

WEST AFRICA

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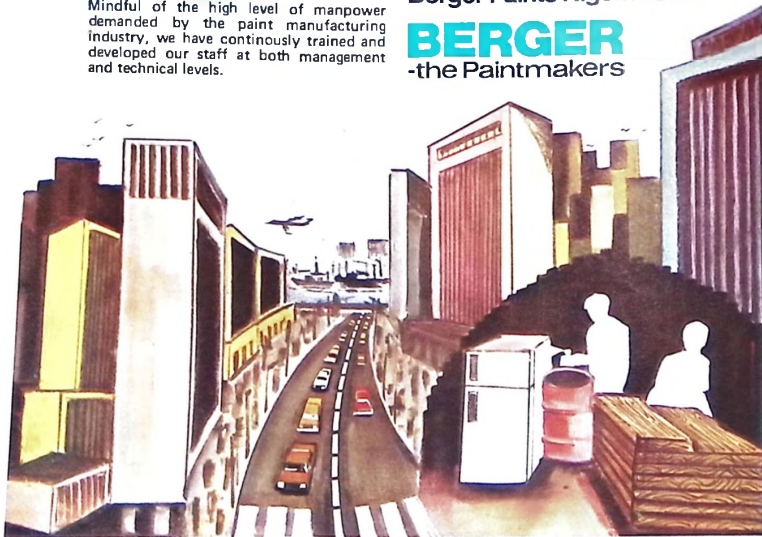
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Options for South Africa

IT HAS BEEN a bad few weeks for the racist South African rulers. The destruction of over £3m. worth of oil-from-coal installations was the most successful act of sabotage committed by the African National Congress. Schoolchildren continued to demonstrate the defiance of youth. Bishop Tutu led a number of clergymen to break the law in showing that apartheid is abhorrent to the Christian conscience. And Nelson Mandela managed to smuggle out of his Robben Island cell a Soweto anniversary message predicting the eventual triumph of democracy.

The thought processes of the white rulers are notoriously slow, but the message must be getting through that they are driving down a dead-end street. The sociologists would say that they are in a "no-win situation". The fact that they are also without friends in the world has most unfortunately been concealed by the present visit of the British Lions rugby team. The rugby reports have been the one thing to boost white morale, and this should lie heavy on the consciences of the British sportsmen if longer violence is the result.

That there are other options open to South Africa is the conclusion of a book* published by two white South Africans, F. van Zyl Slabbert, who is leader of the opposition Progressive Federal Party, and David Welsh, an academic who has been involved in Progressive politics. Their argument is that the problems of democracy in a multiracial society are not insoluble — they spend much time quoting from the new Nigerian constitution — if the will is there. "There are those who believe that the only way it is going to happen is through some violent overthrow of the present regime. . . . Such an approach is likely to entail untold misery, struggle, sacrifice and bloodshed, with the desired outcome of a more just and democratic South Africa in no way certain. . . . Can a more democratic dispensation be negotiated as a possible alternative? . . . The white government will not easily relinquish its position of entrenched privilege and power. It is likely to happen when the costs of domination are outweighed by the possible advantages of negotiation. . . ."

It is not possible to predict when — or indeed if — this position would arise, or whether a white South African government would ever recognise that it has reached this impasse. All that can be hoped is that "it is not necessarily inevitable that the representatives of the conflicting parties

have to crawl in exhaustion over the corpses of their followers to conclude a truce and begin negotiations".

The South African authorities would need first to demonstrate their good faith by committing themselves to the principle of full and equal citizenship for all South Africans and effective participation in the same government irrespective of race. Discriminatory laws would need to be repealed. Then those negotiating must include the true leaders of the people. Banned organisations and leaders would have to have their restrictions lifted and be allowed to mobilise support and campaign; persons convicted under various security laws would have to be amnestied. It is inconceivable that any talking would take place without Nelson Mandela and the other men of Robben Island playing a leading part.

The authors state that "these are tough demands for any ruling group to accept". In fact, it is inconceivable at the moment that any Afrikaner leader would entertain such proposals. But when he is led to the edge of the abyss his mind may change. If negotiations were ever to start there would still be enormous difficulties in establishing some common declaration of intent. If the white side had been driven so far as to make the concessions necessary to mount talks, it is likely that the black side would feel so confident that it would be unwilling to contemplate anything other than complete victory. But, making another big assumption that "the parties recognise and acknowledge a common predicament that will be magnified unless the conflicts are restrained and regulated", the authors go on to debate what sort of a constitution might help a future South Africa.

Some years ago the Progressive Party lost all African support by advocating a loaded franchise that many saw as a device for hanging on to white rule. That has now been completely abandoned. The authors propose full adult franchise, but a proportional representation system that would ensure a sensitive reflection of support for all parties in the legislature. They propose a federal system of some sort, with an executive president, perhaps supported by a Federal Council and Federal Assembly on the Swiss model. The emphasis would be "to afford minority groups maximal access to influence and power, but this access should be in a co-operative, coalescent context, and not merely oppositional". A coalition government is foreseen. Majority rule might be tempered by some sort of minority veto in some cases and safeguards such as a Bill of Rights. The Nigerian practice is quoted for ensuring that all sections are fairly represented in the police, civil service and other government bodies. "The operation of the political system must, as far as possible, deny or minimise the pay-off to racial or ethnic appeals; and conversely, it must provide rewards to coalescent, linkage, or simply interracial movements".

There is, of course, no immediate prospect of any of this happening. The Pretoria racists, in spite of some setbacks and in spite of the evidence of history, still think they are winning. A hard liberation struggle still has to be fought. But it is encouraging that some thought should be given now to a way forward out of the bloodshed towards an apparently unlikely interracial peace. The authors quote Max Weber: "All human experience confirms the truth — that man would not have attained the possible unless time and again he had reached out for the impossible".

*South Africa's Options: Strategies for Sharing Power by F. van Zyl Slabbert and David Welsh (Rex Collings).

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Hard words at PNP congress

THE NATIONAL congress of the ruling People's National Party of Ghana ended in Kumasi last week after two days instead of the planned three and with the dissolution of the party's central committee. President Limann has taken over responsibility for running the affairs of the party, in consultation with Alhaji Imoru Egala, the party's founder, and Nana Okutwer Bekoe, the national chairman.

The full significance of this was not immediately clear. Some reports spoke of it as a move "to save the PNP from an imminent split". Other reports said that the trouble arose because documents, including proposals for amending the constitution of the party, had not been prepared in time.

There was certainly some evidence of ill-feeling. President Limann appealed to delegates to shun the cheap criticisms of those who are "obstructive and insincere". He said they were "individuals wearing blinkers and deliberately refusing to face the realities of our time". The critics had been the very people who had destroyed the economy, he said. They had played a major part in decision-making since the fall of Nkrumah and should, therefore, be held responsible for the debts, the empty coffers

and the idle factories that the PNP inherited.

Alhaji Imoru Egala similarly said that the present state of affairs had been the result of the undermining, hypocrisy and selfishness of some members of the party. He told the old guard that they were the same people who had betrayed Nkrumah. They should withdraw and give the younger generation a chance. Mr. Krobo Edusei, Ashanti regional chairman of the party, said the PNP would continue to achieve success in spite of the "diabolical machinations of political acrobats". Nana Okutwer Bekoe said the party had inherited problems associated with the latter days of the CPP — character assassination, cliquism, intolerance and undermining of true party brotherhood. He referred to members "who put their personal or regional interests above the overriding interests of the party and nation".

The congress adjourned without holding any elections for officers. It is to be reconvened at some future date.

It is obviously of the greatest importance to Ghana at a time when there is an urgent need for stability and confidence in government that the ruling party should maintain enough unity to function properly. The best result of the present dispute will be, firstly, a demonstration of the personal power and authority of President Limann — he was a compromise candidate for the presidency and he has yet to show his grip on the party machine — and, secondly, the emergence into eventual positions of influence in the party of a new generation of young politicians.

Aminu Kano's party divided

MALAM AMINU KANO is facing a most serious challenge to his authority as leader of the People's Redemption Party (PRP) with the decision of the PRP governors of Kaduna and Kano, Balarabe Musa and Mohammed Abubaker Rimi, to defy his direct instructions by attending the meeting at Yola, Gongola State, of the "nine" governors — that is, the governors of the UPN, GNPP and PRP states who had assembled in Kaduna, Kano, Borno, Benue and Ibadan before the Yola meeting. The party is in other sorts of disarray, with several members of the National Assembly being suspended because of their expressed differences with the party secretariat over the governors' meetings, and with open disagreement between the Senate Leader, Senator Sabo Bakin Zuwo, and the Chief Whip, Dr. Junaidu Mohammed, on the one hand, and Governor Rimi on the other.

The position is complicated, and the issues many-sided. Governor Balarabe Musa has said that he felt obliged to attend the Yola meeting in the interest of the Government of Kaduna State and because "it is a matter of honour to do so". It has been argued that he and Governor Rimi attend the meeting as governors and not as party representatives and thus the party has no right to issue prohibitions. The whole area of the exact relationship between party authorities and members elected to various posts or assemblies is one that requires further thought and clarification (this concerns other parties as well as the PRP); obviously party discipline must be maintained to some degree, but equally obviously a governor has obligations to the people of his state as well as obligations to his party, and a member of a state or federal assembly has obligations to his constituents.

There are differences in the PRP about possible alliances. It is no secret that Senator Sabo Bakin Zuwo and Dr. Junaidu Mohammed favour a working relationship with the NPN, for instance, while the two PRP governors would rather seek some sort of partnership with the UPN. Malam Aminu Kano is firmly opposed to any alliance.

Much of the party tension arises from personality clashes and some comes from Malam Aminu Kano's reluctance (like many aging party leaders) to prepare for his retirement from the scene and make clear what succession he expects.

Fortunately, the party has three years to sort out its differences before the next election. It would be a tragedy if the party which offers the most clear-cut radical programme, and the party which has a strong appeal for the young and for women, should be permanently damaged by internal dissension.

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Problems that food aid creates

Alex Rondos analyses, with particular reference to the cases of Mali and Cape Verde, the relation between food aid and agricultural development.

FOOD AID has that dubious distinction of keeping both disaster and cure at bay. The debate surrounding this form of aid therefore concentrates on two main questions: at what stage does food aid become necessary? And, if it is deemed to be necessary how should the assistance be supplied and distributed? The question is political, moral and technical. One report at the CILSS colloquium held in Nouakchott last year made the point that "food aid has taken precedence over longer-term solutions for solving the world's food problems".

The problem was posed again in Arusha some ten days ago at the latest meeting of the World Food Council. Developing countries left embittered by what they felt was the parsimony of the donor states. The latter had attended this occasion, meant to be at the ministerial level with only two countries represented by ministers. The only country to make an offering for the people affected by the latest drought in East Africa was Canada. The donors repeated their call for developing countries to present overall food and agricultural plans so that donors could channel aid to the neediest sectors. The point of the request was that more emphasis in the food aid debate should be placed on domestic food production. The Council assured the Group of 77 that this request, now passed as a resolution, would not become a condition of assistance or an interference in their internal affairs.

When the total aid given every year to Upper Volta, to take a striking example, surpasses the volume of the annual budget, sovereignty and the donors' assurances must surely need to be carefully redefined. The fact that the French Government has now gone so far as to state, on paper, that food aid is no panacea and that furthermore much of the food aid that has been sent to Sahelian states has never reached those for whom it is intended (*West Africa*, May 13, 1980) is an important official change of heart. It will create more problems for French relations with those regimes for whom food aid is the most effective way of sweeping the rural problem under the carpet.

For the donors, the latest World Food Council meeting was another occasion to mark their disappointment. The goal of 10m-ton food aid by OECD member-states was met in 1979 but the other objective of centralising the gathering and distribution of food for aid has failed. The World Food Programme, the ideal institution for this purpose, has seen its role diminish since 1975. In 1977, of the \$1,912,500 donated and loaned for food aid by OECD states only \$507.1m. worth came through multilateral organisations, and the European Community provided \$210.8m. of this. The United States, on the other hand, gives the lion's share of food

aid, 63.3 per cent of all aid that year. This amounted to \$1,210,000, of which \$1,132,000 was given as bilateral aid.

The fact, however, is that neither side in this debate — the donors and the recipient governments — will find it easy to make even a tactical withdrawal from their present positions. An important donor like the US is not going to pull out and that is not even recommended. It supplies over 60 per cent of food aid to the Sahel. But it is clear to the US, if one examines the AID files, that it acknowledges, at least privately, the failure of flooding food deficit economies with US grain. Similarly, Senegal, to take an example, is unlikely to see its cereal production increase markedly; the problem that it suffers from is not one of production but of marketing. This implies internal reforms, which have been initiated, but whose success will be a long time coming and which have serious ramifications in the general political and economic order.

During the colloquium at Nouakchott, two countries were dealt with whose experience has been very different and could prove instructive in the food aid debate.

'Parallel market' in Mali

MALI, everyone insists, is potentially self-sufficient in food. In 1976 it had an excellent year and then promptly sold most of its surplus abroad because of pressure on the balance of payments, 1977 was a bad year and Mali was left stranded, appealing to the international community for a substantial amount of emergency food aid.

State-controlled, in theory, Malian food production should be bought by the state agency, OPAM, whose responsibility it is to stabilise prices and to ensure supplies to the urban and deprived markets. As it happens, between 60 and 80 per cent of food provided to the domestic markets in Mali is supplied by private traders. Cereal production in Mali is stagnating, while it should be producing exports. Mahan producer prices are among the lowest in the Sahel, between 20 and 50 per cent lower than in neighbouring states. OPAM has neither the technical nor financial capacity to enforce its monopoly.

These basic facts have been the main contributors to a situation which results in the existence of what is euphemistically called the parallel market, where prices are higher than in the official market. OPAM gives priority treatment in some areas which produces artificially low prices in the official market. On the other hand, when traders know that they can sell at a high price, they will buy from the producer at a price slightly

higher than the official one. OPAM is thus denied its source of production.

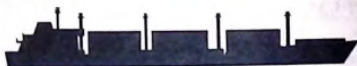
A brief glance at some of the causes of this gloomy diagnosis suggests that the situation is retrievable, but only with the greatest degree of political effort. The drought of 1968-73 naturally had its effects of disrupting the country's relatively delicate production system and reducing official reserves. At a technical level the problems created during the drought have been compounded by the government's inability to provide the rural sector with adequate finance for stabilisation of stocks or for sufficient storage capacity. Transport has been a perennial issue between the government of Mali and donors. Bamako insists on new roads while donors press for the improvement of the wide network of secondary roads and tracks. The latter's maintenance is easier and cheaper. At present government transport fleets are not enough and have left the way open for the private truck owner who is scarcely going to risk damaging his vehicle on the untended roads linking the centre with some of the most deprived regions in the country.

Depending on the year, OPAM controls between 20 and 40 per cent of the market. This, in the view of many who have had to deal with OPAM, is caused by the rigid laws making it a monopoly without the capacity to execute its obligations. There are fixed producer and consumer prices and all the intermediary financial problems are strictly regulated. Under circumstances where a significant proportion of the national production is exported to neighbouring countries where the producer price is more attractive, OPAM is left with very little room for manoeuvre. This incapacity merely aggravates the cereal deficit.

The situation is aggravated by the fact that the local authorities responsible for the collection of cereals have very little financial and technical back-up from the government.

What has intensified the problems for Mali in the last six years has been the depressingly low levels of producer prices. This is one of the most unfortunate examples of the exploitation of a rural population for reasons that have little to do with economics but more with the fears of a politically paralysed military regime which dreads the prospect of unrest in Bamako if food prices are raised. The result has been smuggling at the border zones. One shudders at the prospects for the Senegal River development projects. Unless there is some form of regional producer price co-ordination, what Mali stands to gain from reclaimed land in the Senegal River basin in the years to come is likely to be lost in clandestine exports to Senegal and other countries.

OPAM is in debt, to the tune of 39bn. Malian francs, it was estimated in mid-1979. This debt is almost four times the

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annual budget of 10bn. Malian francs. Mali has to import food at a time when its balance of payments is deeply in the red and under severe pressure because of an energy shortage. Until the government takes steps towards reinforcing the position of the peasant farmer food aid will be seen as the only alternative.

Worst effects are avoided

THE STORY OF CAPE VERDE is a complete contrast. Unlike other CILSS member-states there is very little likelihood of it achieving self-sufficiency in food and there is no real alternative employment outside the rural sector. The difference with Cape Verde though is that it stands out as an example of how a developing country has managed to accept food aid while avoiding the worst psychological consequences of such total dependence on the outside world. Food aid to Cape Verde is used in three ways: free distribution to consumers, food for work projects and the selling of food aid in order to finance the "emergency programme".

Free distribution has always been modest and directed to social groups that have been identified as the most vulnerable; the old, sick, children, refugees, families with cases of malnutrition and women who head a household. The aid is given either in food or cash. However, this assistance has never reached more than 10 per cent of the total value of food aid annually.

The food-for-work project consists of food as a salary for those who work on government projects. This form of assistance is largely conditioned by the rules of some donor states, especially the US. Distribution costs and the relatively high rate of monetisation of the Cape Verde economy limit the utility of this type of aid. In addition, the government is very conscious of the dangers that such aid might create a mentality of dependence among workers.

The most impressive use of food aid in Cape Verde, however, is the emergency programme. The aim here, on the part of the local authorities, has been to meet the two overwhelming economic problems for the islands: unemployment and the elimination of certain basic structural obstacles in the economy, such as the isolation of parts of islands, by the construction of more roads, increasing the output of supervised holdings and increasing the storage capacity for grains that are to be marketed. The effect is to eliminate direct assistance, which has tended to create a psychological dependence on aid, while giving the government greater independence in the management of its projects.

While no-one would pretend that the system is perfect, all observers have agreed that the Cape Verde authorities have approached the complex question of identifying projects and the recipients of jobs in those projects with rare attention. Short-term employment has to be created and must not conflict with the future development planning. The projects have

to be profitable if the entire exercise is to be of any value to the society.

Under the emergency programme the food aid is distributed by the Ministry of Commerce, which has created a specific organisation for this purpose. The Empresa Publica de Abastecimento, EMPA, has warehouses and stores throughout the islands. The finance acquired by the EMPA stores from the sale of food aid is transferred to the National Development Fund, whose activities are co-ordinated by the State Secretariat of Co-operation and Planning. The Fund finances the execution of projects. Up to 1978 it was estimated that between 77 and 94 per cent of the fund's resources were covered by the sale of food aid. The fund, in a reasonable year makes up at least one-third of the national budget, and on a year like 1977/78 when there was serious drought, it constitutes about half the annual budget.

Though it has not been without its problems both the implementation and employment rates under the emergency programme have been encouraging. By 1977/78, the implementation rate had risen to 80.7 per cent. Job creation has even exceeded expectations with implementations rates of 105.5 per cent in 1976 and 120 per cent in 1977, especially in the rural sector. If there has been a slight problem it is that the capital intensive projects have lagged behind somewhat. It is estimated, therefore, that in 1977/78 190m. Escudos (\$5.3m) were redistributed to Cape Verdians as wages from the emergency programme. This is out of a total for the programme in that year of 282m. Escudos (\$7.8m).

Long-term strategy

If there is one basic problem which faces Cape Verdian authorities it is in the relations with donors, and this fact reflects the discussions that took place at the World Food Council meeting in Arusha. For Cape Verde, food aid is seen as part of a long-term development strategy, which aims for economic independence. The Cape Verde authorities are in the course of preparing a longer four-year development plan which will facilitate matters for donors, some of whom are gradually moving towards a multi-annual approach to aid. At present the system is dominated by a cycle of dramatic annual pleas for emergency aid which then has to be followed by consultations and deliberations on the part of the donors by which time there has been a serious gap between the request and delivery of aid.

The report to the CILSS colloquium sums up best the policies undertaken in Cape Verde: "The experience of Cape Verde sets an important example of how to utilise international co-operation to approach short-term issues (such as unemployment) and try to eliminate the longer-term bottlenecks (erosion and opening up of certain parts of the islands), while simultaneously avoiding the setting in of a mentality of dependence."

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Matchet's Diary

THE BENIN bronze plaque which is reproduced on the cover was sold at Sotheby's in 1954 for £450. It comes up for sale again on Monday, June 16, when it is expected to sell for about £200,000. I shall report the exact price it fetches next week. The contrast gives an indication of the way appreciation of the artistry of the old Benin craftsmen has spread; but it also gives rise to thoughts about how this sort of money is bound to encourage the smuggling and faking of artefacts, and other sorts of corruption.

The plaque is part of one of the most important sales of Benin work for many years. Sotheby's describes it as "The Property of a European Private Collector" and refuses (on instructions from the vendor) to offer any further information. This is a slightly pointless coyness, for the collection is well known and anyone who studies the subject knows that the seller is Mr. Adolph Swartz, a Dutch businessman, head of a firm manufacturing essences for use in perfumery, and a man who has built up since 1954 one of the few major private collections of Benin art. The catalogue introduction by Professor Philip J. C. Dark says that the collector "had an eye for fine pieces and was particularly interested in establishing the historical context of his collection through study of the literature".

There are two other items of exceptional



Early head of an oba

value in addition to the plaque. One is the head of an oba illustrated above; it is one of the earliest representations of the Bini brass-casters' skills. It, too, is expected by the Sotheby's experts to sell for about £200,000. The present auction record for a Benin work of art is £185,000 for a figure of a flute-player sold at Sotheby's in July.

1964. The other great rarity is a double bell carved from ivory and dating from the first half of the sixteenth century. A price in excess of £160,000 is predicted for this.

The five-figure plaque illustrated on the cover shows a warrior chief flanked by two soldiers and attended by two naked retainers. It is remarkably rich in detail and is described in the catalogue as a "splendid example of the bronze-casters' skill". All such plaques were produced between the middle of the sixteenth century and the first quarter of the seventeenth century.

Geographical anniversary

SIR Clemence Markham once wrote of the Royal Geographical Society that its "long array of gallant and brilliant achievements has wrought a marvellous change on the map of Africa". But Africa has always been there. Indeed it has been truly said that the darkest thing about what the Victorians sometimes called the Dark Continent was their own ignorance of it — an ignorance which the Royal Geographical Society did much to dispel. Last week the Society celebrated its 150th Anniversary and it is interesting to reflect how much Africa has changed not only in her own development but also in the image which she reflects in the minds of men and women the world over.

One of the earliest references to African minutes of the Society refers to "a blank on the map, a mysterious region exciting the curiosity of geographers and explorers — most of whom today, are more properly called travellers, since they asked their way and were guided — and even sometimes carried — to make their so-called "discoveries". Nevertheless the RGS, as it is usually known, played a very significant role both in bringing knowledge of the cities, rivers and lakes of Africa to the outside world and in their accurate survey. It was fitting therefore that two of the guests that the Queen, Patron of the Society, stopped to exchange a few words with at the evening reception were Professor Mabogunje and Udo of the University of Ibadan. "Have you come all this way just to join us here?" she enquired.

Although established in 1830 the RGS was not in fact the first Geographical Society in Europe. The Societe de Geographie de Paris was established in 1821 and that of Berlin in 1928. Appropriately the Directors of these Institutions attended the ceremony and delivered addresses of greeting as did representatives of the Societies in Mexico (1833) and the American Geographical Society (1852). A Society was formed in St Petersburg in 1845 and a telegram from the Director of its logical successor, the Geographical Section of the Soviet Academy of Science, was also read out to the Duke of Kent, who presided, and to invited guests from the world over.

