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EDITORIAL

GHANA'S AFRICAN FRIENDS

THERE CAN BE no doubt about the necessity of mending political fences between and among states as soon as it is discreet so to do; particularly where there's not only nothing to lose but everything to gain, or regain. In Ghana we once had many natural resources which almost by their intrinsic value alone made many friends for us and influenced many people, in all sorts of ways and directions advantageous or favourable to us. Nor were these just material resources alone; there were human values as well. But then we squandered and frittered a lot of them away, on the one hand. On the other, some of our old friends, to add insult to injury, misjudged our motives when we tried to halt the process, to rescue ourselves, cut our losses, salvage some of the disappearing goods, and restore our favourable image.

Hence it was that after the coup of February 1966 we had to send out high-powered delegations to explain ourselves to our neighbours, in a necessary attempt, especially, to pacify those of them who did not understand our revolt against the C.P.P. regime and had become openly contemptuous and hostile. With some of these our emissaries succeeded; with others they did not. The East and Central African block, especially, were irreconcilable: Presidents Nyerere, Obote and Kaunda were particularly bitter, and in effect barked at us to get the hell out of their sight! Sekou Toure of Guinea of course went one long step further, as we all know.

We came back consoled by our successes and sorry at our failures, but not defeated over the latter. Indeed, as far as the extreme cases of Toure and Kaunda — to a lesser extent also of Nyerere — were concerned we did in our turn tell them to go mind their own ruddy business too and keep their superior wisdom about our best interests to themselves! But quarrels like these between states struggling against the same kinds of internal and external enemies cannot rationally be allowed to continue indefinitely. That would be like indulging in the old and foolish game of the nose and the face.

It was therefore to be expected that at the right psychological moment we would return to the self — as well as mutual — interest task of winning back our former friends, our fellow-travellers along the road to self-emancipation. We of this paper, like all our countrymen, we hope, are happy to see that our new government has decided that the psychological moment has arrived to try again to mend



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the fences between us and our partners in distress. If the notable rate of success of the Victor Owusu missions to East and Central Africa is anything to go by, we shall soon be in the happy position of again working in relative harmony with our neighbours for the political and economic redemption of black Africa.

The visit to Ivory Coast of the Prime Minister himself, just ending, was not of quite the same kind as that of the Foreign Minister to Uganda, Zambia and those other countries on the other side of Africa; President Felix Houphouët-Boigny and his country had become reconciled to us long ago through the N.L.C. That, however, does not minimise the task undertaken by Dr. Busia in the Ivory Coast during the last fortnight or so. It was as important as Mr. Owusu's embassy to the East. It was a job of only-part consolidation; mostly, it sought and found a re-identification of mutual interests, especially in the economic and social fields.

As we indicate in some of our Notebook items in this issue, we do hope that both the remedial exercise of mending political fences, and the original need to make friends and influence people, will continue to engage that part of their time and attention which Dr. Busia and our other governors must of necessity allocate to such tasks. In this we give them congratulations for achievements so far and wish them even greater success in the future.

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Africa

ARCHAEOLOGY, ANTHROPOLOGY AND AFRICAN HISTORY

By

Akua Asaabea Ayisi

"When is a man a man, or what is a man like devoid of his own definition of himself?" — Mazisi Kunene.

UNTIL RECENTLY the words "African History" or the "History of Africa" merely drew open contempt among historians and scholars, and were swiftly and derisively dismissed as the signs of pitiful ignorance about the true meaning of history. It was assumed that Africa had no history. In history books, examples abound of how easily this was done; assertions about the non-existence of African history were generally accepted almost as if they were scientifically established maxims.

Predictably since the advent of political independence in large areas of the continent, this view of Africa as a continent without a past has been considerably modified. As Africans, we are no longer told that:

We have nothing to do in the world.

We are parasites of the world.

And our job is to keep in line with the world.

Questioning Old Ideas

Within the last two decades, the pendulum seems to have swung to the opposite direction: quite a few reputable universities in England, Europe and America which until recently would never have tolerated on their curricula any subject on Africa, unless it was about "colonial history" or "the study of primitive races", have flourishing institutes of African studies which include courses in various aspects of African history and institutions.

There are also the new African Universities and University Colleges, founded in the wake of political independence with a keen awareness of the need to question some of the old ideas about Africa and Africans which were the ideological handmaids of imperialism. In these institutions of learning the history of Africa is receiving serious attention. Gradually, it looks as though the myth that Africa has no history is being exploded, and the picture of our past as impenetrably dark appears to be fading. Yet the explosion is not so audible and the fading is

only around the edges. The central picture still endures in many subtle but significant forms.

The truth is that, in spite of the salvaging work of quite a few excellent modern historians, many dubious theories still cling to the subject, so that the very idea of African history remains somewhat emasculated. It has still not achieved a right to exist independently of bizarre technicalities of archaeology and anthropology. It is really no more than a glorified branch of the social sciences. Mysterious anthropological phrases, and curious archaeological terms are still put forward as African history.

Currently, three different schools of thought in relation to the subject of African history are discernible among historians, or "Africanists". There is what one might call the "Trevor Roper school", which bluntly questions any validity in African history and scorns it as a subject without any "purpose" or "significance". This clearly belongs to the old school and it is pointless to quarrel about it. Such a view takes it for granted that only Englishmen and Europeans have made history. One has merely to remember that, among these allegedly unique and historical peoples, there has, since the nineteenth century, raged a nationalistic war of "historical superiority" which finally produced Hitler in Germany. That is certainly one example of a historical "purpose" or "significance". But I think African history can safely do without it.

Penetrating the 'Darkness'

There is a second "school" which does not overtly or perhaps even consciously denounce the teaching or studying of African history. But this approach essentially belongs to the same school as the first, because they are moulded in the same intellectual milieu. This school, unlike the first, is not deterred by the supposed "darkness" of the subject, or at any rate does not regard the darkness as "stark" and impenetrable. They accept the darkness theory, but maintain that sparks of light from the tools of archaeology and anthropology can, and on occasion do in fact, produce shafts of light. For this school, African history is the evidence presented by researches in archaeology and anthropology. In effect their contention is that the bulk of African history is pre-history, and is thus seriously impoverished by lack of demonstrable achievements.

The missing achievements are supposed to be strictly related to "an evolution in which the

development of the human computer, which man's brain is, compared to that of other primates, was the most notable achievement". Here are echoes of Darwinism, with far reaching implications which boil down to the relative inferiority of African history.

There may be found, in various African sites, million-year-old bones and skulls, but what are all these compared with the wheel, the alphabet, the printing press, Charlemagne, Newton and Shakespeare? The weakness in this Darwinist view of history, though, is that it issues forth from a very controversial premise. Yet when archaeologists and anthropologists, whether as supporters or opponents of Darwinism, employ archaeology and anthropology as instruments of African history, the controversial nature of their premise is completely overlooked. For instance, an anthropologist or archaeologist may attach great importance to "the significance of man's origin from his primate ancestry" and look for the development of traditions, and man's ability to transmit ideas, and social techniques of one kind or another as in "themselves the material embodiment of ideas" and therefore cogent evidence, which "demonstrates a significant divergence from the behaviour of man's primate cousins".

No Real Answer

The flaw in this is that the question whether or not man had any "primate cousins" is not without controversy among scientists. For Darwin after all had as many informed opponents as his renowned disciples. The plain fact is that, evidence consisting of "the scatter of stone tools and broken food bones on the site of million year old camp sites" does not really answer the big question in African history. It merely confirms the dubiousness of the subject, if it is taken in the context of what archaeologists understand as "civilisation", namely "a complexity of material achievements readily demonstrated in the presence of cities, writing, currency, craft specialisation".

When Trevor Roper dismisses African history as devoid of purpose or significance, he merely re-echoes the old familiar charge that in none of these areas had Africa been a guiding light worthy of envy and emulation. Even if it is granted that such evidence as archaeologists and anthropologists can provide reveals that "evolved conceptual thought" can exist without writing and highly accomplished technical and artistic achievement is possible without towns, the problem is

not disposed of. Firstly it is held that no such African conceptual thought has been identified; and secondly, Africans are supposed to be inherently inferior because they did not produce the wheel, the printing press, or a Shakespeare.

