

The New African



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VOLUME THREE NUMBER SIX

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Verwoerd's
Commonwealth

Chinua Achebe's
"Arrow of God"

S.A.'s "Coloured"
University

Malawi Independence



Rivonia: Who were the Criminals?

The New
African



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WHITE SOUTH AFRICA was on trial when the Rivonia group were brought to court in Pretoria. The world looked on and saw apartheid in the dock, side by side with its no less guilty aider and abettor, White supremacy. Nelson Mandela and his colleagues were the witnesses for the prosecution. Dr. Yutar almost exemplified in person the accused, though his tendency to caricature the least acceptable features of South African *baasskap* perhaps reduced sympathy for the predicament of White South Africans below even the modicum that a fair-minded world is prepared to allow.

The protests that followed the sentence expressed the fury of all those who were impotent to do otherwise than expose in words the injustice of a sentence passed by the accused on prosecution.

In these protests there were the usual misunderstandings of the charges against White South Africa and its allies. Rivonia is poor evidence of the police state tendencies of the South African Government. Judge De Wet carried out the laws according to their letter, and merely acted in the spirit within which they were enacted. White South Africa has been able to evade its guilt to some degree by clearing itself of the charge that the trial was rigged, that the Rivonia men were unjustly punished for trumped-up offences.

Dr. Verwoerd made clear again the position of his Government and its followers as the accused by his attempt to justify the sentences on the grounds that the people convicted were "communistic criminals", that they were carrying out a "communist plan aimed not only against South Africa but against the Western world". He said in effect that his people were right to treat those whom some thought to be, in his phrase, "heroes campaigning for freedom" as they were treated because they were not human beings but communists. Verwoerd made the world see once again the accused pleading in mitigation for his actions.

White South Africa was indeed on trial, and it would be hard to find any evidence in its favour at the Rivonia trial. References were made to hospitals and housing for Non-Whites, Transkei self-government was mentioned, too, but such witnesses for the prosecution as Mandela, Sisulu and Mbeki answered any doubts the outside world may have had as to the reality of the oppressed's grievances by their handling of such evidence.

The Rivonia trial may have given White South Africa its last opportunity to show the world that it is at least aware of the nature of the charges it faces, perhaps even to have shown some willingness to meet the demands made by all humanity against it. White South Africa failed to seize this chance, and can now hope for no sympathy as our country moves into the new phase of its growth to non-racial nationhood. In this new phase the world will seek a way of getting South Africa over the stumbling block of White supremacist rule, so as to minimise the South Africa issue as a threat to peace. Some Western powers will drag their feet, but none will do so with an eye to the perpetuation of White privilege, which showed itself at Rivonia to be without responsibility. The common cause will be the transfer of power to majority rule, with the least risk to the peace of the world. After Rivonia there is no likelihood of a break in this common aim.

Malawi will make Independence work

JAMES CURREY

"THE MOST IMMEDIATE problem is the Independence celebrations." The young Malawian's answer to a question about the country's difficulties was serious. The Minister for Independence, Mr. M. W. K. Chiume, was away from Zomba, Malawi's green and pleasant capital. People were waiting for instructions. But Dr. Banda has been keeping Mr. Chiume on the move ever since he took away from him the more important portfolio of Education and gave it to Mr. H. B. M. Chipembere, a man more guarded in action and word. The Independence Office, beside the National Assembly, has only rarely seen its master.

Young Malawians cite "seventy-two years of colonial neglect" as the cause of all the country's problems. On occasion one might feel that Britain had made their small amount of coal low-grade and that the Southern Rhodesians had put bauxite at the top of Mlanje, their highest mountain. But Britain has not looked on Nyasaland with much favour since the Scottish missionaries and Sir Harry Johnston talked Lord Salisbury into declaring it a Protectorate to forestall the Portuguese and the Arab and Yao slavers. Federation was an excuse to stop everything beyond handing out a few C.D.C. loans to the tea plantations and running the administration. The Southern Rhodesian-dominated Federation spent some money in Nyasaland. It tarred the road between Blantyre, the commercial centre, and Zomba, the capital. It built the splendid Blantyre school for Coloureds—to try and justify their spending a great deal more money per head on the education of White children. But it didn't plant money which grew. It didn't put money into schemes which would produce new wealth such as fish from Lake Nyasa, and cotton and sugar from the Shire Valley. The Southern Rhodesians preferred to retain Nyasaland as a labour reserve and a duty-free market for goods made with Kariba electricity.

ON LAKE CHILWA fishermen punt their dug-out canoes Cambridge-style. The logs have been brought over miles of country to the lake. Two lines of tug-of-war men rhythmically pull in the nets, full of wriggling fish. So little is known about the economics of the country that it is not certain how these fishermen operate. It seems likely that entrepreneurs run the trucks into Blantyre or Zomba and

Nyasaland became Malawi on 6 July 1964. On that day Dr. Banda put into operation the revised Five Year plan based on that of the late Dunduzu K. Chisiza.

bring these fishermen from their villages to work for them on the lake.

The Federal and British governments only just began to develop the lake fishing industry. The Southern Rhodesians preferred to rail Frikkie Fish Sticks from the South African coast. A certain amount of research is being done; unfortunately a Rhodesian-born research officer recently offended Malawians by talking of Lake Nyasa as "my lake". When Lake Kariba was created by damming the Zambesi the Federal Government spent millions bulldozing trees which would disappear beneath the waters so that in time to come fishing boats would not foul their trawls. If they had put an equal amount of money into trawlers, refrigerated trucks and a canning factory in Nyasaland, a profitable industry would already be developing. As it is, the delicately flavoured chambo, and other fish from this deep lake which has formed in the Great Rift Valley, do not get to profitable markets.

The Legislative Assembly in session, Zomba



JAMES CURREY, who works in the Cape Town office of a London publishing house, has recently visited Malawi.

A money economy is only just starting. The sellers in Zomba market sit, each behind little piles of potatoes, flour or beans. Each person sells a single commodity. Nobody pesters you to buy in this cool early morning beneath the trees. The wives of English civil servants and American A.I.D. men buy strawberries. They have to wait for their bowls to fill slowly as the women empty tiny punnets at 2d. a time; there are no scales and the sellers do not seem to have had the idea of using larger punnets. An entrepreneur could fly these strawberries to Johannesburg where people are willing to pay five shillings a helping in the off-season.

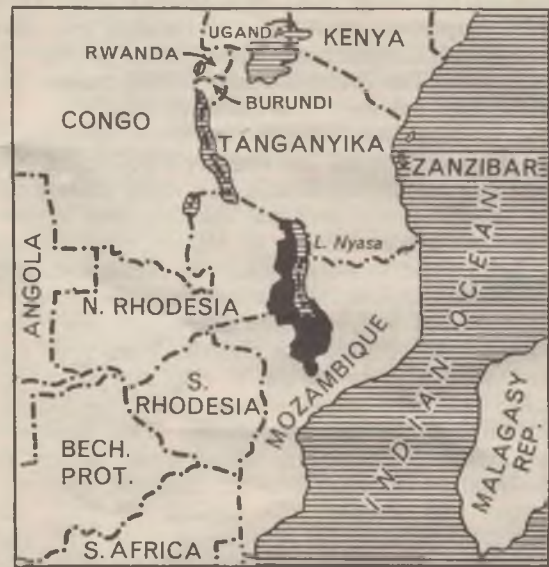
There are about three farms in Malawi run by Europeans, and so there have been few examples of non-subsistence farming. The idea of growing a surplus to sell is only being grasped slowly. And as in all countries an agrarian revolution is needed before a real industrial revolution can take place. Malawi needs agricultural demonstrators and tractor stations more than anything else.

Down river from the ferry at Liwonde, Frankpile thump piles into the foundations of a control barrage for the Shire River irrigation, hydro-electric and drainage scheme. The earth coffer dam looks fragile against the tearing green power of the river. Work has started again after the rains and, due to a miscalculation over the likely level of the river at the time, part of the coffer dam has had to be opened up. This scheme should already be in operation, as should the Kafue scheme in Northern Rhodesia. But Federal effort got tied up with Kariba. Now Kariba can produce electric power for industry which does not yet exist. Meanwhile, the agriculturally rich soil of Shire and Kafue has not been exploited. The development of agriculture first moves money in the economy. This creates the demand for the beer, boots and bricks of secondary industry. These small factories can use the electric power Kariba produces. The order of priorities was wrong.

In the insect-laden afternoon the Malawian mahout rides his elephantine bulldozer. It mud-eats its yellow way through the rich earth. And like an organist the driver plays the spindle levers and clutches, and the steel beast spins as easily as a top on sunbaked earth. The watchers are watched: a child eyes us thoughtfully as he chews wild sugar cane. He doesn't know that Malawi once did not have bulldozers. And he does not know that £4m. are being invested in growing sugar. And that by the time he is old enough to understand what is happening he may be able to replace his tattered vest with clothing made from cotton produced in this valley.

"My country is not poor, it has merely been neglected," says Dr. Banda. In such ways as have been mentioned Malawi is trying to catch up with the economic neglect. On the road between Blantyre and Zomba visitors are shown the bridge where Dundera Chisiza was killed. Many of these plans were his.

A PRESBYTERIAN-TRAINED Inspector looks at us fiercely over her tea and is scathing about the standard of the Primary School she has just inspected. But the problem of education which seems to vex her more than any other is that some of the teachers suckle their children in front of the class. Although Malawian herself she is far more shocked



The High Court at Blantyre



by this than her English and Scots audience. They know that it is difficult for a teacher to concentrate on her teaching in such conditions; they also know how difficult it is to find replacements.

Lilongwe Girls' High School is surrounded by a seven-foot high fence to keep the girls in. Soon after self-government a member of Legco asked whether the fence was high enough to keep out the police, who are camped next door. Such are the problems of education in the new Malawi; overtly different but basically the same as at D.S.G. To what extent is discipline good? Malawian parents, whose daughters are often in their twenties by the time they leave secondary school, are pleased that the chances for their daughters to become pregnant are confined to the school holidays. The parents do not want the school careers cut short: a secondary school education improves the girls' marriageability.

Dr. Banda is determined to squeeze an educated élite out of the schools before he provides for universal primary school education. There are under a hundred Malawian graduates. The new University of Malawi will almost certainly be an "O Level" University, like Zambia's, aimed at providing for the immediate and technical needs of the country. It was originally planned that the University would occupy the old Church of Scotland Mission station at Livingstonia. But, since one can only reach the site by Land Rover, staffing would be a problem. An American team has been touring the country to report on the needs of a university; they will probably recommend that it is placed closer to the Zomba-Blantyre axis.

TOURISM SHOULD BE a useful form of income for such a beautiful country. But there is so much to be done. The lakeside road would be desirable and yet all communications have developed to and from and not along the lake. Would it not perhaps be more sensible to spend the money on roads which would enable the lovely Malawian timbers to be transported to furniture factories? There is also a contradiction in developing tourism. Another American team reported that one of the greatest charms of the country was that it was unspoilt. They then went on to recommend many tourist facilities which will remove this very charm. Nevertheless it is one thing to wish the job of being a quaint and picturesque peasant on somebody else and quite another thing to be a peasant oneself.

And development of the country sometimes takes unusual forms. The "Miss Independence" contest has been supported by the Department of Community Development as a means of giving confidence to the women of Malawi. It is seen as a tool of emancipation of the women, without which no country can develop properly in the modern world. "Miss Zomba" was a schoolgirl and thus one of the emancipated.

Certain Malawian social customs do not help the development of a modern industrialised society. Some of the tribes are matrilineal. A man does not look after his own children but after a sister's children. But if he is more ambitious for his children than his wife's brother then he may find himself landed with paying for the education of both a sister's children and his own children. Such tensions await a Malawian Chinua Achebe.

DR. BANDA obviously has maintained something of the position of the Chief. Young Malawians look to him for a lead; so often they preface answers with "The Kamuzu announced that . . ." John Msonthi, the Minister of Trade and Industry, is in many ways typical of the men in their thirties who form the Cabinet. He comes from the first generation which had secondary education generally available. He is the only Roman Catholic in the Government and went to University in Bombay. Most of his colleagues are Church of Scotland products. He says with smiling frankness as he stands on the ferry beside his black car: "Who knows? The Doctor may have a Cabinet reshuffle tomorrow." But he is not really unsafe because Dr. Banda has already drawn upon almost all the men of Cabinet calibre. But the atmosphere is very much that of "All gifts flow from the Doctor". He personally selected the fifty new members of Parliament from the second rank of local party officials because he did not want to take away the trained men from the Ministries.

Recently the Prime Minister has told his Cabinet Ministers that loose talk must cease. The discipline is not so remarkable as the fact that he made the statement in public. He is the General who gives the orders and statements in the campaign to develop Malawi. He will, and does, order short cuts to be taken on the march to the objective. The end justifies the route taken; and he is probably anxious to get there before he dies. "If it is in the interests of my Malawi people," he said the other day, "I will make an alliance with the devil." He is, of course, the judge of what is in fact good for "my" Malawi People. His approach is pragmatic and the route taken is sometimes surprising as when he shows himself ready to accept the Portuguese as camp followers.