The Society is particularly remembered for involvement in revealing the sources of the Nile, but there are few 19th century travellers to other regions of Africa who were not at some time sponsored, assisted

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or honoured by the Society. The list includes Burton, Speke, Lander, Barth, Baker, Livingstone, Stanley etc. Hardly a corner of the continent escaped their probing. An absorbing book by Ian Cameron entitled *To the farthest ends of the Earth*, which commemorates this anniversary, freely admits that monies were easier to come by in the 19th century for work in Africa than elsewhere — Antarctica for example — a further clear illustration, if one were needed, that the history of territorial imperialism in Africa cannot be divorced from commercial and missionary interests.

Indeed, founder members significantly included several of Sir Joseph Banks' Africa Association, which was incorporated into the Society in 1831. Government interest and support was early too, in the realisation that trade and the flag followed hard upon exploration in Africa. However, the RGS is remembered also for the search for the Northwest Passage, the crossing of the Australian deserts, the struggles (unsuccessful in the latter case) to be first to reach the North and South Poles and the discovery and ascent of Everest — first climbed in the year of the Queen's coronation by an expedition led by Lord Hunt, the present President of the Society.

Project for children

A FULL-TIME Projects Officer has been appointed for the Ghana Union Community Centre in Kilburn, London, and the project should get off the ground soon. The person appointed is Mrs. Ruby Topen, who came from Accra to Britain 15 years ago, at the age of 13, and was educated at school in London and then at the School of Oriental and African Studies, where she took a degree in African history and Hausa. Since then she has been at the International African Institute as a Research Fellow and Project Co-ordinator.

The appointment was made possible by a grant of £8,000 made by the Commission for Racial Equality. The job description submitted to them would seem to be something that will tax even Mrs. Topen's energy and abilities. She will be expected to produce a "cultural orientation programme aimed at children of Ghanaian extraction ... organise social activities for Ghanaian children and children of other cultural backgrounds with a view to developing closer relationships ... develop a resource centre and courses on African studies for adults and children ... organise a free legal advice centre ... and produce a news letter".

Mrs. Topen's first priority will be to establish contact with Ghanaians in London and learn about their children and their needs. The address of the Community Centre, in which she has an office, is St. Andrew's Church, Salusbury Road, Kilburn, W9. (The "Salusbury" is not a misprint: the inhabitants of Kilburn apparently have some original ideas about spelling.) Mrs. Topen and the Ghana Union will also have to turn their attention to ensuring an income for the centre: the CRE grant is a one-off thing.

Master-Sergeant Doe's coup is defended

Miatta Fahnbulleh, the Liberian singer, was recently in Lagos for the launching of the Miss Black World organisation at the National Theatre, and in Monrovia. In an interview with Nii K. Bentsi-Enchill, she discusses the present situation in Liberia.

Question: Your visit to Lagos was about a week after the OAU Economic Summit when your new Foreign Minister Baccus Matthews got turned away? Were people still talking about it?

Answer: Yes, there was a lot of discussion and people were often confronting me with the situation back home in Liberia.

Q: Were people generally sympathetic or hostile to the April events?

A: I think everybody who was aware, whether they came from Nigeria, Ghana or wherever, and particular if they had been in Liberia, knew about the contradictions in that society. So they were sympathetic and, I think, understood the reasons why it happened. Like some Liberians and like the rest of the world, people in Lagos were shocked by the executions. I think this is where people forgot about the sympathy and began to question what was going on.

Q: It is interesting that Nigerians were so shocked by executions in Liberia.

A: Yes, this is what I found ... well, I didn't really find it strange because, let's face it, everyone always wants to pretend that theirs isn't so bad. When a lot of my Nigerian friends were saying, "How

barbaric, etc. etc." I was quick to remind them that in the sixties when I was at school we were utterly horrified to hear that Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, Ahmadu Bello, Akintola, Okotie-Eboh had been murdered, and the way all these people had been murdered! When I mentioned that, and all those years of massacres and civil war, and then the assassination of Murtala Muhammed and the executions afterwards ... and they said "Well, you know ..."

Q: And the routine executions of armed robbers on Bar Beach ...

A: Exactly.

Q: It seems that it didn't really touch most people because those were just so-called criminals.

A: Yes, when a man goes and steals with a loaded gun, you think society has a right to stand up and shoot him, but when an honourable gentleman with a degree, a personality and a position arbitrarily channels millions or thousands into private bank accounts, you expect the punishment to be different. Well that's one of society's problems that there are different standards and values for different people.

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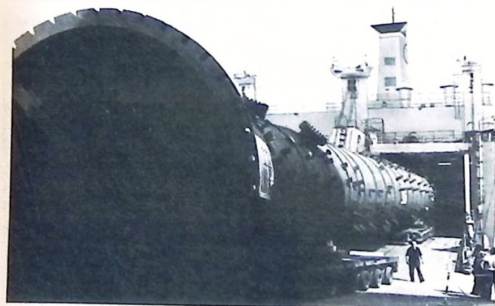
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Q: Did you find yourself having to justify the executions?

A: Well, I realise that one killing or 13 killings do not justify anything and if I want to follow the book I do believe the rule that thou shalt not kill. However, when you are dealing with an explosive situation, a situation of war, you don't expect there to be no blood. To have thought there could have been a change in Liberia without bloodshed would have been dreaming. If a change had come before April 14 last year, then maybe it would have been without blood. But I could not see a change without blood coming after last April 14 because a lot of blood was shed that day. Even for those people who do not remember all the blood that was shed in the past, this was the first time in our lifetime that so much blood was spilt, and the situation was never calm again.

Q: We read in the Western press about the violence that followed the April 12 uprising, the looting and harassment of foreigners and "Congo" people. What was it like when you got to Monrovia?

A: I arrived around May 22, a good month after all these events had been reported, so I found the city relatively calm. You do notice when you are passing the homes of former officials who were arrested that their houses have been looted. But compared to last year when there was outright vandalising and looting of businesses and almost everything in sight in the city centre, this year it was turned on the houses of those officials and people they knew had been carried away. This was done by soldiers, not under orders, the few renegades who take things into their own hands, and a lot of civilians, neighbours of these people, who live in shacks. This was their day to take their revenge so they went in and carted off what they could.

Q: A lot has been made of the barbarism of the executions.

A: Let's put it this way. They will always make us appear barbaric; we will always seem to be more barbaric than anyone else. Maybe the Liberian people did do it in excess on that particular day.

Q: I'm told there is a slum just by the Barclay Training Centre?

A: Oh yes. On the beach there where these people were executed are the living quarters of the soldiers, and it is a slum area where you wouldn't want your dog or cat to live. My understanding is that if you treat a man like a dog then you don't expect him to act like anything else.

Q: I also understand there were only about 150 trained men out of an army of about 5,000?

A: I wouldn't put the number above that. Maybe the rest of Africa, having heard of a coup in Liberia by Master Sergeant Doe and so forth is not aware that our army was really non-existent. Yes, the names were there on the payroll, some uniforms were supplied and so on, but basically they kept those people for ceremonial and pompous occasions, visits of heads of state and things like that. But the rest of the soldiers were really left to survive. Their duties were anything from going to guard the Minister's house or going on the plantation. Soldiers

were carted off to private farms to work. I know a couple of people who were soldiers but worked as ordinary civilians; they didn't live in the barracks and didn't wear uniforms because there were no uniforms to give them. They considered themselves soldiers though they never carried guns, but they lived in the community. I think people just began to realise after April 12 the predicament of the soldiers.

Q: To some extent then, ordinary soldiers were just like ordinary workers?

A: That's right. Because maybe they had the arms, they decided to take action, but they were actually echoing the feeling of the masses. Yes, we call them soldiers and they carry guns, but up until April 12 they were largely a part of the civilian population.

Q: There has been disagreement about the substance of the change. An article in *West Africa* last week for instance emphasised the apparent lack of a clear programme, raised the problem of tribalism, and pointed out the lack of education of the soldiers. What is your appreciation of the change?

A: Well, a change is a beginning, a new beginning. It's like a newborn child. You got to wet on yourself or whatever, reach the stage when you can crawl, when you can walk. Liberia had a change. Even though it was expected, most aware people felt it would happen by 1981-82 — but it happened on April 12. On the education thing, one of the greatest tragedies in Africa is that with the coming of "Western civilisation" Africans have come to look on illiteracy as ignorance and stupidity. I have a lot of illiterate relatives who I know have commonsense and who are wise. The fact that an African cannot read or write English does not mean he cannot make a decision in the interests of his own people. The military and civilian government is capable of handling the administration of this country. I think they have enough qualified people.

For 133 years, Liberia had boasted of a lot of educated people but had not been able to change the system, and we were the laughing stock of Africa in terms of nationalism. Now if "seventeen illiterate men" could do it; even if it was with guns they knew what would be the consequences if they failed and we must admire their courage. They knew that the democratic process in Liberia could never be changed democratically, and they realised that a coup would never be forthcoming from the upper echelon of the army because they were put there through patronage. What more education do you need to analyse that like they did?

Q: What about the tribalism business?

A: From the colonial powers, the imperialist press etc. the thing they have always done is to divide and rule. Now the focus is on Liberia. Up until recently the concentration was on the "native Liberians" and the "Americo-Liberians"; there was no emphasis on the Vai or the Gola; we were all indigenous Liberians or Americo-Liberians, now that the "native Liberians" in the persons of Sergeant Doe and the PRC have toppled a government identified as Americo-Liberians, there is a new agitation. All of a sudden our tribes have been discovered. All the years I have been



Mattia Fohabulleh

hearing about Chea Cheapoo or George Boley, they were never referred to as Kranh. They are Liberians. I think at this time, we the Liberians of the younger generation cannot afford to want to listen to tribalism.

Q: What about the stories that soldiers went to this bank here and took this amount of money, went there and took that amount?

A: The media are always so concerned with the sensational aspects. Yes, there are true stories of soldiers, not under orders, who took it upon themselves to go into people's homes to intimidate people because they knew they could get away with it then. It happens everywhere when there is chaos and confusion, but it is also used to discredit the positive things that might be going on. So a soldier got away with a thousand or two thousand dollars. But where were these same concerned and observant reporters when corruption seemed to be part of the accepted code of conduct?

Q: We have seen Baccus Matthews turned away from the economic summit of the OAU and Master Sergeant Doe from the ECOWAS summit. Why has this been happening?

A: One explanation of what has been happening is that by not recognising Master Sergeant Doe, other African leaders hope to deter similar coups. If so, they do not know the history of Liberia and they are not in touch with what's going on in the continent. Master Sergeant Doe is a redeemer to his people. The same struggle of Liberian people to have a leadership working to fulfil the aspirations of the ordinary people is going on in other African countries. The refusal of other African leaders to allow Liberia in has only unified the country even more behind Master Sergeant Doe. It is ironic that the last straw that broke the Tolbert Administration's back was its very prestigious OAU project which we couldn't really afford but the prestige of being OAU Chairman was very important to him. After about \$350m. of our money was spent on hosting these people and now they don't think we should take part because we have removed our leader, it brings Liberia to a point of realisation where we begin to deal with the problems of the OAU. I think all our African leaders have been avoiding dealing with Africa's problems all these 16 years. They have been trying to retain their own little kingdoms. Without glorifying the death of Dr. Tolbert, I think developments in Liberia will have a positive impact on the OAU.

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President Stevens reviews the year

By a correspondent

PRESIDENT SIAKA STEVENS of Sierra Leone, at the State Opening of Parliament in Freetown on June 6, looked forward to the holding of the OAU summit at the beginning of July and, on internal matters, promised a Bill to complete the establishment of a one-party system.

The President began with a review of the past 12 months, recalled that he had visited Guinea (reciprocating an earlier visit to Sierra Leone by President Sekou Toure), Kuwait, Qatar and Algeria. The Presidents of Ghana and Tanzania has visited Sierra Leone. He attended the OAU economic summit in Lagos, participated in the Franco-African summit in the South of France and returned recently from the ECOWAS summit in Lome. He referred to "certain regrettable misunderstandings" that had developed with Liberia but said, "We will do everything possible to see that these misunderstandings are cleared as soon as possible." Sierra Leone valued highly its historic and other connections with Liberia.

The President continued: "In July last year, I led our delegation to the Sixteenth Summit of the Organisation of African Unity held in Monrovia where my delegation made constructive contribution to the deliberations of that Summit. In a few days from now, as you are all aware, Sierra Leone will have the honour of hosting the



President Stevens welcomes President Nyerere to Freetown.

Thirty-fifth Session of the Council of Ministers and the Seventeenth Summit Meeting of the Organisation. I have no doubt that with the total support and commitment of all Sierra Leoneans and friends at home and abroad, the efforts which we have made in the preparation for these meetings will be crowned with

success."

Another important event, the President said, was the meeting on January 31, 1980, at Conakry Dec, Sierra Leone, of the Heads of State of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. "The outcome of that Summit has not only strengthened the fraternal bonds that have so long existed between our three

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countries but over and above all, it paved the way for the formal admission of the People's Revolutionary Republic of Guinea to the Mano River Union. I have no doubt that the accession of the Republic of Guinea into the Mano River Union will result in immense political and economic benefits as well as provide an added leverage to our relentless struggle to meet the basic needs of our peoples."

In agriculture, the government continued to lay emphasis on the production of rice. "The unprecedented importation of large quantities of rice last year was a direct result of the vagaries of weather conditions and the invasion of army worm pests. To combat this situation, my Government approved the mounting of a Crash Rice Programme during the current cropping season. The Programme is supported by new tractors, power tillers, and implements which have already been deployed in various parts of the country. It is hoped that this exercise will contribute in no small measure to increasing our national production of rice."

On mining, the President said: "The vital role played by the mining sector in past years was maintained during 1979. During the year, mineral exports provided approximately 60 per cent of the total value of domestic exports, with diamonds alone contributing 63 per cent of the country's export earnings."

"The timely resumption of rutile production, and the price increases of diamonds and bauxite were major factors which contributed to the present favourable

position of the mining industry. Rutile production was resumed in July, 1979, and the first commercial shipment of 7,500 tons of rutile valued at Le1.6m. was made last November.

"I am pleased to announce that an agreement was signed recently between the Government and the Austrian state-owned Austro-mineral Company to re-open the Marampa iron ore mines. Studies conducted show that the project is economically feasible, and will initially involve the treatment of ore tailings."

"The 1961 Bauxite Mineral Prospecting and Mining Agreement was successfully renegotiated during the year under review, and makes provision for increases in rents and fees and for effective participation by Sierra Leoneans in the top management of the Company. At present prospecting for bauxite is being done in the Kamakwei area and negotiations are currently being conducted between the Government and Alussuise to conclude an agreement for bauxite mining and processing in the Port Loko area."

"Following the grant of a mineral oil exploration licence to a consortium of American oil companies, exploration for mineral oil and gas deposits will commence this year."

"A few months ago the Government developed a favourable feasibility report on the Kimberlite deposits in Kono. My Government has been studying the report and holding consultations with experts with a view to arriving at a suitable arrangement

for the exploitation of these deposits.

"Gold will continue to occupy a high priority in our exploration efforts in the ensuing year."

The President said tourism was a vehicle "not only for earning foreign exchange but also for the creation of employment opportunities and general understanding amongst the peoples of the World irrespective of their colour, race or creed."

He added: "The infrastructural developments that have taken place in Sierra Leone in connection with our hosting of the 17th OAU Conference have given a further boost to the Tourist Industry in this country. I wish to take this opportunity to express the appreciation of my Government to various International Agencies such as the European Economic Community, the United Nations Development Programme and the International Labour Organisation for their assistance, especially in the training of middle-level personnel in the tourist and hotel industry."

"My Government intends to construct a new National Museum and a new Cultural Village to match the ultra modern hotels that have been built. Consideration is also being given to the establishment of Cultural Centres in Bo, Makeni and Kenema. In keeping with my Government's policy of encouraging cultural exchanges at International level, cultural agreements have been signed with a number of friendly countries, and Sierra Leone is now a full member of the African Cultural Institute."

On education, the President noted that

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"it is becoming increasingly difficult for Sierra Leoneans to study in the United Kingdom, more particularly in the legal field. At the same time, the country needs personnel trained in Law to serve not only as Barristers and Solicitors but also in various other fields. I am pleased to disclose that the University of Sierra Leone has formally approved the establishment of a Law Faculty."

President Stevens said: "Government will, in this Session, initiate a Bill to give effect to consequential provisions relating to the One-Party System established by the Constitution of Sierra Leone. This Bill will amend and repeal certain Acts of our Parliament which are inconsistent with the provisions of the One-Party Constitution of Sierra Leone and thereby finally remove, *inter alia*, the last vestiges of a multi-party system of Government."

On finance, he said: "During the fiscal year 1979/80, my Government and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) reached an understanding on the use of the Fund's resources under a Standby Credit Agreement which is designed to support Sierra Leone's economic Stabilisation Programme. However, since the conclusion of the Standby Programme, developments outside our control have continued to hamper the attainment of our financial objectives. Recent escalations in the cost of imported oil and other external cost increases which we have had to absorb, coupled with the weakening of international prices for our main agricultural exports have caused a substantial deterioration in our terms of trade."

The President referred to local government reforms. "During my meet-the-people tours, I spared no pains in explaining Government's policy and the need for every citizen to be totally involved in the task of nation building through self-help and collective efforts. As a result,

Paramount Chiefs in the Provinces have become more aware of their responsibilities as natural rulers. During the year, two Conferences of Paramount Chiefs were held — one in the Southern Province and the other in the Eastern Province. It is expected that a third Conference will be held in the Northern Province in the not-too-distant future. Apart from providing a forum for Paramount Chiefs to meet and discuss matters of mutual interests, these Conferences have afforded Paramount Chiefs the opportunity of having Government's policy explained to them. The benefits and developments resulting from these meetings are now being seen in terms of various self-help projects ranging from agriculture and health to basic social and economic infrastructure including rural roads and bridges.

"The Register of Voters which was last revised in 1975 is now completely out of date. It is intended therefore that during this year, the Register of Voters will be revised and brought up-to-date. The Electoral Commission in the past year was involved in the Election of a number of Paramount Chiefs in the Provinces and of Tribal Headmen and Village Headmen in the Western Area."

The President ended by saying: "Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, before concluding this address, let me say that the next few weeks will be an important and historic period in the history of our country. Delegations from fifty Sister African States will be converging in Freetown to attend the 35th Session of the Ministerial Conference and the 17th Summit Meeting of the OAU. To this end, every Sierra Leonean must play his or her own part to ensure that the Conferences are a success. I therefore appeal to you as Parliamentary Representatives to give our Government the fullest support in this important task."

Marxism and trade unions in Nigeria

Paul Okojie offers a reply to the two articles by Umoh James Umoh. The articles have stimulated other replies and comments, which we will publish in subsequent weeks.

IN TWO ARTICLES on the trade unions in Nigeria (*West Africa*, May 26 and June 2), Umoh James Umoh attempted to explain why, between 1949 and 1974, successive central trade union bodies created to serve the interest of all union members experienced three major splits. The articles raise a number of disturbing matters which deserve careful consideration.

He uses the word "Marxists" without making clear what he means by it. He also used the word "Left" in a confusing way. Is it a generic word? Does it include Marxists? The confusion gets worse when he draws distinctions between "Marxists", "Liberal Socialist" and "Liberal Left". Who on earth is a "Liberal Left"?

Even in matters where one expected Mr.

Umoh to be more informed (i.e. the history of the trade union splits) his account of the events are twisted and therefore suspect. Inevitably, he fell into a number of errors which could have been avoided had he given careful attention to his evidence. However, for those who are concerned about the development and progress of trade unions in Nigeria, the implications of his conclusions deserve serious attention.

The splits in the central trade union are blamed on a political ideology, i.e. Marxism. It is possible to interpret Mr. Umoh's article to mean that political ideology which accounts for the splits in the central labour movement is separate and distinct from trade union policy and philosophy. If this view is correct, trade



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union leaders are at fault in conflating political ideology with trade union philosophy. This line of reasoning leads to the conclusion that trade union policy and philosophy provide the requisite base for trade union unity, and that political ideology is merely divisive.

He argued, correctly, that the splits which occurred weakened the effectiveness of trade unions in Nigeria generally. Were the splits inevitable? As explained above, Mr. Umoh believes that union leaders ought to have confined themselves to recognised trade union functions. It is, as shall be argued later, a fallacy to assume that such a discrete distinction between trade unionism and politics is possible. He blamed the Marxists for the splits, although he equivocated, when he wrote:

"Throughout the history of the Nigerian labour movement, Marxists have always contributed (author's italics) to the split, bitterness and division of workers along ideological lines."

The problem with the sentence is the use of the word "contributed". Did Mr. Umoh mean that Marxists have always caused the split, bitterness and division of workers along ideological lines? Or does he simply mean that Marxists have contributed to splits, bitterness and division, etc. . . . ?

I do not intend to defend the "Marxists". In fact, it is not necessary to do so. I want to argue that Mr. Umoh confused the situation by giving weight to this aspect of the problem and therefore failed to recognise the more important areas which could

equally be blamed for the trade union splits in so far as one sees the splits as a problem at all. Mr. Umoh failed to look at central trade union structures (which were adversely commented on by Mr. Justice Duro Adebiji who headed the Trade Union Tribunal), the government (see *Adebo Commission, First Report of the Wages and Salaries Review Commission, 1971*) and the employers.

Obviously, unions are bound to disagree where the feeling exists that some union leaders are more favourably disposed to agree with government interventions in trade union autonomy, even when those interventions have an inimical effect on the living standards of union members. To characterise the problem as an issue between Marxists and non-Marxists is to misrecognise the complexity of the issues. (See Robin Cohen *Labour and Politics in Nigeria, 1974*; R. Sandbrook and Robin Cohen, *The Development of an African Working Class, 1975*).

Mr. Umoh's articles almost amount to a call which says, "Stop the Marxists now before they take over". What evidence has Mr. Umoh for this view?

Firstly, let us look at the claim that Marxists caused the splits in the central labour movement. Mr. Umoh wrote that the cause of the first split of the Trade Union Congress of Nigeria (the first central trade union body) was over whether the TUCN should be aligned to the National Council of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC). In 1943, the TUCN voted to align with the NCNC, and this remained the position until 1948. In 1949, the TUCN voted to end their

alignment with the NCNC against the wishes of the "Leftists" who wanted to see the alliance continued. Mr. Umoh claims that the Leftists, feeling peeved that they could not remain in the NCNC under the TUCN umbrella, broke away from the TUCN to form a rival central union called the Nigerian National Federation of Labour (NNFL). However, in 1950, the Nigerian Labour Congress was formed to unify the two factions. The NLC failed, not because of the undemocratic actions of the Marxists, but because of the NLC's ineffectiveness. He puts it in this way:

"In 1950, mercantile workers went on strike. The failure of the strike and the dismissal of workers reduced the influence of the first NLC. Many unions withdrew from it. From March, 1951 to July, 1953 the first NLC existed only in name and had no influence among the workers or in the country."

Therefore it was disingenuous of Mr. Umoh when he wrote that:

"The first NLC inaugurated in 1950 . . . disintegrated because of the political differences of the leaders."

By his own admission, it was clear that the ineffective NLC had to be replaced. In 1953, the All Nigerian Trade Union Federation (ANTUF) was formed "to replace the ineffective first NLC". This suggests that ANTUF represented the consensus of opinion in the labour movement. Not satisfied, Umoh wrote:

"But because of the leftist leanings of leaders of ANTUF, many democratic

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union leaders withdrew and took positive steps to prevent the drift of the Nigerian trade union movement to the left."

Mr. Umoh, it seems, is very selective in defining what he calls "split". He does not see the conduct of the right-wing trade unionists in this instance as splitting the central trade union body, instead their action as "democratic union leaders" is to take "positive steps to prevent the drift of the Nigerian movement to the left". My scoreboard of split causers is as follows: Marxists 1, Rightwingers 1.

