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Gabon's Albert Bongo

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AFRISCOPE

Quit This Organisation

African members of the Commonwealth should quit the organisation now. The sooner we stop this balancing trick of walking on both sides of a pavement, the more clearly we shall begin to see our way to Africa's only salvation—a continental union government.

In the sixties, the intensity of the East-West cold-war rivalry and the lack of a sense of direction of the first post-independence African governments distracted our attention from the immediate task of putting our house in order. Protective blocs emerged from the initial panic reactions of newly freed slaves who were dazed by the light of freedom and with time, the OAU came. If the organisation has not grown into a rallying centre, it at least provides our own platform for interaction and mutual condolence. With time too, we have discovered the severe inadequacies of what was offered to us as freedom. Most important of all, we ought to have discovered from our sad experience in the Southern African liberation struggle and world economic conferences that the only true friend of Africa is Africa.

In this second decade of our freedom, Africa should be moving closer to internal cohesion and self-illuminated orientation.

We therefore believe that African members of the British Commonwealth are doing a serious disservice to Africa. They are in effect saying that their confidence in Africa's collective ability to solve her problems and project an independent powerful image in the world is not complete. Worse still by their membership of the British Commonwealth, they are encouraging other African states to look over their shoulders in search of supplementary foreign alliances.

To prove that they mean what they say about African unity, African members of the Commonwealth should quit the organisation today.

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Letters

Dear Editor,

SOUTHERN AFRICA

After the five frontline States signed a joint defensive agreement in Tanzania rebel forces from Ian Smith's Rhodesia attacked Botswana.

One would have thought that a joint action of reprisal would follow from the frontline States, especially as they had just concluded that agreement. But nothing happened!

These States have again just reaffirmed their pledge of regarding an "attack on any of them as an attack on all," after a threatened invasion of Zambia by the rebels in Rhodesia. This threat to Zambia has, however, been followed with the occupation of Nepai, nearly 100 Kilometres inside Mozambiquan territory. Again nothing has happened or is happening!!

All that we get is righteous appeals to the international community which in turn can do no more than condemn Rhodesian aggression. If this is all Africa is capable of doing, then we might as well resign our faith to the empty skies for deliverance.

Olumide Osho,
Lagos, Nigeria.

Once again, the attack and occupation of Nepai in Mozambique by soldiers from Rhodesia under the pretext of their "hot pursuit and destroy" policy has highlighted our major weakness in the liberation struggle—the lack of a strike force that is capable of holding any would-be-aggressor in check. The recent Rhodesian action not only makes a mockery of the whole of black Africa, especially, as it followed immediately after a joint defensive agreement by the five frontline states. It also poses a threat to the peace and security of the continent.

Kojo Osei,
Kumasi, Ghana.

Ian Smith is a drowning man who is prepared to sink

with all and sundry. If his fellow-white Rhodesians cannot make him see reason and quit bluffing while the going is still good, then no one should hold black Africa responsible for any bloodbath that is likely to follow.

Meanwhile Ian Smith has fired the first battle shots by occupying Mozambiquan territory and has the guts to announce it to the world. Will Africa take up the challenge, or just sit down and cry?

Alison Moyo,
Abidjan, Ivory Coast.

CONTINENT OF THE FUTURE

An uncle once asked me why there is so much noise about Africa in the European media and why these whites do not just pack up their things and go back home in spite of all the telling-offs they have been getting. No one would expect a Briton to be still left in Uganda, for instance, after all the hue and cry about Idi Amin's atrocities in the British press.

My answer then was that Africa is the continent of the future which holds the economic trump cards; but sadly though, most of her leaders are unaware of their potentialities. Hence the sellouts to these Europeans who want to make hay while the sun is still shining.

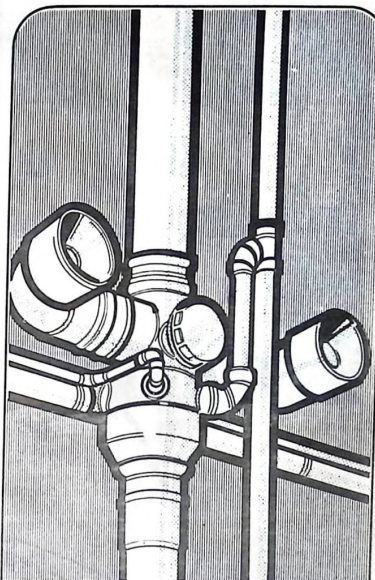
Koko Ajei,
Accra, Ghana.

SECOND SCRAMBLE

The second scramble for Africa is on. With the Russians in Somalia, Mozambique, Angola and now Ethiopia, the West with America as leader, are frantic that they are gaining nothing.

I think the ultimate losers, however, will be Africa whose leaders unwittingly carving up the continent into ideological spheres of influence and satellites.

Sunny Lawson,
Freetown, Sierra-Leone.



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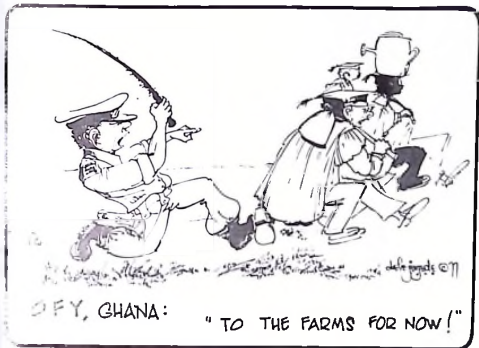


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GHANA'S OFY

Realising how meagre their meals had dwindled of late, University students in Ghana wondered why they weren't getting enough to eat in spite of that country's "Operation Feed Yourself" (OFY) which was launched with much fuss three years ago. They therefore expressed concern over the success, or failure of the OFY programme.

General Acheampong's action to the unsolicited advice was quick and military in precision. Since the problem was basically that of food production, all students of Ghana's three Universities were conscripted into the farms.

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GHANA AND UGANDA

Morality may be difficult to combine with international politics, as President Carter would admit, but this combination ought not to be impossible for Africa whose main weapon against international oppression is moral persuasion.

While Ghana, for instance, may not feel obliged to give an explanation why she was temporarily redeploying the

staff of the Ghana Mission in Kampala (by the way, Ghana hasn't asked Uganda to do the same, but...), this action may not be unconnected with President Alhaji Field-Marshal Dr. Idi Amin Dada's sumptuous meals of all opposition.

It is encouraging that the elastic African conscience seems to have at

last stretched to its limit to accommodate Idi Amin.

AMIN AND THE COMMONWEALTH

True to character! That's what Uganda's Idi Amin really is. If for nothing else, he succeeded in keeping Britain and the Commonwealth on tenter-hooks for the duration of the conference. Never before, since the Kenyan Mau Mau, had any African given the British government so much hypertension.

THE PLOTTERS

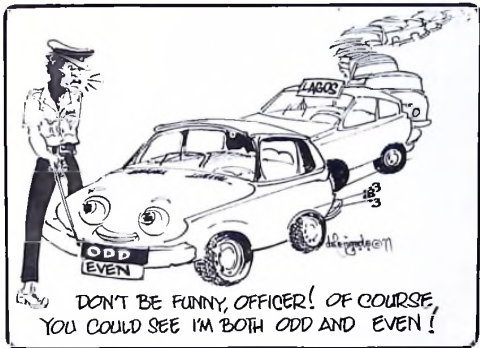
Angola's Agostinho Neto survived to crush the attempted overthrow of his government. Nigeria's Murtala Muhammed wasn't that lucky, and neither were some of Neto's cabinet members. Vigilance is the answer, both from within and without.

A luta Continua!

LAGOS TRAFFIC

First it looked like the ODD NUMBER EVEN NUMBER regulation would solve the world's worst traffic situation that Lagos has come to be associated with. But only for a while.

Now there are more vehicles on the roads because more people can now afford to buy second or third cars, in an oil-rich, spend-thrift Nigeria. Those who cannot afford another car can, however, afford to be both odd and even at the same time depending on how well one can D-R-I-V-E.



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Next OAU Summit:

Leaders And Their Styles

*Adekunle Ajala, NIIA Lagos.

When the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) was established in May 1963 at Addis Ababa it was supposed to be the culmination of all previous African efforts as well as the instrument with which to advance the cause of African Unity. In view of this the aims of the OAU included the promotion of the unity and solidarity of the African states; co-ordination and intensification of the co-operation and efforts of all African States to achieve a better life for the peoples of the African continent as well as the eradication of all forms of colonialism from Africa among others.

According to the Charter of the Organisation the Assembly of Heads of States and Government commonly referred to as the Summit, is the supreme organ of the Organisation. It is composed of the Heads of State and Government or their duly accredi-

ted representatives and is expected to meet at least once a year. It discusses matters of common concern to Africa with a view to co-ordinating and harmonising the general policy of the Organisation. It is also empowered to determine its own rules of procedure.

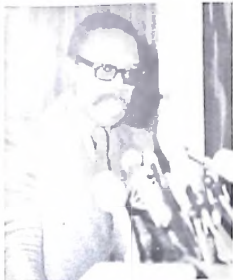
The first Assembly of Heads of State and Government took place in Cairo in 1964. That Summit adopted, among other things, its rules of procedure. Rules 9 and 10 deal with the election and functions of the Chairman.

Rule 9 states that "The Assembly shall, at the beginning of each session, elect a Chairman and eight Meeting Chairmen," while Rule 10 spells out the duties of the Chairman as follows: (1) *The Chairman opens and closes the meetings, submits for approval the records of the meetings, directs the debates, grants the use of the floor, submits to a vote matters under dis-*

cussions, announces the results of the vote taken, rules on points of order in accordance with the Charter and the Rules of Procedure." Besides, the Chairman is also expected to ensure order and the decorum of the proceedings of the Assembly.

But as the Organisation was growing older the Chairmen started to play more roles not previously foreseen when the Rules of Procedure were being drafted. At the initial stages the Chairmen only acted in accordance **Unforeseen Role**

It must also be noted that it would have had serious repercussions if either with the provisions of Rule 10 stated above. This explains why both President Gamel Abdul Nasser who was the first elected Chairman and President Kwame Nkrumah the second chairman quickly went into the background when the 1964 and 1965 summits ended.



Gabon's Albert Bongo: OAU Chairman for the next one year.



President Idi Amin: He chaired the Kampala Summit.



Outgoing OAU Chairman Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam.



Presidents Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire and

tried to do otherwise as President Nasser was still viewed with suspicion by many heads of States while President Nkrumah who was about at least one hundred years ahead of his fellow heads of states was not liked by a great many of them for his vision for a united Africa. Any attempt on President Nkrumah's part to act more than was stipulated in the Rules of Procedure would have therefore been taken as proof of his "in-ordinate ambition" to rule Africa.

The first attempt to increase the powers of the chairman was made by President Boumediene during the September 1968 summit which took place at Algiers. He sought, in the course of his opening address, to lay down guidelines for solving the Nigerian crisis—a topic which was to come before the summit conference. By 1970, however, the powers of the chairman had been substantially increased.

The Summit Conference of that year took place at Addis Ababa and President Kenneth Kaunda was elected the Chairman. Issues discussed at the summit included, among others, the impending sale of arms announced by the newly elected British Government to the South African regime. The summit decided to send a delegation to Britain, France, Germany and the United States of America in order to persuade Britain not to go ahead with the projected sale and put the OAU case on arming South Africa before the Nato powers. President Kenneth Kaunda, in his capacity as the then



Somalia's Said Barre: OAU Chairman in 1974.

Chairman of the OAU Summit was therefore chosen to lead the delegation. He was also empowered to address the United Nations General Assembly on the same issue later in the year. From then on it had become customary for the Chairman to be much more actively involved in matters of great and grave importance to Africa during his term of office. He has since then become the spokesman for Africa at every session of the UN General Assembly during his term of office.

This pattern, with only slight modifications, was followed closely both by General (as he then was) Gowon of Nigeria and General Siad Barre of Somalia Republic in 1973 and 1974 respectively. During the 1975-76 session, however, Field Marshal Alhaji Dr. President Idi Amin of Uganda was in the chair. He more than anybody else, got really involved in the OAU activities.

Idi Amin
When the three parties forming the Angolan transitional government—MPLA, UNITA and FLNA—were faced

Zambia's Kenneth Kaunda.

again at each other's throats and transitional government was to shape President Amin, in his capacity as OAU chairman invited them to a meeting of the OAU Conciliation Commission on Angola. While opening the conference he appealed to the Angolan movements to stop fighting.

Although the movements did not attend the conference he claimed that he had received confirmation that they would attend the talks "in the future." Shortly afterwards he announced that he and the Libyan leader Muammar al Gaddafi had decided to send a peace-keeping force to Angola, if requested, in case of a massive African invasion force before or after independence.

Shortly afterwards he announced that he was withdrawing recognition from all the three movements but that he would be prepared to do whatever decision the OAU took on the matter. He was at this stage joined by President Marian Nguabi of People's Republic of the Congo in "preparing subtle manoeuvres against the Angolan people and compromising the independence of People's Republic of Angola which has been recognised by the international community." At this stage President Amin had agreed with other heads of state to hold an extraordinary summit on the Angolan issue while at the time he claimed to have embarked on other peace moves. While many progressive African governments were lending support for the MPLA Government he said that he was sticking

the former OAU resolution calling for a Coalition Government. He, however, indicated that he would be prepared to recognise the MPLA if that was the majority view. It is worth noting at this stage that he had; just a few days earlier, joined at Bangui, Central African Republic (Now Central African Empire) with President Bokassa and President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire in a renewed call for a government of National Unity and an end to foreign intervention in Angola. He toured some African countries soliciting support in this regard.

On the question of Zimbabwe he claimed late in 1975 that he was ready to make arrangements for discussions between rebel Premier Ian Smith and the two liberation groups in Zimbabwe if Mr. Smith was willing to hold such talks.

President Amin made the proposal while holding talks with the British acting High Commissioner in Uganda, Mr. Hennessy.

Towards the end of his tenure of office he cast doubt on the suitability of Sir Seewosagur Ramgoolam, the Prime Minister of Mauritius where the 1976 summit was to be held arguing that Queen Elizabeth II was the head of state of Mauritius. In spite of this outburst to the Prime Minister of Mauritius, Sir Seewosagur Ramgoolam duly became the next chairman following the summit which took place there last year. He, however, maintained a low-profile attitude during his tenure of office.

President Bongo

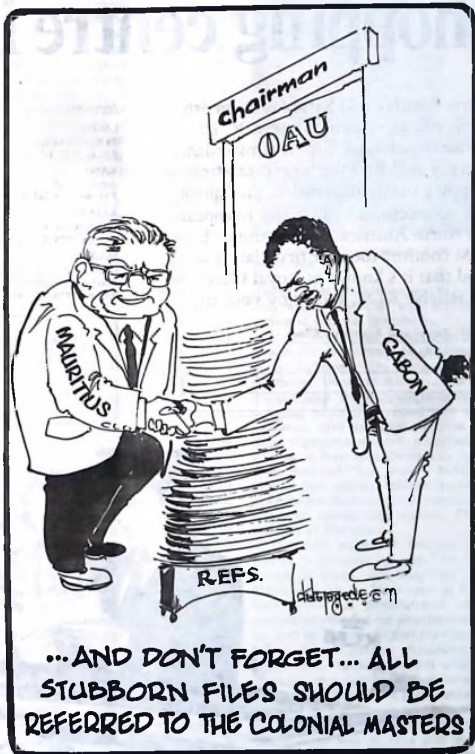
In accordance with the tradition the chairmanship would soon be handed over to President Bongo of Gabon which would host the next summit. Although it is natural to assume that the Chairman would normally be expected to carry out OAU resolutions there are causes for anxiety bearing in mind the fact that the problems of Southern Africa would feature prominently during his tenure of office.