THE ELECTIONS — or really the "non-elections" — in April showed the extent of support for Dr. Banda not only among Africans, who were to vote on a "General Roll", but also among Europeans and Asians who were provided with a "Special Roll". Since there was no successful opposition, the only means Malawians had of showing their approval of Dr. Banda and the Malawi Congress Party was by registering on the General Roll, if they were African, and by refusing to register on the Special Roll if they were Asian or European. 1,863,00 people registered on the General Roll. 800 or so Europeans showed their opposition to Dr. Banda by putting themselves on the Special Roll.

The Minister of Transport, Colin Cameron, pointed out to the Prime Minister that the racialist constitution in fact prevented Asians and Europeans like himself from showing support. First of all Asians were allowed to register on the General Roll. And then later those Europeans who had not registered on the Special Roll were allowed to join the General Roll if they wished; over 600 did. This strange procedure in fact deprived Colin Cameron of the chance to stand for Parliament but Dr. Banda has used his powers which enable him to co-opt a maximum of three non-Members into his Cabinet.

NKRUMAH USED TO MEET in Dr. Banda's house in London. In Malawi one finds some of the cross-fertilised results of

this friendship. Dr. Banda's handling of justice and the press show his philosophical affinity with his protégée. A single party avoids the wasteful bickerings at the time when the need is for a crash programme of economic development; although there is a difference between the situation in the two countries since a middle class has only just started to develop in Malawi while in Ghana a more fully-fledged bourgeoisie makes an official opposition more necessary.

There is a Young Pioneer Corps in Malawi just as in Ghana. However though it was an Israeli Colonel who flew in, gave heart-warming advice, flew out. Within days of leaving he sent back a thick roneoed report. Pages of it were concerned with parachute jumping, an activity which is hardly relevant with the strength of Air Malawi at no more than six. Only when civil servants got to the closing pages did they find some direct references to Malawi; the rest of the report was a standard hand-out. The Young Pioneers have been in trouble on one of the Mozambique borders; they taunted the Portuguese traders and one of their number was shot dead.

One of the members of Banda's government teased one of the retiring British magistrates at a party by saying that Malawi's justice was going to be "much better than Ghana's". Standards seem likely to drop since not one of the British magistrates will be left. Inexperience may lead to some travesties of justice especially when the interests of the party are involved. Some Nigerians have been borrowed but they are in disfavour at the moment, chiefly because of the noisy parties they hold. After one of these they showed what they had learnt from the students of London and St. Andrews by turning signposts round.

DR. BANDA DOES NOT ALLOW a free Radio and Press. The news bulletins of Radio Malawi are reasonable in themselves, especially since a European employee was prevented from over-filling them with praises for the Ngwazi. But the radio does leave out news when the Doctor wishes them to. *Malawi News* is the Malawi Congress Party newspaper and proudly proclaims at the top of the front page "The Only Newspaper in East, Central and Southern Africa owned, Printed and Published by Africans themselves at a Press that is owned and Managed by Africans themselves". It runs true to the form of so many other party papers, especially when it advertises, in May, "1964 calendars now available". *The Times* appears twice weekly. A large headline proclaims UFITI IS DEAD. This turned out not to be an elderly chief but a local chimpanzee which had made good in Chester Zoo in England.

Papers and radio were silent about Banda's visit to Northern Mozambique at the beginning of May. Over tea one morning a missionary's wife said: "And where do you think the Doctor has gone to? He flew off this morning and wouldn't tell journalists where he was going." Supposition and rumour over the next days were split between the possibility of Banda's doing a deal with Tanzan and visiting the Portuguese. Nobody in Zomba seemed to know. There was no mention of his absence in the press or on the radio. Next evening a plane of Air Malawi was seen flying from the north over Zomba, far away from the regular air route. It was commonly agreed that it could

only be Banda returning from the north. Supposition in Zomba still continued. A day or so later a high-up member of the Malawi Congress Party let slip that Banda had been to Mozambique.

Rumours again went around. One of the wildest (repeated in the *Natal Mercury*) was that Banda was bargaining for a strip of land down to the mouth of the Zambezi at Chinde. It could be that he was bargaining with the Portuguese for the completion of the railway to Chinde. But he visited Nampula and Nacala near the town of Mozambique in the North Province. It could be that he is bargaining for favours from the Portuguese in return for promises that Malawi will not become a guerilla base. The Tanganyikan border is a long one and already the Portuguese have more troops in Mozambique than in Angola. Whatever are Dr. Banda's objectives he has already shown that he is more willing to deal with the Portuguese than with the Southern Rhodesians or South Africans. But apparently he does not particularly want this known in Malawi. His country interlocks with Portuguese Africa and it is necessary to maintain reasonable relations; maybe he does not expect his people to understand the situation sufficiently clearly.

TRAINED PEOPLE have always been short in the country. And now a good many expatriate civil servants are leaving. Some of them are leaving in a spirit of malevolence; it is said that all the top officials in one town are resigning together to make it as inconvenient as possible for the Malawians. But even those who are genuinely sympathetic have to think twice about staying. The logic of African Nationalism is Africanisation of the Civil Service. This means that the prospects of a career for Europeans are almost totally removed; a young Englishman in his thirties has to consider whether, before he gets any older, he ought to leave Malawi and start another career.

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It is not that the Malawians do not want white people. Dr. Banda has encouraged expatriate civil servants and technicians to stay. Young Malawians positively resent the exodus of Europeans; one young civil servant said that they ought to be ready to make a sacrifice for Malawi. But in future expatriates are going to be hired on contract rather than as career men. This will mean that Malawi will only get, on the one hand, young men with a spirit of adventure who will leave as easily as they came, and, on the other hand, expensive experts. The country is going to miss the experience of middle rank people who have spent years making the administration work.

The government has recently followed the recommendations of the Civil Service Commission of Enquiry which had T. M. Skinner as Chairman. This has prepared the way for Africanisation. It will no longer be assumed that the Administrative Grade are expatriates. Those Malawians who have, for the last year or so, benefitted from this, will now find that, due to increased superannuation, they will receive less. Rent for their housing will be economic and there will be no loans for buying refrigerators or building houses. They will no longer receive the long leave which was necessary to attract people from Britain on paid passages; it had in fact become an embarrassment since a civil servant would have to vacate his house while on leave and either travel, which is expensive, or go to his village, which could be equally expensive.

Last year the Ministers cut their own pay by 10%. As Dr. Banda says, "We must depend on our own resources to achieve our aims".

IN SUCH WAYS Dr. Banda will run the country on a practical level. He is not going to be tempted into schemes for the sake of newspaper prestige. Unfortunately, he under-rates public relations. He is gruff and rude to pressmen and they are correspondingly gruff and rude about Malawi. The incident on the Blantyre-Zomba road, when some white people were manhandled by the police when they failed to get out of the way of the Prime Minister's car, was given wide coverage. Sympathetic pressmen would have understood how the incident happened. The tarmac is twelve feet wide and has twelve feet wide shoulders. The police move the traffic off on to the shoulders for the Prime Minister; it is a reasonable precaution taken to safeguard the most important person in the country on a road which killed Dunduzu Chisiza. Obviously, both the people involved and the police contributed to the incident. The importance of the incident is that it is isolated.

THIS ROAD is perhaps the measure of the smallness of Malawian society. Just after one passes the bridge where Chisiza crashed one tired night, one sees D. S. Arden, the Bishop of Nyasaland, going in the opposite direction. He, like the Governor Sir Glyn Jones, who is on the road on another day, has gained the confidence of Malawians. Orton Chirwa, the Minister of Justice, drives past just before Peter Mackay, the man who resisted Federal conscription. They are all people who are going, in spite of the numerous problems, to make independent Malawi work in a practical and unspectacular manner. ●

Verwoerd's South African 'Commonwealth' Solution

A Moderate View

N. BARNEY BOLOANG

IT WOULD BE in everybody's interests to settle the race problem in South Africa; but a fair settlement is today more difficult than ever before. The old British policy aimed at the satisfaction of the African without injury to the future of Europeans. African contentment in those days was due not so much to what the British Government had achieved for their benefit as to the clear intention of the statesmen to give the African a square deal. Today, however, the Africans are entirely unconsidered except as the lawful prey of the pass and tax police.

Under the Government's control the Africans have no rights of citizenship, but they are conscious of their right to oppose an openly oppressive Government, although they are impotent to assert it. They are being crushed into a perpetual dull acceptance of their helplessness, and they feel the urge for a better condition only when the United Nations protests against apartheid. Even then, they find themselves confronted with the *animus* of White government officers who intensify influx control and job reservation, which, respectively, forbid free movement and entry into White crafts and professions.

In the towns the Africans are in a rather better position than those in the Bantustans, where the land is woefully arid or inadequate. The position in the towns is relieved by the regular wages they earn, whereas in the Bantustans there are virtually no industries nor any work to be had. Doubtless, the uplift of the Africans will not be an important feature of the Government in the foreseeable future, as instanced by the "one man, one business" law, which the city councils are so anxious to enforce. The Bantustan Africans will never cease to clamour for work in the towns. Their constant contact with civilized conditions in towns will make them conscious of their many disabilities, this resulting in further dissatisfaction.

The race policy cannot be made to fit fairly into the country's economic organisation unless it is released from colour and party considerations. Moreover, it is essential

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to a satisfactory and permanent solution that the European should show himself to be prepared for a compromise and sacrifice.

The 1913 Land Act gave only 13 per cent of the country's land to Africans. It is always difficult to yield and to hold, but the Government is perennially hopeful that a solution will be found by incorporating the British Protectorates, that is, Bechuanaland, Basutoland and Swaziland, leaving the 87 per cent of land occupied by Whites intact.

It simply is not feasible for 80 per cent of the population to be settled on 13 per cent of the land. If Africans are given land it must be fairly divided. It is doubtless possible to devise a plan for the equitable distribution of the land at a round-table conference of Black and White. The present apportioning of land is neither feasible nor fair, because it does not give the African an equal opportunity with the European. The land cannot be divided on any formula that admits the disadvantage of colour; nor can a period be put to the present African unrest and discontent until the White man convinces himself of the reasonableness of African demands and reconciles himself to the inevitability of ultimate concession.

It would have been easier to settle the land question in 1913 or even 1936 than it is today. It is a much more simple matter to give justice now than it will be in 10 years' time. This is the unassailable fact that Parliament should concentrate upon, together with the certainty that the Bantustan Act is not even the beginning of a fair deal.

Fortunately there are many thoughtful Europeans who regard the Bantustans as impracticable. Any non-partisan

examination of the Bantustan concept would not fail to detect the hand of tradition and the strong intention "to keep the native in his place".

Dr. Verwoerd is trying to give away something without losing anything. He is plainly essaying the impossible by sprinkling Bantustan enclaves everywhere in the Republic, and the result will be chaos—or would be if his present plans would mature. The Europeans hold much that the Africans should have: until they are prepared to give to a reasonable extent, there can be no end to the race conflict. The Bantustan Act is obviously hopeless as a means to render the land difficultly less acute and peace will not be assured so long as an issue of such economic importance is approached from a purely political and selfish angle.

THERE IS, ALSO, the question of the African vote. The Prime Minister desires Africans to vote in the far away and overcrowded Bantustans, like the Transkei, with which the majority of the urban population has long lost contact, if they ever had one. Obviously there is no desire for the general uplift of the Black masses, nor is there any opportunity offered to the more advanced Africans for their continued progress towards civilization and full citizenship. If, therefore, it is the duty of those who run the country's affairs to stimulate the people's progress and enable them to attain to a higher and better life, then the influx control and the Bantustan Act are clearly dishonest, because the one endorses the urban Africans out, while allowing Bantustan Africans into towns with special permits (C/E—Conditional Employment), the other retrogressive and unworkable. It must be noted that the *urban Africans have spent years in being trained*, whereas the Bantustan Africans have not.

Dr. Verwoerd asks for the support of all Whites for his apartheid policy and appeals to the Africans that ultimately, at a "Commonwealth Conference" of Black and White, South Africa will solve its problems. This is precisely what the country, Black and White, has been demanding for a very long time. The country would gladly welcome such a non-party, multi-racial conference to deliberate on the best and surest manner in which to approach an issue so momentous and so fraught with possibly disastrous consequences. But there is an uneasy feeling abroad, with many people detained and others muzzled, that the Government's call to a "Commonwealth Conference" does not imply that the Government would value such a "conference" if there was no agreement to base it on apartheid.