In 1959, working away tirelessly as ever, the state managed to shore together another unified trade union body — this time it was called the Trade Union Congress of Nigeria. As usual, it split — exactly a year after. This time, Mr. Umoh did not say who caused the split, except that the cause of the split was ideological. In May, 1962, yet another central labour organisation failed to hold the two factions together. The "left" broke away. In fact the split merely restored the status quo.

The facts do not show that the "left" are more likely to split central trade union bodies than the right. Mr. Umoh fails to consider why these splits occur, but contents himself with meaningless labels. As is common with many commentators on the Nigerian trade union movement, the necessity for the central unions to be unified is posed as unproblematic and incontrovertible.

The question which is never asked is "unity for what?" The belief feeds on itself that the unions will bargain better and more effectively for their members if they were united. If bargaining better and more effectively means more of the Morgan, Adebayo Udoji types, then it is a mistake. It is time to recognise that these types of wage negotiations are harmful to trade union members.

Instead, the unions should strengthen and improve the effectiveness of their house unions. Contrary to general belief, the separate central union bodies showed a reasonable degree of internal stability. Relative to other institutions in the state which experienced major violent changes (the military institutions and society generally) the trade unions were fairly stable. It is important to note that the union leadership had been dominated by nearly the same personalities over the three decades, therefore, it becomes easy to understand why efforts to unite them failed. The Apapa Declaration (1974) showed that union leaders were prepared to unite because of expediency and not principles.

Mr. Umoh has warned the right to guard against the disruptive influences of the Marxists, especially in view of 1981. The question which he does not ask is why should we be so trusting of the right? In a research on a U.I.C.N affiliated house union in Kano, Paul M. Lubeck found that:

"the careers of three officials representing the Kano branch of the United Labour Congress, contrasts sharply with those of the rank-and-file workers."

One of them was offered an ICFTU

sponsored study in Western Europe.

"... many trainees, on their return to Nigeria leave the labour movement for positions in government, politics or even multinational co-operations. The net result of these programmes is to siphon off local leaders in to positions outside the labour movement; the 'foreign aid' nature of international trade union organisations vitiates the accountability of union leadership to the demands of the rank and file."

While Lubeck's study is limited to Kano, the evidence does not suggest that right-wing central unions are better or worse than left-wing unions. The government white paper on the Adebayo Trade Union Tribunal accused the central unions of "racketeering, abuse of office, personality cult, politeness, corruption, conflict of interests and similar malpractices". The central labour organisations between 1969 and 1975 were run with little regard for system and care. The leadership exhibited little, if any, sense of responsibility or accountability to workers they represented. Some officers had been found to be dishonest (*West Africa*, February 28, 1977). On their international connections, the Adebayo report stated that:

"Massive financial and material support from international organisations was wasted, a good portion of the financial and material donations found their way into pockets of individuals. The Central Labour Organisations had been run like 'cults' with only a few top officials trusted to know how the finances and other affairs were managed" (*West Africa*, *ibid.*).

The ideological claim of the different central trade union bodies is functional only, as it seems, because union leaders do not believe that they could generate their financial resources from their own members. In fact, they have never tried to organise membership so as to be independent of foreign financial aid. It was the case that the ideology you subscribed to is equivalent to the source of financial aid you are likely to get. Therefore, opportunism was inevitable.

As to why a house union affiliates to a central labour organisation, it is doubtful whether the decision to affiliate is influenced by the ideology of the central organisation. Local rather than national leadership plays the most important part. As Lubeck shows in his research, the rank and file workers were quite prepared to put their trust on a local union leader if they thought he was honest, upright and a person of integrity. It is not inconceivable that such a person would play an important part in influencing affiliation to a national trade union organisation. From this vantage point, labels do not count. It is a matter of integrity. This is important as it is the house unions who experienced what Gouldner calls the manager's structural authority. "The right to command and expect to receive obedience" (*Without Strike* 1955).

In decree after decree the Federal

government limited the power and therefore the effectiveness of the unions. Government statements suggested that strong unions were desirable, but like all employers, government actions were different from reality. Employment laws provided little or no protection against victimisation and unjust dismissals. The rank and file workers remained as vulnerable as ever. This vulnerability is more irksome because of the power of the employer to issue verbal reprimand, impose extra hours of work, dock wages, inflict demotion, transfer to less pleasant work, closer supervision.

The experience of trade unions in Nigeria is that they are forced, at great personal risk, to fight to have certain grievances put right, grievances which in some societies would be treated as part of the social wage, i.e. items outside pay negotiations which are equally beneficial to all sections of society.

The state is seen and continues to be seen as independent and therefore acting on behalf of all classes. Here, Mr. Umoh seems to accept the ideology of the ruling class uncritically as the ideology of the working class. The role of the state as an employer and by implication a vested interest in maintaining low wages, needs to be appreciated. The government, as the first instrument of authority in the capitalist state, acts naturally in the interests of capital. The government is not the authority, but only an instrument of it. Acting as such instrument, it is possible for it to act as if it genuinely wants labour unity, while in fact it acts against this desire. The

Judging by what Mr. Umoh said, there is a danger that the selfishness which afflicted the old central union organisations might surface again. It seems that the union leaders are involved again in a war of positions. Mr. Umoh tells us that the NLC has sponsored 150 union leaders abroad for trade union courses. This, it seems, has become a source of dispute. Of the 150 sponsored trips, 45 were to Eastern Europe. Yet, Mr. Umoh is complaining:

"The Marxists in the NLC are now campaigning seriously to prevent industrial unions from fraternising with their international counterparts in Western Europe."

The basis of this complaint is not clear. The right-wingers (assuming that is what you are if you "fraternise" with Western Europe) had twice as many sponsored visits as the "Marxists". With the facts as they are, the dispute is very petty.

What is one to make of this classification by Mr. Umoh. He named five NLC officers as Marxists, three as Democrats, one as a Liberal Socialist and another as Liberal Left. For "Democrats" substitute "Reactionaries" and the meaning will be the same. In spite of the confusing labels, the implication is serious. It suggests that Marxists cannot be democrats. If this is the belief of the union leaders, then an internecine war between them seems imminent. Quarrels over overseas sponsorship or over labels are unimportant matters. As V. L. Allen (*The Unmaking of Working Class in Africa*), I. Wallerstein (*Left and Right in Africa*) and G. Arrighi and John Saul (*Socialism and Economic Develop-*

ment in Tropical Africa) have argued, labels are not accurate descriptions of what people say they are.

The NLC needs to widen its perspective. If its organisational structure remains as it is at present, then revolutionary language as expressed by the leadership will be no more than a revolution from above, i.e. empty rhetoric. The NLC must move in the direction of improving the social wage in order to benefit those classes who, because of special circumstances, are not union members. These are the old, the feeble, the sick, the unemployed and the urban and the rural poor. If they cannot fight to achieve the extension of the social wage, then their irrelevance to the underprivileged in society will become more obvious. This is the war the unions must fight.

This fight concerns wealth distribution, and as far as the unions are involved in it, they are acting politically. It is in the logic of things that those whose labour efforts generate the social wealth should participate in the distribution of the wealth created with their labour power. In participating in the process of distribution, they are not undermining the political process, but by their intervention they indicate the inequalities of unequal wealth distribution which is the effect of excluding the class which generates the social wealth. In participating in the distribution process, it is important for the trade unions not to act as a class for itself, but as the authentic body for all the working class. The unions need not fear political responsibility, but must show wisdom and common sense in their organisation and actions.

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Mauritanian outlook

The author of this IMF Survey report feels that withdrawal from the Western Saharan conflict and an improvement in trade last year brightened the country's prospects for 1980

POOR WEATHER, sluggish world demand for iron ore, and three years of fighting Polisario, the former Spanish Sahara imposed a heavy toll on the Mauritanian economy in recent years. During 1974-78, gross domestic product (GDP) declined by 4 per cent, and on a per capita basis it decreased by about 14 per cent. Although an improvement in iron ore production, since Mauritania withdrew from the struggle with Polisario, led to an economic recovery in 1979, with real GDP rising almost 11 per cent, the deterioration in the past had been so pervasive that GDP in 1979 was only slightly above the level of five years earlier. Furthermore, since 1974, the production base of the economy has shifted markedly from the primary to the tertiary sector. Concurrently, the resource gap widened as the country embarked on an ambitious investment programme, largely financed from abroad, and expenditure for domestic consumption increased rapidly.

The 1979 economic recovery was led by a significant rise in the production of livestock (26 per cent), cereals (80 per cent), and minerals (6 per cent). Iron ore output, which accounts for most mineral production, rose by 26 per cent. The construction and public works sector also expanded sharply by 52 per cent in 1979 because of increased building activity, especially housing, and the beginning of work on the last portion of the trans-Mauritanian road, a 1,000-kilometre road linking Nouakchott to Néma.

Gross domestic expenditure at current prices grew at an average annual rate of 17 per cent during 1974-79, reflecting the high growth of consumption and investment, while domestic production rose at current prices, by just over 1 per cent annually. This widening gap was financed from abroad, and net inflows of foreign resources grew from 312m ouguiyas (UM) in 1974 to US\$8,900m in 1979, rising from 2 per cent of nominal GDP in 1974 to 31 per cent in 1979.

Over 25 per cent of Mauritania's GDP originates in the traditional sector, principally from livestock raising, fishing, and cereal cultivation. After the severe drought which ended in 1972, the livestock population returned to pre-drought levels. While no official data exist for livestock, a sizeable part is exported on the hoof to Senegal and The Gambia, with such unofficial exports probably representing Mauritania's largest source of foreign exchange receipts. Agricultural production consists mainly of subsistence cultivation of cereals (mostly millet, sorghum, and rice), as well as vegetables, dates, and gum arabic. Domestic food production, which is largely dependent on weather, is insufficient for domestic consumption needs. Thus, Mauritania must import much of its food. The modern sector, which accounts for

about 17 per cent of GDP, is based on mining and fishing and on a small manufacturing sector. Mining activities generate about 67 per cent of the output of the sector and consist primarily of the exploitation of iron ore, gypsum and, until 1978, copper. The principal company engaged in iron ore mining is the Société Nationale Industrielle et Minière (SNIM), a public enterprise jointly owned by the Mauritanian Government (51 per cent) and by foreign stockholders (49 per cent). Deposits of iron ore that are being mined at Zouerate and are estimated at 75 million tons will be exhausted within ten years at the current rate of exploitation. Mauritania's production of iron ore rose by 26 per cent to 9.4m tons in 1979, after declining by 0.5 per cent in 1978 and by 20 per cent in 1977.

Mining large deposits of iron ore at Guelbils will raise production to about 14m tons annually by 1984. The first phase of the project, scheduled to be completed by 1982 at an estimated cost of UM22,600m., will begin production in 1983; the second phase, which will cover the period 1986-89, is estimated to cost UM 9,700m. Both phases are financed by the World Bank, as well as by a consortium of Arab lenders.

Copper concentrate was mined at Akjoujt through a very expensive fuel-intensive process, but because of its high arsenic content was exported at prices below those of the world market and therefore copper mining was halted in May 1978. Large deposits of gypsum to the north of Nouakchott yielded 13,500 tons in 1978, a rise of about 33 per cent, and production increased by an additional 15 per cent in 1979. The entire gypsum output is sold to a cement plant in Senegal.

Fishing is an important economic activity. The stock of fish off the continental shelf of Mauritania has been estimated at 4.5m tons, with an annual potential catch of 500,000 tons. Modern fishing and fish-processing industries are concentrated in Nouadhibou, with a fleet of ships at the port linked to the processing plants. While fishing activities, except for artisanal fishing, are now largely undertaken by foreign companies, the Government will gradually control fishing in Mauritania's territorial waters and limit permits to foreign fleets. To augment its fishing production, the Government is attempting to create joint ventures with foreign companies. By mid-November 1979, four joint enterprises were formed, involving Libyan, Iraqi, Swedish, and Nigerian interests, and a Saudi Arabian company has expressed interest in a joint venture.

Despite recent large-scale investments made in the manufacturing sector, real growth is estimated to have been low (about 2 per cent in 1978 and 5 per cent in 1979). An oil refinery, completed in 1977, was

unable to operate because it lacked a supply of crude oil and had no markets to sell excess production, no administrative structure, and no trained manpower. A sugar refinery, also built in 1977, is idle because of the narrow spread between prices of raw and refined sugar, which makes it more costly to refine sugar locally than to import sugar that is already refined.

Finally, an electric iron furnace, which was expected to produce 10,000 tons of steel a year from scrap metal (worn rails from SNIM), did not start operation as scheduled in early 1979 because of technical difficulties.

After these unfortunate experiences, the Government shifted emphasis from large-scale projects to small-scale and medium-scale industries with greater potential for employment. To that effect, in March 1979 the Government replaced the Investment Code of 1976 and established a research centre, the Centre d'Etude et de Promotion Industrielle (CEPI), to identify, appraise, and supervise viable small-scale projects and to provide management assistance to small and medium-sized firms. As to manufacturing enterprises, a large number of small privately owned firms profitably manufacture paint, matches, soft drinks, sponges, notebooks, and blankets.

During the 1970s the Government of Mauritania embarked on an ambitious investment programme. Between 1974 and 1979, gross investment expenditure amounted to UM3k,000m., representing, on average, over 28 per cent of GDP. Of total expenditure during this period, about 72 per cent was invested by the

Government and 21 per cent by the public enterprises, with 7 per cent representing spending by the private sector, mostly for housing construction.

For 1980-85, total planned investment expenditure amounts to UM50,000m., of which about half will be realised by public enterprises, mainly SNIM, and the other half by the Government. More than half of the total investment will be allocated to productive sectors, with primary emphasis on mining (30 per cent), transportation (25 per cent), and agriculture (13 per cent). The remaining investments will be distributed among housing and social infrastructure.

Mauritania's overall fiscal situation deteriorated considerably during 1975-78. Although mining royalties virtually disappeared towards the end of the period, total budget revenue grew at an average annual rate of 11 per cent, partly as a result of a near quadrupling in fishing royalties in 1978. However, as the growth in current expenditure accelerated to an average annual rate of 35 per cent, reflecting mainly Mauritania's involvement in the conflict over the Spanish Sahara, the budget deficit widened progressively from UM700m. in 1975 to UM5,900m. in 1978. Dramatic increases in capital expenditure in 1975 and 1976, mainly for the construction of the trans-Mauritanian road and several large-scale industrial projects, caused the overall fiscal deficit to reach a high of UM 10,800m. (48 per cent of GDP) in 1976.

After a sharp reduction in investment expenditure in 1977, the overall fiscal deficit declined by more than a fourth: in 1978, as the growth in current outlays

exceeded a further cut in investment, however, it widened to UM18,600m. (36 per cent of GDP). The cumulative overall fiscal deficit was financed primarily by external assistance. Foreign grants covered almost 40 per cent of the deficit, and foreign borrowing, part of which took the form of suppliers' credits, financed more than half of the deficit. Recourse to credit from the banking system, which remained relatively small in 1975 and 1976, rose appreciably in 1977 but was partially reimbursed in 1978.

In 1979, the fiscal situation improved somewhat, following the adoption of more restrictive demand management policies and Mauritania's withdrawal from the Sahara conflict. Revenue increased by 11 per cent to UM6,000m., mainly resulting from better collection of income and import taxes and a moderate recovery in receipts from mineral exports. Current budget expenditure rose slightly by 0.8 per cent, in spite of a sharp rise in outlays for military equipment, causing the budget deficit to decline by 9 per cent.

As extra, budgetary outlays declined marginally to UM2,700m., the overall fiscal deficit fell by 6 per cent to UM8,100m., or the equivalent of 28 per cent of GDP. As in previous years, the deficit was almost entirely financed by external assistance, including grants from the European Community's stabilisation of exports programme (STABEX) and from Arab countries. Recourse to bank financing remained relatively small.

During 1974-79, net domestic credit expanded at an average annual rate of 32 per cent, reflecting mainly the large

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financing needs of the mining company (SNIM), as well as the deteriorating fiscal situation. As a result of this rapid expansion, the ratio of domestic credit to nominal GDP rose from 15 per cent in 1974 to 39 per cent in 1977. Even though net foreign assets of the banking system declined during this period, especially in 1977, the growth of broad money still averaged 15 per cent, a rate lower than the growth in nominal GDP.

In 1978 and 1979, the growth of domestic credit slowed down considerably to only 3 and 4 per cent, respectively (46 per cent in 1977), in response to a more restrictive credit policy toward the private sector.

After having grown by 18 per cent in 1977, credit to the private sector declined to 10 per cent in 1978 and remained unchanged in 1979. Credit to the Government, on the other hand, declined sharply by 49 per cent in 1978, due to a large loan reimbursement made possible by a higher inflow of external assistance, but rose in 1979 by 71 per cent, as the Central Bank's claims on the Government increased by 24 per cent.

The slower credit expansion during 1978, together with a further reduction in net foreign assets, caused the growth in broad money to slow down to only 2 per cent, a rate far below the growth in nominal GDP. In 1979, as claims on the Government rose, broad money increased by 14 per cent.

During 1974-78, Mauritania's external payments position deteriorated appreciably, with the current account deficit widening as a result of a large increase in imports and a sharp drop in exports. The

main factors behind the import growth were an increase in government investments, increased need for foodstuffs, rising fuel costs, and after 1976, Mauritania's involvement in the Sahara conflict.

The export decline was due to a drop in world demand for iron ore, compounded by disruptions in production and transportation caused by guerrilla activity. As foreign aid, mostly in the form of grants, was not sufficient to cover the current account deficit, Mauritania had to supplement the use of international reserves with the rescheduling and delaying of debt service payments.

After a surplus in 1974, the overall balance of payments position went into deficit in 1975. Exports declined by 10 per cent, as a result of slack world demand for Mauritania's minerals. Imports declined by 7 per cent, and the service gap turned into a sharp deficit, mainly because of higher payments for foreign contractors. The cumulative effect of these factors produced a substantial increase in the current account deficit and, as official transfers and capital inflows remained unchanged, the overall deficit reached SDR25m. Official international reserves were used to finance the deficit, and their level dropped in terms of imports of goods and services from over six months at the end of 1974 to three months at the end of 1975.

Conditions worsened in 1976 when a 12 per cent rise in exports, induced by a modest recovery of iron ore shipments, was overshadowed by a 59 per cent increase in imports, and the ensuing trade deficit was seven times larger than that of 1975. The

strong import demand was mainly related to purchases of military equipment and investment goods, and as the implementation of projects gained momentum, payments for services contracted abroad increased substantially.

The current account deficit, which more than doubled, was financed by massive foreign assistance in the form of grants and loans. Foreign borrowing, which had been relatively small, became an important source of financing, covering close to half the current account deficit. A residual surplus of SDR9m, helped to boost gross official reserves to the equivalent of 3.6 months of imports.

The external payments position eroded again in 1977, with the overall balance reverting to a large deficit. Disruptions in the mining and transport of iron ore reduced the volume of minerals exported, while world market prices abated, thereby lowering the value of total exports by 15 per cent. Meanwhile, imports continued to increase, spurred by new purchases of military equipment, investment goods, and foodstuffs. Although the completion of some projects reduced the service deficit substantially, the current account deficit widened marginally. Project-related foreign borrowing was reduced as some projects were completed, while official transfers, partly in support of current budgetary operations, were reduced by 19 per cent. The overall deficit rose to almost SDR60m and was financed by a large drawdown of international reserves and by rescheduling and delaying some debt service payments.

The situation improved slightly in 1978, owing to a decline in imports of goods and services connected with the abatement in investment activity. This import reduction, however, was offset by a sharp drop in export volume following stepped-up disruptions by insurgents to the production and transportation of iron ore. Imports of services reflected lower payments for foreign construction contracts, and the current account deficit was reduced by 14 per cent. As inflows of foreign assistance remained at the 1977 level, the overall deficit declined by half to SDR27m, and was mainly financed by an accumulation of arrears and by some debt renegotiation.

Mauritania's overall external payments position improved somewhat in 1979. Because of a 19 per cent increase in exports, prompted by a recovery in the volume of exported iron ore, the trade deficit declined slightly as imports of goods and services rose only marginally.

The cease-fire in the Sahara conflict in 1978 contributed to an increase in private transfers, following a return of foreign technicians employed in the modern economic sector. As a result, the current account deficit decreased slightly to SDR177m. As net capital inflows were about 70 per cent higher than in 1978 — mainly reflecting an SDR58m increase in the equity of the SNIM — the overall deficit was reduced to SDR5m. Net foreign assets increased as a result of debt service relief stemming from rescheduling a number of foreign loans.

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BOOKS and Publications

A dam mistake?

The Volta River Project, a Case Study in Politics and Technology by David Hart (Edinburgh University Press, 17.50)

COMPLETED on schedule, at a cost under the estimate, and free of accusations of corruption, Ghana's Volta River Project (VRP) might appear to be an example for development projects in the Third World. But Dr. Hart, in the first detailed critique to be published of the VRP's benefits to Ghana, sees it as "a case of unintentional exploitation resulting from narrow self-interest." Ghana, he concludes, has benefited little from the project, while some tens of thousands of Ghanaians, removed from the area flooded by the lake created by the Akosombo Dam or obliged to act as hosts to these refugees, have lost much because of it.

The idea of building a dam on the fast-flowing Volta River to generate electricity which could — since this requires enormous supplies of electric power — turn Ghana's bauxite into aluminium, went back to 1915, when it was suggested by the Director of the Gold Coast Geological Survey, Sir Albert Kitson. The idea was taken up by the British Government after the 1939/45 war as a means of ensuring aluminium supplies for the sterling area. That Labour government no doubt believed that the project would also benefit greatly the then Gold Coast colony.

In the end, Dr. Hart shows, the project became simply one for producing cheap power for the Valco aluminium smelter at Tema in which Kvaerner of California holds the controlling interest. The secondary advantages to Ghana promised by Dr. Nkrumah and his associates — widespread development of industry because of the availability of cheap power, the raising of living standards generally, and the improvement of agricultural practices — have not materialised. Indeed only the Volta Lake fisheries have really produced a bonus for Ghana. And because world market factors in the end prevented the use in the Tema aluminium smelter of alumina processed from Ghana's own bauxite — whose existence was a major influence in the thinking of those who conceived the Volta River Project around the time that Dr. Nkrumah was born — even the smelter, which uses most of the VRP power and gets it at favourable rates, earns comparatively little foreign exchange for Ghana, although it guarantees servicing of the loans made for the dam.

Dr. Hart's most telling point, however, is made by the figures he gives of the number who left the resettlement villages. Within four years over half the 67,500 whose land was inundated and who were resettled had left the villages established for them by the Volta River Authority. Dr. Hart ignores the fact that because of the nature of Dr. Nkrumah's rule many farmers reluctantly accepted official decisions about the area of their land which was flooded, only to reopen the matter after his overthrow. But his story of the Volta Lake compensation payments is a disgraceful one.

Nobody could complain that the project was started in haste or in ignorance. It could be said — a point not made in this book — that the VRP preparatory commission was determined to examine fully in advance not only those issues which a decision to go forward would depend but also those which would arise if the project was implemented, but would not themselves affect the decision. In the end, however, as E. A. K.

Kalisi a senior VRP official, put it, "implementation concentrated on power as the direct economic objective and important work to achieve socio-economic objectives and ensure desirable biological conditions were left in abeyance..."

Dr. Hart's analysis is important for any country in whose development programme big dams are an essential feature. Nigeria, in particular, is at present facing difficulties arising from compensation arrangements for those displaced by the Bakolori Dam. But in no country can a single dam have been given such national significance as was the Akosombo Dam by the Nkrumah government. If the alumina plant is finally built to feed the Tema smelter with Ghana's own bauxite the project's economic benefits for Ghana would increase significantly. But Dr. Hart emphasises that an alumina plant of economic size would produce a surplus which would have to be exported although supplies are already plentiful. He urges consideration of a formal arrangement with Guinea which already produces alumina on an enormous scale. He also mentions the prospects offered by ECOWAS for aluminium — using industries, although suggesting that the big aluminium companies would oppose this development. But it was in fact Dr. Nkrumah who was unenthusiastic about the plans. Kaisers themselves forward for fabrication in Ghana because these depended on Ghanaian entrepreneurs, whose development he disliked.