President Bongo who once claimed to be "a native of two countries; his own (Gabon) and France" has on many occasions caused eyebrows over the Southern African issue. He once declared his willingness to co-operate with South Africa in economic and medical fields. As a result of this, his government co-operated with both the South African millionaire Louis Luyt and a major French oil company in the construction of a \$7 million hotel project in Libreville. Besides, Gabon was once accused of leading the list of the principal violators of the United

Nations trade embargo against Rhodesia.

Rhodesian cargoes used to be air-lifted daily from Libreville to Salisbury while Rhodesian beef were sold openly in Gabonese shops. But with the present economic boom, due to oil production, one would hope that Gabon could turn a new leaf and dutifully abide by OAU resolutions and actions on the Southern African issues. Besides, the alleged involvement of Gabon in the abortive invasion of the People's Republic of Benin does not endear it to any dedicated Pan-Africanist.

Being a conservative, to put it mildly, it would be too much to expect President Bongo as Chairman of the OAU, to suggest innovations which would bring about the much needed restructuring of the organisation to be able to cope squarely with African problems. It would be day-dreaming to expect him to suggest concrete ways of solving the Spanish Sahara question or to condemn the gradual establishment of an ultra-conservative caucus—as manifest by the Zairean crisis—within the OAU. In other words he would, at best, be a status quo chairman.



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OAU And The International System

*S.O. Agbi

There are, broadly speaking, three schools of thought about the nature of international institutions and their contribution to world order. These three schools might be called the Rationalist, the Revolutionist and the Realist.

The rationalist hates the objectives and practices of the Old Diplomacy and insists on the need to plan a new For Dag Hammarskjöld, the United Nations was generally concerned in terms not of "the traditions of national policies of the past... but of the needs of the present and of the future."

The rationalist starts with the claims that though sovereign states are without a common government, they are not in a condition of anarchy. Professor Bull puts this point well when he states that, "like the individuals described by Locke in his account of the state of nature (states) are a society without a government. This society is an imperfect one; its justice is crude and uncertain...; and it gives rise to recurrent tragedy in the form of war; but it produces order, regularity, predictability, and long periods of peace, without involving the tyranny of a universal state."

From this premise, the rationalist goes on to argue that a rational and moral political order analogous to that found at the domestic level can be created in international society, thereby transforming that society into a true community of nations. International institutions, the rationalist argues, provide the framework for the realisation of this order, for expressing and nurturing the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind, and for the application of what are concerned to be universally valid moral and legal principles, perceptible through reason, which will lead to the general renunciation of the use of force save in the common interest and to the inauguration of the rule of law.

In the Covenant of the League of Nations, these principles were to impose themselves directly on the conscience of member-states which, in the event of a violation of the law, would react against the wrongdoer spontaneously under Article 16. The Charter of the United Nations looks to a more

centralized system in which the Security Council has the right to call upon states to act in concert to maintain the peace.

In both cases, international institutions are seen as instruments for the outlawry of war and for the mobilization of the collective power of an incipient world community to deter and apprehend the law breaker. Rationalist thought is thus imbued with a sense of purpose, 'to save successive generations from the scourge of war'; to secure equal political rights and equal economic opportunities; to substitute right for might through the institution of the rule of law which will give protection to the powerless against the powerful.

The revolutionist, like the rationalist, is animated by the conviction that he, too, is working with history, that his task is mainly that of accelerating an historical process, of giving the wheel of history a push. There is an important difference, however. The rationalist is a reformist, not a revolutionist. Moreover, the rationalist goal is an internationalist millennium, that is a millennium in which sovereign states will continue to exist, even though they will co-exist not in a state near anarchy, but in an effectively functioning world community. By contrast, the revolutionist goal is to rebuild, not merely to repair, the existing world order, the institutions of which may need to be demolished, to clear a site for the rebuilding. In their rebuilding, there would be little place for traditional notions of sovereignty. The Communist revolutionists who believe in the inevitability of the proletarian revolution are forthright, regarding the notion of sovereign as part of the bourgeois paraphernalia which will be swept away with the attainment of the cosmopolitan millennium. Their revolutionist strategy is concerned not with a balance of power or with a community of power, but with a monopoly of power as the final stage in the transition to proletarian cosmopolitanism. For the revolutionist, the most significant fact about international law is its essential theoretical superfluity. Strictly speaking, communist doctrine regards the state, the primary unit of international law, as belonging to the phenomena of superstructure. It contemplates instead



OAU Secretary General William Eteki Mboumoua.

classes whose struggles extend beyond, and whose loyalties and affinities transcend national boundaries.

It is, however, not necessary here to discuss the ambivalence of the revolutionist doctrine or the compromise of the Soviet Union with the reality of world politics. But it should be pointed out that while they regard their co-existence with capitalist regimes in world organizations as only transitional, they want these organizations to fight what they call "just wars." Military intervention against colonial regimes in Africa and Asia would not constitute aggression against such regimes. They are wars of liberation.

The third school of thought, the Realist, is pre-occupied with "the real nature of things, not imagining," as Machiavelli put it. Machiavelli as E.H. Carr wrote has demonstrated what man actually did and not what he should do, and he also taught that the essence of the state is power. According to Machiavelli, "he who neglects what is done for what ought to be done sooner effects his ruin than his preservation."

Thus the realist approach is dominated by the ubiquity of the struggle for power, regardless of time and place, political ideology or form of government. International institutions are



Botswana's Seretse Khama and other delegates at the Addis Ababa Summit.

caught up in this struggle. The League of Nations was for most realist primarily an instrument of the status quo of powers. The United Nations was concerned as an 'Armed Concert' of the victorious powers to police a world in which the defeated would not remain so for ever. It became therefore, as Professor Goodwin has rightly remarked an instrument for the multilateralization of the American national interest, serving both as a mechanism through which American power could be brought to bear on peripheral danger spots and a moral framework through which that power could be exercised more acceptably." To the realist now, the U.N. represents a triangular balance of forces, the non-aligned Afro-Asian Powers acting in a sense as the balances.

The only effective antidote to power, the realist argues, is countervailing power. World order is therefore a function of a balance of power checking and restraining the over-weening ambitions of the powerful. The task of international institutions is to add stability to the balance and to facilitate the adjustment of shifting power relationships without resort to large scale or unlimited war. To this end, international institutions merely provide a convenient point of diplomatic contact which may enable statesmen to assess each other's intentions more accurately and to appreciate better the risks a particular policy may involve.

The OAU

Let us consider the O.A.U. within the framework of the three differing modes of thought sketched above. In the years immediately preceding the

formation of the O.A.U., debates about the organization were carried out on two ideological planes. The radical African States, the Casablanca group wanted a United States of Africa which would not only make a positive contribution to international peace and goodwill, but will also foster cooperation in economic, social and cultural matters among member-states. Their ultimate objective, no doubt, was to force political integration of the continent; and in doing so, renounce part of their sovereignty to the supra-national body. Kwame Nkrumah is reputed to be a strong proponent of a continental government. Indeed, his Minister of Foreign Affairs made a serious plea for the formation of a Union of African States to provide the framework within which any plans for economic, social and cultural cooperation can operate. The institutions of such a Union of African states would include the following:

1. An African Consultative Assembly composed of representatives of every African State.
2. An African Political Committee of Heads of States.
3. An

African Economic Committee, African Cultural Committee and Joint African High Command of Staff.

The ideas of the Casablanca were a crude mixture of the radical and the revolutionist modes of thought. While they did not call for eradication of sovereignty of States and wanted to set up a Union of Africa within the existing framework of nation-states, they, like the revolutionists believe in the concept of 'war.' The thinking behind the idea of an African High Command was not enough. Apartheid policies in South Africa, and colonialism were not a form of war against African States which would justify armed intervention on their behalf. The need for international intervention would require not offering assistance to liberation movements by training their forces, but consolidation of African forces into a force for the inevitable struggle on the continent and its enemies. The idea of a Union of African States is a realistic assessment of the balance of forces in Africa may call for a question of feasibility of these



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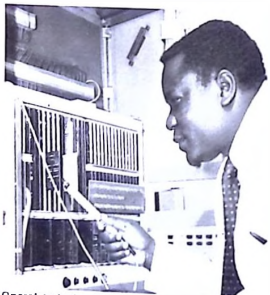
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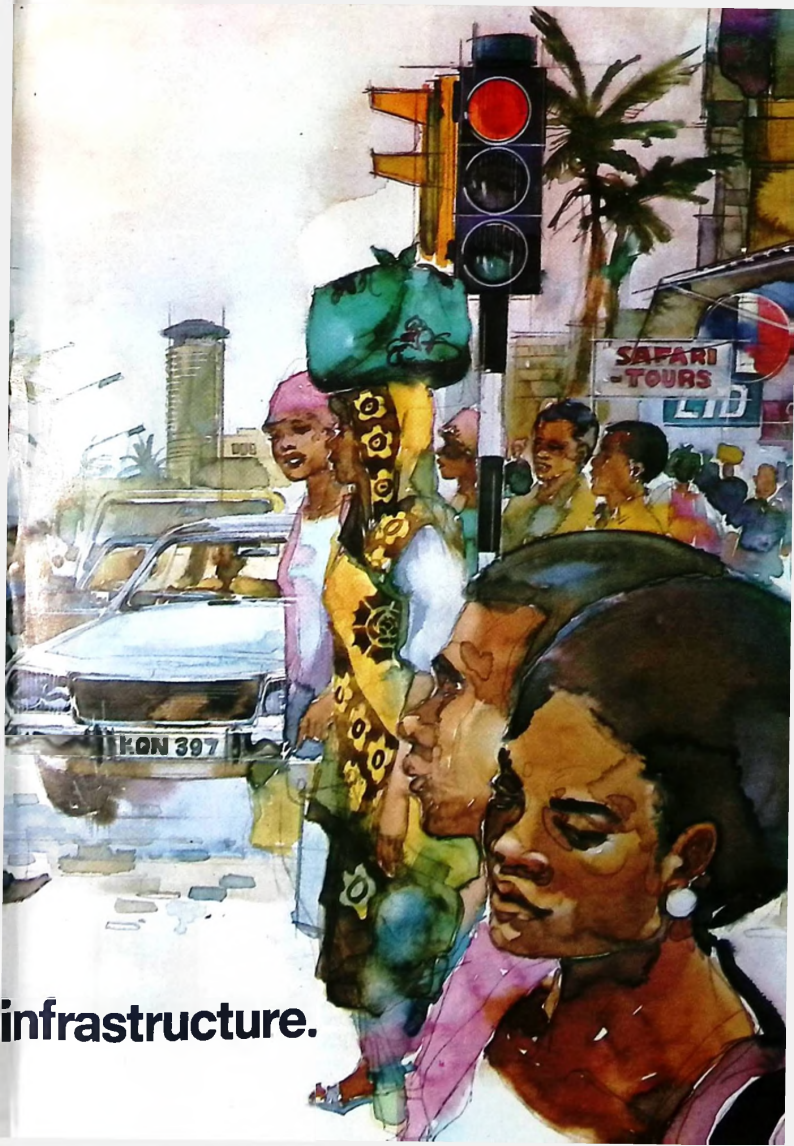
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tionist goals, members of the Casablanca group optimistically thought that the O.A.U. could mobilize United Nations support for their attainment. Thus the positive contribution of the radical African states to the theory of international relations was their idea that colonialism is a form of permanent aggression. As such it is one of the most potent threats to world peace. The prime task of the O.A.U. would be to coordinate efforts with the U.N. in eradicating the last vestiges of western colonialism and racial discrimination from the world.

The other African states, the Monrovia group, could be said to have imbibed the realist rationalist arguments concerning international institutions. On the notion of sovereignty, the Monrovia states were not prepared to renounce their newly won independence. As Martama Sule pointed out in reply to Ado Adjehi's call for African states' surrender of sovereignty "at the moment, we in Nigeria cannot afford to form union by government with any African states by surrendering our sovereignty. . . . We believe that many African states would prefer to rule themselves, and that they would like to taste the atmosphere of freedom after having been under foreign domination. . . ." Perhaps as a result of the Federal government's commitment to its newly won independence, and as a reaction to the Casablanca programme, Tafawa Balewa enunciated his own political principles which should govern inter-state relations in Africa. These programmes include:

1. Respect for the sovereignty of each state;
2. No country should be a base of subversion of the government of another state;
3. Respect for the internal affairs of each state.

The fact that Balewa's ideas appealed to many African States mirror the interest that the governments of these states had in upholding the existing order in Africa against the forces of movement and change. The Nigerian version of African cooperation was no doubt an expression of the African states' idea of international institutions. It also reflected Nigeria's need to prevent the rise of a dangerous rival on the continent and from another, her interest in securing freedom of action in international affairs.

The Charter

However, the arguments of the Monrovia states won the day, and on 25 May 1963, thirty-two independent African States met to draw up the Charter of the O.A.U. at Addis Ababa (Ethiopia). A close study of the Charter

of the O.A.U. reveals that it was a product of ambivalent thinking. While the Charter called for "the total emancipation of the African territories which are still dependent," there was no provision for the coordination of African States' military efforts to achieve this desirable objective. Also, while the Charter enjoins African States to adopt a policy of non-alignment, it ensures sovereign equality of states and non-interference in the internal affairs of states. Even if state 'A' refused to adopt the policy of non-alignment, there was no means of checking its anti-O.A.U. foreign policy posture. The O.A.U. has no mechanism for checking repressive governments in Africa.

The O.A.U. has therefore become in the realist notion, a mere point of diplomatic contact between the African States. But the charter's emphasis on arbitration, conciliation and freedom of individual states has a striking resemblance to rationalist thinking. Unfortunately, however, the O.A.U.'s Charter exhibits its disappointing poverty of ideas in relation to either the realist or the rationalist mode of thought. The O.A.U. is not, as the rationalists would have liked it, an instrument for the outlawry of war and for the mobilization of the collective power of an incipient African community to deter and, if need be, apprehend the law breaker. Despite the fact that the Charter speaks loosely about the need to promote the unity and solidarity of the African States (Art. 11), it remains silent on the crucial question, how?

The O.A.U. also falls short of the realist expectation. It does not constitute itself into a potent power bloc to stabilize the military balance between the two most powerful states. The O.A.U. is not a regional defence arrangement, for the member-states are not bound by any recognition of some community of interest and collectivity of action.