A multi-racial conference would be wasted if one section insisted that the structure aimed at should be built on a foundation planned and set to their own formula. To be of real service a round-table conference must imply openness and the will to consider the other's opinion. There is more than one reason to believe that Dr. Verwoerd and those on his side are anxious only for the general approval of their own design, faulty as it may be, but the Africans will respond to the appeal only on condition that the Government will agree to renounce their assumed right to determine what is good for the African, and to submit to the demolition of their apartheid skeleton edifice, if it should be proved to be unsuitable and unsafe.

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Leaders and Followers

Implications of the strain
on democratic institutions
imposed by vigorous
development politics in Africa

DAVID WELSH

STRONG LEADERSHIP is essential in the developing countries of Africa. These states will not be able to support the kind of political democracy one associates with the liberal societies of the West until there is a reasonable level of socio-economic development. The firmer the leadership the sooner will this level be reached. In these circumstances the position of leaders and followers in the political parties of Africa needs examination.

In everyday talk about the notion of democracy, a hangover from the classical approach clouds the issues and presents an over-simplified account. This hangover presents "the people" in the initiatory role in the governmental process. "The people" rationally consider issues and choose representatives to give legislative expression to the popular will.

Locke and Rousseau were little concerned with the problem of leadership. Underlying this approach was the belief that "the people" could generate sufficient initiative out of themselves for purposes of government. This classical approach largely overlooked the leader/led dichotomy. This dichotomy tended to clash with notions of individual equality and the principle of rule by majority. How could theory ignore the problem of leadership for so long? Largely because of the negative role which it was felt government should play. Democratic theory was forged in times before government was deeply involved in regulating the lives of citizens, concerned with welfare legislation and actively engaged in manipulating the economy. A typical nineteenth century liberal view conceived the government in entirely negative terms. It should concern itself largely with the maintenance of law and order and leave the economy to run itself. The less government the better was a sound laissez-faire principle.

In conditions like this strong leadership was not considered necessary or desirable. The more diffuse leadership

which resulted from executive weakness was appropriate. De Tocqueville could say in *Democracy in America*, 1835, "The American institutions are democratic, not only in their principle but in all their consequences; and the people elects its representatives directly, and for the most part annually, in order to ensure their dependence. The people is therefore the real directing power. . . ."

Changes in conditions led to changes in the role of government. Government is now to be seen as a positive force, taking on many more functions and intimately involved in the economy. Even in the liberal democracies, the increased strength of the Executive *vis-à-vis* the legislatures has been the most notable feature of twentieth century changes in the structure of government. The more empirically-minded British and Americans have been able to adapt. In Europe the classical approach has lingered longer and various systems of proportional representation have served to inhibit (but not entirely prevent) the evolution of a strong executive.

Theorists have also taken note and, increasingly, attention has been paid to the distinction between leaders and followers. Mosca, Pareto, Weber and, more recently, Schumpeter, have done much to undermine the classical theory. On Schumpeter's theory "democracy does not mean and cannot mean that the people rule in any obvious sense of the terms 'people' and 'rule'. Democracy means only that the people have the opportunity of accepting or refusing the men who are to rule them." The method of political democracy was the institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote.

The modern approach to political democracy is more concerned with the struggle between organised parties representing, broadly, classes; with the efforts of pressure groups to influence parties; and with the efforts of both parties and pressure groups to manipulate public opinion. It recognises that the role of the electorate in the political process is essentially a negative one: it does not act so much as react. Politicians do not see themselves essentially as followers of public opinion. They are concerned with leading it and moulding it. Dr. Steytler of the Progressive Party was asked at a meeting whether he should not "follow public opinion". He replied: "If I followed public opinion I would be bent over double with my ear to the ground, and that is no posture for statesmanship!"

THE POLITICAL PARTY is the vehicle through which the competition for political power is fought. Ostrogorski and Michels were early twentieth century theorists who studied the organisation of parties and came to pessimistic conclusions about what they found: parties were essentially undemocratic associations, however democratic some might profess to be. Their approach was, however, vitiated by their apparent retention of classical notions of democracy. They realised that parties were essential to the functioning of mass democracies, but when they found that parties were undemocratically conducted associations it seemed to them almost as if they had proved that democracy was undemocratic.

Michels claimed in his *Political Papers* to have discerned

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“an iron law of oligarchy” at work in every organisation. “Organisation implies the tendency to oligarchy . . . every party becomes divided into a minority of directors and a majority of directed.”

The leaders in a party possess advantages which give them superior bargaining power over the rank-and-file members who may wish to exert pressure. The leaders are better educated, better informed than the members. They control all communications between the leadership and the followers. Their views rather than followers' views are likely to be given prominence in the party press. The leaders are full-time paid officials and consequently can devote much more time and energy to presenting their views than the ordinary rank-and-file member. As professional politicians they are much more skilled in the art of dialectics, in oratory and political writing and in organisation. As leaders they are much more in the limelight and acquire a prominence and a renown which gives them an insurmountable advantage over the ordinary members. These are largely occupational skills which are developed in the leader's role.

“The masses are incapable of taking part in the decision-making process and desire strong leadership.” Michels firmly believed in what he described as the “incompetence of the masses”. They feel a need for guidance and are incapable of acting without an initiative from above. They have an urge to venerate the leaders: “Their adoration for these temporal divinities is the more blind in proportion as their lives are rude.”

The leadership becomes a “closed caste”, highly suspicious and selective in allowing new members into the caste. The leaders are able to twist criticism of themselves into the appearance of “factionalism”. They can make it appear as an attempt to undermine the unity of the party and, as indeed the British Labour Party has found in recent years, this plays right into the hands of their opponents. Criticism can therefore be represented as some kind of intra-party treason.

Michels' studies were confined to European Socialist parties but he agreed that his law of oligarchy held good

for all bureaucratic organisations.

Some writers have shown that Michels was overdeterministic in his conclusions. He ignored the factionalism inherent in any large party whose centrifugal force any leadership must counteract. Parties will tend to have left and right wings or to have factions based on regional considerations. The American parties, for example, do not pretend to be anything more than coalitions of groups, united at the national level only for the purpose of contesting presidential elections. How can the President hold his party together other than by a process of conciliation or arbitration between the various constituent groups? And does this not suggest a greater degree of interaction between leaders and followers than Michels cared to stress? Did Nehru dominate in Michelsian fashion the different groups which go to make up the Congress Party?

ALL AFRICAN NATIONALIST leaders are committed to the goals of economic development and the modernisation of their underdeveloped societies. All see the need for strong government, for centralised economic planning and extensive state initiative. None is prepared to adopt the laissez-faire approach and hope that “forces of the market” and the Protestant ethic will secure a suitable growth rate. Negative government is out of the question.

A broad distinction can be made between what Schlesinger has termed “hard” and “soft” leadership. “Hard” leaders like Nkrumah, Sékou Touré and Ben Bella, see themselves as surgeons, inflicting an operation on society, modernising by dragging society up by the scruff of its neck. No opposition from traditionalist-orientated leaders, like the chiefs, or from the older generation of less radical nationalist leaders (like Danquah in Ghana) will be countenanced. Little or no independent power will be allowed to new interest groups which arise if the process of development continues. Trade unions in Ghana, for example, are kept firmly under the wing of the C.P.P.

It is not correct to say that these mass-party leaders are necessarily entirely hostile to traditional society.

A F R I C A N A

Send contributions to *Africana*, P.O. Box 2068, Cape Town. One Prize of R1 will be awarded for the best item each month, and two additional prizes of 50c each.

● He said one of the main reasons for Whites leaving Kenya was because of the integration at schools. It had even been rumoured that they would soon have African prefects at formerly White schools.

— *The Star* [J.M.]

● “The *Cape Times* has been asked to point out that the headline to a report published yesterday about Mr. J. C. Carstens, Vice-Principal of the School of Industries for Coloured children at Ottery who is to receive a University of Cape Town doctorate, might have given the impression that Mr. Carstens was a Coloured teacher, he is, in fact, a teacher of Coloured children.” — *Cape Times* [H.L.]

● IT'S FUN TO BE BLACK
ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN ON
SOWETO TRAINS

— *Sunday Chronicle* [C.C.]

● “No legislation can legitimately be attacked on the sole ground that it interferes with human rights, for every law that ever was passed interfered with human rights to some extent.

“One does not hear measures of slum clearance and rehousing condemned on this ground so why should human rights be invoked in the attack on the Bantu Laws Amendment Act? — Hon. F. H. Broome, Judge-President of Natal, *Cape Argus*.”

● A beauty contest with 17 girls, arranged by the Gardens branch of the Nationalist Party to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the party in the Cape . . .

The prize in the contest is a course at a charm school (plus gifts of clothing and cosmetics) and a boat trip to Robben Island, South Africa's long-term prison colony, seven miles offshore from Cape Town. — *Sunday Times* [F.P.]

Sékou Touré's writings are filled with a mystic veneration for the old ways and a hostility to the cultural imperialism associated with French colonial policy. But he is nonetheless adamant that traditional groups shall not wield political influence and hold up the process of mobilisation.

For the mass-party leaders, national unity is the sine qua non of modernisation. If traditional groups present an obstacle to the growth of national consciousness, they must be broken. It springs from a Rousseau-esque mistrust of "partial wills" as opposed to the "General Will". Threats or imputed threats to national unity will be treated as treason.

"Soft" leaders are normally associated with somewhat more conservative approaches to development and with attempts to achieve some kind of reconciliation with the traditional, status-based older groupings. They are reformers rather than revolutionaries; "Consociational" rather than "mobilizational", as Apter has termed them in *The Political Kingdom in Buganda*. "Elite" parties of this kind, as Hodgkin has noted in *African Political Parties*, "consist essentially of a nucleus of persons enjoying status and authority within the existing social order—an elite of chiefs, religious leaders or wealthy bourgeois—and depend largely upon established ties of obligation and loyalty between the "elite" and "the people". He also notes the ramifications of this distinction between "mass" and "elite" parties on concepts of membership, structure, discipline, methods of finance and ideology, etc.

I NOW PROPOSE to consider leadership in Guinea in some detail. Leadership can be considered from the angle of leadership of the government *vis-à-vis* the citizens of the state or in terms of leadership within the ruling mass party, the Parti Démocratique de Guinée. In practice, however, the party is accorded a status superior to the government itself. "The P.D.G. has not hesitated to say that more than ever will it retain its supremacy over all other institutions in the country," says Sékou Touré. He has denied that the P.D.G. can properly be called a party in the standard sense of the term. It is a "higher entity" behind the state, a vast movement seeking to unite all Africans "under the banner of anti-colonialism and progress . . . the party assumes a directing role in the life of the nation and exercises all the powers of the nation. Political, judiciary, administrative, economic and technical powers are in the hands of the P.D.G." European parties, according to him, are sectional in that they reflect the interests of the class in society from which they emanate. But, he agrees, this class structure of society is alien to Guinea. Guinea is a classless society and therefore needs only one party. Emphasis on class or religious stratifications imports a harmful divisive tendency. The P.D.G. can adequately represent the interests of all citizens.

Touré insists that the P.D.G. is democratic in nature. "All our people are mobilized in the ranks of the P.D.G.; that is to say that the common will derives not from the summit but from a base of the popular will. Authority rests not with government but with the people." You may call it a dictatorship but it is a democratic dictatorship ". . . if the dictatorship exerted by the government is the direct emanation of the whole of the people, dictator-

ship is of a popular kind and the state is a democratic state—democracy being the exercise, by the people, of National Sovereignty".

The structure of the P.D.G. as it is outlined by L. Gray Cowan in *African One-Party States* appears formally democratic. Right from the basic village and urban committees up to the ultimate decision-taking body, the Bureau Politique, the elective principle is enforced. Membership of the party is open to all citizens above the age of 21.

Within the party the principle of Democratic Centralisation, first expounded by Lenin, is enforced. As expounded by Touré it consists in:

- (1) All the leaders of the party are directly elected, democratically, by the party workers, who have complete freedom of conscience and expression within the party.
- (2) The concerns of the state of Guinea are the concerns of all the citizens of Guinea. The programme of the party is discussed democratically. As long as a decision has not been taken each one is free to say what he thinks or wishes. But when—after a long discussion in the Congress or Assembly—the decisions have been taken by a unanimous vote or by a majority, the workers and the leaders are required to apply them faithfully.
- (3) There is no sharing of the responsibility of the leaders—only of the responsibility for a decision.

Thus, discipline will not be undermined.

The Bureau Politique of the P.D.G. has complete liberty in the execution of assigned responsibilities and in the "evaluation of the forms of action appropriate for the objective conditions of their execution". It is the locus of supreme authority in the state. It is elected by the triennial Party Congress. It consists of 17 members, all of whom are either Ministers of Government or other senior officials, such as head of the armed forces. The evidence suggests that debate is free and unrestrained within the Bureau but that "the opinions of a small inner group directly surrounding Sékou Touré carry the most weight, particularly on the more important questions".