Dr. Hart's conclusion is pessimistic. He sees the development of aluminium smelters in poor countries — Sierra Leone, Guinea and Cameroon, for example, as well

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West Africa recently ran a series of articles criticising the Volta River Project (March 24 and 31, April 7 and 14) and a response from the Managing Director of Valco (June 2).

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as Ghana — as simply another form of primary production, and not an escape from it. "The aluminium smelter in the Third World is likely to remain an enclave."

There is little to criticise in this carefully argued analysis. Dr. Hart speaks of a "fairer" international distribution of wealth without defining this elusive concept. He sees the retention of the office of Governor-General after independence in Ghana as a "subtle form of dual control" maintaining British influence, a view which would astonish the British and Ghanaian holders of the office. His discussion of the world cocoa market is sadly oversimplified. He is critical of the capital-intensive nature of the Tema smelter, as if a special "bare-hands" technology could be invented for a Ghana smelter. And he exaggerates the effects of the VRP on Ghana's trade with the US, in which cocoa has long been and still is the main factor. Confusing, too, he says that the Nkrumah government opposed nationalisation of the VRP, when he means only the smelter. But it is the central thesis which matters, and which deserves attention.

Dr. Hart seems to attribute to political influences too great an influence on US official attitudes to the VRP. He does not, however, mention the episode which was said to have drawn President Eisenhower's attention to the then dormant project in 1957. Dr. Nkrumah's Finance Minister, Mr. Gbedemah, experienced discrimination in a restaurant in the southern states and in consequence the President invited him to the White House. In a briefing on Ghanaian affairs before Mr. Gbedemah's visit the President was given details of the VRP, with the result that Kaisers were brought in to revive it.

D.W.

Meticulous history

The Solima Yalunka Kingdom by C. Maybaily Fyle (Nyakon Publishers, Freetown, Le 9, \$10, £5)

WITH ITS territory now divided between Guinea and Sierra Leone, the Solima Yalunka Kingdom was, for almost a century up to 1884, an example of the capacities of African leaders to "bring some cohesion to disparate policies" and to "effect organisation of commerce on a relatively grand scale". Dr. Fyle maintains. The Yalunka are a southern Malinke people ("Djalunka") is the French version of their name, which they themselves pronounce "Jalunka"), and are one of several peoples now divided by Guinea's frontiers. Beginning his study in the middle of the 17th century Dr. Fyle explains in detail — perhaps too great detail for the non-specialist — how four Yalunka clans came to settle in Solimana, in the area which became the Solima state. It is the book's aim to identify the challenges — chiefly the attempt of the Fula (Fulani) of the Futa Jalon of modern Guinea, which helped to bring them together. The clans migrated to the area for varying reasons but, says Dr. Fyle, they were really "seeking their fortunes". And the emergence of the state

they formed was due to their need to unite against the Fula.

Dr. Fyle, uses skillfully the surprising, if still sparse, amount of written material covering the events and the area with which he deals. He pays tribute to Gordon Laing for example, whose *Travels* were published in 1825, and uses Winterbottom and Winwood Reade. But he shows that a scholarly historian who skillfully collects oral tradition can reveal deficiencies in their accounts. He is also at pains to show that anthropologists have for too long been accepted as historians of peoples such as those he describes, although once again an historian can point to weaknesses in their accounts.

The kingdom was established before the end of the 18th century. Dr. Fyle emphasises that, because it arose from the need to resist an outside danger, it was not, as it is often supposed that West African pre-colonial West African states are, an example of successful invaders forming a state of which they are the ruling class, perhaps to become merged completely with their subjects.

Dr. Fyle is able to describe in convincing detail the organisation of the state. It was a federation, and had features which would now entitle it to that description. It had, for example, a form of standing army, while all murder cases were tried at the capital, Falaba. The rulers of the "towns" were obliged to stay at the capital, leaving their administrations in the hands of their "seconds-in-command", as Laing observed.

The state was small. Dr. Fyle notes that no point in it was further than 35 miles from the capital, although Falaba itself may have had by the end a population of 15,000. But it was never isolated or moribund. In particular it played an important role in the trading system of Upper Guinea. It was also greatly influenced by the attraction of the then British Colony of Sierra Leone — Freetown and its immediate area — as a trading centre. Dr. Fyle's treatment of this aspect of the kingdom's history is an important contribution to the history of Sierra Leone.

The kingdom was destroyed before the British Protectorate was declared over the Sierra Leone hinterland and before the British-French partition. It succumbed in 1884 to the power of Samori — Dr. Fyle gives insufficient explanation of his rise and significance — and in spite of a brief rebirth of Falaba and a short-lived rebellion against Samori it had ceased to exist before the Protectorate was proclaimed in 1896. If the state had still been in existence, Dr. Fyle suggests, the British would have found it difficult to fit it into their system of "balkanised" chiefdoms.

The book is a valuable example of a type of historical work which is becoming increasingly important in the historiography of Africa: a study of a group or an area of limited scope meticulously building up from oral tradition and all other available material an essential contribution to the wider history of states and regions, which can in the end be completely constructed only on the basis of such studies. This study is of particular interest

since it is the work of a Creole scholar of Fourah Bay who has made a significant contribution to the study of the hinterland of his country, a study which in the past has received far less attention than has that of the well-documented history of Freetown and the Colony. It is important, too, since it concerns a state now whose territory is divided, as a result of colonial partition, between two independent states, and so helps to create that sense of West African unity from which so much of value can spring.

The book runs to some 170 pages and has an attractive cover. The text was "composed" in the UK but the printing, by the Government Printer, Freetown, has produced a few pages of indistinct print. Eight photographs are satisfactorily reproduced, and there are very few misprints. There are six maps. Some of the names in the first, showing the chiefdoms in Sierra Leone's present Northern Province, are difficult to decipher. In this the position of the Solima Yalunka Kingdom, shown clearly on later maps, is not evident.

Specialists may search for inaccuracies in this pioneering work which is only one of the author's contributions to the study of his country's history. A layman might venture to question the statement that in Guinea "the majority of the population is Soso, Yalunka and Mandinka" since, although the census figures for that country are notoriously unreliable, the Fulba must be at least the second most numerous group, while the Yalunka are not significant except as a section of the Malinke.

M.D.C.

Problems of publishing in African languages

Hans M. Zell, editor and publisher of the *African Book Publishing Record*, delivered this paper to a meeting of the American African Studies Association in Los Angeles last November.

THAT THE FUTURE of African literature belongs to literature in the African languages is a view that has been voiced by many African writers. It is also the opinion of the Union of Writers of African Peoples, the organisation set up in 1975, whose stated policy is "to give special encouragement to the literature of Africa in the indigenous languages and at the same time promote the adoption of a single language for the continent of Africa, as an instrument and symbol of the unity of African peoples everywhere".

Individually, many African authors have called on their colleagues to curb their tendencies to write for an overseas market and address themselves to a home audience. As the Zambian novelist and poet O. K. Sibetta (who writes in Lozi) has put it: "An African is a singing animal... He is a human being who expresses his sentiments in music, poetry, folklore, proverbs and riddles. If these are not shown in one's indigenous writing then one has failed to reach one's audience". And Ngugi wa Thiong'o, in a recent interview on the BBC African service, has put it even more eloquently, and has said:

"Literature, as a process of linking images, utilises language and grows upon the collective experience, that is history, embodied in that language. In writing one should hear all the whisperings, all the shouting, all the crying, all the loving and all the hating of the many voices in the past, and those voices will never speak to a writer in a foreign language."

However, it would seem that a decision to publish creative writing in one of the indigenous African languages will have to be promoted more by nationalistic rather than commercial considerations, at least for the time being. Certainly the publishing realities of producing literature in the African languages present an unhappy picture. According to John Nottingham, the former director of the East African Publishing House, titles published by them in the indigenous languages were all "a financial disaster", even though one of them was a prize-winning novel in Luo and the other a translation, back into the original Acholi, of Okot p'Bitek's *Song of Lawino*. David Mailu of Comb Book Publishers, a pioneer in the field of popular

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literature, has stated in an interview that his titles in Kiswahili were "the slow ones" in terms of sales. And Henry Chakava of Heinemann's in Nairobi has reported that a translation into Luganda published by them of Chimua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* "proved commercially unsuccessful", even though Luganda being one of the major Kenyan languages and being studied as an examinable subject at School Certificate level.

In an attempt to try to investigate further into this I recently conducted a survey amongst the main publishers of material in the African languages, although I should add that I did not cover the major national literature bureaux (e.g. The Ghana Bureau of Languages or the Rhodesia Literature Bureau) who do, of course, publish widely in the indigenous languages, but most of whose publications are simple readers or material for adult literacy. Among the multinationals, Longman, for example, publish in no less than 17 main languages, 15-plus Kenyan languages, and seven-plus Ugandan languages. Macmillan's affiliate, the Northern Nigerian Publishing Company in Zaria has a particularly strong Hausa list, and others like OUP, Heinemann's and Thomas Nelson have also published widely in the African languages.

However, the bulk of their publishing output is aimed at the school book market, and when it comes to creative writing the response throughout indicates that, thus far at least, this has proved disappointing in commercial terms, certainly for any titles that are intended for a general market. The

exceptions are those books that are prescribed reading and which have been set for examinations, which can sell in large numbers depending on the total student population. For example, Oxford University Press in Nigeria (now called University Press Limited) has sold 60,000 copies of three books in Yoruba (one a play, the others historical fiction). In East Africa a title, when prescribed, may average an annual sale of about 6,000 copies and OUP's East African branch has a number of best-selling titles which have sold some 30,000 copies each, one book, *Nakupenda Lakini* by K. Kuria, first published in 1964, has sold a staggering 120,000 copies. But when the titles are not prescribed, the picture looks gloomy, and publishers reported annual sales figures of as few as 300 copies. The length of the books, as well as their prices, do not seem to influence their performance in terms of sales. "Maybe", admits one publisher "there is a market, but we are producing the wrong book", and goes on to say that "maybe what is required is a change in subject-matter and marketing methods".

One person who sounded a bit less pessimistic was John Nottingham, now running TransAfrica Book Distributors, who reported that he had done well with certain new titles in Kiswahili, both original writing as well as translations — including a translation of Alex Hailey's *Rain*. Nottingham feels that, contrary to what other publishers say, there is indeed a market for creative literature in Swahili, if not in any of the other African languages.

The apparent publishing flops of books in the African languages are something of a puzzle, but can perhaps be explained, at least partially, by two factors: first, the majority of people for whom books in the indigenous languages are intended, i.e. largely the poor, non-elite urban communities, can ill afford the luxury of buying books, even a so-called "cheap" book (and a "cheap" book is something of a myth anyhow, unless the runs are huge or the production costs subsidised). Secondly, much of the promotion and advertising may well be hampered by the fact that there is a marked absence of newspapers and magazines in many African languages, with the exception of Swahili and some of the Nigerian languages. An added difficulty in Kenya, for one, is the absence of a defined language policy (Kenya has recently switched back to using English, in addition to Swahili, as its joint official language) which makes it difficult for publishers to select in which African languages to publish, if at all. As far as Swahili is concerned, Heinemann's Henry Chakava estimates that only about 50-60 per cent speak it, and only 30 per cent can actually read the language. The situation in Tanzania is somewhat different, where it is the official language and probably some 95 per cent of the entire population speak it.

One aspect that seems to favour increased African language publishing is the fact that there is ample evidence that plays presented in the African languages can enjoy huge popularity, as was clearly demonstrated by the phenomenal success of

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Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Ngũthika Ndenda*. So successful in fact that the government was prompted to revoke its performing licence. Written in Gikuyu, the content of this Ngugi play reflects the lives and aspirations of ordinary peasants and workers, and was performed by actors and actresses from a Kenyan urban community.

In West Africa, too, there are now an increasing number of writers who try to reach a national audience through an indigenous language. For example, in Nigeria, performances of plays in Yoruba, particularly those by Ola Rotimi (following in the footsteps of the late Duro Ladipo) have been performed with huge success and to enthusiastic audiences. Or, in Sierra Leone, dramatists such as Dele Charley and especially Pat Maddy now write their plays in Krio. Maddy also developing a socially-committed theatre aiming to raise the people's political consciousness.

Co-incidentally it might be added, however, that there is, sadly, not one single centre or library in Africa that is systematically collecting creative writing in the African languages, other than what is published locally. I have always felt that this was a deplorable situation, especially now when more and more material is being published. However, when, at a conference held in 1976 on the theme of "Progress in African Bibliography", I confronted librarians from East and West Africa concerning this fact and suggested that at least one major library in each of these regions start collecting African language materials seriously, one distinguished

librarian from Kenya responded by saying such an undertaking "would be useless and probably impossible". His colleagues, much to my dismay, agreed that national and university libraries in Africa should concentrate on materials in their own national language, before attempting to be in any way pan-African in their coverage.

In any event, to find new avenues and methods of effectively marketing books in the African languages calls for an enterprising and innovative publishing approach, and it is something on which publishers and African books development councils should put their heads together. But of course merely publishing and providing books does not necessarily create literacy or foster the reading habit. Attitudes to books and reading in Africa have been governed by many social and cultural factors, and they are also heavily affected by the lack of a sufficient number of either retail outlets or libraries, above all in the rural areas. Whilst the African book professions have a major role to play, the initiatives for significant change must largely come from government-backed programmes and initiatives by local authorities with the aid of the media, and this requires a strong political lobby for the cause of the book and library development.

Many conferences, seminars, and meetings on publishing and book development in Africa have taken place in recent years, most preceded by elaborate official opening ceremonies, fine speeches by education ministers, and often concluding with pious and long lists of

resolutions. But what most of these meetings have badly neglected is the whole question of the *audience*, for writing in the African languages for one, and how to most effectively reach that audience. It is clear that the critical issue of the audience has not anywhere been adequately stated, studied, and investigated — for books of the "right" kind.

What sort of interests should they serve or foster? In what languages should they be written? At what sort of level should they be pitched? How can they be most effectively and widely distributed? What importance, if any, should be put on quality of production? Should new norms for simply produced books be found? These are some of the questions that need answers, and it is the audience on which the future of African literature, and the establishment of a lively and viable indigenous publishing industry will all so much depend. As that hard-headed and successful Nigerian publisher Gabriel Omonojé has put it:

"The African author must speak the language, fulfil the expectations and satisfy the needs of the ordinary African reader. The social richness of African literature, that is, the number, the intensity and quality of the 'earth' connections, must be determined by the African reading public. Our literature must find its inspirations from the hard life of the people and focus on our reality, know it better and thus create the necessary critical consciousness among the people and ultimately lead them to true development and freedom."

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*I want to sleep
after this long trek
the head aches
to the clipping hammer of mischievous
sculptors
the bone pains
to the watery resistance of the marrow
the soul bleeds
to gushing taxations that go
beyond survival, beyond sleep.
But even beyond them
I want to sleep
after this long trek.*

*But there is no bitterness
no regrets to the wasted pamperings of the
journey
there is no sour taste from the cold
wash-down of the
bitter-leaf meal
no odious helching from the melting
communion
not for the host nor the guest
who watch the sunset's
singing the doxology
and standing advance
with a blank slate
full of unanswered questions.*

*I say there are no regrets
to the withered prunrove of youth
I say there are no daggers drawn
to the stupefying revelations of the
post-mortem
I say there are no anchors for sorrow
only, only the wish to sleep
and forget the questions
and remember the answers.*

Elegy for the Unsung Heroes

*Do not ask for the ghosts
of the unsung heroes,
Mum.*

*Even we the new merchants
bartering Our uncertain days
for edifices stripped naked in market places
are set for shallow graves
to battle with our wild dreams.
This is our FATE,
hidden from the village centurions
when they read the tablets
on the eve of nativity.*

*But some mountaineer
still crawls the rarified zones
chest against crag
and songs suffled on the lips
spurn - smiling at danger*

*against stones sharp
in a defiant ascent to the pinnacle.
Mum,
the high snows are no consolation
for the dead
and their whitened bones
withier.
They are the remains
of the unsung dead
the ghosts of the unheralded
the heroes of whom you ask.
Mum,
those of whom you ask.*

Eko (looking back from Yauri)

*Matched scales,
the frail stability of Fulani roundheads
perching empty calabashes
on a windy day,
Strange concoctions of sane herbalists
deranged doctors
and polluted gospels
all crush you
there,
where the city is on the precipice
and they tread on the tightrope
in the perpetual struggle to survive*

Eko, traditional Yoruba name for the city of Lagos.

Newsy Silence

*There are no stories to tell
the tides have battered the strong
and swept to the shore
fossils dug-out from peaceful graves
where all comers can feast the eyes
but tell no tales.
there are no stories to tell.*

*Kinsmen defecate the shores
in incestuous love of the flesh the soul is bled,
silently for no cowries can carry supra-
terrestrial messages anymore
in wrong rolls on the mats.
but there are no stories to tell.
There is no general excitement
to the all engulfing craze
even to the confusing waltz of the naive
assemblage*

*to strange tunes, to no tunes
to silent rhythms, bewildering choruses
sifting through the maddening din
but there is no sensation for vendors!
there are no stories to tell.*

LETTERS to the Editor

US policy towards Africa

SIR: Spurred, apparently, by his claimed love for freedom and human rights, President Carter has for the past five months or so orchestrated a vigorous if not vicious campaign against the Soviet Union because of her military intervention in Afghanistan. Apparently banking on the short memory or indifference of the vast majority of the world's citizens to current and recent events, the President proclaimed the Soviet action the greatest threat to world peace since the Second World War and called on the whole world to take measures to punish the aggressor. In particular, the Third World was directed as usual to see the Soviet action as specifically directed at it as the freedom of one of its members has been encroached upon. Fortunately, realising that in the African context freedom for Zimbabweans and South African Blacks is more important than freedom for the Afghans, most African countries made a different interpretation of the crisis and refused to be used once again as pawns in what is essentially a big power game of strategic as opposed to real interests.

For the likes of Kenya's Amp Moe, who appear never to question the true nature and purpose of America's claimed love of freedom for Third World countries, the recent race riots in Miami, sparked off by the acquittal by an all-white jury of four white policemen accused of beating a black businessman to death, should serve as an

example. They once again show that in spite of all the noise and propaganda, the American society remains deeply unjust and racially biased and that the Carter administration has done little or nothing to improve the lot of black Americans. Perhaps, more importantly, the racial situation in America seriously questions America's right to be the self-appointed freedom-fighter and defender of peoples thousands of miles away when it cannot guarantee freedom and justice to a section of its own people.

Some of our leaders, in fact most of them, need to be reminded of where the true interests of the African people's lie. On the "freedom" front, African interests lie in the procurement of freedom and respect for black people everywhere, including the United States and South Africa. In this respect, our true friends are those countries which help the liberation movements and vote with us at the United Nations and not those which sustain South Africa's apartheid.

On the economic front, our interests lie in the procurement of modern technology at a reasonable price and those advanced countries which are dishonest with us with regard to the quality and pricing of this technology, and also in the training of Africans so that they can take over at some future date must be seen as wanting to keep us in the dark forever and so cannot be regarded as true friends. The African politicians and businessmen who collude with foreign business interests to deplete our meagre resources must see themselves as saboteurs and must accept responsibility for the spite and denison with which black people are treated all over the world, even on their own soil, for economic and technological achievement are inextricably linked with social esteem. Throughout history the black man has served the interests of others. I think it is time we began to identify and serve our own interests.

Merseyside, UK DR. CHUKWUOD IWEGBU

"Sickening Hopelessness"

SIR: One evening in the last week of May 1978, I came across the following on a wall in the heart of Paris: "Noir c'est noir, il n'y a pas d'espoir" (Black is black, there is no hope). It might have been a mere repetition of what a young French musician sang some years ago, but the writer might have been making a point. Anyway, all through my visit and especially during the 50-odd minutes of the flight back to London, the sweet melody of the original song (not by the French musician) echoed in me, but the words, those words and the message they seemed to convey were never to be forgotten.

Having read your report, 'Towards a French Commonwealth' (*West Africa*, 19 May), I feel like taking off in search of the author of the writing on the wall to learn just what really prompted him or her. I know too many citizens of French-speaking African countries, intelligent, lovable and noble men and women, to allow myself to conclude that all citizens of these countries are delighted with the very chains that hold them in bondage. It just can't be!

First, what is the significance of independence if most of these countries after 20 years, cannot stand on their feet and walk unaided. Let alone feed themselves? Secondly, if after 20 years of 'co-operation', aid and dependence on French paternalism, the present is as catastrophic as the future is hopelessly bleak, why can't the helmsmen see that continuation of the same pattern of relationship would only lead deeper into the mire?

Surely, something must be wrong somewhere. It might be easier to reconcile *mépris de culture* with *la négritude* than to feed ourselves. Yes, indeed, black will always be black; will there be any hope? What a sickening hopelessness!

Liverpool

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What Akinjide said

SIR: The attention of the Honourable Attorney-General of the Federation and the Minister of Justice, Chief Richard O. A. Akinjide S. A.N., has been invited to the letter of Mr. Joe Appiah of Kumasi, Ghana, captioned "Immodest Claim" in the May 26 issue of *West Africa*. Mr. Appiah is right when he asserted: "I find it difficult to believe that the learned Attorney-General of Nigeria and Minister of Justice did in fact make the claim attributed to him in this report".

What the Honourable Attorney-General and Minister of Justice said and which was accurately released to the media on the issue raised by Mr. Appiah, is, "Nigeria has the largest number of lawyers, very brilliant ones too, and obviously among the best, in Africa". You will see that the word "among" was omitted from the report for reasons unknown to me. I am grateful to Mr. Joe Appiah for giving me this opportunity to correct the impression which the Honourable Attorney-General has no intention to convey to our other African brothers.

Lagos

S. O. OMO-OSAGIE

Press Secretary to

The Honourable Attorney-General
of the Federation and Minister of Justice

'A big news indeed'

SIR: The greatest news so far from the West African sub-region this year was reported in *West Africa* of 5 May under the heading of *From the Mines*. This piece of news (MOM) electronics industry in Owerri, Imo State) raises the hope that in course of time Nigeria will join the bandwagon of world manufacturers. Nigeria is now beginning to make electrical goods such as air-conditioners, radio, television sets, refrigerators etc. One can only hope that the planners have carried out adequate project feasibility studies and are satisfied, from the point of view of the feasibility report, that this project

can be carried out on a long-term and profitable basis and that the products of the enterprise will genuinely be "Nigerian-made" goods and not a mere assembly of parts. Perhaps one might suggest that this sort of enterprise be divorced from the control of government officials (whose apparent tardiness in decision-making is in conflict with commercial productive enterprise) and placed under an independent profit-oriented Board of Directors who will then be responsible, by way of their annual and Auditors' reports, to the established government and the taxpayer.

Viewed from two angles one would conclude that this is a most admirable economic proposition on the part of the planners. The first viewpoint is the outflow of Nigerian foreign earnings. If there are accurate statistics showing foreign exchange expenditure per item head, this will most probably reveal that quite a large percentage of Nigeria's expenditure on foreign goods is on electronic and electrical equipment. In fact, statistics is just a means of the proof of a fact which is indisputably apparent from the point of view of the nation's need (bordering on greed) for this equipment. They are therefore necessities in the present-day level of development. From this standpoint, a lot of foreign exchange expenditure will be appreciably conserved.

