NIGERIA

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Model of a Colonial Failure

Stanley Diamond

with discussions by

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OCCASIONAL PAPER : 6 ACOA **$1.00**

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AMERICAN COMMITTEE ON AFRICA

New York 1967

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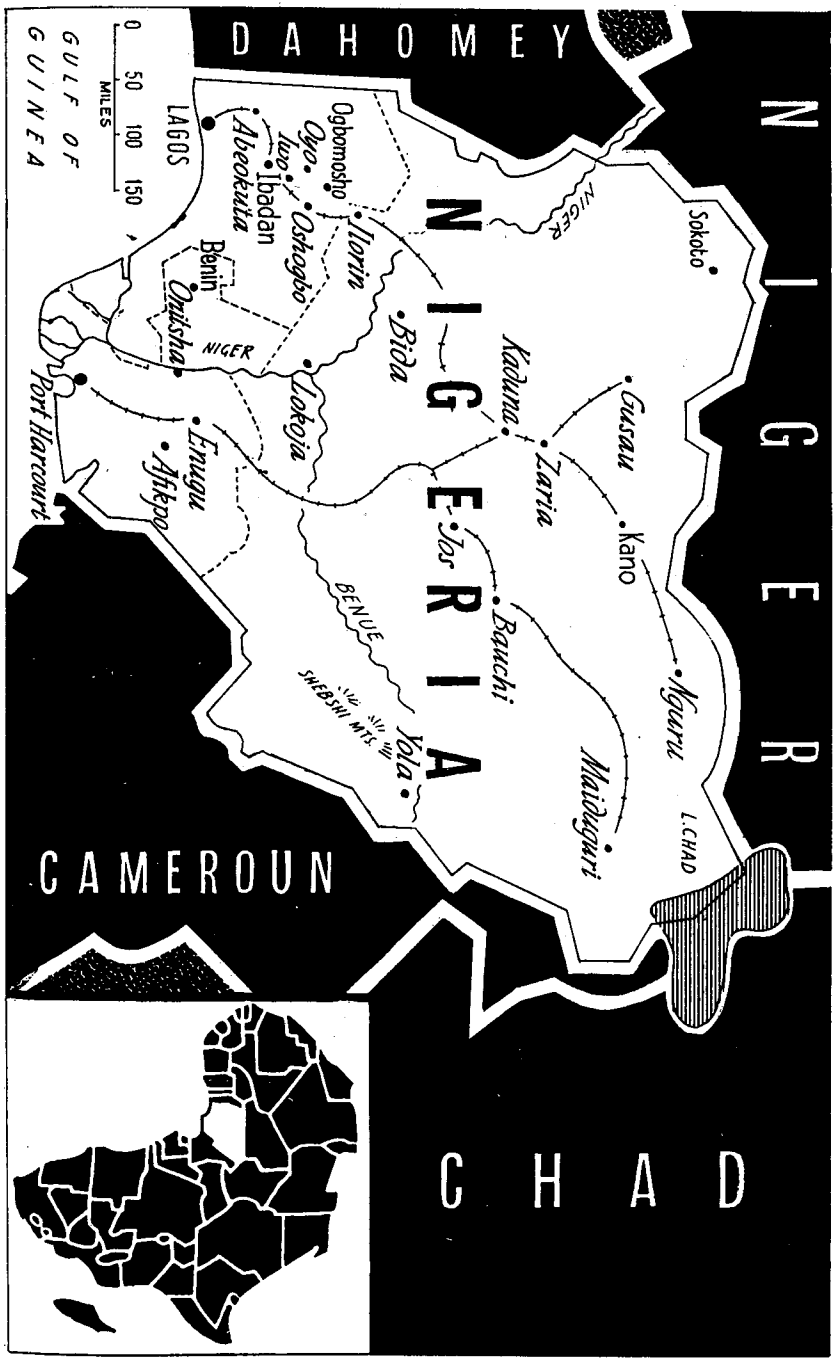

Map by John Bartholomew & Son,
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Introduction

"The Nigerian revolution has not yet occurred," wrote Stanley Diamond in November 1963, warning us to disregard the preponderance of soporific reports we were then receiving from observers of this model ex-colony.

It was fashionable, for the first five years or so of Nigeria's independent existence, for scholars, businessmen and public officials to journey to Nigeria, the most populous of new African nations, as if in pilgrimage to a, though more humble, nonetheless sincere African example of democracy in action. The application of federalist principles, the existence of three political parties (one too many, it was felt, but certainly better than one too few) provided the springboard for this optimistic viewpoint. Confirmation came by way of the firm anti-communist principles which governed Nigerian domestic and foreign policy, by the "pragmatic" approach of her national economic planners, and by the spirit of compromise which seemed to activate so many Nigerian politicians and interest groups. The doctrine of pluralism could hardly have found a more happy haven. One recalls, for example, the uncritical welcome given by such journals as **Foreign Affairs** to Prime Minister Balewa who wrote (in the October, 1962 issue): "A federal system of government is always full of problems and difficulties but so is democracy, because the art of persuasion is much more difficult than a dictatorship. . . ."

Throughout the literature of the period produced by American scholars there is a fairly constant complaint that there exists a gap between Nigerian

political theory and actual practice, but the blame is usually widely apportioned to all parties involved and in the end, the writer calls for greater efforts at cooperation or other similar empty exhortation.

These illusions, for that is what they were, seemd to gain strength when contrasted to the apparent flood of demagogy, fiscal irresponsibility, communism, cannibalism and tribalism our mass media reported from Ghana, the Congo and other areas apparently uninspired by our own political example.

Then suddenly, on a January, 1966 day of chaos and blood, the Nigerian illusion was shattered. The dead has not yet been buried before our press invoked "tribalism" and a too generous share of **esprit de coup** on the part of the Nigerian army to explain the tragedy. It was Ibo **vs** Hausa and damn the spirit of compromise. When, later in the summer of 1966, ethnic and linguistic rivalries were at last really harnessed to the other causes of the internal struggle, it seemed unlikely that many Americans would stop to analyze the deeper forces at work; even those educated Nigerians long accustomed to seeing beyond regional or ethnic peculiarities were caught in the storm of vengeance and recrimination.

The value of the articles reprinted here, then, lie in giving Americans a subtly detailed analysis of a fundamental Nigerian dynamic which culminated in the January coup and subsequent violence.

Dr. Diamond's principle contention—and he was, it seems, the only American scholar to grasp this reality—was that one must look beyond the legal framework or the practical difficulties of the Nigerian constitution and analyze the socio-economic forces at work. He hardly dwelt on "tribalism" as a significant dynamic, though he refers to the fact that tribal loyalties were involved in the national political struggle. Incidentally, there may be as many as 300 "tribes" in Nigeria, all of which but three or four are conveniently forgotten when "tribalism" is conjured up as the genie of Nigerian politics. It is also interesting to note that the dreadful massacres of Ibo by Northerners (not just Hauswa) **followed** the January rebellion by many months.

May we just add that our righteous tones of moral unctiouness which permits us to ascribe malevolent intent to all evidence of "tribalism" is both absurd as well as self-destructive. The world will be much poorer when all cultural alternatives save those acceptable to American and Russian suburbanites will be eliminated. We have already seen, for example, how West Africa's pidgin English so well caricatured in Joyce Cary's "Mister Johnson" has gradually led to the flowering of a literature in which Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka and John Pepper Clark are surely but the first blooms.

Similarly we may yet all profit from customs and traditions which we now take for barbarian.

* *

In reprinting these articles and letters we have chosen not to correct minor errors of facts or opinions. It is thus that the reader will be surprised to learn that the population of Nigeria was 39 million in 1962 (it was, of course, somewhere around 55 million according to the controversial census of 1963-64).

Some of the heads, however, have been changed. The review of Sir Ahmadu Bello's autobiography, for example, was originally titled "His Life Thus Far," a rather ominous title in view of his assassination a little more than two years later.

Much may seem to have occurred since January 1966: coups, riots, and a generous number of political assassination. Unfortunately, mayhem is no sign of development. The first coups, organized by field grade Eastern officers, was hurriedly housebroken by the new chief of state, Major-General J. T. U. Aguyi-Ironsi. Ironsi set an impossible task for himself: To satisfy the young radicals calling for a unitary state (he went as far as to place himself behind a unified civil service, thus threatening the Northern emirs' principal source of power and patronage), as well as his Northern military coleagues, if not those to whom they held ultimate loyalty. The Northern establishment, its political arm apparently destroyed, its southern allies dispersed and its leaders dead, was prepared to bring Nigeria down as a polity rather than loose its power. Ironsi hardly lasted six months The new chief of "state," 31-year-old Colonel Yakabu Gowon, rapidly undid the modest work of Ironsi by re-affirming the principles of federation. His assumption of power was marked by the first real "tribal" outburst since January. Politically, the killing of Ibos in the North served to warn southerners to renounce all hopes of creating a Nigerian personality as well as to show that the Northern Peoples Party, ostensibly disbanded, would continue to tolerate no incursions into its territory.

Significantly, Gowon released Awolowo and invited him to attend the constitutional talks. Was the North feeling its way to a new alliance with the South? Were more progressive forces of national unity beginning to stir?

Collin Gonze

1. The Responsibility of Scholars

For almost a generation, Africa, particularly sub-Saharan Africa, has commanded the attention of American scholars; and of all the sovereignties, Nigeria has provided the richest field of study. Yet the events of January, 1966 were received with shock and disbelief. Why the surprise?

Obviously, in too many instances, African studies have been careeristic, or merely fashionable: Concern has been less with the subject of study, with the conditions, needs, and potential of African people, than with special and abstract problems that qualified the student as an academic expert or Africanist, the latter certification presumably indicating a certain control of data, but by no means guaranteeing the application of general intelligence to the problems of the sub-continent. Nor, it hardly needs saying, has being an Africanist implied respect or sophisticated regard for the ancient peoples and cultures of Africa, or the illumination that may attend such sentiments.

Africa has been a laboratory for too many American careers; too many papers and books are simply status symbols in the social system, the social struggle, of the domestic academy, shaped by that system and couched in its limited and evasive language. How masterly we have become in cueing each other to the rules of this game, and to the relative position of each to each in the subtle hierarchy of subject matter dealt with, funds awarded,

Reprinted from *Africa Today*, Feb., 1966

works praised. There have been too many grants and too few demands. There was, and there remains, a notable lack of integrity in defining African problems and relating them to the lives of Africans as experienced by Africans. Of course, one omits from this category authentic historical efforts in, for example, archaeology, folk-lore, and genetic linguistics. But even there, the degree to which such undertakings caused the scholar to ignore obvious processes of African history, such as the profoundly ramifying effects of colonialism and slavery, or dissociated him from trying to understand the ensemble of social, political, and cultural problems, which he then left to other experts—to that degree Africa was, on the one hand, reduced from a raw and complex social reality to an academic discipline, and, on the other, inflated to an abstraction resembling Johnathan Swift's Laputa. This has proven to be one of the saddest and most instructive recent lessons in the quality, range, and purpose of our scholarship. For thus we witness how history is neatly sorted, packaged, and put on ice, how events are consumed and assimilated to the frequently trivial uses of the academician, the academic politician.

Evident here are both a failure of nerve and a failure of insight. Many Africanists promiscuously associated themselves with transitory elites in this or that new state, in order to maintain mining leases on private scholarly preserves, to guarantee entry. Thus they, whose privileged intimacy with Africans in native settings should have sharpened their perspective, raised no serious objections to, for example, poorly conceived or motivated aspects of our foreign policy, and generally either permitted themselves to be used as "justifiably" amoral experts, or they remained silent, failing to challenge widespread misconceptions about the course and character of African events. This response, although differing in detail, is in the same mode as the types of scholarship that flourished, if not in direct connection with, at least under the umbrella of, the British colonial enterprise. The scholarly British disregard of African history, the overestimation of legal and constitutional studies that were a by-product of colonial superimposition, the failure to confront and analyze realities of African politics, the structural-functional perspective on African societies were correlated with each other and with the cultures of specific metropolitan disciplines, and also fitted without intrusion into the British political scheme.

The dilemma posed here is, of course, as old as the Western academy, as the schism between Socrates, who lived and died at the center of action, in the din of the market place, without sacrificing his intellectual integrity or his love of his city, and Plato (that epigone and biographer of Socrates), who built a refuge for scholars and finally, in his last dialogue, recognized the right, indeed the obligation, of the state to take the lives of those identi-

fied as dissenters. Our Western intellectual tradition is bisected at the root, its heart split in two; the irony of Plato's divorce from Socrates haunts us still. So the dilemma is not new, but the conditions that confront us are. That is to say, the world has shrunk to the size of a Greek city-state; we are a single polity, yet we are unaware of the multifarious ties that bind us; and the required, if not the acceptable, mode of scholarship is Socratic. Socratic, even if against the grain of our fragmentation and objectification of the human condition. Intelligent, pertinent, and comprehensive inquiry, sanctioned by a vision of a just world, or at least of a real one, and by no other political consideration, is a form of action. Conversely, scholars otherwise motivated diminish themselves and cease to represent, or help create, meaningful historical events.

While a thousand busy and discreet academic enterprises were at work on the body of Africa, counting, sorting, cataloguing, staking small intellectual claims, the fate of Africans had begun to shift, or rather, given the conditions they had inherited and the opportunities available for working on those conditions, had begun to be realized. But where were we, the interpreters, the scholars, the experts? Where are we? In return for those gifts of historical data that Africa bestowed on us, we might have displayed a deeper regard for Africans caught in the welter of events, over which they had, being a subject continent, only limited control. Let us reverse the image, in order to bring the point home. Suppose that hundreds of African scholars had sought and been granted entry to each state and region of an emerging America, there to study the natives, politically, socially, economically, culturally. Let us imagine that such studies were well-financed, that the scholarly standards of living were well above those of the subjects, that, on the whole, American informants and collaborators placed their confidence in the alien visitors and did not shrink from intimacy, despite the fact that alien control of Americans had been a fact of life for some three centuries. centuries. Let us then suppose that these African scholars created institutes, programs, and academic problems that enhanced their reputations at home while they denied, with honorable exception, any obligation to comprehend or report on the realities of American life as experienced by ordinary Americans, or to examine, and, if necessary, protest the direction of African policy relative to America, or to direct their attention to the actual course of American development. And let us suppose that Americans were impoverished, politically weak, their traditional cultures disintegrating. What, then, would we think of the morality of such remote and unruffled experts, such scholars?

What have we given Africa in return for what we have taken? We in the Western world are in the habit of controlling Africans. We have seized

people and resources, blocked out spheres of influence, shaped states; we have imposed religions, established political and academic careers through the manipulation of African data, presumed that Africa was a battleground for political schisms that rent our world. And the scholars, who, among all those representatives of every species of colonialism, should have been least exploitative and most disposed to portray Africa as it was, to have disinterestedly concerned themselves with the fate of Africans, and to have reported these things of value that we could have *learned* from Africa, have been, on such matters, almost as quiet as the politicians. We have been, by accident or design, omission or commission, comrades, even without arms, of the conquerors.

The over-riding (not the sole) realities of Africa today are clear enough. The overwhelming majority of its peoples are impoverished peasants whose traditional cultures have been shattered by societies armed with superior technologies in pursuit of economic or political profit. Within its new slum-ridden cities, the rich grow richer and the poor poorer, paralleling the dynamic between Africa at large and the North Atlantic nations, with the recent addition of the Soviet Union. Slavery and colonialism have rendered Africcans amnesiac about their own history, have tended to make their history unavailable to them, a tantalizing but abstract resource, expressed in such poignant terms as negritude, the African personality, African socialism, consciencism. Of course, we have scoffed at these constructions while misunderstanding the "antics" of liberated Africans who replace ubiquitous portraits of, let us say, the Queen of England with those of their own leaders. African formal schooling has been Western, predominantly British and French. For the most part, it has been a schooling in service occupations; certainly not in modern techniques. In the colonial hierarchy, clerks and barristers were most highly rated. This was a training in dependence, and with it there developed a distaste among the Africans whom the French called "civilisé" for the types of labor that help build societies and give them autonomy. Colonialism, like slavery, taught too many Africans to be ashamed of themselves, and emerging African elites have often simply adopted the social standards of their former rulers, as these were put into effect in the colonies.

As a heritage of colonialism and of the various metropolitan connections, 30-odd sub-Saharan states have been projected into being, replicating, indeed caricaturing the sovereignties of 19th Century Europe, at precisely the point in history when the more powerful nations of the world would have been forming all sorts of effective political, economic, and military associations. These separate African polities, separate despite efforts at union that were suspect in the West, exist economically subordinate to the advanced industrial nations; they are locked in primary product, monocrop economies. Market mechanisms militate against them; for example, the cost

of industrial goods increases, while primary produce tends to remain the same or decrease. International aid of appreciable dimension in building the technical infra-structure of modern balanced economies has been often promised, but hardly delivered. Under these conditions, independence is proving a snare and a delusion; new and impatient interest groups—bureaucrats, academicians, businessmen, the military—press for prestige and profit, for a place in the sun. Workers and peasants, when heard at all, demand higher incomes and cheaper goods; in increasing numbers they suffer under- or un-employment. While too many of our political scientists arrogantly debate whether Africans understand our pet abstraction, freedom, and the presumably high skills of modern statecraft, regimes fall, reactionary in some cases, progressive in others, but whether reactionary or progressive, and whatever their desire, without the resources to fulfill the aspirations of "independence."

The sub-continent is balkanized; worse, it is being Latin-Americanized; therefore it cannot be free and is, as Anthony Sampson pointed out in his criticism of Lord Home's speech in the Nigerian parliament several years ago, subject to a real, not imaginary, neo-colonialism. But the sub-continent is not free in a more direct and obvious sense. The heart of Africa, from a Congo that has been pulverized by a succession of conflicting foreign interests, south through Rhodesia and to the Republic, flanked by the Portuguese colonies, is under European settler or overseas domination. Given this thralldom at its heart, and given the economic subordination of the nominally independent African states to the North Atlantic Powers, what scholar or expert can honestly celebrate African freedom? And how are we to understand Africans if we do not address ourselves to these fundamental conditions of their existence?

Nigeria has been a prime example of our denial of African realities. As the anchor of British sovereignty in West Africa, as the arena for the most comprehensive colonial experiment in indirect rule, as the most populous and heterogeneous of the emerging African nations. Nigera was celebrated as the model of colonial success. In a very real sense, judgment of the British Raj, the perspective in which the British were to view their own recent history, in so large a part a history of colonial formation and dissolution, centered on the denouement of the Nigerian drama. Nigeria was a symbol of the investment of British energy and pride in Africa, and more than a symbol. For there can be no doubt that the choices made by Nigeria were critical to all the black sub-Saharan states. Pan-Africanism, or even a regional union of any depth, could not be realized unless the rulers of Nigeria cooperated. Effective action against the colonial, settler-dominated regimes remaining on the continent could hardly be undertaken without Nigerian leadership. Indeed, any real degree of economic or political solidarity among the emerging African states waited upon Nigerian decision. And, as preced-

ing articles in this series have indicated, that decision was largely a function of the Northern balance of power in the federation. Nigeria's "moderation," the vaunted "conservatism" of Northern leadership, the well-publicized "democratic character" of the coalition have all been political myths, sanctioned by legal and constitutional documents. For the fact is, that the majority of Nigerians did not participate effectively in their government; under the cloak of a tradition, which was little more than a heritage of domestic conquest, the Northern leadership utilized every conceivable political weapon to maintain its power. Nigeria, held together in an absurd and corrupt coalition, had forfeited that vanguard role that ordinary Africans, within and beyond its borders, had logically anticipated. In reality, Nigeria was the very model of a colonial failure; for Africa, the critical model. The federation was imagined to be a colonial success, an example of how well-intentioned power, sober and lofty design, can create a nation and move a people, with minimum displacement, from a position of tutelage to one of "independence," through which the best interests of rulers and ruled are harmoniously united. Nigeria was the example cited by journalists and politicians throughout the Western world, of the "positive" force in Africa, as the standard against which we invidiously compared developments that we neither understood, nor had compassion for, in other African states. Until recent events forced themselves on our attention, Nigeria projected a remarkably quiet image, a projection that was advantageous to the domestic leadership and to those metropolitan powers who were depending upon the country as a counterweight to the more radical forces in Africa. That image has now been shattered, through a succession of events, deeply rooted in the colonial enterprise.

2. NORTHERN NIGERIA
a key but no showpiece

Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa, and contains more than half the total population of West Africa. Its direction is thus likely to determine the broad course of events throughout most of the continent, most obviously in West Africa. Within Nigeria, the Northern Region, which comprises more than three-quarters of the land area, and just over half the popu-

Reprinted from *Africa Today*, July, 1962

lation (about 20 out of an estimated 39 million; the Eastern Region has some 10 million and the West some 9 million) is presently decisive. Indeed the North has by far the largest concentration of population of any area in West Africa, nearly one-third of the total and three times the population of Ghana alone!

The North was, moreover, the laboratory wherein indirect rule was elaborated as a philosophy and systematically applied as an ultimately desirable program although, of course, pragmatic indirect rule is as old as the very idea of State or Empire. It is hardly possible, then, to interpret events in West Africa without taking Nigeria, especially Northern Nigeria, into the fullest account; nor is it possible to assess the political and moral trajectory of British rule in West Africa without centering one's attention on Northern Nigeria.

Except for authentically primitive societies of the Middle Belt (see map in front), the North is an archaic and quasi-feudal, but not a primitive area. For at least a thousand years it has been a battleground for successive waves of invaders; one tributary empire, one oppressor state, built on the ruins of another, usually taking over and, to some extent, transforming its predecessor's political apparatus. Indirect rule is quite ancient in Northern Nigeria; more recently, of course, the Fulani replaced the Hausa in the early 19th century, and 100 years later the British replaced the Fulani, consolidating and, more or less, modernizing the emirate structure, just at the time when the regime, rotten with slavery, was ready to fall of its own weight, as Lady Lugard, Obafemi Awolowo, Sir Alan Burns, and others have told us. Lady Lugard puts the matter succinctly: "In nearly all the country districts the peasantry had remained pagan. To raid pagan countries for slaves was lawful according to the Koran. In the earlier years of their rule the Fulani used this permission to carry out raids against the pagan centers of the southern districts. Gradually, however, rebellion had its effect. As their power weakened, and was confined within narrow limits in the southern emirates, they were forced to abandon the process of distant raiding. They began to raid and sell their own peasantry, and thus completed the desolation of the country by a process which resembled the fabulous devouring of its own body by a snake."

It deserves notice, moreover, that the British prohibited *slave raiding* after 'subjugating' the emirs, but not *slave holding*. The aim was pacification in the ultimate interest of trade, not social reform; or rather social reform was a side effect of pacification. It was established as a matter of policy that if slave holding had been forbidden, "the social scheme of the people would have been rudely shattered . . . and the prosperity of the country would have been ruined . . ." (Sir Alan Burns). Slavery, indeed, was a

pillar of the ruling class and slaves were widely used as currency. Certainly neither Lugard, whose maiden appearance in Nigeria was in behalf of the Royal Niger Company, nor his intrepid little band had the mandate, desire, or power to undertake extensive social amelioration. Nor was this ever the practical intent or the witting result of indirect rule. Lugard's speculation concerning the theory of indirect rule (that it would by some natural amalgam benefit both parties) was, of course, admirable, despite the Victorian certainty of his premises, and his fine grasp of commercial advantage. The administration, however, did set a terminal date on slave holding; all children born after April 1, 1901, were to be considered free, the status of their parents notwithstanding. It is hard to determine the extent to which this law has worked out in practice, but there can be no doubt that legal domestic slaves, at least, still exist in Northern Nigeria. M. G. Smith has assessed the situation as follows:

> The prohibition on slave recruitment under British rule has left these relations intact. Wherever ex-slave and master remain in contact, the ex-slave or his descendant is still the master's *dimajo* while the master is *ubangiji* (father of the inheritance). Thus slavery has turned into serfdom, and the *dimajai* of today are described by the masters as *talakawa* (commoners), *bayi* (slaves) or *yanuwa* (kinsmen) according to the context. In one sense, the *dimajai* are just as much slaves as ever they were in the last century. In another, they are free commoners, like other *talakawa,* and at law they are now formally responsible for their own offenses. Few are readily distinguishable from other Moslem Habe, whose culture is now their own.*

* Slavery is not only difficult to detect, but to define. Article One of the Supplementary Conference on Slavery of 1956 (United Nations) includes debt bondage, serfdom, and various types of domestic rights in women and children as "practices analogous to slavery." The League of Nations Conference of 1926 defined slavery as simply ". . . the status or condition of a person over whom any or all of the powers attaching to the right of the owner are exercised." If we should adopt Greenidge's attitude (in *Slavery*), an extension of the League of Nations and the UN Conventions, that peonage, the sham adoption of children and the outright sale of women in marriage (the commercialization of customary bride wealth), converge to slavery, then the degree of this ownership in persons in archaic areas such as Northern Nigeria must be very high indeed. But the question whether or not Islam, ipso facto, sanctions slavery is a complex one. Greenidge, in a balanced and judicious summary, believes not, and there is ample evidence from the Koran to justify this conclusion. The Koran, however, fully endorses the enslavement of pagan prisoners of war and, in particular cases, the technical discrimination between believer and unbeliever was adjusted to the uses of conquest; for example—in the Fulani Jihad, the pagan Fulani were not molested by the forces of Othman dan Fodio. In any event, no Church has ever prevented slavery, nor obstructed its imposition, no matter its religious creed, or possible interpretations of the latter. Institutional religion has, historically viewed, proved itself irrelevant to the maintenance or obliteration of slavery.