How far can this be said to constitute collective rule? The evidence suggests that though Touré might be a kind of *primus inter pares*, the Bureau does have a certain collegiate character. Hodgkin suggests that personal rule was found predominantly among the older generation of mass party leaders. "The newer leaders have on the whole reacted against the 'cult of personality', and have criticized the great patriarchs of the past—and the present—on the ground that a collective form of leadership is more mature, rational, and effective. . . ."

Certainly, one gains the impression that Touré is no more powerful *vis-à-vis* other members of the Bureau than a British Prime Minister is *vis-à-vis* his Cabinet.

WHAT GENERAL FACTORS predispose towards a strengthening of the leader's hand? What forces will tend to legitimise the regime and what counteracting forces will tend to break down its authority?

In many cases, such as Guinea and Ghana, the leader is

founder of the party and the hero who banished the imperialists and secured independence for his country. He was able to unite many of the citizens behind him in the struggle to get rid of alien rule. For many he comes to be a symbol of their aspirations, achieved and expected. Their millennial hopes are focused on his quasi-charismatic personality. The prestige of the leader engendered in the struggle for freedom is enormous and constitutes a considerable obstacle to any other politician wishing to wrest the power of leadership from him. Freedom is a heady brew and, in the exultation, rivals can safely be denounced (and destroyed) as being traitors to the cause of national unity or imperialist agents. If the leader has sufficient authority (as distinct from power) over a number of citizens, then he can derive from that source sufficient power over those who refuse to recognise his legitimacy.

I have stressed the importance of party in the process of mobilisation of society. If membership of the party is the key to success and the possibilities of patronage by the party are immense, then, obviously, the power of the party leader is further consolidated.

How far is the notion of "democratic centralisation" likely to inhibit the entrenchment of an oligarchy in the party? In those states where only one party is permitted, is it a genuine substitute for the right to form opposition parties? In the U.S.A. the two major parties have been able to tolerate "factionalism". New political movements that arose have tended to be enveloped in one or the other of the parties. No pretence at any kind of ideological homogeneity of the party is made. Cross-party is much more common in Congress than in the House of Commons. In Britain it might well be argued that the tightness of intra-party discipline is to some extent determined by the size of the leading party's majority. In an African state where the ruling party is so firmly entrenched that the possibility of potentially dangerous opposition arising is slight, a similar relaxation of discipline may be permitted. But this is a purely theoretical consideration. It seems more likely that the revolutionary leaders will keep a tight rein on the distribution of power and prevent the formation of other centres of power either in the party or in other social institutions. In other words, any kind of pluralistic distribution of power in the social structure is not likely to be permitted. This kind of *gleichsaltung* is one of the hallmarks of authoritarian rule.

IMPLICIT IN THE ABOVE analysis is my belief that the developing states will not be able to support the kind of political democracy one associates with the liberal societies of the West. Despite the fact that African nationalism is essentially a Jacobin revolt against alien rule and that its leaders are men imbued with democratic ideals, I believe that the social tensions between leaders and followers which vigorous development policies will generate will prove too much of a strain for democratic institutions. Millennial hopes in the breasts of followers are bound to be dissipated as the hard realities of development are reckoned with. The authority of the leadership which was nurtured by the presence of the alien rulers will tend to diminish as the *raison d'être* of nationalism withdraws. "Neo-colonialism", "White rule in Southern Africa", are useful whipping boys to keep the

nationalist fervour alive but they are not adequate substitutes for the actual presence of the alien oppressor.

You have, then, an overall picture of predominantly rural societies controlled by a tiny elite of nationalists who, paradoxically, are trying to build nations out of the imperfectly shattered remnants of the old societies. In his work *Political Man*, S. M. Lipset has argued that political democracy must be based on a certain level of socio-economic development if it is to endure. The higher this level, the more educated, the more industrialised the society, the firmer the base for democratic institutions. The Russians, though they spilt much blood, have laid such a base and the pressures for greater freedom in all fields have resulted in a slow relaxation of controls—"the thaw". They have a long way to go before they can be described as politically democratic but the indications are that the trend must go in that direction.

The rate of investment is the determinant of the rate of



MODERN JAZZ has been around in South Africa for a good many years, having found a small but dedicated following through United States discs released by South African record companies at about the same time that Charlie Parker and his contemporaries of that era were revolutionising jazz with their Bop sound.

One of the men who helped most to set the modern sound on the road to its current high pitch in the Republic, via a "live" scene, was the world-famous Johannesburg altoist, Kippie Moeketsi.

It was largely due to his dedication and musical sincerity that modern jazz was able to crawl confidently out from its shaky beginnings in township backyards and shanty jam sessions into the public eye, where it weaned a small coterie of musicians on the artistic possibilities of the "new sound" (of that time).

Naturally there were rewards for their sincerity—starvation, frustration and rejection by the classical and "pop" snobs who snubbed jazz as "neurotic", "juvenile" and "obscene" music. Still, they held fast and it was with this sincerity dictating his music that Kippie, on one of his road tours, met Dollar Brand.

economic growth. The unconsumed part of the national product is the amount invested. The greater the extent it is possible to minimise consumption the more is left over for investment. If, as the more radical leaders desire, development is to be swift, high investment rates will be necessary and consumption will not be allowed to rise rapidly. From the population's point of view, a screw will be put on them: produce more but keep the consumption level constant. To the nationalist leader this is elementary economics; but to the followers (and some 80 per cent of Guinea's population are rated as "peasants") it represents a new kind of oppression. Modernisation, if it is as thorough-going as the radicals want it, also represents to the peasant an upheaval and destruction of his traditional mode of living. And if peasants are the most conservative of all political animals, one can be sure that it will be bitterly resisted. Good government is not necessarily popular government.

Rousseau-esque notions of a General Will supporting the nationalist leaders at the height of the struggle for independence may then have had some relevance. However much Sékou Touré may claim that his authority is grounded in "the people's wishes", it is clear that the General Will is becoming more a normative concept. No longer do the leaders represent the actual will of the followers but rather what they ought to will. In Rousseau's terms, they are to be "forced to be free". Marx put the matter in a nutshell: "Theory is going to be realised in a people only to the extent that it is the realisation of its needs. . . . Will the theoretical needs be immediately practical needs? It is not sufficient that the idea strive for realisation; reality itself must strive toward the idea."

Centralised government and strong leadership are necessary in African states. Without this it is likely that Africa will see a repetition of the pattern of successive revolutions characteristic of South America. ●

LAST MONTH THAT MEETING between these two men who destined to become the high priests of jazz in South Africa was rewarded by international recognition of Dollar Brand's new disc entitled "Duke Ellington presents the Dollar Brand Trio". The record, cut in Paris by the Duke for Frank Sinatra's "Reprise" label, was reviewed by *Downbeat*, the world's leading jazz journal in a recent issue. The reviewing panel, which includes such top names as Leonard Feather, Don de Michael and a host of other world-famous critics, stated: "Dollar Brand is a 28-year-old South African pianist who has impressed a good many American musicians in Europe. It is clear now, with this release, what everybody has been shouting about. Brand is one of the strongest—as Duke Ellington and Thelonius Monk are strong—musicians to come along in some time. His playing is an amalgam of Monk, Duke and himself. He has that wide time conception of the other two; he has perhaps more technical command of his instrument, though, like his elders (Monk and Duke—H.L.), he maintains an appealing aura of the primitive in his playing. He is a deliberate player, sometimes moving with Monkish dignity—that slow, ponderous movement of which Monk is the acknowledged master. Further, he constructs his improvisation with the same care and respect for thematic material as do Monk and Ellington.

"Brand's piano often takes on a deeply dark hue that conjures a feeling of restless melancholy. In fact, his playing rarely seems at rest—here only on parts of the ballads 'Kippie' and 'Ubu Suku' (both composed by Brand.—H.L.) He does dapple his generally sombre tones, improvisations and composition with patches of light that are sometimes startling in their unexpectedness. Often there is a bi-tonal quality to his jaggedly contoured work, the right hand playing figures set at half a step down from what one should expect, judging by the left-hand chords. This is in keeping, however, with the clashing dissonance that is part of all his playing and composing on this record. . . ."

The record was awarded 4½ stars out of 5—a distinction that even the world's top acknowledged jazz musicians are seldom awarded.

THIS IS NOT THE FIRST TIME that Dollar Brand's music has received international recognition. In November, 1963, *Downbeat* ran a cover story on him and his group—sidemen Johnny Gertze (bassist), drummer Mackay Ntshoko and vocalist Beattie Benjamin (all from Cape Town).

In 1961 Willis Conover, director of the Voice of America's "Music U.S.A.", played a tape of Dollar Brand's "Jazz Epistle, Verse I" album cut in South Africa. Conover and world-famous musician, composer and arranger Quincey Jones conducted an enthusiastic dialogue on the music. (All the compositions on the "Epistle" disc were originals written by members of the group, Dollar, Kippie, Moeketsi, Hugh Masekela and Jonas Gwangwa.—H.L.)

Late in 1961 Dollar Brand decided that he was ready to assault the European Jazz Circuit and, after a series of concerts in the major centres of the Republic, he flew to Switzerland with vocalist Beattie Benjamin and set up his headquarters in Zurich. Bassist Gertze and Drummer Ntshoko followed them a few months later to form the Dollar Brand Trio with Beattie Benjamin. Concert tours, night-club engagements, festivals, TV appearances followed until they became front-page news. *Politiken*, one of Denmark's leading morning newspapers, ran a front-page lead story on Brand and the *Downbeat* cover story followed after they were spotted by Duke Ellington and recorded by "Reprise" in Paris.

WHEN DOLLAR BRAND HITS the States in the next few months Jazz South Africa will have made the big time jazz scene, finally. The starvation, frustration and rejection of its growing years will become a thing of the past.

And what with Chris McGregor's "Blue Notes" ready to fly to Paris for the Antibes Festival on the French Riviera, Jazz South Africa, in Chris McGregor's words, "will have some fantastic surprises for the jazz world".

The New African wishes them all good luck. We only hope that the Dollar Brand Trio and the Blue Notes will not forget the men back home who all helped to make this heartening fact a reality. ●

Down at Bush

I THE STUDENTS

An inside view by a student
of the Cape's "Coloured"
University College

IN TERMS OF THE Extension of University Education Act, 1959 (Act No. 45 of 1959), a university college for the so-called Coloured people was established in 1960. In the lingo of the powers-that-be, its specific purpose is to provide university training for Coloured students and to enable them to share in the advantages of a full academic life.

The University College of the Western Cape, better known as "The Bush College", was for the first two and a half years of its existence housed temporarily in an old school building in Fourie Street in Bellville South, about 15 miles from the centre of Cape Town. In the course of 1962 it became possible to move into the attractive and efficiently planned new buildings for Science and Arts. These buildings form the nucleus of the whole building complex on the college campus, which is situated between Bellville and D. F. Malan Airport. Last year the administrative buildings and the cafeteria were completed. The following buildings are in the course of construction: the Library (a fashionably designed three-storey building with spacious foyers, which is the quintessence of the masterly architecture characterising the entire building complex on the campus); the building for Education, Psychology and Social Science; a Gymnasium for Physical Education; a hostel and hall which will serve *inter alia* as a cultural centre. There is talk that a swimming bath and a sports pavilion will be included in the project.

The "conspirators" of this building project usually stare at it with admiration and comment with glee that when the facilities provided by these buildings are available, the college is bound to become the centre of cultural and sporting activities for the "Coloured" community of the Western Cape. In reply to this, one progressively neurotic "bushnik" was heard to say that, despite the finery of the architecture and the beautifully laid-out flower beds with palatial fish ponds, the atmosphere of the whole project was a bitterly sad insult to the concept of education. The atmosphere on the campus falls far short of providing an incentive to any academic work.

The set-up is something in the nature of an old-age

home, if not a hospital, where the victims, rather the products, of apartheid should be sent to recuperate.

SUCH THINKING PROVED to be horrifying and ungrateful to some "yes-boy" from a quisling middle-class family (by the way, the Bush College teems with juvenile quislings) who happened to overhear the progressive "bushnik's" commentary. The young quisling stood there fuming and fretting and awe-inspired by such lack of appreciation on the part of "die ander bruinmense" for what "die witmense" are doing for the Coloured. What an anachronism in the 20th century! Are there still people who drill their children to accept the lot of being underdogs in their own fatherland? Has any man any right to mislead the youngsters into believing that any gesture by the White man, which gesture tells the same abominable tale of domination of the Non-Whites by the Whites, is an expression of the White man's humanity?

While the two students were still involved in their different thoughts, the serenity of the surroundings was punctuated by the screeching tyres of a police van. The emergence of Constable Visagie with his impeccable bluish-grey suit and revolting holster set off different emotions in the two students. To the progressive student the presence of a police van on the campus was viewed with indifference, if not with disgust. You see, in any country where the government is out to rudely disturb the privacy of the individual, it becomes necessary to step up the police force; not to protect the individual but to harass and molest him at the slightest pretext. In our country this is the exclusive lot of the Non-White—to be molested and harassed by full-grown and well-fed constables.

