his impetuosity burst all bounds; that is why he always pursued the victims of his ire with what appeared like exceptionally violent fury and rancour. For his fight, Sekyi employed several means—the processes of law, public lectures, the press, and the platform of the Aborigines Rights Protection Society.

It was by means of the Aborigines Rights Protection Society that Sekyi hoped to achieve his political aims. He believed that this Society of Chiefs and Elder Statesmen, as embodying all the gathered wisdom and experience of the country, alone was capable of saving the country. This was the first article of his faith. It was the last article of his creed. This creed formed a basis of conviction on which his aims and ambitions were supported and steadied. He lavished all his resources of wealth and talent on this Society, and succeeded in a considerable measure in making it a formidable national political organisation.

The Colonial government, not to be overtaken by events began to undermine his achievements by several subtle counter measures, the most potent of these being the Provincial Councils of Chiefs, which were established not only for the purpose of carrying out the policy of Indirect Rule but also of crippling the formidable weapon that Kpbina Sekyi and other statesmen had built up. In spite of all that the gifted Sekyi could do, the spontaneous and full co-operation of all the Chiefs and people was wanting, and the Society was soon to be ushered into its twilight.

This was accelerated by the coming to the fore or a new and less definitely shaped political ideology, based on the conviction that in the task of the emancipation of the people the material interests and well-being of the masses must be given prior consideration, and that the masses themselves must be granted a place in whatever Council of State that dealt with such matters. This new creed began to gain ground more and more and, with its growth, proved to be a dangerous onslaught on the fortress of the Council of Chiefs and Elder Statesmen. Henceforth the Optimates *per se* counted for little or nothing in local politics.

Sekyi himself was not so much a man of the people as an intellectual giant and selfless patriot whom everybody respected. The new political creed was not in consonance with his own cherished ideas. Not that he did not believe in democracy, but he felt that in our system of chief-ship we have a unique contribution to make to the constitutions of the world. And he would have liked to see the old order yielding place to

no new-fangled theories about sops to King Demos.

The result was that Kobina Sekyi withdrew from the arena of active politics. For some considerable length of time he was a solitary man cultivating an Olympian aloofness and enjoying few intimacies. But there was in that lonely man a steely firmness, a serene assurance of confidence which proved an immense strength in times of crises and justified the admiring, though distant, veneration with which he was regarded.

Towards the close of his life, he was dragged out of his enforced retirement by the force of events—events connected with the form that the constitution for a free and independent Gold Coast should take. He gladly accepted membership of the Constitution Committee of 19 but before the political paradise he was vigorously helping to create could materialize, he was called away to his eternal rest.

The debt which we of the present generation owe him is not to be counted in pounds and thousands of pounds (though it can be measured in many of these), but rather in those imponderables whose value can never be assessed in concrete terms. His place in the country's history is assured, for it will be idle to predict when students of West African politics will no longer be impressed by the fascinating story of the momentous task that was performed for the country in particular and West Africa in general by W. Essuman-Gwira Sekyi.

CLEMENT ANDERSON AKROFI, O.B.E.

Tribute by

Rev. D. A. Konotey-Ahulu

YOU would appreciate the genius that accomplished his life's work only if you knew Clement Anderson Akrofi personally. I first met him when we entered the Akropong Training College as first year students forty-six years ago. As fellow-students for three years and as fellow-tutors for another seven a warm friendship developed between us which continued until his death on the 10th of July, 1967. His is the story which demonstrates that to the dark side of life there is always a bright side. Handicap should not necessarily spell failure, where there is the will, determination and resolution to succeed.

Akrofi was not a physically strong man. But though his weak body was denied the movement of its members his brain was not. He had an amazing, versatile mind; he read widely and it seemed that he had a photographic memory. English History and English Literature were his

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special field; and he read all the greatest English writers.

He had a flair for formal grammar, a subject to which Murray, the Principal, attached the greatest importance. He studied Latin, classical Greek, Logic, Ethics and Economics, and enjoyed Vergil, Cicero, Ovid, and Horace best of all. For his study of African Linguistic he acquired a working knowledge of German in order to read Prof. Westerman. But when Akrofi started his scholarly work in Twi Grammar, he did not imitate European Grammarians. He confirmed that there was no preposition as a part of speech in the Kwaa Group of Sudanese languages of which Ghanaian languages form a part. Instead there are "post-positions". He standardized Twi spelling, and for almost forty years Akrofi's authority in Twi was unquestioned; he read the script of every important work in that subject, at least for orthography.

With Prof. Eugene Rapp, the eminent philologist and linguist, Akrofi carried out the laborious work of revising Christaller's Twi Bible. In his frail body, he showed more than enough vitality; and for his performance, he was awarded the doctorate degree by Mainz University.

His residence was a centre for intellectuals, and his visitors came from many fields and many lands: priests, missionaries, educationists, politicians, scholars, traders, journalists, teachers, students, and farmers—all were equally at home with him. The charm of his life was as much in his scholarship and his defiance of his physical disabilities, as in his profound faith in God, Who gave him vigour and victory in life.