Thus, oligarchy of wealth and privilege are maintained to this day, despite the existence of a few show-piece projects.

Islam is borne lightly by the people at large; characteristically, it is mixed with pagan elements in the villages, where the *Maguzawa* and other pagan, native Hausa speakers still survive. Even in the larger towns, Islam is by no means monolithic; the lower in the social scale one descends, the less orthodox is Moslem usage, and the less complete is the holistic cycle of family, political, economic, social and cultural life assumed to be the Islamic norm. But among the ubiquitous officialdom, Islam is a politico-religious article of faith. After the hoary custom of indirect rule, local chiefs were often converted to Islam, presumably bringing their people with them, and becoming agents of, and buffers against, the dominant power. This rather complex process may have begun in the Hausa states; it was commonplace under the Fulani, as part of a more elaborate pattern of local control, including various forms of clientship and fiefholding, and persisted under the British. The system of rule that emerged was strongly theocratic. Thus, for example, the missions which built the infrastructure of education throughout British West Africa had been originally barred from the North; subsequently, highly selective admission has not significantly affected the educational pattern.

After more than a half century of colonial rule, illiteracy in the region is about as high as it is anywhere in the world—perhaps 95 percent. Only one schoolboy in 20,000 can hope to receive a grammar school certificate; only one percent of the population attends a school that would be defined as such by minimal modern standards. In the Koranic schools, children learn religious tracts by rote but they hardly learn to read and write. Nor can the prospective University College at Kano and the existent College of Arts, Science, and Technology at Zaria be expected to do anything but widen the gap between the few and the many, in the absence of a free and compulsory system of elementary education. In other words, the well-known "law" of circular causation and cumulative effect operates in the area of education when the latter functions through an archaic structure just as it does in all other significant cultural and social areas. The inevitable result of this process will be the continuous creation of a domestic elite as rootless, unrelated to, and manipulative of the people at large as any colonially nurtured elite group (in British West Africa, semiliterate clerks and a small group of highly cultivated university graduates were produced to the neglect of managerial, social, and natural and physical scientific personnel).

Annual per capita income in the North is extraordinarily low—under $45 (beneath Egyptian and Indian levels). It seems doubtful that this depressed figure can be solely attributed to the high ratio of "subsistence" cultivation remaining in the economy. Subsistence is, first of all, a relative term; throughout the primitive and peasant North, diet is usually poor and inade-

quate. Subsistence cultivation may be an invisible item in the economic ledger, but those engaged in it often eke out only the barest living. Moreover, the whole region has become involved, to one degree or another, in an internal market system which combines archaic bartering with cash transactions. Cash cropping, primarily for export, but also for local consumption, is on the increase. In heavily or over-cultivated zones devoted to export cropping (i.e., around Kano), a process of proletarianization seems to have set in. These considerations appear to indicate that the estimated per capita income of the North is a broadly accurate reflection of the relative status of the Region, both within Nigeria and with reference to rural areas, developed and underdeveloped, throughout the world.

Health and welfare facilities are tragically limited. It is estimated that the ratio of hospital beds to people is 1:6,000; and even those beds that do exist are often grossly underequipped. Infant mortality, death and chronic disease rates are, on a general and relative basis, probably exceeded nowhere.

Transportation and communications follow a typical colonial pattern —motor roads branch out from the railroad in pursuit of the major export crop, and serve also as a channel for the distribution of European imports. Communications outside of the predictable commercial grid hardly exist. Only 13 percent of the total regional area is within one square mile of any kind of vehicular road.

The political organization is archaic and monolithic; the Northern Peoples Congress (NPC), the party of the Emirs, has a chain of command built into the very structure of government on all levels. Even today, political activity other than that initiated by the NPC tends to be regarded as subversive; there is, of course, no female suffrage. The legal system, particularly on the local level, remains archaic, and is too often an instrument of party politics; a condition that is likely to become more acute with the formal withdrawal of local British advisors and officers.

Only in parts of the Middle Belt have opposition parties, notably the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU), allied with the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC) and the United Middle Belt Congress (allied with the Western Region's Action Group), been able to make any headway. But the movement for Middle Belt secession, which would have reduced the national power of the Emirs considerably (the area comprises the southern half of the Northern Region and has perhaps one-third of its total population), has been suspended for the time being. In the meantime, the young "Turks" of the Middle Belt are beginning to accept positions in the NPC and Regional hierarchy out of sheer political frustration, a development which is likely to pull the sting out of any coordinated opposition. Local opposition is made even more problematic by the fact that NEPU, through its association with NCNC, landed in a national coalition government with the NPC after the December elections that pre-

ceded formal independence in October 1960. Following independence, Amino Kano, the Head of NEPU, found himself simultaneously chief of Government whip at the Centre and leader of the opposition in the North! Such contradictions have continued to multiply since the larger coalition in which they function is in itself a contradiction, for which the only justification would seem to be in the fiercely expressed desire of the NCNC leadership to forge a united Nigeria at any cost.

The Middle Belt movement for secession which would conceivably have strengthened a Pan-Nigerian structure had been discouraged by the British and also fought by the NPC, first in a bizarre, if understandable alliance, and now, as noted, in active coalition with the NCNC. The rationales were both cultural and political. The NPC insisted that the entire Middle Belt was an integral part of the North ("one region, one party"), a conception which is historically invalid since even Fulani rule, more extensive than any that preceded it, never penetrated the area in depth; indeed, critical parts of the Middle Belt, such as the Jos Plateau, were either bypassed by the Fulani or withstood their assault. It should be understood that, culturally, the Middle Belt is composed of diverse and often complexly overlapping linguistic and tribal groups, many of a decentralized, a-political and authentically primitive nature. So their connections with the ruling classes of the North are even more tenuous than those of the Hausa-speaking peasantry. Yet it is logical enough to assume that the fate of the latter, more generally of the *talakawa* (the poor and untitled), and the peoples of the Middle Belt is indivisible. Thus the ultimate target of parties such as NEPU is the typical Hausa-speaking peasant. The best way for these groups to reach the peasants is through the Southern exposed flank of the Emirs, that is, through the Middle Belt. Clearly, then, the antagonism of the Emirs to Middle Best autonomy and the intolerance of the NPC to internal political opposition are facets of a single policy. The ruling circles of the North realize that holding the Middle Belt is a precondition for the maintenance of their power, not only in Nigeria at large, *but in their own region.* Even if the heartland of the Emirs were to be further consolidated, it could not survive a liberalized, dynamic and detached Middle Belt running along the whole extent of its Southern border. This the Emirs understand, and there is every reason to believe that the colonial British, who anchored their Nigerian, indeed, their West African rule, in Northern Nigeria, understood this fact of political life also.

3. Collapse in the West

The British expressed the feeling that an autonomous Middle Belt would weaken the Center, but there is at least equal reason to believe that it would have been more likely to bolster the latter, since the Middle Belt would have looked to the Central Government for protection, the development of its resources, particularly the hydroelectric potential, and for the further employment of the reservoir of skilled and semi-skilled workers in the mining areas of Plateau and adjacent territories.

The National Council of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC . . . strongest in the Eastern Region) found itself allied with the Northern People's Congress (NPC) on this matter of Middle Belt secession for three reasons:

The first is that they feared that the North would withdraw from the Federation entirely. Relevant here is the fact that the North moved reluctantly toward independence, and then under the spur of the South. Only in recent years have Northern leaders, including the present Prime Minister, stated their belief in a united Nigeria, thus apparently reversing their characteristic attitudes.

Another reason for the alliance was that the British were likely to postpone independence were the Middle Belt issue to become acute; moreover, other equally complicated if less significant political issues affecting the boundaries of the Eastern and Western Regions would have to be raised.

And lastly, the Ibo-based NCNC, chronically involved in a struggle for power in the South with the Yoruba-led Action Group, centered in the Western Region, found it advantageous to come to terms with the NPC, indeed, to form a coalition with the latter, without betraying, at that time, its universalistic principles.

In recent months, however, the machinery for establishing a Midwest state has been set in motion. This state, composed of Benin and Delta provinces, would be carved out of the Western Region. Ratification of the move requires a two-thirds majority of the registered voters and passage by a simple majority in two of the three regional assemblies. These majorities will be forthcoming, since the Eastern and Northern houses have already opted for the Midwest state over the objections of the Western regional house and heavy pressure on the West will strengthen the resolve of the NCNC on

Reprinted from *Africa Today,* Sept., 1962

the local level.

The creation of a Midwest Region will certainly bring about some of the following results:

The South will be further fragmented vis-a-vis the North; the latter, we should note, has been strengthened by the addition, following the United Nations plebiscite, of the Northern Cameroons, now known as Sardauna Province.

The NCNC and the Eastern Region will be fattened at the expense of the Action Group and the Western Region. This will be even more evident if the Federal Government (i.e., NPC-NCNC coalition) takes advantage of its constitutional option to govern the new Region directly for the first 6 months after establishment . . . thus entrenching NCNC policy and grass-roots control (the party hopes). The attempt to form the Midwest state must be considered then, a gross, if skillful, political maneuver, facilitated by the present coalition, in which each partner has a particular stake. But there is this difference in that convergence of interests: the North is behaving strategically—in terms of long-range advantages—for a divided South can only benefit the Emirs; while the East is behaving tactically in order to gain an immediate and risky partisan advantage. It is one thing to champion alternative programs in a legitimate political context, as the Action Group and the NCNC ordinarily do; it is quite another for either party to become so engulfed in enmity that the massive threats that confront the South at large are minimized or forgotten.

Indeed, events in recent weeks have moved more rapidly and tragically than have been anticipated, although the general pattern is familiar enough. A Public Emergency (from June through December, 1962) has been declared in Western Nigeria by order of the National Government; former regional government and party leaders, including Action Group head Awolowo and ex-Premier Akintola have been relieved of their official duties and restricted to, for all practical purposes, their home towns; a Federal Administrator and staff have been appointed to govern the region by Prime Minister Balewa*; and the Action Group has been declared "dead" by Akintola, various spokesmen for the NCNC, and its obvious enemies in the North. Both the North and the East, via the interim administration, have already

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* The Ghanaian press immediately labelled Balewa a "black Englishman" for this and other "neo-colonialist" actions and rallied to the support of the Action Group, thus revealing a tension between the two countries that cuts to the heart of West African dynamics. During the past year Awolowo has moved closer to Nkrumah's conception of pan-Africanism . . . and Ghana has shown increasing sympathy for the plight of the Action Group, thus giving Awolowo an outlet for domestic frustrations. This could have been a factor in the Federal decision to take over the West; the Emirs despise and fear Nkrumah for his anti-chiefly policy and the NCNC considers Ghana a 'subversive' influence in West Africa. Both groups had reason to be anxious about closer Awolowo-Nkrumah ties.

seized the opportunity to "straighten out" big and little affairs in the West in accordance with their own particular interests, as exemplified in the piously conceived fiscal investigation of Western regional institutions, which will further discredit the Action Group, as a similar inquiry would any significant political party just about anywhere. This will, more ominously, shake public confidence in the relative prosperity of the region, and the manner of its achievement, compared with the quasi-feudal, depressed North and the dynamic but, in critical areas, overpopulated East. It is also noteworthy that the West's suit challenging the legality of the makeup of the Eastern legislature that voted in favor of a Midwest state has been nullified by the Federally-appointed administrator of the beleaguered region. And he, it should be noted, had originally moved this Midwest motion in the Senate. Strangely, however, the West's separate case versus the Center is being pursued, apparently, to establish a precedent on this issue.

There is now no doubt about the rapid emergence of the Midwest state, and no chance of other states being formed to balance the Federation, which would, as Awolowo demanded, buttress a more progressive center. Balewa, in fact, has once again affirmed the "integrity" of the North and of the Federation as it is now or will shortly be. Awolowo, the most vocal of the Nigerian leaders in his opposition to the ruling circles of the North, has been temporarily silenced. This must please his old NCNC antagonists, even if it makes them a bit uneasy. The way seems clear for a nominal (at least) NCNC command of the entire South.

The events leading to this "startling" (if only superficially) situation can be summarized as follows:

Akintola had steadily lost the confidence of the Action Group leadership ever since the last turbulent Congress of the party held, symbolically enough, at Jos in the Middle Belt. Awolowo, the party chief, had been his major critic for three reasons:

- Akintola has refused to accept the principles of democratic socialism, increasingly favored by the party under Awolowo, and had crudely misrepresented them to the Obas (hereditary chiefs) and other groups; in this connection, students of African politics will appreciate the irony of the charge, made by one of Awolowo's first cabinet ministers and headlined in the *West African Pilot* that the "AG [is] going communist."
- Awolowo and his aides conceived the Action Group as a *national* party and had openly tried to split the Northern monolith, calling for a Middle Belt state and campaigning widely, at serious risk, throughout the region . . . Akintola, meanwhile, opposed this national policy and seemed eager to confine the party to acknowledged "Yoruba" territory while feeding on real or manufactured splits among intra-regional groups.

• Akintola refused to recognize the principle of ultimate party sovereignty over his actions. But this was a purely formal matter, quickened to life only by the issues at stake.

The results of these *contretemps* were, in explosive succession: The removal of Akintola from office by the Regional Governor following his expulsion from the party and his apparent lack of support in Parliament; the appointment, by the Regional Governor, of a new Premier acceptable to the Action Group; Akintola's refusal to accept his deposition, his unsuccessful appeal against the Regional Governor to the *British Crown,* his bringing the case to court (he won) and the simultaneous existence of two Premiers in the West; two abortive meetings of the Western Assembly which disintegrated in violence, apparently sparked off by the obstructionism of the Akintola faction, leading to the Federal intervention.

Finally, Akintola announced that the Action Group was dead. And *that,* stated Awolowo, from his curious position of internal exile, had been the intent of the NPC from the beginning. Akintola, he charged, was an NPC hireling, a silent partner of the Sardauna (head of the NPC and Premier of the North), willing to sell the party for control of the Region.

In this perspective, exaggerated only in that it may impute a grand design to a pattern of passive failures, ad hoc tactics and small ambitions, Akintola's opposition to the Midwest state reduces itself to a desire to maintain his grasp on the West at large, as head of a purely regional government party. Awolowo was never, in principle, opposed to the Midwest state—but only to its becoming a political weapon in the hands of the coalition at the center; he wanted more states, if they were justified in the national interest, not fewer.

As a false calm settles over the country, preparatory to new elections in the West next December, it is clear that the NPC has gained immensely. "In a very short time, the NPC will rule the whole of Nigeria," stated Mallam Sule, a Federal Minister. Opportunistic Southern diversions to the NPC are beginning to occur. NCNC radicals are now publicly alarmed at the prospects of losing the battle of the Midwest state, and perhaps of Nigeria, not to the AG, but to the NPC. Although Akintola paralyzed the West, he was also an enemy of the East. He was thus the perfect foil for Northern policy. Even as the West collapsed, the Sardauna gave Akintola public blessings and "fraternal greetings," while urging the people of the Region to rally around the deposed Premier.

Akintola has now set up a new party, the UPP (United Peoples Party). Its character and aims are likely to duplicate those of the NPC, thus triggering the reactionary potential in the pseudo-traditional Yoruba Chiefly structure. Nigeria will have been driven still further from the path of African socialist democracy and continental unity.

As for the NCNC, it has won too much, thus lost, for the most progressive, anti-NPC elements in the West have been too drastically reduced, and not by any NCNC allies. It was reported, however, that Akintola was, at the end, willing to deal with the local NCNC parliamentary opposition in order to save his Premiership. But that was certainly a minor expediency. In one way or the other, Akintola, like Balewa, the Premier, is the Sardauna's man, and he brings with him a reactionary modern and "traditional" elite.

It is likely that, when Nigeria becomes a republic, Akintola will work hard to have the Sardauna made its first President against the only personnage in the country who rivals him in power: Azikiwe (Zik), the current Governor General (nominally above politics), former Premier of the East, and a revolutionary of authentic stature who, it is hoped, has not been compromised by his own cleverness.

The real struggle for control of Nigeria's and perhaps West Africa's foreseeable future has been, thus, for a while, shifted to the West, wherein North and East, partners at the Center, fight out a surreptitious and complicated battle. But can they keep the Nigerian people waiting in the wings until the game is finished?

In a world in which the rich are growing richer and the poor poorer, can any of us afford our habitual political idiocies?

4. Conflict With Ghana

The pertinent intricacies of Nigerian party and national politics were discussed in some detail in earlier issues of AFRICA TODAY. Without recapitulating, I may just say that the upshot is that the North commands Nigerian national politics as the victor in the first national elections, which elicited a uniform Regional vote for the party of the Emirs. Hence the Northern People's Congress (NPC) formed the present Government as the senior partner in the alliance with the National Council of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC). This was accomplished, it must be noted, after the NCNC had rejected an Action Group request that the two parties enter into a coalition, which would have had sufficient votes at the center to organize a government. The meanings and motives of this rejection should, by now, be clear.

Reprinted from *Africa Today*, Nov., 1962

As it is, the NPC has the premiership and dominates the cabinet and the national assembly, in which it enjoys, at the moment, an actual majority. Formal Parliamentary opposition, until the current collapse of the Party and Government in the West, had been provided by the Action Group and associated elements.

In the light of the past actions, attitudes, and statements of the leaders of the North, and of NPC party policy, we can assume that the North will do its utmost to develop a National and Regional program that will keep Nigeria from any but a token involvement with a Pan-African or a Pan-West African union, or indeed with the revolutionary forces sweeping the continent. The country's connection with the Monrovia group is instructive, since the group is more a response to the Casablanca powers than a unit with any organic intention, reason for being, or genuine trans-national vision. It seems rather to comprise a convenient alliance of conservative nationalism. The Monrovia association draws its strength from former French West African territories, whose elites are markedly closer to Paris than to their own people, and from Liberia, whose corrupt structure and development are well-known to students of West African history.

Although present Nigerian policy may in the instance seem congenial to the West, any sober appraisal reveals that as a narrow view. The revolution in ex-French West Africa has hardly begun; France left behind a thin crust of Gallicized Africans with little or no structure connecting them to the inactive, uneducated, and, as yet, silent majority. The Liberian ruling group is cut off from the people of its own hinterland, indeed has a record of oppression and disinterest, and is not respected by the more dynamic and dedicated leaders throughout the continent. Policy adopted under the symbol of Monrovia could easily be discredited as the African revolution accelerates.

Further, policy formally congenial to the West is not, necessarily, in the best interests of the West, since we, as well as the Communists, may require, whether we or they care to acknowledge it, a third force in the world, an active and independent "neutralism," which can serve as a creative buffer among the nuclear powers. Simple polarization of the world is a most dangerous condition; nor is it a condition that the more important leaders in the underdeveloped areas are likely to accept. Certainly, identification of ultra-conservative, reactionary, feudal, or merely nationalistic elements with pro-Western positions is not to our advantage, although it may, for a time, soothe egos. Have we not experienced, since the end of World War II, a surfeit of these easily compromised allies who flock to us because they do not feel secure in their own milieux?

Nigeria has not identified herself in Africa or elsewhere with those nations that seek to pursue an actively neutralist, that is a literally interventionist, path between the great powers, a path which, if independently con-

ceived, could benefit us all while expressing realistically the temper of West Africa and the continent. Such a Nigerian policy, more in tune with that temper, might also forfend a later explosion of accumulated grievances, which would take us by surprise, as it has done elsewhere, merely because we had settled for the forms of friendship rather than helping to create the substance of genuine popular respect.

There is hardly any doubt that the currently enunciated Nigerian position on Monrovia and other issues is largely the result of Northern pressure in the coalition. Last June, for example, a Nigerian delegation visited the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, as guests of Sir Roy Welensky; the Parliamentarians were snubbed by all Central African nationalists, including Kenneth Kaunda, the Northern Rhodesian leader, while Kanyama Chiume of Nyasaland is said (*West African Pilot,* June 9) to have stated bluntly: "One only hopes this bunch does not represent the true Nigerian." The projected trip to Nyasaland was cancelled, and at the same time a member of the Nigerian delegation remarked that "so far he had not come upon any racial discrimination in Northern Rhodesia, although he had heard there was discrimination and was strongly opposed to it."

Welensky has established a High Commission in Lagos, and last April Balewa had offered to visit the Rhodesias, to the dismay of the NCNC. He has also announced his willingness to exchange ambassadors with, and to visit, South Africa, an intention which drew an indignant cable from the ex-president of the South African Indian Congress. However, Verwoerd forebore to extend the invitation to Balewa (who has recognized the "honesty and sincerity of Boer belief in apartheid"; it is, he feels, a misconceived "religious dogma").

As part of this emerging pattern of Northern command of Nigerian foreign policy, the Sardauna of Sokoto recently toured the Middle East, including Iran and Pakistan. Southern Nigerian quarters interpreted the trip as an attempt to search out and establish closer contact between the North and those Moslem states that might conceivably share similar views.

All of these large and little moves help clarify how critical Nigeria's choice of friends will finally prove to be. The present official policy is one of stalemate, not of principle, and it is the NCNC that is being most massively blocked in the search for African associations, not the NPC nor even the decimated Action Group. For, as noted in a previous article, Awolowo has visited Nkrumah in Ghana, and has announced his sympathy for the Ghanaian concept of African affairs; at a later date the Ghanaian press supported the Action Group when the Western Region was placed under Federal restrain. Awolowo's position was a drastic reversal of his previous attitudes; an ideological alliance with Ghana's Convention People's Party (CCP)

seems almost as strange as the NCNC-NPC coalition. Both, for the time being, must be viewed as functions of Nigerian internal politics.

In the welter of such conflicts, little principles are bound to dissolve, but that of West African federation remains too big and pressing to be abandoned or badly used because of tragic disharmony in southern Nigeria. Nigeria will presently have to choose between the feudal and the democratic elements in the underdeveloped world, and it would be ironic indeed if the NCNC, with its traditional Pan-African concerns, formally reaffirmed by Azikiwe and others, should wittingly or otherwise help estrange the nation from its populist friends.

The current Nigerian conflict with Ghana throws into relief the critical nature of the African social, political, economic, and cultural cleavage south of the Sahara. Of course, the antagonism of the NPC to Nkrumah was predictable: the NPC quite accurately sensed that Pan-Africanism, in both its internal and its external imperatives, implies the demise of the system they represent. The potential tragedy for West Africa does not stem from the obvious opposition between Nkrumah and the Emirs (Nkrumah has his own North to contend with), but from the fact that the conflict has become part of established Nigerian national policy, acceded to and even abetted by the NCNC. Feelings of fraternal rivalry (and they can be the bitterest kind) between Azikiwe and Nkrumah certainly play a part. But, more significantly, the pace of events in Ghana cannot be calibrated with Nigerian developments; the NCNC is in a frustrating position of stalemate within its own complex nation. But the CPP attempts to call shots, and to effectuate programs (Pan-Africanism, African socialism) that the NCNC has characteristically proclaimed but cannot now execute. At the same time, given world conditions and her own domestic economy, Ghana is obliged to act quickly in order to achieve some real measure of political and economic self-determination. This in turn must imply a concern with social and economic programming throughout West Africa; no single West African nation can secure a viable freedom by and for itself alone. This, I submit, explains the conflict not merely between Ghana and the feudal elements in Northern Nigeria, but between Ghana and the NCNC, since the latter must look first to sheer formal survival on the domestic political front, and resents Ghanaian initiative in so many areas of major importance to West Africa.

While Ghana is struggling against being set into the mold of 19th century nationalism impressed on West Africa by the ex-colonial powers, Nigeria is entering a period of severe and probably prolonged effort to achieve a minimal national identity. But it should not be forgotten that the fortuitous boundaries established by colonial fiat make it easier, and more essential, for Ghana to face outward, while Nigeria, whose extensive and

diversely populated territory seems even more of a historical "accident," is trying to give substance to the national form that is its colonial inheritance; Nigeria is thus disposed to face inward.

Ghanaian leadership conceives the nation, the region, and the world—and economic, political, and social life—as inextricably involved with each other, and it is assumed that in the ex-colonial territories, growth on one level or in one area must be synchronized with development on every other. On a planet where a tiny fraction of the population is able to achieve affluence, where the great majority lives in want and in the midst of disintegrating traditions; in a world which has not yet found the means of distributing goods equitably, and which is threatened not only by apocalyptic war but by the dehumanization of the rich and the degradation of the poor, and moreover with little time left for maneuvering among or within nations, there is a great deal to be said for the *assumptions* of Ghanaian policy. The *results* will depend, to a significant degree, on the insight that the great powers bring to the plight of the people of West Africa. We must learn to read the signals coming to us from Nigeria and Ghana with a less self-serving, less tactical, and more broadly human concern, for our good, our survival, and theirs.