The lack of a clear-cut philosophical base for the O.A.U. results in its structural weaknesses, and these in turn, make the O.A.U., like the League of Nations, an organization of governments, not of the people. The failure of the O.A.U. arose mainly from its structural weaknesses. Perhaps a further example will suffice here. It is true that the Addis Ababa Conference provided some permanent machinery to which disputes involving member-states could be referred for discussion, and if possible, settlement within the African context. And while the Council was able to bring about a cease-fire

and initiate negotiations in the border conflicts between Morocco and Algeria, Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia in the early '60s no solution to the substantive problem was possible.

The partial success of the O.A.U. in these disputes was due to the fact that they were local in nature. But disputes which involve the immediate self-interest of member-states and outside interests could not be tackled by the O.A.U. The bitter division of the member-states on the Congo crisis in 1964/65 and the Angola Crisis in 1975 is a striking illustration of the lack of unanimity of members' attitude to conciliation and mediation in disputes involving members. The effects of this bitter division on the O.A.U. have been brought out by Catherine Hoskyns. First, the O.A.U. has no levers which it can use against determined foreign intervention in African crisis; second, that where foreign interests are involved as sharply as in the case of the Congo crisis, it is impossible to expect that a consensus will be maintained except as in the case of the Congo crisis, it is impossible to expect that a consensus will be maintained except at the level of inactivity; and third, that in a dispute like that in the Congo, where African passions and interests are really affected, there is likely to be a return to partial groupings.

The Future

The crucial question which must of necessity preoccupy our minds now is whether we should allow the O.A.U. to continue in its present form as a universal umbrella organization sheltering a rather disparate collection of partial groupings or we should build a strong, supra-national African Organization which would serve the interest of African peoples adequately.

My preference is obvious. It is my belief that the present age is characterized by a plurality of aims and values, and that in such a circumstance, African peoples must assume a militant attitude if we are to survive. To this extent, a true African Organization must be predicated on the revolutionist mode of thought. It is only then that we can convince the world that we have a manifest destiny and a World Mission. The impulse of Africans now for an institutionalized African unity must be given expression Not in the Congress of heads of States and Foreign Ministers, but in a community of African peoples. It is only by adopting this option from the range of options available to us that we can make the O.A.U. relevant to our yearnings and aspirations.



With his steel helmet resting on his knee and wearing a combat suit—President Mobutu takes a break with a glass of beer near the Lutudi River in Shaba province.

Zaire: Mobutu's Tragedy

*P. F. Wilmot

Today, ten years after the publication of *Challenge of the Congo*, and five years after the death of its author, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, is an appropriate time for assessing the contribution of this great African nationalist to African political thought. Today, if we accept Dr. Nkrumah's concept of the "challenge," we can, in light of the present situation in Zaire, decide whether the challenge has been met, whether the hope has been fulfilled, whether the promise has been kept or, on the contrary, whether the trust of Africa has been tarnished and its interest betrayed.

According to Nkrumah the challenge of the Congo stemmed from its strategic location, the vastness of its size, and the abundance of its mineral wealth. At the very heart of Africa, Zaire is bordered by no less than nine countries—Angola, Zambia, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, Sudan,

Central African "Empire," and Congo (Brazzaville)—and sprawls, on a continental scale, over 2,345,409 km². No other country in Africa—the richest continent in the world—possesses the vast concentration of wealth locked up in the bowels of Zaire. The world's biggest producer of cobalt (60%) and industrial diamonds, Zaire produces also 8% of the world's copper, 4% of its zinc, plus significant percentages of uranium, manganese, cadmium, germanium, lead, iron ore, and zinc. Zaire is also rich in agricultural potential and has vast possibilities for the development of cheap hydroelectricity. In short Zaire, more than most other countries in the world, has a sound basis for industrial development, for the creation of wealth to satisfy the most basic needs of its long suffering and brutalized population.

Because of its central location, its size and its mineral wealth, Dr. Nkrumah saw the challenge of the Congo (Zaire)

in both positive and negative terms: a promise and a threat, as a hope and a danger. A natural bridge between independent Africa and Africa under colonial and racist bondage, Zaire held out the promise of extending the fight of liberation against Portuguese, French, Belgian, British, and South African racist domination to Azania, Namibia, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Botswana and Malawi. At the same time, Zaire constituted a potential channel for these repressive forces to reverse the African liberation tide. The wealth of Zaire was a potential which, if not realized, would act like a dead carcass, attracting the vultures of Europe, the United States and Japan to devastate the loins and the sinews of prostrate and mutilated Africa. Dr. Nkrumah concluded, therefore, that "the degree of the Congo's (Zaire's) independence will substantially determine the ultimate fate of the whole continent of Africa. Free Africa will never abandon its struggle to end colonialism and to expel white supremacy from the whole continent. And independent Congo will be unreservedly on Africa's side in that struggle, while Congo with a government controlled by imperialism and neo-colonialism because of its geographical position will be assisting Portuguese colonialism and South African apartheid even while playing a neutral or semi-passive role."

The Traitor

Today, fourteen years after the passage was written, is more than enough time to assess whether "independent" Congo (Zaire) has played a neutral, semi-passive, or treacherous role of collaboration with colonial and neo-colonialist and racist oppression in Africa. An unbroken thread in the Zaire's history is Mobutu, sergeant in the Belgian Force Publique, frustrated journalist and CIA plant on Lumumba, Colonel and Chief of Staff of the Congolese army at "independence," self-appointed general, self-made president in the coup of November 1965, confirmed CIA agent, stooge of American, French, and Belgian imperialism, and staunch collaborator with Portuguese fascism and South African racism.

Mobutu's role in the capture and assassination of Patrice Lumumba, one of the first heroes and martyrs of the African revolution, puts him on par with Tshombe as betrayer of Africa's trust. Mobutu's rule, since he replaced Tshombe in 1965 as the spearhead of reaction and retrogression in Africa, places him in a unique position of dubious eminence.

On 12th September 1960, Lumumba

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Troops of the Zaire army ride in a heavily camouflaged jeep during the Shaba invasion.

was arrested by troops of Mobutu's "national" army (ANC). On 13th September Mobutu announced the "Neutralization" of Lumumba and Kasavubu, and the Assumption of power by the ANC till 30th December 1960. Lumumba was later released. On 11th October 1960 Mobutu again attempted to arrest Lumumba but was frustrated by patriotic elements among African troops of the UN command. On 1st December, Lumumba was captured by Mobutu's troops at Nweke in Kasai province, imprisoned and tortured. On 17th January 1961, Lumumba was sent by Mobutu and Kasavubu to Elizabethville in Katanga, with thoroughly predictable results. On the same night, in the presence of Tshombe, and his "interior minister," Godefroid Munongo, Lumumba and his two companions were murdered. Typical of neo-colonial dependence, even this supreme act of treachery had to be undertaken by foreigners. Lumumba was flown to Katanga by a Belgian pilot, escorted from the airport by a Belgian guard, killed by a Belgian officer, and certified dead by a Belgian doctor.

Behind the whole affair, however, was American imperialism, whose activities in the Congo were co-ordinated by the Central Intelligence Agency. The U.S. Senate Report on CIA assassinations of foreign leaders reveals that the agency had three separate plots or options for "neutralizing" Lumumba. The first involved a highly lethal biological toxin, the effects of which resembled the symptoms of a local disease. The second involved the use of a noted figure of the European under-world, whose features had been altered by

plastic surgeons working for the CIA to conceal his identity while in Zaire. The third involved turning Lumumba over to elements hostile to him whom, as the agency correctly predicted, would know what to do with him. All three options involved the collaboration of a "high Congolese official." And the details of the assassination report itself, massive circumstantial evidence, and the revelation by American news reports that Mobutu was one of the African leaders on the CIA payroll, make the identity of this "high Congolese official" unmistakable.

For purposes of economy, we can summarize the middle period of Mobutu's career of treachery. In October 1968, Pierre Mulele, the Lumumbist leader, was lured to Kinshasa by a promise of "amnesty," arrested and killed during the "welcoming" celebrations. Mobutu prevented the MPLA from using Zaire territory as a sanctuary or as an infiltration corridor from Congo (Brazzaville) into Angola. Troops of Zaire, FLNA and Portugal carried out joint operations against MPLA forces in the North. And Mobutu's collaboration with western imperialism and South African racism in aggression against independent Angola is well documented. For example, Colin Legum, hardly a friend of African nationalism, reported in his booklet on the Angolan crisis that Chipenda, the FLNA leader, was sent from Kinshasa in July 1975 to meet the Chief of the apartheid Bureau of State Security (BOSS) to organize the invasion of Angola. In early January 1976 the *Johannesburg Star* reported that Mobutu had requested South Africa to invade Angola and that the racists had threatened to pull out on

AFRICA NOW

three occasions unless Mobutu met the request public.

On 17th February 1977, the *Journal de Angola* reported Neto's speech of 15th February in which he named military bases being used in Zaire in aggression against Angola. These included Manete, Nvela, Kitoma, Nkanga, Pangala, Dembo, Kinkuzu and Tchibanga.

On 24th February, before the foreign diplomatic corp in Luanda, Neto gave details of "Cobra 77," a joint Zaire-South African-mercenary operation involving air, sea and armoured ground forces of Zaire, South Africa, FNLA, UNITA and FLEC, Scheduled for September or October of this year, the forces would be co-ordinated by American CIA-recruited officers operating under mercenary cover.

Significantly, South Africa's stationing of 50,000 troops on the Angolan-Namibia border, its acts of continued aggression against Angola using regular and puppet UNITA troops, and its clearance of population and vegetation from a mile-wide "no-go area, to be called "operation cobra 1976."

On 25th February troops from Zaire reportedly led by white mercenaries massacred 43 Angolan civilians in northern Angola not far from Pangala.

Patriotic Uprising

The recent popular uprising in Zaire beginning in the first week of March is the action of patriotic elements principally in Shaba and Kivu provinces. Mobutu's response to this uprising has to be seen within the context of his neo-colonial up-bringing and socialization. Instead of recognizing the real causes of the uprising—neo-colonial exploitation, political repression and cultural degeneration—Mobutu immediately branded the anti-communist red-herring, blaming Angola, Cuba and Russia, and everybody but Mobutu. Mobutu's interview (*Newsweek* 18th April 1977) with the bysterical anti-communist de Borchgrave sounds very much like Nguyen van Thieu, just before he was flushed down the neo-colonial drain. With armed forces of 60,000 (at least on paper) Mobutu could muster just 1,000 troops to guard Kolwezi, the most important town in Zaire, in the first two weeks. Despite being \$3 billion dollars in debt to his western patrons, and despite vast annual revenues from copper and other minerals, Mobutu reported to be one of the richest men in the world, had neglected to build roads in the region and had not paid his troops for six months.

Instead he had to go hat in hand to the western imperial powers, and reactionary Arab and African countries. France which supported reactionary

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puppet forces in Nigeria and Angola, suddenly emerged as a staunch supporter of political stability in Africa, having the gall to cry "Africa for the Africans" in a meeting with Francophone African leaders who are kept in power by generous supplies of French troops and equipment. Belgium, the principal organizer of Tshombes' secession, has suddenly discovered the value of African territorial integrity. And to cash in on Jimmy Carter's human rights campaign, Mobutu demanded that the American government support the rights of his troops to drink Coca Cola. But unfortunately Carter was a friend of the President of Pepsi Cola so Mobutu had to buy his tinned coke with money supplied by the CIA. American support

"Chairman's" public support for French interference in the internal affairs of the peoples of Zaire.

According to the *Sunday Punch* of 25th April 1977, Mobutu is busy recruiting British mercenaries at the rate of \$1,169.86 per month, with money supplied him by the CIA. The principal recruiter is John Banks of Angolan mercenary fame. So far Mobutu is reported to have spent \$26 million on arms and men.

After making rapid progress toward Kolwezi in the first two weeks, the insurgents stopped because Mobutu's forces, led by French "advisers" threatened to kill their families, most of whom were still in the town. Western intelligence helped draw up lists of

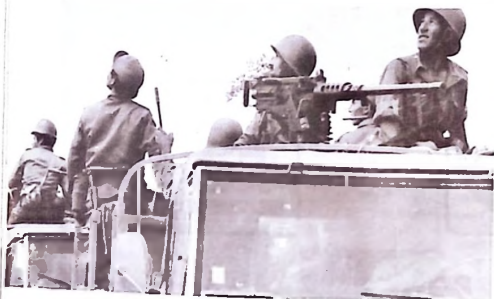
Zambia-Rhodesia-South Africa routes for both imports and exports, including 210,000 tons of copper in 1976. Rhodesian minerals are exported principally under South African cover, but increasingly under Zaire cover as well. Mobutu's continued use of the Rhodesian South African route instead of the more convenient Benguela route, indicates his continued hostile intentions toward Angola since he could not carry out aggression against that country while the minerals from neighboring Shaba province were being evacuated to the ports of Lobito and Benguela.

This summary has shown that Mobutu is "controlled by imperialism and neo-colonialism" and that, far from playing a "merely neutral or semi-passive role," Zaire has actively collaborated with Portuguese colonialism and South African apartheid. Thus Dr. Nkrumah's prediction, based on his analysis of Zaire's strategic importance, has been confirmed by events. While accepting this conclusion, however, one needs to ask why the situation has developed in the way it has, since Dr. Nkrumah was one of the most active participants in the affairs of the Congo leading to the ascension of Mobutu.

The Sad De-Rail

Two factors are of crucial importance in this regard, first the activities of Ghana's troops in the UN contingent and second the type of political system Nkrumah recommended to Lumumba.

On the first score, Ghana's troops were commanded by an Englishman, General Alexander, who was seconded from the British Army to be Ghana's Chief of Defence Staff. Nkrumah quotes Alexander as saying: "I often found it difficult to act on Nkrumah's orders without feeling that I might be hurting British interests." Yet, despite this clear evidence of divided loyalties despite Lumumba's complaints about the white officers in the Ghanaian force, and against the advice of Ghanaian ambassador to the Congo, Nkrumah dismissed Alexander only in 1961, after the damage had been done. One of the senior officers in the force, General (then Colonel) Ankrach, was to help organize the coup that toppled Nkrumah in 1966. It was Ankrach and Brigadier Otu, acting presumably on Alexander's orders, who prevented Lumumba from using the broadcast station while allowing Bokikanga and others of his enemies to use it. When Mobutu illegally arrested Lumumba on 12th September, 1960, Otu and Ankrach, refused the request of Dr. Nkrumah to release the Ghanaian ambassador, that he should release him. And when Ghana



Moroccan troops in the Shaba operations: How genuine was their assistance?

for Mobutu contrasts with its underground role in the Nigerian Civil War which it termed an "internal affair" and a "British responsibility"

The Moroccan expeditionary force is drawn from the 30,000 troops fighting a colonial war to subjugate the peoples of the Western Sahara. These troops, heavily armed by the U.S.A. and France, are led by Ahmed Dlimi, the killer of Ben Barka. The war against the heroic resistance of the Polisario, is a classic, genocidal war of colonial aggression. The first act of support for Mobutu by these Moroccan saviours was the killing of two Zairois children.