At best the only significance that such evidence may produce for people like Trevor Roper is the mere fascination of a supposedly unspoilt charm of a primitive and dead culture. It is nothing but a kind of charitable Darwinism. Far from illuminating the darkness of African history it hardens the habit of looking at African history from the exalted and impressive heights of other peoples' achievements in history, from a creative past far back into the remote and dark ages, when lizardlike men oozed from the primeval slime.

These Darwinian presumptions are not the only shackles of African history. There are other pet theories, such as the 'Berber' theory by which the peoples of the African continent are classified into semi-white 'berber-races' and black sub-sahara races of negroid stock. Other theories meant to establish that the Sahara desert had insulated Africa from outside influence. All these are based upon highly controversial, and sometimes dubious, evidence.

Ethnological Divisions

Yet there has been little or no hesitation in using them to contradict any attempt to clothe the skeletons of archaeological and anthropological researches with the flesh of imaginative influences from other historical facts. Try, for instance, to find out at least why it is that a "materially and technically rich civilisation" like that of ancient Egypt failed to have the same impact on Africa as Greece has had on Europe, and you would promptly be found guilty of "weeping hypothesis".

One must bear in mind that the very ethnological division of Africans into "sub-saharan blacks" and Northern "Berber Africans" is more a matter of colonial political convenience than objective history or proven facts. It was fostered by the French colonialists in North Africa primarily to counteract Pan Arab nationalism. In essence, therefore, it is a racial separatist theory which was used to buttress the colonial system of "divide and rule". When in recent years we Africans South of the Sahara also began to assert ourselves and to demand political autonomy as well as a right to shape our own

cultural and national destinies the "Berber Africans" and "Black Sahara Africans" theory was found to be a ready and convenient theory and an effective weapon against continental African nationalism. For a time it fitted in neatly with the notion that the Sahara had been a barrier between Black Africa and the rest of the world, and thus provided a plausible explanation of why Africa slept while the rest of the world, particularly Teutonic Europe, marched towards their glorious imperial destinies, as the chosen peoples of history.

The 'barrier' idea is gradually fading. It seems now accepted that:

Though dessicated, the Sahara was still important for culture contact between the period of its desertion by the pastoralists around 3,500-2,500 BC and the commencement of the camel caravan trade of Islamic times.

Potent Dividing Factors

As between "black Africans" and Algerians the sense of separatism cannot therefore be attributed to the assumption, by some writers, that Algerians "neither feel nor look like Africans". It is possible after all to feel a sense of community with a people without looking or feeling like them. For instance we are told that "the Cartesian spirit is deeply rooted among the Algerian intellectuals" yet the last thing they want surely is to feel or look like the French. On the other hand the Algerians do feel and look like their Eastern brothers, but that fact alone has not bred in them a strong sense of cultural unity. Obviously the Algerians have imbibed French separatist ideas about "black Africa". Those ideas are that, far from any affinities with us, black Africans belong exclusively to the same black racial stock as the bushmen of South Africa. Such ideas are far more potent dividing factors than physical and cultural differences.

It is important to find out why and how the history of North Africa was "deliberately and systematically re-written" by the French. If not with new hypotheses, in the light of new evidence, how else are the distortions which are inherent in such a systematic and deliberate re-writing of other peoples' history to feed the national vanities of colonialists to be examined and exposed? For instance in a recent discourse on the role of archaeology in African history, Prof. M. Posnansky of the University of Ghana, has

denounced the use of hypotheses in African history as either "a counsel of defeat or an acknowledgement of over-scanty sources of information".

I should think this is one example of how difficult it is, given even the best will and the most scrupulous objectivity in the world, to be wholly liberated from the prejudices and presumptions which are accepted tenets in one's 'intellectual milieu'. For though it may appear, by the bulk of Prof. Posnansky's observations, that he neither accepts a counsel of defeat nor acknowledges over-scanty sources of information, he does not go the whole way, because he also berates what he describes as:

A tendency for historians, particularly in the university of London, to regard the study of tropical Africa during the first millennium A.D. as African history rather than as pre-history.

He would prefer the opposite practice in Britain and America where "pre-Columbian history is rarely accorded historical status" just as the millennium preceding Julius Caesar is denied historical status in Britain, though according to him "for both these periods there probably are more evidence than for the first millennium A. D. of most of *Sub-Saharan Africa*".

Scrutinising the Theories

I wonder if Professor Posnansky's "sub-saharan Africa", is substantially different from the "sub-saharan Africa" of the French proponents of Berber North Africa doctrines. If it is, then surely whoever wants to broaden the perspective of African history, break down its isolation, and reveal its significance and purpose — three important objectives in African history to which Prof. Posnansky succinctly refers — must first scrutinise this huge and intimidating legacy of theories which were originally formulated with the primary object of reshaping the African past for the benefit of others. Such an exercise would seem to me to be more important than the most unusual archaeological discovery, not only because it would illuminate the 'darkness' of African history, but also because it would give greater meaning to the labours and discoveries of archaeologists and anthropologists in the study and teaching of African history.

Let us now turn to the third school, which happily brings us to the heart of the matter. It is open-minded and is championed by such writers as Roland Oliver, J. D. Fage and Basil Davidson. Without ignoring archaeological and anthropolo-

gical evidence, they are not unduly obsessed with either the supposed darkness of African history, nor are they pre-occupied with "similarities or divergence from man's primate cousins". Fully conscious of the limitations of the subject, they have tried to approach African history with the same imagination as they would bring to bear upon considerations of their own history, or to that part of their own history for which there is scanty evidence.

Moreover, they realise that, history has 'purposes' or 'significances' which are universal.

Admittedly, the current predominance of archaeology, anthropology and other 'sciences' in the study of history is not confined to the study of African history. Nor must one deny that archaeologists and anthropologists have made great contributions towards the rediscovery of the African past in recent years. It is largely thanks to their patient and meticulous labours that it has become possible to put forward the view that:

"There is an unbroken sequence of human development, from man's origin, probably in some part of the drier areas of tropical Africa some two to three million years ago up to the present day" and that "Africa, the most populous continent in the stone age, was at no time far from the mainstreams of human history"

Obsession With Bare Facts

Not long ago, any such proposition would have been instantly submerged in the scornful smiles of many a distinguished historian. Yet the purposes of history do not consist merely in the presentation of factual or even 'scientific' evidence, and such an objective is not more important than the efforts which have been made by historians to retain the past as the source of vital and creative element in the living present. This is why as distinguished a historian as Prof. J. H. Plumb has recently lamented what he regards as the destruction of the past by a highly developed and highly sophisticated approach to history, and has likened the obsession with bare facts in history:

To the wood worm which makes itself at home in the timbers of some ancient building, invisible to the naked eye, yet incessantly at work on its task of erosion and destruction which does not become apparent until the entire edifice



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is on the point of total collapse.

I am afraid this is what the whole awesome array of archaeological and anthropological "scientific tools" i.e. "resistivity meters, proton-magnetometers and aerial surveys", are doing to the emergent vision of African history. For if in the opinion of J. H. Plumb this threatens even well established histories of the world, then what chance has African history which is only just emerging from total oblivion? Certainly the purpose and significance of African history will continue to be buried in obscurity if our vision is so steadily and stubbornly fixed only upon the desserts of the stone age and the ruins of a forgotten past: we have to break the barriers of isolation by saying with Professor Disney that prehistory underlines the history of all civilisations alike and that it forms one essential preface to the libraries of literate humanity.

For us Africans, this means that we must cultivate the courage and discipline to look at our past realistically without glossing over patent but unflattering setbacks, or obvious limitations. We must cease to romanticise empty traditions. We must ponder over our inadequacies and find out really why we failed where we might have succeeded, and patiently and painfully try to redefine our reality, and our identity in our own terms.

The Economy

GHANA'S FOREIGN DEBTS

By

Kwabena Manu

IN THE PAST few weeks Ghanaians have become increasingly aware of the massive problems posed by our huge external debts. It has become indeed a great national issue because the debts present great obstacles to the future development of this country.

In 1966 when the N.L.C. took over the reins of administration, the country was faced with a debt service burden of over NC100 million a year and in order to alleviate this burden on the balance of payments, the government sought and secured the first of two reschedulings with our creditors. The first rescheduling exercise, as in the second one, concerned essentially the medium-term suppliers' credits with maturities of from 1-12 years contracted by the former

government.