5. The Weight of the North

In the words of Dennis Austin ("West Africa and the Commonwealth," p. 82), ". . . tradition has learned to equip itself with modern weapons in the formidable organization of the Northern Peoples Congress." Certainly, the sagacity of the NPC has been consistently underrated by politicians in Nigeria and elsewhere in Africa. The Action Group, which attempted a frontal assault on the Northern citadel, has been crushed, for the time being, as a national force, and the National Council of Nigerian Citizens, which had pinned its hopes on the quieter tactics of its associated "Hausa"-oriented Northern party, the Northern Elements Progressive Union, does not seem to have gained proportionately to the disaster in the West on either a national or a regional scale. Indeed, the recent municipal elections in Lagos unseated the NCNC in favor of the Action Group despite the fact that the trials for

Reprinted from *Africa Today*, Jan., 1963

treason of major Action Group figures, including Awolowo, were about to begin. (These trials, which epitomize Nigerian conflicts, will be discussed in a forthcoming article.) And it looks as if Akintola, whose legal status as Western Premier has been upheld, will resume his position when the Federal Administrator has stepped down. If this is a further blow to the Action Group (which may not survive the brand of treason), since it gives the Premier's new United People's Party an initial advantage in the West which will emerge when the Federal emergency is lifted, it is no solace to the NCNC.

The point, which need not be labored, is that the NPC has established its virtuosity at political infighting under the cloak of piety, conservatism, and coalition. More broadly, the NPC is alert to the need, and has demonstrated its ability, to accommodate its basic structure to modern realities without seriously shifting the nature or balance of power in its own ranks or in the Region at large. The Party is capable of reading the meaning of local discontent expressed in elections or by other means, and can clean its own house when necessary. For example, the current reorganization of the Northern administration is designed to lessen the arbitrary power of the Emirs and restrict the sovereignty of the local native authorities, thus strengthening the Regional Centre personified by the Sardauna of Sokoto. It will also have the effect of reducing the potential for independent action of the many local native authorities in the pagan areas of the Middle Belt, such as the Jos Plateau, and thus inhibit further the growth of new states or parties in the North.

In a sense, the move toward Northern centralization substitutes the presence of the Sardauna for the former prevailing presence of the British, which had bound the Region together by reserving decision on critical issues to the Central colonial agencies. This is not to deny the continuing importance of the advisory role of British officials in the Region; the difference is that these officials were once the backbone of the British Raj, but they now serve as the links between the Regional Government and the localities. We may call the process indirect rule in reverse; if the British once used local and regional authorities, these authorities are now using the British—and for the same broad purpose: to facilitate the rule of the many by the few.

The newly emerging regional superstructure is, in part, a response to the new complexities of administration, but also diminishes the possibility of the Region's disintegrating into mutually antipathetic Emirates; the latter development had been hopefully anticipated in certain Southern quarters. However, at the moment, it is the South that is being fragmented, not the North.

Also, the NPC is capable of responding to strong, predominantly Southern, expressions of popular sentiment on national issues that it does

not consider vital to its interests. Obvious instances are the abrogation of the defense pact with the United Kingdom, and the refusal of the present Government to associate Nigeria with the European Common Market. But the latter decision is not necessarily contrary to the interests of the NPC, since the Government has already announced that it will seek bilateral agreements with European Economic Community nations in order to maintain markets for primary products. It is difficult to distinguish the purpose and effect of such bilateral agreements from actual association with the Common Market where the real interests of metropolitan and ex-colonial countries are concerned. In short, the official position of Nigeria on the Common Market may prove to be no more than a formal genuflection to Southern popular opinion. The continuing connection with the French West African sphere and Nigeria's conservative attitude toward the possibility of West African economic union tend to bear out the inconsequential nature of the formal decision not to join Europe economically. If such a decision is to have meaning, other realistic alternatives must be explored, and there is no indication that this is being done seriously. So far as the NPC is concerned, the maintenance of the current socio-economic structure in the North will not be greatly endangered by abstention from the Common Market; moreover, the Party, commanding the national scene, is in a position to inhibit alternatives that may be developed in the conflict-ridden South, even if bilateral agreements with the EEC countries are not forthcoming. But I think it is reasonable to anticipate that such bilateral treaties will be signed, even if quietly, in a "non-political" atmosphere, since it is presently advantageous to the Nigerian coalition Government, and also in line with the economic and political purposes of the Common Market nations.

By further centralizing authority, absorbing dissident elements into the Party, pursuing reforms that strengthen rather than reduce the present socio-political structure, and playing on regional loyalties, religious and otherwise, the NPC has, thus far, been able to impede the development of popular democracy in the North at every turn. Its immediate purpose is to streamline but essentially to maintain the oligarchic structure of the Region in the name of "tradition." Its ultimate purpose, if such exists, may be interpreted as an attempt to "modernize" the Region from the top down in an arbitrary and unsystematic framework. One thinks of Iran and Pakistan as possible precedents for this kind of ineffective intention. Yet to the degree that the NPC succeeds in maintaining power by learning how to absorb more progressive national elements, the Party may serve as a model for neo-reactionary forces throughout Africa.

Other likely results of NPC influence on Northern and national affairs in Nigeria may be summarized as follows:

1. Large-scale capital re-investment in the North and the widespread formation and distribution of capital in the Region would require, and, in their turn, stimulate, a far-reaching reorganization of society. Therefore, it is doubtful that these processes will be encouraged. It should be noted that the construction of isolated "economic monuments" such as a steel or textile mill does not create a significant new class or technical grouping in the population. Nor does it redistribute income or enable backward economies to achieve viability. Such undertakings may, however, strengthen the party in power while giving the appearance of change.

In Northern Nigeria the result of such a policy would be the maintenance of a primarily agricultural, increasingly cash-cropping economy, leavened by the remarkably intricate and socially wasteful trading system, into which the metropolitan trading companies are tied, and which is to the advantage of the richer Hausa traders, and their counterparts in other regions. I might re-emphasize, parenthetically, that in Nigeria, indirect rule has been the natural, and least costly, instrument of a colonialism bent on supposedly mutually beneficial trading objectives. The trading orientation retains its magnetism for those elements that are preoccupied with maintaining their power and prestige; their interests are readily adjusted to those of the ex-metropolitan countries, and to the continuation of a domestic peasant economy. The basic socio-economic structure inherited from colonialism would remain unchanged; it could merely be subject to Nigerianization.

2. We can anticipate that the NPC will try to inhibit, in the name of regional rights, the growth of a strong and flexible national government that could develop, and effectuate, a socio-economic plan designed not only to raise the standard of living of ordinary Nigerians but to change drastically the pattern of their economic activities.

It deserves note that each Region has full control of the design and pace of economic development within its borders; no national plan can be undertaken without regional consent. Thus, Northern Nigeria's refusal to accept Israeli aid in any aspect of the development program affecting the Region, although in itself inconsequential, may exemplify the potential political difficulty of calibrating the growth of the Regions on a national scale.

3. The Region will be sealed off, insofar as that is possible, from more dynamic Southern influence, in part by "northernization" of the bureaucracy, business, trading establishments, and so on.

Each of these three policies would reinforce the others and lock Nigeria further into the lower echelons of that international class structure whose polar groups are growing apart through the process of "cumulative and circular causation" outlined by Gunnar Myrdal and sociological economists of similar persuasion. This could also have the effect of slowing the growth

of West Africa as a whole. At the same time, the Northern oligarchy, particularly if it were the beneficiary of Western support, would, at least temporarily, be able to maintain its own position, and the gap between it and the millions of peasants would increase. In such a situation, sooner or later, if our contemporary experience is any guide, the people are bound to rebel, not only against their own government but, very possibly, against the West, which had been identified with the old colonial structure out of which the new ruling class has emerged.

The potential for direct and spontaneous rebellion should not be underestimated in an area such as Northern Nigeria. Given the appropriate political-historical occasion, the tensions generated within archaic and hierarchical family, economic, and social structures can converge into an irrepressible force. Even a modest familiarity with the background of radical uprisings in the 20th century should, I think, confirm that the most important of them have occurred in predominantly peasant, archaic cultures. More specifically, the archaic-hierarchical family structure is an emotional breeding ground for rebellion when the society at large is no longer capable of offering sanctioned and traditional status alternatives to its members. Egypt, China, and many areas in Latin America and in Southeast Asia are among examples that come readily to mind. These coincide with the boundaries of what may be termed *decayed* Great Traditions. In such areas, among vast numbers of people, the "neurodynamic," along with the socio-economic, basis of rebellion germinates; the more precise political fate of these rebellions—whether or not, for example, they flourish as full-scale revolutions—seems to depend on the sophistication and ruthlessness of a relatively small leadership, a so-called "elite."

It seems improbable, in the light of the thousand-year history of conquest in the region, that the present ruling class commands the fundamental loyalty of the people on political, religious, or cultural grounds, although it can now manipulate support in each of these areas. Far from being "a pillar of Western strength" or a "sturdy example of colonial rule," Northern Nigeria must be viewed as the most potentially explosive area in West Africa; or perhaps it is more accurate to state that the underlying instability of Northern Nigeria is a function of the entrenchment of colonial control, more particularly of British-Fulani accommodation since the turn of the century.

It remains to be seen whether sophisticated Eastern and Western Nigerian leaders can circumvent the danger of Northern reaction and intransigence by somehow outmaneuvering the oligarchy on a national and regional basis, that is by breaking down regional barriers and reaching the people through an effective central government, or whether they will lose sight

of this objective because of relatively minor ethnic and political tensions between Eastern and Western Regions. It also remains to be seen whether American policy will take adequately into account the dynamics of the Nigerian situation, which demands an understanding and support of movements against colonial and quasi-colonial control, rather than isolation of them. To fail here is to increase international estrangement, and to cultivate a destructive extermism in one underdevolped nation after another.

6. THE SARDAUNA OF SOKOTO
His Life Till Then . . .

Alhaji Sir Ahmadu Bello, Sardauna of Sokoto, Premier of Northern Nigeria, great-great-grandson of Sheik Othman dan Fodio (leader of the Fulani conquest of Northern Nigeria at the turn of the 19th century), and direct descendant of the Prophet on both sides of his patrilineage, has now joined two other major Nigerian political personalities—Awolowo of the Western Region, and Azikiwe of the East—in writing his life for the Cambridge University Press ("My Life," Cambridge University Press, 1962). The Sardauna is probably the most powerful man in Nigeria, and heads the largest and least understood political party in Africa, the Northern Peoples Congress, a model of streamlined reaction. He is taken in the West to represent "stability" in Africa, and has become a symbol of the conservative opposition to the more revolutionary regimes and parties throughout the continent.

In West Africa, one is tempted to say that the apparent political chaos is condensing rapidly into two major movements that cross-cut current national boundaries. On the one hand is the conservative-nationalist, quasi-traditional, European-influenced movement, represented significantly among the Monrovia powers. On the other hand are the revolutionary-nationalist, neutralist, pan-African forces, exemplified in Ghana and Guinea. In each of these areas, the domestic opposition tends to find the parties in power in other areas congenial, as in the instances of the Ghana-leaning Dynamic Party and Action Group in Nigeria. And we can probably anticipate an increasing traffic from one bloc to another of politicians seeking asylum.

Reprinted from *Africa Today,* April 1963

The Sardauna is, at the moment, the most important figure on the conservative-nationalist side, which encompasses most of the government in West Africa, while Nkrumah, of course, symbolizes the revolutionary-nationalist opposition. The broad division cross-cuts not only tribal, political and linguistic barriers, but previous metropolitan connections, although certain contradictions are involved here, for example, in the difference between the official attitudes of Nigeria and its French-speaking Monrovia allies toward the European Economic Community. Such contradictions, which are likely to prove superficial, as an increasing number of ordinary Africans walk onto the stage of history, keep each major group from being entirely symmetrical. Still, it is the international character of the two dominant political constellations in West Africa, arising from roughly parallel conditions following independence, that has given rise to charges and countercharges of espionage, treason, sabotage, and subversion in and among states in turmoil. These charges have, as yet, little real basis, but their plausibility testifies to the recognition that interests have converged beyond national boundaries. And this is only one small step from more conscious efforts at international political action on the part of the opposing movements, which could indeed, include a denial of national prerogatives. That is, a kind of regional cold civil war may be said to exist in West Africa, flaming occasionally into internal coups d'états, but characterized ordinarily by clashing cultural tempers, perspectives on African union, philosophies of economic growth, and world alignments. The actual and potential importance of leaders such as the Sardauna should, then, be clear.

The story of the Sardauna's life makes a disarmingly simple book; it masks intentions, not profundities; it creates images. It is an impersonal memoir, as remote from introspection as can be imagined. One learns nothing of private emotions, little of human relationships, not even whether the protagonist is married. Yet the portrait of a very clever, contradictory, and poignant person does, inadvertently, emerge, despite the official tone. Here is a man of the most formal piety, conversant with the Koran and Fulani traditions, yet a devotee of cricket and fives; an African Moslem Chief who strangely assumes, in his sudden switches of identity, an English public school mentality. We have encountered this paradox in other parts of the British Empire; the political wedding of local aristocrat and colonial ruler was a technique of the British, and it helped keep the Empire fruitful.

Chronological facts of the Sardauna's life may be summarized briefly, and represent a classic pattern of colonially stimulated leadership. He was born in 1910 in Sokoto Emirate, seven years after the Sultan, a distant patrilineal relative, had been killed by the British and replaced by a near cousin of his father's. His grandfather had been the seventh Sultan of Sokoto, and all of his great-uncles had been Sultans. It is clear that one of Sir Ahmadu's ambitions is to succeed his third cousin, Abubakar, the present Sultan of

Sokoto, since that was the most prestigious position in the old Fulani structure, and Mohammadu Bello, the first Sultan, was the most accomplished son of Othman dan Fodio. After all, Sokoto had been the center of the Eastern Fulani Empire.

In the early years of the 20th century, bureaucratic positions were, with colonial consent, still at the disposal of the dominant, conquest-established lineages, as they are to this day to a more limited extent, and the Sardauna's father had been one of 48 district heads in Sokoto Emirate. Reared in a rural area, in the elaborate compound typical of Fulani officialdom, the Sardauna was able to observe, if not yet to understand, the ebb and flow of local politics.

From the age of five he sat in a Koranic school under a tree and learned scripture by heart. In his 10th year he went off to the Sokoto Provincial School, studied English, arithmetic, geography, some history (mostly British), and continued with his Arabic. At 18 he was head of a house at Katsina College (secondary school). Here he was introduced to British games, in which he did well, learned to respect Gentlemanly Etiquette, and met many of his present colleagues in the Northern Regional and National Governments. Five years later, after completing the course at Katsina, which was a kind of finishing school for the British-trained elite, the future Sardauna returned to Sokoto and was appointed a Middle School Mallam (an honorific term for teacher).

One year later he succeeded a cousin as District head of Rabah, his birthplace. Under the Sultan, he was "in absolute control of his district and was virtually responsible for everything that went on in it." But his major task was to "bring in his tax early and bring it in complete," a remark that tells us volumes about the nature and structure of the archaic Fulani Conquest State. By the end of his fourth year (1938) as District Head, he was successful enough as a tax gatherer, just about equivalent to having proved himself as an administrator—then, as now, no small feat in areas such as Northern Nigeria. A frank note of ambition now enters the narrative.

Also in 1938, Abubakar, the present Sultan, was installed, vacating the title of Sardauna of Sokoto, which was eventually assumed by Ahmadu Bello. Shortly after, Ahmadu was, he hints darkly, exiled from Rabah to Gusau, apparently for reasons of state. If this was a kick, it was a kick upstairs, for he became supervisor of the work of 14 District Heads and of various branches of the Sokoto Native Administration, including the sub-Treasury. Moreover, he was appointed to the Sultans Council, a position he has maintained to this day. By 1942 the Sardauna was entrenched in Gusau and had become closely associated with the British Senior District Officer, Sharwood-Smith, "who ten years later [as Governor General of

Northern Nigeria] appointed [him] First Premier of the Northern Region." But this pilgrim's progress was not really accelerated until 1948 and his return from England, where he had been given a chance to study local agriculture and government. Until that time, as he says, "I knew little about Nigeria and *nothing* about the world outside." But Sharwood-Smith, who was then Resident at Sokoto, evidently felt that the Sardauna, who "had been considered, but had been turned down" for legislative office, was now ready, and, "in due course," he was elected to the Regional House.

From that time on, the Sardauna's personal history and that of the North grow together, while Sharwood-Smith continues to serve as midwife to the former's career. In those days, the Sardauna writes, "We sat with our Residents—one Member (Nigerian), one Resident (British)—alternately. . . . The Resident sat with his provincial Member to give him help and confidence. . . . Some said that this was done to overawe the Members, but this was patent nonsense." Sir Ahmadu rose through the reorganized Northern House in 1950 to the Executive Council and finally to his first Regional Ministry, that of Works and Communications, in 1952. He tells us, "I am glad to say that I made my way of my own impetus all the way from the first 'village level' to the top of the Provincial College." In the meantime, he had become associated with the Northern Peoples Congress, "then a purely cultural" society, on the invitation of Abubakar Tafewa Balewa, the present Prime Minister of the Federation, and also an old Katsina college boy and fellow member of the Regional House.

The growth of the NPC is not documented in any detail, and there is no explanation of the Sardauna's increasing influence in, and ultimate control of, the Party. He does note, however, that "Some people think that it is odd that I retained the leadership of the Party [after Balewa became Prime Minister] and did not hand it to him on this occasion: they do not understand that the *Premier of any Region is not in any way subordinate to the Prime Minister:* Our powers are, in fact, quite separate and our functions do not overlap: in the Regions the Prime Minister is only concerned with his Federal matters and not with Regional affairs. He is, of course, a welcome and honored guest." But, as Sir Ahmadu has stated elsewhere, he considers that the job at the Centre is being filled by a man whom he regards as his lieutenant.

Other significant political attitudes that help ravel the tangled web of current Nigerian affairs, as the Sardauna reports his version of the events and personalities that led to self-government for the various Regions and finally in October, 1960 to national independence, are as follows:

1. He is antagonistic toward the West. Historically, he claims (p. 16) that the friction between North and West, Fulani and Yoruba, stems from the irridentist wars halted by the British, without having reached any conclusion, certainly not that of the "ancient prophecy, that the Fulani would

dip the holy Koran in the sea." More contemporaneously, he expresses his distaste for the Action Group and its representatives in strong terms (even then he was attracted to Akintola, ch. 11), but he seems well-disposed toward the peoples of the East, with whom Sokoto "never came in physical contact . . . with whom our relations have usually been amicable in the last years." However, the feeling for the East must be appraised relative to his repeated distaste of the South in general (e.g., p. 134).

2. He is opposed to a strong central government (p. 135), and appears skeptical of the original amalgamation, under Lugard, of Northern and Southern Regions in 1914. His major interest in Nigerian unity seems to be in the fact that the North is landlocked. One should note, in this context, that the midwest State, now in process of coming into being as Nigeria's fourth Region, could provide the North with access to the sea, and, therefore, make the threat of secession realizable. As is well known, Northern political elements and their allies have been very active in the Midwest area, and have also supported the formation of the new State.

3. He is opposed to, and dismisses the possibility of a Middle Belt Region, attributing the movement to a mere desire to embarrass the North (pp. 215-16). Here, as elsewhere, he indicates that "conquest" is the most evident and acceptable justification for continued sovereignty by a political apparatus over particular territories.

4. He agrees that the Northern leadership and the Colonial British spoke the same language, "because we tended to think along the same lines in our minds" (p. 125). However, he defends the pre-British Fulani structure as being democratic, religious, and civilized, and he blames any deterioration on colonial manipulation of the system (e.g., p. 75).

5. He justifies his reluctance toward early self-government and independence (pp. 112, 131). This is put in deterministic and unusually conservative Islamic language, as follows: "The hand of God was moving as always, using us men as his pieces on the wide field of world events. Nothing which we could have said or done would have moved the day of independence forward, or put it back a single hour, from the moment in which it was ordained to the dawn of time itself."

6. He is opposed to female suffrage, again revealing an expediently political interpretation of Islamic usage, and "would be loath to introduce it myself." He believes women are not yet properly educated, would vote "in the same direction as their menfolk," but would antagonize the great majority of men should they vote, and that widespread trouble would be the result.

One could list any number of related attitudes, over and covert, that delineate the political personality of the Sardauna of Sokoto, and that, though the NPC and the structure of the Northern Region, may have the most momentous consequences for Nigeria and West Africa at large. The Sar-

dauna emerged under British tutelage. But leaders of this character are now coming into their own; they are rejecting their metropolitan cohorts in the name of self-determination, politics notwithstanding. We are obliged to face the fact that the Africa growing out of colonialism has, also, a reactionary side, composed of pre-European feudal elements shaped to colonial ends. This Africa is also bent on independence, is prepared for civil and continental struggle, uses the slogans and even the logic of revolution, and is willing to seek allies where it can find them. All this is made abundantly clear in the concluding pages of the Sardauna's "Life."

Yet there is a note of poignancy. For what he most deeply represents he represents sincerely; his strategic frankness, and his cunning have been utilized in the service of a cause that he considers inviolate. And in the end, I have no doubt, he will be defeated, not by a superior good, but by a superior necessity, and because of the insurmountable contradictions that rend his actions and his view of the world.

7. THE TRIAL OF AWOLOWO
A Nigerian Tragedy

*In Nigeria there was no conflict of principles in 1959, nor were there any rules of the game"**

It would be easy to balance an analysis of the trial and imprisonment of Obafemi Awolowo, quondam Premier of the Western Region and former head of the Action Group, and of the official Opposition, on the ugly post-enlightenment epigram—"Revolutions eat their own children." It would be easy . . . so we may expect academic discourses on the subject by the new

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* *K. W. J. Post, in the* Nigerian Federal Elections of 1959 (*The Nigerian Institute For Social and Economic Research*), *1963, Oxford University Press, p. 442. Figures quoted in this article follow K. W. J. Post's. In many respects his general sense of the Nigerian scene parallels mine as outlined in previous articles in this series and in other publications.*

Reprinted from *Africa Today*, Nov., 1963

Machiavellians who examine revolutions as mere structures . . . but it would be wrong. The fate of Awolowo is a personal tragedy, bizarre in that such an outwardly bland, headmasterish, undramatic sort of man should be the protagonist. (The younger Zik—flamboyant, magnetic, a radical socialist, belonged in that box, not Awolowo—but the older Zik had chosen another, more honored path.) It is a personal tragedy, as it is a national tragedy, but it is not the aftermath of a revolution, although it may well be the prelude. This was no Nigerian Thermidor, a state of affairs which the students of abstract revolution interpret with relish. Nor was this the Americans discarding Tom Paine, the French decapitating Danton, the Bolsheviks slaying their brothers. *The Nigerian revolution has not yet occurred;* the independence of the new nation is a formal reality; but the British, poor and troubled in the post-war world, and faced with rising demands from their Colonial subjects, did not surrender political sovereignty with any reluctance, nor at any material cost, only with a certain nostalgia. The better known Nigerian leaders boast the ease of the transition to statehood, of their statesmanship, their caution, their skill in handling the internal problems of the vast artificial construct of 40 million people, in four regions and 300 ethnic groups, striving towards a more organic unity. In their claims, they are supported by tired, naive, or corrupt politicians of the ex-metropolitan world, who hail them as wise, just, and profound. One often hears unfavorable comparisons with Ghana. The reason is simple. Ghana is undergoing a revolution, a revolution that is public relations-conscious, and poignantly desirous of friendship, but, nevertheless, a revolution. That is, the colonially inherited internal structure of the new nation is being consciously and radically changed. This is an unpopular undertaking in our world, but Ghana seems prepared to pay the price of estrangement, even when her leadership, trained in the West, is wistful about it.

The treason trials in Ghana and those in Nigeria are, therefore, not aspects of a similar social process; they are the mirror images, the *reverse* of each other. Ghana condemns those who conspire against the idea of a Central Government, are proponents of "tribalism" or "regionalism," or other special interests, are opposed to national planning on any realistic scale, and are either opportunistic or reactionary; that at least is the formal tendency of the charges. Conversely, Nigeria punishes and keeps a sharp eye, each Region in its own way, on those who speak of the need of radical change of a stronger, more reliable Central Government, of socialist democracy. Certainly the trial in the Western Region helped reveal these tendencies, and they may become even sharper social realities. Nigeria damps its revolutionary forces, while its reactionaries are at the center of power, and Ghana suppresses its reactionaries and defines its power structure as radical and socialist. In both cases, innocents suffer (which is intolerable, if not

unusual, anywhere); but up to the present, the Nigerian penalties have generally been stiffer, despite the unbalanced reports in the American press.