To its lasting shame, the OAU has cowardly refused to condemn the violation by Morocco and Mauritania of the clauses of its own charter concerning the rights of colonial peoples to self-determination, and respect for the integrity of colonially established boundaries. At the same time it has acquiesced, through its silence, in its

workers who had left to join the uprising, as well as of those who had fled after the collapse of the original Katangan rebellion in the sixties. The first defensive lines were set up inside, not outside the town, meaning that the objective was not to protect the town but to hold the population hostage. As in Hue, Mobutu would have "saved" the town by destroying it.

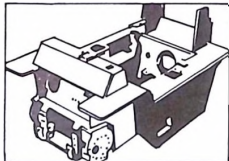
In the *Daily Times* of 19th March 1977 Robert Mugabe, joint chairman of the Zimbabwe Patriotic Front, accused Zaire, Ivory Coast and Gabon of breaking sanctions against the Rhodesian rebel regime. The centre of sanctions breaking in Zaire is Mbothi Litho, a cousin of Mobutu, member of Lonrho's board of directors, and the second richest man in Zaire after Mobutu himself. Litho owns the *societe generale d'alimentation*, a large scale distributor of food from Rhodesia and South Africa. Although the Zambian-Rhodesian border is closed to Zambian traffic, Mobutu uses the



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SHIPPING SERVICES IN NIGERIA

Some critics have described Nigeria as a newly oil-rich society eager to get hold of the world's goods but still lacks the highly-developed infrastructure and organisation to land and deliver the goods efficiently.

The same critics remarked that the Lagos Ports Complex that handles on the average, above 70 per cent of the Nigeria's total sea-borne trade is among the best in the world for sheer throughput of conventional break-bulk goods over the admittedly limited berths at its disposal.

One is tempted to agree entirely with such critics when one remembers, for instance, that the Lagos Port which was primarily built and developed to handle a traffic of about 270,000 metric tonnes is handling almost double her planned capacity.

It is a common knowledge that the management of the authority and the various port users are finding it difficult to cope with this increased volume of traffic.

If the whole story of growth and development of a country can be narrated by analysing the volume and variety of cargoes passing through the ports of that country, then it is easy to describe Nigeria's economy.

The total cargo throughput at Nigerian ports (inward and outward tonnage) in 1955-56 was 2.74 million tonnes, rose to 4.84 million tonnes ten years later and again to 8.95 million tonnes in 1975-76. The expected throughput (excluding cargo throughput of petroleum) for 1976-77 is 12.39 million tonnes.

This phenomenal increase in the cargo throughput at our ports would continue for as long as we remain a consumer-oriented economy. What baffles most people is the claim that the Nigerian Ports Authority did not anticipate this sharp increase in the volume of traffic.

There was as common with us, no long-term planning nor proper co-ordination at all levels including the one that should exist between the Authority and the Federal Ministry of Transport. The Authority was faced with the problem of red-tapism common with all public utilities as it has to clear with the ministry to get anything done. The ministry, on the other hand, empowered by Decree 34 of 1969, issued directives of a general or special nature with regards to the duties of the authority.

The congestion which has become

was largely caused by this problem. If perhaps the Second National Development 1970-74 in respect of port development and reconstruction had been implemented, there would not have been a congestion.

All this time, the port had been without improvement of any sort yet the traffic was increasing. The exercise demand for port facilities were seen to have manifested in the various integral port infrastructure which extended beyond to the evacuation processes, plants and equipment over-used and support facilities over-stretched.

Had the NPA been contacted before the Ministries placed order for goods, it would have discouraged the extraordinary purchases of cement as there were no port facilities to cope with the upsurge.

The massive importation of cement by the Federal Ministry of Defence was identified by the authority as one of the main causes of the congestion. At the peak of congestion, 65 per cent of the total number of ships with homogeneous unit loads were cement or order by the ministry.

Some other causes of the congestion included the FESTAC, liberal Customs policy and the Udoji Review Commission. Goods ordered for FESTAC, for instance, had firm dates of delivery and did upset existing berthing arrangements.

It is important also to realise that the causes of port congestion are not only limited to the ports but also arise from the inland transport modes which in this case were inadequate. Every port depends absolutely on those modes

for the transportation and evacuation of traffic passing through it. There was lack of adequate development of railways, roads and inland water transport.

All these were taken care of in the third Development Plan which is being executed fast especially as it affects the port development. In the current plan, about ₦26m is being committed by the Federal Government in the development of ports.

The Tin Can Island wharf will be ready in October, this year, and is expected to provide 10 more berths to the Lagos Port Complex. The third Apapa Wharf extension which may also be completed early next year, will provide six berths in addition to the existing 16. There are other emergency projects on the Lagos Port Complex some of which have since taken off.

Similar expansion programme was planned for other ports in the federation all of which would be ready by 1980. The Port Harcourt wharf is being constructed at a new site spanning about 61.2 kilometres.

The port development since the current financial year has not been restricted to merely providing additional berths but also to the replacement of the old plants and acquisition of new ones. Presently, the port is highly mechanised and is capable of doubling its capacity.

Control

To tackle the congestion as an immediate remedy, the NPA introduced several measures aimed at co-ordinating and controlling the influx of ships into the country's ports. It was after the congestion, they knew that it was necessary that the volume of cargoes coming in through it be equated to the country's need of essential commodities and the facilities available for handling of these tonnages.

When some measures seemed to be paying off, the port management felt it was necessary to introduce more stringent ones. Most of the measures were on how to get rid of the cement ships and many other tramp vessels without disrupting the normal port operation and to ensure that essential goods like milk, sugar, salt, flour were made readily available to the market.

There was such measures as the registration of all vessels coming to Nigeria irrespective of whatever cargoes they intended to carry so that clearance would be obtained before sailing. The



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further shipment of cement to Nigeria and prohibited part loading of ship with cement. This embargo was lifted as soon as nearly all the cement ships were cleared through mid-stream discharge operation which has now become very popular in the Lagos Port Complex.

Mid-stream Discharge Operation

Infact it has been identified as being largely responsible for the improvement of the Lagos throughput. During the months of April, 1977 alone, it accounted for 48 per cent of the total imports discharged. It also accounted for the loading of nearly 2,000 metric tonnes of export cargoes during the same month. The port had during the month achieved a total throughput of 555,035 metric tonnes made up of 526,802 tonnes of imports and 28,233 tonnes of exports.

Although the figure shows a remarkable increase of about 29 per cent over the figures for the corresponding period of last year, it was 20,669 tonnes less than the figure for the previous month.

The mid-stream discharge operation involved only cement at first. That time it was handled by a few syndicates appointed by the Federal Government. One of the syndicates, Aeromarine International Management Services Limited, was discharging between 80,000 and 100,000 bags of cement each day, which was later increased to 160,000 bags. This operation later spread to fertilizer vessels and other vessels carrying non-perishable commodities like iron rods. Now, nearly every commodity is being discharged mid-stream. All sorts of cargoes can now be seen at the kinkiri lighterage terminal which unfortunately has poor security facilities. Like the Chairman of NPA, Brigadier G.C.A. Ally declared recently, with the mid-stream discharge operation, the Lagos Port Complex is now capable of working 60 ships simultaneously at any given time.

Berth Allocation & Conference Lines

NPA expects that at least 20,000 metric tonnes would be achieved at each berth each month. If such a target is not met by any consortium of shipping lines appropriated priority berths, such a consortium, otherwise called, Conference Lines, would lose the chance of being appropriated more berths. If on the other hand, the liner conference is not doing well at all, it may forfeit the berth completely. None of the liner conferences has lost its berth as yet but it is obvious from their performance that instead of losing the berth, they will all be granted additional berths when the Tin Can wharf and the third Apapa Wharf extension are completed.

United Kingdom West African Line

(UKWAL), a consortium of four shipping lines including Nigerian National Shipping Line (NNSL), Palm Line and Elder Dempster Line, has exceeded the target. UKWAL is proud of the fact that at the two priority berths which it has been using since the congestion, it has been landing cargo at an average annual rate of 300,000 tonnes per berth.

It is quoted as being in excess of any general cargo berth in the UK, Europe, the US or the Far East and, way ahead of rival conferences with similar facilities trading with the Continental Europe and Japan.

Continental West African Conference which has up to seven member lines achieves the set target hence it has up to three berths allocated to it. These are berths 6, 7 and 8. It has one in Port Harcourt port and also allowed to discharge mid-stream in one of the Burys like UKWAL. The scope or range of geographical area served by the American West African Freight Conference (AWAFC) extends from Montreal and ports east thereof in Canada, the North Atlantic and South Atlantic Coast and the Gulf of Mexico of the United States to the West African countries beginning from Mauritania and extending through Angola including islands off the West African Coast and the Canary and Cape Verde Island.

It has 14 member lines and the number of countries in West Africa served directly by the conference lines total 16, while the number of vessels operated by its members to West African ports total 52.

It achieved a throughput of 91,028 metric tonnes, last year, 15,698 tonnes of which were milled rice. NPA believes their appropriated berths is under-utilized and does not justify a call for more berth which the liner conference has been making.

AWAFC believes it would have achieved a lot more if not for the emergency measure which NPA adopted whereby the non-conference line vessels were discharged in the appropriated berths.

The Far East West African Conference (FEWAC) also has only one berth in Apapa. It has also been pressing for more berths. Membership of this line include the Lagos and Niger Shipping Line which is one of the biggest shipping companies in Nigeria. It is responsible for most of the Japanese or Taiwanese goods which now flood the Nigerian market. FEWAC is often plagued with space problem in their shed because of the type of cargo that comes through them. The liner conference cannot stock a cargo like TV sets or radio and so makes maximum use of its shed which when it get congested prevents further discharging. Only

recently, the receivers of the cargo have begun responding to the call for immediate collection and it would appear that such problem will no longer arise.

The Association of Nigerian Independent Conference Line (ANICL) which was the last to be allocated a berth Apapa comprises four Nigerian shipping companies. These companies are fully owned and subscribed by Nigerians. They are Nigerian Green Lines, Nigerian Far East Line, Equatorial Line and Falcon Line. The Association's berth 5 is still being under-utilized. The member lines apart from being new to the business, are not well-equipped as yet. Besides, they have a number of issues to settle between them to effect a smooth operation.

Some non-members of this association have been pressing to join as they feel they are qualified to belong. It does not, however, seem they will be considered as no statement has been made by its spokesman. This Association really needs a lot of encouragement for it to improve. It would be out of place too to grant it more berths and expand its membership.

Shipping is an area in which a country could lose considerable amount of foreign exchange annually through non-participation by indigenous institutions. Actually, it seems the appropriation of berths to conference lines to enhance productivity and thereby quicken the turn-round of these ships was the most effective of all the measures so far taken.

Containerization

One big achievement of the NPA since 1975 is in the field of containerization. They brought in Container Terminal Company (Nigeria) Limited (CTC) to try and get things moving again. Prior to the company's appointment as the container management agent, containers formed a big menace at the ports. They were scattered all over the port area like sheep without a shepherd and helped to congest the port because they occupied a better part of the area. The container seat at Berth 14 was in a terrible state and nothing was really working. By then, about 1,540 were landed in six months.

CTC is now landing between 4,000 and 5,000 containers each month. This figure represents the maximum landing that is possible with the present berthing and terminal facilities. During the first six months, a total of 15,808 containers were evacuated. This is about 2,000 containers more than the number that entered the port during the period. According to Mr. Kurt Neilsen, the Managing Director of CTC, "Nigerian importers using container transport can now plan the arrival

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of their supplies at their stores or factories within a few days margin. They can know the availability date from their overseas suppliers and can plan the shipment by the particular vessel knowing also the expected arrival date in Apapa of this vessel."

The congestion of port areas with containers has been eliminated. Containers are now stacked only on confined or terminal areas controlled by CTC. All containers are duly registered and immediately available to receivers.

CTC still needs the co-operation of receivers in the evacuation of these landed containers. The evacuations for each month since November 1975 when they began operating, has been less than the landings. The Lily-Pond has a capacity it can take and if the receivers do not respond fast to collect their containers there, the place would get congested or the container company would cut down on their rate of landings.

Meanwhile, the importers have been complaining of the high container charges imposed on them by the company. On the other hand, the company feels its charges are very fair.

Finally, with the introduction of an integrated port Cargo handling system aimed at consolidating stevedoring and shore handling functions, shipping services appears to be past the take-off stage that is, assuming the National handling Company and the other four Stevedoring contractors will now effectively manage the dock workers and their Union.

CLEARING AND FORWARDING BUSINESS

Clearing and forwarding agencies play a very important role in the shipping industry. They act as middlemen between the importers and the shippers.

Soon after goods are shipped by shippers to Nigerian receivers or importers, it is the clearing and forwarding agents who ensure that the goods are safely delivered. They find out when the actual ship carrying the goods will arrive at the Nigerian ports and when it will berth either at the herd quays or in the case of the Lagos Port complex, mid-stream.

When the goods are finally loaded, they ensure quick clearance going through all formalities. Often, they do not have problems until they get to

the stage where the customs and Excise comes in. If they eventually get over the Customs checks which often takes a long time to complete, they arrange for transportation to take the goods to their customers who are also the owners.

Customs regulations in Nigeria are known to be causing a certain amount of delays which in turn is reflected by congestion in the transit sheds and adjoining warehouses.

However, it is necessary that trade control formalities be introduced. The customs tariffs are levied not with the primary purpose of generating revenue but also to protect and encourage the growth of young developing industries. In order to conserve foreign exchange, it is necessary to impose certain restrictions on imports; this also had the added benefit of encouraging local private industries.

It is everybody's wish that the customs regulation be modified and simplified further with a view to obviating delays usually caused by the long and tedious formalities before cargo clearance could be effected.

It is obligatory that the clearing and forwarding agents should own delivery vans with which to deliver the goods they clear. Sometimes, they are made to take delivery of the goods from the ship side where such a good would not need to be taken transit sheds. This procedure helps to decongest the port. The 90 per cent delivery concession as it is called is not granted to any agency except those remain and reliable.

Clearing and Forwarding agencies are highly profitable ventures which do not require expertise or sound education.

Thousands of Nigerians are already in the business, this being one of the areas by Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Decree (INEPD) exclusively reserved for national.

Owing to the high demand for the services of the clearing and forwarding agents, there are lots of mush-room agencies which also favourably compete with the bigger ones.

This competition although unhealthy, helps to keep the charges fairly low except for the very big agencies which would not be affected by increase in the number of generators.

Such agencies depend solely on name and long-standing association with multi-national companies. The trend has been for very big importers to stick to the big clearing and forwarding agents. If there were only big importers in Nigeria, then there would be no chance for the small clearing and forwarding agents, but we have small

importers than the big ones.

Nigerians are predominantly traders. There is hardly any one who does not buy and sell. Most of these traders go a bit further by embarking on importation of materials they sell. We often have such traders claiming: "Importer, Exporter, Manufacturers representative" and such-like terminology which they print against their name in their business cards. With this large number of people in the importation business, there is bound to be as many clearing and forwarding agents. Some now operate even without licences from the offices. These are quite a number who manage to buy a van which they use for dual purpose—to deliver their customers goods as well as office from where they operate. Some mush-room clearing and forwarding agents have in fixed addresses and some operate from their living houses. Now it does not really matter where you are operating from what matters is how much money you make each day. This often amounts to thousands of Naira. It appears to be the most profitable business which does not infact require a heavy investment nor too many workers. There are those who have only one or two workers and are able to cope with the number of customers they attend to.