The presence of the police van on the campus left the quisling student dumbfounded and spellbound, if not scared. "What have the ungrateful Coloured students done that the 'oubaas' should send his dogs on the campus?" thought the quisling student. By the way, the two students are freshers, but the difference between them is that the one knows that South Africa is a police state, and the other has been conditioned by his immediate surroundings—his home and fellows—not to accept this fact. Thus the stay of the one student at Bush College makes him the more resentful of the abominable laws of a police state. While the stay of the other in this seemingly indifferent-from-progressive-ideas institution makes him clay to be shaped in any form by the conspirators of his fatherland. Hence he later becomes a half-baked helmsman to the "slegs-vir-Kleurlinge" dinghy. His short-sightedness and blindness make him an enthusiastic captain of a boat that is moving at breakneck speed towards an iceberg.

IT MUST BE NOTED that the progressive students are in the minority, and the great majority fall in the "yes-boy" category. In this group we find the students who accept things as they are and are not prepared to do anything by way of seeking a change. This type of fellow is usually heard to say, "What can we do?" Perhaps the reason for this negative attitude is to be found in the ruthlessness with which the government deals with those who dare utter unfavourable words against it.

There is yet another group in the "yes-boy" category

which is not satisfied with tacit collaboration. This group is prepared to see to it that any progressive element on the campus must be stifled. These are the government spies. Some of these spies are so enthusiastic that even the world beyond the precincts of the campus knows them. However, others are quite inactive from fear of exposure. Indeed, about 20 per cent of the students "down at Bush" are spies.

The progressive students are all opposed to the idea of apartheid with all its monstrous accompaniments. Among the progressive students we find those who are obviously oriented by some outside political group. The influence of one particular political group which has since died a natural death is evident in these students. This political group was doggedly sold to the policy of non-collaboration, which bordered on indoctrination, irrespective of the facts pertaining to the matter on hand.

Their stand is perhaps justifiable in that in this country we are faced with a government committed to principle; and like all fascist rulers, our rulers are not prepared to compromise, because compromise on any issue would either mean creating an undesirable precedent or abandonment of their cherished principles.

At this point we can mention, by way of dispelling certain misgivings as regards the degrees and diplomas obtained down at Bush, the fact that this college is a constituent college of the University of South Africa. This means that it only prepares the student to sit for the University of South Africa examinations; and therefore its degrees are, as a matter of fact, the degrees of the University of South Africa.

Part II will deal with staff and student organizations.

TRANSITION

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The Suspects

A Story

JACOB MOKGOLO

SEVEN O'CLOCK. The last truck wound its way round the corner of the main street. A hotch-potch of pale pink faces stacked the lorry, presenting an unusual sight on the traffic line. Behind this trailed the story of that morning's early hours, of which story a few residents of the township were lucky not to have been forced into the scene. Snatches of the night's happenings were evidenced in the rifles poised at chest level by the young men in the lorry, in the tunics, in the front-tilt police caps that struggled in vain to muffle the pinkish uniformity of facial line.

The village had been stirring in the night, and you receive a sudden shock at this realisation. That is the time you begin to wonder that someone could have spent a nightmareless night while the heart of the village had throbbed with the tread of angry feet, had trembled with the ravaged beat of frightened bosoms.

And all this stir because the village women had dared to question a law they deemed unjust; because they had organised a protest meeting against passes for women in the Community Hall two days back; because they had refused to disperse when Special Branch Chief Pieterse ordered them to call off the meeting instead of meeting their wishes; because a hot encounter had ensued between the people and the law, the law being forced to run away.

The Chief had given a lengthy, heated report at headquarters. Agitators; communist influences, it was solemnly declared. The report had elicited this response. A raid in the small hours of the Sunday morning while they lingered over thoughts of a day's rest, while ruminating over the last whiffs of week-end alcoholic taint on the breath. Twelve patrol vans, four trooper lorries were called forth and threw a strong cordon around Lady Selborne. Then the raid began.

IT MIGHT BE EXPECTED to raise a sudden, wild alarm, but the African township, accustomed to more embarrassing situations at odd hours, is not easily taken by surprise.

The African boy dashed through a paneless window, sneaked through a backdoor, cunning and intrigue were

JACOB MOKGOLO, a freelance writer who lives in the Pietersburg district of the Northern Transvaal, used to contribute under the pseudonym Carl Mafoko.

brought into play, and ultimately the man found an outlet to the dark fastnesses of the mountain. One was caught in the act and, after the scheduled beating, was hauled by stalwart arms into the yawning back van reinforced on the sides with trellised iron rails.

Police steps woke a child from the passage. The child screamed. There was a shout back: "Open! Vula!" The door flew with an unkind wave while the man inside staggered back at the impact of the push, one hand still at the doorknob, another missing and taking up a clutch at the unhoisted braces, the leg withdrawing with a jerk and a clap, intuitively perceptible under the baggy pants unguarded by underwear. It assails his moral hold—one revered member exposed to shame?

Doors closed and banged wildly behind the booted men. They had to cover a wide area before dawn or the people would be up and who knew one throaty alarm call would not organise the whole village against them? A rifle is nothing, shivers in the hands of a policeman when Africa is enraged. The doors banged furiously, the boots pattered from door to door. Perhaps there would have been softer, stealthy treads and less noise but for the hurry. But for the villagers it was a good, friendly warning.

Open! Vula! Pass!

Obed jumps out of a dream about a sales job and crawls naked on his belly in a furrow among mealie stems. For he is yet without work and has had no time to register as a work-seeker. But at least he does not think of going, even if there is time. How often must he have his book plastered? So also feels Abey. Abey graduated from Normal College the previous year and he is still waiting for a call: a teaching post, secretarial work. So he joins Obed in this act and together they lie low in the mealie garden, thanking their stars their skins are dark and almost one with the earth in the night. A police torch flashes a wide beam, sends patches of beam and vine leaf shadow over their bronze, searches up and down. They press down with bated breathing, silent as two corpses.

THEY HAVE GOT another one. They push him into the lorry. The spring of the chain he holds on to as he climbs throws him stumbling into the half-undressed bodies he cannot see well because the mist of sleep is still in his eyes. He yanks his forehead into the broad nose of a boot. He is cuffed on all sides and propelled thus roughly to the inner part of the lorry. He wipes a tear and keeps alert. He knows it will be the same from then on through the whole affair: roughing and jolting into every form of reception.

Kenny's unlocked door yielded to the push of a rifle butt and before he could jump from bed a rifle point poked in his nose, in his chest, while the torch light searched for his eyes. That was rather unceremonious greeting, he thought as he applied the back of his hand to the blinking eyes.

"Pass!"

He motioned at his wife with his eyes. At least he should be treated with more respect in the presence of his wife!

"Pass!"

"It's in the kitchen," he lied.

"Come on, hurry up, then!" The gun point poked his behind to urge him on.

"I'm undressed. Just step out and I'll follow."

The White policeman looked at the window, looked back at the man. "Pull him out," he said to two African constables.

Kenny tried to reach for his pants as he tottered out of bed with that unbalance one knows when dragged un-gainly. The gun point pushed from behind with a rude brush. In the passage he said to the two constables dragging him: "My pass is back in here. Let me go back to fetch it."

That was enough for the rifleman giving orders. "To the van. We take him along."

As they climbed the steps on to Phefeni's verandah S.B. Chief Pieterse said to the African constable: "Is this the place?"

"Yes, I think so." There was a veiled hesitation in the voice, as if the man was chary of the information he had to give—as a duty.

Pieterse turned to his S.B. colleague: "We are picking our man today."

AN INSISTENT KNOCK rattled the door. Two fat patches of light swallowed the darkness out of the passage. Phefeni met the men in the blinding glow of the torches. And he knew even before he saw the helmet behind the two that it was the law. He made to speak to the men at the door but they stalwartly brushed with soldierly quick strides into the passage. They guessed the open door to be the bedroom, so they filed in, ignoring the man's protests.

Ma Phefeni, curled in the blankets, wriggled there, for she could not be still with the knowledge that the introducing light was there to light her and her husband's bed, to pick her body line that shaped the blanket to its delicate course. Two children in their bed shrieked with night-marish fright.

"You are Phefeni?" Pieterse asked.

"Yes."

"You were at the meeting?" But it came out more as a statement than a question.

"Yes. What of that?"

"You addressed the meeting and you are influential with your people. You saw the van stoned?"

"Mm."

"We have been ordered to search your house" (producing a search warrant), "and thereafter we take you along to headquarters. You are Suspect No. 1."

"Who are the other suspects?"

"Our vans are full of them already."

But he knew what had happened. Once a well-conducted organisation of his people had put up a legitimate stand. A police raid had been official response. And, as if it was an organisation of the lawless, the raid went searching for pass, liquor offences. That had scared many people.

The house search was thorough, even woke the wife from her shaky concealment in the bed. It fed a huge suitcase with various specimens of that dreaded silent carrier of ideas, the paper.

Phefeni in the back seat, Pieterse turned the car back just as dawn was beginning.

AFRICAN PROFILES

Messali Hadj

FRANZ ANSPRENGER

THE LATEST COMMUNIST OFFENSIVE in Africa, which began after Stalin's death, is well known to employ a strategy involving a pincer-movement. The two attacking "columns" are marching at present in formations that are still strictly separate, although they no doubt intend to join forces some day. The first (and at present most forceful) line of attack consists of generous offers of bilateral development aid; in this, Moscow and its East European satellites as well as Peking (notwithstanding different ideological nuances) co-operate with African governments of all colours, even with those which, by the greatest stretch of imagination, can hardly be labelled "national democratic".

The second line of attack is the training of young African cadres at the universities, trade union colleges, etc., of the Eastern bloc. Publications of converted African students¹ go to show the patient and careful but unswerving way in which the "befriended guests" are being enlisted in the service of Marxist-Leninist teaching which alone can bring happiness. The constant care for Africans studying in the West by the communist parties or front organisations in the respective countries comes into the same category; what is more, at the moment Moscow evidently considers the time ripe for beginning to build up communist cells inside Africa itself, not yet formally called political parties.²

A German expert, Fritz Schatten, has judged the chances of success for the communist cadre-offensive as quite good: "Ideally, then, the person trained in the East returns to his homeland as so-to-speak a missionary for a world-wide movement carrying a historical mission—he becomes, voluntarily or not, a communist functionary."³ In actual fact, communist party organisations that could be taken seriously have still to be created throughout the African continent, including those states (such as Morocco, Egypt, Algeria, Sudan, South Africa) in which formally such parties have already existed for many years. They are all more or less illegal, it is true; but this alone does not sufficiently explain why they have remained so in-

significant: after all (leaving South Africa aside), the great national liberation movements succeeded in asserting themselves victoriously against the colonial power everywhere, and had been subject to equally hard administrative pressure for more or less extended periods.

At the same time, a revolutionary situation does exist in Africa. In the opinion of many African politicians a revolution is necessary not for the attainment of political independence but for the achievement of economic independence, an aim which is put forward everywhere, that is, to overcome the state of economic backwardness and to integrate the masses of the people into the modern world. *Les Damnés de la Terre* is the title of the last book by the psychiatrist Frantz Fanon of the West Indies, who died in 1961 at the age of 37, who fought on the side of the Algerian F.L.N. and who was perhaps the most passionate theoretical exponent of this anti-colonial revolution.⁴ Despite this Fanon was no communist; his book—though not explicitly—is implicitly nothing but a rejection of communism. Obviously, despite its efforts, communism is not readily able to capture the revolutionary forces in Africa, to canalise them for its own purposes. Why?

This question cannot be answered in a short essay. But one cause among several is to be found in the disadvantageous heritage of past communist policies: the wooing of Africa initiated since the death of Stalin is, after all, not the first offensive in this direction. A number of politically conscious Africans of the older generation have their experiences with communism already behind them, and it is not without interest to glance briefly at the personality of some of these Africans. None of them could put up with communism for long. That their story is not irrelevant, but typical, is demonstrated by the mere fact that no effective communist parties are in operation anywhere in Africa.

THE TWENTY-EIGHT-YEAR-OLD former French soldier Messali Hadj, who after demobilisation worked in a Paris industrial concern, was elected chairman of the organisation *Etoile Nord-Africaine* in 1926, just as the Communist International was preparing a new offensive in the colonial and semi-colonial countries. This took the form of founding the "League against Imperialism", a "front" organisation, disguised by the participation of prominent non-communists, the management of which was at first largely in the hands of the German Communist Party, with Willi Münzenberg pulling the strings.

This appeal to the widest possible masses and to as many groups as possible amongst the people under colonial rule was in full accord with the well-known theses which Lenin drafted for the second Comintern congress of 1920, stating that "we as communists must and will support the popular freedom movements in the colonies only if these movements are truly revolutionary, if their representatives do not obstruct us in educating in the revolutionary spirit the peasantry and the broad masses of the exploited and in organising them".

