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ABSTRACT

The British Labour Movement's condemnation of the Boer War was the only reaction to imperialism before 1917. However, the Fabian Society set forth the main ideas of the policy later adopted by the Labour Party. This policy was elaborated for Africa between 1917 and 1945, when the Party was pledged to a programme of economic development, social advance and political change.

Basic to this 'trusteeship' programme was the provision of capital for colonial development. In practice, however, capital was extracted from Africa, and virtually nothing was done to improve the economic position of Africans or to make the plans for social development viable. Emphasis was on the production of raw materials for Britain. The few small political changes came mainly in West Africa, where revolutionary movements seemed dangerous.

After achieving power, the Labour Party found the trusteeship policy irrelevant. This irrelevance is inherent in the character of imperialism.

McCullough

Labour's Policy in Africa, 1900-1951

LABOUR'S POLICY IN AFRICA, 1900-1951:
THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF TRUSTEESHIP

by

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PREFACE

This thesis consists of two main parts: a survey of the Labour Party's stated policies with regard to the African Colonies, and an examination of the policies actually followed during the 1945-1951 period, including a comparison of promise and performance. Since there has been no comprehensive study of either topic, it is maintained that the bulk of the work covers new ground. The significant exceptions have to do with the problem of capital extraction from Africa, specifically the control of the prices of African products and of banking and finance, where advantage has been taken of the considerable body of research already done.

I wish to acknowledge the invaluable and painstaking criticism of my adviser, Professor Robert Vogel, who steered me away from many pitfalls. Thanks are also due to the staff of the London School of Economics Library for their unfailing courtesy and helpfulness.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The most significant political trend of the twentieth century has been the relative decline of European power. The hold of the Europeans on their overseas empires, weakened during the preceding thirty years, was badly shaken by the Second World War and its aftermath, and adjustment to the new situation was imperative if even partial control were to be maintained. At the same time, if retreat from some outposts should prove unavoidable, it was necessary that the theory of empire should be extended to cover its demise.

For this double enterprise of bolstering European power on the one hand, and explaining its decline on the other, the basic materials were already at hand: for many years Europeans had represented the world, and even half-believed themselves, that their lust for conquest was primarily an altruistic impulse

to lead a benighted world forward into the light of European civilization. In the pre-1914 era, with the prestige of European civilization at its height, western-oriented groups in many countries had accepted this argument to some degree, and it might still prove useful in the most primitive colonies. Where European rule could no longer be preserved, it remained only to assure the world that this noble task had been performed, that the trust for the future of humanity had been fulfilled and that one of the child races of the world had been prepared for adulthood.

In this development of an ideological formula which would both buttress an empire and rationalize its decline, the lead was taken by Great Britain. No doubt this was due mainly to the superior flexibility and adaptability of the English political system, which had already succeeded in reconciling real independence for white colonists with their continued nominal association with the British Empire, but it was also assisted by the fact that many Englishmen already believed in and were devoted to the idea that imperialism involved the undertaking of a trust.

One of the constant factors in political affairs is the dichotomy between the real world, dominated by wealth and power, and the ideal world in

which men act in accordance with their altruistic impulses. There appears to be an almost universal need for men to persuade themselves that whatever serves their interest is also good and right in some absolute sense. The development of theories and principles which demonstrate that state policies are in harmony with universal morality is therefore a normal part of politics.

However, since those who are in power must operate in the real world, it often happens that the fullest elaboration of ideal policy is undertaken by groups whose aspiration to achieve power may be assisted by arguments designed to discredit their more successful opponents. Perhaps it is for this reason that the idea of treating the empire as a trust was particularly well developed amongst the thinkers of the left.