By 1968, after the second rescheduling, Ghana was still faced with a heavy debt service burden the bulk of which represented medium-term suppliers' credits, plus interest and amortization on long-term loans utilized on the construction of the Akosombo Dam, plus short-term loans from the International Monetary Fund's standby arrangements, economic aid granted to Ghana since 1966 and trade credits and banking loans.

The result of the two rescheduling exercises, plus the need to obtain further credits to sustain the economy, was that by early 1968 the country was faced with the dim prospect of an external debt service of NC780 million. Under the two reschedulings, however, our creditors imposed an additional interest on the deferred liability for the concessions granted Ghana.

Rescheduling of Our Debts

In spite of the reschedulings, there is still a heavy debt service burden to be carried by Ghana up to 1981, and this clearly indicates that we got a raw deal in the process. The burden is so heavy that it would exert great pressure on the resources of the country making it virtually impossible to honour our foreign obligations and simultaneously achieve a meaningful increase in our productive capacity. The two rescheduling exercises did not provide a permanent and reasonable solution to our debt service problems. In the 1966 rescheduling, principal and interest falling due between July 1966 and December 1968 plus arrears up to June 1966 were consolidated and rescheduled. Eighty per cent of the consolidated amount were to be paid in rising instalments from 1971 to 1979. During the grace period up to 1971 only the interest (about 6%) on the deferred debts, technically called moratorium interest, were to be paid.

The remaining 20% of the debt was to be paid during the last 18 months of the consolidation period, i.e. from June 1967 to December 1968.

The 1968 rescheduling meeting agreed that debts owed between January 1969 and June 1972 would be consolidated and deferred; 80% of the deferred amount would be paid beginning from July 1974 giving Ghana a grace period of two years. The remaining 20% of the debt was to be paid during the consolidation period, at interests not exceeding 6% per year.

It soon became apparent to many observers

after the 1968 rescheduling exercise that the country could still not achieve a reasonable rate of development under the terms of the rescheduling exercises and that there was an urgent need for the incoming civilian government to take another look at the problem.

This is the *raison d'être* for a further payments arrangement with our creditors, an arrangement that will give the government a breathing space to embark on its objectives. The debt problem is to be viewed against the government's policy of tackling the basic problems facing the country and which the government is committed to solve, e.g. developing the infrastructure of the rural areas. A further attempt at working out a better arrangement with our creditors is imperative because in the first place the previous arrangements were not the best that the country could have had, taking into account the capacity of Ghana to pay. Our creditors took the rather short-sighted view that the debts were purely commercial and they were more interested in getting the maximum they could get rather than sympathetically considering the adverse effects of the debt payments on Ghana's long-term development efforts.

A Major Obstacle

Secondly, the debt service burden is a major obstacle to the future development of the economy and must somehow be solved. Without a proper solution commensurate with our ability to pay the economy cannot generate growth through the provision of more job openings, and the liberalisation of imports of essential goods. Unless the whole debt problem is cleared, the government cannot formulate any meaningful long-term development plan for the country. The present government is committed to an improvement in the standard of living of the people in this country and unless they see their way clear, there is very little they can do to fulfil their election promises.

Thirdly, the new call for better payments arrangement is firmly based on economic justification backed by technical analysis of the balance of payments and other considerations which were ignored in the two previous reschedulings.

Having given reasons why a new payments arrangement is necessary, the next problem is: what sort of arrangement do we want which will not place undue obstacles in our development aspiration?

Attempts are being made to obtain the refinancing of our debts in place of the costly exercise of rescheduling. The meaning of refinancing is that creditor countries will provide new credits to enable Ghana to continue debt service payments; that is, a fresh loan will be contracted in place of the original debt in order to pay off existing debts, the new loan may be made by the governments of our creditors. If the new loan is given on long-term basis, then the refinancing constitutes a moratorium, that is, Ghana could achieve a respite of say 30 years before resuming transfer of debt service payments.

No doubt, an agreement on refinancing will provide the relief necessary for the government to achieve a diversion of resources into major development efforts. On purely economic considerations, refinancing is in the long-term interest of our creditors; for if we are pushed far with our backs to the wall, and if the government stands firm on its election promises, then the only logical course to take is to default. On the other hand, if a refinancing is achieved, and if investments are channelled into productive areas, the growth of the economy will generate sufficient resources with which to make debt service payments at a future date. A solution therefore of our debts is essential to a reasonable rate of economic development in the next few years.

No Debt Is Sacrosanct

The Prime Minister has recently said that our debts are going to be X-rayed presumably because none of the debts is sacrosanct. What has not been made clear so far by the government is whether in the event of our creditors agreeing to a moratorium we will let sleeping dogs lie or whether — refinancing or not — the exercise of reviewing the debt will still go on. It is important to know the government's policy on this; there are many thoughtful Ghanaians who are dissatisfied with the peculiar circumstances surrounding some of the debts. The best way the government can derive the maximum support from the public on this major and complex issue is to take us into its confidence. After all, whatever decision the government takes is bound to affect all of us one way or the other.

Politics

INGREDIENTS OF AN AFRICAN IDEOLOGY — BEYOND THE NATION-STATE

by
Oburoni Muntu

THE central political gospel of our time, virtually everywhere among that half of the world's states which attained independence during the past thirty years, is that the key to progress is nation-building. It is not surprising that this faith is so widely held. As Dankwart Rustow says in the opening pages of his thoughtful book *A World of Nations*:

Nation and modernity are among the most potent ideals of the twentieth century. They are distinct in concept but often reinforce each other in practice. Scientific discovery, new technical skills, and industrial production are among the tools of modernity; among the emotions of nationhood are common purpose and mutual trust. Nationality can lay the social foundation for the division of labour in modern science and industry; and the desire for modernity can bring national loyalties into focus... Together nationalism and modernity form an arena of tacit assumptions in which the vocal battle between political ideologies such as democracy and communism has been fought.

...The nation-state, like modernization, has roots, having grown out of the dynastic states of the twelfth to eighteenth century. But Western Nationalism did not burst forth fully until the American and French Revolutions, and in that same period it became linked to modernization. Since then, in Latin America, Asia, and Africa, nationhood and modernity have appeared as two facets of a single transformation—a dual revolution loudly proclaimed and often ardently desired but never accomplished quickly or with ease.

Nevertheless, the nation-state is already running into trouble in the Europe which brought it forth; and it poses severe problems of intercommunication in our rapidly shrinking globe. Rustow indeed notes these two points just two paragraphs beyond the passage quoted above:

...In Europe, economic and technical

progress is bursting through the narrow boundaries drawn by monarchs and nationalists in the eighteenth and nineteenth century; hence democratic Europeans have been thrown into a protracted crisis of supranational unification... Where once nationhood was the proud achievement of a few peoples isolated from the rest of humanity, it now has become the vocal aspiration of 130 peoples all linked tightly through modern means of communication and transport. Where once the nation-state was the symbol of sovereign power and unfettered independence, today it means interdependence and common peril. Sometime in the nineteenth century in Europe, modernization was wedded to the nation-state, and in Asia and Africa that alliance is being consummated anew in the present day; but unless the marriage contract is renegotiated or dissolved in voluntary separation, it may well turn into a suicide pact.

Crisis of Modernization

All this is given special point by the meaning he attaches to modernization, which 'denotes rapidly widening control over nature through closer cooperation among men.' In this sense it is plainly a goal almost universally accepted, and Rustow cannot readily be faulted when he asserts in summing up his argument here, that 'only societies transformed into nations have shown themselves capable of attaining the more advanced forms of modernity, and only modernizing nations are likely to retain their identity in the present era of modernization.'

Even so, he concedes that other possibilities may yet emerge: 'It is conceivable that in some future period the connection between modernization and nationality will disappear, that modernization will find expression in political institutions that transcend and transform the nation-state.'