But in fact the Comintern concerned itself even after 1920 only very marginally with the colonial question, so that the Indian delegate, M. N. Roy, at the third congress

Continued on page 139

FRANZ ANSPRENGER, a committee member of the German Africa Society, contributes to *Survey*, the *Journal of Soviet and East European Studies*, London, where this article first appeared. The concluding part, dealing with George Padmore, will appear in *The New African*, 15 August 1964.

To the Editor

"The Collaborators"

SIR,—As one of those who helped collect background material for the Anti-Apartheid Movement pamphlet "The Collaborators" I should like to reply to the attack on it by your London correspondent in the *May New African*. If, as I suspect, this pamphlet is banned in South Africa, your readers will have no opportunity of judging its contents for themselves. Nor have they been assisted to do so by your correspondent for he does not attempt to outline the basic arguments or to criticise them on rational grounds. Instead, he falls into the Vorster trap of smearing the authors as "dedicated communists" and then resorts to emotional terms such as "awful" and "full of contemptible malpropisms" (such as?).

Here is a brief outline of the pamphlet's contents: The authors argue that, to prevent a race war developing in South Africa and engulfing the whole continent, total economic sanctions should be imposed through the United Nations. Such action would obviously be impossible without the support of the United States and Britain. The writers believe that the extent of British trade and investment in South Africa prevents this country from backing fully U.N. resolutions on South Africa. Using a mass of statistics and quotations from speeches and statements, they show how businessmen and Members of Parliament who have commercial interests in South Africa form a lobby at the House of Commons which defends apartheid at every opportunity.

Thus, contrary to your correspondent's opinion, it is not businessmen in general who are attacked but the "collaborators" who are shoring up apartheid by investing in border industries and helping to perpetuate iniquities such as job reservation, endorsing out of "surplus" Africans and starvation wages. As to the allegation that the pamphlet is written by dedicated communists, I believe that this is totally irrelevant. It should be judged not by the political opinions of the authors but by the soundness of its contents. Your correspondent expresses fears that the freedom movement will collapse because of communist support. My own belief is that the greater danger comes from those like your correspondent who would advocate the

conducting of McCarthy-type witch-hunts among its members.

JAMES H. WHITE
22 Stanley Crescent, London W11.

Nonracialism and Youth

SIR,—There is, we are informed, a military threat to South Africa from the African states—a military threat from the same African states that are in "a state of chaos and mismanagement". We are further informed that Africans are planning "subversion" and sabotage against "South Africa"—these sinister acts of planning are the brainchildren of "uncivilised savages" who "cannot govern themselves".

The contradictions are obvious—and tragic when one considers that nearly two million are utterly taken in by this type of nonsense. They are even worse when it is noted that among the most gullible are the racist youth. This youth is prepared to swallow all the klatsch put out by their own "cultural" bodies; to believe in their divined, God-sanctioned mission (so typically accepted)—blindly and docilely.

For those who don't know: the average White youth is certain that South Africa will be invaded from the North; he is positive that this will happen within the next few years. The "black savages" will cross the border in hordes, with no discipline and (as one may guess) they will not have the Almighty on their side.

The uninitiated may not realise it but the black man with a degree is less civilised than the White labourer—the reason being (there are numerous anecdotes told on any suburban train) that the "centuries" of "civilisation" behind the White labourer make him better.

Thus, the rebel, who defies all this, who wants no part of this sham system, who may prefer to judge men as men with merit the only yardstick is labelled as a "Kaffir-

boetie", "muntlover"—or is called names even less likely to be printed.

But the people with this view have their opponents. Foremost among these are those believing that it is wrong to "ill-treat the natives", "Give them food and houses and clothing and a slight increase in pay but they can't have the vote—maybe in a hundred years' time". These gentlemen are found among "the English-speaking" and are often of the "sporting type"—but "one can't play rugby with them, you may as well shake them by the hand".

We are left with two groups. The first accedes that the "educated ones" should be allowed the vote—they will even let a few come to their parties and dances in order to show their democratic outlook—and (perhaps more accurately) just "for kicks".

This leaves the outcasts, the smallest group amongst White youth, the most hated group. This is the group that believes (in some cases albeit only for a short while) in genuine democracy. Those who maintain this belief for a longer period are even fewer.

With democrats, among the Whites of tomorrow, few and far between, the future looks tough from the non-racial point of view. Too few will brave the hostile isolation, the cold lack of popularity, the rifts that may develop between hitherto friends and numerous other unpleasantnesses.

But with the non-racial press struggling, with non-racialists of every race and age keeping their heads high amongst all the indignities they have been forced to suffer there should be no barrier to young non-racialists of today defying the massed might of the state and contributing of their talents for as long as they are able to.

Unfortunately there are not enough people to do so which places a greater burden and responsibility on those remaining.

TWO NON-RACIALIST THINKERS
Cape Town

COMMENT

"To Russia
with Love"

THE DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION has achieved the impossible! An advertisement in a recent edition of the British weekly, the *New Statesman*, "proves" that the Whites constitute the majority population group in South Africa. Those of us poor dimwits who believed that Africans were the majority group must hastily mend our ways and absorb the truth that there is no such thing as a "Bantu population": only Xhosas, Zulus, Vendas, Tswanas, etc. . . . and Damaras another day. We will also have to forget that there are deep cleavages in the White population between Afrikaners, English—and Jews, as the skirmish in the House of Assembly on the 18th March, 1964, so vividly showed. For purposes of external consumption and internal fortification we Whites constitute a nation—and don't forget it.

in 1921 bitterly criticised the opportunism of the Soviet government and the lack of interest in the commission on the Eastern question set up by the congress shown by the European and American delegates. The demand of the fourth congress of 1922, that "every communist party in the countries possessing colonies must take over the task of organising systematic moral and material assistance for the proletarian and revolutionary movement in the colonies . . . European communist workers in the colonies must try to organise the indigenous proletariat and win their confidence", also remained essentially a dead letter: what proved to be a stronger force was the dislike, say, felt by the French workers, however communist-minded they may have been, for Algerian *bougnoules* and similar sub-proletarians. But now the new league was to provide a new beginning, and it is easy to understand that a man like the young Messali should enthusiastically rally to its banner, since his membership of the French Communist Party during the past few years had given him no practical opportunity to mobilise his Algerian compatriots.

WE FIND MESSALI among the speakers at the "Congress against Colonial Oppression and Imperialism", organised by the league in Brussels in February, 1927. His brief address, made in the name of the *Etoile Nord-Africaine*, ended with the words: "Our fight for independence will be hard . . . French imperialism wants to set brother murderously against brother amongst us. I hope that the victorious struggle for freedom of the Chinese people will be the signal for the liberation of us all, and I assure the fighting Chinese people that they have the support of all oppressed peoples. Through uniting all oppressed peoples, and with the support of the world proletariat, we hope to achieve the destruction of imperialism and to create a truly human society. I greet the representatives of brother nations who are at present at this congress.

I greet with all my heart the French proletariat which has supported us and still supports us today. . . . I conclude my speech with the call: long live the socialism of the oppressed nations! Long live the Soviet Union, which is liberating the world! Long live the Chinese revolution! Long live the congress!"⁵

This text contradicts the assertion made in a biographical sketch recently circulated by political friends of Messali: "In 1925 Messali Hadj completely severed his connections with the communists, in whose organisation he was active as a very young man."⁶ No, in 1927 the chairman of the *Etoile Nord-Africaine* at least still believed that it was possible to advance in close fellowship with the Comintern. But not for very long. When the first wave of police persecution against the *Etoile Nord-Africaine* began in 1929, Messali evidently did not receive the hoped-for support from the communists. In May, 1933, he had the party programme revised in order to safeguard his organisation "from threatening infiltration and underground activities".⁷ It is now that the *Etoile Nord-Africaine* for the first time expressly demands "complete independence" for Algeria, whereas the communists three years later wrote in the founding manifesto of the P.C.A. (Parti Communiste Algérien): "If we try to shake off the chains of serfdom and oppression which keep us shackled to imperialist France, we do so in order to create firm brotherly bonds, which will bind our people of their own free will with the great brother-nation of France into a community with common interests."⁸ In other words, a communist France would not think of giving up Algeria!

Meanwhile, at the Moslem Congress in Geneva in September, 1935, Messali had entered into relations with the Pan-Islamic movement and its leader, Cheikib Arslan: the gulf between him and the communists became even wider. The communist author Egrétaud criticised Messali's demeanour at that time as "wavering" and "confused".

In 1934 the *Etoile Nord-Africaine* participated in the

FRANKIE, YOU'RE A GENIUS! In one unguarded moment the department's journal, *S.A. Digest*, let out what must amount to one of the great understatements of recent times when it quoted a public relations consultant as saying that "presenting South Africa's case to the rest of the world is recognised in international public relations circles as the trickiest single public relations problem"! With so much dirty linen to hide, who can wonder. But, never despair: "Waring washes whitest of all," or, presenting the new anti-Soapy formula, "We didn't get White by accident."

BUT I AM WORRIED by one or two small doubts. Who reads these advertisements? And who believes them? Apart from those dubious allies, the League of Empire Loyalists and a few Tory backwoodsmen, we have few

friends in Britain and the impact of the proportionate representation is negligible. All of which just goes to show that even mountains of Old Spice won't remove the stench of good old polecat. And even if the Old Specious is laid on with a heavy hand, our own bunglers can be relied upon to drop some resounding clangers and undo all the good work. Who will ever forget the performances of Messrs. Vorster, Sauer and Abraham in the C.B.S. TV film "Sabotage in South Africa"? The latter, in particular, was splendid: when asked if Africans were allowed to protest against the provisions of the Transkeian constitution, he blurted out, "Of course they are, they're protesting about them all the time!"

ONE WONDERS WHAT impact is made by the long procession of retired warriors, tycoons and editors of minor

provincial European newspapers, all of whom dutifully issue strangely similar-sounding statements just prior to departure. How seriously, for instance, can one take the opinions of Monty, who equates Dr. Verwoerd and Mao Tse Tung together as "great guys"?

I AWAIT WITH bated breath the handling of the Bantu Laws Amendment Bill by the Propaganda Department. It is difficult to see just how this Bill can ever be given the proverbial sugar-coating, even by the most ingenious of public relations men—and how it will be believed by even the most ingenuous of readers. The Leader of the Opposition says it will lead to a revolutionary situation. He might consider sending a copy of the Bill to Mr. Kruschev, inscribed "To Russia with Love". It is Bondage of the worst kind.

A. B. OLIPHANT

mass Paris demonstrations against the attempted fascist *coup d'état* of February. In 1935 and 1936 Messali offered to join the popular front that was then being created. But even after the election victory of the popular front, the communists had no intention of giving him honest support; on the contrary: together with middle-class moderate Algerian organisations, the P.C.A. at a "Congrès Algérien" in June, 1936, proposed complete assimilation with France. And when, in August of the same year, Messali held his first mass meeting in his homeland of 20,000 people in the stadium of Algiers, drastic measures of suppression became only a matter of time. On 25 January, 1937, the *Etoile Nord-Africaine* was declared illegal by the communist-supported Popular-Front Government of Léon Blum.

THE SAME CONFLICT reappeared after the Second World War in far more bloody circumstances. Messali's organisation (which now went under the name "Parti du Peuple Algérien") was made responsible for the riots that broke out during the victory celebrations on May 8, 1945, at Sétif. The communists were participants in the De Gaulle government which ruthlessly suppressed the rising (officially 15,000 dead; according to Algerians 45,000 dead). Consistent with this was the comment by Léon Feix in the communist party organ, *L'Humanité*, of May 12, 1945: "It is highly illuminating that the criminal tools of bloated colonialism should be the M.T.L.D. and P.P.A., for instance Messali and the impudent jackals in his pay, who did not utter a word and did nothing when France was under Nazi domination and who now demand independence. What needs to be done is to punish without mercy the originators of these difficulties."