(Nkrumah and Ghana have long experienced a nasty press in the US, in part because of the habit of many politically sensitive Americans to displace their hatred of Stalinism onto barely emergent, weakly structured neutralist states with strong nationalist leaders—which is like calling a mouse a tiger, although it is not only somewhat smaller but also a member of a different family, because one catches an eye glinting in the dark. Nigeria has, in its turn, inherited a fund of good will, quite irrelevant to an understanding of African political dynamics, simply on the basis of being projected as a counterweight to the "Ghanaian threat.")

Yet, without a Preventive Detention Act, which the emergency powers of the Central Government render unnecessary, the jails of Nigeria, particularly in the Northern Region, have, for years, been familiar to political prisoners. Ghana is more formal about it; there is an Act, the purpose of which is to discourage counter-revolution, and by-pass, if necessary, courts that frequently failed to convict common criminals, as *West Africa* recently editorialized. Yet, the political jails of Ghana are at the moment almost empty; and the people being tried are faced with a concrete charge—the attempted, and near successful, assassination of the President at Kulungulu in the Northern Region.

Conversely, the Nigerian charges against Awolowo and the major Action Group leaders were vague, since no overt act had been committed. In effect, they were tried for, and found guilty of, plotting a coup d'état with aid, it should be noted, from Ghana—whether official or not was never broached. (Alleged paramilitary training in Ghana was an important argument for the prosecution.) Ex-associates of Awolowo helped convict him. Even political allies in the Middle Belt, the Southern half of the Northern region, which Awolowo had fought to detach from the North, both before and after independence, had sworn to his guilt. Awolowo had always understood, and acted on his understanding, that the Northern region, comprising more than half the population, and two-thirds of the area of the country, rigidly class-structured and latent with ethnic tensions, was the key to Nigerian politics. He had depended on the Middle Belt in the critical pre-independence election of 1959 and had, in a formal sense, which will be qualified later, "failed." And later at the trial, when fighting more personally for his survival, he found that politics and sentiment do not sleep together.

The substance of the Government's formal case against Awolowo was simple. He had set up a tactical committee, consisting of himself, as Chairman; Onabamiro, who was never charged, but later turned up as a witness for the prosecution, thus suggesting a deal (he is now Minister of Agriculture and Resources in Akintola's Western Government); Enahoro, who was

extradited from England (where he sought asylum) and who was independently tried and imprisoned (fifteen years); and Ikoku, now in asylum in Ghana. The alleged purpose was to overthrow the Government, following the defeat of the Action Group in the 1959 elections. Arms had been procured, military training of key personnel had been undertaken, and it was said that an ultimate refuge in the Middle Belt, in Tiv hill country, had been prepared, in the event of the failure of the coup. Awolowo made a blanket denial of these charges, and Ghanaian newspapers, denying any connection with any supposed plot, had sympathetically identified him as a victim of "neo-colonialism." Awolowo confronted witnesses, pleading his own case, and maintained a real, if oratorical dignity to the end, when he stated, after being found guilty: "Blessed be your Lordship's verdict and blessed be the sentence which it should please your Lordship to pronounce on me tonight."

During his trial, the founder of the Action Group seemed to grow in stature: he had already matured in his ideological contest with Akintola, who had been, as a result, deposed as Premier of the Western region and read out of the Group. Following his expulsion from that party, Akintola had set up his new United People's Party, and had been reinstated as Regional Premier, when the Federal Government lifted its emergency bans in the West. Following the elections, Awolowo had begun to lean toward Pan-Africanism and an explicit democratic socialism (the *West African Pilot,* an NCNC [National Council of Nigerian Citizens] organ, had later headlined him as a Communist, which had been, in effect, Akintola's distorted charge). If Awolowo's interests began in a struggle for power, it seems clear that his intimate knowledge of the disparities within Nigeria and of the effects on himself and his Party of political compromise and cynicism turned him into a man who insisted that principle must be realized in action. He was neither morally nor intellectually capable of compromise with the North. But this sort of existential politics is a loser's game, although such defeats help shape the future.

Awolowo's success—in failure, as we shall see—consisted of revealing that the Middle Belt was the key to the "impregnable" North, and the North the key to Nigeria. He had rejected the idea of a National Government, and following the elections in 1960, had gone to Azikiwe and the NCNC, asking for a coalition Government, which would have been based on an almost identical vote, though a smaller number of seats than the present Coalition. Balewa, who was to become Premier, had made it clear that the North would not withdraw from the Federation, indeed he explicitly remarked that the North was prepared to form the Opposition, should the Southern parties coalesce at the center. But the NCNC rejected the Action Group request. Dr. Azikiwe's party chose the North, as it turned out, by *prior agreement,* judging, perhaps, that they could command the South without Awolowo and

seizing the chance to rid themselves of Action Group rivalry. But in doing so, the NCNC forfeited their drive toward a sturdier central government, which had been part of Awolowo's platform, and they sacrificed their radicalism, for the sake, so goes the claim, of maintaining the Federation.

The West, the Action Group, and Awolowo were trapped in a pincer move from North and East. The more overt political assault had been preceded by the Federally initiated *Coker Commission* inquiry into the fiscal solvency of the Region, including the connection between the Action Group and the major financial establishments. The findings merely institutionalized what has long been common knowledge, in Nigeria and elsewhere, about the relationship of business to politics. For example, there is no need to document in detail, at this late date, the group of private, public, and political undertakings linked via the consortium of Zik enterprises in the Eastern Region, which led to the 1955 inquiry into the flagrant affair of the African Continental Bank, of which Dr. Azikiwe was Director. The *general* point has been made by Post: ". . . each major party was supported by a bank, which, in particular, was responsible for keeping the party's main newspaper alive and . . . each bank had in the past received a very substantial injection of public money from Government agencies, the respective governments being controlled by the different parties." And further, "without going into the vexed question of morality, it could be concluded that there was a general failure in Nigeria to distinguish between public, party, and private financial interests, and this gave the parties the opportunity to increase their own strength in a number of ways." The inquiry into the Western Region's financial affairs seems thus to have been politically motivated (the AG had, in the past, assaulted NCNC on the same front); that is, it was child's play to uncover evidence of "corruption" or "insolvency"—even though, objectively viewed, the Action Group had, over the years, been more soundly based than the NCNC. Yet the Group's electoral effort in the Middle Belt had been expensive, a fact which the NPC (Northern Peoples Congress) would have understood well enough. Thus the inquiry came at a time when coffers were necessarily low; and the Action Group more vulnerable to examination. Moreover, for the defeated party, financial restructuring had become a more complex problem.

The more specifically political assault on the West had three aspects: First, the suspension of Regional (i.e., Action Group) sovereignty during the initial state of emergency, declared by the Government because of an alleged breakdown of law and order in the West, following the Akintola-Awolowo dispute; Second, the reinstatement of Akintola as Premier, and head of a new party; Third, the rapid immobilizing of the core Action Group leadership, initially confined to their home towns, and finally charged with treason.

In the general trajectory of Nigerian politics since 1959, the actual treason trials appear almost as an incident. They have an aura of inevitability —whether or not Awolowo was personally guilty. It is within the context of the efforts of the NPC and the NCNC to obliterate their common rival that the trials demand to be understood. Only the Action Group had won, even in defeat, enough seats in the North and East to be identified as a *common* rival; the Party was the most immediate Regional antagonist in the North and the only national rival of the NCNC.

If the NCNC suffered any ambivalence, if Zik, by then honored as Governor General, had any qualms about the fate of a former associate in the Nigerian Youth Movement, it was evident for only a moment, shortly before formal charges were made, when, in the conflict between Akintola and Awolowo for dominance in the West, the socialist program of the latter was charitably viewed in the Zik enterprise-controlled *West African Pilot.* But when the lid was clamped down on the West, the NCNC, although quickly disenchanted with the opportunistic Akintola, prudently looked to secure what seemed its own best interests.

Awolowo played his personal role at the trial against this background, denying or dismissing the accusations as such, and disputing the credibility of the witnesses. His contempt for the NPC and his charge that Akintola, who had refused the discipline of the Action Group, was the Sardauna's man, had long been evident. Now, defending himself on the last evening of the trial, having been found guilty, his oldest son dead in a road accident, his honor and intelligence at stake, betrayed by sunshine associates, "pinioned by the wings of God," he called attention to his role in Nigeria's achievement of independence, to his record and his aims. The Judge who sentenced him was a friend, the courtroom in Lagos was choked with tears, and he was condemned. His fate incarnated a lesson in evolution from the principles of politics to the politics of principle, which he, himself, must have learned in pain.

The question remains, was Awolowo guilty? Legally and formally—perhaps; at least a few of his lieutenants may have been, although the outlines of the plot, as alleged by the government, seemed childish, fragile, even irrational. It is just as plausible to believe that paramilitary activity of Action Group members would have been designed to protect themselves and their allies against violence and harrassment by well organized NPC strongmen in the North, as was, in fact, pleaded; or, a presentment of trouble ahead may have led Awolowo to put his party on a more militant footing. Preparations for a coup (if trouble at the Center developed) may have been part of a vaguely defined plan—but it seems doubtful that they were seriously being considered. Yet, if a practical blueprint for revolution hardly appeared to exist, the NPC had deeper grounds for anticipating difficulty and the

Action Group had less reason for being discouraged than is readily recognized. To understand this concretely, we must turn to the results of the December 1959 elections, which, in the first instance, led to the NPC-NCNC coalition at the Center.

Electoral constituencies in Nigeria are allotted to each region on the basis of population, as estimated in the census of 1953. Hence the critical importance of the new census, now being undertaken because of the charges of false counting that echoed between East and North some months ago, when the initial post-independence count was attempted. Generally, it seems that the population of the North had been overestimated, and that of the South under-represented. If so, the census may hasten what political rivals have been attempting to do—unseat the NPC.

Although women are denied the franchise in the North, it is the gross population, as of 1953, which remains the basis for reckoning seats at the Center; thus the North had a possible maximum of 174, the East 73, the West 62.

The actual results revealed that the NPC had, by a minute margin, the smallest popular vote of the major parties and was confined exclusively to its Region, winning not a single seat elsewhere, whereas Action Group and NCNC emerged as national parties winning in all three regions.

The gross figures are:

	NPC	*Action Group*	*NCNC [plus NEPU]*
Popular Vote	1,992,179	1,992,364	2,594,577
Seats	134	73	89

The proportions of the ballot are significant, despite the fact that Northern women did not vote, because the North was calculated to have more than twice the population of the West, and the Northerners, under the urging of Emirs and headmen, had outvoted the Westerners by about 28 per cent.

Furthermore, if we were to reckon the results on the basis of proportionate representation rather than on a simple majority in each region, they would be roughly as follows.

	NPC	*Action Group*	*[plus NEPU] NCNC*
Seats	105	79	102

And if allotment of seats were made on a National rather than a Regional basis, the NPC would have been deadlocked with AG, while losing National primacy.

	NPC	*Action Group*	*[plus NEPU] NCNC*
Seats	86	86	112

Thus it is clear that the reckoning of constituencies on the basis of Regions, indeed, the whole conception of regional autonomy, has been most beneficial to the Northern power structure. It is fair to say, that throughout post-colonial Africa, those who have stood most strongly for regional autonomy, in the name of "decentralization" and/or "tribalism," have not only converged to a position held in metropolitan quarters, but have been concerned with shoring up antiquated and oppressive political systems, representing special interest groups (*vide* Katanga), far removed from the local democracy of tribal life. It is important that political experts understand the specific dynamic involved here, rather than to postulate an abstract contest between centralizing and decentralizing forces. In Africa, the proponents of central governments are almost always more ideologically democratic and responsive to local communal traditions (on which they rest the case for *African* Socialism), although opposed to *secularized* chiefs, than are those who insist upon intranational regional autonomy, as in the instances of the UP and NLM in Ghana, KADU in Kenya, NPC in Nigeria, and so on.

But the statistics imply even more interesting political realities. The Action Group had won 25 seats in the Middle Belt where they *equalled the NPC;* their victories were of course among the pagan peoples; NPC among the Moslems. It cannot be emphasized strongly enough that the Middle Belt is a Nigerian internal *irredenta*—for generations prior to British occupation, it was a battle-ground between Fulani and Yoruba (the predominant people of the Western region) on the one hand, and Fulani and the lesser-known decentralized pagan groups whom the former raided for slaves, on the other. In his recent autobiography, the Sardauna of Sokoto stated that the Colonial Power had halted the wars between Fulani and Yoruba in the Middle Belt before any resolution had been reached, which he felt accounted for the rivalry between North and West today, implying also that the North would have triumphed had the British not intervened.

Awolowo's electoral thrust into the Middle Belt had been successful, although a refined analysis of election results in a historical context is necessary before that becomes apparent. To the historically sensitive Fulani-Hausa elite (and to the NPC), Action Group activity was viewed as an invasion of a vulnerable area which they had never controlled, traditionally, in any depth. Moreover, the NPC had no "understanding" with the Action Group, as they did with the NCNC-NEPU alliance, agreeing, in effect, to form a coalition wherever possible and necessary. The Action Group, therefore, found itself struggling against both East and North before and during the elections; the Opposition was, so to speak, rigged, and the showing in the Middle Belt provinces was all the more significant. The NPC, it deserves note, did not put up any candidate in the East, even in the irre-

dentist areas, and this lack of effort may have been part of the national deal between the two parties in the shotgun marriage at the Center. Technically, of course, NCNC did not stand in the North; NEPU was, presumably, an independent party with which it was *nationally* allied. Even before the elections, NPC and NCNC had agreed to smash Awolowo, and that is the sort of thing that can turn a lap dog into a wolf.

The election results illuminated another pattern of vulnerability in the North. The pagans of the Middle Belt and the peasants of the core provinces of the Sudanic North (the northern half of the Northern region) were *potential allies.* In Kano, Katsina, Zaria and Sokoto, one out of every 3 to 4 peasants *voted against the NPC,* which, in a theocratic structure, gives the appearance of sin. Moreover, not a single NPC candidate in Sokoto and Kano provinces was a peasant or farmer, in an overwhelmingly agricultural area. The majority of NPC candidates in the Sudanic provinces were native authorities, counsellors, and employees, indicating that the contest was between the *Talakawa,* the *untitled,* and those built into the NPC-government establishment. This struggle was heightened by the Hausa peasants' distrust of the British-secured Fulani leadership. To the peasants, a vote against the NPC was a vote against both the Fulani and the Hausa upper classes who ran the Party.

In 24 of the 86 constituencies of the four core provinces, NEPU received over 25 percent of the vote, but not a single victory, and because of the simple majority rule, not a single seat. The Action Group (in alliance with the United Middle Belt Congress), earned at least 25 percent of the vote in five electoral districts and won four of them, all pagan. In most of the remaining constituencies, NEPU and Action Group controlled from 25 to 30 percent of the vote. However, the majority system obscured this deep tear in the NPC fabric.

History will record, I think, that Awolowo was basically guilty of one thing—an uncompromising effort to breach the Northern monolith. This would have been conceived as dangerous, even if the formal voting results had been happier for the NPC, since, as I have indicated in previous articles in this series, the appearance of Northern "stability" and "solidarity" are illusions. The region is, potentially, the most explosive area in West Africa because of the accumulation of inequities within the successive Fulani-Hausa-British and Fulani-Hausa conquest structures. The Northern power elite, best represented in the complex personality of the Sardauna of Sokoto (the Eastern portion of his realm voted heavily for NEPU), certainly understood this fact of political life. The coalition with NEPU at the Center via that party's tie to NCNC was a contradiction only for NEPU, not for NPC, which was thereby enabled to keep a sharp eye and substantial hold on its internal enemies. Thus, the Northern government does not hesitate to arrest NEPU leaders for encouraging "disorder"; nor does the Center, which it

controls, shy from banning public meetings in Lagos or elsewhere in the Federation for the same reason. Recently, in response, the Western Regional wing of NEPU called for the abolition of the theocratic Alkali courts, along with the regional Houses of Chiefs, that is, Chiefs in political assemblage throughout the Federation. NPC reacted predictably, announcing that Chiefly rule and Alkali courts in Northern Nigeria had been established and cherished long before British occupation. This good system, the Party concluded, had earned for the North the admiration and respect of all those who visited the Region.

In any event, the NPC appeared to be in a relatively protected position. It had a coalition understanding with the NCNC, in turn affiliated with NEPU, which was supposed to frustrate NEPU opposition on the local front after independence. On the other hand, NCNC must have regarded NEPU as its Trojan horse within the Northern wall; indeed, the fact that the Party was primarily organized by Moslem Hausa, although establishment outsiders or "sons of the wind," gave it a decided advantage over the Action Group-UMBC alliance, which leaned heavily on Yoruba lawyers and political advisers, who were often Christian and obviously alien to the North. Therein lay Awolowo's greatest liability—coming from the outside, he had done remarkably well among the inaccessible and politically unsophisticated pagans, but his Northern effort had no leverage among the Moslems, even when they were disaffected with the NPC. Still, the NPC had every right to be alarmed. A Fulani counterattack, across the Middle Belt border, against Awolowo, the West, and the Action Group, was essential for two reasons: First, to split the South further by driving another wedge between West and East—Action Group and NCNC; second, in order to forestall the possibility of any understanding betwen Action Group and NEPU, for that could have forged a Middle Belt pagan-(Sudanic) Hausa peasant alliance, a united front of the disaffected, which the Fulani Emirs and their officials could not have long withstood.

In the concrete context of the election results, then, compounded by class and ethnic tensions throughout the North, and between Yoruba and Fulani in the Middle Belt, we can discern the deeper imperatives for the sudden strike at the West. And this also enables us to understand the new concern of the NPC with recruiting party members in the fragmented West and in the emergent Midwest Region. The NPC had supported solidly the conception of a Midwest, the fourth Region in Nigeria; and NCNC alarm over subsequent NPC *national* initiative was well founded. For the NPC was not playing the game its junior partner in the coalition had counted on; NCNC "understanding" seemed to be that the NPC was a provincial Party which would permit NCNC to call the Southern turn. But the NPC had a great deal to gain by supporting the Midwest state—for example, insulation

of the Middle Belt-Southern border where NEPU had been weak and UMBC-AG strong; along with isolation of NEPU within the Northern heartland, where NEPU had been electorally strong, but politically ineffectual because of its NCNC alliance on the national scene. Interestingly enough, none of the major Action Group-associated Middle Belt leaders were found guilty at the trial. Thoroughly cowed, and having turned State's evidence, they had finished their careers, or, men without a Southern anchor, they may wind up in despair in the NPC, a not uncommon fate for Northern politicians from minority groups that are not yet politically structured to hand out appropriate awards, or even to acknowledge efforts at probity.

Finally, in supporting the Midwest state, the NPC not only opened a potentially new phase and area of activity (an arm of the NPC, the Midwest People's Congress, won the first significant by-election in the Midwest Region —a victory downgraded by the NCNC but hailed by the NPC as the turning point in Midwestern politics), but also announced, via Balewa, their Prime Minister at the Center, that no other state or region would be established. This both reaffirmed the NPC rejection of the Middle Belt state movement and satisfied the NCNC, for it is out of the Eastern Region that the prospective Calabar-Ogoja Rivers state would have been carved. And NEPU, perhaps under pressure from NCNC, had never really committed itself to the idea of Middle Belt autonomy. Thus it is evident that proponents of regionalism distinguish rather carefully between legitimate and illegitimate regions in Nigeria, and, I dare say, in other African nations also. Given colonially inherited region, riveted on parochial interests, it is difficult to establish unitary nations. Therefore, the creation of additional regions, weakening the existing ones, can have the paradoxical effect of strengthening a more progressive center. That was apparently Awolowo's reasoning when, as his Party disintegrated, he called for a multi-state Nigeria.

So there we have it. During the first three years of Nigeria's formal independence, Obafemi Awolowo, a deceptively mild man, has spent a year and a half in prison and is now committed to ten more. The sequence bears recapitulation. The Western Region, relatively the richest, had been investigated financially, and publicly discredited. The integrity of the Action Group leaders had been publicly doubted. An intra-regional, intraparty political struggle then broke out, with the Premier of the Northern Region, the Sardauna of Sokoto, warmly supporting Awolowo's ideological enemy, Akintola. A Federal emergency was declared in the West; the upshot was the treason trial of the core Action Group leadership, with an elaborate airing of Middle Belt and Ghanaian associations, both anathema to the North. The alleged conspirators were found guilty and imprisoned, while the two leading Middle Belt allies of the Action Group turned state's evidence.

Did the NPC, which gained much, engineer this affair, with the acqui-

escence of the NCNC, which gained less? The evidence for such an assumption is at least as good as is the evidence for Awolowo's formal guilt. Or, each particular action in each opposing chain of events may have stimulated a counter-action until, at the end, there were two organized forces, Government and Action Group, head to head. But whatever the motives and immediate causes of each event (as if they could ever be known fully), the patterns and the context are, I believe, as described.

The tragedy for Awolowo is clear, though if he survives he may grow on tragedy. The tragedy for Nigeria is that its most powerful leadership betrayed its fear of profound social change, and its love of power, in the country's most critical Region and in the nation at large. Not least among the leaders, but well above the battle, a feted symbol of Nigerian unity in disunity, was Dr. Azikiwe, then Governor General, and now President by constitutional fiat, and without recourse to popular vote. In the end, the more complex tragedy may be his. Awolowo, conspirator or not, conspired against or not, is now growing as a symbol of protest and progress in a nation that could become Africa's center of gravity, and in which we may anticipate a rising disaffection with present political parties and possibilities. The Action Group may be shattered, but the NPC, manipulating carrot and stick, is an inflated "monolith." As for the NCNC, it has compromised itself at the Center, sown further discord in, rather than sweeping, the South, and alienated many of its younger radicals. The post-colonial Nigerian youth, seeking a *national* unity on the Left, finding their brothers in all four Regions, may be the next protagonists in the drama.

8. The End of the First Republic

The events that are changing the character of Nigerian national life happened with incredible speed, but they were long in the development. Within a period of a few hours, the major political figures maintaining the power of the coalition government, primarily by forcing the Western region into an alliance with the North (the NNA), were assassinated. The Sardauna of Sokoto, presumably the most potent political figure in the country, the Prime Minister, Balewa—both Northerners—and Akintola, the Premier of the Western region, had been pressing, through the census scandals of

Reprinted from *Africa Today,* Feb., 1966

1963, the chaotic federal elections of 1964, and the rigged Western regional elections of 1965, for the legitimacy of the central government's position. It had become increasingly clear that Zik, the tragic, fading hero of formal Nigerian independence, was the unwilling captive of the coalition; from his honorific presidency "above politics," he was also, it appears, desperately out of touch with insurgent forces mobilizing throughout the country. In the last several months, it had become clear that Zik opposed the methods and character of the coalition at the center, but, at the same time, clung to an image of Nigerian unity, which, given the government that presumed to be representative, betrayed its shallowness. Although Zik had spoken for relatively quick and painless dismemberment of the federation following the general elections of 1964, which had been boycotted by the Grand Alliance in opposition to the census returns and oppressive electoral practices in the North, it was probably too much to expect from an old warrior that he put his heart into a battle contrary to his fondest hopes. He and Balewa, although disagreeing on the legitimacy of the central government, communicated on an abstract, statesmanlike level, with goals of national harmony in mind that implicitly denied the severity of the internal struggle. Moreover, Balewa, as Prime Minister, had at least the formal compliance of the army. But the real power lay with the Sardauna and Akintola. The latter was fixated on his control of the West, appearing to be a Yoruba "tribalist," although such terms are meaningless in a modern context. Actually, Akintola was the narrowest type of ward-heeling politician, attempting to find, manipulate, and cultivate whatever sectarian sentiments were available to his opportunistic ends. He had no concern with the national well-being. Bello, the Sardauna, had never gone out of his way to identify himself as a Nigerian, as did Zik and even Balewa, and could not have been displeased with the stalemate that had developed within the nation at large, composed of a divided South and a nominally united North, presumably under his suzerainty.

Both Nigerian domestic and foreign policies were being further compromised by this national conflict for power and principle staged in the Western region and symbolized, initially, by the trial and imprisonment of Awolowo in 1962. Deepening corruption on all levels of government was one of the prices the Nigerian people paid as their country foundered; for example, Finance Minister Okotie-Eboh (who was also executed), an old friend of Zik, grew most flagrantly rich through the open manipulation of his position. Gift-giving, sanctioned in the traditional milieu, had, in many of these cases, deteriorated to outright commercial bribery in modern circumstances. Regional ministries proliferated to an absurd degree as the establishment swelled to absorb those party members and politicians who had some interest in maintaining the status quo. At the same time, while unemployment in the cities grew, the extension of public works and utilities, relative to both political promise and public expenditures, was inadequate.

Increased peasant production did not appreciably add to peasant purchasing power. The point is that the struggle at the top was crippling efforts to make the nation a viable concern; correlatively, the myth of the Nigerian administration's ability to ride out crises was breaking down.