These days, come of the small clearing and forwarding agents are able to win over traditional customers from the big agents and this is because they offer better services. The small agencies are faster and seem to be more accessible to the Customs and Excise or the officials from whom the goods would be claimed.

Apart from the higher charges of these big agents, there is the tendency of their not caring so much for their customers because they would not be bothered if customers withdraw some of the customers have had long-standing association with them.

A bulk of the new clearing and forwarding agencies were formed by the former employees of such agencies like Elder Dempster Lines, Panalpina. These new agencies have been known to be developing fast and will strive to impress the customers with their confidence.

There are those who believe that the richest Nigerians now are those who are in a way or the other have to do with the shipping trade. Most of these people are clearing and forwarding agents. Even with the large number of agencies now operating in our ports, one tends to believe that the ratio with Nigerian importers is now to 20.



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Readership Competition Results

After a careful scrutiny of all the entries received the panel of judges could not find any particular inspiring to be declared overall winners.

*The panel however declared the second prize of ₦80.00 to Mr. Okolie Nwankpele of P.M.B. 1072, APAPA, LAGOS.

•Messrs. S. Ibibi-Somoni of 11 Hospital Road Port Harcourt, Rivers State and Christian U. Nwanne of Holy Ghost College, P.O. Box 5 OWERRI, IMO State are to share the third prize of ₦50.00. That is ₦25.00 each.

•Plus one year free subscription of Afriscope for all winners.

The Management of AFRISCOPE, Your Monthly Brief on Africa, wishes to express their profound gratitude and appreciation to its readers and especially, all those who sent in entries for the Competition.

We believe, however, that the inability of our panel of judges to declare an overall winner in spite of the numerous entries is a reflection of the paucity of the knowledge of African Affairs of most competitors which we at this end have and will continue to strive so hard to bring to our readers.

While wishing all our readers more useful days of readership, we also wish every one better luck next time. All prizes will be posted through the contact addresses of winners.

troops were moved out of Leopoldville between October and November, to facilitate the capture and killing of Lumumba, Nkrumah was powerless to do anything about it. Thus, by preserving the British tradition of an "apolitical" military, Nkrumah's troops were used in carrying out the political objectives of his and Lumumba's enemies. It is rather pathetic to hear Nkrumah say to Stevenson, America's ambassador to the U.N., that: "although I have consistently backed Lumumba politically, my military contingent serving under United Nations has throughout adopted a completely neutral attitude, obeying implicitly the United Nations command in Leopoldville." This separation of "politics" and "military" is rather strange for a "scientific socialist."

Nkrumah's second error was to assist the Belgians in organizing the Kasavubu-Lumumba government. Although he agreed that Kasavubu had not received enough votes to qualify him for the post of ceremonial president, it was Nkrumah who persuaded Lumumba to accept him nonetheless, on the grounds that because of temperament the "two Congolese personages were admirably complementary to each other" and "they also represented fairly substantial tribal groups in a country in which tribal divisions are still very rigid." There was no question at all as to whether the nationalism, the patriotism and anti-imperialism of Lumumba were compatible with the neo-colonialist treachery of Kasavubu, i.e. whether there was political, not just temperamental or tribal, compatibility. This position is particularly surprising from a political leader who had experienced the limits of primitive nationalism and ethnic arithmetic when he abandoned the retrograde and antipopular United Gold Coast Convention to form the Convention People's Party in 1949. It is not at all surprising that the "formula . . . which Ghana helped to evolve . . . earned the special commendation and gratitude of the Belgian government," since it served the interests of the Belgian and other western imperialists, against the permanent interests of the people of Zaire.

While Dr. Nkrumah has correctly stated the problem of the Congo, therefore, his proffered solutions have not solved the problem.

In the Preface to his book Dr. Nkrumah said that "unless we unite and deal with neo-colonialism on a Pan-African basis, they will try to undermine our independence, and draw us again into spheres of influence comparable to the original carve-up of

Africa arranged at the Berlin Conference of 1884." Ten years later General Murtala Mohammed declared that Angola merely provides the occasion to recreate the 19th century partition of Africa into spheres of influence where the predominant consideration will be the interests of the big powers without any consideration for the inalienable rights of the African."

When Tshombe visited De Gaulle in 1964, Belgian officials accused the French of "unfriendliness," as if the 15 million Congolese did not exist. When Giscard d'Estaing recently transported Moroccan mercenaries and arms to Zaire, Van Elstande, the Belgian Foreign Minister, again reminded the French that Zaire is a historically legitimate sphere of Belgian interests.

A Luta Continua

The only answer to such arrogant and patronizing attitudes, a reflection of long-standing colonial and neo-colonial domination, is an African nationalism that puts the interests of Africa above all other interests, that recognizes the integrity and indivisibility of African concerns vis-a-vis the Cold War, the Great Power Conflicts, the Sino Soviet dispute or intra-imperialist manoeuvres and competition. A neo-colonial African country which, through subordination of African interests to any other interests, constitutes a threat to the interests of independent Africa, should not be protected by OAU sentimentality from being dealt with. This applies particularly to Zaire, involved in imperialist aggression against Angola, Gabon, involved in aggression against Benin, and Morocco and Mauritania against the Western Sahara. No country can remain indifferent to the political complexion of its neighbours, and any country bent on eliminating neo-colonialism and racism must adopt a hostile position to imperialism as well as to puppets of imperialism.

The most powerful recent expression of African nationalism was made by the late General Murtala Mohammed, who has followed in the footsteps of Patrice Lumumba and Kwame Nkrumah as martyrs of the African revolution, and victims of imperialist aggression and African betrayal. According to the late General:

"The fortunes of Africa are in our hands to make or mar. For too long have we been kicked around; for too long have we been treated like adolescents who cannot discern their interests and act accordingly. . . . The time has come when we should make it clear that we can decide for ourselves; that we know our own interests and

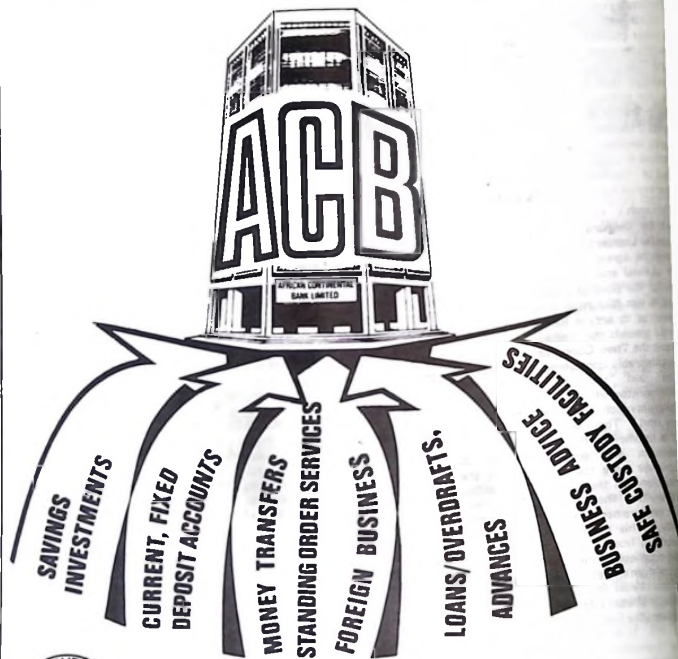
how to protect those interests; that we are capable of resolving African problems without presumptuousness in ideological dangers which, more often than not, have no relevance to us, not for the problem at hand.

Brothers and sisters, as peoples of Africa, our position vis-a-vis African interests can only be Africa first. Africa second! Africa always!

Ad inimigo nem um palmo de terra!
(To the enemy not one handful of soil!)
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The London Summit And Africa

*A Correspondent

The much-talked about third Economic Summit of the Western pillars—United States, Britain, West Germany, France, Japan, Canada and Italy—which took place in London last May, ended after all to fulfill the prophecies of the London ECONOMIST. Said the paper: "...the leaders of the world's richest countries will discuss how to stay that way (Rich) ...and to keep the rest of the world on an even keel!" Later in an analysis of the summit's problems, it listed the last but one problem as "how to APPEAR (capitals mine) most generous to the poor countries." That, precisely was the achievement of the May summit.

Prior to it, hopes were high from two apparently opposite but economically complementary quarters—the non-summit members of the international world and the citizens of summit countries. The 15 million unemployed nationals of these countries, no doubt, hoped for summit developments that will provide jobs in the near future. For example, in the United States unemployment rate averaged 6.4 per cent between 1971 and last year compared to a meagre 2.7 per cent growth average within the same period. In fact, of the seven, Japan and France were the odd ones out of this trend of high unemployment and low growth. Japan grew by 5.2 per cent while unemployment wavered round 1.5 per cent. France on the other hand recorded growth average of 3.4 per cent as against 2.6 unemployment average within the same period.

Also, all faced the problem of how to jointly or severally encourage investment without adding more fuel to present inflation. In addition, this year's expected \$42 million OPEC surplus means more and more countries, including the seven's weaker economies, will record another red and the question is how best can this be borne? Energy was another ripe area for a joint decision especially whether or not the rest of world should go along with President Carter's call for a stop to arbitrary atomic energy exports.

As for the rest of the world, especially the Third World (a greater proportion in Africa), their expectations are for a change favourable to their demand for a new international economic 'contract.' In reality this summit seven (in addition to COMECON and other developed countries) hold the key to the future of these poor ones. According to a report released in 1975, the 35 poorest countries grew economically at the average rate of 2.5 per cent. Going a step further, the World Bank declared last year that real incomes in these countries may grow by less than 1 per cent for the rest of this decade and "£3,300m programme of rural development projects for the next five years will scarcely keep pace with the additional numbers of the rural poor—some 70m—who will be born during this same period" in these nations. In addition, Third World deficit stood at \$28bn last year and may rise to \$50bn by 1985. As a result debts have mounted to such an extent that even the Financial Institutions doubt repayment ability. By the same last year, total debts of the Third World stood at

\$180bn with \$21bn needed to service them (75 per cent increase since 1973).

Yet these are countries dependent on factors outside their control—international prices for their exports (unfair); the international Monetary system (controlled mainly by and for the developed world); smoothness of know-how transfer and of course availability of stringless aid (hard to come by). The summit seven knew of the existence of these problems and in fact held the major trump cards in the north-south dialogue; GATT negotiations and other corrective international talks yet to bear fruits.

Self-love

After the summit, the only resolution that came was the one on how to stay at the top. Said Chairman Callaghan (of the summit) "First we agreed that our most urgent task is to create more jobs including special measures for young people.... secondly heads of Governments (at the summit) committed themselves to maintain their targets for economic growth or for stabilisation policies. We recognised that growth rates must be maintained in stronger economies, increased in weaker ones.... If we are to cut unemployment and provide a base for a sustained non-inflationary growth!"

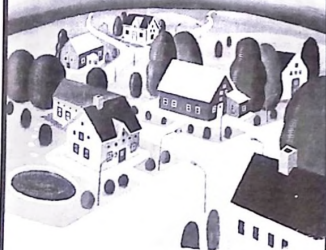
On international negotiations the only indication was that the seven have "discussed the policies that will be needed to reach a successful conclusion of the conference on international economic co-operation" and a pledge "we will give a new impetus to the Tokyo round of multilateral Trade negotia-



Left to Right: Giulio Andreotti of Italy, Takeo Fukuda of Japan, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing of France, U.S. President Jimmy Carter, Helmut Schmidt of West Germany, Britain's James Callaghan and Canada's Pierre Trudeau: The seven Economic giants of the West who met in London recently.



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tions." The most concrete development for the third world was the summit's commitment to "Seek more resources for the IMF facility." Even then, how concrete and favourable will still depend on whether or not the fund's special Drawing Rights (SDR) is adjusted to provide according to liquidity needs. And although, according to Mr. Callaghan, the seven countries agreed to do all in their power by means of trade, aid and finance to help the developing countries, there is no doubt these will be carbon copies of past aids which only ended up being indirect finances for increasing standards of living in the same developed nations. Until the poorer nations stopped to pay prices for industrial goods meant to compensate drops in standard of living in their country of origin, no amount of aid and finance will save the situation. So much for the third world's hopes.

In the final analysis, the London Summit was nothing but an attempt at making things easier for the developed while ensuring the poorer ones remain financially strong enough to go on supplying the raw materials in the face of higher interests rates; two-tier oil prices and ever worsening terms of trade. They forgot that even to grow without

inflation, North America will have to exceed 33 1/3 per cent; EEC 20 per cent and Japan under 43 per cent exported to the third world in 1975. The developed world has to come to terms with Mr. Shridath Ramphal (Commonwealth Secretary-General) when he said "the new contract which the third world seeks from the first and second world rests firmly on the premise that the independent relationship of the past have served the world badly that isolationism (protectionist policies) is not an option open even to the most powerful nations."

Or else understand the warning in the Club of Rome's founder/Chairman Signor Aurelio Peccei's declaration: "Unless Europe makes special effort to establish the right relationship for transfer of Technological know-how; Capital and absorption of third world products, it will find itself in an increasingly hostile world which controls its energy and raw material supplies." Already the North-South dialogue is drifting towards this unfavourable state. Lets hope that at the next summit of the Seven, instead of appearing generous, the Western World will own up to its duties in much more practical ways before the world starts to crumble with protectionist policies.

monthly increase ceiling and now practically total freeze). In fact, the marriage of these two policies was responsible for last year's panic in the financial market. As liquid cash poured in, in the mix of decreasing credit, most borrowings found their way to the property market so that when that market recorded a major crisis (the Glen ANIL CRISIS) things went sour for many banks. Randalia Bank and Rand Bank were placed under judicial management before the Reserve Bank's (Central Bank) rescue operation and R55m cushion provided by the Big five—Barclays National, Standard, Volkskas, Nedland and Trust bank—managed to save the day. Despite this, one of the big five—TRUST, was still taken over by BANKORP, the small unknown banking arm of South Africa's insurance heavyweight. It is rumoured that the present freeze on credit increase is to make sure the fund is there for the government to collect.

Dilemma

The real dilemma for these banks, most likely only for the foreign ones, lies in the intended use of the fund. Declared South Africa's Finance Minister, Senator Sunny Horwood last year while launching the 1976 increased defence spending: "Political events in Southern Africa clearly demand that we increase our defence effort!" In other words, because of increasing resistance to apartheid and discrimination practised in Southern Africa, South Africa—the godfather of apartheid—deemed it necessary to ask financial houses to help finance the needed defence. Herein lies the headache for the institutions.

Africa and a majority of the world continue to stand firm against apartheid in line with UN resolutions. Hence the involvement of Barclays, Standard and others in both South Africa and the rest of Africa amounts to playing two opposite ends against the centre. But, although Nigeria now allows only 40 per cent foreign ownership in her banks, this minority holding when added to holdings in Zambia, Kenya and a host of other African countries, surpass the returns from South Africa. Hence the dilemma—which to sell if at all? The growing but threatened African holding or Gold-laden South African interests?