The second viewpoint is that of opening up a practical field for our engineers. So far, our engineers have earned their name merely on papers which are based purely on theories. They have never really been given the opportunity, or rather, they have never really sought the chance, of demonstrating their theoretical knowledge in practical terms. They have preferred to remain behind the closed doors of air-conditioned offices, dressed elegantly and attending to phone calls and visitors — the "contractors".

London

DIPO ODUWOLE

The 27th State

SIR: In the issue of *West Africa*, April 28th, you stated that Sierra Leone is the 79th state to sign

the Constitution of the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation.

For the record, I wish to point out that, in Sierra Leone's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation, I signed the Constitution on behalf of my country in Vienna in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on 29th August, 1979, being the 27th state to do so.

Rome

BIRCH M CONTE

Learning from research reports

SIR: There are some enormous social and economic gains to be achieved by the use of some relevant foreign reports. Two quick examples are the US government reports on the dangers of cigarette smoking, and the Rand Corporation research on alcohol abuse. No doubt these researches cost significant sums of money but are available, nonetheless, in most libraries in the countries. Developing countries can benefit tremendously by the use of such information.

Apparently, Ghana consumed 27,600 worth of tobacco between 1974-75 (*West Africa*, April 28). The economics of this and similar abuses ought to raise serious and moral questions Mr. M. P. Ansah, Ghana's Minister of Health, must have caught our attention when he observed that "... the temporary financial gain enjoyed by the Government would be whittled away by the long-term losses in death and disease ...". Of course, the Government of Ghana is responsible for the health of her citizens, the producers of the State Express 555 and the Rothman's King Size and similar multinationals have no such social accountability. They operate in Ghana and other developing countries in order to maximise their profits. Meager takens, now and then, are totally unacceptable considering the disastrous effects such industries

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Ghana's current development plan rests in the area of food production, health, housing and the improvement of the infrastructure. Tobacco production and manufacture of cigarettes for local consumption does not fit our economies, social and health needs at all, such activities are definitely opposed to saving Ghana now or ever. In my opinion, the planners of Ghana's economy must guide these "cigarette-alcohol multinationals" so that their efficient resources can be turned around and used more productively. I consider multinational participation in the production of rice, millet, cassava, plantain and other foodstuffs as progressive.

Accra

ANIS HAFFAR

Water transport in Nigeria

SIR: Your wide ranging survey of Transport in West Africa (*West Africa*, May 5) reveals the rapid developments that have occurred and the necessity to maintain progress in this field. My special interest is in Nigeria's River Transport systems to which Dr David Hilling's article pays considerable attention.

The formidable natural obstacle presented by the Bajho Rapids has previously been insurmountable. The Kainji Dam, primarily for hydro-electric power, should afford the additional benefit of overcoming the rapids. Situated 20 miles down-river from Kainji, despite blasting and dredging, this rocky stretch of the river has remained hazardous and virtually impassable for large river vessels. The construction of Jebba Dam will create a new lake to cover the Bajho rapids thus providing a safe route to Sokoto State and the Republic of Niger. The Shiroro Dam on the Kaduna River will significantly assist in the regulation of the Niger flow to complement the dredging already performed in the lower Niger. With the rapids flooded and these improvements completed, the opportunities for increased river transportation should quickly be realised.

As Dr Hilling shows, the Niger River was of real importance when roads were virtually non-existent, or only capable of taking the 5-ton truck compared to today's 35-tonner. It is interesting to look back to the time when the Nigerian Railway in Northern Nigeria was being constructed. Before the First World War, much of the railway track and equipment was carried directly from Europe to Baro in Niger State by small ocean-going coastal ships. Of course, they were limited to arrive during the peak river flood of August-September. Even in the 1960s, coastal vessels with draughts of 10 feet played an important part supplementing the River fleets. These coasters were able to ply to Makurdi, 500 miles from the sea.

Dr Hilling comments upon the size of the locks in Kainji Dam. These were constructed to take the Niger River Transport (UAC) Tug *Gangola* and her barge train. During discussions in 1962/63, it was considered that her type would remain as a likely maximum for the foreseeable future. The *Gangola*, which still operates from Warr within the fleet of Niger Benue Transport Company, was built by Yarrow in 1957 and powered by two 550 hp Ruston Paxman diesels. The tug and her eight barges, which were pushed towed in tandem, had a total length of 637ft and width of 64ft. To keep the cost of the locks within reason, the Ministry and its consultants rightly determined that a single line of four barges should be locked through rather than in tandem. For this reason the locks are 40ft in width and over 637ft in length. This barge train could proceed upriver with 3,250 tons at 5ft 2in draught. Down-river the load was 4,450 tons at 6ft 2in. She may have been a little in advance of river engineering of the time as these loads were only possible for some four months of the year, a fact which Dr Hilling brings to our attention. Yet the cost per ton mile for cargoes carried by this vessel worked out at 0.25 old pence in the 1960s compared to 0.6 old pence for the less modern

vessels in the fleet. Road transport costs in those days were 3 pence per ton mile on long hauls.

A major increase in the use of the Niger now appears likely to become a reality. In line with contemporary conservation policies, it is of paramount importance that this should be encouraged to the maximum. The River should be seen to be again "living" and facilitate good, cheap access to new areas of commercial expansion.

London

G. M. DUNCAN

No cause for disappointment

SIR: Some commentators have complained that the new Libenan Head of State, Master Sergeant Samuel Kanyon Doe is of a very low rank and uneducated. While that is true, we cannot turn away from the fact he is a man of action. There were highly educated soldiers in the Liberian army but none of them had the nerve to risk his life as Master Sergeant Doe and his men did. This was because these men were paid sufficiently well and therefore were not interested in rescuing the suppressed and exploited people of Liberia who had been crying in the wilderness for a little more bread, a little more butter and a little more rice.

Master Sergeant Doe is not the only half educated soldier or national leader in history. The late President William V. S. Tubman who ruled Liberia for 27 years did not hold a college degree. Master Sergeant Samuel Kanyon Doe is therefore, no exception.

Monrovia

J. MICHAEL KUNHEH

Letters to the Editor MUST bear the writer's full name and address though this is not normally published. Writers are advised to keep the letters succinct and to type them where possible.

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ECONOMIC and Business NEWS

Talking about trading

from a correspondent

THE ANNUAL General Meeting of the London Chapter of the Nigerian-British Chamber of Commerce, now three years old, was told of steady progress by the London Chapter, which now has 78 members of various categories and is aiming for a century by the next AGM. Also by then it hopes to have reached outside London, to organise workshops on Nigerian business commerce in Cardiff, Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool, Glasgow, Edinburgh and Aberdeen. Such exposure should help to increase membership.

The AGM was also told that the Lagos Chapter is now making good progress, having suffered a setback with the most untimely death of Chief Henry Fajemirokun during its formative stages.

This is good news because it is of the essence of the NBCC that it should function effectively in both countries since the mutual membership and contacts which it can thus offer to visiting businessmen are obviously a persuasive reason for joining and contribute to its economic and commercial (and perhaps even political) influence.

Chief A. O. Lawson, President of the Lagos Chapter, attended the London meeting and chaired the re-election of London's President, Sir Peter Masfield, but actually he did that not as President from Lagos but in his concurrent role as Vice-President of the London Chapter. At the conference which followed the AGM Chief Lawson resumed his Lagosian persona, or perhaps was pushed back into it since he was an *ad hoc* addition to the scheduled speakers.

The title of the conference was "Nigeria: the way ahead for British exporters and investors". Mr Cecil Parkinson, Minister of State at the Department of Trade, was the first speaker. He pointed out that Nigeria is clearly set for another period of strong growth, unlike so much of the rest of the world at present. He stressed, however, that Nigeria will not again offer the easy money of the 1975-77 boom period and the pattern of demand, which then seemed to cover almost anything that could be got into the country, will be very different. Nigerian importers will not now be seeking goods so much as the machinery to make them, nor will this mean only consumer goods. Industries supplying other industries are developing and will offer

chances for joint venture investment, as well as markets for machinery and equipment sales. Mr Parkinson instanced the openings for local motor vehicle component manufacture to complement the vehicle assembly industries which have virtually eliminated vehicle imports.

He advised businessmen to note the shift from spectacular projects, though a careful study of the IVth National Development Plan will reveal opportunities for big contracts in such fields as telecommunications, power and transport. The shift is to medium-sized schemes such as the need for more agriculturally based business all the way from growing to processing.

The opportunities are there, declared Mr Parkinson, adding that admittedly there are risks but potential profits are commensurate. There are obstacles to be tackled, too, but these merely emphasise that Nigeria is a market meriting the attention of senior management, not just routine calls by junior staff. Businessmen intending to approach the Nigerian market should do their homework thoroughly (he reminded his audience that his ministry runs informative seminars and stands ready to help businessmen who seek its aid. "We run a responsive service, tell us what you want us to do for you"), offer detailed plans and take local advice. This last is a matter with which the Nigerian-British Chamber of Commerce can help.

Question of confidence

His Excellency the High Commissioner for Nigeria, Mr S. Uthman Yohah, said that although the Minister had already said much of what he had had in mind to say there were still some important points which he wished to make. The first was a matter of confidence: British confidence in Nigeria. British businessmen are, he felt, too cautious, too aware of potential risks, losses and failures in Nigeria. "Your competitors are not so excessively cautious," hence Britain's loss of trade growth in Nigeria.

Perhaps at one time, many months ago, it might have been not unreasonable. His Excellency suggested, for the timorous or ignorant to be cautious about the

effects of the process of returning to civilian rule in Nigeria. Now at least 95 per cent of that caution should be abandoned; civilians are governing, democracy has reappeared, vicious and even raucous. Indeed Nigeria could make a claim to be more democratic than Britain, not only are there five parties and 20 elected legislatures "but with us a minority cannot elect the government. But do not be afraid of democracy, you have survived it in Britain".

He then went on to repeat Mr Parkinson's point about the changed style of demand in Nigeria, the desire now not so much for goods but for the means to make them and the wish for industrial investment on the pattern that British businessmen have long applied in Europe and North America, a partnership of equals.

Finally he spelled out most plainly the importance to businessmen of Nigeria's opposition to the existence and practice of apartheid in South Africa and Namibia and the effect of trading with South Africa. "We should like to see more being done by you. We believe you have influence. We do not expect instant success for your efforts but we should like to see you trying. If you do not appear to try to end these evils then you are likely to find us untrusting."

Chief A. O. Lawson said that British goods and businessmen still stand well in Nigerian eyes, but neither are in Nigeria as much as they should and could be.

Pointing out once again the opportunities which the Fourth National Development Plan will set forth he repeated the guidelines of the Plan to reduce unemployment and rural migration to the cities, to speed up technical education, to increase productivity (and training) and coupled with that to try to re-orientate national attitudes to work generally and to reduce reliance on oil by developing other industries and agriculture (Sir Peter Masfield commented that the guidelines sounded an appropriate recipe for Britain as well and he hoped that the Minister had taken earnest note of them).

Chief Lawson said the guidelines have already indicated a need for some N9,000m of investment from the private sector. Nigerians cannot themselves find that sort of investment, he said, so that there is plenty of opportunity for joint-venture investment, as well as the business to be found in Federally funded projects. The Chief said that there are steps afoot to reduce obstacles to increasing private investment and said that existing regulations were to be kept under constant review for possible modifications.

He then said that the Nigerian Government was under pressure from Nigerian business to lead the Third World in reorganising and applying the distinction between

seeking transfer of technology and procuring technology.

Nigerian businessmen, he said, fully realise that one cannot go round demanding an "intellectual property" (if such demands are met it may well be that the technology delivered is outdated or inappropriate). They want to procure useful technology for due consideration — the Chief's legal background became very pertinent in this section of his speech. The nine-month budget, still unhappy, not clear of the legislature's debates and with some of its proposed projects at risk of being aborted for lack of time, has made some gestures to improve payments for technical assistance though the permitted level is not yet generous. Nigerian businessmen would be working to improve these still more, partly because technology needs are going to figure largely in future shopping lists to advance Nigerian industry which already has a lot of the necessary hardware in place.

Visa problems, of course dominated questions from the floor and the High Commissioner generally played a straight bat to them. In answering questions about obtaining multiple re-entry visas he said that when these are sought one of criteria applied is "Why can't this person be based full-time in Nigeria rather than the outside and visiting often?" The logical inference from this is that it is to become easier to obtain residence and work permits for non-Nigerians. Mr. Yohah confirmed that this is indeed so when he was asked after the meeting.

Opportunities in Francophone

The day before the NBCC's conference the London Chapter of Commerce had held a seminar entitled "Passport to Francophone Africa" and intended to remind British businessmen of the opportunities there.

Mr Gerald Raingold, of Banque de Paris et Pays-Bas, outlined the target area very clearly and then crisply offered some more detailed information on four countries, the Ivory Coast, Cameroon, Gabon and Niger, with almost throw-away references to the sort of openings which might be worth investigating — for example, discussing Cameroon he observed, "There is a shortage of light aircraft". He concluded by outlining methods available for financial Francophone trade, reminding his audience that joint ventures could include other European or Japanese concerns as well as African partners.

Mr Michael Koenig provided a quick tour of the legal framework which businessmen could expect to meet in Francophone Africa. It is basically French practice but in the 20 years of independence some local variations have developed and some forms now common in

France itself are post-independence.

When seeking government contracts it is essential, Mr. Koenig said, to draw on the services of experienced intermediaries who can advise on the most effective way of drafting tenders, even to their phrasing, and on the channels which should be consulted at which ministries. Without this sort of skilled guidance through government by-ways one has to be very very lucky to be awarded a contract.

At the non-government level the important thing to remember is that the French law of contract differs in many ways from the Common Law. Many of the elements of contract in Common Law are missing from the French code. In French contract probably the fundamental factor is the "cause", namely what each party believes to be the obligations to be fulfilled by the other party, or putting it in another way, "What does he think you are going to do?" Getting that unequivocally clear is most important. Other matters which need to be carefully handled are conditions precedent and subsequent (the latter should be avoided as much as possible by honest businessmen) and grounds for reviewing the terms of the contract (innovation).

Although it may seem fearsome at first sight, reasonable care and attention to drafting clearly and using professional advice can produce contracts which are both secure in French legal eyes and reassuring for British businessmen but do not try to do things in a hurry, this is even more so in Francophone Africa than in France.

Excellent advice

The final speaker was Mr. Bernard O'Connor, of Westimes, who largely repeated, with appropriate modernisations, the excellent speech which he delivered to a CBI conference trying to draw the attention of British businessmen to the commercial possibilities of Francophone Africa (*West Africa* May 9, 1977), since then Senegal has become a slightly less attractive market of it Mr. O'Connor said; this time, expect small orders only. There have been some changes since his CBI speech, import licences are now easier and tariffs more level. French privileges seem to be less obtrusive there are more local traders and the markets are less chauvinistic with sales of UK goods having improved considerably over the past five years. Mr. O'Connor has even found it possible to interest more British manufacturers in the market — he stressed that Westimes, and so his experience, was in the business of selling goods not capital nor technical exporting. So long as there is the will there is a way.

He made it plain that the way still involves going to see for oneself, adding that it would be wise to think in terms of £3,000 for a fortnight — up £1,000 since 1977 — and that the first visit can be to capital cities with subsequent visits to the hinterland markets. Practical hints poured out, some of which should not have been needed such as write letters in French, label goods in French. He also made the important point that meeting dates is very important; the importer may lose the value of his import licence if the goods don't arrive in time; and if the relevant documents don't arrive in time it is the British exporter who pays for waiting time. Documents should always go via a bank.

Distribution systems are complex, said Mr. O'Connor. Do not expect to find specialist dealers but do not think that because a trader's store is small his trade is small. As well as checking your prospective customer's bank references — think in terms of each against documents rather than credit — watch his store for a while and chat with a few of the locals (French will be enough, you can hardly be expected to know Wolof or Dyula). Thanks to transport problems local industries, such as bakers, often order in fairly substantial lots three or four times a year instead of the small weekly packets for a similar business in Europe.

In some quick notes on various countries, Mr. O'Connor said that everybody knows that the Ivory Coast is rich so everybody is trying to land business there and the competition is fierce in Abidjan — but nothing like so tough in Brousse, Benin and Togo are enterprises for what could be termed informal supply lines which need to be kept full to satisfy their customers. Guinea, "things are changing there, it could be worth a visit."

There was no suggestion that the Francophone market is easy, "the market is not waiting for you but it is there. And Westimes experience has shown that it can be worth two-thirds of the Nigerian market, which is a lot of business to neglect."

Further promptings

As these two meetings show, British businessmen are regularly urged to go to Africa and help themselves to a slice of the action. Clearly the number of trade missions from various bodies visiting Nigeria and other places show that this advice is being given some heed, but a quick glance at the makeup of the average mission shows that many of the companies taking part are already trading with West Africa and their man is just taking sensible advantage of the cheaper fares, and other conveniences offered, by a trade mission trip, to visit existing customers and seek out some new ones. That is, of course, good but what would be better would be more visits by

businessmen whose goods have not yet reached Africa, visits by senior men — chairmen and managing directors — determined to make real commercial discoveries.

Often the exhortations to tackle the African market come from people with a mainly theoretical awareness of their subject, such as politicians and busy, highly-placed officials in the Department of Trade or the Treasury. Now another voice has joined in to proclaim the profit in West Africa, an African voice.

Chief Francis Arthur Nzebe is, however, something of a hybrid, being in a substantial way of business in Britain as well as in Nigeria — indeed he set up the London-based Fanz Organisation some of whose activities have nothing to do with Africa, before starting his Nigerian businesses. A man whose own commercial activities have brought such material symbols of success as three Rolls-Royces — when these are mentioned, he likes to point out that as a prudent businessman he also owns three horses "in case the cars break down" — has some claims to a hearing for his advice.

As a Nigerian, Chief Nzebe reckons that he has a fair knowledge of that market and its opportunities. He also has interests and experience in other West African countries which, he believes, could offer British industry almost as much scope as Nigeria — and remember ECOWAS (For example, Niger certainly is a country of enormous commercial potential by the end of the decade and a casual glance at the map might not suggest that Mali has one of Africa's biggest fishing industries.)

The Chief makes his points bluntly in a take-it-or-leave-it style, at the same time making it plain that he has more sympathy with those who openly reject what he may say, than those who tacitly leave it. To some people he sounds like a Mancunian trying to stir Southerners into action — having taken his degree in engineering at Manchester University he recognises the style. The Chief started to add his public encouragement to British industry last autumn at a meeting of the Nigerian British Chamber of Commerce, (*West Africa*, November 19) and the message is still much the same. But that was at a fairly specialised gathering where the participants had already evidenced an interest in doing business with Nigeria. Now he wants to reach a wider audience of people who do not seem to know the opportunities that can be found by those prepared to seek them.

Having offered to give his advice the Chief disconcertingly observes: "There are no experts on the new Africa, not even Africans, not even me. The conventional wisdom of the 'old Africa hands' is about as useful as yesterday's newspaper, although their personal contacts may still be valuable. Anyone

doing business there now has to make radical new assessments; new decisions have to be taken, new policies formulated. This means that senior men must go to Africa."

"Having decided to go to Africa, remember that it is a place where mistakes can be expensive, so do your homework thoroughly. A wealth of accurate commercial information is available from your own government departments and the various African embassies and High Commissions in London. You also have shrewd and experienced commercial counsellors in most African countries."

"Find a friend"

"Probably the most important thing to do on your first visit is to find yourself a good friend, whether you choose to call him your agent, your representative, your local director or your correspondent. In the first instance ask your local Embassy to arrange some interviews and, if possible, some social occasions. Be prepared to put a lot of effort and yourself into this job."

"The eventual choice, is of course, a purely personal one for you and him, but if I may offer my own opinion here, do not ask the man who is already an agent for a dozen other companies to act for your firm — he already has his hands full and will not be able to give the attention that you believe your activities deserve. Go and seek out a new entrepreneur who will have a close interest in making a success of your business. There are plenty of them to be found but they do have to be sought out. If you have got the right man, your next visit will be much smoother and probably much more profitable."

"It seems to come as a surprise to some British businessmen that there are plenty of other competitors from different countries offering their wares. All these people have to be seen by some overworked government official or technical or local businessman, who has a great deal more to worry about than the fact that you are booked on the plane home the day after tomorrow (Part of the problem is that he lacks the mid-management support in his own organisation that really comes after years of experience rather than some diploma passing.)"

"This is where you friend, your local representative is invaluable. It may take him weeks to set up a meeting that lasts just ten minutes, but when he sends for you, go. Most significant orders are clinched on the spot. They no longer toll in by mail and telex, certainly not until people know you personally. You, or somebody with full authority to make decisions, must always be prepared to go to Africa — and often at short notice — if you really want to get business."

now we are enjoying the luxury of choice but there is certainly nothing wrong with British technology, goods and services but do not take Nigeria, or anywhere else in Africa, for granted.

"Every businessman is interested in profits, that is his *raison d'être* and the measure of his efficiency. We hear a lot of complaints about British companies having their money tied up and being unable to get it out. I honestly believe that over 60 per cent of them are caused by ignoring local laws and conditions — these should be followed to the letter — remember, a young official who lacks the confidence born of years of experience may be

handling your paper work and for safety, he will stick rigidly to what the rule book says. A good idea is to retain a local solicitor or accountant who understands all the regulations and who can handle the appropriate forms and look after your interests at every stage, particularly on local taxation matters, and secure necessary permissions. It will cost you some money and time but you will find that, generally speaking, getting your money home can be fairly straightforward if things have been done properly right from the beginning of your African ventures.

"Just get out there and sell — or buy."

OPEC picks a \$32 barrel

The meeting of OPEC ministers in Algiers last week decided, by a majority, to set a basic reference price of \$32 a barrel for crude oil and keep within a ceiling of \$37 a barrel. The average OPEC price was just under \$32. Saudi Arabia, however, currently charging \$28 for the reference barrel, said that it would not be raising its price to the new level nor would it yet be reducing output, it is easily the biggest producer, from the present 9.5m barrels a day so that the situation is still not very clear, especially as some countries have been having to sell their oil below the theoretical and published prices.

Producers at the higher quality end of the scale, which includes Nigeria, have agreed not to raise their price above \$37 for the time being.

It was announced during the meeting that the OPEC countries had agreed to increase their co-operation with non-oil producing developing countries.

● The Africa Committee of the London Chamber of Commerce is holding a one-day conference on Energy Resource Planning in Africa on July 10. Topics to be discussed include: power generation in Africa, substitution for fossil fuels, small-scale hydroelectricity, and alternative energy.

Pause for cocoa

The meeting of the International Cocoa Council which has been called to deal with matters involved in winding up the International Cocoa Organisation, after the demise at the end of March of the International Cocoa Agreement, and to arrange to start distributing the money in the buffer stock fund to the producing members of ICCO — some \$85m, was liquid — decided to delay action until their next meeting in September.

They decided upon this after a message from the general secretary of Unctad, under whose aegis the ICA comes, urged them to try yet again to reach co-operation in the cocoa industry. Unctad is to

arrange talks on cocoa in Geneva at the end of July. Whether these talks are to be negotiations towards a new ICA will be decided nearer the time. But it cannot be denied that there is a guarded optimism in the cocoa industry which did not exist very widely a month ago.

After the new cocoa prices, which had already showed some improvement after the news of Rayner's deal (*West Africa*, June 9) to buy 100,000 tonnes of Ivory Coast cocoa — at a reputed £1,030 a tonne — had lifted that overhang off the market, rose and at the middle of last week all 1980 contracts were above £1,100 a tonne and next year's above £1,200.

Contract to build paper mill

Foster Wheeler World Services are to supervise the building of a 120,000 pulp and newsprint mill designed by Parsons & Whittemore Lyndon for Nigerian Newsprint Manufacturing Co. in Cross River State. The mill's 100,000 tonnes of newsprint annual capacity, using locally grown *gmelina arborea* as the main raw material, will make it one of the largest in Africa.