The predictable disorders in the Western region following on Akintola's efforts to maintain power in the rigged elections at the end of 1965 seemed to be the immediate occasion, if not the catalyst, for the military coup of last January 15th. Action Groupers, and other adherents of Awolowo, had refused to accept the results; both the regional and central governments proved incapable of containing the ensuing violence. The West, which had been the initial cockpit for the struggle for national power in Nigeria, was plunged into a condition of smoldering, chronic rebellion. But the plot to unseat the government was hatched among junior Ibo officers, whose ultimate ethnic ties were in the East.

The political logic is plain. In the first place, prior to the national elections of 1964, the Ibo-dominated NCNC had broken with the NPC at the center and had entered into a Grand Alliance with the Action Group in the West in an effort to capture national power; in effect, the NCNC thereby proclaimed the failure of its previous alliance with the reactionary elements in the North. The defeat of the southern Grand Alliance in 1964 further frustrated the NCNC, which had always considered itself the party of revolutionary nationalism.

Moreover, as relations between the NPC and the NCNC worsened, the latent antagonism of the Northern establishment to the Ibo in their midst sharpened. Northernization of private and public organizations was accelerated, and substantial numbers of Ibo returned, under duress, to the East. But it would be inaccurate to claim, as many have done, that the basic conflicts that convulsed Nigeria were tribal. One must understand that the Ibo-speaking peoples were traditionally and politically decentralized, egalitarian, and individualistic. Population pressure on deteriorating forestlands (1,000 plus per square mile) in, for example, Owerri Province at the heart of the Eastern region, had, in conjunction with the social character of the Ibo, led to a continuous migration of Ibo to all regions of Nigeria; the largest number of migrants, of course, found their way north since the Region so designated represents three-quarters of the country. Moreover, the educational level of Ibo was higher than that of the average Northerner, enabling them to get jobs in the civil service, trading companies, utilities. Nigeria became, in effect, an Ibo diaspora. Therefore, Ibo tended to develop a Nigerian *national* sensitivity; they conceptualized Nigeria as an emerging nation-state. The identity *Ibo* and the identity *Nigerian* converged. Being Ibo meant becoming a missionary for the idea of Nigeria. Indeed, one typically encounters Ibo who refuse to identify themselves more narrowly than as Nigerians. However, if

Ibo were developing a wider sense of national identity based on their special mission of being *the* Nigerian nationalists, they also maintained a network of ethnic associations throughout the country. These local chapters of the Ibo State Union served Ibo in alien territory as instruments of mutual aid, while buttressing the specific local connections of specific Ibo; moreover, they discharged a latent nationalist-revolutionary political function. The point is that the Ibo rule in the military coup is not properly analyzed as tribalistic but rather as nationalistic, with the Ibo assuming, with some justice, that they were the truest proponents of a modern, unified, African state, shorn of the opportunistic ethnicity, the so-called "tribalism" of the most conservative Northern and Western elements. Put another way, the Ibo catalyzed from within the historical logic of the arbitrary, colonially-imposed legal-commercial structure known as Nigeria. This point can hardly be overestimated. The Ibo have been in the forefront of the modernization forces in Nigeria; in their view their rivalry with other groups has been primarily, ideological, not tribalistic. As Coleman has properly pointed out, the Ibo Unions were initially dedicated to raising the educational level of *all* Nigerians.

The question remains why the military was the vehicle of the drive for a unified Nigerian state. Certainly, in part, because of the high incidence of Ibo in the officer corps, but, more significantly, the military, and particularly the junior officers, had been subject to a militant training in Protestant values, and had developed a Cromwellian disdain for the civilian "rascals" in office. Moreover, the military constituted an interest group that, at the same time, had as its interest the state as a whole; theoretically, the army is the instrument of the state. After all, the military have an instinctive understanding of the structure of state power. As the pioneer British anthropologist E. B. Tylor pointed out many years ago, "Political order came out of military order . . . [the] army served as [the] model on which to organize [the] nation." In Nigeria, there were no other interest groups comprehensive enough to unite the four semi-autonomous regions. The weakness of the extant political parties had ben exposed. Labor was insufficiently organized, and national communication among workers, excepting in the civil services and utilities, was subject to the same disabilities that weakened the federation at large. The general strike that, remarkably, persisted for two weeks in the early summer of 1964 was a massive sign of discontent with wages and living conditions, and a cry of outrage by the better-off workers (civil servants, teachers, etc.) against peculation in high places. But organized labor, although a potential factor of very great force in uniting the federation, has not yet reached the stage where it can actively determine the political direction of the nation.

The peasantry remains the great unknown. Their possibilities for

national political behavior are immense, but Nigerian peasants still tend to function within local, at most regional, contexts. This is not to say that the Northern peasantry, for example, is content, or locked into a conservative ideological alliance with the erstwhile leadership. There was no groundswell of anger in the North when the Sardauna was assassinated. The plurality of Nigerian peasants are Hausa-speakers; now that the Northern Establishment has been brought down, the emerging political accessibility of the depressed peasantry could prove the most significant new development in the life of the state. But the peasantry throughout the federation remains relatively inert, their national consciousness relatively undeveloped. So long as the nation is poor, and dependent, the peasantry is likely to be in conflict with other groups and classes for an adequate share of the national product. The potential for rebellion is there, but the dilemma of unification, of national resolution, persists. No political party, whatever its designation and intention, seems able to solve that problem. Logically, then, it would seem that the military was the only establishment with the required training and power to maintain and strengthen the union; and the role of the Ibo, both within and outside the army, was also understandable, without recourse to argument about tribal or cabalistic conspiracy. Whether or not there was an implicit counter coup consolidated by senior officers, who exploited their junior officers' daring, is not clear, and may not be important. The seniors did, after all, suspend the civil government. But it is quite clear that the refusal of the Action Group to genuflect in the Western region, their insistence on being a national party, although primarily Yoruba in origin, their skepticism concerning the solidarity of the peoples of the Northern region created the environment in which the coup germinated. From the pre-independence federal election of 1959, through the trial and imprisonment of Awolowo, until January 15th of this year, it was the intransigence of the Action Group in the Western region that, in one of modern Africa's minor ironies, gave the NCNC and the nationalist Ibo the opportunity to experiment with several routes toward Nigerian unity. That is to say, the Action Group, under Awolowo, had originally conceived of a national role building up from a regional base—a corbeled arch of political power; the NCNC, spurred by Azikiwe, hoped to link the state in a single span, with themselves as the linch-pin. As it turned out, after much waste and suffering, each conception needed the other in order to give substance to the idea of Nigeria.

But the coup is not a solution to the problems of Nigeria; it is merely the sad end of the beginning of the struggle for a unified and, within the limits of the contemporary world, an autonomous nation. The symbols of the older forms of colonialism have been obliterated. The critical question, still unanswered, concerns the character of the civil regime that has been promised the Nigerian people in due course. A new constitution will be

drafted by study groups and ratified by a constituent assembly. Presumably, governmental machinery throughout the federation will be simplified. A unitary polity will be organized diminishing the power of the regions, in part by the formation of at least a dozen states, primarily in the Sudanic and Middle Belt North. (This would destroy the illusion of a unified and monolithic North, while redressing, as a case in point, the injury done to the West at large by the creation of the Mid-West region, the latter having been, by the way, an old Awolowo constituency.) But all these states would then be dependent on the Center for overall planning and allocation of resources. Moreover, voting rights are to be extended to Northern women. It is worth noting that these plans parallel the national platform of the Action Group as originally conceived by the Awolowo wing. The goal was to block the North as such, and the NPC in particular, from dominating Nigerian politics and policies.

However, the AG failed in their confrontation with Northern reaction in 1959, although they did penetrate the soft underbelly of the North, the Middle Belt. The NCNC "success" in achieving the coalition at that time, the fruit of an implicit pre-election agreement with the NPC that they would, if necessary, form a majority with the latter, thus excluding the AG, was merely a prelude to their compound failure to sweep the South and then compromise the NPC in a close embrace at the center. The NCNC-AG-UMBC-NEPU Grand Alliance, the more rational coalition, failed at the polls in 1964. Where ordinary politics, the contest for power in slow motion, failed, the quick, young tribunes have succeeded. All who have more than a careerist focus on Africa will hope that forces that now have a chance to mobilize this military interlude will move Nigeria and sub-Saharan black Africa toward a more dignified and authentic independence.

The Tragedy of Prof. Diamond

Simon Obi Anekwe

Professor Stanley Diamond's "The Trial of Awolowo, A Nigerian Tragedy," in the November issue of AFRICA TODAY, demonstrates a triple tragedy.

It is a Nigerian tragedy, as Diamond says, that one of the foremost nationalist fighters for independence should become a prisoner in free Nigeria. It is a personal tragedy, in a way that Diamond apparently does not see: that of Obafemi Awolowo, lawyer, political leader, Premier, one who lived and was sustained by the tradition of the rule of law until he met his first major setback on the ascent to personal power. Then he became so metamorphosed as to seek to subvert the law that he himself had helped to create.

The essay is also the tragedy of perverted intelligence. One would have expected an objective and truthful presentation of Nigerian events. Instead the contrary is the case, and one finds the Professor chiseling at truth to fit it into prefabricated molds. So vastly is the article strewn with errors that only a very limited sampling can be presented here to substantiate the contention that his thesis on the interrelationship of the treason trial and the Coker Commission is erroneous and misleading.

But first a passing reference to Diamond's use of the term "central government." "Ghana condemns those who conspire against the idea of a Central Government [and] are proponents of 'tribalism' or 'regionalism,'" with the converse being the case, says he, in Nigeria. Now, central government was never the issue. The quarrel was over the break-up of the unitary government inherited from the British into a federal system. Under the former there was only the central government, but the latter had both central and regional or state governments. True, the fragmentation in Nigeria was spearheaded by the proponents of tribalism or regionalism. But who was their leader?

The following three contributions are reprinted from *Africa Today*, February 1964

Chief Obafemi Awolowo stated his philosophy of regionalism and tribal politics in his "Path to Nigerian Freedom," published in 1948. (Sir Abubakar Tafewa Balewa was then a freshman legislator without any dreams of regional autonomy for the Northern Provinces nor of independence for Nigera.) Returning from England as a barrister, Awolowo formed the Egbe Omo Oduduwa, a tribal cultural organization of Yoruba people, of which he was Secretary-General. This cultural society's political manifestation became the Action Group party, and Awolowo became President of it. He went on to be the apostle of tribalism and regionalism in Nigerian politics, gaining the support of the British, who wanted to use him to stop Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe and the multi-tribal NCNC party.

Between 1956 and 1959, Awolowo realized that he stood no chance of wielding power as head of a national government as long as he confined his political organization to the Western Region. So that period saw his frantic efforts to extend AG party machinery to other regions—frantic because national independence elections were coming up, and he was behind the NCNC and the NPC.

He came from third and stayed third after the 1959 general elections. Then, as Diamond says, he began to lean toward Pan-Africanism. It is significant that in the late 50's, following Ghanaian independence, Chief Awolowo supported the NLM regionalists of Ghana and was antagonistic toward Nkrumah even when he visited Nigeria.

But after the failure of his 1959 electoral ambitions, Awolowo changed. He sought out Nkrumah, then the formal leader of Pan-Africanism. His main target had been power. He had adjusted to any set of circumstances that might aid its acquisition. He played for power by accepted rules or by any that he could innovate. His party had sought power without any qualms as to the propriety of the means.

So if he was, as Diamond says, "a man who insisted that principle be realized in action," this principle was power, which he sought to realize by exploiting tribal and regional, then national, and finally Pan-African sentiments.

Diamond states that "the Nigerian charges against Awolowo and the major Action Group leaders were vague, *since no overt act had been committed.*" (Italics added.) How could the Professor reason thus? So US security men should wait until a known conspirator fires a shot at the President before moving against him; otherwise there could be no sane ground for their intervention? Is the moral or legal responsibility for an act necessarily dependent upon its physical completion or execution?

The Professor takes Azikiwe and the NCNC to task for not accepting Awolowo's request for an NCNC-AG coalition in 1960, after the failure at the 1959 elections. And he further suggests having discovered a clandestine

"prior agreement" (like the secret treaties of European diplomacy) between the NCNC and the NPC, which bound them to form a national coalition: "as it turned out, by *prior agreement.*"

Anyone acquainted with Nigerian pre-independence politics knows that by 1958, the virulent and somewhat unprincipled tenor of the AG drive for national power was endangering national unity. At that time the British were making national unity a precondition for granting independence. Cries were raised all over the country for unity and independence.

But Awolowo and his party steamrolled ahead, heedless of the popular plea for unity among the leaders. It was no secret that the then Premier of the Eastern Region, Dr. Azikiwe, went to Kaduna, conferred with the Sardauna of Sokoto, Balewa's party boss, reached an agreement on party cooperation, and received a symbolic white charger from the NPC leaders. The result was well publicized: that the NCNC and the NPC would cooperate at the elections and thus assure independence in 1960.

That "Dr. Azikiwe's party chose the North," as Professor Diamond states, is true; but that this choice was secret or unknown to the AG and to Awolowo is false. For Diamond to accept the myth about the reasoning for the agreement—"perhaps, that they could command the South without Awolowo, and [seize] the chance to rid themselves of Action Group rivalry" —is regrettable, the more so because Diamond visited Nigeria and was in a position to find out the truth instead of hypothesizing. Certainly no wishful thinker could have believed in 1959 that the richest and most dynamic Nigerian party could be got "rid of," as Diamond suggests.

Before the 1959 elections the national Government was a coalition of NCNC, NPC, and AG. But Awolowo, who had expected to leave the Region and go to the center after elections, rejected pleas for a post-election coalition. Rather, he hoped to go it alone. Thus the alliance following the pre-election agreement between Dr. Azikiwe and the Sardauna was actually no innovation, or any sinister plot, but an affirmation.

In making the alliance with the NPC, the NCNC may have "sacrificed their radicalism" for the sake of national unity, but they did not forfeit "their drive toward a sturdier central government which [as Diamond erroneously contends] had been part of Awolowo's platform." The constitution had been determined before the alliance, and after that there was no move to re-define the powers of the regional and federal Governments.

The spirit of an "uncompromising effort to breach the Northern monolith" was not the basic evil in the AG pattern, but its unwillingness to question the means to its objectives. Awolowo's trial for the introduction of organized force into Nigerian politics was not the first for the Action Group. I was an administrative officer at Uyo in 1958, when a royal commission report on the creation of new states was expected; the British, of course,

were then in power. The Action Group in Uyo, led by ex-NCNC whip Eyo, was "uncompromising" in its attempt to detach Uyo for a projected Calabar-Ogaja-Rivers state. The situation was so tense that soldiers were moved in to anticipate trouble. Probably on that account trouble did not come then.

It did come after the British departure, during the first Eastern Nigerian elections following independence. The same Eyo armed his AG followers and fought a pitched battle with a detachment of the Nigerian Police, after having sealed off his village so that the NCNC, led by the Regional Premier, Dr. Michael Okpara, might not campaign there. Thus Eyo preceded his political chief Awolowo in drawing a prison sentence for setting up a private army of insurrection.

Diamond's ingenious attempt to falsify history leads up to his central thesis on the relationship between the treason trials and the investigation by the Coker Commission. "The more overt political assault had been preceded by the Federally initiated Coker Commission inquiry into the fiscal solvency of the Region." The Commission was actually appointed *after* the suspension of the Western Regional Government.

One can rearrange these events in their historical sequences thus: 1 (a) breakdown in the West; (b) suspension of the Western Regional Government; (c) Commission; (d) reinstatement of Akintola, majority leader in the Legislature, as Premier; and 2, arrest and trial of AG leaders for treason.

Diamond himself sums up: "So there we have it. . . . The sequence bears recapitulation. The Western Region . . . had been investigated financially, and publicly discredited. The integrity of the Action Group leaders had been publicly doubted. An intraregional, intraparty political struggle then broke out. . . . A Federal Emergency was declared in the West; the upshot was the treason trial of the core Action Group leadership. . . . The alleged conspirators were found guilty and imprisoned."

Professor Diamond is, in my view, guilty of untruth. There were two distinct chains of events, although Awolowo and the Action Group were the central figures in both. But aside from this, there was no *causal* relationship between the two series of events. Thus the treason trial was *not* the upshot of the Federal Emergency declared in the West over the breakdown of government. The correct sequence, which as Diamond must have known, was:

1 (a) Intraparty, intraregional struggle
  (b) Federal Emergency in the West.
  (c) Coker Commission investigation.
2 (a) Treason trial (following emergency in Lagos).
  (b) Sentencing of conspirators.

Intraparty feuding within the Action Group exploded in May when Chief S. L. Akintola was dismissed as Premier and Alhaji D. S. Adegbenro

was appointed in his place. Chief Akintola contested his dismissal and asked for a meeting of the Assembly, which the Speaker at first refused to call. On May 25, the Assembly met twice, and on each occasion there was a fight in the chamber; the Speaker's mace, wielded as a weapon, was broken.

Parliament reassembled May 29 to consider the Prime Minister's resolution on a state of Public Emergency in Western Nigeria. The House of Representatives passed it 232-44, with no abstentions; the Senate passed it 32-7, with 2 abstentions. Subsequent to this, Mr. Justice G. B. A. Coker of the Lagos High Court was appointed to head a Commission of Inquiry into the affairs of six statutory corporations in the West.

In September, the Prime Minister announced that a coup d'état had been forestalled through the vigilance of the police. Large caches of arms were seized and members of a paramilitary group trained in Ghana were arrested; some fled the country. Chief Awolowo was placed under house arrest. Court proceedings followed, ending with the conviction of Awolowo for treason.

Diamond's unreliability as an objective scholar is further illustrated by the fact that he would not concede that Parliament was justified in declaring an Emergency in Western Nigeria ("alleged breakdown of law and order in the West"), while he would justify the clearly illegal "paramilitary activity of Action Group members" on the basis of "a presentment of trouble ahead [which] may have led Awolowo to put his party on a more militant footing." Yet positions taken by legislators of Awolowo's own party in Parliament indicate that the "alleged breakdown of law and order" was real enough. Speaking after Opposion leader Awolowo moved an amendment to the Government motion (May 29, 1962), his follower Chief Ayo Ropiji asked, ". . . Is it not true that Government is completely broken down in the Western Region? Firstly, today, there are two Premiers in the Western Region! Is this order? Can a state in which there are two Premiers be regarded as orderly?" Would Professor Diamond answer Yes?

Diamond exhibits an amazing sense of proportion when he compares the 1955 British Government inquiry into the African Continental Bank with the Coker Commission's inquiry into six public corporations in the West. For the ACB inquiry erupted over the Eastern Regional Government's attempt to support an indigenous bank and end the monopoly held by the British Bank of West Africa as a depository of Government funds. Later this bank was nationalized. On the other hand, the Coker Commission was brought about by malfeasance and misfeasance involving foreigners, public officials, and private persons in the affairs of the six public corporations.

Diamond understands well the part played by Awolowo in creating regions in Nigeria; hence he enters into special pleading and tries to blame the British for it. "Given colonially inherited regions, riveted on parochial

interests, it is difficult to establish unitary nations." No. Nigerians, not the British, are to blame for regionalism in Nigeria. For they, in 1950-54, fought in Ibadan, London, and Lagos to carve the country into pieces. And in those days Awolowo was Prince of the apostles of tribalism and regionalism, albeit with British blessing.

The plea of difficulty is a weak-kneed defense of Awolowo's part in destroying Nigeria's sturdy unitary system—the kind of system Lumumba died for in the Congo—and in introducing a weak central and a set of strong regional governments. Diamond fully understands Awolowo's role, but he seems to lack an understanding of what truth is.

What Nigeria needs now is not an Awolowo, like an elephant trampling all in a mad stampede for power. What is needed is a younger Zik, like the elder statesman, devoted to democracy and the rule of law, whose breath of social consciousness permeating all sectors of Nigerian society would enkindle in the masses and the leadership high purpose and a selfless dedication to the public good.

Does Stanley Diamond Exist?

Chief F. U. Anyiam

Readers of Professor Stanley Diamond's analysis of the trial and imprisonment of Chief Obafemi Awolowo, leader of the Action Group of Nigeria, will, if they have not been in Nigeria, come to one inevitable conclusion: that the Action Group leader was a victim of political vendetta by the two political parties in the Federation coalition (NPC and NCNC).

Professor Diamond also paints the Nigerian judiciary in lurid colors to show that our judiciary is not insulated from partisan politics and that it conspired with these political parties to jail Chief Awolowo. In other words he brands Nigeria as a country without any moral code of conduct and principles.

One should have expected a more intelligent and constructive analysis from someone who prides himself as a professor of anthropology. But rather Stanley Diamond exhibited a most damnable ignorance of the true state of affairs as far as the trial and imprisonment of the Action Group leader is concerned, and of Nigerian affairs in general.

Reading the article as a whole, one is bound to conclude that the analysis was the handiwork of a hired public relations expert who is most

shameless in portraying his partisanship. I shall endeavor in the process of this rejoinder to show that Stanley Diamond must be a most uninformed intellectual, or that he deliberately distorted the whole trial of Chief Awolowo to suit his diabolical ends and to deceive the ignorant and uninformed, or that the mischief is the handiwork of an unscrupulous political hireling.

This latter view can not be otherwise when one considers the following opinion, said to be that of Stanley Diamond: "One often hears unfavorable comparisons with Ghana. The reason is simple. Ghana is undergoing a revolution. . . . Ghana condemns those who conspire against the idea of a Central Government. . . . Conversely, Nigeria punishes and keeps a sharp eye, each Region in its own way, on those who speak of the need of radical change, of socialist democracy." This is mischievous. On the contrary, it is Nigeria that punishes those who try to overthrow the Federal Government by subversion. In Nigeria everybody is free to have his political views of the Government. Revolution and subversion are not synonymous.

Surely one will agree that the trials in Nigeria are not what this professor of untruth has dished out for the reading world to believe. Most of us who spoke of the need of radical change were imprisoned by the British. Since our independence, Nigerians have been the freest in Africa in expressing our political views without fear. Professor Stanley Diamond has therefore betrayed himself as unworthy of his claim as an anthropologist.

Continuing his farrago of nonsense the professor from Syracuse University says: "Nigeria damps its revolutionary forces, while its reactionaries are at the center of power, and Ghana suppresses its reactionaries and defines its power structure as radical and socialist." Nothing can be further from the truth. We may concede to Professor Diamond the right of his opinion even though such opinion has no iota of truth. Since we are not here to discuss Ghana we must therefore allow the sleeping dogs to lie.

On the charges against Chief Awolowo, Diamond says: ". . . the Nigerian charges against Awolowo and the major Action Group leaders were vague, since no overt act had been committed. In effect, they were tried for, and found guilty of, plotting a coup-d'état with aid, it should be noted, from Ghana—whether official or not was never broached." Professor Diamond wants the Nigerian Government to be overthrown or its President to be shot as the late President Kennedy of America was assassinated before he agrees in the commission of an "overt act." To him illegal importation of arms and training abroad for purposes of a coup do not constitute sufficient guilt but are "vague, since no overt act had been committed."

Stanley Diamond drags the name of the President of the Nigerian Republic, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, into his hymn of hate for Nigeria. The references to Dr. Azikiwe in the article are unnecessary, uncalled-for, and wicked.

In this vein Professor Diamond avers: "It is within the context of the efforts of the NPC and the NCNC to obliterate their common rival that the trials demand to be understood. . . . [The Action Group] was the most immediate Regional antagonist in the North and the only national rival of the NCNC." Here Diamond is guilty of terminological inexactitude. Both the Action Group and the NPC have regional backgrounds and those who know the history of the NCNC must admit that the party does not believe in obliterating its rivals but in winning over its oppoents through examples and persuasion.

Professor Diamond continues: "If the NCNC suffered any ambivalence, if Zik, by then honored as Governor General, had any qualms about the fate of a former associate in the Nigerian Youth Movement, it was evident for only a moment. . . . But when the lid was clamped down on the West, the NCNC . . . prudently looked to secure what seemed its own best interests." Here again the so-called scholar and professor of anthropology is most uncharitable to Dr. Azikiwe and the NCNC. His references to the President in particular are unkind and border on impudence. His insinuations that NCNC and NPC leaders conspired to frame up Chief Awolowo, presumably with the cooperation of the judiciary, are criminal and can only show his frame of mind and a calculated attempt to bring our judiciary to ridicule and hatred abroad.

Equally scandalous to our judiciary are certain portions of the article where the integrity of the Lagos High Court has been questioned. "The outlines of the plot as alleged by the government, seemed childish, fragile, even irrational."

While we loathe and condemn Professor Diamond for his balderdash, we must deprecate the apathy and indifference with which our Federal Minister of Information treats such unprovoked attacks from within and from without on the President and on Nigeria. Our Minister of Information is no doubt a hard-core nationalist, but he seems to overlook or ignore attacks such as Stanley Diamond's scandalous effusions on the people and Government of the Republic of Nigeria.

This is the time to inform people like Professor Diamond and his ilk about Nigeria.

The Federal Government should also pay more attention to external information about Nigeria. There are people within Nigeria who constitute themselves as a menace to the good name of the Republic. We must expose these forces working to distort the image of our beloved country before the outside world without fear. We must also warn those like Professor Stanley Diamond who take delight in running down Nigeria that Nigeria can no longer tolerate such insults.