By 1945, when a Labour Government first achieved full power in Britain, the Labour Party and its spokesmen had already spent a generation in the development and elaboration of the concept which I propose to call "Imperial Trusteeship". The Labour Government's policy for the African Colonies was supposedly evolved in the light of that concept. The difficulty arose when a Labour Government was called

upon to exercise power under extremely difficult economic conditions after the devastation of a great war, and to carry out a policy which would meet the necessities of the real political situation, without admitting the total irrelevance of the principles the party spokesmen had espoused for twenty-five years.

The purpose of this study is to trace the growth of the Labour Party's idea of Imperial Trusteeship, to examine the policy actually followed in relation to that idea, and to assess the extent to which the military conquest of the world by Europeans and its exploitation in their interests could be reconciled with it. An endeavour will also be made to examine the validity of the trusteeship principle on its own terms, that is, on the assumption that it could have been put into practice.

For the period before 1945, attention will be concentrated on the Labour Party's appropriation and development of the idea that an empire should, and can, be operated on the principle that the rulers are trustees for humanity, civilizing 'backward peoples' and developing the resources of their territories in the interests of all men. The assimilation of this theory into Labour thinking will be traced from the Boer War, through its adoption and elaboration as party policy

towards the African colonies between the two world wars, until the election victory of 1945 provided the opportunity to translate theory into practice.

With Labour's advent to power, the emphasis will be on a comparison between the policies advocated before 1945 and those actually carried out during the Labour term of office. The economic, social and political aspects of government activity in the principal African colonies will be examined, and an effort will be made to assess the results. There will be no attempt to investigate in detail the influences which determined policy, beyond a general discussion of Great Britain's situation at the end of the war.

The intention is to assist in laying the foundation for a more rational relationship amongst the races of the world, in an age when European superiority is no longer accepted by other races, and less obvious than formerly to Europeans themselves. One step towards such better relations could be the admission by Europeans that the principle of trusteeship was basically a rationalization of the European conquest of the world which superior military technology made possible between the sixteenth and the nineteenth centuries.

Labour Party spokesmen have usually claimed

the idea of the sacred trust as peculiarly their own, and have tended to assume that its adoption by other parties reflected the growing influence of Labour in British politics. While this claim cannot be dismissed as wholly without foundation, it must be noted that the trusteeship theory appeared, at least in rudimentary form, long before the founding of the Labour Party. The relation of Labour's view of empire to that generally held in English society at large seems, therefore, to be relevant to any discussion of the question.

Since the emphasis here is on imperial policy, it has been assumed that the focal point is to be found in London rather than in the African colonies themselves. Although this approach presents no difficulties for the time when the theory of trusteeship was being formulated, it dictates that the study of the actual implementation of policy lacks the additional materials available in the individual colonies. The topic, however, lends itself best to an elucidation of the broad outlines of imperial policy rather than to the minute details of day-to-day administration.

Some mention must be made of the failure to consult the private papers of Arthur Creech Jones, probably the most important single figure engaged in

both the theory and practice of Labour policy. These papers were not available when the writer was in England, and are still restricted both as to access and to use. It seems unlikely, however, that they could add much to the views expressed in Creech Jones' voluminous published writings and numerous speeches in Parliament and elsewhere. This opinion finds support in recent works which cite these papers without throwing any new light on his ideas and policies. In any case, the present study concerns itself primarily with publicly expressed attitudes to colonial policy.

CHAPTER II

BRITISH SOCIALISM ADOPTS TRUSTEESHIP

In the period before the First World War British Labour took little interest in the Empire. An Independent Labour Party circular of 1896, which stated that the party "at present mainly CONFINES ITS ATTENTION TO INDUSTRIAL QUESTIONS,"[1] set forth the view which, apart from a growing interest in foreign policy, was substantially maintained until 1916.

The single deviation from this general attitude of official indifference was produced by the Boer War, which was opposed by Labour. A resolution passed unanimously by the First Annual Conference of the Labour Representation Committee, held in 1901, read as follows:

> That, inasmuch as modern Imperialism with its attendant militarism is a reversion to one of the worst phases of barbarism, is inimical to social reform and disastrous to trade and

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[1]Tom Mann, The Independent Labour Party - Its History and Policy (London, 1896), p. 3.