Even then, this question is further com-

International Banks And South Africa

*A Correspondent

Since March, after the launching of this year's South African budget described by the nation's Financial Mail as one that "will go a long way towards restoring confidence in South Africa's economic policies. . . ."¹ the storm that engulfed on Foreign Banks in the apartheid territory late last year, appears again to be brewing. Like last year, South Africa has again called on these banks to contribute, like it or not, to her ever increasing defence expenditure—a call which last year precipitated the end of year storm. Apparently to make matters worse last year's mandatory 10 per cent of investment contribution has been increased to 15 per cent for the current year. So, no doubt, the foreign banks equally expect increased hue and cry from the rest of the world.

In 1976, when budgeted defence spending went up by 40 per cent, overall budget deficit clocked R2,356m which was planned to be financed mostly from within as external taps were running dry because of apartheid. R1,285m was to be got from Loans (R175m from abroad) and R120m from special defence bonds to be issued. As a result by the end of the year domestic credit expanded by 19 and 5 per cent in the first and second halves respectively.

In the new financial year, defence has gone up again by 21.3 per cent to record R1,654m second only to South African Mint budgeted expenditure of R3,119m. Although the budget generally was deflationary, envisaged deficit, excluding redemptions, still stood at R1,088m and like before, financial houses are once again to contribute. All things being equal they will invest R760m in Government bonds in line with the new directive. R532m maturing stocks are to be reinvested while the money market will be flooded with R500m new issues. In addition,

R80m defence bonds and R160m National defence saving bonds will all help to close the gap expected to exist after increased revenue from changed fiscal policies have come on stream.

As for the Banks, taking up some of these bonds in line with government wishes does not appear to be the problem. The approximately fifty banks in the country have enough liquid cash to throw around; banks jointly to high level of interest which makes most commercial borrowing unprofitable for borrowers and the tight rein the Government continues to place on credit business (last year it was 0.5 per cent



Racist Premier John Vorster and Austrian President Rudolf Kirchschläger during a recent call on the latter.



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plagued by political pressures from non-African quarters. Last year, after Barclays National's Mr. Bob Aldworth handed over the R10m for Barclays share of 1976 bonds, its London parent company faced a load of questions and angry demands. Barclays International's Mr. Frank Golling, after an immediate summons to the foreign office, assured the public the South African action would not be repeated. Now that the South African government is asking for more, one wonders what he will do next to live up to this pledge.

One expert speculation is that after the public outcry over the Barclays involvement, majority South African shareholding might be demanded by Vorster and Co. Limited—a policy earlier intended to materialise over nine years. If this happens, then the Banks will be saved a lot of trouble. But are we to believe that South Africa can risk this in the mix of increasing demand for foreign loan and connection? Well, your guess is as good as mine.

However, so far the English-speaking Afri-

can states in which these foreign banks have holdings, are yet to be real crossed to the point of asking these big banks (yes Barclays, Standard and Grindlays are big here too) to pack and go. Admittedly, the economic benefit derived from their continued stay still very much outweigh the political considerations and commitments but for how long can economic commonsense stand the political pressure especially in the mix of today's Africanisation policies?

Hence, in the final analysis, the choice still lies with the foreign banks. They can either work out a formula for themselves between now and when either Vorster or African States come in to ask them to surrender or deliberately wait for either governments to act while in the interim getting the best milk from both cows at the same time. Still a third alternative is to do nothing but hope that before the 'do or die' point, the issue of apartheid will be settled amicably. I must add, however, that this will be optimism of the highest order and the banks should know it.

bewildering juggle with meanings, he makes us to understand that the same writer whom he accused of allowing himself to be confined by society is an escapist, worse than the Hardy Chasean marketer. In thrillers whose genre offers "relief, all too transient relief, from the burden of consciousness, from the knowledge of living, struggling, and suffering". He adds: "Like tranquilisers they take our minds away from the crushing weight of responsibility which each man has to assume for his own life and for the collective life of the community." I would not only say that this is an overstatement. It is an egregious blow, beneath the belt, which no serious African writer (Because we were talking about the serious African writers) deserves. Is it the African writer who deals with the rampant corruption, civil strife, the liberation struggles, the ineptitude of the waning elites, which Osofisan puts in the same soup as Hardy Chase? What constitutes the escapist essence in their works? Or is it simply that any writer whose writings do not affect a programmatic stance must necessarily carry the label of escapist? For that matter, should commitment necessarily become programmatic before it can win the accolade which it more than deserves by being able to identify essential social forces, the human equation in them and the possibilities deriving from these? Or, should we judge writers no more against their understanding of human beings as they are mauled, frightened, sublimated, or desublimated in their interaction in a world of conflict? What kind of vision (different from prophecy) must a writer project to escape the cheap Hardy Chasean tag?

Unadvisedly, Osofisan castigates the African writer for succumbing to "that subliminal quality of social irresponsibility which is the hallmark of all literature of escapism." According to him, though "the writers will deny this . . . we know that most of our creations so far are nothing but a literature of escapism even if only in their patent refusal to deal with existing reality. . . . in also the naked paucity of their social vision." These jeremiad claims deserve to be tested under fire. First of all, what is meant by a "patent refusal to deal with existing reality"? It would seem that by this Osofisan means no more than that the writer "has been behaving like the anthropologist whose sole interest is in its sarcophagus"—the past. He fails to point out that the tendency in African literature to reach back into the past is a trend, not a tradition, that has almost completely fizzled out. And for that matter, only a few of those writers who philandered with a primal source seem to have allowed themselves to be permanently fixated in their stance. Achebe, the man who best epitomizes the group, strides two trends; the backward gaze and the contemporary concern with self-examination. In the hands of Achebe, and most African novelists, the backward gaze, a historical necessity smarted by the denigration of Africa and Africans by the west, has since given way to a concern with Here and Now. So much so that a noted African writer, Elchi Amadi has expressed disgust at the prevalence of creative writing dealing with contemporary issues. Amadi even went as far as to claim that "the more politically or socially committed a writer is the worse his writings become." This because he could not tell where art ends and journalism begins. "The pity, and my excuse for this rejoinder, is that Osofisan is not against "social commitment" so that Elchi Amadi's holy mantle does not fit his shoulders. Or is it that distaste for social commitment lurks behind his profession of commitment? If

LITERARY SCENE

Criticism as Homicide

A reply to Femi Osofisan's LITERACY AS SUICIDE

*Odia Ofeimun

To suggest that an ideal situation can exist in which literature or art in general does not form part of the crisis in a crisis-ridden society amounts to a pious gaming for a minimal philosophy of art that, at best, defines art as some form of reality which can be set against the materiality of existing society. To go on and add that it is the role of the artist, as prophet to "map out the visionary paths of tomorrow and hence restore our faith in life" is to succumb to a fatuous contradiction. For, how can an artist function as a visionary (different from being a prophet) in a society riven with conflicts of interest without holding forth for one side against another, delivery and being delivered, defining and being defined and to that extent implicated in a social crisis? Or, to put in another way, how is an artist whose fate is implacably situated within the experience of his fellowmen, an artist who chooses to suffer for or with his own people, be excused the place he earns by his stance in the crisis of his society?

Femi Osofisan in LITERACY AS SUICIDE (Afriscopie Vol. 7 No. 1 January, 1977) seemed to believe in the possibility that art can escape being part of a historical crisis. For him, "the artist is supposed to define society; he has accepted instead nowadays to be confined by it" in tune with a future which extends itself like a promise but will be born "only out of the lucid and sincere confrontation with History as it is daily created and experienced." He does not make it clear how a confrontation with History can preclude freedom unconfined by society; as if the writer can express a viable position that is not rooted in, or progressing from, existing social relations.

Within the ambit of committed literature towards which Femi Osofisan is ostensibly inclined I do not see what sense it makes to say a writer can be unconfined by society. To the extent that his vision positive or

negative, derives from teasing out and streamlining possibilities within a given social framework, to that extent is the writer confined. This is a fact which all committed artists must face. In fact, it is not only the committed artist. Whether an artist opts for silence, deals in metaphysics, shows concern or unconcern about history, he is ineluctably part of the crisis of his time. To see him otherwise as a lark in the sky "soiled by the mud of human plodding or to see him as a happy-go-lucky trobadour who must forever churn out optimistic vignettes to restore (or destroy) our faith in life is to overconfine his role.

Pointing out as I do that writer is necessarily confined by his society is not the same thing as saying that he cannot problematize in order to transcend the existing order (malaise). It is simply to repudiate the vulgar historicism which too easily over-takes and contradicts commitment to social relevance in literature. And which, in literary criticism, assumes the monstrous posture of godly, in no way grounded on the terra firma of objective social practice. Specific to literary criticism: this historicism, because it does not relate the things in people's heads to their objective social base flails about in the air, in the name of an indeterminate (undefined) future or "Coming." Understandably, it takes the way of all jeremiads, vilifying, castigating and bracketizing a good thing for the liver but an antidote to literary (social) insight. This is my quarrel with Osofisan's LITERACY AS SUICIDE. To wit: He puts almost all African writers under one rubric, without actually pinpointing which of their works (and how they) fall within his brackets. He therefore succeeded in attracting attention to his sense of making the parts represent the whole. No clearer showing of this approach could be harsher than his attempt to propose that African writers in essence, if not in intention, are poor proteges of Hardy Chase. In a very

not, why has he chosen to graft a sarcophagal mood on works as freshly contemporaneous as Chinua Achebe's *A Man of The People*, Kweyi Armah's novels, Soyinka's novels, Munonye's *A Dancer Of Fortune*, Kole Omosoto's *The Scales and Sacrifice*, not to talk of the stream of plays, poems, and novels on contemporary reality from a burgeoning generation. For one thing, I don't know by what measure Sembene Ousmane's beautiful *Xala* qualifies for Osofisan's eulogies and not Kweyi Armah's *Fragments* if our concern is their concern for the present as opposed to the "sarcophagal." Frankly, our critic impresses me as a warrior flexing his muscles at enemies who have dropped their battle kits and are hoeing the earth away from disputed territory.

The Problem Of Direction

Perhaps, the major thrust of his lance is supposed to counteract the despairing note of much African writing, as well as restate the need for a direction away from the dastardly disposition of our politicians and pseudo-ideologist. If I am right in thinking so, then it must mean that Osofisan's quarrel is with the ineffectiveness of the scribes of our time as social transformers (Quite debatable as I shall soon show). It must mean that he is riled by the effete punches traded upon the governing elite outside the rigours of a determinate ideology. Anyhow, I must say that it does art a world of good that our writers have not degenerated to the point of using the verbiage of political pamphletizing (except for the Oba Egbunai in order to indicate new directions away from the horrific scenes they describe. All the same, I agree that their treatment of common people those whom they do not regard as crucial to the immediate moment of historical decision is a bit disappointing, leaving us bereft of signs of a positive "Coming." Agreed even where the common people are given worthwhile attention, they are seen no more than as mere "passive waters on the shore or pitiful comedians on the road" as Ngugi Wa Thiong'o has pointed out with regards to Wole Soyinka's works. And of course it is unarguable that the language used by these writers, whether it is the elevated diction of Wole Soyinka or the proverb-suffused but very accessible language of Achebe's has certain dysfunctional attributes as Femi Osofisan has pointed out. But all these do not make these writers out as escapist. In my opinion, it merely shows where, among the constellations of forces in society, they are reaching for help. Very evident, while they care for the masses, they repose some admittedly incongruous confidence in members of their own class, the elite, from whose messianic formation would surface to uplift the masses. Thus they tend to over-celebrate the inept Odili Samalusi (*A Man Of People*) and luckless Ofeiyi (*Season Of Anomy*). The failure of these individuals then becomes the failure of the society. But is this not a realistic portrayal of a dog society wogged by its elitist tail?

Because my answer to this question is in the affirmative, I make bold to disagree with Osofisan's contention that "the writer cannot afford merely to be faithful to history, to mirror the conditions of our life as they are." Even if this is the singular enterprise of the creative artist, it is of monumental service if it is well done. In fact, such faithfulness to history does unmake and demystify the "ideals of the marketplace" and to a Solzhenitsyn. In the confusion of our contemporary world, it is a feat to be able to bare

the heart of things and open people's eyes to the lies used as protective coverings by and for the naked Emperor. It is a feat, moreover which requires courage. To be able to write knowing that the jaws of detention camps are yawning is something for which many Africans deserve some pat on the back. Nor is it only for this that they deserve consideration. I would say that they have been more effective than they themselves have dared to claim. Remember? T. M. Aluko's Chief *The Honourable Minister* was banned in Banda's Malawi. Chinua Achebe's *A Man Of People* and Kweyi Armah's *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* may have suffered the same fate if they had been published in 1963—long before the coups in Nigeria and Ghana. I don't know what stronger or more positive element an art work can have than its capacity to strike fear in the heart of those against whom it is directed. To take Armah again, Chinua Achebe in "Morning yet on Creation Day" quarrelled with his overt concern for the "human Condition." A concern for the human condition cannot be called escapist even if one detects despair in its entrails. Despair or no despair I think it is healthier to reach by defaults than pyrrhic victories which reflect the will from the path of resilience by fanning a fatuous accommodation of euphoria. To my mind it would be the greatest act of fraudulence for any writer to pretend that our struggle is easy. It is not and when our writers point out the odds we ought to reason with them. An artist can only go so far and no further. . . .

The rest become straight-forward political task. Maybe it is the lack of faith in the primacy of political solutions which leads Osofisan to demand easy victories from our writers. Any how, if African writers are not read, as Osofisan informs us, it is not because they are escapist, it is because they cram the canvas full of Guernicass. They present realist in its star-scatteringness. Those who seek escape from the reality around them will of course find solace in African Chascan immateriality. Thus if African writers are not read, it is for the same reason that readers of Denise Robins do not rush to James Baldwin, Richard Wright, Solzhenitsyn, Ignazio Silone (whom they may not have heard of) or Norman Mailer. It is for the same reason that many of us crammed our heads with Bertha M. Clay before meeting John Steinbeck or Joseph Conrad. If Osofisan had conceded these facts he would not have had to belabour the platitude that the commodity status which works of art have acquired in our century predetermines whom they reach. He would not have had to overcorrelate our predilections for Chase with "our alienated mentalities" which prefer goods "imported from the 'civilized' countries of the West" to our own. Nor would he have had to state that "we buy our books just as we buy our lace cloths and radio sets with an instinctive avoidance of home-made labels, with immediate distinction for the superficially attractive." The question that should be asked is why Hardy Chase and not Alan Silitoe? Put in another way, how is Osofisan to explain the raving success of Naiwu Osahon's *Sex Is A Nigger* as opposed to the lukewarm reception of his obviously more serious minded novel.

KOLERA KOLE!