He was forthright and never knew fear. Certainly Akrofi held a special place in life. Many of us cry over lack of opportunities and talk about departed relations who might have enabled us realize our ambitions and changed our fortunes. But Akrofi reminds one of Archimedes and Goethe. Archimedes once cried, "Give me a standing-place and I will move the world." Centuries later, Goethe retorted "Keep your standing-place and move the world." Using a frail body, Akrofi kept his standing-place and moved his world.

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Matters Arising

DISFRANCHISEMENT AND DISQUALIFICATION—RADIX ANSWERED

By

Yao Kobli

THE article by Radix on disfranchisement and disqualification in the *Legon Observer*, Vol. II, No. 21, made interesting reading. On an important issue such as this the more views there are the better the opportunity for the nation to assess the merits and demerits of disfranchisement and disqualification.

Distinguishing between Disfranchisement and Disqualification

While I entirely share Radix's view that the right to vote should not be denied the C.P.P. elements concerned, I find it rather difficult to see the basis for considering the right to stand for election less important than the right to vote. If he means to say that the right to vote is fundamental because it admits of no qualifications while the right to stand for election does, this is not correct. The LCNR Communication on Political Parties and the Electoral System (*Legon Observer*, Vol. II, No. 3, p. 5) rightly asserts that "important as the right to vote is, it has never been unconditional." For example, people convicted of certain crimes or who are below a certain age are not allowed to vote. The same is true of the right to stand for election. So that citizenship without more does not entitle anyone to vote any more than it entitles him to stand for election. When Radix talks of the right to vote he means to say that a citizen who satisfies certain conditions **ought** to be given the vote. Similarly when one talks of the right to stand for election one intends to say that a citizen who satisfies certain conditions **ought** to be allowed to stand for office. The voters may or may not reject him, but that is beside the point.

If by the distinction between the right to vote and the right to stand for election Radix implies that the former admits of lesser qualifications than the latter, the facts of life again do not bear him out. A comparison of the grounds of disfranchisement and disqualification in the laws of any country reveals a striking similarity. Try comparing, for example, the provisions of the Electoral Ordinance of 1953 with section 25 of the 1957 Constitution. This is not an accident. It is a manifestation of the belief based on 20th century political experience that the right to stand

for elective office is no less essential to democracy than the right to vote. The right to vote is meaningless unless there is something to vote for. It is for this reason that Article 21(1) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that:

"Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives".

Paragraph 2 of the same Article adds for good measure that, "Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country." And this is not all. If the right to stand for elective office can be arbitrarily denied conditions will not exist for the electors to have in the words of the LCNR Communication on The Party and the Electoral System (*The Legon Observer*, Vol. II, No. 2, P. 3) "the unhindered right and the opportunity to choose one candidate rather than another." Why, after all, do people quarrel with the elections held in Communist countries? The electorate must be left some room to sieve the desirable from the undesirable candidates.

What all this means is that certain other rights are so closely associated with the right to vote that they are no less fundamental, whatever dogmas textbooks on politics put across. These rights cannot be arbitrarily interfered with, any more than one can arbitrarily interfere with the right to vote.

Grounds for Disqualification

This brings me to the crux of the matter—the basis for disqualification. We say that a citizen ought to be given the right to vote if he satisfies certain conditions because we believe that democracy demands it. The conditions vary from one country to the other, but in order not to render the right meaningless we believe that democracy regards certain conditions as irrational; so that, for example, one should not be denied the vote because of his sex or political opinion. We have considered why the right to stand for elective office ought also to be accorded when the stipulated conditions have been satisfied. The question now is what conditions in relation to this right are rational and permissible and what are not?

As I understand it, Radix calls for disqualification because those concerned have shown themselves "unfit to hold public office". They are guilty of the "type of betrayal that... is clear enough although... not capable of precise formulation" but definable "by means of examples."

Disqualification is always done because it is felt that those concerned are unfit for office. That much is common ground. The difficulty is in

stating the grounds for disqualification so as not to destroy democracy in the process. Now let us look at the examples of Radix. The first one concerns the purported gift of Peduase Lodge to Nkrumah made by the Cabinet in 1960 (just before the change to Republican status) in appreciation of his 12 years service to Ghana. According to Radix this means in "plain language" that Nkrumah benefited by £50,000 "taken fraudulently from public coffers." In the atmosphere of 1960 it is not difficult to believe that there was a genuine appreciation of Nkrumah's services to Ghana. In the circumstances there could be nothing fraudulent about a publicised gift of £50,000 to him any more than it would be fraudulent for the NLC to offer a £50,000 reward to anyone who captures Nkrumah. Moreover, what Radix does not seem to know is that the Apaloo Commission appointed "to enquire into and... determine the extent of Kwame Nkrumah's properties..." does not include Peduase Lodge among such properties. The Lodge is and has been considered as belonging to the state, even before the coup.