Contracts worth more than £100m have been placed with various British companies in connection with the project which is due to be completed in 16 months. Black & Clawson have a £10m contract to provide machinery for the two production lines, and other companies will be providing other equipment.

● Net British aid to developing countries in 1979 amounted to £974m, equivalent to 0.5 per cent of GNP. This compares with £759m in 1978, equal to 0.4 per cent of GNP. Mr. Neil Marten, Minister for Overseas Development told the House of Commons

These figures are net of capital repayments to the United Kingdom in respect of past aid loans. They have been compiled according to the OECD Development Assistance Committee's new basis of assessment which requires the inclusion of promissory notes deposited in respect of certain multilateral agencies instead of the cash drawn down.

SHIPPING News

BARBER LINES

EASTBOUND — TEXAS due Tenerife June 13, the Dakar, FreeTown, Monrovia, Abidjan, Tema, Lagos, Douala, TAMPA loads Jacksonville June 9, Norfolk June 11, Baltimore June 12, Philadelphia June 14, New York June 17, Sunny Point June 19, Tenefé, Dakar, FreeTown, Monrovia, Tema, Lagos and Douala.
WESTBOUND — TEXAS loads West African ports 5-10 July for U.S. Atlantic ports discharging 20-25 July. TAMPA loads West African ports at above 19-25 July for U.S. Atlantic ports discharging June 4-10 August.

E.A.C. LINES

SOUTHBOUND — BORNGIA Oslo/Moss May 17, Copenhagen May 22, Aarhus May 27, Hamburg May 31, Bremerhaven May 31, Rotterdam June 1, Antwerp/Zeebrugge June 2, Rouen Le Havre June 3, Tenerife June 7, Dakar June 9, FreeTown July 10, Monrovia June 11, Abidjan June 20, Tema July 5, Lomé July 4, Lagos/ Apapa June 14, Douala June 18.
NORTHBOUND — FIONIA Port Harcourt July 1, Lagos/ Apapa July 4, Cotonou July 2, Lomé July 5, Tema July 6, Abidjan July 7, Monrovia July 10, FreeTown July 25, Dakar July 11, Tenerife July 14, Amsterdam July 17, Antwerp July 17, Rotterdam July 17, Bremen July 23, Hamburg July 22, Aarhus July 19, Copenhagen July 24, Oslo/Moss July 26, Le Havre July 26.

ELDER Dempster Lines

SOUTHBOUND — DUMBIA sails Liverpool June 17. SAPELE sails Liverpool June 19. SOKOTO sails West June 18.
NORTHBOUND — PFGE due Dublin June 19. SEKONDI due Apapa June 21. SHERRO due London June 16.

EASTBOUND — BLUE AKEISHI due Apapa June 20. KADUNA due Douala June 16.

FARRELL LINES

EASTBOUND — Departs Mataldi May 22, Lagos/ Apapa May 16, Abidjan May 26, Monrovia May 28 (if sufficient replacement) arrives Boston June 7, Philadelphia June 9, Baltimore June 10, Norfolk June 11.

K LINE

WESTBOUND — SEA EXPRESS from Japan via Hong Kong and Singapore, to Abidjan, Lomé, Apapa/Lagos, Port Harcourt, Douala, Mataldi, sailed Japan June 4 due Apapa/Lagos July 12.

MEDAFRICA GOLDEN EAGLE/ NIGERIA LINE

SOUTHBOUND — ALKMINI Marseille June 2, Leghorn June 8, Barcelona June 11, Lagos June 28, Port Harcourt July 3.

NORTH EUROPE — ASUNARO Balise May 18, Dunkerque May 21, Rotterdam May 23, Ipswich May 25, Antwerp June 1, Lagos June 15, Port Harcourt June 24.

USA — CAPBON St John June 1, Montreal June 8, Quebec June 13, Lagos June 30, Port Harcourt July 7. **BIRGITTE** B New York May 24, Baltimore May 30, Abidjan June 18,

Port Harcourt June 24, New York July 18.
FAR EAST — SABIRA Singapore June 1, Bombay June 11, Lagos July 5, Port Harcourt July 10.

MITSUI O.S.K. LINE

BRAVE PIONEER sailed Lagos May 30, Port Harcourt June 8, Abidjan June 18-20, Monrovia June 20-25, sail back to Japan TEMDAI WA A5 Abidjan June 12-16, Lagos/ Apapa June 17-18, Abidjan July 5-5, back to Japan. **HEROIANE** WA A4 arrived Lagos June 1, ETD June 16, Abidjan June 18-21, Port Harcourt June 22-23, Douala June 30 July 2, back to Japan. **SEAMASTER** voyage WA A1 sail Singapore June 8, Lobei June 27-31, Abidjan July 6-8, Apapa July 10-21, Port Harcourt July 22-27, Douala July 29-31, Mataldi August 2-7. **GRAND WING** voyage WA B4 ETD Singapore June 20, Abidjan July 17-19, Monrovia July 21-24, Lagos July 27-August 7, Douala August 8-11, Abidjan August 14-16.

NIGERIAN NATIONAL SHIPPING LINE

SOUTHBOUND — RIVER OD Liverpool May 2, Monrovia May 12, Apapa May 14, RIVER MADA — Hamburg May 5, Bremen May 6, Antwerp May 9, Rotterdam Min 13.

OT AFRICA LINE AB

SOUTHBOUND — VALLMO load ing Waltham June 15, Felixstowe June 16, Rotterdam June 17, Zeebrugge June 18, Le Havre June 18. **KAPRIFOL VOY 24** Waltham July 1, Felixstowe July 1, Rotterdam July 2, Zeebrugge July 3, Le Havre July 4, Dakar July 11, Lagos/ Apapa July 15, Tema July 17, Abidjan July 18, Monrovia July 20.

PALM LINE

SOUTHBOUND — APAPA PALM Abidjan May 4-6, Tema May 8-15, Port Harcourt May 17-28.

S.C.A.D.O.A.

SOUTHBOUND — SAINT-MATHIEU Dunkirk May 23, Rouen May 27, Le Havre May 30, Bordeaux May 2, Cotonou June 13, Port Gendé June 26, Pointe Noire June 21.

SCANDINAVIA WEST AFRICA LINE

SOUTHBOUND — LYCANO Aarhus June 2, Copenhagen June 3, Nørskoping June 5-6, Bangil/Dakar May 23-24, FreeTown May 26-28, Monrovia May 29-June 1, Abidjan June 3-7, Tema June 8-11, Cotonou June 12-16, Port Harcourt June 18-24, Douala June 26-29.

WESTWIND AFRICA LINE

DESSERT WIND ETA Houston May 2, ETS Houston May 7, ETA Abidjan May 22, ETA Lagos May 26. **BUNNA FORTUNA** ETA Houston May 10, ETS Houston May 15, ETA Abidjan May 30, ETA Lagos June 4.

UNITED KINGDOM WEST AFRICA LINE

SOUTHBOUND — MARON Middleburgh May 9, London May 16, Lomé May 26, Apapa May 27.

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A. VACANCIES

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Engineering Posts	Salary Grade Level
1. Chief Engineers (Electrical, Mechanical and Civil)	14
2. Assistant Chief Engineers (Electrical, Mechanical and Civil)	13
3. Principal Engineers (Electrical, Mechanical and Civil)	12
4. Chief Technical Officers I (Electrical, Mechanical and Civil)	13
5. Chief Technical Officers II (Electrical, Mechanical and Civil)	12
6. Principal Technical Officers I (Electrical, Mechanical and Civil)	11
7. Principal Technical Officers II (Electrical, Mechanical and Civil)	10
8. Senior Technical Officers (Electrical, Mechanical and Civil)	09

ACCOUNTING POSTS

9. Principal Accountants	12
10. Senior Accountants	10
11. Accountants	09
12. Principal Executive Officers I	11
13. Principal Executive Officers II	10
14. Senior Executive Officers	09

Other Posts

15. Principal Personnel Officer (Safety)	12
16. Principal Estate Surveyors	12

B. THE JOBS, QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

For engineering posts, areas to be covered will include transmission, distribution, power station laboratory technology, purchasing, electrical maintenance, mechanical maintenance, civil works, protection-control-metering, line maintenance, boiler maintenance, turbine maintenance, instrumentation and staff training. Applicants for posts 1, 2 and 3 must possess a recognised university degree or equivalent professional qualification in the appropriate field of study. In addition, they must have acquired a minimum of 14, 11 and eight years post-qualification relevant experience respectively.

Posts 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 call for the Higher Technician Diploma or its equivalent in the appropriate field of study, together with minimum of 15, 12, nine, six and three years of post-qualification relevant experience. In that order.

Applicants for posts numbered 9, 10 and 11 above should possess any of the ACCA, ACA and ACMA.

Those for Principal Accountants and Senior Accountants, however, need six and three years post-qualification relevant experience respectively.

Aspirants for posts numbered 12, 13 and 14 should all hold a recognised higher diploma or certificate of the Chartered Institute of Secretaries and Administrators, or parts I to IV of any of the aforementioned professional accounting qualifications. Three and six years post-qualification relevant experience will also be demanded of applicants for the posts of Principal Executive Officer I and Principal Executive Officer II respectively.

For the posts of Principal Personnel Officer (Safety) and Principal Estate Surveyors, applicants should hold a recognised university degree (or equivalent professional qualification) in the appropriate fields of study. In addition, they should have acquired at least eight years post-qualification relevant experience.

C. REMUNERATION AND OTHER CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

The Salary Range of each Grade Level is as follows:

Salary Grade Level	Range for Pensionable Appointment	Range for Contract Appointment
14	N9,168 x N320—N10,128	N10,498 x N368—N11,602
13	N8,064 x N320—N9,024	N9,228 x N368—N10,332
12	N7,404 x N216—N8,052	N8,470 x N248—N9,214
11	N6,744 x N180—N7,284	N7,710 x N208—N8,332
10	N5,760 x N162—N6,732	N6,580 x N186—N7,696
09	N4,668 x N162—N5,640	N5,324 x N186—N6,442

Entry point will depend on candidate's qualifications and experience. Appointments made to Nigerians will be pensionable subject to probationary period of two years, but other successful candidates will be offered appointments on contract basis. Transportation to Nigeria will be provided for overseas appointees and their families as well as luggage. Fringe benefits and other conditions of service are as laid down for senior employees of identical grades in the authority.

D. METHOD OF APPLICATION

Application forms are obtainable within the country from the Director of Personnel or any of the Authority's Directors of Operations/Directors of Distribution/District Managers/Undertaking Managers. In the case of overseas applicants, the forms are obtainable from NEPA Office, York House, 199 Westminster Bridge Road, London SE1; Embassy of Nigeria at 1333 16th Street, NW, Washington DC; and from Nigerian Consulate Office, 575 Lexington Avenue, New York, NY, USA.

Applications duly completed should be forwarded to the Director of Personnel, Electricity Headquarters, 24-25 Marina, Lagos, Nigeria. (In case of applicants in Nigeria). OR

NEPA London Representative,
York House,
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All completed applications must be received not later than Friday, July 25, 1980.

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GHANA

Limann stands firm on constitution

President Hilla Limann declared during a closed session of the People's National Party Congress in Kumasi that he had sworn before God and the nation to defend the constitution and would defend it. Those who had been pestering him to alter parts of it, he said, should therefore get off his back. "I will never, never alter it," Alhaji Imoru Egala, carrying the title of "Founder of the Party," told the old guard that they had had their chance, so they should withdraw from the front and give their support in the background. He said the younger generation must be given their chance, too. The present state of affairs had been the result of the undermining, hypocrisy and selfishness of some party members. The old guard, he said, were the same people who had betrayed Kwame Nkrumah. While he spoke, reported the *Pioneer*, he pointed to where the old guard, including Mr. Kwesi Armah and Mr. Alex Quaison-Sackey, were seated.

According to the *Pioneer*, the old guard would not take such criticism lying down and it became apparent that any attempt to hold elections in the "strained but frank talking atmosphere might lead to undesirable consequences which might provide opponents of the party with a windfall." Security at the Prempeh Assembly Hall was tight, and "robust looking men" frisked delegates before allowing them to enter the hall. A nominee for the post of Ashanti Regional Minister was reportedly found to be carrying a pistol. The congress ended prematurely with the dissolution of the Central Committee, no election of national officers, and the carrying of a motion proposed by Alhaji Imoru Egala and seconded by Nana Okutur Bekoe II, national chairman. As a result, President Limann, in consultation with Alhaji Imoru Egala and Nana Okutur Bekoe will administer party affairs until another delegate conference is held.

Rawlings
speaks out

Flight-Lieutenant Jerry John Rawlings (retd.), has called on Ghana's youth, "in whom it to be found a wealth of labour and enthusiasm", to gather courage and reject "a system which has failed the nation and its our worn traditions which have deepened the people's plight". He said the task of national reconstruction required the concerted efforts of the people who constitute the country's greatest resources. The former AFRC chairman was speaking to a large audience of journalists and members of the public at the Accra Community Centre to mark the anniversary of June 4.

Flight-Lt. Rawlings said there were young men and women in medicine, law, technology, journalism and in the military who had recognised the need to serve the country but who continued to go to waste in frustration. He said the experience of active youth in progressive countries had been of direct involvement in productive work with ordinary workers and farmers to make a positive impact on the rapid overall development of their societies.

The former AFRC chairman denied a GNA report published in the *Ghanaian Times* that he had

reaffirmed his loyalty to the PNP Government. Describing the report as absolute nonsense, he said that as a Ghanaian and a soldier, his loyalty was to the state and the Constitution, not to any government. He illustrated his point by saying Brigadier J. Nunoo-Mensah, former Chief of Defence Staff, was retired by the PNP Government because he refused to declare his loyalty to it and affirmed his loyalty to the State and the Constitution. Flight-Lt. Rawlings said "it was very insistence of Brigadier Nunoo-Mensah on distinguishing a soldier's loyalty like any other citizen's to the State and the Constitution that made him unacceptable to certain powerful elements in the government."

According to the former chairman, the government convened a meeting soon after last September 24 which was attended by the President and Vice-President, the Minister of Defence, Mr. S. K. Riley-Poku, and Mr. Kofi Batsa, chairman of the PNP Publicity Committee, as well as Rawlings and Brig. Nunoo-Mensah. He said government members demanded that the Brigadier declare his loyalty to the government. The Brigadier insisted on the loyalty of the commissioned officers and senior army personnel to the State and the Constitution and not to the

government in power. This resulted in a heated argument for some seven minutes and the meeting ended abruptly. The next thing the government did was to retire "this honourable and distinguished soldier". Mr Kofi Batsa walked into the offices of West Africa in London to deny categorically that such a meeting ever took place.

Flight-Lt. Rawlings asked Parliament to investigate seriously "what seems to be a campaign of reprisals directed at certain members of the armed forces for their roles in the June 4 revolution". He said Parliament must not listen to ministers alone but must hear what the soldiers, too, have to narrate, "because such reprisals are the very cause of instability in the forces even if those who organise them profess the security of the State". He said the reprisals also threatened the harmony existing between the armed forces and the civil sector. Since the September 24 handover, he said, there had been a lot of misleading analysis and proposals dealing with situations in the armed forces with the result that some of the commentaries had gone so far as to attack not only the integrity of the armed forces but also to question its very existence. The forces were an important institution undergoing rapid and profound changes. June 4 marked the beginning of an important stage in the forces history—the start of a new democratic process in the forces.

Flight-Lt. Rawlings said, "In terms of hardship, of being able to fend for your family, the situation is worse now than it was before... we should all have learnt by now the longer the genuine aspirations of the people are repressed the greater the danger of an uncontrollable explosion".

On the armed forces, Flight-Lt. Rawlings added that "the present system of discipline which we inherited from the past is based on the blind subordination of junior ranks to superior ranks—a system known in the forces as obey before you complain. This authoritarian military code protected the corruption of senior officers from being questioned and exposed by their juniors and enabled soldiers to be used in defending an oppressive system which benefited only a handful of people. The foundations of this undemocratic system were severely shaken on June 4—a natural reaction whose dimensions could have been more explosive and bloody. But there are still some senior officers who advocate such a system despite the severe jolt it has received. It is obvious that the appointment of a few senior officers to the highest ranks does not as such ensure discipline and normalise the situation. We have seen how generally have created a mess not only in the armed forces but in the country at large. The exposure of our soldiers and to other armies in

the Middle East and overseas courses has made them notice the different nature of the relationship between senior and junior ranks in modern armies and the relationship that exists in our own army. I believe the spirit of our present democratic constitution is against the maintenance of such an oppressive system in a 20th century army.

"The process which the rank and file themselves initiated on June 4 must be seen as part of a growing democratic insistence in all areas of human life and must be allowed to develop to embrace a review of appointments, especially when these appointments are politically motivated and not based on any acknowledged merit, the election of committee and councils as representatives of the rank and file, the removal of restrictions on constitutional rights of soldiers. In other words the military code must be seen to reflect the democratic spirit of the new constitution. If those who have emerged from their hiding places to assume positions of command in the armed forces are too terrified to recognise the democratic process begun by the rank and file themselves, they should withdraw themselves into their holes and give way to men of courage and vision or else risk being blown away by the new wind of change. A peaceful and democratic growth of our armed forces will ensure that it is not only capable of defending the sovereignty of our nation but is fully and productively integrated into the national development effort."

Brigadier objects to retirement

Brigadier Arnold Quainoo, former army commander, has objected to the government statement that he had been retired from the Ghana armed forces. He said he was due for retirement on June 19 this year, and therefore was still a serving officer on the active list until the effective date of his retirement.

In a press statement issued in Accra Brigadier Quainoo said he received a letter dated December 14 last year, from the Military Secretary at the Ministry of Defence advising him of a decision to retire him compulsorily on June 19, 1980. He said according to Article 15-21 of the Ghana Armed Forces Regulations on Administration, he was expected to intimate his acceptance or otherwise of the decision within 14 days of receipt but he objected to his compulsory retirement.

He denied allegations that he had been writing and signing letters as the Army Commander, and pointed out that his letter, which was in reply to one relating to his retirement, was the only one he had written and signed.

Brigadier Quainoo said he signed this letter to reflect his rank and position in accordance with

normal practice. "This action is perfectly in order in a letter of this nature for, after all, I am expected to retire on June 19, 1980," he stated. Brigadier Quainoo disagreed with a Ministry of Defence statement that he was writing anonymous letters and had been visiting Burma Camp and other military installation units at night to incite troops to mutiny.

"These are grave allegations and in the light of the general sense of insecurity gripping everybody, I wonder why I have never been questioned by any of the security agencies," he said. He said allegations made against him had been "fabricated to add colour to an otherwise drab and unconvincing concoction against him."

He requested the press houses to publicly prove allegations that he had been contacting and picking retired soldiers and toured the press houses to seek publicity for himself. Explaining the incident of June 3, at the Teshie Military Camp, Brigadier Quainoo said he had gone there to have a letter inviting the press to a conference cyclotyled by the duty clerk. He said since the orderly officer was not in the office, he was asked to go and come back at seven o'clock in the evening. He said he went back as arranged but saw himself surrounded by three officers with rifles, with one of them saying they had instructions to arrest him. He said he told them that he had simply come to have a letter cyclotyled for him and that he was going to see the Commandant himself. Brigadier Quainoo said when he entered his car and started the engine, the officer shouted for the guards but nobody responded. The officer then grabbed a rifle and opened fire on his car. He said he got out of the car, went to the office to wait for the Commandant and when he narrated his story, the Commandant apologised to him and asked him to go.

The banning order, Brigadier Quainoo said, was nothing but a feeble attempt to force a low profile on him, and declared, "I am not guilty of any offence against any authority or discipline as alleged."

Brigadier Arnold Quainoo, the former Army Commander, has been prohibited from all units and installations under the Ministry of Defence and from using Ministry vehicles. According to a statement from the Public Relations Directorate of the Armed Forces, Brigadier Quainoo would henceforth enter any unit of installation "at his own risk". The statement pleaded with civilians and retired servicemen to leave the institution of the Armed Forces alone to enable servicemen to get on with their work.

Students are sent home

The University of Ghana, Legon, has closed down until further notice. The university's

Academic Board said the decision to send over 4,000 students home was taken in view of the "unbearable conditions" on campus. A statement signed by Professor Adze-Bekoe, the Vice-Chancellor, explained that "although according to new reports the University Teachers Association of Ghana (UTAG) had advised members to return to work, the absence of job workers still means that arrangements for feeding, sanitation and security cannot be maintained."

Parents to pay more fees

Parents will soon be paying two-thirds of the total cost of boarding fees of secondary schools as a short-term solution to the increasing cost of the boarding school system. The remaining one-third will be subsidised by the government, announced Dr Kwamina Okran, Minister of Education, Culture and Sports at the 40th anniversary speech and prize-giving day of the Aggrey Memorial Zion School in Cape Coast. He said the entire cost would eventually be shifted on to parents, "but that will only be done when we have reached the stage where the parent can face a meaningful choice whether or not to send the child to an institution." Government policy, he said, would be directed in the next four or five years towards promoting day institutions and improving public transport.

Retiring age remains at 55

The Government has decided that all civil servants who reached the former compulsory retiring age of 55 before September 24 last year but still remained in their posts are deemed to have retired with effect from the dates on which they individually reached the age of 55. They were however deemed to be on a one-year contract starting on that date of retirement. A statement from the office of the head of the Civil Service said enquiries had been made by civil servants since the Constitution was promulgated as to the effective date for implementing the new compulsory retirement age of 60. The statement explained that a circular letter of August 6 last year raising the retirement age from 55 to 60 years had been withdrawn as it had no legal backing. Principal secretaries, head regional administrative officers and heads of various public establishments were asked to bring the notice to the attention of all affected people and ensure that the contract appointments of affected people were terminated on the dates due and before September 24, 1980.

5,000 dismissed

About 5,000 workers from various divisions of the Ghana Industrial Holding Corporation

(GIHOC) have been dismissed after they had stormed Parliament House and interrupted proceedings to draw attention to their grievances. Police guarding their factories said they had instructions not to allow the workers back in. President Limann held a meeting with representatives of the political parties in Parliament the following day and visited Parliament to see the extent of the damage caused by the workers.

Workers locked out

Workers of the various divisions of the Ghana Industrial Holding Corporation (GIHOC) in the Accra-Tema area were kept out of their work places by steel-helmeted and truncheon-bearing policemen, the day after about 500 of them had invaded Parliament House, chanting war songs, and reportedly damaging furniture and official documents. The *Ghanaian Times* reported similar damage at the Ministry of Industries, the Hall of Trade Unions and the GIHOC head office. The workers were demanding implementation of new salary structures and allowances.

The lockout happened at a time when GIHOC management was reportedly meeting a parliamentary delegation behind closed doors. Meanwhile, lawyers for nearly 1,000 GIHOC workers dismissed by the government after the demonstration have filed suit actions challenging the government's right to dismiss them. None of the affected workers has so far reapplied for work as demanded by the government. The Majority Parliamentary Leader, Mr C. C. Fith, said Parliament would not tolerate any further violent disruptions of its proceedings and demonstrators should present petitions to the Speaker or the Clerk of Parliament. GNA reported that armed policemen were guarding Parliament House against a repetition of the GIHOC workers' demonstration.

Senior staff protection

Senior staff of the Ghana Cargo Handling Company decided to return to work after assurances from the Minister of Transport and Communications, Mr Harry Sawyer, that adequate provisions would be made to ensure their safety from junior workers. Some junior workers had allegedly beaten-up some senior staff and chased others off into town in trying to force the management to sign a new collective agreement. The workers also laid down their tools for three days to back their demand. The Senior Staff Association called on the government to appoint a substantive managing director for the company so as to effectively check "underground dealings", and undermining on the part of certain staff members in collusion with sections of the workers to cause disaffection.