> commerce, a fruitful cause of war, destructive of freedom, fraught with menace to representative institutions at home and abroad, and must end in the destruction of democracy, this Congress desires most earnestly to impress upon the working class the urgent need there is for combatting this dangerous and barbaric development in all its manifestations.[2]

The Second Annual Conference of the Scottish Workers' Parliamentary Elections Committee, held in Glasgow on January 5th, 1901, passed by 115 votes to 70, a resolution condemning the war and "the policy of Imperialism on which it is sought to justify it, as fraught with danger to Democracy" and signifying "tyranny abroad and neglect of social reform at home."[3]

Anti-imperialist views were also expressed by writers associated with the Labour Movement. A contemporary statement by Keir Hardie again emphasized the association between imperialism and war, and concluded that "whoever gains by war the working class is bound to lose."[4] An article in the Labour Leader, organ of the I.L.P., attacked imperialism as a bulwark of capitalism, holding that, since the expansion of markets increased profits and gave capitalism a new

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[2]Labour Representation Committee, Report of the First Annual Conference (London, 1901), p. 20.

[3]Labour Leader, Vol. XIII (January 12, 1901), p. 10.

[4]J. K. Hardie, Keir Hardie's Speeches and Writings (Glasgow, n.d.), p. 102.

lease on life, "every extension of empire tends economically towards the perpetuation of capitalism, and every curtailment of empire towards the downfall of capitalism and the possible establishment of socialism."[5] A somewhat different note was struck by a staff writer, who expressed his view of the righteousness of British imperial policy as follows:

> Having ourselves humanely extinguished the Matabele, butchered the Zulus, enslaved the Bechuanas, and introduced civilisation, scrofula, and gin to every quarter of the globe, we suddenly recollect that the Boer . . . has not always been just to native races.[6]

It is quite plain that these pronouncements reflected interest in a current problem, and had no relation to the subsequent evolution of Labour policy. They were concerned mainly with the threat posed by imperialism to the interests of British workers, not with the right of subject peoples either to independence or to better treatment; they called for resistance to imperialism but gave no consideration to any steps for ending or reforming it; and they produced no continuing interest in the Empire after the end of the war. Neither the Reports of the Annual Conferences

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[5] Labour Leader, Vol. XI (November 4, 1899), p. 350.

[6] Labour Leader, Vol. XI (September 30, 1899), p. 305.

nor the activities of the Parliamentary Party show any sign of concern with imperial or colonial affairs.[7] Not until 1917 was serious attention given to the question of colonial policy.

While the Labour Party was declaring its unqualified opposition to imperialism, the outlines of its future policy were being sketched by the intellectuals of the left. The controversy over the Boer War concentrated the attention of the Fabian Society on the question of imperialism and revealed a division of opinion on the war but a basic unanimity in favour of the idea of Imperial Trusteeship, as expounded by Bernard Shaw and Sidney Webb.

At a special meeting on the Transvaal War held on December 8, 1899, a resolution proposed by S. G. Hobson condemned the "Imperialist passion" which had caused the war and had "effected a sinister co-operation between professional financiers and the military power", and continued:

> The Fabian Society therefore formally dissociates itself from the Imperialism of Capitalism and vainglorious Nationalism, and pledges itself to support the expansion of the Empire only in so far as that may be compatible with the expansion of that higher

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[7]Reports of the Annual Conferences of the Labour Representation Committee and of the Labour Party. See also the pamphlet Description of the Parliamentary Party (London, 1912).