The second example given by Radix is the case of the Ghana Educational Trust. This Trust was set up before independence for the perfectly legitimate purpose of helping those dismissed from Secondary Schools for political sympathy with the independence movement. It was subsequently "endowed" with a considerable sum of money by the Cocoa Marketing Board. As Radix suggests, bribes were collected on the contracts awarded. If that is so, this is definitely reprehensible and, if the NLC were so minded, prosecutions could be considered in the same way as they are being considered in respect of those guilty of bribery and corruption in the issue of import licences. Those found guilty of bribery and corruption should be disqualified by all means. The difference between Radix and me is that while he is prepared to rest on his personal morality, I believe that the Courts are the best institutions for deciding such questions.

The danger of erecting one's personal morality into public standards is demonstrated more clearly by Radix's third example. A socialist and autocratic government in a one-party state sets up an Ideological Institute to teach socialism, chooses lecturers and pays them salaries it thinks they deserve. Is this a "means of looting the public treasury" any more than it is if a democratic government decides to set up a Civic Education Centre to educate the people so as to prevent a recurrence of dictatorship, and pays the staff salaries different from those obtaining

at the Universities? In effect what Radix proposes here, as well as in his arguments concerning what the C.P.P. did to deprive the people of "the right and opportunity to protest", is punishment for political attitudes that are no longer fashionable. Would those who advocate disqualification on the grounds of the Preventive Detention Act do so on the ground of protective custody, or do they think that the victims of the latter do not find it oppressive? On the basis of Radix's suggestions the story of disqualification will for ever be resurrected with every change of government, to punish acts of politics which in one context were legitimate but in another appear obnoxious.

Apportioning Blame

When it is argued that disqualification is inadvisable because one cannot blame only the C.P.P. for the past it is intended thereby to make people think more deeply of the reasons for what happened instead of searching for scapegoats. Nevertheless, Radix insists on a formula for apportioning blame for the wrongs of the past. He distinguishes between "those who take orders and execute policy" from "those who formulate policy..." The latter only merit disqualification. But isn't this solution too simple? Is the prison warder who tortured Dr. Danquah because he was rude to him less responsible for his death than the man who ordered that he be fed on garri, salt and water only because the former executed policy and the latter formulated it? Is it too much to appreciate that even those who execute policy formulate their own in the process? Furthermore, what about those pressure groups who caused particular wicked policies to be formulated, e.g. those persons who instigated the cruel detention of their fellow beings? Are they less guilty because they were not in the government? And if, as Radix claims, which is not true of all cases, those who executed policy were browbeaten by those who formulated policy into enforcing their orders, is it fanciful as has been claimed by many, that some of those who were in a position to formulate policy were themselves browbeaten by Nkrumah and some of his associates into accepting certain policies? Radix may say that they had no business continuing to serve and that they abdicated responsibility for which they should be punished. But don't similar considerations apply to those who executed policy? The Nazis learnt at Nuremberg what those soldiers who participated in the April 17th abortive coup are learning now: that there is no excuse for obeying manifestly immoral or illegal orders.

There is one more comment on Radix's formula. Having created it he hardly applies it. He would not enquire to find out what part each individual who worked in the "input" of the Nkrumah regime played in creating the policies which merit disqualification. He would simply disqualify members of the Central Committee, Cabinet Ministers, MPs., Lecturers of the Ideological Institute, District Commissioners, high party officials as well as those of the so-called "integral wings", and members of the "Rogue Dictator's personal security service (Ambrose Yankey's outfit)". This will include people as different as Archie Casely-Hayford, P. K. K. Quaidoo,

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The Alternative Test

I support the grounds for disqualification expressed in your editorial of Vol. II, No. 20, for the following reasons: they supply a test independent of anyone's personal morality; they satisfy another essential tenet of democracy—the rule of law; they do not allow of blanket disqualification; and they reflect not only the values of the Independence Constitution which most people consider democratic but of many a constitution. To quote your editorial:

"disfranchisement (or disqualification) must be based on criminal acts which are of a fraudulent nature, or which concern elections or which carry a certain type or degree of punishment, or which involve professional misconduct."

The fear of Radix that to advocate disqualification on the basis of the rule of law and due process of law is in reality to let "the C.P.P. leaders alone to enjoy their loot, and at any future date worm their way back to power"

is unjustified. Such a fear cannot even be founded in the abortive prosecution of those involved in the Leventis deal. The legal armoury is rich and there is no reason why prosecutions should be made only for dissipation of public assets. Of course, there will be some reprehensible acts for which criminal convictions cannot be secured. This is the price you pay for democracy. If we are to sacrifice or circumvent the criminal process for convenience we shall let loose a more terrible tyranny.

Conclusion

The debate on disfranchisement and disqualification should occasion a deeper search into institutions and procedures for avoiding a recurrence of the mistakes of the past. These mistakes reflect a general weakness in the Ghanaian society. We have often been reminded of the fact that what went wrong is still going wrong. The social and political problems which face this country were merely worsened not initiated by the C.P.P. The disqualification of some C.P.P. members will therefore not herald an era of democracy, honesty and integrity.

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