Officials accused of embezzlement

Thirty-two officials of the Ghana National Reconstruction Corps (GNRC) have been indicted by the management for allegedly embezzling over C1.5m. Captain J. K. Sowu, deputy organiser of the Corps, said officers had misappropriated sums ranging from C2,000 to C376,419. He was giving evidence before the Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee which is holding a preliminary investigation into the GNRC accounts. Capt Sowu said some of the cases had been referred to the police. He added that some of the officials had been found to have made fictitious hotel claims for hotel bills while others sprayed barren land as farms and misappropriated revenue from farm produce sales.

Medical supplies from CCBG

The Concerned Citizens for a Better Ghana (CCBG), a non-political Ghanaian organisation based in New York, has donated drugs and other medical supplies to the Government and people of Ghana. The drugs include Chloroquin, Aspirin, Syringes, Needles and Penicillin. The drugs were presented by Dr. Sammy Mensah, President of the organisation, at a ceremony held at the Ghana Mission Consulate-General in New York. According to Dr. Mensah, the drugs were purchased with money collected at a "fund-raiser for Mother Ghana" held in New York.

Receiving the supplies on behalf of the Government and people of Ghana was Mr J. D. K. Foli, Acting Head of Mission. Mr Foli thanked the CCBG for the gift and urged all Ghanaians abroad to help rescue Ghana from its economic mishap by contributing their quota, as the nationals of other countries domiciled abroad have been doing. Among those present at the ceremony were Mr. N. K. Domevi, Deputy Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the UN, Mr S. E. Annangye, Minister Counsellor, E. E. J. V.

Getting on top of river blindness

The incidence of river blindness (onchocerciasis) in Ghana's Northern and Upper regions is now negligible, a spokesman for the National Onchocerciasis Secretariat said in Accra. Apart from Ghana, the river blindness control exercise is taking place in Benin, Togo, Niger, Upper Volta, Ivory Coast and Mali. It is being jointly sponsored by the Food and Agriculture Organisation the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Health Organisation (WHO). Speaking in an interview with the Ghana News Agency on May 22 in Accra, the spokesman

said since the river blindness control exercise began in 1975 in Ghana, no children born after 1976 have contracted the disease. "The control of the disease in the Northern and Upper regions is a great success," he added.

The spokesman said following the control exercise, inhabitants who evacuated the originally affected agricultural areas are now free to return to settle in those areas to continue with their farming. He said a data collection exercise aimed at extending the control programme to the Volta and Brong-Ahafo regions was now under way, and that the control programme was scheduled to last 20 years. The first phase of the project ended in December last year.

No Graphic

The *Daily Graphic*, Ghana's largest-circulation daily newspaper, did not appear on June 7 because of a shortage of vital materials, reported GBC radio.

NIGERIA

Chadian troops arrested

Twelve of the Chadian soldiers who invaded parts of Koukawa local government area in Borno State have been arrested. The State's Commissioner of Police, Alhaji Dahidu Didah, said a rifle and more than 600 rounds of ammunition were also recovered from them, also recovered was over N5,000 believed to be money taken from fishermen on Lake Chad. In the invasion the Chadian soldiers killed five persons and took away 1,000 head of cattle. Alhaji Dahidu Didah said the area is now under full control of the Nigerian armed forces, while the 9th division of the police are guarding the western side of Lake Chad.

The report that soldiers from the war-torn Chad are now threatening the lives of Nigerians living in the border towns is the subject of editorial comment by the *Daily Times*. It says that these acts of terrorism from across the border by the Chadian soldiers, which were carried out with great impudence, smack of a total disregard for the country's laws.

According to the paper, the incidents justify Nigeria's efforts seeking a lasting solution to the Chadian problem, for she realises that it will not be in the best interest of Africa for neighbouring states to be strife-torn for too long. However, the *Times* notes that Nigeria already has enormous refugee problems as a result of the conflict in Chad and argues that a situation whereby the lives and properties of Nigerians living in the border towns are insecure will be too much to bear. The paper feels that security measures should be tightened at the Chadian border to put a stop to the menace of soldiers from the country.

"Corporal's coup"

There have been rumours of an attempted coup in Nigeria by a discharged army corporal who was described as "mental". A commentator by the Federal Radio Corporation (FRCN) said: "In the early hours of Saturday, May 24, a discharged army corporal illegally gained access into one of the studios and attempted to make a broadcast. The ex-soldier was arrested by the guards on duty and was later identified to be the same person who made a similar visit to the studios on September 8, 1979 attempting also to make a broadcast."

The name of the ex-soldier was not given nor the details of his intended broadcast. But unconfirmed reports said he was going to announce a coup. The FRCN also said that the unnamed leader of the laughable coup had been treated as a mental patient at the Armed Forces Hospital, Kaduna, last year.

The *National Compost* newspaper, apparently contradicting the FRCN, reported that there was an attempted coup adding that 28 people have been arrested in connection with the incident.

Gom retired

Lt-Col. Alfred Gom, formerly serving with the UN Peace-keeping Force in Lebanon, until imprisonment by Israeli authorities for gun-running, has been retired from the Nigerian Army, under the "services no longer required" clause of the army, with effect from June 1. A letter from the Military Secretariat, State House, Marina, said Lt-Col. Gom could retain his army rank and would be paid six months salary in lieu of notice. His other entitlements under the army terms and conditions of service including pensions would be paid to him when due, the letter stated. The Army Officers Pay Office and Army Records Department have been instructed to recover whatever Lt-Col. Gom owes the army.

Rumours denied

President Shehu Shagari has denied rumours of mass demobilisation and dismissals of soldiers which have been circulating since the so-called "voluntary retirement" of six top military officers in April. The officers concerned were Major Generals Joe Garba, Olu Bajowa and George Innih, Brigadier F. B. Akmolu and Air Commodores Dan Sulaiman and A. Falope.

The President explained that the retirement of these officers coincided with a routine exercise of terminating the services of officers on temporary commission. He further explained that some old army veterans recruited to serve in the civil war had been retained for ten years after their services were necessary.

'Oilgate' hearings end

The Crude Oil Sales Tribunal investigating the alleged missing N2.8bn oil money of the NNPC, has concluded its public hearings at the Institute of International Affairs, Victoria Island, Lagos. A total of 69 witnesses from within and outside Nigeria gave evidence before the tribunal (see *West Africa*, April 14 and 28, June 2 and 9).

Two of the last witnesses, Chief Festus Marinho, the managing director of the NNPC and Alhaji Tijani Dagazau, a Nigerian agent to most oil companies operating in the country, told the tribunal that the former head of state, General Olusegun Obasanjo, never influenced any oil contract awards nor dictated sale prices of Nigeria's crude.

In his evidence, Chief Marinho stated that there were absolutely no unusual dealings between him and General Obasanjo, when the general took over the portfolio of Commissioner for Petroleum from Brigadier Buhari. Chief Marinho declared: "All my dealings with him then were carried out during official hours and were always in writing. He only approved the recommendations on sales prices made by the NNPC and all these are on records for generations to see."

Chief Marinho explained that he was empowered by the NNPC Board of Directors at its meeting on February 23, 1978, to submit memorandum in matters relating to expenditure of over N5m through his chairman for onward transmission to the Federal Executive Council for approval. He stated: "There was no contract signed by General Obasanjo, or the late General Murtala Muhammed. Contracts entered into by the NNPC with the oil companies were signed by me as the managing director, in accordance with the law." He apparently contradicted the evidence of some witnesses and that of the NNPC chairman, Mr. A. K. Hart, who had stated that his board was used as a rubber stamp to ratify arrangements and contracts that had been concluded and that the Federal Executive Council interfered with the management of the NNPC.

Concluding the hearings, Mr. Justice Irikefe called on counsel to submit all the corroborating evidence in their client's favour within four days. He said his tribunal was satisfied that it had done its very best and would leave appropriate actions to be taken against the various categories of the Corporation's staff to the Government. He ordered all the corporation's staff on suspension since the beginning of the inquiries to resume work immediately, but he excluded the chairman, Mr. A. K. Hart, and Chief Festus Marinho, the managing director. He explained that the suspension

order had been to enable the tribunal to have access to all the documents needed for its assignment. The Tribunal's report was expected to be submitted to President Shagari on Monday, June 16.

Denial by London bank

The Midland Bank of London has denied that the alleged N2.8bn oil money of the NNPC was ever paid into any of their branches in Britain. According to the *London Financial Times*, the foreign manager for Midland International, Mr Robert Hubbard, told the Crude Oil Sales Tribunal (presumably during their visit to Britain) that both the NNPC and the Central Bank had accounts with the Midland but that such a large sum of money had never been transferred from one branch to the other.

Budget passed

The House of Representatives has passed into law President Shagari's 1980 Budget of N9.04bn, after more than two months of what many critics of the legislators described as "unnecessary delay". The amount covers both the capital and recurrent expenditure of the Federal Government for a period of nine months, beginning from last April, to December. The recommendations of the 13 committees who reviewed the budget proposals were accepted without debate.

More branches to be opened

The governor of the Central Bank, Mr. Ola Vincent, has said that he would intensify his on-going programme of having to compel commercial banks to open branches in different parts of the country. Mr. Vincent said Nigeria, with its population estimate of 100m, was under-banked with only 700 branches of all categories of banks. He therefore appealed to all the banks to use their own initiative to establish branches throughout the country before they may be forced to do so.

World loan for Green Revolution

The World Bank has granted a N21.66m loan to the Federal Government towards agricultural projects under the Green Revolution Scheme. The loan was the ninth lending from the World Bank to the Federal Government towards agricultural development in the country. The latest loan would go towards agricultural projects in Ondo State, according to World Bank sources.

The Ondo State project is estimated to cost about N59.6m. Official sources said that more than 70,000 farmers in the Ekiti-Akoko area of the state would benefit

from the project. Similar projects have been started in Funtua, Gusau, Oyo and Gombe.

Rural projects

The Minister of Agriculture, Alhaji Ibrahim Gusau, has announced that the Federal Government will establish rural integrated agricultural development projects in all the states of the federation by 1983. He explained that the move is to ensure self-sufficiency in food production throughout the country by the year 1985.

Alhaji Ibrahim said the rural development department of his ministry was being expanded to provide manpower for rural development programmes related to agriculture. He said the construction of the rural management institute at Ilorin, Kwara State, was being accelerated to train the much-needed agricultural manpower. The minister also announced the opening of the Bida Agricultural Development Project at Bida, which was set up in co-operation with the Niger State Government.

Training ship for cadets

A training vessel has been acquired by the Nigerian National Shipping Line for use by the Nautical College of Nigeria in Arin in Cross River State. Announcing this, the Minister of State in the Federal Ministry of Transport, Malam Garba Wushishi said that the vessel could accommodate 30 cadets at a time. The Minister, who was visiting the Nautical College, hinted that the Federal Government was looking into the possibility of acquiring another ship which could be used simultaneously as a training and cargo vessel. Malam Wushishi also spoke of steps already taken to ease the problem of qualified staff for the institution.

New fishing vessels

Four fishing vessels built by Mariotti Ltd of Genoa, Italy, have been bought by Imano (Nigeria) Ltd. The first of the four, MT Agbeke is due for immediate delivery to the company in Lagos, the second, MT Ansa will sail to Lagos next week and two others, MT Alisa and MT Uju will be delivered in June.

A spokesman for Imano Ltd said the vessels will be on charter to several government organisations such as the Nigeria National Fish Company for 2½ years during which period they will be used as training vessels for the crews of the fishing company.

● The Eastern Naval Command based in the Cross River State is to be equipped with new and faster gunboats to enable it to carry out its services effectively and efficiently. This was announced by the outgoing Commandant of the unit,

Rail strike off

The Nigerian Union of Railwaysmen has decided to call off an industrial action. This followed an agreement reached at a meeting held in Lagos between the union leaders and the Minister of Transport, Alhaji Umaru Dikko. At the meeting it was resolved to refer some outstanding issues in the public review unit for final determination within the next few weeks.

● The Federal Government has earmarked the sum of N500,000 for the establishment of the proposed National Institute for Labour Studies. Announcing this, the Minister of Labour, Productivity and Employment, Mr. Samuel Adebisi Ogedengbe said the institute should facilitate understanding of industrial relations which has been lacking in the country. The proposals for the new institute have been forwarded to the labour committee of the House of Representatives.

Hydro-electric project shelved

The Federal Government has suspended plans to build the N2.5bn Lokoja hydro-electric project because "the project was likely to involve the resettlement of about 270,000 people inhabiting over 800 towns and villages in the area. It would also cost the government the Kofekefe Bridge."

Alhaji Ibrahim Mohammed Hassan, Minister of Mines and Power, explained that it was unwise to site all the hydro-electric stations in one vicinity of the River Niger, which had been dammed at Kamji and Jebba, both on the same stretch. The minister also explained that about 17 states were against the building of the Lokoja Dam. Alternative sites such as Zungeru, Makurdi Falls and the Mambilla Plateau are being considered, Alhaji Ibrahim stated.

The last Federal Ministry Government announced the project on September 28 last year, three days before they left office. The announcement was greeted with protest, especially by politicians from Benue and Kwara states, who argued that a dam of that magnitude would involve massive movement of people from their places of origin.

River basin plans

The chairman of the Upper Benue River Basin Authority, Alhaji Ibrahim Usman, has said that his authority expects to produce about 129,918 tonnes of rice, wheat, guinea corn, millet and maize by 1983. Other projected products of the dam basin include sugar cane and large quantities of vegetables.

Alhaji Ibrahim said that 369,000 hectares of land have been

earmarked for the project. The operational area of the authority covers almost the whole of Gongola State, the eastern half of Bauchi State, the southern part of Borno State and small portions of Plateau and Benue States.

The authority chairman announced that seven pilot farm projects have been opened at Callum, Gassol, Donga, Dadin Kowa, Bagel, Mayo-Ine and Geryo, areas which he described as having potentials for the development of large-scale irrigation schemes. He also announced that 21 sites have been chosen for the construction of dams on the Mambilla Plateau.

Protecting the environment

Dr. Wahab Dosunmu, Minister of Housing and Environment, has said that an environmental protection law would be made as soon as the draft is completed. Meanwhile, environmental impact assessment would be made mandatory before approval of major projects in the Fourth National Development Plan, while the enforcement programme of the environmental protection legislation would come into effect during the plan period.

The minister indicated that Nigeria might participate in the regional sea studies of the Gulf of Guinea with other West African nations to protect the marine environment and natural resources in the area. He condemned indiscriminate dumping of refuse and open burning of toxic and non-toxic industrial wastes.

He announced the winners of this year's essay competition on environment among secondary school children. At the senior level, Osta Ike of King's College, Lagos, won first prize, Charles A. Ajuyah of the Federal Government College, Warri, came second and Halilu Yusuf of Federal Government College, Sokoto, third. The junior level winners were: Samuel O. Ike, Enugu; Nkem C. Animalu, Lagos; and Ernest Mkpasi, Okigwe, in Imo State.

■ An Ikeja High Court has ordered the Lagos State Government to answer on June 30 the suit filed by some proprietors and trustees against the abolition of private schools in the state. Mr Justice I. O. Agoro stated that the legal technicalities barring the recognition of various interest groups in the case have been cleared.

Olympic team

Mr. Abraham Ordia, Secretary-General of Nigeria's Olympic Committee and President of the Supreme Council of Sports in Africa, has said that Nigeria would be sending a team of 61 to the Moscow Olympics; 37 competitors would take part in athletics, weightlifting, wrestling and boxing.

FROM THE STATES

Bauchi

The 19m-litre Guhi temporary dam constructed at the cost of N3.8m, on the outskirts of Bauchi State capital, has been commissioned. The State Governor, Alhaji Tafari Ali, described the project as the biggest ever earned out through direct labour by the state government. The dam is expected to ensure regularity of water supply in the state.

Bendel

The Bendel State Government has floated a N1m loan to aid small-scale industrialists who may wish to establish industries in the rural areas. The State Commissioner for Industry, Trade and Co-operatives, Dr. Robson Momoh, explained that the loan scheme was part of the state government's rural integrated development programme. He explained that his ministry has set up a consultancy and monetary unit to advise industrialists on the best way to run successful industrial ventures.

Benue

The *New Nigerian* has reported a tremendous response to the appeal fund to build an Institute of Political Studies in memory of the late Senator Joseph Sarwuan Turki at his home town of Ghoko, near Makurdi, in Benue State. Over half a million naira was realised at the launching of the fund, chaired by a Kano-based businessman, Alhaji Aminu Dantata, who donated N100,000.

Other major donors were: Dr. Olosofa Saraki, N50,000; Chief M. K. O. Abiola, N20,000; Mr Tilley Gyadu, N25,000; Mr C. C. Onoh, N10,000. The Benue State Government gave N100,000; Rivers State, N50,000; Plateau State, N20,000; Bauchi State, N10,000; Niger State, N3,000; Borno State, N2,000.

The Governor of Benue State, Mr. Aperi Aku, said the institute would be built by the graveside of the late senator and would devote its attention to rediscovering the true history of Nigeria that had been distorted by colonialists. In his own speech, the Governor of Rivers State, Chief Melford Okilo, promised that his government would sponsor a research department in the proposed institute.

Cross River

Foreign and indigenous industrialists who may wish to invest in the Cross River State have been assured of maximum co-operation from the state government. This was a promise by the State Governor, Dr. Clement Isong, while exchanging views with a four-man Bulgarian industrial delegation which has been visiting other states.

Dr. Isong, however, stated that his government would only welcome genuine investors for whom they will provide lands and

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other infrastructure they might need. In his reply, the leader of the Bulgarian delegation, Mr. Volentin Penkovski, said that his government intended to set up a pharmaceutical manufacturing factory in the Cross River State. He added that two Nigerian partners have already indicated their interest in the project. A feasibility survey to determine the viability of the project and its market has begun.

Gongola

The people of Ganje Local Government Area in Gongola State are asking the government to carve out three more local governments from the present council. The proposed new councils would have headquarters at Ganje, Gangehanji and Lengdo respectively.

● The Gongola State Ministry of Agriculture and Co-operatives has cleared a total of 8,000 hectares of land under the land clearing scheme for this year.

The State Principal Agricultural Officer, Mr. S. S. Rasheed, said that about 104 hectares of land at the Dwaam Irrigation Scheme had been planted with rice. An additional 96 hectares would soon be cultivated, he added.

He said that the aim of the scheme was to cultivate farm land, with crops and then sell it to farmers at a token price of N23.40 per acre, in order to boost agriculture in the state. His ministry has already realised more than N179,280 as revenue from the scheme. Mr. Rasheed said the government had created five zones, Yola, Muhi, Ganje, Jalingo and Wukari, for the scheme.

Kaduna

A new external telecommunications system is to be built in Kaduna to enable the northern states of the country to dial overseas calls without going through Lagos.

● Payment vouchers totalling over N2m in respect of capital projects executed by the Kaduna Local Government Council have been reported missing from the Council's Cash Book. An audit task force attached to the judicial commission probing the affairs of the council said the missing vouchers totalled 550 and were supposed to have been issued between the 1977/78 to 1979/80 financial years.

● The Business Committee of the Kaduna State House of Assembly has recommended N15,000 as salary for the Head of Service of the state. Since coming into power, the Kaduna State Governor has not been able to appoint a head of service. The Secretary to the Government, Alhaji Abdu Yazid, has been holding the two posts.

● Members of two committees — the Committee on Discipline in

Post Primary Institutions and the Committee on Creation of New Local Governments have been appointed by the Governor of Kaduna State, Alhaji Abdulkadir Balarabe Musa. Addressing the members of the two committees, the Governor said the agitations for the creation of new local governments stemmed from the apparent neglect and discrimination against some areas within the jurisdictions of the existing local government councils in the provision of facilities and basic infrastructure.

Governor Balarabe Musa also said that the situation in schools called for a review of attitudes and methods, as far as discipline is concerned.

Kano

The Governor of Kano State, Alhaji Abubakar Rimi has condemned the management of the Nigerian economy by successive military regimes that had ruled the country for 13 years. He said the military indulged in prestige projects like the FESTAC, while ignoring the general standards of living and the level of production in the country.

Alhaji Rimi said the military was carried away by the brief spell of the oil boom until they were caught up by high inflation. The military hastily introduced measures such as the Foreign Exchange and the Anti-subsidy decrees, which he said was "medicene after death". He stated, "It was out of sheer mismanagement of the economy that the Obasanjo regime committed the country to over N2bn. in loans". He told members of the Nigerian Economic Society (at their annual conference in Kano) that it was their duty to examine the economic policy of the country and make recommendations to the Federal Government. The society's conference this year was sponsored by the Bank of the North.

● A total sum of N1.5m. has been earmarked as loans for mixed farming in Kano State during the current financial year. This was announced in Kano by the state's Commissioner for Rural and Community Development, Alhaji Mahmud Othman, while inaugurating the state's Agricultural Loans Committee. The new committee comprises of all chairmen of local government councils in Kano State.

He also announced that 2,000 emot ploughs, 500 ox-carts and 4,000 work bulls had been purchased for this year's farming season and that these would be distributed to mixed farmers in the rural areas of the state. He pointed out that about 100 mixed farmers in each of the local government areas of Kano State would benefit from the exercise. In addition, each LGC in the state would be given a total of N50,000 for the purchase of 200 work bulls for distribution to interested farmers in their areas.

● An 11-man board of governors has been appointed for the Kano State Transport Corporation, with Alhaji Audi Howeyi, a retired head of the state civil service and a one-time secretary to the State Military Government, as chair-

Ondo

The Ondo State Assembly has passed a bill legalising pools betting and allied businesses in the state. Although the bill would have to be assented to by the state governor before it becomes law, reports said that many promoters have already begun to renovate pools betting offices closed down in the last financial year when the business was banned by the Federal Military Government.

The bill provides for a board to grant, renew or revoke pools betting licences. It also provides for a minimum tax of N2,000 for fixed odds bets and N1,000 on treble chance bets. A 10 per cent tax will be charged on winnings and dividends of fixed odds stakings, the bill stated.

● The Ondo State House of Assembly has passed a motion to ask the Federal Government to build more prisons in the state. According to the resolution, a maximum security prison and an ordinary one should be built at Akure, while the existing ones at Owo, Ondo, Ikare, Ikere, Ikole and Okitipupa, should be modernised "to effect a smooth administration of justice in the state".

In another development, the Secretary of the Government, Mr. M. A. Popoola, announced that the state government has banned fund-raising activities in all the schools in the state. He explained that the government was concerned about abuses in the disbursement of such funds.

Plateau

Professional ability rather than seniority has been made the criterion for promotion in the Plateau State. This was declared by the State Governor, Mr. Solomon Lar, at the swearing-in ceremony of members of the state Civil Service Commission. He explained that the aim was to build a result-oriented civil service.

The governor advised the commission to ensure fairness and equal treatment in all matters involving the civil servants. He warned them against arbitrariness, nepotism and other malpractices that had always bogged the civil service. Members of the commission are: Mr. Y. M. Lang, chairman; Alhaji Ahmad Tanko, Mr. Bitrus Pam, Mr. James Akabe and Mrs. Julia Useni, who is a part-time member.

● Governor Solomon D. Lar, of Plateau State, has approved the appointment of Alhaji Ma'wada B. Keffi as the new general manager of Plateau Hotels and Tourism

Company Limited. Alhaji Ma'wada was until his appointment the general manager of Kongo Conference Hotel, Zaria.

He also announced the appointment of Malam Sule Alumbugu as member of board of directors of the Plateau Relief Technology Board. Both appointments are with immediate effect.