The case I want to argue is that the world is moving into a crisis where the continuation of its modernization, as Rustow terms it, or its progress as more commonly put, depends on finding such new institutions; that the parts of the world which have both the greatest need and the best chance to devise them are those where the nation-state has developed least; that of all such parts, Africa has the greatest need and the best chance of all; that African society and culture already contains in embryo some of the means

nd devices that are needed for the supersession of the nation-state; *but* that none of this can come about, and the creative contribution that Africa can make to the advancement of mankind will not be made, unless and until Africans develop that special spiritual self-reliance which enables one to make use of one's own cultural resources and to cease to want or need to emulate Europe.

All the ingredients of an adequate African ideology must be blended together at once, every constituent needs all the rest: we can be sure of ourselves, of our place in the world, only when we know what kind of special contribution we can make to the common life of mankind. Thus we can know only when we know where to look in our own culture and heritage for the sources of this contribution; but to be able to do this we need faith in ourselves and the courage to break the habit of relying all the while on Western, or at any rate boreal, models.

New Economic Developments

Part of the indictment of the nation-state has already been prepared by Rustow, in the words already quoted: it is too small for the new economic and technical developments that are coming into being, and it does not fit a pattern of interconnectedness. If this is true for economically highly developed countries, with high incomes and populations of fifty millions or more, can it be less true for small, poor, underdeveloped countries? Even Nigeria, which brags of its size on our continent, is no more populous than the United Kingdom or Western Germany, and only slightly more so than Italy or France; and its purchasing capacity, its size as a market, is no greater than that of Manchester.

A country like Ghana, for all its relative wealth in Africa, provides no economic market for any industry worth looking at twice. The same applies to questions of supply of raw materials, etc.: we all remember the corned-beef factory which could have used the entire cattle population of Ghana in six weeks. Any but the most fooling kinds of economic development depend absolutely on effective cooperation with at least other West African countries, if not those beyond our own part of the continent.

All this is quite well known: the planning experts, the ECA people, and others, have been saying it for years. But it still seems to be thought in apparently responsible circles that you can have it both ways—that you can build close links

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with other countries, move toward economic union, while simultaneously making it more difficult for their citizens to come to your country. Yet the moves towards tightening up controls over non-citizens, the devising of new means of ticketing and docketing everyone and making sharp distinctions between Ghanaian citizens and everyone else, are all quite consistent with the philosophy and policy of nation-building.

Building a nation *means* minimising all distinctions inside the frontiers and maximising all those between nationals and non-nationals. Of course, Ghana makes it exceptionally difficult for a non-citizen to acquire citizenship, by comparison with most countries; but even if she didn't, the same principle would apply. If you are trying to make a nation-state out of something which is not that, you can only do it by emphasising that all or most of its denizens have in common and rejecting whatever they share with outsiders, as far as possible. A nationalist economic policy, in this sense of "nationalist", is one which seeks to foster first and foremost the presumed common economic interests of citizens against those of outsiders; such a policy is simply not compatible with establishing wider economic ties and larger units. You cannot have it both ways.

Thus Preston King's suggestion, already twice quoted, that we are "presented not merely with the task of nation building, but, equally, with the challenge of making a continent" is, as it stands, quite misleading. Properly understood, and certainly in the long economic term, we are presented not with the *task* of nation building but *instead* with the challenge of making a continent.

There is a lot more to be said about the nation-state and why and how we can and should do without it. Meanwhile, another ingredient of an African ideology can be offered as:

Building nations is against Africa's long-term economic interests.

BLACK POWER AND THE CARIBBEAN

By

A Political Correspondent

EVERY politician seeking the sympathy and active support, not to say sacrifice, of a people uses slogans. This is not a moral judgment but a universal observation. Julius Nyerere once called for "Uhuru na Umoja" — Freedom and Unity — and again "Uhuru na Kazi" — Freedom and

Work. Busia called for "Progress — Sure"; Kenyatta for "Harambee" — Everyone pulling together — and even Hitler ranted about "Living Space".

"Black is Beautiful"; "Say it Loud I'm Black and Proud"; "Black Power" — these are some of the powerful slogans of today. It is therefore to be expected that ambitious politicians everywhere should seize upon them. "Say it Loud" was adopted by one party very recently here in Ghana, for example. But it might be superficial to read from the scattered use of every slogan the necessary existence of much more than a common sympathy recognised as useful by certain politicians. An infrastructure of politically organized co-operation may follow, but it is not necessarily implied as soon as the slogan is used. Is "Black Power" such a slogan?

The question arises whether or not the "Black Power Movement" has "spread to the West Indies", as many observers throughout the world have somewhat glibly interpreted. Some examination of the structure and relationship of Black Power to the differing political realities of the United States and the Caribbean seems called for.

New Demands

Men have more often agreed on what needs to be done than on how to do it. The American Negro has consistently sought social justice since the days of formal slavery and before. Various methods of changing his lot have been tried, and, while not universally discarded, several formerly popular approaches have successively lost favour with new leaders — prayer, the freedom marches and sit-ins, and Luther King's non-violent Civil Rights Movement are among them.

Today the "moderate" leaders of yesterday and their white liberal associates are often violently denounced. The demand is no longer for equal status within American Society — but for recognition as a separate cultural entity or nation, outside of a "white" America. The term Negro has become discredited — "Afro-American" and now "Black" and African-American have replaced it. Simultaneously the writings and pronouncements of several more racially assertive opinion-formers, as Baldwin predicted in *The Fire Next Time* and other works, have been enthusiastically received. Most important, of course, is Eldridge Cleaver's *Soul on Ice*, but other works seek to free the "Black" mind from "White" values and consequently damaging psychological confusion. But this *must* lead to the rhetoric of separatism.

er slogans — such as “Burn, Baby, Burn”, of recent long hot summer—have been coined. In t, “Black Power” is associated with a greater ancy — for the present (and, some argue, for) it is against integration — and it has grown of frustration. Also it is associated in most oles’ minds with violence.

ne movement in the United States has bor- ed much from the thoughts of revolutionaries here, but in response to special local condi- s, its dominant theme is and has remained al. A coherent political and economic con- us may not exist. Since Black migration, ly from the South, but to all the cities of United States, appears to be increasing, and e the birth and unemployment rates in the tos are far higher than the national average a captive and sympathetic audience for the an “Black Power” seems assured for many s.

a the largest cities of America today integra- can only be seen as a “dream” of very low rity and probably a concept of academic rest merely. Among its adherents, Black ex- icemen returning from South-East Asia are a and significant factor. Some of the skills have learnt in the military are not irrelevant iolent confrontation. But, as here in Africa, rising expectations of younger folk are also ey factor. Hence President Nixon speaks of ban Renewal” and of subsidy for “Black italism”.

Various ‘Power’ Groups

here are several different Black Power groups organisations in almost every major American . Politically, they have some aims in common to gain control of the school curriculum and en the school itself; to have the ghettos policed Black policemen or their own vigilante groups, — but most aims are purely local. The Nation Islam or the Black Muslims was one of the t of the wider organisations, but its popularity declined since the deflection and subsequent assassination of Malcolm X. Other wider organi- ons are the *Student Non-Violent Co-ordinating mmittee* (SNCC) and the *Congress of Racial uality*. From these, important leaders such as kely Carmichael and Floyd McKissick have erged. But these have little in common with politics — or at least the wider policy pro- nouncements — of say the *Black Panthers* — iust whom it is claimed the American Police e totally committed. Nor with the *Republic of*

New Africa which seeks an Independent State, not as Garvey did, in Africa, but South of the Mason-Dixon line in the United States itself.

In the Caribbean, the position is diffe- rent. Progressive political leaders, especially in Jamaica, and Trade Unionists, especially in Trini- dad, have long argued for a fairer economic deal for the mass of the people. The enemy has been identified as the black leaders of the Islands. The opposition has accused them of being “Uncle Toms” or the mere stewards of a foreign economic estate. Now that the popular slogans of “Black Power” have been seen to have considerable appeal, there is more talk of “black” and “white” but the detail remains economic. The heroes of the Caribbean Black Power Movement can thus remain Senor Castro and even Chairman Mao who are hardly “black”. The honoured dead include Che Guevara and Ho Chi Minh.