The events on which light is thrown by these examples have built a wall—impenetrable to this very hour—between communism and the extreme wing of the Algerian nationalist movement (whether devoted to Messali or not). At the same time Messali and his followers never failed to apply the organisational experience of the communists to the legal, semi-legal, or wholly illegal associations they built up after 1945 in Algeria and among the Algerian emigrant workers in France. For instance, the simultaneous use of a legal and an illegal apparatus, or again the cell-structure, the *Gleichschaltung* of the trade unions, and lastly the co-ordination in the last stages of the revolutionary struggle of the military and the political and administrative organisations: all these are but the most obvious examples of the debt owed to the communists in the matter of methods by this wing of Algerian nationalism (covering the M.T.L.D. and the P.P.A., the F.L.N. and the M.N.A.); indeed, Messali's fall in 1954 from his earlier position is strikingly reminiscent of a simultaneous trend in communism: the majority of the central committee of the M.T.L.D. (Mouvement pour le Triomphe des Libertés Démocratiques) which rebelled against Messali, accused him—probably not entirely unjustly—of encouraging a "personality cult"

NEVERTHELESS, IT CANNOT BE over-emphasised that the borrowing of communist methods and also the more or less conscious adoption of some of the phraseology changes nothing in the basic immunity to communism of the

extreme wing of Algerian nationalism, and the communists themselves referred to it at a meeting of the central committee as early as October, 1948, when the secretary-general of the P.C.A. stated: "We are not closely enough bound to the masses, particularly the Moslem masses, in the workshops and offices, in the cafés and markets. In these conditions it is difficult for our cadres to know what the people are thinking, to be in tune with the people."⁹ On the other side, the F.L.N. treated the isolation of Algerian communism from the living realities of the people to devastating criticism, contained in its first party programme declaration, the platform of the Soumman Congress of August, 1956: "The communist leadership, bureaucratic, without any contact with the people, has been unable to analyse correctly the evolutionary situation. That is why it has condemned 'terrorism' and from the first months of the insurrection ordered its members from Aurès, who had come to Algiers to get instructions, not to take up arms. Its subservience to the C.P. of France has become the subservience of a yes-man with the silence which followed the granting of special powers in February, 1956, to Guy Mollet's government, which the French communists at first did not oppose. The P.C.A. has disappeared as a serious organisation, primarily because of the preponderance in its midst of Europeans; the shock to their artificial Algerian nationalist beliefs, faced with the realities of armed resistance, brought these contradictions into the open."¹⁰

It seems appropriate to close the Messali episode with this quotation from the programme of the F.L.N. However far the F.L.N. may have moved away from Messali, as regards its relation to communism it is following the route marked out by the founder of Algerian nationalism on the basis of bitter experience. No blasts of propaganda from the communist bloc, no offers of aid or perhaps even of real assistance given in support of the revolutionary war of the F.L.N. (as soon as its success began to come into sight) can wipe out the fact that French communism and its Algerian offshoot on the whole failed to integrate themselves into the process of emancipation of the Algerian people. They failed because the bonds of nationhood and religion binding the Algerians together were far stronger than the abstract theme of a "class-struggle situation", because the communists underestimated these elemental forces, and in particular never believed in the chances of a spontaneous national revolution, which, in 1954 and the years that followed, the F.L.N. knew how to embody and to lead. ●

1 See Andrew Amar, *A Student in Moscow* (London, 1961); Michel Aïyh, *Ein Afrikaner in Moskau* (Cologne, 1961).

2 "What is evident is that the extension of the understanding of communism, the study of Marxism-Leninism or of such journals as *The African Communist* and *World Marxist Review*, and through these the developing of corresponding political organisation, whether finding its fulfilment in the immediate formation of Communist Parties or through the development of parties advancing to acceptance of the principles of Marxism-Leninism, has become a vital need for future political development in Africa." R. Palme Dutt, "Africa and Communism", in *The African Communist* (London), January, 1962, p. 46.

3 Fritz Schatten, *Africa—schwarz oder rot?* (Munich, 1961), p. 359.

4 Frantz Fanon, *Les Damnés de la Terre* (Paris, 1961).

5 *Das Flammenzeichen vom Palais Egmont*, Report of the Brussels Congress (Berlin, 1927), p. 98.

6 *Réalités Algériennes* (Antwerp), October-November, 1959, p. 26.

7 *La Voix du Peuple* (organ of the Mouvement National Algérien, the group in the national movement that remained faithful to Messali), March, 1961.

8 Marcel Egrétraud, *Réalité de la Nation Algérienne* (Paris, 1957), p. 173.

9 Colette and Francis Jeanson, *L'Algérie hors la loi* (Paris, 1955), p. 110.

10 *El Moudjahid* (central organ of the F.L.N.), special supplement on the Congress of August 20, 1956, at Soumann-Tal, p. 16.

The Legacy of "Lumumbisme"

James Stack

La Pensée Politique de Patrice Lumumba,
edited by Jean Van Lierde (Présence
Africaine).

THIS VOLUME makes tragic reading. Jean Van Lierde, Catholic trade unionist, founder of the Belgian "Amis de Présence Africaine" and trusted friend of Patrice Lumumba, has assembled almost all Lumumba's available speeches, conferences and texts from the time of the 1st All African Peoples' Conference December, 1958) until his murder in January, 1961. The cumulative impact is practically unbearable—and bitterly ironic. For Lumumba, whose true "dictatorship" was that of the word, of persuasion, of reason, was overwhelmed and destroyed by a crisis where the word became ineffectual, where panic, irrationality and blind instinctiveness reigned. Mutineers, *colons*, trusts, tribesmen exceeded each other in their criminal lapses, each responding as their limited consciousness and interests dictated. Lumumba remained faithful to his universal and abstract vision; his ultimate optimism was unshaken to the end. "En avant, citoyens et citoyennes, pour la construction d'un Congo uni, fier et prospère. Un avenir radieux pointe à notre horizon. Vive la republique Indépendante et Souveraine du Congo!"—so concludes his last message, recorded shortly before his death.

Yet this defiant confidence, naive and voluntarist as it was, explains precisely the *danger* which Lumumba constituted. Lacking an articulated political doctrine, devoid of any economic programme, Lumumba still posed an irreducible threat to the post-colonial system envisaged by Belgium: in him we can recognise the explosive and genuinely revolutionary significance of authentic anti-colonial nationalism and pan-Africanism. It was this combination of certain absolutely firm principles with a lack of conventional political "sophistication" which gave Lumumba his unusually *representative* quality; he personifies a moment of the African revolution in its painful discovery of its own contradictions, tasks and real possibilities.

HIS POLITICAL THOUGHT was striking both in the rapidity of its evolution under the pressure of events and in its consistent
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autonomy. In 1956, Lumumba still voiced the partial and illusory project of the *évolués* for a Belgo-Congolese *Communauté*; at that date both Ileo and Kasavubu occupied apparently more advanced positions. By the beginning of 1959, however, Lumumba had transformed the co-ordinates of Congolese nationalism with the founding of the MNC, the first supra-ethnic party, and with the recognition of the necessarily pan-African dimension of the Congo's struggle for national independence. Throughout 1959 and early 1960, there was a steady radicalisation in his formulations and demands as Belgian manoeuvres became increasingly transparent to him; simultaneously, he was engaged in the desperate race to organize and extend the MNC throughout the Congo and to co-ordinate its action with that of the many regional, minority and client parties which mushroomed at this period. The Conference of Luluabourg, the vigorous protests against the imprisonment of Kalonji in August 1959 (this was *after* the secession of the Kalonji tendency within the MNC), the presentation of a common platform at the *Table Ronde* discussions in Brussels, the formation of the *Cartel Lumumba*, the struggle against federalism, the efforts to establish a firm coalition government of national

unity—all these initiatives for a united nationalist action reveal Lumumba's primordial emphasis on the interests of the new nation.

The postulate of a genuinely independent Congolese nation was Lumumba's core idea: unswerving loyalty to this concept of a free Congo (and by extension of a free Africa) accounted at once for his impermeable moral and political integrity and for his practical flexibility and open-mindedness. His political temperament was Jacobin. Lumumba, the *évolué*, inherited the European revolutionary tradition (his speeches are peppered with references to the French, American, Belgian, Russian revolutions), with whose values he contested colonialism; but as a Congolese and as an African, he interpreted it in terms of his faith in his people's past and his aspirations for their future. The Congo would be African. The construction of the nation was to be an *autonomous unifying process*. The Belgian Congo, Lumumba perceived, was a concentrate of divisions, a complex of micro-communities, culturally, geographically, economically and socially atomised; these interests could and *must* be reconciled in a common loyalty. The Nation was to be history's annealing agent. Thus, Lumumba's nationalist party, the Mouvement National Congolais, was authentic and representative in its rejection of metropolitan controls and divisions. Created not at the instigation of one or other metropolitan party, avoiding the quagmire of clerical/anti-clerical strife, the MNC aimed to unite tribes, denominations and political tendencies through its positive action for emancipation and independence.

WHY WAS THIS ASPIRATION revolutionary? Because, as Lumumba swiftly came to recognise, division had not only constituted the essence of the system of colonial domination but was further intended to assure the new order, neo-colonialism. The dramatic rapidity of Lumumba's radicalisation derived from the logic of the process of "decolonisation" itself. Patriotic and acute, Lumumba was one of the first lucid victims of neo-colonialism. His dangerous merit lay in the rejection of the neo-colonial compromise, against which he tried to mobilise all African leaders. The pan-Africanism, which at Accra had merely implied the strategic solidarity of freedom fighters engaged in similar struggles, now became for him an urgent and concrete imperative. "We know the West's objective," he said in his opening address to the Leopoldville Pan-African Conference, convened at the height of the desperate struggle for the Congo's future. "Yesterday it divided us at the level of

tribes, clans and chieftainships. Today — because Africa has freed itself — it wants to divide us at the level of states.” Lumumba, as prime minister of a juridically independent state in the heart of Africa, had come up against an unsuspected, occult political geography which bore little relation to formal frontiers — a ramifying network of international big capital whose agents penetrated governments and international institutions, bought and sold ministers and effectively applied new and more sophisticated forms of domination. Lumumba’s observation that the Congo problem was the problem of all Africa was not a rhetorical figure: it was profound and accurate.

CONSCIOUS OF THE IMMENSITY of the obstacles facing Lumumba, therefore, we should hesitate to condemn him for the uncertainties and lacunae in his thought, the errors in his practice. These are amply discussed in Sartre’s eloquent preface to the volume: over-concentration on certain *formal* problems of political structure, naive faith in centralisation, absence of any serious economic policy, fundamental illusions about the social base for his programme, extraordinary trust in his associates. But it should be recalled that the situation had escaped his control too quickly for him to be able to develop the organisational, programmatic and ideological elements already revealed in these texts. He favoured a unified party which recognised the rights of internal tendencies, but was compelled *force majeure* to adopt cartel and coalition types of organisation. Again, his social programme clearly would have devoted great attention to the rehabilitation of women and unemployed, to rural renovation and accelerated education. He constantly stressed that independence did not entail a magical solution to economic difficulties, that work was indispensable: “gold will not drop from the heavens”. And there is little doubt that he would have moved towards more overtly socialist positions as the options revealed themselves more starkly. But, as Sartre remarks, in politics what is necessary is not always possible.

Lumumba died before these ambiguities could be resolved. His legacy, “lumumbisme”, is not so much an articulated doctrine to be inferred by picking through his various statements as a basic complex of principles — the primacy and autonomy of the Nation, inseparably linked with genuine pan-Africanism, non-alignment and rejection of externally introduced divisions, fundamental commitment to a more humane social order. The struggle to realise these objectives will assume new forms, but Lumumba’s writings will remain a constant point of reference.

The Evidence of Africa’s History

Len Bloom

Africa in Time Perspective: A Discussion of Historical Reconstruction from Unwritten Sources by Daniel F. McCall. Boston University Press and Ghana University Press. Distributed by O.U.P. 25s. 0d.

ACCORDING TO THE colonial powers, colonised peoples never had a past, a discoverable history, until the clever colonisers arrived. Indeed, the arguments for colonialism often deny that the colonised peoples are people at all: they are “natives” or “aborigines”. Toynbee in his *A Study of History* suggests why this is so. When “westerners call people ‘natives’ . . . we see them as wild animals infesting the country in which we happen to come across them, as part of the local flora and fauna and not as men of like passions with ourselves . . . We may exterminate them or . . . domesticate them . . . but we do not begin to understand them.”

Then comes the end of the colonial regime and there is a flood of researchers from “the west”, and the argument that “Africa had no history” becomes more sophisticated. It takes the form that much of the sources of Africa’s history are unwritten, and therefore historical reconstruction of a journey into the unknown along paths strewn with methodological boulders.

MCCALL’S *Africa in time-perspective*, based upon a series of lecture given at University College of Ghana in 1961, is one of the most up-to-date and persuasive attempts to assess “some of the problems implicit in any attempt to discover the history of Africa, a part of universal history which is still largely unwritten”. Here two problems are intimately linked,



the answers to which will depend upon the historian’s view of the nature of his subject. *First*, McCall emphasises that the problems of historical study in Africa are no different from those in other parts of the world, and if we managed to reconstruct much of the histories of “the Scythians, Huns, Celts, Finns, Balts, Iberians, Etruscans and other peoples who had no writing”, or who left little straight documentary evidence, then there is not much reason coyly to shy from the study of Africa’s past. *Secondly*, McCall sees one of the tasks of history “to help the individual to define his personality: to see himself in the stream of humanity. For a nation as well . . .” This view demands that the historian treats the history of Africa just as he would that of any other place; as a part of the history of the world, and not as though it were a peculiar place with its own peculiar need for its own peculiar understanding.