Is Truth Worth Two Pennies?

Stanley Diamond

The twin attacks on my effort to place the treason trials in Western Nigeria (among the most important political events in post-colonial West Africa) in historical perspective were not unexpected. Either could be readily answered in detail; both are notable for their misinterpretations, irrelevancies, distortions, and inaccuracies. However, I have no wish to sustain a debate, the minutiae of which shift from day to day, which must be mystifying to American readers, and which the political commitments of such antagonists make fruitless. I prefer to leave the evaluation of my efforts, and of theirs, to history. Time is a clarifying agent.

Still, I am compelled to point out that neither Anekwe or Anyiam confronted the central theses of my article (developed over the series of five and recapitulated in the sixth essay). They were:

1. That the Nigerian revolution has not yet occurred. (This is a declarative statement, not an exhortation; one intensely hopes that the profound changes foreshadowed are bloodless and unifying.)
2. That the North is the critical area in Nigerian politics.
3. That the Middle Belt is the critical area in the North.
4. That the NPC is the most reactionary, least representative, and most repressive of the parties.
5. That the elections of 1959 demonstrated the vulnerability of the NPC in the Middle Belt and also among the Northern peasantry.
6. That the NPC has, up to the present, gained more from the Coalition Government than the NCNC, and will continue to gain if Southern discord is not resolved—but that NPC strength is grossly over-rated.
7. That only in the context of the above can the events in the West, the immediate cockpit of the struggle for power and progress within and among the parties in the country at large, be understood.

I find it exceedingly strange that neither Anyiam nor Anekwe made any reference to K. W. J. Post's masterful study, "The Nigerian Federal Election of 1959," published in 1963 for the Nigerian Institute of Social Economic Research (at Ibadan) by the Oxford University Press. Anekwe, in particular, would benefit from Post's discussion of campaign and pre-campaign politics, of the nature and history of the major Nigerian political

parties, of the relationship between business and politics in the South, and of the development of the Coalition Government. As indicated in my article, Post's "general sense of the Nigerian scene parallels mine as outlined . . . in this series and other publications."

The avoidance of these issues helps reveal the narrow political inspiration of both attacks upon me. I should note, however, as an aside, that the ad hominem vehemence is a cultural idiom—in the new tradtion of West African journalism—and the manner must not be taken too seriously. Although the extravagance of the language will sound shocking to the majority of Americans, as will the colorful imputation of motive, any faithful reader of, let us say, the *West African Pilot* or *Gaskiya Tafi Kwabo* ("truth is worth two pennies"), et al., will remain unshaken.

It is hardly necessary for me to assure Mr. Anyiam that: 1. I exist and am not a projection of the Acton Group or a Nigerian masquerading as an American Professor; and 2. I do not write in order to please any group in or out of power anywhere. My identity is clear enough, but the identity of my two friends has not been spelled out. Permit me to do this. Mr. Anyiam, who is, of course, of Ibo derivation, was at one time: 1. National Publicity Secretary of the NCNC (during the Federal election of 1959)—that is, perhaps, why he is prone to label as public relations-inspired interpretations that he finds inconvenient; 2. A member of the Zikist movement; 3. An associate of Zik enterprises; 4. A featured columnist for the *West African Pilot,* with a national reputation for invective. For Mr. Anyiam to represent himself as "uncommitted" in any shape or form is, of course, absurd. He represents the older generation NCNCers who are tragically entrapped with the assumptions of the present Coalition.

Mr. Anekwe, on the other hand, is somewhat more obscure. He is apparently a resident of the US and at one time was a Civil Servant in Calabar, an area not known for its congeniality to the Ibo-dominated Eastern Region. Mr. Anekwe's associations are almost certain NCNC (he is also an Ibo). Although presently at some remove, he certainly seems supportive of the Coalition.

I do not wish these ad hominem remarks to be mistaken for an attack. They are made solely for purposes of identification. Nigeria and West Africa owe much to the remarkable and courageous Ibo people (as I have written elsewhere—see "Nigerian Discovery: The Politics of Field Work," a chapter in "Community Studies Reader," edited by A. Vidich, J. Bensman, M. Stein: John Wiley & Son; "A Field Trip That Failed," in preparation [Harper & Row]; The Anaguta: Suburban Primitives [University of Illinois Press]), but like peoples everywhere, individual Ibos are not above parochialism. Indeed, they can be most parochial when disclaiming that quality in themselves alone, while claiming that Ibos above all (and the NCNC) are capable of reaching and/or representing universal Nigerian interests.

I shall, of course, continue to write as both a scholar and a politically engaged man, for AFRICA TODAY and other journals. In the works listed above I set forth my reasons for doing so. I regard assaults of this type as merely irrelevant. They do not touch the deep respect and love I have for the people of the villages in all the regions of Nigeria, to which the various publications of mine attest. (See e.g., "The Search for the Primitive," in "Man's Image in Medicine and Anthropology," edited by Iago Galdston, International Universities Press, 1963.)

Diamond Was Prophetic

Akintunde Emiola

Nigeria, like any other new nation, is on the threashhold of a socialist revolution. Whether that revolution is going to take the form of a gradual evolution is another matter. The plain fact is that the revolution will certainly come.

Even now the signs of a general awakening, a general gathering of operational forces, can be seen by those who care to see. Why do we want to crucify our phophets?

Personally, I can see neither a cause for, nor a point in, controversy in the articles of Professor Stanley Diamond on events in Nigeria. Is anyone trying to deny the facts? For so the rejoinders of Chief Fred Anyiam and Simon Anekwe seem to me. Dr. Diamond has done no more than state the facts of the Nigerian contemporary political situation as he saw them. Why should anyone try to create an international stagedrama over it?

How good for Africa it would have been if its leaders were able to see themselves as others see them!

I am a Nigerian. And so I do not want to get dragged into the controversy over the propriety of the treason trial and the conviction of the Opposition Leader, Chief Obafemi Awolowo. I am interested only in correcting a number of misstatements in the rejoinders of the two gentlemen in question.

In the November, 1963 issue of AFRICA TODAY, Dr. Diamond, Professor of Anthropology at Syracuse University, New York, treated the trial of Chief Awolowo and related events, and drew the inference that it was the culminating point of a design to liquidate the Opposition. He also referred to events in the Western Region of the Federation of Nigeria, particularly the Coker Commission, and concluded that the pattern of the developments

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The following two contributions are reprinted from *Africa Today*, May, 1964

followed similar lines in countries where the Opposition has been crushed. In the deepest sense, Dr. Diamond spoke as a friend of Nigeria, genuinely concerned with developments in that country, which is tropical Africa's pivotal state.

But in their rejoinders, both Anyiam and Anekwe have tried to portry Dr. Diamond as taking sides with the Opposition and attacking the verdict of the court. To open-minded critics, there is nothing of the sort in the Professor's observations. The impression that honest people can gather from the article is that Dr. Diamond has criticized a political decision to put the Opposition Leader to trial as a poor political judgment.

I am not impressed by the venom unleashed by these critics against the persons of Awolowo and Diamond. This is because abuse cannot be substituted for arguments. Rather, it weakens the case of those who engage in it. Of course, we can ignore such tirades.

The important question, however, is: Is there any rational basis for the trial of Chief Awolowo? I am not convinced—and many others share this stand with he—that any independent person would argue in the way Anekwe has done, and fewer still would accept his conclusions.

Turning to the question of fiscal inquiries, Anekwe has sought to discredit the Professor's argument that an investigation did precede the *overthrow* of the Action Group Government and the declaration of a state of emergency in Western Nigeria. He claimed that the emergency preceded the Coker Commission. This, to my mind, is a mere rationalization of the situation. Every good student of Nigerian contemporary politics will know that the *Coker Commission was the continuation of the abortive Bairamian Bank Inquiry,* which *did* precede the emergency, and which the courts declared illegal. On that score, Dr. Diamond is perfectly right. But even then, Dr. Diamond did not refer to the Coker Commission in his recapitulation of events in the West. He merely spoke of a fiscal investigation, and the bank probe was certainly that. Is Anekwe denying this fact?

And is he also trying to deny that the Coker Commission inquiry was a critical part of the attack on the West? For, in their rejoinders, Dr. Diamond's critics made a flat denial of what people regard as an attempt to liquidate Awolowo and destroy his Action Group Opposition party. But the point is that they have not explained why *all* supporters of Chief Awolowo should be found guilty by the Coker Commission, while Akintola and his backers were exonerated even though Akintola was catapulted to power with funds drawn from the Action Group. Nor were readers left better informed as to why Akintola and Ayo Rosiji, who were Awolowo's deputy leader and secretary respectively at the time material to the treason case, were not found worth prosecuting for the same offense. Surely, Awolowo could not have planned anything without the support of his deputy and secretary. It must be one of two things: either Akintola and Rosiji knew

everything about the alleged plot to overthrow the government but were left out because they left the Action Group, or there was no planned coup d'état at all.

I do not think it is easy to argue out every point in the rejoinders without boring the reader. It is pertinent, however, to say that since the two gentlemen wrote their articles, many more facts have come to light. The passionate ambition of the Feudal Leaders of the Northern Peoples Congress to rule Nigeria at all costs has unfolded itself in many phases; the political leopard typified by Premier Akintola of the Western Region has emerged in his true colors; economic depression in the country has been so severe that a depressed people are now demanding the release of Chief Awolowo from prison confinement—even while his appeal is pending.

This was the point Dr. Diamond was making—the point that the political decision to put Chief Awolowo to trial was ill-considered and ill-motivated. And this view has now been vindicated by time.

Notes for the Record

Stanley Diamond

I have re-read the attacks on me by two Nigerians (February, AFRICA TODAY), one of them a working journalist resident in New York, the other a publicity agent in Lagos, but neither representative of informed and dispassionate opinion in Nigeria. As I mentioned, I deliberately refrained from answering in kind; nor did I think it worth the effort to go into detail about Anekwe's piece in particular. It was cunningly handled, but it was a tissue of deliberate and/or ignorant misstatements of both my articles and the historical events involved.

However, several friends and correspondents of mine, including Nigerians from the three major Regions, have urged me to a somewhat more detailed reply, and I have decided on it for two reasons: first, to clear up one small point of substance, and second, to take the opportunity of noting further pertinent events in Nigeria.

To begin with, Anekwe makes much of the fact that in my summary of events in the Western Region on the last page of the article in question I state that the Western Region had been investigated financially as the first step in the events that culminated in the Treason Trial. This precise sequence (and the *connection,* not the sequence, is the significant issue here) is irrelevant to my overall theses (which were recapitulated in the February issue) and was certainly not my major thesis ,as Anekwe tries to make out. However, it happens to be accurate.

For the fact is that the Federal Government announced many months before the Emergency was declared in the Western Region that they were undertaking investigation of the Region's National Bank, announcing also the makeup of the Board of Inquiry. Immediately thereafter, the Director of the National Bank brought the case to the Courts, where it was fought until October 1961, the result being that the inquiry, itself, which had been underway for no more than a day, was declared illegal. The Government then appealed to the Privy Council. But before the decision of the Privy Council was made known, the Federal Emergency in the West was declared, about eight months after the adverse decision of the Courts. Shortly after the declaration of the Federal Emergency, the Coker Commission inquiry into Western fiscal institutions, including indirectly the National Bank, was initiated. It could hardly be clearer that the Emergency served as an opportunity for setting up the Coker Commission, which must be seen as an elaboration of the abortive National Bank inquiry, precisely because the effort to continue that inquiry had been frustrated. But the prior effort itself had already publicized nationally the Coalition Government's lack of confidence in the Action Group, and all its fiscal works. It is of some interest that the same civil servant was the Secretary of both the National Bank inquiry and the Secretary of the Coker Commission. In short, my sequence is the correct one, not Anekwe's. I make no mention of the Coker Commission specifically, on page 40 of the article in question, but only of the Federal initiative in making fiscal inquiry into the West, which of course preceded the Emergency.

However, in a former article in AFRICA TODAY, one of the five, which Anekwe obviously did not read ("Collapse in the West," September 1962), I do have the Coker Commission specifically in mind, and place it *after* the Emergency declaration. And on page 34 of the November article under discussion, I specifically mention the Coker Commission as preceding the *overt* political assault, which it clearly did, but I do not indicate its relation in time to either the National Bank inquiry or the Federal declaration of Emergency. Ironically enough, after the Coker Commission was initiated, the Privy Council upheld the decision of the Nigerian Courts against the right of the Federal Government to initiate the National Bank inquiry. But this decision was now an academic matter, and the Coker Commission was, of course, not affected.

Parenthetically, I should note regarding the decisions of Privy Councils, whose authority is certainly intolerable to a people seeking independence, that the Privy Council (before Nigeria became a Republic) had also concluded that the removal of Akintola from the Premiership (as a result of the struggle with Awolowo) by the then Governor of the Western Region had been legal. Of course, this decision had been rejected by the Akintola

Government. (Akintola had been, in the meantime, reinstated as Premier by the Coalition at the Center without popular election—elections have still not been held in the West.).

Still another point of interest is that a week prior (June 8, 1962) to the public announcement of the Coker inquiry (June 14, 1962), the Western Regional branch of the NPC called upon the Federally-appointed administrator to initiate just such an investigation into "the finances of the Western Nigerian Government, public corporations, and its agencies" (*Pilot,* June 10). One may fairly conclude that the Western wing of the NPC was anticipating the larger trend of events, to say the least. However, when the London *Times* wrote, toward the end of June, that events in the West appeared to be an assault on the AG and the Regions by the Coalition Government, it was condemned in the *West African Pilot* as a "British independent purveyor of falsehood" and as on the "lower path of lying for cash or kind" (*Pilot,* June 25). Similarly, the *Economist* contended (neither the *Times* nor the *Economist* could be accused of political partisanship toward Awolowo, who had already announced his Democratic-Socialist Program), during the Coker Commission inquiry, that "admittedly the whole inquiry is partly intended by the Federal Government to damage the Action Group which provides the Federal opposition. Nobody expects that anything the Coker Commission may say will destroy the AG finally, but it may affect the Group's future attitude toward politics and it may decide whether the Group itself or its offshoot, the United Peoples Party, under Chief Akintola (the Regional Premier deposed by the AG leader, Chief Awolowo) gains the upper hand." The response from Coalition and Coker Commission spokesmen was predictable: "An insult to Nigeria"; "The correspondent [for the *Economist*] if a foreigner should be deported, if a Nigerian, the Commission should recommend stern steps against him." (*Pilot,* Aug. 17, 1962). It should be clear then that the Anekwe-Anyiam attacks on my article have been hack responses to those questioning the nature of the Coalition Government both within and outside Nigeria.

The above, I hope, should clarify a complex detail tendentiously raised by Mr. Anekwe. But I believe it would be fruitless to go any further into the misleading intricacies of his position. However, may I move on to the really important issue, that is, that current events in Nigeria are developing along lines that had been indicated in my series, and incidentally dissolve further the secetarian assumptions of the Anekwe-Anyiam response.

For example, the UMBC and NEPU have formed an alliance in the North (the Northern Progressive Front) against the NPC, thus not only uniting AG and NCNC affiliates, but forging a link between Middle Belt peoples and Northern peasants. (The Action Group, itself, has recently announced that it was applying for membership in the Northern Progressive Front.) As I have emphasized repeatedly, this, above all, is the fear of the

NPC, and the one best hope for a progressive Nigeria, given its present geographical boundaries. Even more dramatically, in the wake of the continuing crisis over the census figures, which give the North a comfortable majority in the Federal House, the NCNC has formed an alliance with the AG in the Western Region against Premier Akintola's new party, the Nigerian National Democratic Front. Of course, Akintola's new group immediately won the wholehearted support of the NPC (Akintola's Deputy Premier has now called for an open alliance with the NPC), further revealing Akintola's intimacy with the Northern establishment, while the NCNC increasingly disenchanted, referred to the new party as a "betrayal in the classic Akintolian style . . . a three-day wonder conceived in sin and born in treachery." Furthermore, after the initial census figures had been rejected by Premier Okpara and the Eastern Regional House, by Adegbenro, the head of the Action Group, by Osadabey, the Premier of the Midwestern Region, and by Tarka, Aminu Kano, and others, representing the Northern Progressive Front, it happened that the *West African Pilot,* among other Eastern voices, called for a multi-state Nigerian, claiming, as I had done, that it could lead to a more progressive and sturdy center, and paralleling, also, Awolowo's position on States from 1959 to 1962. This, of course, was a theme that had been muted by the NCNC because of its role in the Coalition. It is also interesting to discover that the *Pilot* (March 2, 1964), referring to the census, blames the present crisis on what it calls the imbalance of the political structure in Nigeria, which, it contends, made possible the provocative plot by one party (the NPC) to rule the country forever on the dubious numerical strength of its population. The *Pilot* goes on to claim that it has always consistently advocated the creation of more states in Nigeria to redress the imbalance of the political structure. It warned that if this was not corrected by the creation of more states, it would lead tragically to the breakup of Nigeria into two separate nations, North and South (at one point, the State Union suggested the dissolution of the Federation, following reports of discrimination against Ibos in the North and the census controversy); unlike Anekwe, the *Pilot* also blamed British imperialism, which, it says, gave the North a big majority so that it could hold the South to ransom. In order to avoid this, the Pilot advises the outright rejection of the recently announced census figures. No price, the paper stated, would be too great to pay for Nigeria's unity; and a high-powered UN panel should be organized to recount Nigeria.

I find this position of the *Pilot* sensible. The census issue aside, it parallels Awolowo's point of view, and my own, as expressed in the series. However, my view is not *based* on Awolowo's, and it is also likely that the *Pilot* in the heat of circumstance has reached its view independently (Zik had in the past advocated more states in Nigeria and the breakup of the Colonially-formed Regions).

The point is that taken together with the new alliances in the South and UMBC-NEPU Coalition in the North, current NCNC moves reveal the shallowness of Anekwe's attitudes about the growth and nature of the present Regions, his pseudo-history of the Action Group (that party, incidentally, had been the first to try to set a definite date for Nigerian independence), etc. Under duress, the South is knitting itself together, and it is only fair to mention that the plea for an AG-NCNC alliance had come from Awolowo following the election of 1959. The actual development of this alliance is, of course, a function of the failure of the NCNC in the context of the present Coalition, and of the frustration generated by the census figures, which, for the time being, seem to forestall any possibility of the NCNC's counter-balancing the NPC at the center. A further thorn in the flesh of the NCNC has been the increasingly blunt attitudes of NPC spokesmen both in and out of the Regional House, about Ibo "imperialism" in the North, and the consequent necessity for protecting other people's land, businesses, and job rights. A recent report, denied by Northern spokesmen, stated that a thousand Ibos, given eleven days to pack up and leave Katsina Province, had returned to the East. Whether or not this and similar reports (also denied by Northern officials who claim that the migration have been voluntary) are literally true, the fact is that they reflect all too well the publicly expressed attitudes of NPC and Northern native authorities. As has been apparent throughout this series, the NPC is, I believe, capable of any action in order to preserve its power. In late April the *Sunday Express* reported that more than 3,000 UMBC supporters in Tiv Division had been imprisoned during the preceding month. The Northern Nigerian Government made a blanket denial, stating that, since the inception of the Tiv riots, the number of people jailed for social crimes and arson was 900! The attitude and behavior toward Ibos in the North is an expression of the iron fist, but the NPC also has a velvet glove; it is flexible enough to absorb younger elements that are locally thwarted, and it encourages the kind of progress that does not threaten the fundamental power structure of the Region.

A further fascinating indication of NPC morality is that Chief Anthony Enahoro, the Vice President of the Action Group, who is now serving 15 years in jail for planning the coup d'etat, *had been mentioned as possible Premier of the new Midwest Region by one of the major political parties that contested the election recently held there.* The party was the Midwest Democratic Front, an ally of the NPC. Presumably, the MDF would have had to effectuate Enahoro's release if they had won the election and if they had maintained their interest in making him Premier. The point is that the NPC made a remarkable shift in their attitude to the "traitor" Enahoro, who is a Midwesterner, for purposes of political gain. As the *Nigerian Tribune* asked at the time, "Are we now being told that the NPC is in a position to

give instructions to the lower Courts as . . . has been suggested?" I would suggest that Mr. Anyiam, in particular, ponder this point. However, I must protest that Mr. Anyiam's remarks that *I* had slandered the Nigerian Judiciary are false; at no point did I imply anything of the sort. The sentencing of Awolowo was done not only honestly but poignantly, as I had indicated. The real issue was not the probity of the Judge, which can be accepted as being beyond question, but the political context in which the trial occurred, and the political nature of the evidence.

I also invite Anyiam (and Anekwe) to reflect on the article in the *Pilot* of March 31, in which it is stated that the Yorubas *never suffered* under Awolowo; instead, they established themselves on the Nigerian scene. But, the paper notes, since Chief Akintola took office in 1960, it is on record that *the troubles in the West started under his regime.*

Furthermore, on the 26th of March, E. A. Mordi, an NCNC member of the House of Representatives, stated during the debate on the appropriations bill that "President Azikiwe should use his powers under the constitution to order the release of Chief Awolowo so that he can assume his leadership of the Yoruba people." The parliamentarian claimed that the instability in Western Nigeria had been caused by the imposition of a leader who was not acceptable to the people—"only one leader is acceptable to the Yoruba, and he is Awolowo." It would certainly seem that neither NCNC spokesmen nor NPC representatives, for rather different reasons, in the cases of both Enahoro and Awolowo, are taking their own bitter denunciations of the former Action Group leadership as seriously today as they did yesterday. It is hard to conceive that attitudes toward convicted "traitors" could shift so rapidly. May one conclude that the "crime" for which Awolowo and Enahoro were found guilty is not now viewed as morbidly as the formal charges would have it? I repeat what I noted before: Action Groupers were found guilty of planning, rather vaguely, it seems, a coup d'etat; no action had taken place. Such a charge must necessarily be vague; it now seems that Nigerians connected with the present Government were not impressed by the depth of evidence and intention either.

Permit me to reemphasize that neither Anekwe, who had been an Eastern Regional civil servant in the irredentist area of Calabar, where there is, unfortunately, a good deal of anti-Ibo sentiment (indeed, the Calabar-Ogaja Rivers state movement has been gaining ground in recent months with, one must note, the cooperation of a local NPC affiliate), nor Anyiam, is representative of Nigerian youth, Nigerian labor, or Nigerian intellectuals. In his covering letter to AFRICA TODAY, Anyiam's sole identification was as head of the Nigerian Union of Uncommitted Writers. I have already pointed out the absurdity of this identification (February, AFRICA TODAY), But I should add that Anyiam is currently Publicity Secretary of the working

committee of the NCNC in Lago, a position that we must assume requires some kind of commitment, although I do not believe it to be representative of the stronger voices in the NCNC as they are now developing.

Finally, the frustration evident in the attitudes of Anekwe and Anyiam can be understood, in part, by the fact that NCNC thunder on the left has been stolen by Awolowo, who, to cite one example, had called in Parliament, on November 29, 1961, for compensated nationalization of certain basic industries; this motion, which the NCNC stalled in the Coalition, indeed could hardly have supported, was defeated by the Parliamentary majority.

But these are, perhaps, small matters, which I mention only for the record.

The important thing is that Nigerian politics are undergoing a profound sea-change at this time, and the Western Region remains its most sensitive barometer. Although further predictions at this moment would be rash, one process is obvious. The alignments that have developed since 1959 are disintegrating. The incapacity of the NPC-NCNC Coalition to function in the interest of the Nigerian people is being progressively revealed. South and North are reconsidering their weights and roles in the Federation. Forces are beginning to stir that may well determine the shape of West Africa, the fate of its poor and its peasants, its relationship to the major world blocs and to the rest of the continent. Because of these interrelated factors, what happens in Nigeria helps determine how much time we have left for solving underlying social-economic problems throughout the world in a reasonable and realistic way, and thus helps illuminate our chances of peace. The fate of the Nigerian people is today an aspect of our fate; a mutually critical examination, by each of us of all of us everywhere in the world, in the common interest, is the intellectual imperative of our time. Critical analysis of domestic events in other nations is not inevitably a colonialist enterprise; it should not be interpreted as "meddling" in domestic affairs. Rather, it is even the obligation of citizens of the world who desire peace and freedom. I find it pitiful that Anekwe and Anyiam could not rise above their parochialism, and understandable suspicion, to that perspective.

ACCRA & LAGOS

Chiaroscuro

Stanley Diamond

Colonialism in its classic form is dead, but the spirit lingers on in the policies and presuppositions of the ex-colonial powers, and infects, also, the American consciousness. Lupine journalists, catching the scent of our malaise, and pets of the liberal-conservative establishment, from *Time* to *The Reporter,* are remarkably quick to condemn what they do not understand; they laugh at the wrong times at the paroxysms of nations in birth, and assume an insufferable and unjustified air which can easily be interpreted as "white" superiority. Too often, even radical Americans, innocent of specific knowledge of events in the ex-colonial territories, think in cliches and join the chorus of disapproval. They turn abstract principles, which are always double-edged, to the analysis of the "emerging" peoples. But what these people need, and deserve, from us are humane insight, fraternal sympathy, and concrete historical perceptions. We neglect such understanding at our peril.