Trouble in the Islands

This is not to say that separatists like the Ras Tafarians (named after Tafari Makonnen, now known as Haile Sellassie) have no influence in the Caribbean. They have had a following for years—but theirs is not on the increase. The Black Muslims also have influence and more recently even the Panthers, but it is poverty and opulence in close juxtaposition that is the real social irritant. And the existence of a flourishing tourist trade does not ease that. Serious riots occurred in Bermuda and Jamaica last year. As we go to press some soldiers are charged with treason in Trinidad and the state of emergency there is not yet over. But the basis of unrest—except perhaps in the final analysis of the ex- ploitation of man by man—differs in the Islands, with their colonial heritage of social and economic injustice, from the worsening situation in Ameri- ca’s ghettos. And this, despite the fact that the communications satellite, the electronic tape, television and improved news media spread the appeal of America’s slogans.

Here in Africa there is great interest both in America and the Islands, and in the movements there. Also, we must note that the cultural in- fluence of Africa on America is a two way process. Here in Ghana, at least our city youth, admire “Afro” styles; and even the haircut, if that is the correct word for it, is influencing certain young people. Colourful Afro-American styles of garment are said to be “from home”. Neverthe- less, politically, we cannot easily call for an end to persistent colonialism in the Southern part of

this continent and the integration of all peoples there, while at the same time subscribing to "Black Power" in its more racial forms.

If we were to so subscribe, in our present circumstance we might well be led to take recourse in psychological analysis and define that, in the special post-colonial case, black can be white. But with all respect to Fanon, not everyone is mentally muddled. Honesty may well demand, whatever the slogan, whatever the political method, that we carry the limited political interpretation of "Black Power" a step further and expose tyranny where it exists with neither confusion nor compromise.

Obituary

LOVERIDGE NUKU KOFI ABABIO 1933-1970

By S. La-Anyane

Professor and Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture
University of Ghana, Legon.

NUKU KOFI ABABIO came to Legon in the Michaelmas term of 1963/64 as lecturer. He was 30 years old. He had won the Master of Science degree in Animal Science at the Prairie View Agricultural and Mechanical College a year earlier. During his tenure at that institution, he earned and maintained a high academic record. He impressed his tutors as a person with an inquisitive mind and as a competent student in all aspects of Animal Husbandry.

Legon was not new to Kofi Ababio. He was one of the few students to graduate in agriculture in the pioneering days of the Faculty of Agriculture of the University of Ghana. The Faculty was in those days a Department of Agriculture of the University College of the Gold Coast. Kofi Ababio was in the class of 1958, which had nine students. This class was a considerable improvement in numbers over the initial years of 1956 and 1957 when there were three students, and one student, in agriculture respectively. A general Bachelor of Science degree in agriculture was awarded at the end of a three-year programme. Kofi Ababio had no difficulty whatsoever in successfully completing the course, grading above average.

Mr. Ababio accepted the position of Agricul-

tural Officer in the Ministry of Agriculture on graduation in 1958. In this capacity, he served in several parts of the country and was put in charge of extension education in the Kete Krachi district. He very quickly established himself as a competent officer of the Ministry, and within two years of his appointment he was selected by the government to join a delegation of four to represent Ghana at the 15th session of the C.C.T.A. conference in Antananarivo in the Malagasy Republic in February, 1960.

The practical field experience which he had acquired as an agricultural officer also contributed to his success as a lecturer in Animal Science in the University of Ghana. His field of specialisation was livestock production. He was particularly interested in the production of cattle and sheep. As a lecturer in this special field, Mr. Ababio showed a robust personality and certainly left a lasting impression on all the students who came under his care. He wrote several articles, including substantial contribution to *Background to Agricultural Policy in Ghana*, published by the University of Ghana Faculty of Agriculture in 1969.

Mr. Ababio's contribution, while a lecturer in this University, did not end in the lecture theatre and on the research station where he undertook research and trained students in practical agriculture. He was actively involved in many other activities within the University and outside of it. He was a Tutor of Mensah Sarbah Hall and served on several committees and boards.

Valuable Contributions

He was a member of the management committee of the Animal Research Institute, Animal Science Society, and the Agricultural Society of Ghana. He retained his links with the University after leaving it to engage in a private commercial agricultural enterprise, and served as a Director of the University of Ghana Farm Enterprises until his final day. He was also a member of the Board of Directors of the Ghana Commercial Bank and a founding member of the Legon Society On National Affairs, publishers of the "Legon Observer". A good debater, and generously imbued with a sense of humour, Mr. Ababio was always a pleasure to listen to at society and committee meetings. In his very pleasant and likeable manner, he always made a valuable contribution to the business of the society or committee on which he served.

After serving the University for five years, Mr. Ababio decided to accept a challenge with which

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he had lived for many years: the challenge to be a pioneer in the field of modern farming. The challenge was to prove that the immense knowledge he had acquired from college and university equipped him better than others for the successful operation of a private farm enterprise. The country was also in need of educated men and women trained in agriculture to engage in private commercial farming. No better time could be found to falsify the claims made by the critics that the educated agriculturist was a failure as a farmer and that he preferred the pen to the cutlass.

In his paper on "The Development of our Livestock Industry" which appeared in the Legon Faculty of Agriculture book, *Background to Agricultural Policy in Ghana*, published in 1969, Mr. Ababio had recommended that "the importance given to general education must now be transferred to agricultural production". As far back as his graduate days in Texas in the United States of America, he had written in a letter to a colleague expressing the desire to put his knowledge into practice in the field and produce animals as big as those he saw for the first time in Texas. He wrote, "... I could never have believed beef cattle can weigh over 3,000lb! The environmental conditions here are very

similar to the savanna areas at home..." These were some of the forces which impelled him into a farm business two years ago.

Mr. Ababio was the operating partner in a livestock enterprise involving cattle on about one thousand acres of savanna along the Akosombo road. He appropriately named his farm Abel Modern Ranch. After the difficult initial gestation period of two to three years, Mr. Ababio had definitely emerged on the road to success. His point had been made. He was, however, not to live to enjoy the results. He met his end in an accident on the road to his farm.

Stimulating remarks, articles, positions held, and committees he served on — these are the thin documentary profile of the scholar and farmer. The imperishable reality is in the contents of what he wrote and did, and in moulding the thinking and ideas of his students, his colleagues, his friends, his relatives and all those who were fortunate to associate with him. Each of us who had the privilege of working closely with Kofi Ababio could not but be impressed by his love of truth, his respect for evidence, his humanity and optimistic faith in the success of agriculture and farm people in this country.

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Observer Notebook

Ghana-Ivory Coast Relations

FLUCTUATION is the key-note in the relations between most states: our relations with the Ivory Coast are no exception, and most observers will feel nothing but pleasure at the warm reception accorded Dr. Busia and his high-powered entourage now visiting that country.

Thus fluctuations marked the Nkrumah era as well as more recent regimes. In the earlier period, Nkrumah's support of the dissident Ankwah was a considerable source of friction. Besides, in the ideological sphere, the two Presidents had openly challenged each other to a ten-year contest with a view to seeing which mode of development would prove more effective — Nkrumah's radical socialism or Houphouët-Boigny's emphasis on capitalism as an economic strategy.

In more recent days, border troubles in the strong-Ahafo area have been a cause for concern.

It is entirely appropriate, therefore, that Dr. Busia's first excursion into the African arena since his accession to the Premiership should be his visit to the Ivory Coast. Indeed those eyebrows which were dramatically raised when Dr. Busia jetted away to the U.S.A. and Europe immediately on his assumption of the Premiership, could be seen being lowered as dramatically on the announcement of the current visit.

But what lies behind the diplomatic niceties relayed to us by the information media? The fact is that it makes plain economic and human sense that we should have cordial relations with our Francophone brothers and sisters. Our ethnic ties with them are very close, and cultural patterns are nearly identical. Our correspondent was pleasantly surprised to have been treated to authentic plantain fufu in Jackville early last year.

Smuggling is an area demanding close examination by the two countries. Our strategy for economic development — not to mention our lust for things foreign — has made it necessary to impose prohibitive customs and excise duties to be levied on imported goods. Neither Togo nor the Ivory Coast shows this tendency. Hence consumer goods are sometimes five times as dear here as in the neighbouring countries. Correspondingly, export duties are lighter there, so the less patriotic of our farmers smuggle their agricultural produce over the border. Clearly, we need the co-operation and understanding of our

neighbours if this problem is to be solved. And it is only one of several problems.