> social organization which this Society was founded to promote.[8]

An amendment by Bernard Shaw, calling for nationalization of the Rand Mines and the passing of a stringent Mines Regulation Act, clearly looked forward to victory, and, contrary to Hobson's opinion, accepted the war as one compatible with the Society's ideals.[9]

Shaw's amendment was decisively defeated by the assembled group, but no decision could be reached on the main motion. The Executive Committee thereupon polled the membership by mail, with the result that the Society declared itself, by a small majority, in favour of Shaw's view.[10]

After the victory of the pro-war faction, Shaw was entrusted with the task of producing a statement for the Society. The result was Fabianism and the Empire, of which Shaw claimed to be only "the draughtsman employed by the society to express its views."[11] Published in 1900, it was to remain for four decades the Fabian Society's most significant statement of imperial policy.

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[8] Fabian News, Vol. IX, No. 10 (December, 1899), p. 37.

[9] Ibid., pp. 37-38.

[10] Fabian News, Vol. X, No. 1 (March, 1900), p. 1.

[11] G. B. Shaw, Fabianism and the Empire (London, 1900), p. v.

Beginning with the recognition of the fact that the "partition of the greater part of the globe" among the Great Powers was "now only a question of time",[12] Shaw proceeded to argue that this consummation was not only inevitable, but right. The "right to trade," which also "involves a right to insist upon a settled government which can keep the peace and enforce agreements" was "an irresistible natural force, which will lead sooner or later to the imposition by the Powers of commercial civilization on all countries which are still refractory to it."[13] In China, for example, it was necessary to "proceed on the principle that we have international rights of travelling, trading, efficient police protection, and communication by road, rail and telegraph in every part of the globe."[14] He conceded similar rights to China in the British Empire, without discussing how China might be able to enforce them.

Of course, Shaw insisted, the Great Powers "must govern in the interests of civilization as a whole."[15] He admitted that the Powers, "not excluding

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[12] Ibid., p. 3.

[13] Ibid., pp. 45-46.

[14] Ibid., pp. 47-48.

[15] Ibid., p. 23.

the British Empire," were apt to make their right to trade "an excuse for purely piratical conquests of weaker states,"[16] and that it would, in theory, be better if their rule could be internationalized. However, since no World Federation was in existence, it was necessary to "accept the most responsible Imperial federations available as a substitute for it."[17]

The maintenance of the position of England as one of these Great Powers who were to rule the world would depend on her ability to govern the Empire: British power "must be exercised as a trust for the common interests, not only of the whole British Commonwealth, but of the whole of civilized society."[18] Within the Empire, this meant the adoption of "a definite constitutional policy," not everywhere the same, but suited to the needs of the particular people concerned. "As for parliamentary institutions for native races," he wrote, "that dream has been disposed of by the American experiments after the Civil War."[19] Such institutions would be "impracticable" in India, where he advocated an increase in secondary education,

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[16] Ibid., p. 46.

[17] Ibid., p. 23.

[18] Ibid., p. 32.

[19] Ibid., p. 16.

the Indianization of the Indian Civil Service and the development of local self-government.[20] In South Africa, the natives "must be protected despotically by the Empire or abandoned to slavery and extermination."[21] It was necessary "to lay the foundations of International Socialism" by establishing under the British flag a factory code and a legal minimum wage so that the flag would "carry a reasonable standard of life with it."[22]

The key to the greater part of Shaw's essay is to be found in the phrase "International Socialism". His ideas were based on a completely erroneous interpretation of the political trends of the time. He believed that "the point of view of the twentieth century" was that of International Socialism,[23] and that the new imperialism had grown out of this point of view and was therefore the creation of the Fabian Society. This latter idea was expressed in a lecture on "Imperialism" which he gave on February 23, 1900 in which he told his audience that imperialism was "really a claim for the further integration of the communities

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[20] Ibid., pp. 17-18.

[21] Ibid., p. 22.

[22] Ibid., pp. 54-55.