● The wife of the Plateau State Governor, Mrs. Mary Lar, has called for a law which would make it compulsory for girls in the northern states not to leave school before the age of 17. She explained that such a measure would help in uplifting the standard of women's education and prevent early marriages. She advised parents to change their misconception that western education was bad and leads to corruption. She condemned the attitude of many parents who prefer to send their sons to school rather than their daughters, basically on the argument that the daughter will be married away to someone after draining the resources of their parents during training. Mrs. Lar was speaking as a special guest at the government secondary school, Soba, Zaria, where she was the first principal.

Sokoto

The Sokoto State House of Assembly has set up a special committee to look into the possibility of prohibiting the sale of alcohol within Sokoto city. Presenting the motion, Alhaji Muhammadu Augu said Sokoto city is the seat of Islam and it was well known for its holiness all over the country. He stated, we should stop the sale and consumption of alcohol in the city in order to keep it Islamically pure. Alhaji Muhammadu said since 99 per cent of the population in the city were Muslims, it was shameful to note that over 200 off licence shops and bars were being operated in the city. He therefore called on the House to support the motion so that the sellers would be moved to about four kilometres out of the state capital. Alhaji Muhammadu suggested that the hotels and off licences when vacated should be converted into mosques and residential houses.

Another member, Alhaji Aliku Zurum from Mayasu constituency drew the attention of the House to the deteriorating situation brought about by the sale of alcohol in the 'holy city'. He said he had investigated from clergymen who confirmed that a good Christian abstained from drinking. Alhaji Ibrahim Turakin Gwandu in his contribution told the House to view the issue from two angles — socially and religiously before passing it into law. He said that although the majority of the people in the area are Muslim and they should know that the sale and consumption of alcohol cannot be banned for non-Muslims. But

Alhaji Mamuda Yabo from Shagari constituency said the House should not make laws in parts. He said it should affect the whole state since 95 per cent of the population were Muslims. Alhaji Mamuda said the House should also include dangerous drugs, Indian hemp, smoking and all sort of alcoholic drinks since they were all against the Islamic doctrine.

WESTERN SAHARA

Moroccan rights reaffirmed

Moroccan Prime Minister, Mohi Bou Obeid, has said that the resumption of mediation by Saudi Arabia in the Western Sahara conflict "does not mean that Morocco is relinquishing its rights over the Sahara".

Mr. Mohi Bou Obeid added in an interview that "the position of Morocco with regard to the Saharan conflict is unalterable and not open to any discussion". He said that "in the past, mediation by Saudi Arabia has been hampered and frustrated by the lack of desire shown by Algeria to want to settle the difference between us".

The Moroccan Prime Minister said that Saudi Arabia has recently resumed its efforts and was trying to speed up events "having found evidence of greater understanding on the part of the Algerian authorities".

"For our part," he went on, "we consider that Arabs must avoid secondary conflicts in order to devote ourselves to the essential battle (against Israel), which is why we welcome any mediation, from whatever quarter it comes".

The Saudi Crown Prince Fahd and Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud Bin Faisal had paid visits to Rabat and Algiers.

The Kuwaiti daily, *Al Rai Al Aam*, has said that the Saharan conflict would soon be solved by a proposal from Prince Fahd to give autonomy to the territory while keeping it under Moroccan sovereignty.

GUINEA

Aluminium pacts signed

Guinea has signed agreements with several Western and non-aligned partners to build an aluminium production plant at Ayekeye in the north east. Radio Conakry announced in a broadcast monitored in Dakar.

The radio said the partners were the Governments of Algeria, Nigeria and Rumania, two US companies and companies from Switzerland and Yugoslavia. The broadcast did not say how much the plant would cost nor when it would go into service.

According to earlier reports, the plant is to process bauxite from the

Akekeye deposits, estimated at 500m. tons, into 1.2m. tons of alumina and 150,000 tons of aluminium.

Power to run the plant will be generated by a hydro-electric dam on the Konkoure River. The French state electricity company is planning the installation, which is to have a capacity of 300 megawatts.

A joint concern formed in 1976 by Guinea, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Libya, Kuwait, Iraq and the United Arab Emirates will mine the bauxite.

Guinea has about 9,000m tons of bauxite deposits, between one-third and one-half of the world's reserves. Last year, it was reported that about one-third of the output of the big Kindia deposit in Western Guinea was being exported to the Soviet Union at well below world prices.

SENEGAL

Villages clash

Four people were killed and more than 20 wounded in a fight between villagers supporting different political parties in the village of Medina Gounasse in Casamance, Southern Senegal. AFP reports.

Its sources said that the two parties were supported by different ethnic groups, and the police had to be called to end the battle. Local

elections in March last year were won by the Senegalese Democratic Party. PDS, the national opposition party, which was running the local co-operative. The sources said that the Rural Council running the co-operative had now been dissolved.

ZAIRE

Co-operation with Mozambique

Mozambique and Zaire will soon sign a co-operation agreement expected to lead to the reopening of Mozambique's ports to Zaire's mineral exports. The Mozambique News Agency has reported. The statement followed a three-day visit by President Mobutu to Mozambique. President Michel is reported to have told port workers at Maputo that Zaire trade will soon be flowing through the railhead harbours of Beira and Maputo.

Traffic between the two countries was suspended in 1975 when Mozambique sealed its frontiers with Rhodesia, in support of the nationalist movement. The line from Zaire's Shaba Province passes through Zambia and Zimbabwe. In addition, Zaire was forced to use the long and expensive route to its Atlantic port at Matadi when the Benguela Railway was disrupted by guerrilla activity. That link has yet to be opened to international traffic.

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AZAP reports that Mozambique has already taken steps to improve its ports and transport facilities. It signed a contract for the purchase of 20 locomotives which is being financed by the US. Last year Mozambique bought 25 other locomotives.

ANGOLA Change in US attitude

There is growing pressure on the US Government to recognise the MPLA government of Angola. The release of an American held in Angola since 1975 has been seen in Washington as a breakthrough in US-Angolan relations. Senator Paul Tsongas who has been active in US-African policies said after the announcement of the release: "This is not a routine decision by the Angolans. It is a significant diplomatic overture preceded by years of delicate manoeuvres." He added: "We have before us a wavering Soviet client, a young state not yet entrenched in a dogmatic Marxist mould. Do we offer an alternative to the leaders of Angola or do we abdicate our responsibility and leave the field to the Soviets? The time for recognition of Angola is now."

A little earlier the former Secretary of State, Mr Cyrus Vance, urged the US government to recognise Angola.

The State Department has issued a statement saying that the presence of Cuban troops in Angola was hindering any improvement in relations between the two countries.

African tour by Brazilian

In the early seventies, Brazil, the largest country in South America and the nation with the world's second largest black population after Nigeria, moved to bridge the gap separating it from Africa.

The Brazilian Foreign Minister, Sr. Ramiro Saraiva Guerreiro, continuing this trend, is on a five-nation African tour spearheading a major Brazilian diplomatic drive. Sr. Guerreiro, whose visits to Tanzania, Zambia, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Angola, will take him to countries never before visited by a Brazilian foreign minister, has described 1980 as "an African year" for Brazil.

The key point of this diplomatic offensive, which is aimed in particular at English-speaking East Africa, could be a tour of a number of African countries next year by President Joao Figueiredo. There has, however, been no official announcement on this.

Brazilian overtures to Africa date back to the end of 1972 and followed a period in which Brazil had turned a blind eye to the colonial policy of Portuguese Prime Minister Antonio de Oliveira Salazar's government.

After the revolution in Portugal in April 1974, the pace stepped up

markedly and barely two months later Brazil cut the feet from under the Portuguese Government of General Antonio de Spínola by recognising the unilaterally-declared government of Guinea-Bissau.

Rapid recognition of the MPLA government in Angola in November 1975, several months before the end of the Angolan civil war, continued the trend.

The present Brazilian regime, which came to power with a military coup in 1964, has based its policy towards Africa on solid pragmatism. Neither the extreme left wing political views of the present Angolan regime nor the Cuban presence in that country have undermined good relations. The pragmatic attitude to Africa is central to the foreign policy of Brazil, a developing country that also produces computers, tanks, fighter planes, civilian aircraft and nuclear power stations.

The Volkswagen "Beetle" car, which is no longer constructed in Europe, is still produced in Brazil from where it is exported, in particular to Nigeria. Other sales to Africa include fighter bombers to Togo, tanks to Libya, supermarkets built in Angola, roads in Mauritania and cars and lorries to a range of countries.

A number of states, once considered the private domain of former colonial powers, are now turning towards Brazil for such products as tractors, which are both cheaper and easier to maintain than those built in Europe.

For its own part, Brazil, anxious not to simply look on Africa as a market, has indicated that its plans to increase oil imports, in particular from Nigeria and Algeria. In recent months, African heads of state and businessmen have made numerous visits to the Brazilian capital. Each of these visits could lead to major co-operation projects, a number of which could involve Brazilian aid in building dams.

Brazil might be on the road to establishing good relations with all African countries — even Mozambique, which remained cool towards Brazil at the time of its independence — but two delicate problems still have to be ironed out. These problems, Brazil's attitude to the government of South Africa and the fate of Brazilian blacks, concern a number of African diplomats. But it is thought that relations between Brazil and South Africa, already considerably diminished, could decline still further as South America's largest country forges closer ties with Black Africa. Others also believe that closer ties between Brazil and Black Africa can only help improve the lot of Brazilian blacks. The blacks, shipped as slaves from Africa by the Portuguese, are still victimised at times today despite a law against racial discrimination.

THE GAMBIA

Libyans walk out at human rights

The Libyan delegate walked out of the ministerial meeting of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) on a human rights Charter for Africa in protest against the presence of an Egyptian delegation. The Libyan delegate later returned to the meeting which will adopt a human rights charter to present to the OAU summit.

Nine of the OAU's 50 member countries were absent from the conference: they are Liberia, Malawi, Congo, Uganda, Equatorial Guinea, Swaziland, Seychelles, Benin and Sao Tome and Principe.

Oral tradition

African, American and European historians and sociologists attended the first International Colloquium, in Dakar, on the oral traditions of Kaabu. The Colloquium, whose patrons are the Heads of State of The Gambia, Mali, Guinea Bissau and Guinea, was opened by President Leopold Sedar Senghor of Senegal.

The Gambian delegation submitted papers, including maps of the ancient Kingdom of Kaabu and its states, a historical outline of Paches, the great and Nyanchu (warriors) of Kaabu, the battle and the fall of Kansala, and the life of Janke Wally until his accession.

Another Kaabu personality discussed was Kelepha Sannin. There were also papers dealing with Islam and the local religions of the kingdom from the 13th to the 19th centuries.

● The Acting Nigerian High Commissioner to The Gambia, Mr D. Obiaja, has presented a trophy to the 864-pupil Muslim High School, which was founded six years ago, to be awarded to the student with the best performance in the School Certificate Class.

LIBERIA

Restrictions on banks eased

Captain Robert G. Zuo, chairman of the government committee on banking and currency, has urged bankers in Liberia to have the interest of the poor people as their priority and to help them improve themselves through loans for business. Capt. Zuo was addressing a meeting with heads of financial institutions at the Capitol building to discuss problems confronting the "New Liberia". He assured bankers of government co-operation in the discharge of their duties once it was in the interest of the poor people who had suffered so long from exploitation at the hands of the privileged few. He put the question: "What justice is established when a rich man negotiates a loan only to add to his riches?"

The *Express Special* reported that the restrictions imposed on withdrawal of savings and capital transfers abroad after April 12 had been lifted by the Head of State from May 16, according to Mr Charles Greene, Governor of the National Bank of Liberia. Bankers at the meeting said as long as the government provided protection and kept the restrictions lifted, the economy would grow steadily. More investors would come to the country and people would have restored confidence in the banking system. However, they complained that certain unidentified soldiers were in the habit of approaching bankers for loans, an arbitrariness practice they felt could affect the peaceful atmosphere now experienced in the banking system.

Protest about assets priorities

Mr. Bacus Matthews, the Foreign Minister, criticised the military rulers when he appeared before the People's Redemption Council to answer questions about his assets. He said: "I am appearing in protest before you because you should have declared your assets before requiring the minister appointed to declare them. However, in due respect for you I am happy to appear in the cause of the people."

"He said he had no bank account, no real estate and no income except that from his government post. At the time of the April 12 coup he was in jail awaiting trial on a charge of high treason.

Investment and the revolution

The People's Redemption Council issued the following statement on 30 May entitled "Foreign Investment in the Present Revolution": "Foreign investment occupies a pivotal place in the national economy. In all the major economic sectors (rubber, iron ore, forestry) foreign capital is dominant. At the end of 1979, direct foreign investment in our country amounted to \$746m. In addition to the large number of people employed in foreign-owned enterprises (\$2,500), foreign investments account for 42.9 per cent of the gross domestic product. This means that Liberia is highly dependent on foreign capital for our nation's annual production, growth, and hence the welfare of our people.

"Such is the reality of our situation. Ideological considerations aside, therefore, it would be Utopian and even suicidal if the Government of the People's Redemption Council (PRC) did not opt to support and encourage foreign investment in its programme for national development.

"It is true that the financial requirements for supporting our development objectives demand that we mobilise our own human and material resources, put an end

to social inequalities, and practice austerity. However, the capital derived from this policy will still not suffice to finance our development. Accordingly, the PRC Government wishes to renew its repeated invitations to local and foreign private investments, particularly those that go to expand the productive capacity of the economy and utilise domestic resources, including labour and other resources. For it is only through economic progress that the government will be enabled to satisfy the basic needs of the people who are at one and the same time the instrument and subject-matter of the Revolution.

"Means-while, the old investment code is being reviewed with the aim of streamlining the procedures and establishing a more attractive investment climate. The objective of the new process is to provide greater ease of granting incentives, remove inequalities between economic sectors, and improve the geographical spread of economic activities.

"The government realises that in order for foreign investment to come to our country it demands what is called a favourable investment climate. And objectively, the investment climate has indeed improved in Liberia since the April 12 Revolution. Because this revolution, enthusiastically embraced by the vast majority of Liberians, has defused the social time-bomb and is attempting to remove the conflicts which, under the Tolbert regime, stemmed from rampant corruption and gross inequalities. The PRC Government is therefore able, by democratic means, to assure the investors the favourable investment climate which the Tolbert regime attempted to assure by sheer political repression.

"In this connection, the PRC Government will maintain the dialogue it has begun with labour and with employers to ensure greater productivity and industrial peace and harmony.

"Given these assurances and reassurances, the PRC Government is entitled to hope that investors would adopt a friendly attitude and resist any inclination towards massive transfers and evacuation of assets. The PRC Government is also entitled to hope that investors will take advantage of our enthusiastic welcome and join us in the progressive development of our nation and its people."

Protection for foreigners

People from neighbouring African countries have been assured of the government's full protection in Liberia despite the hostile attitude shown by some ECOWAS countries towards the People's Redemption Council. In an interview with the US-based *International Observer*, the Minister of Planning and Economic

Affairs, Dr Togba-Nah Tipoteh, declared there is not a grain of truth in rumours of possible expulsion of citizens from sister African countries. He said citizens now have fuller opportunities to participate in the Liberian economy and must view themselves not as foreigners but as fellow brothers and sisters.

Dr Tipoteh said missionaries in Liberia, including members of the United Methodist Church, had the right to move about their daily activities freely. If anything was suspected or if anyone among them did anything wrong it would be treated on an individual basis. He asserted that concern about missionaries came about as a result of the political ambition of former Vice-President Bennie Warner of the United Methodist Church who indicated opposition to the PRC Government. Dr Tipoteh said no missionary in Liberia should have fear of government retaliation because of Bennie Warner's actions.

Law officers held over bribe

Two law enforcement officers were arrested after one of them allegedly gave the other \$5,500 to obtain the release of three political prisoners, including Winston Henries, son of the former Speaker of the House, the late Richard Henries. Announcing this at a press conference recently, the co-chairman of the ruling People's Redemption Council, Major General Thomas Weh Syen, General Thomas Quinwonkpa, Commanding General of the Armed Forces, Defence Minister Samuel Pearson and Justice Minister Chea Cheapoo condemned the incident as anti-revolutionary and against the interests of the Liberian people. They said the money was given by Immigration Officer Beatrice Bao to army Corporal Amos Gee in an effort to win the release of the three prisoners — Winston Henries, Lester Parker and Louis Russ, all detained for high treason and corruption. Officer Bao is the sister-in-law of Winston Henries, whose father was among 13 Tolbert officials executed in April.

● A delegation led by Mr. Gabriel Bacous Matthews, Minister of Foreign Affairs, has visited Togo for talks with President Gnassingbe Eyadema, head of the recent summit of ECOWAS heads of state which refused the participation of Master Sergeant Doe.

SIERRA LEONE Bangurah verdict

After sitting for several weeks and hearing more than 50 witnesses, the inquest into the death of the late Sam Bangurah, former Governor of the Bank of Sierra Leone, has come to an end and given a verdict. The seven

jurors gave a unanimous verdict of death by foul means (murder) but could not agree as to who committed the murder. Three of the jurors said that it was committed by person or persons, unknown and the other four named four suspects, all of whom gave evidence at the inquest. The four are: Abdul Bai Conteh, Simiyu Jalloh, Mohamed Jagne and the niece of the late Governor, Titty Koroma. Warrants have been issued for the arrests of the four suspects who will face a murder charge.

Medical check for S. I. Koroma

First Vice-President S. I. Koroma has been flown to Europe for a medical check, and the Minister of Finance, Mr. Francis Minah, has been sworn-in to act as Second Vice-President, with Mr. Kamara-Taylor acting as First Vice-President.

There is a likelihood that Mr. Koroma may not be well enough to be back in time for the OAU Ministerial Meeting, but it is hoped he will be back to help President Stevens receive the Heads of State when they arrive in Freetown early next month.

Dr. Conteh on OAU

The Foreign Minister, Dr. Abdulai Conteh, has said that Liberia did not need an invitation to attend the OAU Summit in Freetown, like every other member of the Organisation of African Unity, it has a right to attend any of the meetings of the organisation. Dr. Conteh was speaking at a news conference.

Asked why Nigeria had refused admittance to the Liberian delegation to the OAU Economic Summit in Lagos, the Minister said that countries have a right to determine the individuals who they let across their borders, and in Africa, immigration laws differ from country to country.

The Foreign Minister said that the agenda for the Ministerial Meeting will include President Stevens' idea for the formation of a responsive mechanism in the structure of the OAU which would help to detect and defuse impending crisis before they got out of hand.

It would mean certain changes in the OAU Charter, but it would be a fire-detecting machine, helping to prevent fires starting, rather than waiting until the fire had started before trying to put it out.

It would be a body of States, represented by ambassadors of member states accredited to Ethiopia, and like the Security Council, it would always be in force.

The oil crisis, Afro/Arab co-operation and the report on the establishment of a centre for food science and technology and the Secretary-General's report on drought and other natural disasters

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in 12 months. The ministerial building will have 400 offices, a conference room for 300 and car park for 100 vehicles.

● A Water and Land Development Division is to be set up in the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. A mission from the United Nations Development Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organisation has been in Freetown to look into the possibility and have presented their findings to the Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, Dr Joe Jackson.

Histories for President

Two books on the history of Sierra Leone have been presented to President Stevens by the author. Written by history lecturer, Dr Cecil Fyle, who is Acting Head of the Department of African Studies, Fourah Bay College. The books *Alimamy Solokot of Sierra Leone* and *Sulaiman Yalunka's Kingdom* (reviewed in this issue of *West Africa*) are an examination of traditional life and the system of political life and organisation in Sierra Leone before colonial rule.

Alimamy Solokot is the biography of a 19th-century ruler of the Limba tribe, while *Sulaiman Yalunka's Kingdom* relates the history of the Yalunka Kingdom from the mid-17th century to the beginning of the colonial period.

Congratulating Dr Fyle for his

scholarship and research, President Stevens said that there was a great deal of work to be done in documenting the history of Sierra Leone, and mentioned particularly the establishment of the first settlement around Bullom, just opposite Freetown on the Sierra Leone River, which, he said, formed a gateway to other settlements in Bradford, Rotifunk, Senehun and Sulima. He mentioned the role played by Mamy Yoko of Senehun, who later became chief of Moyamba, and whose name has been given to the new hotel in Freetown, and the Englishman Pa Harris, who settled and contributed to the development of Sulima, as persons whose lives were worth writing about.

Making cement again

After a period of nearly ten years, local manufacture of cement is to be resumed. This has been made possible by a Le9m. agreement signed in Freetown recently between the World Bank's International Finance Corporation (IFC) and the Sierra Leone Cement Company. The production target is 1,200 tonnes a year.

Alusuisse to mine bauxite

The bauxite deposit found in the Port Loko District, is to be exploited by the Swiss Aluminium

Company (Alusuisse). An agreement was signed in Freetown recently between the company and the Sierra Leone Government which allows the company to start operations in an area which includes that formerly exploited by the DeLoko Mines.

The Minister of Mines, Mr. Francis Conteh, said that the company has extensive plans for the development of the area and will assist in the socio-political setting in that part of the country.

Cold storage promotions

The Freetown Cold Storage Company, the oldest Swiss company operating in Sierra Leone, has promoted 11 Sierra Leoneans to top managerial positions within the company. The General Manager of the company, Mr. Hans Schmid, said that contrary to rumours that the company had been sold or was in the process of closing down, the promotions were in keeping with the company's policy of Sierra Leoneanisation, and a clear indication that the company is here to stay. Mr. Schmid said that since 1978 the number of expatriates working for the company has been reduced from 14 to six, a move, which he said, makes room for more Sierra Leoneans who have the experience and drive to work hard and to succeed.

Those promoted are: Mr. J. S. Mengor, sales and marketing

manager of the company's meat, water manufacturing division; Mr. Bernard Thomas, production manager; Mr. F. Tucker, sales manager, soft drinks; Mr. Saiz Kamara, production supervisor and Mr. S. I. Koroma, the security officer, all of the same division.

Mr. Edward S. Pratt is the new supermarket manager; Mr. A. I. Kamara, manager of the whole sale division; Mr. M. N. O. Joss, assistant to the chief accountant; and Mr. Lionel L. Y. Cole is the new supermarket floor manager.

The only lady among the new managers is Miss M. P. Palm: who is now the assistant personnel manager.

● The former sales manager of SL (SL) Ltd., Mr. Donald Smythe-Macauley has been appointed general manager of the company in succession to Mr. Callander. Mr. Smythe-Macauley is the first Sierra Leonean to hold this office.

● Dr. Keddy Eccles-James, son of Mr. Horace Eccles-James, O.C., councillor and former Director of the Bank of Sierra Leone and Mr. Eccles-James, and brother of Eric James, recently got married in the West German city of Duisburg, Hanborn.

His bride was Miss Chinn Okpara, eldest daughter of the former Premier of the then Eastern Region of Nigeria, Dr. Okpara. The new Mrs. Eccles-James is an economist and met her husband four years ago while studying in West Germany.

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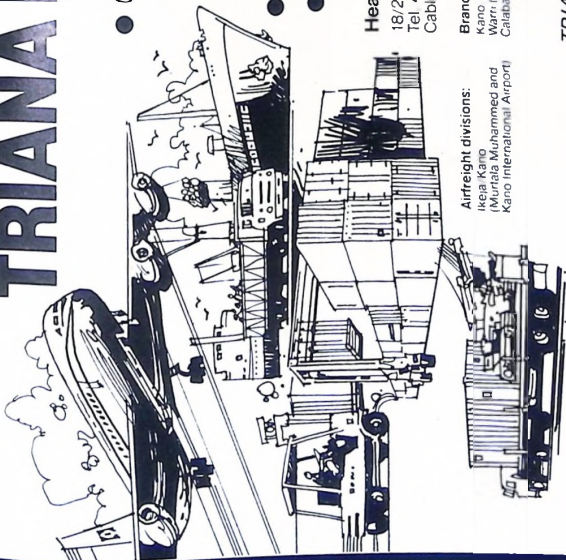
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