I am saying that the hanker for Denise Robins or Chase parallels the demand for *Sex Is A Nigger*. To explain it simplistically as a reflex induced by our alienated (colonial)

mentality is to mystify the problem. So that if Meja Nwagiri's *Kill Me Quick* or Nkem Nwankwo's *My Merciless* is *Bigger Than Yours* are not as popular as the others it is not so much a fault in the writer. Osofisan seems to suggest when he says that "The Nigerian scribes his awareness of the proportions of an unprofound universalism." (It happens that what is an "unprofound universalism" to Osofisan, an idea derives from juxtaposing Mercedes Ousmane Sembene Ousmane's *Xala*—an unflinching confrontation with evil—is to a pro-patriotic particularism, based not on a class perspective as in *Xala* but on the specificity of historical conjuncture, (according to the writer's viewpoint) that no determinate class is absolutely responsible for. Hence its peculiar conclusion). Nor do I take the opportunity to stand and blame the audience for not turning on our home-made writers. The problem is resolved by considering that the predilection for cushions, soft pads, rosy caresses is endemic in all men whether in Africa or Europe. The aversion for unproblematic literature could be explained by the man's human desire to escape pain—especially a world so horribly traumatized. But it is not the business of the serious writer to point to this human weakness. Hence, much as I agree that there is need to cultivate a healthier reading public I think it unwise to gaming for artistic suicide when a writer begins to water down his personality and style, scrambling for the name of reaching a type audience in the name of reaching the people. (This is one thing I have against "Fella's Choice," a thriller by Kole Omosoto. I think it is unbefitting of the author to "Sacrifice" and "The Combat.")

As a last word, I would like to respond to the suggestion that Hardy Chase, being a foreign writer, does more damage to our culture than Naiwu Osahon's *Sex Is A Nigger*. I am realistic enough to see that our century of speed, easy-does-it, cocaine, and hot cinema, we cannot stop our gaze from reading lighthearted fiction, romances or home-spun, even if, as I agree with Osofisan, we must cut our dependence on the West. I only need to add that for a writer when it does not sacrifice controversy for public relations is a good thing. It can still turn homicidal, snuffing out the buds of promise a "Coming."

The Long Illness of Ex-Chief Kiti

Author: Micere Mugo

Publishers: East African Literature Bureau, Nairobi, 1976

Reviewer: Chris Wanjala, University of Nairobi.

When literary critics write literature they often run the danger of oversimplification issues, pushing their thesis a little too far, sermonizing. This is Micere Githae Mugo's problem in her new book of plays *The Long Illness of Ex-Chief Kiti*. She introduces the plays herself and identifies her ob-

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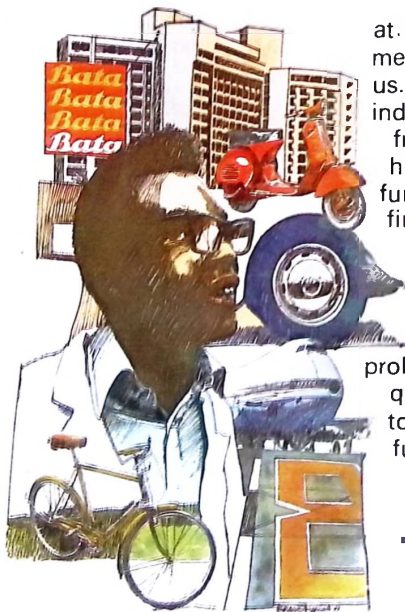


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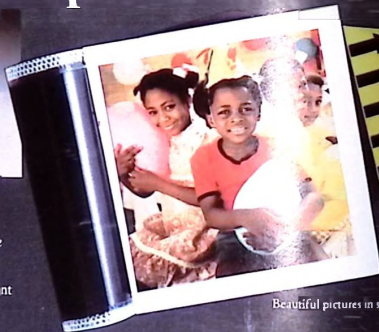
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weakness as a playwright; she owns that the script of "The Long Illness of Ex-Chief Kiti" depends rather too elaborately on stage directions which leave very little to the producer and the reader. To my mind the directions acquire novelistic traits in their minuteness of detail. In the introduction to the play Dr. Mugo withdraws from her own play and gives it a severe critique; but it is in doing so that she flogs the theme of the Mau Mau War, leaving the play very little chance to speak for itself.

The two plays in the book, "The Long Illness of Ex-Chief Kiti" and "Disillusioned," make an excellent character study and therefore good reading. The plays were previously presented as a Master's thesis by Dr. Mugo at New Brunswick, in Canada. Her subject matter is not new to readers of Chinua Achebe and Ngugi Wa Thiong'o. Her characterization in "The Long Illness of Ex-Chief Kiti" is very much in line with that of Achebe in *Things Fall Apart*, in that Ex-Chief Kiti, the protagonist is like Okonkwo, caught in the complexity of change and questions the new ways in his society. In him we get the popular argument, by Kenyan writers who are inspired by the Emergency—that the African was spiritually maimed by the Emergency. Placed in the context of the Emergency, Ex-Chief Kiti is something of a collaborator who finds himself at variance with his own militant children who have a sharper conceptualization of the white man as an enemy. The Long Illness of Ex-Chief Kiti is a psychological illness. It reveals Ex-Chief Kiti as a pathetic creature of the Mau Mau War. He is two historical figures in one; he was once a collaborator of, and then a freedom fighter against colonialism.

For his role as a collaborator, he is hated by his children. This makes him act like a trapped angling lion, in the sense that knowing that he is held in contempt by his eldest son, he does not experience himself as the sole head of his homestead. This position of his reminds the reader of the Njotoh-Boro relationship in Ngugi's *Weep Not Child*. Mata is for Boro what Ex-Chief Kiti is for Njotoh. The young people break with their parents as they leave the forest (where they have been fighting the white man) and move in the city where they will start a new wave of urban politics against the white man. Again, Micere raises the same point of cultural alienation that Ngugi treated to in the 'sixties in *The River Between*, *Weep Not Child*, and *The Black Hermit*.

Historically "The Long Illness of Ex-Chief Kiti" and "Disillusioned" move us into the late "fifties and the early sixties" when nationalism was an important question in literature. In "Disillusioned," she reveals the colour prejudices, and political oppression that existed behind the veils of white nuns, sisters and mothers, who came to work in East African mission centres. This is an issue that East African writers have not treated exhaustively. Surgiving with their *tabula rasa* approach to the African, the nuns in Mugo's play, "Disillusioned," hold every self-asserting African suspect. Sister Immaculate, an African nun who has just returned from France, enjoys a frankness of mind, and seeks to unveil racist views behind the religious mask. Her white superiors see her questioning stance as a form of derangement which must be suppressed. She is forced to leave the nunnery. But she is the very victor in the struggle and from what those who sympathize with her principled and militant stand say, she is the very purveyor of new ideas that will change the image of the African.

The two plays are an addition to what has been written on culture conflict and the destructive presence of the white man in East Africa. "The Long Illness of Ex-Chief Kiti" treats the theme of betrayal, and the lack of self-knowledge amongst black people who join colonial ranks against their own.

The betrayers and collaborators act as a buffer group between Africans and their colonizers. In the play, however, the role of old people is significant. The elders show that there was something dignified in the Africans before the white man arrived. They carry the remaining sanity in the land, when the hot-headed youth crush their head against the walls of modernity and Westernism.

The use of elders in literature is not a novelty peculiar to Micere Mugo, Achebe and Ngugi do use elders, too. The aged help to bring the question of social change clearly, and in their pathos vis-a-vis modernity, we see that somehow, social change must be accepted only fools fail to see change as inevitable.

Micere Githae Mugo etches a changing homestead by bringing children to the stage. The homestead of Ex-Chief Kiti is a tradi-

tional one, but it is open to dramatic changes. Children bring a new life to the homestead from the school. They are the agents of cultural synthesis. If you like, in the sense that they open to new cultures which shock the old. There is a coherence in activities, such as playing, work, and even learning, from which the children benefit whilst at home. Reading and writing are among other new activities that are brought to the homestead, and no doubt the aged benefit from it. Ex-Chief benefits from his child's education when the child helps him to write a letter to his son in the city.

But the thesis that Ex-Chief Kiti is a spiritually maimed character is rather overdone by the author. One would have liked to see Kiti's illness evolve of its own accord. However, obsessed with the idea that was leave ugly scars, and "devastating psychological damages," the play overlays the psychological malady of Kiti. There is very little memory in the play to show that Kiti ever went to the war; the much we know is that he betrays his own son to colonial forces. His anguish is therefore phoney, at most, and it comes from the author's conscious of Mau Mau War as a backcloth to the play.

Osagyefo, Kwame Nkrumah

*P. F. Wilmot

Africa

land of majestic and unscalable mountains
of foam-maddened rivers without depth
of rock-scoured and bottomless precipices
of monumental and impenetrable forests
land of Ben Barka Lumumba Mounie
of Mondlane Nasser Nkrumah
of Cabral Muhammed Nguabi

Africa land of riches without measure

of gold diamonds uranium
of cobalt oil vanadium
of copper tantalite beryllium
land of poverty and disillusion
of hunger terror grief
barren land of waste and death
desolated by droughts and floods and build-
ders

Osagyefo, Kwame Nkrumah
save the riches of Africa for its own children

Africa

land of the colourful and abandoned multi-
tudes
who explode into the airless streets
in search of bread
in the factory of the European
a worker dies in the morning
crushed by the machine of Europe
making a profit for Europe
while outside the shut gates
the pot-bellied comprador having his cut
warms his hands with his breath
in the chillness of his air-conditioned Bonz
in the evening
a woman puts henna in her hair
to earn a new maxi and children's cot
from the Levantine in tight shorts
who hands stacks of crisp dollar bills
to the sleek acolytes of oxbridge who preach
the stale wisdom of gilded toms
Osagyefo, Kwame Nkrumah
save the children of Africa

Africa

land of Mobutu
killer of Lumumba and Mulele
land of Hassan

killer of Ben Barka

land of Amin Banda Bokassa
of Bongo Houphouet-Boigny Senghor
of Nuremy Sadat Ould Daddah
of Mencham (?) Vorster (?)

Ramsgolm (?) (?) (?)

land of bloated fieldmarshalls
of strutting generals and well-fed life-presi-
dents
of hyenas and terse flies
of treachery and the Yankee dollar

You

who plunge from the scaffold of ambition
into cynicism and the sweet life
who retreat into the exquisite luxuries
of villas in Spain and sterling accounts
who seek salvation
in the voluptuous bodies of Irish Jewesses
who warm your pleasures
in the Union Jack and the Stars and Stripes
and dance to the jingles of the stock exchange
you
the fair-born of Africa
the gigolos of Europe
you await unknowing
the strike of lightning and flares of rockets
Kwame Nkrumah, Osagyefo
save the land of Africa from these children of

Africa

who wait in the pantries of the chancelleries
of Europe



The late Dr. Kwame Nkrumah.



Dr. Aboubakar Diaby Ouattara: Ivory Coast-born first Executive Secretary of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

'ECOWAS IS MY DREAM COME TRUE'

*Saka Fadairo

When a banking colleague once described him as a "Savanah Man" many people probably did not agree with that apt description which is practically what the first Executive Secretary-General of the Economic Community of West African States, Dr. Aboubakar Diaby Ouattara is; simple, unassuming and easily accessible. Recently, the smartly dressed Ivory Coast-born ECOWAS boss granted an interview to Afriscope's Saka Fadairo in his Lagos office. Excerpts from their conversation:

Afriscope: As a former banking executive who now finds himself heading an Organisation as complex as ECOWAS what has been your experience since you assumed office last January?

Dr. Ouattara: I have been very busy making contacts with member countries, Organisations and financial institutions. I have been trying to acquaint myself with the various aspects of ECOWAS, setting up the task force; in fact, establishing operational organisation to get ECOWAS started. The task force comprising four countries, Togo, Nigeria, Ghana and Guinea has done a marvellous job and the agenda for the Ministerial Council in July is almost ready, just three months after I assumed duty.

Afriscope: 15 years is the period given your Organisation to successfully take off. Would you say that its speed since May 28, 1975 when it came into existence is anything enviable?

Dr. Ouattara: It is true that some people feel that things have not been happening as they should with ECOWAS, but this is because they do not know the amount of activities that are going on behind the screen. Very soon much will be known about it. Look at the enthusiasm with which the protocols were signed in Lome by member countries. This is an indication that ECOWAS members still have a lot of confidence in the Organisation and they know what work we have done so far.

Afriscope: The death of East African Community (EAC) is a sad loss. With the disintegration of the EAC what lessons have you learnt from its demise?

Dr. Ouattara: It is not only from the painful collapse of the EAC that we have learnt, we have also benefitted from the experience of European Economic Community (EEC) and other similar organisations and this is reflected not only in the drafting of the Treaty of ECOWAS but also in the spirit of working it. The treaty provides for proper balance, equal distribution of amenities, satisfactory equilibrium etc. Some of the problems of EAC arose out of imbalance and disequilibrium between the member states. However, we know that we shall need a lot of cooperation and tolerance too.

Afriscope: The problems confronting ECOWAS are formidable. These include similarity of agricultural production, difference in natural endowments, ideological differences and language barriers. How do you intend to cope with these problems?

Dr. Ouattara: Yes, once you have problems and you are aware of them you are already solving them. We are aware of our differences. But then these differences may not be as apparent as people may think after all. Remember we have a lot of things in common as Africans—historically, politically, culturally etc. These common things are to be emphasised rather than the differences. Another thing is the recognition of the sovereignty of each state. I believe that if we give consideration to the beneficial aspects and we are sensitive to our diversities, our problems are not insurmountable.

Afriscope: Some pessimists see ECOWAS as just another ambitious economic co-operation which will fizzle out like its predecessors. What can the sub-region do to prove such people wrong?

Dr. Ouattara: The best way to quieten such pessimists is to get the community going and I am happy that member countries are fully

committed. This is a crucial element of success and I have the assurance of all members that they are ready to make a sacrifice on behalf of the community.

Afriscope: But you seem to have underestimated the role of external forces. How do you see the role of multinationals in ECOWAS for instance?


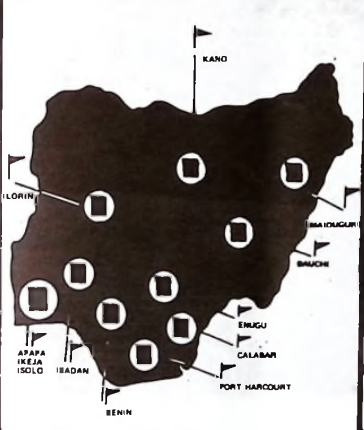













Dr. Ouattara: I agree that multinationals are very difficult to control. But then this depends again on how you approach the issue. If you present the Community as a virile, viable economic entity based on gentlemen's agreement, I am sure multinationals will be ready to do honest business with it. I am not ruling out the fact that some of them may be up to some fast tricks sometimes, but majority of them are law-abiding and good citizens. So the role of multinationals in bringing expertise, organisation, capital etc. may be constructive rather than destructive.

Afriscope: In what aspects are your ideas a West African Common Market which you thought of in your university days similar with the present ECOWAS and where do they differ?

Dr. Ouattara: There is no disagreement between what I proposed then and what ECOWAS has now turned out to be. In fact this is why I am very happy to work because I see ECOWAS as a dream that has come to reality. I have always held the view that language barrier should not constitute an obstacle to economic cooperation among West African states and this is what ECOWAS has achieved. I would, however, want to see the 16 member countries to rally round ECOWAS as it is a major milestone in African history in regional cooperation. It is Africa's hope for economic development and therefore all Africans must support this enterprise. It is a total support that is needed, not only political leaders and elite class but total commitment from every citizen for economic development of our continent.