One senses that the affirmations of friendship and of common interest have gone beyond what protocol requires, and that therefore we can hope for the quick solution to our border and other problems with the Ivory Coast. Of particular importance is the fact that a measure such as the recent Aliens' Compliance Order has neither been misunderstood nor misconstrued by our Ivorian brothers and sisters.

It is our hope that while maintaining accord through the Friendship Games and other cultural media, we shall be humble enough to want to learn from the Ivorians the method by which they have been able to grow enough food for their population. This is the first step to the solution of our economic problems. If the Ivorians, with geographical conditions similar to our own, cannot help us in this regard hardly anyone else can.

Ghana and Nigeria

TALKING ABOUT political fences and intra-African interests, recently there has been a bit of a storm-in-a-teacup tossing back and forth between "Ghana" and "Nigeria", that is, as staged by sections of the mass media apparatus of the two countries. In our humble opinion these were wasted efforts. Nigeria Radio first broadcast a vitriolic attack on Ghana over the aliens business, coupled with our alleged official and unofficial support of ex-Biafra. A section of the Nigerian press took up the cry (although in fact there had been previous attacks, all over), to be followed in due course by the self-defence of Ghana and a counter attack on Nigeria by a section of the Ghana press. It was all done mostly by name calling, by charging and counter charging. And it ended as it had begun: in smoke.

We ought to be paying close attention to matters of substance, to realities, instead. Attacks generated in or by the respective national mass media may in truth be straws in the wind; now and again they may have to be taken up and answered back in kind. But more often than not this amounts to mere chasing after shadows; the real diplomatic game is meanwhile being played at a vastly higher level — not necessarily higher than the *press* level but certainly than the *discussion* level of a mere surface comment or two, consisting mostly of abuse and threat on both sides. The realities which Nigerians and Ghanaians should mutually be deeply concerned

with, these days, are far more serious than the immediate ill-will created by the aliens exercise, serious and regrettable as that was; or than any real or imaginary conflict occasioned by Ghana's alleged support of Biafra. Where were we of the press, for one thing, when those two military glamour-boys and, at the time, contemporary heads of state, Brigadier Afrifa and General Gowon, were visiting each other and exchanging compliments right in the middle of the civil war, while their staffs worked on the substantive matters of state between their two countries? What did they talk about, and at what level? Do we know? How then can we take up a fight on these issues now, and on such a low pitch?

As far as Ghana should be concerned with the realities of Nigeria at any rate, the following considerations, it would seem to us, are elemental. First, cooperation with Nigeria in most fields today is essential for Ghana, both for ourselves and in aid of the African, if you like the O.A.U., cause; because, secondly, let's face it, Nigeria has come through a baptism of fire which has left her not weaker but, potentially at least, immeasurably stronger: politically, militarily and economically. Any reckoning in African terms today which does not take Nigeria's powerful position into top consideration would be plainly illusionary and disastrous. Our Ghanaian pride in our own potentialities and abilities would be strengthened, not diminished, by an all-fronts cooperation with our large and powerful neighbour. And it would yield concrete results.

An open-minded, open-hearted visit to Lagos, Ibadan, Kaduna, their Universities, and even some smaller communities in that vast country, today, would tend to confirm the impression of vitality, potentiality and "take-offability". We of the *Observer*, for our part, have started to look as closely as we can into the Nigerian scene. For a start we have taken an *Observer* interview each off the Vice-Chancellors of Ife and Lagos Universities, which we shall soon release, followed later by other material. We do not claim that we or the Nigerians have all the answers, or hold the key to the solution of all of Africa's immense problems. We do not even expect that every Ghanaian would agree with our analysis. All we plead for is patience and tolerance with ourselves, both in Accra and Lagos. The future of black Africa is still in the balance; more cooperation and less conflict are the greatest needs among us.

Ghana's Ties with East and Central Africa

ONE of the most successful foreign relation offensives of the Busia administration has been the projected resumption of diplomatic relations between Ghana and Zambia, which had been broken off entirely; and between Ghana and the East African countries of Uganda and Tanzania, which had become frozen since the 1966 coup d'etat.

Although East and Central African governments were agitated alike over the military overthrow of the Nkrumah regime, it was Zambia which appeared most vociferous in contempt and disrespect for Ghana's military government. Zambia's equation of Ghana with Nkrumah was pitiable enough, though understandable. The transport and communication network between Central and Western Africa is so bad that Central Africans have had the misfortune of being politically and culturally isolated in many respects.

What most Central Africans knew (and still know) about West Africa were personalities, rather than ideas and processes. It was no wonder that immediately after the coup in Ghana every Ghanaian in that part of the world was constantly confronted with the tormenting question: Why are Ghanaians so ungrateful? Nkrumah had come to be seen as principally an *African* leader, rather than a *Ghanaian* president. In a sense, therefore, Nkrumah's lavish spending on his *African* image 'paid off'.

One is relieved that Mr. Victor Owusu, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, has been able to arrange for the eventual strengthening of relations with these countries which had been originally hostile. Mr. Owusu must have seen, learnt, and exploited to Ghana's advantage, the fact that in East and Central Africa, even up to now, the best way to win friends is *not* to condemn Nkrumah, whose personal standing is apparently still high there, but rather to inform them about the realities of Ghana's political and economic situation, and the attempts at national reconstruction.

Nixon and Cambodia

PRESIDENT Nixon's announcement of the involvement of U.S. ground troops in Cambodia has shocked many people, including Americans, the world over. After all, has President Nixon not committed himself to, and has he not actually begun to implement, a policy of gradual U.S. troop withdrawals from South Vietnam? Has this not been sufficient evidence of the sincerity of his administration in its declared policy to see a

dictated, rather than a military, settlement of Vietnam War?

But such reasoning has failed to reckon with the imperatives of deep U.S. involvement in South-East Asian affairs, as also with the nuances of Nixon's April policy-speech on Vietnam. Whatever the fire and brimstone may be emitted by the Fulbrights and the American "doves", the U.S. administration—and none more so than the one headed by a person of Mr. Nixon's conviction—could afford to go "soft" on the spectre of communism.

Again, it is true that the Nixon administration was gripped in an agonising hesitation about its response to Gen. Lon Nol's personal call for help against the two-pronged Viet-Cong-Communist threat in Cambodia. And yet, in his April policy-speech, President Nixon offered dark hints as to what form the response, if the decision was eventually reached, would take. In that speech he sharply warned Hanoi's leaders of the tremendous risks they would be running if they so much endangered the security of U.S. forces in South Vietnam "by increased military action in Vietnam, in Cambodia, or in Laos". In an address the same week to the American Society of International Law, the Secretary of State, Mr. William P. Rogers, revealed that "...more than 40,000 South Vietnamese and Viet-Cong troops have invaded and now occupy Cambodia." And this, he said, constituted a violation of the 1954 and 1962 Geneva accords, which guaranteed the independence and neutrality of Cambodia. He continued: "If states fail to honour their obligations to other nations have no recourse but to resort to force to protect their sovereignty and territorial integrity".

Clearly, if these statements had been carefully studied, President Nixon's favourable response to Gen. Lon Nol's appeal would not have come as such a shock to many people. And so with such a response Mr. Nixon has extended the Vietnam war to Cambodia in order, as he explained, to shorten that war. Its possible extension to Laos cannot be ruled out, if only because the situation there must be equally mucky to the Nixon administration.

However, it would be naive to conclude that the U.S. action was wholly dictated by the official reasons given. For the action, it would seem, was also dictated by the U.S. desire to prop up the weak, non-communist and pro-American regime of conservative Cambodians, who only recently overthrew the radical and communist-orientated regime of Prince Sihanouk. And for

the State Department "neutrality" and "non-communism", or "anti-communism", are interchangeable terms.

The extension of the Vietnam war to Cambodia has certainly added another dangerous twist to U.S. involvement in South-East Asian affairs. It can only serve to prolong rather than end that war quickly. It also strongly promises to add to Mr. Nixon's domestic problems by intensifying political protest over the war. Nor can the extension fail to galvanize the allies of the Indo-Chinese communists into such renewed activity as may dangerously upset world peace. We can only hope that the Nixon administration has not, with this latest decision, reached the point of no return in this long drawn-out-war in Indo-China.