The situation is, of course, very complicated. The era of so-called unlimited national sovereignty is rapidly coming to a close. Global organizations and regional blocs not merely of a military, but of a political, economic, and social character, have multiplied since the Second World War, not so much out of sentiment as out of need. These embryonic structures appear at the very time that political and economic factors are literally forcing new boundaries into existence. There is, of course, a contradiction between the many states arising in the wake of colonialism and the larger trend toward the limitation of national sovereignty. The paradox is one that both we and the new revolutionary nationalisms must face, for reasons that will become evident below.

Reprinted from *Dissent,* Spring, 1963

But to return to the demise of classic colonialism: there are at least three reasons why it is no longer viable. First, it is no longer profitable; indeed, the minimal cost of maintaining a modern colony in accord with what has wrongly been called the "revolution of rising expectations" (actually, at this stage, a revolution for sheer survival), makes formal independence a cheaper alternative for the metropole. Second, colonialism is no longer prestigious for the metropolitan countries. And finally, the idea of political independence has irreversibly seized the underdeveloped peoples.

But this is not to deny that classic colonialism has left a massive heritage in the form of weakly industrialized or completely agrarian economies shaped to the needs of the mother country. In the British West African areas, for example, the early growth and later ramifications of the metropolitan trading companies recapitulate the form and substance of colonial and post-colonial subordination. Detailed evidence for this is available in a recent 1955 US Department of Commerce survey on investment in Nigeria. It is worth quoting at length:

> *Mining, foreign trade, shipping, wholesaling, industry, and banking are dominated by large expatriate companies, and outside of the purely agricultural production field, local African capital is significantly represented in only a few scattered activities.* [Italics added.] This situation has prompted some Africans to complain against foreign-financed companies on grounds of economic domination, "monopoly position," and limitation on opportunities open to Nigerians. [A typical view is that of G. Udegbunem Meniru, a Nigerian student in the United States, who, in his treatise "African-American Cooperation," 1954, Libertarian Press, Glen Gardner, N.J., stated: "The impact of large European combines in the internal trade with their monopolistic tendencies have restrained independent African traders from large-scale undertakings especially in the fields of exporting and importing. Having been squeezed out of trade, as it were, Africans have concentrated on retail and petty trade. . . . These big European companies are the machinery with which imperial Britain exploits Nigeria."]
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> . . . the large foreign-financed companies started principally as trading concerns but have increasingly diversified their operations to include processing of primary produce and a wide variety of industrial activities. Some of the activities, such as the sawmilling and plywood plant at Sapele of Africa Timber and Plywood (Nigeria), Ltd., a subsidiary of United Africa Company of Nigeria, Ltd., represent large-scale modern industrial ventures. Several of these companies have a century or more of trading experience in West Africa behind them and in this period through successive mergers and amalgamations have attained a far-flung and diverse establishment reaching, insofar as trading activities are concerned, into every section and virtually every village in the country. Representative of this group are the United Africa Company of Nigeria, Ltd.; John Hold & Co. (Nigeria), Ltd.:

Cie Francaise de L'Afrique Occidentale; Paterson, Zachovis & Co., Ltd. and Societe Commerciale de l'Ouest Africain. British banks, such as Bank of British West Africa, Ltd., and Barclay's (D. C. & O.) also have long association with Nigeria and are well established throughout the principal towns.

The United Africa Company of Nigeria, Ltd., popularly referred to as UAC, is responsible for much of the total import and export trade of Nigeria. Aside from its widespread activities directly or through subsidiaries in wholesaling and retailing, UAC has interests in sawmilling and plywood manufacture, bulking plants for palm oil and other export processing activities, breweries and fruit juice plants, cold storage, engineering and shipping. It also owns 36,550 acres of plantation estates, of which 20,250 are in Nigeria (around Sapele and Calabar) and 16,200 in the British Cameroons. Of the total, some 30,000 acres are planted principally to rubber, bananas, and oil palm.

The history of UAC in Nigeria goes back to the original chartered company so intimately associated with the economic and political history of the company. [Italics added.]

By 1879, four British trading companies had established themselves in trade along the lower Niger as far up as Onitsha. In that year, through the efforts of Sir George Goldie, these companies were amalgamated to form the United African Company. Goldie, *a keen diplomat, businessman, and empire builder described not incorrectly as the founder of Nigeria* [Italics added], proceeded to enlarge the company by amalgamation with competing French trading companies and 2 years later the company's name was changed to National African Company. *The company continued vigorously to "open up" the upper reaches of the Niger River in Nigeria, and in 1886 it was granted a royal charter giving it sweeping power to administer the territories it had acquired by treaty or concession as well as exclusive rights to all mineral resources and royalties in these territories.* [Italics added.] Upon receiving the charter, the company took the name of Royal Niger Company.

At the end of 1899, its charter was revoked by the United Kingdom, but apart from capital compensation it was allowed to retain the right of one-half share in Government royalties from mining. At the turn of the century it had achieved a virtual commercial monopoly in the lower Niger Basin, but in 1919, a new syndicate of several competitors had emerged—the African and Eastern Trade Corp., Ltd. With an issued capital of 6 million pounds, compared with the Royal Niger Company's capital of 10 million pounds, the syndicate was sufficiently big to seriously threaten the Royal Niger Company. In the ensuing competition, both companies, as one writer put it, "almost competed themselves broke."

The British soap firm, Lever Bros., purchased the assets of the Royal Niger Company in 1920, for 8,5500,000 pounds and made one

unsuccessful attempt at that time to purchase the shares of the African and Eastern Trade Corp., Ltd., as well. In 1929, the two companies joined forces, and a new company was launched—the United Africa Company, Ltd., with a capital of 13 million pounds. Subsequent financial transactions resulted in Lever Bros. acquisition in the early thirties of the outstanding African and Eastern Trade Corp. shares and a full ownership of the United Africa Company, Ltd. With the formation of the Lever Bros.—Unilever consortum in 1937, the United Africa Company, Ltd., continued as a direct subsidiary of Lever Bros. and Unilever Ltd., of England.

Although the United Africa Company group trades throughout West Africa, it does most of its business in Nigeria and Ghana; separate local companies have been set up to handle its operations in the respective countries. In Nigeria, the local company is called the United Africa Company of Nigeria, Ltd.

As an indication of its importance in the economic development of Nigeria, statistics issued by the company show that between 1936-37 and 1951-52 capital expenditures of 15,781,000 pounds were undertaken in all 4 British West African areas, of which two-thirds, or 10,011,000 pounds was expended within Nigeria.

The United Africa group, as of December, 1956, employed 43,228 persons in Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and Gambia; of this total, 25,234 were employed in Nigeria in the following fields: Trading, 15,442; transport, 5,380; timber, 3,191; motors (service, etc), 1,221. Of the total number in Nigeria, 695 were Europeans in technical or nontechnical management jobs; all others were Africans.

In 1955-56 the UAC group in Nigeria alone sold merchandise (mostly imported) to a value of 62,030,000 pounds (at selling prices) and purchased raw material for export totaling 595,000 tons, valued at 27,654,000 pounds. (Most of this was purchased on behalf of the Government marketing boards, the UAC acting as the boards' agent.)

Another factor affecting the development of the ex-colonial areas is an unbalanced transportation and communications grid developed in the economic and military interests of the mother country. Typically, motor roads branch out from railroads in pursuit of the major export crops, and serve also as channels for the distribution of European imports. Communications outside of this predictable colonial pattern hardly exist.

Moreover, the ruling elites and supportive bureaucracies of the former colonies have been trained for the most part either in the cultural expectations, intellectual attitudes, and psychological set of the dominant power, or are reared in such symbiosis with that power that freedom only reveals the rootlessness of the elite structure. The exceptions here are, of course, those leaders who ignited the independence movements by reaching the people through agencies that lay beyond the control of colonial rule. In the British areas, in particular, independence is being achieved, not through the

fancied evolution of the usual instruments of indirect rule, but by their obliteration and replacement. And the leaders, although men of what may broadly be called "Western education," learned lessons and suffered experiences that their teachers did not perhaps intend.

In short, the whole shifting socio-economic structure, including the degree and type of urbanization which is developing in most underdeveloped areas, is a function, direct or indirect, of prior colonial occupation. When a metropolitan power disengages itself politically from a former colony, when "independence" is conferred upon the new nation, what is laid bare is neither a viable and modern political economy nor a series of self-sufficient primitive cultures, nor an archaic culture, but an awkward and random blend of all these elements. Properly to grasp the attitudes of the more dedicated African leaders—Azikiwe, Nkrumah, Toure, Mboya, Nyerere, Banda—demands our comprehension of their struggle against this massive heritage of colonialism, of their quest for what Nkrumah is fond of calling "the African personality." This widely, often deliberately misunderstood phrase can be taken to refer not only to the laughter and rhythm that continues to flow through everyday African life, but also to the intangible communalistic consciousness that survives among millions of ordinary Africans in spite of modern commercialism and the gross defections of colonially manipulated chiefs. It is this ancient sense of community which Nkrumah and others seek to rescue, and transform into contemporary cultural forms, while maintaining the spirit of the past. The so-called opportunism of these leaders, in search of a united people and effective political agencies, opportunism which European politicians are so eager to emphasize, undoubtedly exists; but it is no more than that which has always been the gamey aspect of politics itself. It certainly need not blind us to the legitimate historical roles that these leaders have assumed.

The Instance of Ghana

It would be, for example, politically disastrous and analytically naive to interpret Nkrumah's behavior in Ghana as solely motivated by a desire for personal power or as pro-Soviet in a cultural or political sense.

Nkrumah, that is the Government and Party which he represents, is confronted at home with a single crop economy (technically a luxury crop), geared to the interests of the prior colonial power; indeed, there is good reason to believe that cocoa was a major factor in keeping the British on the Gold Coast, after the abolition of slavery and the evident limitations of gold, rubber, and palm oil. Moreover, especially among the Ashanti, the dominant native State of the old Gold Coast, the Centre has been faced, on the one hand, with Chiefly groups whose interests had been cultivated, while their traditions had been transformed, by the British as a means of political and economic control. On the other hand, the Central Government is confronted

by the more prosperous cocoa growers, often in fact identified with the chiefs, who desire the continued expansion and protection of the cocoa economy and thereby pursue political and economic autonomy to a degree and in a manner that would threaten the integrity and growth of the nation at large.

For example, the Ashanti-dominated Opposition in Ghana agitated against the Volta River scheme which will destroy the sovereignty of cocoa and help unite the country in economic and social units that cut across present ethnic boundaries, although divisions are bound to appear in the new national class and occupational structure. It is here that the dilemma of African socialism becomes evident. For the struggle for national unity is not only territorial and ethnic, it is social and economic also; the distance between classes in the emerging polity must be kept from widening to the point at which national growth would be crippled and unnecessary revolutions precipitated. This will demand enormous poise and intelligence from an informed leadership, along with the wisest possible planning and economic and technical aid without prejudice from the richer nations. Thus, the attitude of the Opposition to the Volta River project—that it be delayed until the country was better prepared, is only superficially plausible. Given continued dependence on cocoa, Ghana is bound to get poorer, not richer, as time goes on, and the possibilities of self-determination must also diminish. Moreover, the best way to develop techniques is not to delay their introduction but to sharpen them on concrete projects. The Volta undertaking is the basis for a new economy, and this must be begun at once, even at some sacrifice of more specialized internal interests, and of what may seem to be quicker, more tangible profits.

This antagonism to Volta is a good example of how "traditional" economic, regional and cultural interests coalesce in opposing the central government, and, thus, converge to a classic position held in metropolitan quarters that underdeveloped areas maintain their role as primary producers, and that decentralization of political power and economic means be pursued along regional and "ethnic" lines.

The principle of radical decentralization, which many social democrats in industrialized countries understandably support, simply does not apply to ex-colonial territories, where the people at large must grope towards union across a great many artificially erected, and a few authentic, barriers, while attempting the most difficult feats of national development. It is the projective fear of our own totalitarian tendency, emerging out of the whole structure of the modern industrial state, that makes us so sensitive to "centralizing" trends in the ex-colonial areas; but in these areas the base of state and nation is weak and amorphous, and a polity first of all must be created to transcend the makeshift colonial structure. Furthermore, centralization and decentralization cannot, in such a context, be conceived as abstract, inflexible principles, but as strategies associated with specific ends, namely, political

freedom and economic survival. The governments of the new nations may alternate in their policies in this matter, and may even adopt centralization in one sector and decentralization in another. We must be prepared to understand the context in which either course is pursued.

Ghana, then, has been undergoing a revolution against both colonialism and its after-effects, including the pseudotraditionalism of the Chiefly groups. Among the latter is the old Gold Coast middle class business and professional elite formed at a time and under circumstances that made solidarity with the mass of people almost impossible. Under Nkrumah's leadership, the attempt is being made to lay the basis for a popular democracy, to shift from specialized, primary agricultural production to a more balanced industrial-agricultural economy, which would include the growing and processing of food crops for consumption at home.

It would also be naive and disastrous to misconstrue Ghana's Pan-West African or even Pan-African policy as merely one man's or one party's ambition in a regional or continental struggle for power. It is most unlikely that Ghana alone, with its arbitrarily, colonially defined boundaries, can become, even with the shrewdest political planning and use of resources, a viable modern polity. And this is true despite its relative prosperity at this time, based on judicious use of money made in what has been from 1947 until recently an unusually favorable cocoa market. To one degree or another the same thing holds for every so-called independent nation in Africa, indeed for nation states everywhere. In Europe there are the European Economic Community, the European Free Trade Association, Benelux, the European Coal and Steel Community, etc. In these cases, one rarely hears a reference to the ulterior motives of a Monnet or Spaak. On the contrary, we tend to eulogize their capacity to respond to the need for boundaries reflecting political and economic reality. Still, let us bear in mind that European economic union, especially with the involvement of Great Britain, can easily serve a neocolonialist function. That is, underbidding for raw materials, high tariffs, and preferential planning, pricing and support of commodities produced in Western Europe can drive the ex-colonies into an even more subservient, because less protected and more competitive, position than was the case during the heyday of frank colonialism. *Buying cheap and selling dear* is, after all, if not the expressed intention of the Common Market, at least its likely effect, vis-a-vis the rest of the world; it is, by no means, the dead slogan of a perishing arrangement between the politically strong and weak. One possible remedy for this would seem to be the economic union of the primary producers, the new nations; it may be the only way that they can protect themselves and accumulate sufficient capital to break out of the endless circle of primary production into more balanced industrial-agricultural structures.

Should England join the Common Market and, in effect, abandon the Commonwealth both as an independent union dedicated to the strengthening of all its constituent economies, and as a potential, political third force, the rationale for West African Federation would grow even more impressive. The idea of a non-colonialist Commonwealth would have proven unrealistic; and, incidentally, English preferential use of colony-earned dollars to help rescue her economy after the Second World War would remain, along with other, more imponderable obligations, an undischarged debt. It is just such considerations that lead sociological economists of Gunnar Myrdal's persuasion to counsel an enlightened self-protection as one essential policy of the emergent nations. Yet the desire for politico-economic union and the more rational use of human and natural resources first projected in the Ghana-Guinea-Mali accord is widely suspected in the West.

But the fact is that the new nations of Africa enjoy little or no communication among themselves. It is still necessary as both symbol and fact, for a telephone call from Lagos to be routed through London on its way to Accra. Part of the heritage of colonialism has been the strategic overdevelopment of connections between metropolitan power and ex-colony, and the underdevelopment of political, economic, and social relations among the colonies themselves even when the latter were territorially contiguous. Rational and historical connections between colonial areas associated with the various nation states of Europe were not only ignored but actively discouraged. Moreover, connections between colonies of the same metropolitan power were almost equally undeveloped, since isolation of a dependent territory has the effect of securing political control. Both enforced isolation and overprotection have on the political level results analogous to psychodynamic processes; they choke off growth and make the subject more dependent. It is only in such a context that we can properly understand the complaint of Nkrumah and others concerning the postcolonial "balkanization" of the continent; political independence revealed the fragmentation that had taken place under the pseudo-unity of Empire.

In Ghana the sentiment for African union and the critical internal position of Nkrumah, which are of course related phenomena, do not represent antidemocratic or totalitarian tendencies in any philosophic or programmatic sense of those terms; rather they are the imperatives of a movement that we in these federated and United States should be able to understand in the light of our own history—a movement away from a colonial economy and toward a more rational, independent, and sturdy union conceived in the best interests of ordinary Afriacns. Within Ghana, such a movement implies a strong and flexible central government which can weigh provincial needs in the interests of the people as a whole. Gunnar Myrdal's principle is pertinent: ". . . central planning will have constantly have to aim at breaking the rigidities, which are the mark of underdevelopment, and to seek to

establish greater flexibility in the entire economic and social fabric." That, I submit, is the key to both domestic and foreign Ghanaian policy.

An Unfinished Revolution

So long as this revolution remains unfinished, as Julius Nyerere has pointed out, it can hardly tolerate an opposition which would subordinate the interests of the people at large to those of traditionally or newly privileged groups. We should view developments in Ghana as telescoping aspects of our own Revolution and Civil War; indeed, the analogy holds for almost any African or underdeveloped area. Moreover, these explosive events are occurring in a world society in a century that has developed new sources of energy along with alternative technical and social means of organizing industry and agriculture; and, it might be added, Africa has her own ancient sense, and systems, of communal ownership. Thus, one may conclude that the surprising thing is not that there has been so little tolerance in Ghana for an opposition that sought to fragment the country before the revolution had gotten off the ground, but rather so much tolerance when compared with similar situations elsewhere. This is not to deny the danger inherent in the bureaucratic entrenchment of new, revolutionary elites, particularly in the underdeveloped areas, where very striking gaps between the few and the many are easily opened. But it should be borne in mind that a bureaucracy settling in after a revolution *can* be cleansed by the vigilance of the people and their executive representatives; it is also, despite itself, a structured part of a movement toward freedom, and should not serve as an excuse for us to belittle the efforts of emerging nations. Nor must we exaggerate, or misinterpret *their* "corruption" as against *our* purity. The dynamic cultural context should always be considered; what is acceptable in one tradition may be intolerable in another that succeeds it. For example, bribery, and related practices, in our society tend to be outright commercial transactions, betrayals of principle. But in many developing nations, wherein the impersonal principles of statehood have not yet crystalized, nepotism seems natural and even bribery has emotional, kin-saturated overtones; it can be considered a civil transformation of the customary practice of gift-giving. In any event, corruption in all modern bureaucracies is universal and multiform; occasionally it is subtle. Who would dare measure us against them—and where is the evidence? Moreover, to evaluate by standards of behavior that we ourselves hardly ever achieve, as in the instance of our "disappointment" with India over Goa, is a species of what may be called *moral colonialism,* a curious piece of psycho-political business which gives us the chance to evade our own history by adopting fantastic expectations of carefully chosen others; and we, then, become justified in their failure.

Summing up my second premise, then: Colonialism is dead, but its heritage remains. Properly to understand events in ex-colonial areas, such

as Ghana, demands recognition of the unfinished revolution against this heritage, and the no less difficult attempt to replace it with an independent and viable structure.

International Inequality

My final premise is implicit in the socio-economic analyses of Gunnar Myrdal, Ragnar Nurkse, and like-minded Scandinavian scholars. It is Myrdal's hardly debateable contention that classic equilibrium theory, most evident in economics with its free trade and laissez faire components, but ramifying throughout the social sciences, has led to a false and dangerous expectation concerning the self-adjusting and harmonious relationship of the "have" and "have not" nations. Accordingly, Myrdal and others, including the authors of a basic United Nations report on economic development in underdeveloped areas, point out that the richer nations of the West are accumulating capital at a rate so far in advance of the underdeveloped areas that an international class system, comprising all nations, has already come into being. Colonialism alone was merely a phase in this process, the origins of which must be looked for in, among other factors, the global dynamics of the mercantilist and later the industrial market. Indeed, several of the lower class nations are not only relatively, but absolutely, poorer in terms of real per capita income than they were before the Second World War. Moreover, the richer nations themselves strive increasingly toward integration, that is, the bringing up of relatively depressed areas within their borders to the national level by means of typical, and costly, welfare state measures. In all western nations this internal interference with economic forces has become a routine matter. But the disparity between richer and poorer classes and areas within underdeveloped nations, who cannot afford such measures and are ill-equipped to implement them, grows cumulatively through a spiraling process similar to the one widening the social and economic distance between groups of nations. One reason for this internal dynamic of the lower class nations is clear enough: In large parts of the underdeveloped world, archaic, "oppressor," pre-industrial state structures, to use Myrdal's terms, are absorbing the wealth that is being produced and using it to buttress the ruling regime and to benefit its members. Even where foreign aid seems fairly extensive, it is quickly blotted up in showcase projects or by bureaucratic waste, and the "takeoff into sustained growth" cannot be achieved.

The traditional "oppressor" state (Myrdal believes that all pre-industrial states are "oppressive" and I am inclined to agree with him) should not, I think, be confused with a strong and flexible state apparatus. On the contrary, the "oppressor" state is usually weak in its own hinterland, substantially unconcerned with welfare measures, economically feeble and incapable of conceiving or effectuating large-scale socio-economic reorganization. It survives because it is either not directly challenged, that is, accepts, under

native conditions, a high degree of local autonomy in exchange for tribute, or because it is supported by colonial or foreign authorities. The idea of the absolutistic, pre-industrial state is a modern political myth, a sort of historical projection of present fears into the past. That is, past "despotisms" were less capable of cultural regimentation than any contemporary state, totalitarian or otherwise. They simply lacked the complicated ideological, technological, social, and economic means, not to mention the refined psychological techniques which are at hand today and are incorporated into all modern political structures.

This cumulative development of international inequality which Myrdal sketches as the present trend is not only perilous politically, inviting the most ugly forms of behavior, but an anthropologist is obliged to add—it is thoroughly destructive of culture. For the shattering of subsistence or near-subsistence economies, as a heritage of colonial or quasi-colonial penetration everywhere in the underdeveloped areas, means the destruction of the relative cultural autonomy, style, and vigor previously associated with these societies. Millions of people, radically disengaged from their own traditions, are being rapidly proletarianized in both rural and urban areas, and are being forced to substitute a mere strategy of poverty and survival for authentic cultural expression. Put another way, they are being rapidly converted into marginal producers and marginal consumers on the remotest fringes of contemporary industrial society. This is a development on a scale unprecedented in history; even the most far-flung empires prior to modern times were essentially tributary; considerable local economic and cultural autonomy were maintained under the surface of external rule, and there was far more sense and continuity, even of participation, in the changes that did occur. To put the matter aphoristically, in the past a genuine *culture of poverty* was possible but in the present the familiar, mutually reinforcing factors of overpopulation, economic stagnation, political impotence and the loss of tradition threaten us with a vast *poverty of culture* among the lower class nations in the international class structure. This looming cultural poverty is complementary to the cultural deficiency of our phase of industrial civilization; to their chaotic diaspora, we are a problematical Jerusalem.

The further widening of the socio-economic and cultural gap depend upon the free play of national and international markets, either unregulated and thus working "naturally" to the disadvantage of the poorer nations or actively regulated in favor of the rich. Myrdal's critical point is that free trade will only increase the wealth of the community of richer nations, although I should note that capital has migrated, and will continue to migrate, from one area among them to another. But free trade will increasingly impoverish the poor. In some cases, indeed, a flight of capital from the now unprotected ex-colonial areas is under way as a predictable result of the "free play" of the market forces. Thus active, planned interference with these

forces by sophisticated, welfare oriented and politically sturdy governments is the *sine qua non* of future development in the underdeveloped areas. The internal purpose of these governments, moreover, must be to develop balanced economies; thus to break down archaic oligarchies of wealth and privilege which impede the distribution and slow the formation of capital. In Myrdal's words, "In many of the poorer countries the natural drift towards inequalities has been supported and magnified by built-in feudal and other inegalitarian institutions and power structures which aid the rich in exploiting the poor." Moreover, "No society has ever substantially reformed itself by a movement from above or by a simple voluntary decision of an upper class."

As for ourselves, let us not forget that colonialism has been the old, persistent contradiction that unfolded at the heart of the West and remains, in its accumulated ramifications, unresolved; it is the concrete denial of our conception of freedom, justice, truth and mercy; indeed it is the force that drives them into mere abstraction. A modest acquaintance with history confirms that these abstractions starve the spirit; civilizations die of them.

For us, the colonial contradiction began with the Greeks, generated in the disparity between their view of Man and their uses of men. It was chronically evident in their employment of strangers as slaves, and in their pride of Empire, but it reached its climax in that terrible dialogue between Athens and Melos recorded, or invented, by Thucydides. In the end the Melians are, as a matter of policy, exterminated and enslaved, having been denied the right to stay neutral in the war against the Lacedaemonians, and having refused the honor of becoming an Athenian colony. That act of Athens epitomizes the self-betrayal of classic Greek civilization. The rest is epitaph.