MCCALL’S BOOK covers a wide range of kinds of evidence that the modern historian can use, and it shows how the modern historian may have to be a master of far more disciplines than that of the conventional interpretation of documents. He must be like a scientific detective: a scrap of cigarette ash, a few smears of grease, a cleat of dried mud and a half a used bus ticket, and he has a shrewd picture of the criminal.

The historian must make use of the evidence of archeology, folklore, myth and tradition; language; social anthropology; food and food production; zoology, biology, and the distribution of diseases; art; the technical means of measuring time such as counting tree-

“ *Adikra*, Ashanti patterns carved from gourds to stamp textiles; each has an esoteric meaning. The upper one, called *Obi nka obi* (One person doesn't bite another) enjoins social harmony; the lower is said by J. B. Danquah, (*The Akan Doctrine of God*, London, 1944, p. 93) to represent a war captain. The progress of one form into another is, to me, an illustration of process.” CHAPTER NINE *Process in Nature, Society and History*

rings, and Carbon 14 dating. Barely a generation ago few of these methods were widely used. Now students of Africa's past are using them to plot and trace the astonishingly complex, involved and mobile history of African societies. They are showing, what was often denied, that the past of Africa has been as rich culturally, as evolved socially, and, until very recent times, as advanced technologically as anywhere else in the world. The social, economic, medical, intellectual and social history of Africa is emerging rapidly, and McCall suggests that “this generation of African historians has the opportunity of pioneering in the use of unwritten sources, as not so long ago social and economic historians and others pioneered”.

“New strategies of history” are demanded in Africa, mostly based upon the need for co-operation between different types of method, and new lights on Africa's past are emerging. The partition of Africa is not yet one hundred years old, but it caused the destruction of many social boundaries and replaced them by lines drawn on a map at the whim of colonial grabbers. Now we are reconstructing the cultural regions, and discovering the culture changes that have been taking place behind the rigid artificial barriers imposed by the colonial powers.

The history of language, for example, is a novel means of finding out how people lived. We can infer about early Africa that its peoples “lived in an ecological setting in which the *elephant* and *antelope*, the *baobab* and *palm*, and the *grey parrot* were to be found. Apparently an open forest. They cultivated . . . *millet*, *sorghum* and *rice* . . . *groundnuts*, *beans*, *melons*, *pumpkins* and *bananas*. They had *cattle*, *sheep*, *goats*, *chicken* and the *dog*. They used *iron*, *hoes*, *adzes*, *knives*, *spears*, *bows* and *canoes*. They wore *clothes*, put *salt* on their food, and drank *beer*. They used *cowrie shells* . . . They were governed by *chiefs* and ministered to by *diviners*.” This can be seen by tracing the forms and content of languages over the continent, and suggests that pre-colonial Africa was a lively, cultivated, well-organised and by-no-means “primitive” place.

MCCALL'S BOOK eloquently and soberly insists that the historical problems of Africa are basically the same as those of other continents, and can be solved by the same techniques. McCall is objective, sympathetic with the difficulties of the historian in Africa, and practical in advocating how history can be improved if historians with different points of view can be induced to co-operate even more.

McCall's book advocates that we must explore the past in order to understand the present and to try to thread our way through the labyrinths of the future. One of the tragedies of much of the teaching and research in S. Africa is that it is (consciously or unconsciously) rooted firmly in the past in order to excuse the greed, muddle and mischief

of the present—and to tamely retreat from the present.

McCall writing from tiny, struggling Ghana has shown us in South Africa how we may encourage the teaching and study of history, not as a narrow ethnocentric discipline, but as part of the history of Africa, and further, of the world.

Literature and Life

John Clare

A Selection of African Prose—Volume I. Traditional Oral Texts. Compiled by W. H. Whiteley. (Oxford University Press.) R2.10.

Somali Poetry—An Introduction. B. W. Andrzejewski and I. M. Lewis. (Oxford University Press.) R3.

THE OBJECT OF THIS SERIES, according to the editors, is not only to conserve the oral tradition but to “relate African literature to African life”. It is hoped that the conservation of the old will give contemporary writers a tradition to draw on and also provide a basis for future literary studies of Africa. In the matter of relating literature to life, it is interesting to note that the volume on Somali poetry was edited not by anyone with a special knowledge of literature but by a social anthropologist and a linguist.

The Nigerian, Chinua Achebe, in his foreword to the anthology of traditional oral texts, rightly warns against the modern, self-conscious tendency to try to “salvage bits of the African heritage before an imminent cultural darkness”. This must result in a collection of curiosities of no literary merit and of interest only to scholars and, perhaps, those more fanatical exponents of “négritude” and that curious phenomenon the “African personality”.

The difficulty of distinguishing between what may or may not rightly be termed literature is freely admitted by Mr. Whiteley in his introduction to the prose anthology. He goes on to point out that translation must both convey the spirit of the original and stand in its own right as literature. In this reviewer's opinion much of Mr. Whiteley's material is of no literary value whatsoever and is on the contrary unrewarding and tedious. Inclusion in this volume may well have secured its conservation, may even have illustrated some little known aspect of “African life”, but as a contribution to the African literary tradition its value—in spite of appeals to “indi-

genous African standards”—remains strictly nil.

Many of the stories included in the volume bear much the same relation to literature as a 10-line synopsis of the “plot” of the play bears, say, to “Macbeth”. In these cases it is important to appreciate that there is probably a very similar difference between the written version of the story and the oral. Changes in the quality of the narrator's voice, movements, facial expressions, would all compensate for the bareness of the narrative. It is this bareness which prompts a comparison with the contrast between a synopsis of the plot and the play itself.

But the best stories in the collection all satisfy that primitive fascination the well-told tale has exercised over man since time immemorial. Remember Scheherazade whose life depended night after night on her ability to keep the king intrigued until dawn—that precisely is the quality of the best of these tales and readily explains why so many of them have come to be handed down by word of mouth from generation to generation.

IT WOULD APPEAR that the Somali Republic is a poet's dream. As literally the only channel of national communication, poetry has an important social function to fulfil. Acting as newspaper, radio, television and cinema, it must bring instruction and amuse to a widely scattered population. Thus essential to any political party that wants to get its “line” across is a competent poet. As the rigorous requirements of strict alliteration are fundamental to Somali poetic composition, the definition of competence is extremely exacting. For example if the alliterative sound of a poem is the consonant *g*, a poem of 100 lines must contain 200 words beginning with *g*. Naturally one of the results of this is often a certain obscurity—a factor which the editors in their introduction explain away with much charm and resourcefulness: “For the Somalis listening to poetry is thus not only an artistic pleasure but provides them with the fascinating intellectual exercise of decoding the veiled speech of the poet's message.” Which makes Somali poetry pretty modern after all.

Another result of the demands of alliteration is the conservation of a large vocabulary of archaic words which, though they may be known to the nomads of the interior, are more or less Dutch to the younger generation of townsmen. But the advantage of having this stock of words to draw on is that in a rapidly changing world the purity of the language can be maintained. As new ideas and concepts arise archaic words are restored and foreign

borrowing is avoided.

But perhaps the most notable result of the rigid alliteration is that the lines have a rhythm which makes them easily remembered—an important consideration if the poem is a medium of propaganda and must pass from mouth to mouth. Bound up with the question of rhythm is the fact that the poems are generally chanted or sung and often accompanied by handclapping and drumming. This link with music is worth insisting on because European poets and critics today are concerned to point out that it is to music that all poetry aspires and consequently bewail the current divorce between the two.

None of the poems included in the volume has previously been translated nor, with one or two exceptions, have they been committed to writing—the Somali language having no official or generally accepted orthography. The lengthy introduction on the “social and cultural setting” and the inclusion of some poems not for any intrinsic value but on the grounds that they “illuminate” some basis of Somali life, though valuable, does emphasise that this is not simply a collection of poems to be enjoyed for their own sake. As a lively introduction to life in a little known part of the continent this is a really admirable and absorbing work. ●

changed the people of *Things Fall Apart*. And so the total feeling left with the reader of Achebe's novels is one of cumulation, of expansion and deepening of our knowledge of the way of life that is past and still passing.

I wish publishers would stop emphasising in the blurbs of their jackets the stereotyped phrase “conflict between the old and the new”. I think also that the cover design of this novel, in its concentration on the all-be-it beautifully drawn python, puts a wrong emphasis on the novel. It is this type of approach that leads to the equally stereotyped adverse criticism about the lack of concern among our novelists with characters. It is more significant to watch ordinary and normal people reacting to heightened situations than to see the divagations of hypersensitive characters over the ordinary events of life. And what Achebe has given us in *Arrow of God* is a host of recognisable people with normal reactions from which we learn “the directions of men's souls”.

AND IT MIGHT be suggested here, before the usual conflicts arise, that this is not a sociological novel. The writer's present is always in the past, and the proximity of that past is not to be judged in terms of time lapse but in the author's ability to enter into the spirit of the period in which his story is set. Here again Achebe achieves success and handles his material with a deep-felt realism devoid of nostalgic idealisation. We are presented with a society that is dignified, communal and deeply religious, different from but not inferior to our own today. But this society is also shown to have its rivalries and pettiness between wives of a polygamous marriage, between children of different mothers looking for the inheritance of their father's powers, between individuals and deities claiming the leadership of the community, between sections of the village seeking precedence.

There are questions one still wants to ask after reading the novel. What punishment was meted out to the White road engineer for flogging workers contrary to regulations and why did Obika and his father do nothing about Obika's flogging in spite of their threats? Why did the disturbances that arose over Oduche's imprisoning of a sacred python in a box fizzle out as they did? And why did Obika have to die? One also wants to complain about the incidental and rather cursory nature of the treatment of the Europeans on the scene.

But when these questions have been asked and the complaints made, there remains the overwhelming achievement of the vivid and convincing re-creation of a world that is nearly past, there remain the naturalness of the events and people in this world and the astonishingly pungent concreteness of style that has evoked this society. May we hope that Achebe will explore this society to its fullest depths before he turns, if ever he turns, to other topics.

The Present in the Past

Donatus Nwoga

Arrow of God by Chinua Achebe (Heinemann, R2.10)

THE FEELING OF remarkable development was inescapable. Here was a fuller, deeper tone to the voice of an old friend. Here was a new sense of freedom, of exhilaration, of uninhibitedness, of self-confidence.

Achebe no longer has any doubts about his style. The Ibo words are clearly best in certain situations and they are used with no apologies. The interested will know where to find the translations if any. And sometimes, in any case, it is not necessary to find the translations. When the proverb says that one should know the size of his anus before he swallows an *udala* seed the meaning is obvious without knowing the translation of *udala*. And when somebody says “It ran away *fiam* . . .” the onomatopoeic sense of *fiam* is independent of prose meaning. So that Achebe has here, without losing meaning for the outsider, confidently indulged in private linguistic communion with his local audience.

And the proverbs figure conspicuously. I once worried about Achebe's proverbs. I said to myself, these proverbs are too many and are taking the place of speech. Here are more proverbs and they are speech. They are so integrated into the style that they have become less conspicuous. Their effect has become so diffused over the setting and the events that one instinctively thinks of the definition of style as atmosphere.

The atmosphere, that “emotional aura which the work bears and which establishes the reader's expectations and attitude”, is one pervaded by the supernatural. The principal person of the novel is Ezeulu, the

arrow of God, the High Priest of Ulu, the God that rules over the six villages of Umuaro. When the six villages were separate, each with its individual god, the Abam warriors had stricken them one by one and taken them by storm. They had therefore come together and erected the Ulu deity to hold them together and protect them, and the ancestors of the present Ezeulu had carried the deity through a host of enemies into Umuaro village square. It was Ezeulu's right and responsibility to declare the time for planting crops. He announced the time for the ceremonies and celebrations, especially the purification Festival of the Pumpkin Leaves. He, through Ulu, had the power to call the New Yam Festival or delay it and have the yam harvest destroyed. Ezeulu was half-man and half-spirit. He knew the will of Ulu and declared it fearlessly against all odds. If he thought a war was unjust he refused to call his deity into it. If his people fought against another village, he declared the true culprit even if it was his own village.

This it was that brought conflict between him and certain members of his community who thought that he had betrayed them. This it was also that brought him into contact with the British Administration, whose officers, in their dithering with their friend the “truth speaking witch-doctor”, unleashed more destructive forces in the community than they could ever begin to understand.

BUT THIS IS NOT a book with an after taste of bitterness. There is not, for example, the biting irony of the concluding words of *Things Fall Apart*, though here we find that the book the Administrative Officer was going to write—*The Pacification of the Primitive Tribes of the Lower Niger* (what a smug title)—is now a manual for colonial officers who have answered “the call”. Achebe has gone back in time and filled some of the gap between *Things Fall Apart* and *No Longer at Ease*. The time setting is around 1921, the time of the appointment of Warrant Chiefs, and the locality is a village some miles from Umuofia as yet only slightly touched by the forces that had already

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