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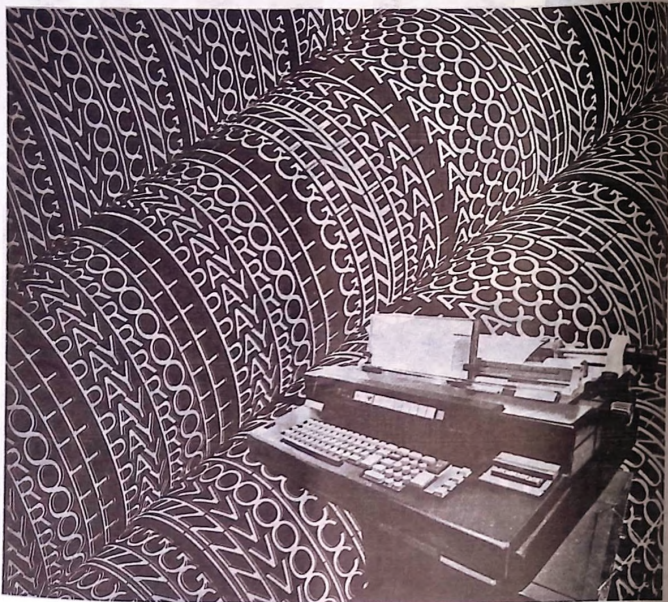
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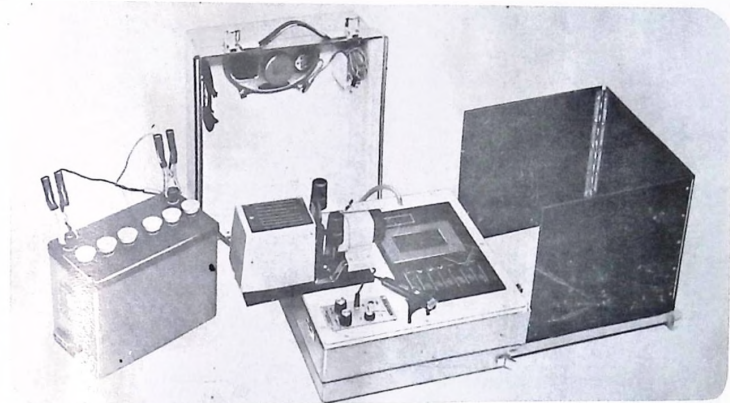
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PRODUCT NEWS:

AUDIO VISUAL AID

One of the newest in the field of Audio Visual Teaching aid has just surfaced in Africa. The remarkable PHOTOVISION ISLANDER, this unit consists of a Cassette Player, an Amplifier and a projector with accompanying Screen. Usable in both Rural and Urban areas, because it runs on 12-14 volts; this aid has an address system and can be used in daylight under any weather condition. According to Photovision slide films Ltd, educational programmes can be designed to meet local needs.

CO2 JET FREEZER

Industrial Gases (Nigeria) Ltd., now has in stock a Carbon dioxide jet freezer which makes regular sized pellets of DRY ice. Weighing approximately 30 gm, the ice pellets are frozen at -78.5°C at atmospheric pressure and should be of immense benefit in Hospital—for blood and tissue banks and serum preservation. They can also act as refrigerants in refrigerators at home during power failures.



WIND DRIVEN GENERATOR

Australia's Davey Dunlite recently exhibited its wind-driven generator here in Lagos. With maximum continuous output of 2KW, this model of generator uses neither petrol nor diesel depending only on wind velocity which of course, means it can not be used in wind-free areas. Basically too, says DUNLITE, this generator is an alternator more suitable for operation on DC than AC. All the same, where applicable, this model is the surest way of beating present operation costs in other models.

COMMERCIAL AND TECHNICAL REVIEW

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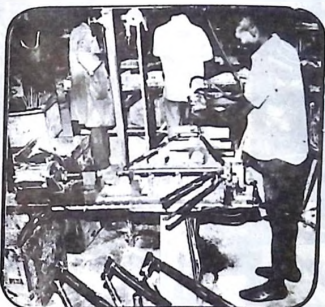


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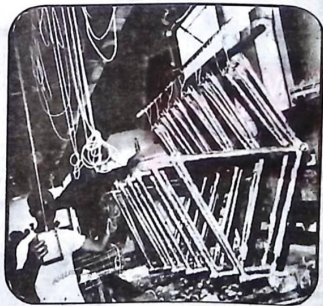
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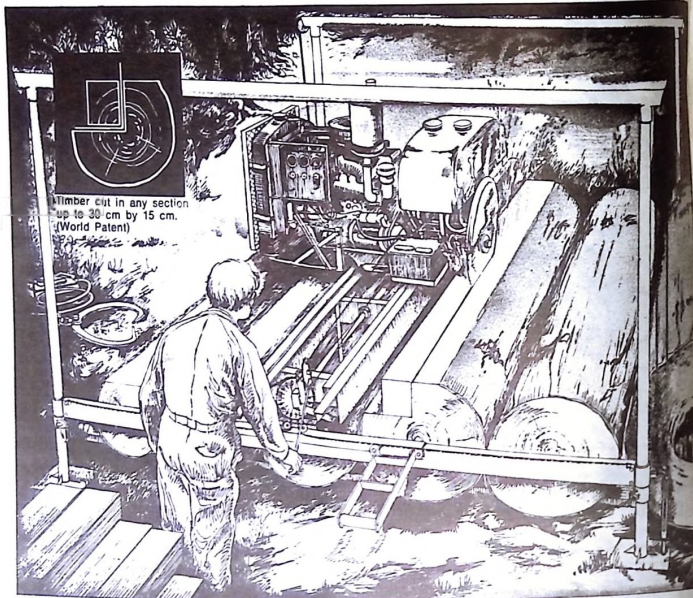
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COMMERCIAL AND TECHNICAL REVIEW

INDUSTRY AND TECHNOLOGY: FOCUS:

MACQUARRIE'S PORTABLE SAWMILL

The basic motive behind this invention is cost reduction. It saves cost of transporting timber from bush to town for sawing and reduces waste of timber by processing on the spot, partly bad timber which would have been left behind in the conventional transport-to-town system.

Trade-marked 'FORESTMIL' this portable and easily transportable sawmill is powered either by a 41 HP Volkswagen Engine or 65 HP Nissan diesel engine and fitted with a safety shut-down device which makes the engine to stop automatically if there is lack of water.

The Mill proper consists of a reduction gearbox having a vertical and horizontal output shaft both of which have inserted teeth made of hard steel. An electric

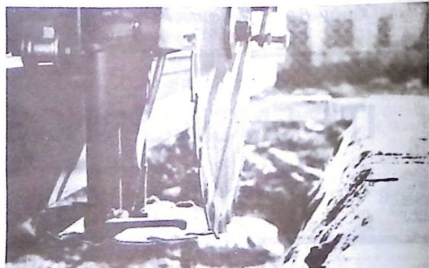
sharpener sharpens the replaceable teeth while a water tank near the blades supplies water for cooling and friction reduction as the blades cut along the raw timber.

Adjustment for desired sizes of cut timber is provided by a corner post which can be lowered to any level required as per graduation situated at the bottom of the engine. For the depth of the cut timber a rule graduated in metric units is also attached.

The standard 'Forestmil' can cut a section of timber up to 30cm x 15cm x 5.5m although special devices can be provided for cutting longer logs. The cutting speed is 16m per minute while the return speed is

22m per minute.

One special feature of this invention is its clutch, which, unlike the conventional ones, can prevent transfer of overload to the engine any time this unavoidable happens. Finally after cutting the timber the cable from which the blades are suspended, returns the machine along the road (a horizontal metal work along which machine moves) and at the same time raises the cut timber from the Log assisted by an idler roller situated at the end rail. In the end, the 'Forestmil' represents a 'big plus' for timber industry especially here in tropical Africa.



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COMMERCIAL AND TECHNICAL REVIEW

AUSTRALIAN TRADE EXHIBITION

From March 7 to 11th this year, Australia's major industries organised their first major display in West Africa at the Lagos State Cultural Centre. Many well-known Australian names made up mainly of companies in search of agents in Nigeria seized the opportunity to exhibit their mastery in a cordial atmosphere.

From the first day, after Nigeria's Trade Commissioner Major-General Shwua declared the show open, attendance was more than impressive as most of the products exhibited tallied well with Nigeria's economic aspirations. Thanks to the organising ability of the resident Australian Trade Commissioner here in Lagos. Even people from Ghana came in for the 5-day show.

Major attraction was the silent, award winning domestic fan displayed by Mistral SUNRAY COMPANY. The fan employs a new concept in air movement and has a totally enclosed Motor and fan blade in a modern and portable but light weight housing for safety sake. The presence of many others like the much talked about portable Sawmill, dairy plants, Agricultural implements and machines, only show the amount of home-work done by the organisers. In fact, it is gratifying to note that a special information publication was handed out from the office of the Trade Commissioner long before the show. I believe this is the only display that has surpassed last year's Swedish exhibition at the same venue.

NIVEN TIMBER DRYING SYSTEM

A development that cannot be blinked these days, even in developing countries, is the relationship between the Humidity content of Timber and its many uses. For example, Timber meant for Cabinet works will hardly stand the test of time if it contains more than its fair share of Humidity. The same with those meant for other uses like Boat Building, General Construction and decking.

Niven drying system, one of the present timber drying systems in the world, reduces the moisture content of timber by employing the principle of heat transfer and circulation in the process of which wood wastes are beneficially utilised. Basically these chips and wood cuts are stored in SILOS and later transferred to a Boiler, which contains water. The heat generated from the burning chips heats the water to boiling point to produce steam that moistured air which is in turn transferred on to a control pipe work where the heat is distributed into different dryers for drying the Timber.

Stacks are placed by a special handling system. Also inside the dryer, control post.

In most cases, the dryers are divided into chambers called COMES inside which Timber for Temperature, Humidity and air circulation is attached to adjust these to required levels. However, a moisture content monitoring device can also be attached instead of a separate moisture meter. On the other hand, there are three drying processes and the choice of which to use depends on the type of Timber, local conditions, Capital

and other available facilities and return obtainable.

These include PRE-Drying; Air and KILN Drying Processes. Both the first and the last are most suitable for areas where wet conditions occur for an appreciable part of the year. In fact the KILN drying process will be uneconomical for those hardwoods which are 'Impermeable and collapse-susceptible' and must not be exposed above about 110°F continuously.

However, the question of which humidity moisture content and density is desirable for the many uses of different brands of Timber, C.J.T NIVEN PTY LTD has a comprehensive table for operators of the drying system.

FINANCE & COMMERCE:

NSU CHANGES NAME

Netherlands Shipping Union Group of Companies (NSU), an international union of diverse companies, has changed its name. The new name, NEDLLOYD GROUP, became necessary because of the group's increasing activity in Air transport, offshore drilling, Hotel management and a host of other business interests diverse from Shipping—the group's initial main business which today ranks among the largest privately owned Shipping Companies in the World.

As a result of the change, the SHIPPING division will now go by the name NEDLLOYD LINES operating 101 Cargo vessels, 3 Container Ships and one Roll-on/Roll-off Ship all having a total capacity of 1.4m tons of Cargo.

On the other hand, Holland Bulk Transport, another division of the group, will now change its name to Nedlloyd Bulk managing a fleet of 30 ships comprising 12 general purpose Carriers, 4 crude oil tankers; 4 product tankers, 7 chemical and 3 LPG/ammonia tankers.

The group's total labour force, as at December last year, stood at 17,274 out of which 7283 were at Sea working in offshore drilling interests (two modern drill ships which can drill in 1,000 and 2,000 ft. of water respectively); Smit International (a division World renown for ocean towing, Salvage and Supply of drilling installations) and in its shipping and bulk transport lines.

One of the diverse activities that brought about the name change, Air transport, consists of a fleet of three DC-10's; two DC-8's; three DC-9's; one F-28 and 17 Smaller Air craft.

LORRHO LOSES KENANA PROJECT

Lorrho has lost Kenana sugar company's management contract. At a shareholder's meeting held in May, Mr Abdul Rahman Abdullah, Sudanese Industry Minister, was appointed chairman and Mr. Mohammed el Bashir el Wagei, Managing Director, in a move which spelt the end of Lorrho's exclusive Control. And, because of its financial stake in the project, Kuwait is to appoint a deputy Managing Director. However, Alexander and Baldwin, a U.S. Consulting firm was retained to provide technical assistance to the Company.

The Kenana Sugar project, a proposed sugar estate with biggest world output, has continued to be re-estimated upwards since 1973 when feasibility study was completed. Present estimates put the cost at \$600m by early 1980s when it is expected to come on stream, in May's General meeting the company's Capital was increased from \$100m to \$160m—a move over which Kuwaiti partners have been dragging their feet.

Official sources indicate that Lorrho lost the Management Contract because of

dispute between Arab shareholders. Lorrho over the rising cost estimates was apparently a blockade to the firm of Arab fund. Even then, should the result in less delays in obtaining the poor Sudanese infrastructure and inflation will still remain two other causes of increase in cost estimates.

BRITISH TRADE MISSION TO NIGERIA

Between May 9th and 20th the British played hosts to a trade mission from Glasgow Chamber of Commerce. The mission was made up of representatives from varied industries. Mr. John McEwen representative of Ealing Beck Ltd of this said prior to their arrival "I plan to do as many Universities as possible" and believe our optical benches and optical systems should be highly acceptable in education marked at all levels as well as industry." Earlier on before the mission company had supplied optics and optical education equipment at the University of Benin and carrying out another order from Ahmadu Bello University.

Other companies represented in the trade mission include, G. Leavel Products Ltd—makers of mould-resistant surfaces; Renold's Group (power transmission and mechanical handling equipment); Atlas Hydraulic Loaders Ltd (Lorry Mounted Cranes) and Thomas Thompson Holdings Ltd—makers of a wide range of surgical dressings.



HOW ABOUT PRISON INMATES

*By Henry Atenaga

To assume that all humans coming to this world with one or two natural skills is tantamount to owing up to one's fate when it is called. People fall by the side and become social problems on a scale such talents are either abused or completely required avenue for recognition by the rest of our world. But then, any society that knows all hands must be on deck because it can pick up a required development momentum, must have to ensure that those subjects falling by the way side do not influence of external forces making constructive pose. This is why one wonders why Africa is not having second thoughts about its inmates.

As far back as 1972, Mr. Arthur Koestler in a bid to develop creative ability among bars in Britain, introduced a national competition which by last year attracted 7600 entries from British guinea. Of course, he is an individual and till date, the British Government has only encouraged this competition but then, in Africa today the roles must be swapped because we are in a hurry. It is not to say the creative development of our inmates can not and should not be undertaken by individuals if available, but without Government's active role and well-meant endeavours are destined to because of red tape, cost and other problems.

Hence this month's question: Why do African Governments create avenues for creative development of jailbirds, instead of teaching them skills? One bitter truth is that such skills push them to move on because they are rarely in line with a natural self and what's more, rarely are the skills the society rate high.