Rallies and Demonstrations

MODERN party political rallies were developed, in Ghana, by the United Gold Coast Convention after its founding in 1946; they were popularised by the Convention Peoples' Party in the years following the Great Schism of June/July 1949. It was in the hands of the C.P.P. propaganda machine that the party rally became "Super-Monster". In the process of its "refinement" it took on the character of demonstrations precisely tooled for specific ends.

"Solidarity" with various causes, peoples or persons; displays of the exact opposite of solidarity-with; the expression of appreciation or of displeasure; the mounting of campaigns of political assassination—these became the order of business. Given time, the "Super-Monster" rally developed into a political-tribal orgy, in which ideological blood was freely and frequently spilled to appease the gods of the "Ah-rena" and set the stage for the next ritual sacrifice of party enemies. By 1964 the rally had become a frenzy of wholly irrational emotions out to kill all "enemies", known or merely suspected: "He who is not for us is against us"!...

The leaders of Ghana's political parties today ought to watch their step. "Super-Monster" rallies are a high political risk. Demonstrations of support and party loyalty in which judges, clergymen, teachers, and any particular classes are by thousands of party followers pilloried and assassinated in effigy and in the intention, for their saying or doing things displeasing to the party, are a positive danger in our politically new and always explosive situation.

We have seen it all before: the "telegrams and messages of 'loyalty' from all over the

country", the bowing and scraping before "the leader", the open invitations, the crowds in the chartered lorries, the frenzy, the "Hozannah!"—the "CRUCIFY HIM!"... We have seen it all before, and the experience was in the main bitter.

Letters

The Sallah Judgement

SIR—We had the misfortune to listen, on 20th April, 1970, to a long lecture on the correct uses of legal freedom in which we heard quotations from Justinian, Lord Denning, and excerpts from British newspapers of Court proceedings relevant to the Sallah type of cases; in short, a brief outline of a minor aspect of the British legal system.

The Prime Minister must know that this place is not Britain. We believe in the competence of our judges all right, and rising to such unnecessary heights of learning, as he often does in his speeches, by echoing Greeks and Englishmen (never an African) does not help in justifying his stand on this matter.

It is now clear that he has lately been caught between the dilemma of making his powers felt and at the same time going by the precepts of his favourite word 'democracy'.

Scarcely a day passes in the life of the Ghanaian without this political creed being thrown at him from various ranges. If the government is committed to democracy as it always proclaims, let it abide by the democratic process of things, which might make it unnecessary to sack 568 persons by giving such superficial reasons as these.

P.O. Box 159
Accra

Agyare Larbi

P.M. and the Sallah Case

SIR—The Prime Minister's recent broadcast left many of us sad and disappointed. Sad because his words and manner were reminiscent of the not too distant past, and disappointed, because those of us who were taken in by his utterances before the election certainly expected a different attitude.

If I were a potential foreign investor who had seen his performance on T.V. tonight, I would pack my bags and get out tomorrow. In Africa, when a government begins to get a persecution complex, look out!

P.O. Box 1934
Kumasi.

Marilynne Charles

The New Order

SIR—Dr. Busia was obviously at pains to impress upon his audience, at the Liberation Circle, the high sense of responsibility which his government felt for the welfare of all Ghanaians—every Ghanaian—judges, opposition M.Ps., farmers, clerks, policemen, soldiers, and all.

One wonders the extent of his government's sense of responsibility for the welfare of the over 500 public servants whom the government dismissed from office two months ago. These dismissed Ghanaians and their families are starving, and ironically enough, their plight was brought upon them by a government which now claims that "we are responsible for the welfare of every Ghanaian". In the same breath they tell the dismissed workers not to attempt to seek redress at court for

wrongful dismissal.

Have these unfortunate brothers of ours lost their Ghanaian citizenship for not being sufficiently "forward looking?"

P.O. Box 1840
Accra

Owusu Yaw

Political Demonstrations

SIR—The political demonstrations which were reported to have been held in some parts of the country recently in support of the government's stand concerning the Supreme Court's judgement in the Sallah case remind one of the "relics" of the pre-coup regime. Most of us were witnesses of spontaneous and calculated demonstrations during the Nkrumah regime, notably the one against the acquittal of Mr. Adamafio and others.

One may ask what these demonstrations achieved. At home, they went a long way in hardening the dictator's heart and encouraged him to oppress his victims with more ruthlessness than before; abroad they only exposed the government and our country to criticism and ridicule.

One wonders why even today some personnel in our public service and workers in other establishments both in the public and private sectors of the economy should take time off duty to demonstrate for the government.

I think it behoves the unemployable "unbiis" to engage in this exercise, probably in order to catch the eye of the "big men" in the government or its party. In any case political demonstrations, whether for or against the government, are uncalled for, for they cast a slur on the country's image.

I would therefore like in a humble way to remind the leaders of the government, the Progress Party for that matter, that many of their people who in the past staged demonstrations either of their own volition or on the promptings of party propagandists in that regime, are among the rank and file of the Progress Party today. And since adulation, sycophancy and sometimes the so-called 'unflinching support' were some of the causes of what went wrong in Ghana, they need to view such actions of the masses or supporters with caution. I may add that the Prime Minister and his lieutenants have multitudinous admirers who are keen to see their government succeed; however, these admirers need not sing their hero's or master's praises.

P.O. Box 129
Winneba

Eugene K. Owiafe

The Kumasi Resignations

SIR—The circumstances surrounding the recent resignation of 24 engineering lecturers of the Kumasi University of Science and Technology, came rather surprisingly to many people in Ghana.

Perhaps that was the only alternative line of action the lecturers could take after waiting for weeks upon weeks without any signs of getting their grievances solved.

But it appears that the decision taken by these dons, to say the least, was rather harsh. For, in a country where there is already a shortage of qualified Ghanaian engineering lecturers, one expected these dons to show some sort of patriotic feeling or sympathy for our present economic situation.

It is hoped that a judicious compromise would soon be reached, so as to avoid the deepening of such crises

in the country's universities.

Kokomlemle
Accra

E. Y. Frempong-Mensah

Reviving Pan-Africanism

SIR—The *Legon Observer* trickles irregularly into Akrokerri, so I have only just seen Mr. Obatala's article on "The Need for Reviving Pan-Africanism" (L.O. V/3), and would like to comment, if it not too late.

His starting point seems to be that the concept of an "African" should be extended to include not only those currently native to the geographical continent of Africa, but also American Negroes. This is fair enough: one can formulate any number of definitions of an "African" which might either include or exclude, according to one's own criteria, such groups as Egyptians, Kenyans of Asian origin and Africaners. However, to this basically reasonable premise he adds the assumption that all those who fall within his definition are of a sufficient cultural similarity to be able to act as a unit, and this is surely where his argument begins to crumble.

Firstly, he ignores the historical truism that for centuries many of our human races have been in a state of flux and migration, and that if the historical perspective is long enough, the definition of a member of almost any group of people may be ambiguous.

Secondly he ignores, to the detriment of his argument, the fact that the peoples of "geographical" Africa are now widely diverse socially, physically and linguistically, whether or not they were more homogeneous millenia ago—diverse both when one considers the whole continent and when one looks within the artificial national boundaries.

He oversimplifies in other ways too. His concept of the sharing with African countries of the skills of Afro-Americans is a generous one, but is there really such a clear cut distinction between this and what he terms as the degrading "charity of the white western world"? Again, he claims that Africans "at home and abroad" are facing "the common enemies of poverty, backwardness and economic exploitation". But here too, I think, one has to insist that it is not so simple; the poverty of, say, a northern Ghanaian farmer and an unemployed urban Afro-American may have similar effects on their way of life, but the causes and possible solutions of their problems are quite unrelated.

Lastly, I think the final section of Mr. Obatala's article is rather depressing—I mean his attempt to dictate to African historians and artists what theme they should choose. This is a major topic which cannot be gone into deeply here, but he should realise that the artist, whatever his medium, writes, paints or carves whatever concerns him, and if, say, a Ghanaian playwright chooses to write about some conflict in local history, and not about a "Pan-African" theme (if such a thing can exist), this has no direct relation to the quality and value of the work he ultimately produces. Why should a slayer of Europeans be a greater, or a lesser, cultural hero than a layer of Africans?