Democracy and Dictatorship in Africa

William McCord

The people of the emerging nations, as Stanley Diamond has rightly said ("Modern Africa: the Pains of Independence," DISSENT, Spring 1963), need our "humane insight, fraternal sympathy, and concrete historical perceptions." They also have a right to constructive criticism. To suspend our critical faculties simply because these nations are "young" would be insufferably condescending. In his defense of the inevitability—and indeed, desirability—of dictatorship in West Africa, Diamond comes dangerously close to such a position.

No one can deny the truth of some of Diamond's generalizations: Colonialism has, in many respects, left an unfortunate heritage. Developing nations do need to diversify their economies. West Africa could make judicious use of protective tariffs. Foreign-owned companies often put their own immediate profit ahead of the best interests of Nigeria or Ghana. And, of course, it would be economically desirable, if it were politically possible, for Africa to unite in larger, more viable federations.

Yet Diamond goes further. He appears to assert the economic and political *necessity* of authoritarianism in Africa.

Diamond's brief for centralized, suppressive governments in the developing nations rests on several misconceptions. He apparently believes that some vague "popular democracy" and adequately substitute for the concrete protections afforded to the individual in a liberal society.

In taking the stance that Nkrumah, Touré, or Nasser can create a new communal polity, Diamond dismisses all too lightly the specific freedoms which are the substance of democracy. The African context does not change the essential nature of these freedoms nor, for that matter, does the newness of independence. Correctly, Jefferson attacked the oppressive Alien and Sedition laws even though the American people were, in Diamond's analogy, going through "growing pains" similar to those of contemporary Africans.

Reprinted from *Dissent*, Autumn, 1963

Whether in Washington in 1800 or Accra today, the victim feels the same when he fears an informer, or knows that a judge is a political stooge, or is kept in ignorance by a controlled press, or languishes in jail for political crimes. To trust, as Diamond does, that a one-party bureaucracy can somehow be "cleansed by the vigilance of the people and their executive representatives" puts a faith in despotism which history hardly justifies. He forgets Demosthenes' advice that "there is one safeguard known generally to the wise, which is an advantage and security to all, but especially to democrats as against despots. What is it? Distrust!"

Freedom's defense, in West Africa as in Greece, requires distrust—a vigilance expressed in a network of solid institutions reinforced by the rule of law, a set of restraints upon the tyrant's power. No discourse about "new" forms of freedom can convince a political prisoner in Ghana that he really has his liberty.

Diamond overlooks another lesson of history: that a benevolent despot often becomes a cruel tyrant. Once the first steps are taken on the path of authoritarianism, it becomes increasingly difficult to reverse the direction. Nkrumah began by affirming his trust in liberal democracy, then instituted the so-called "preventive detention" law, some years later felt compelled to abolish a free trade union movement, and now, contrary to the prediction of his adherents, has turned to execution as an instrument to protect his power.

Yet many liberals and social democrats have, however regretfully, concluded that a "Western" type of democracy will not work in underdeveloped countries. Intellectuals of this persuasion sometimes give the argument an anthopological twist. They contend, as Diamond does about Ghana, that colonialism has destroyed the indigenous culture (thus leaving a political void) and that the opposition is hopelessly parochial and reactionary. They conclude that "the revolution . . . can hardly tolerate an opposition. . . ."

Such an argument radically oversimplifies the West African situation. Admittedly, in Ghana the opposition party did partially draw its sustenance from tribal groups opposed to change. At the same time, one cannot label a party led by such progressive men as Dr. J. B. Danquah, Professor Busia, or Joe Appiah as merely a reactionary clique. They, too, sought economic advance, but within a framework of decentralized political power.

Further, Diamond's argument casts a pall of inevitability over events which were well within the scope of human choice. In Ghana's last free election, Nkrumah received 91% of the vote. Exactly what implacable forces *compelled* this charismatic figure to impose despotism? Surely, with such overwhelming support, he could have governed the nation without resort to mass coercion. (Adherents of Nkrumah sometimes argue that he uses extraordinary measures because of the danger of assassination. In fact, the normal criminal law of Ghana was fully adequate and the president's safety did not

require the passage of such acts as the preventive detention law.)

Most unfortunately, the anthropological contention that democracy and economic development cannot be reconciled, seriously underestimates the capacity of freedom of "native" cultures. In Ghana, the Ashanti tradition provided mechanisms for limiting chiefly power, for deposing despots, for discussiong issues before an open tribunal. Nkrumah has not just poured new wine into old bottles; he has betrayed some of the ancient political traditions of his land. As a Ghanaian correspondent recently wrote me.

> Abbettors of Nkrumah's regime implicitly tell us that we are incapable of appreciating values based on belief in the sanctity of human life and personal freedom. They do not realize what an insult this is to some of us who have had personal experience of the values which informed our most primitive governmental arrangements before the white man set foot in Ghana, values which went into the evolution of central government from the beginning of this century, values which fostered the move for independence in the late forties and early fifties, values caricatured and betrayed by Nkrumah's regime. In short, values derived from the belief that above everything else, men matter.

Whether this urge to freedom can prevail against the lure of authoritarianism is today in doubt. In an age of rising expectations, authoritarianism exerts a basic economic lure. A strongly centralized dictatorial government can pursue its plan development with a ruthlessness eschewed by democratic states. It promises to avoid the compromises, inefficiencies, and hesitations supposedly inherent in liberal democracy.

Diamond has apparently succumbed to this appeal, for his article abounds with economic justification for centralized, one-party states. I agree with many of the economic suggestions he makes, but most of the recommended policies can be undertaken (if they can be undertaken at all) with equal facility by a free or a tyranical government.

On one economic issue we basically disagree. He argues that decentralization is inappropriate for underdeveloped nations, although perhaps desirable for industrialized countries. Actually, the reverse is true. It seems most unlikely that General Motors, say, could be broken up into small, self-governing units. The nature of our economy prohibits any extensive decentralization. In West Africa, however, a pluralistic program makes sense.

In societies like Ghana where the critical needs are to utilized unemployed labor, invigorate agriculture, conserve capital, and improve the peasants' lot, a sensible government would strive to stimulate small-scale, village-based endeavors. What is *most* needed are not the highly "capital-intensive" projects like the Volta dam, but rather programs which release the talents of formerly idle men and save scarce capital. In addition to its economic value, a policy of decentralization corresponds well to social reality in the developing nations. In countries divided by ethnic, regional, religious

and tribal conflicts, economic planners must seek to persuade and satisfy highly diverse interest groups—either that, or forcefully impose their arbitrary decisions on a restive people.

Diamond, then, seems to have accepted the unfortunate identification, first popularized by the Stalinists though not confined to them, of industrialization with *heavy* industry: Volta dams or massive aluminum factories. Industrialization in West Africa could (and should) mean the creation of small fisheries, village industries, "cottage" forms of production, and the advancement of agricultural techniques.

Diamond has also taken another element from the Marxist lexicon: its total rejection of so-called neo-colonialism. One can readily agree with many of Diamond's assertions about colonialism but, as he points out, the past is dead. The task which confronts emerging nations today is to create growing economies, not to pick over ancient wounds. Too often, broadside disparagement of the colonial heritage raises specters of imagined "neo-colonialism" and serves only to hinder economic development.

In Nigeria, to cite one illustration, a blind anti-colonialism on the part of some demagogues threatens the nation's economic progress. In 1961, the Action Group—until then, ironically, the country's most conservative party—demanded nationalization of the economy. The proposal's main appeal lay in its claim to end the economic subservience of Nigeria to foreign "neo-colonial" groups. The motion met with parliamentary defeat, but at least among many in the NCNC party, their vote against this motion sprang more from temporary tactics than fundamental disagreement. Confiscation of foreign enterprises would, in all probability, have crippled Nigeria's economy. Its meager reserve of capital would have been gobbled up in repaying current owners; its hopes for an extension of industry blocked by investment in existing projects. The fund of foreign capital, technicians and equipment, urgently required for the development of new resources would have dried up. Ambitious programs, such as the Shell Co. oil explorations, would have come to a halt, for Nigeria by itself could not provide the men, money or machines necessary for success. Sir Abubakar Balewa's present policy—a program which pragmatically balances public and private sectors, welcomes foreign capital, requests a share of profits from certain new industries, and persuades foreign companies to train a Nigerian staff—this approach promises steady, equitable, if unspectacular growth. Unfortunately, it can hardly be defended with the politically heady but economically sentimental slogans attacking neo-colonialism.

While Nigeria has been more staunch than Ghana in defending basic freedoms (and simultaneously adhering to reasonable economic policies), I am not holding Nigeria up as an exemplar to Ghana, for at the moment, even Nigeria's constitutional framework threatens to collapse. Opposition leaders are standing trial and the government has refused permission for

"foreign" lawyers to defend them.

The trend of events now, as in the Europe of the 1930's, makes one fear that dictatorship is the "wave of the future" in the developing nations. I have faith that this new pessimism will prove as fallacious as the old. While democrats in West Africa admittedly face formidable obstacles, there are no *inevitable* forces either in their nations' colonial background, social traditions, or economic situation which dictate an authoritarian solution. In the absence of an informed public opinion, intellectuals in these areas (and in the West) have immense influence and consequent responsibility. We can hope that they will not fall prey to the current self-fulfilling prophesy that tyranny in Africa is inevitable. We can hope, too, that they will remember Albert Camus' observation that "without freedom, heavy industry can be perfected, but not justice or truth."

The Moral Colonialists

Stanley Diamond

McCord's communication is of no importance as interpretation of the ex-colonial nations in general, nor of emerging Africa in particular. But as a species of moral colonialism, which I define in the article he attacks as

> "A curious piece of psycho-political business which gives us the chance to evade our own history by adopting fantastic expectations of carefully chosen others and then we become justified in their failure, . . .,"

it needs attention.

McCord's central theme is that I defend, indeed espouse, "dictatorship" in Africa, and have composed a brief for "centralized, suppressive governments." He uses "authoritarian" as a synonym for "dictatorial." He considers me contaminated, although perhaps innocently, with Stalinism which he seems to use interchangeably with "Marxism." He also throws "anthropology" and "intellectuals of a certain persuasion" into the hopper so that everything becomes expediently confused. It would be possible to restate the inner logic of his arguments somewhat as follows: Anthropologist, believing in inevitable forces in history, have no respect for the capacity of native

Reprinted from Dissent, Autumn, 1963

peoples to solve their contemporary problems except in Stalinist, Marxist, centralized, authoritarian, suppressive, and dictatorial ways.

Anthropologists need no defense here. But McCord must know that when Gunnar Myrdal, whose conceptions I follow in my article, talks about the desirability of centralization in underdeveloped areas, he is not referring to streamlined, totalitarian dictatorships, or repressive governments. Quite the contrary, Myrdal's brief for centralization is that it will lead to greater flexibility throughout the whole social structure, and break the regional rigidities associated with underdevelopment.

McCord's use of the term "dictatorship" in modern Africa is simply ethnocentric. With few exceptions, the new African nations are one-party states, and those that are not are striving consciously to become so. Nigeria, which McCord mentions with approval, is dominated in each of its major regions by a single party and the Northern Region, consisting of three-fourths of the country, with more than half the population, is in the grip of the most powerful and reactionary political organization in sub-Saharan Africa, the Northern People's Congress, which also dominates the shotgun coalition in the Center. That coalition is under the premiership of Balewa, who is second in his Party and his Region to the Sardauna of Sokoto, the neo-feudal Northern premier. What is sinister about the NPC is its centuries-old feudal base in the archaic civilization of the Sudanic provinces of Northern Nigeria, not its modern "totalitarianism." The point is that totalitarianism and dictatorship in McCord's irresponsible usage are simply not existent in sub-Saharan black Africa; even a really monolithic party such as the NPC is neo-feudal, not fascist, corporative, militarist or communist in structure. But this is not the place to elaborate on Nigerian politics, except to point out that McCord's characterization of the Action Group as "[until] 1961 . . . the country's most conservative party" is ridiculous. The Action Group is a liberal democratic party, far to the left of the NPC, and somewhat to the right of the NCNC, the dominant party of the Eastern Region. Since 1961 the Group—which was crippled in the Federal emergency and consequent treason trials that until recently immobilized the Western Region—has adopted a social democratic program, and is, if anything, more congenial to the West than the Moslem dominated NPC or the more explicitly Marxist elements in the NCNC.

Thomas Hodgkin, a distinguished Africanist, has made the following point in his *African Political Parties:* "We have to seek to understand [African political parties] as they are, avoiding any rigid application of categories and a schemata derived from a study of Western political history and institutions." Emanuel Wallerstein has stated in *Africa, the Politics of Independence,* that "multi-party democracy does not solve the first problem of every African government [which is] how to hold the country together. The alter-

natives are one-party states and either anarchy or military regimes or various combinations of the two." Wallerstein argues further that national integration makes possible economic development, which in turn acts to diversify interests.

Wallerstein and Hodgkin deny a drift toward totalitarianism. Hodgkin documents "the dispersion of power that prevails in varying degree in African states" as expressed through regional and ethnic groups, traders, cooperatives, civil servants, professionals, trade unions, and so on. Wallerstein adds to these the broader trans-national movements and makes a point similar to mine and Myrdal's which the new, particularly Western educated African leaders themselves emphasize, namely, that "totalitarianism can be forestalled by centralization, as when the opposition party enters the dominant party and acts to maintain an openness of discussion and some pressure to account to all interests before reaching decisions." As Harvey Glickman, a political scientist-Africanist, sums up the matter, "All this undermines the utility of the terms traditionally descriptive of politics elsewhere in the past —left, right; authoritarian, democratic; liberal, socialist, or communist— which are too vague, and usually misleading to characterized African politics today. . . ." Although "African nationalism and . . . nation-building resembles the process in its early stages elsewhere, African politics must be related to uniquely African social institutions and to African history." Or, in Hodgkin's words, the African transformation "has its own special kind of contribution to make to humanity."

I would put it this way: the party is the nation in process of formation, drawing upon the past and moving through a variety of social forms on a broad front into the future. But it is not and will not be authoritarian, dictatorial or totalitarian in the Western sense. Rather, it strives to be traditional in spirit, i.e., a unified symbol of the diverse movement of the people into the modern world, the vision of a polity which precedes reality. For a fuller analysis of this situation, I refer McCord to the (thus far) definitive study— *African One-Party States: Tunisia, Senegal, Guinea, the Ivory Coast, Liberia and Tanganyika,* edited by Gwendolen M. Carter.

Now to a few particulars.

1. McCord states that "I believe that Nkrumah, Toure or *Nasser* can create a new communal polity." Nasser is not mentioned in my article, although some years ago in DISSENT I characterized him as a paramilitary dictator. Nkrumah, Toure, or for that matter, Nyerere or Kenyatta may help create new communal—*not collective* but *communal* polities—*if* Africa as a whole is:

(a) able to "rapidly unite," as the renowned French Africanist and agronomist Rene Dumont writes in *L'Afrique Noire Est Mal Partie,* "[and thus] to resist the grip of this powerful European bloc: otherwise neo-colonialism may rename itself Eur-Africa."

(b) to transform the fundamentally cooperative and democratic (but not merely mechanically oppositional) local usages into modern political institutions. That Western nations find it hard to understand this effort, being, in the first instance, so deeply separated from primitive democratic historical experience, does not mean that Africans must fail.

2. Since McCord has seen fit to elaborate my reference to the revolution in Ghana as combining *elements* of, not being fully identified with, the American revolution and Civil War, it is necessary to point out, with Richard C. Haskett (*American Historical Review,* April, 1954) that Tories "suffered loss of civil rights, confiscation of property, imprisonment, exile, and, in a few instances, hanging. It is estimated that 100,000 Loyalists (4 per cent of the white population) fled the colonies between 1775 and 1783." In Ghana, however, the maximum number of people detained under the Preventive Detention Act probably never exceeded 1,000. At present it is doubtful that as many as 100 are still in prison; moreover, it is agreed by responsible African observers, including those in Washington, that there have been no political executions in Ghana, contrary to McCord's contention. Of course, moral colonialists prefer other people's revolutions to be perfect.

3. McCord states that the Preventive Detention Act in Ghana was unnecessary. But the weekly British journal, *West Africa,* the authority in its field, disagrees, stating "There is no doubt that, in Ghana, the state's security was threatened before and after independence by the impossibility of securing convictions in court largely because of intimidation of witnesses, not only of those guilty of political violence, but also of criminal gangs.... The case for the [Detention] Act was strong."

4. The Trade Union Movement in Ghana did clash seriously with the government but a major reason was the compulsory savings plan adopted by a regime which was under tremendous pressure to build a viable economic base on a national scale. It is here that the intent and extent of international aid to the new nations can directly affect internal policy. The Nkrumah government is not opposed to "a free trade union movement" by politics or principle; there was a specific economic conflict of a type which will develop throughout the underdeveloped world unless unprejudiced aid from the richer nations is forthcoming. In this context, it should be noted that American aid to Ghana via the Volta project is primarily to an American company (Kaiser-Reynolds) and is, in any case, a short term loan with a quite high rate of interest,* although bankers do not think so.

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* The actual terms and categories for American aid to Ghana are as follows: From A.I.D. to the Volta River Authority, a government corporation paralleling the TVA, $27,000,000 at 3½% for 30 years; from the Export-Import Bank to the Volta River Authority, $10,000,00 at 5¾% for 25 years; from the Export-Import to VALCO (Volta Aluminum Co.—a Kaiser-Reynolds subsidiary) $110,000,000 at 5¾% for 20 years.

5. I do contend, as McCord states, that colonialism has destroyed much of the indigenous culture, but I also specifically point to surviving African elements and traits. The political opposition in Ghana is, however, not indigenous or "tribal" as McCord argues. The opposition was led by a colonially-bred elite, whose regionalism was based upon the new political and economic interests of chiefs, the related affluent cocoa interests, and antagonism to national planning. Dr. Danquah, whom McCord mentions, probably the most distinguished member of the opposition, is still formally associated with the United Party, is practicing law in Accra, and was released from preventive detention about six months ago. Professor Busia was never in detention, having gone into voluntary exile. Busia was last heard from when he testified in Washington before a closed hearing of the Senate Subcommittee on Internal Security that Ghana was a pro-communist dictatorship, etc. The State Department was thereby moved to announce that:

> The government of Ghana follows a policy of positive neutralism and in the furtherance of this policy has established relations with both Western and Eastern bloc countries. *Ghana has not aligned itself with either grouping.* Ghana has a long history of close association with the West and there exists basic good will among the Ghanaian people for the United States and the West in general.

The Department also characterized Ghana's economy as "mixed," which is correct.

The Ghanaian government interpreted Busia's testimony, which played with the curious allegation that there were 500 Ghanaian soldiers in Cuba, as an effort to sabotage American aid to his country. Even so, it should be pointed out that Ghana is financing fifty per cent of the Volta project, the remaining half stemming from American, British and other sources, the American aid being, as mentioned, a loan. The fact is, that the backbone of the domestic opposition in Ghana *is* reactionary and conspiratorial.

6. McCord misquotes when he states that I and other "liberals and social democrats," who are also linked with anthropologists, Stalinists, and "Marxists," conclude that: "The revolution . . . can hardly tolerate an opposition. . . ." My actual statement from which this is lifted out of context, reads:

> Thus we may conclude that the surprising thing is not that there has been so *little tolerance in Ghana for an opposition that sought to fragment the country before the revolution had gotten off the ground* . . . but rather so much tolerance when compared with similar situations elsewhere.

If McCord knew anything about the history of the CPP relative to the NLM in Ghana, he would understand the background of that remark. More significantly, he simply misrepresented my opinion which was that there had been considerable tolerance when it is recognized that *the Busia-led opposition sought to negate independence unless the little country was divided into*

semi-autonomous regions, and they were in London pleading the case at the very time that independence was being granted. That, Mr. McCord, is not the same as making the generalization you attribute to me: "The revolution . . . can hardly tolerate an opposition. . . ."*

7. McCord implies, without warrant, that I have stated a rigid preference for heavy industry to the detriment of agriculture, fisheries, and village industries, etc. in countries such as Ghana. In the first place, I referred to the necessity of developing "a balanced agricultural-industrial economy including the growing of food crops for consumption at home." My major argument was against the maintenance of a mono-crop economy.

Concerning the Volta hydro-electric aluminum project, McCord simply does not know the facts. The dam will create one of the largest man-made lakes in the world, approximately 300 miles in length; this will lead to an expanded inland waterway system and the development of fishing villages, an important element in the Volta scheme. The power generated will service a large part of the country for a wide spectrum of purposes; ultimately the aluminum factory will utilize Ghana's substantial bauxite reserves. In other words, the Volta project is a step forward out of a colonial economy into an era of balanced growth.

8. By underplaying the role of industrialization, and insisting that "decentralization corresponds well to social reality in the developing nations . . . in countries divided by ethnic, regional, religious and tribal conflicts . . . ," McCord slides into a politically colonialist position. Although he claims to be referring only to heavy industry in his stricture on industrialization, the only vague references that he makes to industry are: "village industries" and "cottage forms of production." He also refers to the need for advancing agricultural techniques; but nowhere is there any recognition of Ghana's cocoa economy, of the need for national planning if diversification is to be achieved, nor of the tremendous energies that must be utilized in order to create a network of modern communications, to exploit local resources. McCord would have Ghana, and presumably the other emerging African nations, quietly fragment themselves into their so-called "ethnic, regional, religious and tribal segment" (*vide* Katanga), abandon their national and international needs (which led to the anti-colonial movement in the first place), content themselves with a primary product oriented peasantry, and all in all cultivate an impossible condition of stasis. Even if this could be achieved, and it cannot be, for both internal and external reasons, it would only serve to attract a new breed of domestic and foreign opportunists.

9. In identifying the industrialization that he does talk about (e.g., Volta) with a Stalinist conception, McCord scatters his shot wildly. He has already bracketed liberals, social democrats, Stalinists, democrats, anthro-

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* For Diamond's full statement, see page 74—*Ed.*

pologists and intellectuals of a certain persuasion as the misled or deliberate Enemy, that is, as a group undifferentiated by virtue of supposedly sharing views opposed to his. The fact is that all United Nations economic reports have consistently stressed that industrialization is the only escape from the downward spiral of underdevelopment. Myrdal, and other economists of the prominent Scandinavian school, have the same view; it is indeed the prevailing attitude of the leaders in the underdeveloped world and of the great majority of modern economists, of whatever theoretical persuasion. To imply that this is a communist idea, is, among other things, simply inaccurate.

10. It may be instructive for Mr. McCord to learn that the distinguished Indian diplomat, K. N. Panikkar, characterized the CPP in Ghana as a "bourgeois nationalist party." Ghana has gone out of its way to attract and protect Western investment. The British High Commissioner in Ghana stated recently that the new investment Act is a model for other developing nations seeking to attract capital: "The investment law meets every test I have ever encountered for encouraging and protecting investors." It is a view shared in official Washington.

Nigeria's investment policy is no more "reasonable" than Ghana's—both are flexible and friendly. No new African nation has shown any serious inclination to "confiscate" foreign enterprises, but McCord's bland attitude toward colonialism does reveal the shallowness of his understanding of its economic and psychological aftermath in Africa, and helps illuminate the slant of his thinking.

11. Finally, I must confess that I am unmoved by McCord's plea against the "self-fulfilling prophecy that tyranny in Africa is inevitable." No one has made this prophecy except a few newspaper reporters and journalistic observers. For a man so loose with his facts, and promiscuous with his concepts, it is absurd for him to invoke the spirit of Camus, who was a man of utmost scrupulosity, an Algerian, and a fierce and honorable anti-colonialist.

Let McCord and others like him address their concern for freedom to their own countries, about which they are presumably better informed.

About the author

Stanley Diamond is Professor of Anthropology in the Graduate Faculty of the New School for Social Research and also a Senior Lecturer in Anthropology at Columbia University. His field work in the Nigerian Middle Belt (1958-1959) resulted, not only in the series of articles reprinted here, but also in a number of scholarly essays, a record of Jos Plateau music (Folkways), a chapter in Arthur Vidich *et al's* "Reflection on Community Studies" entitled: "Nigerian Discovery—the Politics of Field Work," and several forthcoming books, including "A Field Trip That Failed" (Harper & Row). He is a Contributing Editor to *Africa Today* as well as the General Editor of the Basic Books series, Classics in Anthropology.

About the American Committee on Africa

As the oldest organization in the US concerned with African affairs, the American Committee on Africa has consistently focused on African problems of national liberation. Thus previous pamphlets have been published on Kenya, Algeria, South West Africa, Southern Rhodesia and South Africa. Only one. "South African Crisis and US Policy" remains in print (order from American Committee on Africa, 211 E. 43rd St., New York, NY 10017).

The work of the Committee tends to center, these days, largely on southern Africa in general, and apartheid in particular. In this capacity, the organization spearheads anti-apartheid community programs, distributes films and pamphlets, and supplies or suggests speakers. Membership is open to anyone who agrees with its views. Descriptive material will be sent on request.

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