I hope I have not given the impression of being out of sympathy with Mr. Obatala's hope of greater international co-operation and understanding; any activity, whether informal or under the auspicious of a formal organization, which leads towards this is surely worthwhile. But it does seem a pity that he should base

his ideas on a mythical racial solidarity.

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Michael Chandler

Play Review

"KONGI'S HARVEST"

By K. E. Senanu

WHEN I reviewed the George Wilson/Bertie Opoku production of Wole Soyinka's *The Lion and the Jewel* nearly three years ago, I complained of the lack of purposeful training for those who might lay the foundations of a virile popular theatre in Ghana. At the risk of sounding pedantic, I should like to say that the recent Wilson/Opoku production of *Kongi's Harvest* confirms some of the fears I expressed in 1967 and makes more urgent the need for action at governmental level, in order to rescue the parlous situation Messrs Wilson and Opoku have had to contend with in the production of *Kongi's Harvest*.*

On two nights when I saw the production, Mr. Wilson stepped out, after the final curtain, to make a heart-rending appeal for financial support. One gathers that the institutionalized help which should come from the Arts Council is either denied or simply not available to talent such as Wilson's. It is a matter of great regret that such a situation should be allowed to mar the work of one so dedicated as Wilson is to making the theatre thrive in Ghana. To my mind to make a success of a play as difficult as *Kongi's Harvest*, Wilson needed to be spared the worry over production cost.

A Sign of Sensitivity

For the decision to produce *Kongi's Harvest* is, by itself, an indication of Wilson's continuous growth as a director, as well as a sign of his sensitivity to the interest of his audience. *Kongi's Harvest*, as many of the reviews in the daily press have pointed out, mirrors some of the appalling events which were well known in this country before the February Revolution. And, naturally this should interest a Ghanaian audience. But one must add that Wole Soyinka's play is not merely a picture of Nkrumah's grotesque attempts to exploit traditional uses to prop himself up as a messianic leader. And therefore much as one sympathises with George Wilson's interpretation of the play, which identifies Kongi almost entirely with Nkrumah, one is disturbed by the fact that this identification has prevented Wilson from giving the necessary emphasis to other aspects of the play.

For example, to allow the Carpenters' Brigade the degree of good feeling they enjoyed in the production when preparing the stage for Kongi's arrival at the harvest scene (while reminiscent of the enthusiasm of the Builders' Brigade on such occasions in Nkrumah's day) is to destroy any suggestion of nervousness on the part of Kongi's supporters, and to eliminate the hints of an assassination attempt in the offing. But the text requires that this suggestion should be there, to make credible Daodu's and Segi's abortive attempt.

In spite of such lapses, which result from seeing Kongi as Nkrumah's image, one ought to concede that a great deal of the vitality of the production derives from this implicit identification of the situation

* The production was put on at the Drama Studio in Accra from 9th to 18th April, and from 28th April to 1st May.

in *Kongi's Harvest* with events in Nkrumah's Ghana. A number of the actors found it easier, no doubt, to relate themselves to this aspect of the play and to bring their affective memory to bear on their roles. Memorable roles, like that of the Organising Secretary, played with aplomb by George Wilson himself; of Kongi, played by that dapper veteran Turkson-Ocran; of the members of the Reformed Awerri Fraternity, played with cunning competence by people like Villars and Botchway, struck one as felicitous.

But the play, as a whole, demands a venture and the winning of laurels in a mode different from the kind of success with which the roles listed above were played. This is a mode approached tentatively by Kofi Middleton-Mends as Daodu and, intermittently, by Evans Hunter as Oba Danlola. I have no doubt in my mind that in *Kongi's Harvest* Soyinka approaches poetic drama. And the obvious 'difficulty' of this text is that the language which Soyinka uses gets in the way of any realistic acting, and demands an elaboration on realism, an emphatic structuring through rhythm and expressive gesture; demands a quality of production which one wants to call *style*. I believe Soyinka was himself cunningly aware of this need for style. In an ironic reference to the traditional uses upon which the Reformed Awerri Fraternity wishes to pattern itself, the first member of the Fraternity remarks,

'Oh, I do admit they (our predecessors) were a little old fashioned, but they had er . . . a certain style.

Yes, I think style is the word I want.'

And style is the thing one kept hankering for in the opening scene of the play called 'Hemlock'.

Difficulties with Language

Soyinka writes a predominantly trimeter verse with a strong dose of traditional proverbs and aphorisms. To make such language the natural speech for the actors is not easy. The words seem to get in the way of natural behaviour and realistic acting. But Soyinka builds his verse against the background of the rhythm of the gbedu drum. The greater part of the opening scene is therefore a *lyrical drama* of the Oba drinking the bitter cup (the hemlock) from Kongi's hand. And the style or mode of play required is of lyrical verse controlled by the expressive rhythm of the drum and the dance. Some amount of the *literal meaning* of the verse will inevitably be lost, but the rhythm of the drum and the dance would establish the lyrical feeling of deprivation built into the scene. One missed this from the Wilson/Opoku production.

A similar need for style is obvious in the scenes set in Segi's Bar, and especially in the lines given to Daodu. In effect, Soyinka contrasts the ceremonious life of tradition (How but in custom and in ceremony

Are innocence and beauty born)

in the scenes dominated by the Oba and his heirs, with the realistic but chilling scenes of Kongi and his henchmen. The warmth of the scenes between Daodu and Segi also require the lyricism of the opening scene.

Thus *Kongi's Harvest* makes demands on directors and actors who have, by long practice and by training of their talents, learnt to create beauty or style as the blossoming of life. They need to dig down to the life behind the beautifully wrought verse of the play. One is tempted to say this is a play which can only successfully be done by a repertory group, not by a group harrassed by mundane problems of financing the produc-

tion.

And it is because such examples of stylization, of beauty as the blossoming of life, are available to us in the dance (when seen in an organic relationship with the verbal drama) that one regrets the lack of official patronage for a talent like Wilson's. He has made the best use of resources at his disposal. But what a plenitude would *Kongi's Harvest* have been if Wilson had actors and actresses with the trained ability to make both their voices and gestures expressive.

There was a glaring demonstration of this limitation in the final scene of the production. This is the scene in which Kongi is presented with the head of one of his victims instead of the pounded harvest yam on a tray. Soyinka asks for a harvest orgy in the text, a dance stylised enough to include the passing of the fatal tray from dancer to dancer until it is placed before Kongi. This climactic scene suffers most in the production. In fact the dance here became merely decorative and the tray was carried by Segi and deposited without any of the appalling irony built into the scene.

I believe I have given enough reasons already why one couldn't expect more than the success one gets in the realistic scenes of the production. But one is left asking, aren't there any funds available to the Arts Council for people like Wilson to get down to a thorough job of work on productions such as *Kongi's Harvest*?

News Items

Accra, May 4

Vice-Chancellor arrives in Budapest

THE Vice-Chancellor of the University of Science and Technology, Dr. E. Evan-Anfom, has arrived in Budapest, Hungary, to explore the possibility of recruiting staff for his University. An official statement from the Hungarian Embassy said here today that Dr. Evans-Anfom has already held discussions in this connection with officials of TESCO, an Organisation for International Technical and Scientific Co-operation.

UN Consultant Killed by Thugs

MR. Louis Cohen, 45, a United Nations Consultant on Secondment to the Public Works Department, died at the Korle Bu Hospital here at the week-end after he had been attacked by thieves at his Tesano residence. A Tesano Police spokesman said that Mr. Cohen had earlier on the day of his attack dismissed his night watchman. The police have mounted a search for the whereabouts of the watchman.

Washington, May 4

Senator Kennedy on his Political Future

SENATOR Edward Kennedy yesterday re-affirmed his position that he would not stand for the Presidency in 1972. Making his first comment on his political future since the release of the transcript of the inquest on Mary Jo Kopechne, in a radio interview broadcast here last night, Senator Kennedy said that he would neither seek nor accept the Democratic Party Presidential nomination. He emphasised: "I would not accept a draft and I have indicated as clearly, completely and precisely as the English language allows, that I would not be a candidate . . . for the Presidency."

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