[23] Ibid., p. 44.

constituting the Empire." As such, it was a new creation. Twenty years earlier it had been thought the natural thing to shed colonies when they matured, but now "no statesman could propose independence for an acre of the Empire." This change had been brought about by "the application of Socialism to current politics -- in other words, the work of the Fabian Society." Fabianism had eliminated the idea of class war, while the old faith in such concepts as the rights of the individual, competition and nationality had been "superseded by a sense of the supreme importance of the Duties of the Community." With the "regulation of Private Enterprise in the common interest, and dissolution of Frontiers through international industrial organization, Imperial Federation was an inevitable deduction from these new views. . . . For good or evil," he said, "it is we who have made England Imperialist."[24]

Sidney Webb apparently agreed with Shaw that the socialist heaven, if not yet attained, was near at hand, and that the "Commonwealth" was already in existence. Twentieth century British politics, he wrote, would "certainly assume the maintenance, as

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[24] Fabian News, Vol. X, No. 1 (March, 1900), p. 2.

against all external aggression, of that great commonwealth of peoples styled the British Empire." Webb denied the right of any "nationality" to organize an independent government and pursue ends which might conflict with "the common interests of the Empire as a whole." All that was needed was that the Empire should be organized "to promote the maximum individual development of each geographical unit within its bounds."[25]

The issue between the followers of Shaw and those of Hobson was a difference of opinion about the Boer War, not about imperialism. Hobson shared Shaw's opinion on the inevitability of the expansion of trade and European influence, and believed "that the British administrator, by reason of long experience and temperament" was "best capable of organizing and governing suzerain territories," but he did not agree that the current imperialism was purely socialist in character. He decried the "capitalistic imperialism" which had caused the Boer War, and in which he could see nothing "save cupidity and a callous indifference to the rights of other peoples." This imperialism, he concluded, stood in the way of a humanitarian

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[25]Sidney Webb, Twentieth Century Politics (London, 1901), pp. 5-6.

administration of subject races and, unless these races could be consolidated and organized in the socialist sense, it would be better for the Empire to contract rather than to expand.[26]

A more skeptical view was taken by Gilbert Murray, who described the "training of inferior races to self-government" as a "shadowy ideal" and doubted that either the British or other Europeans had the qualities needed to solve the problem.[27] Another Fabian, Edward Carpenter, disputed the right of Great Britain to force trade on other countries, and derided the "notion about the British Mission to reform the world." He maintained it was "the most illiterate folk of all classes" who were shouting for Empire, and predicted that the craze would pass before long.[28]

Despite such voices of dissent, it was acceptance of the view that Europe's commercial civilization would inevitably triumph, and that socialism could be counted upon to tame the greed of those who held the power, which set the course of later

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[26] Labour Leader, Vol. XI (December 16, 1899), p. 397.

[27] Fabian News, Vol. X, No. 4 (June, 1900), p. 14.

[28] Edward Carpenter, Empire: In India and Elsewhere (London, 1900), pp. 4, 15.

thought. The minority survived, but made little headway against the tide; the basic ideas which were to dominate the thinking of English socialists for half a century were those formulated by the Fabian Imperialists during the Boer War.

The central problem lay in the necessity of using the European conquest of the world as the foundation for the creation of a socialist world commonwealth in which everyone would have an equal share. It was unrealistic to imagine that Europeans would forego the opportunity of exploiting the world's resources when they had the military power and the technological ability to do so: all that was in question was the basis of the relationship through which control of these resources would be acquired. If international socialism could dominate Europe, it could determine the direction the industrialized world would take.

The underlying assumption of the Fabian majority was that, in the context of the existing imperial system, it was possible to ensure the adoption of principles which would guarantee to non-Europeans a share in the benefits their raw materials could produce. They also accepted without question the popular dogma of backward or inferior races, whose political, social

and economic systems must be replaced by those of Europe. They saw western civilization as Europe's special gift to a backward world, and assumed that its bearers had not only the right but the duty to impose it, by force if necessary, on the whole human race. The British Empire was already the prototype of the socialist world commonwealth which would emerge. From these assumptions stemmed the full flowering of the doctrine of Imperial Trusteeship, which would sanctify Europe's drive for world domination by presenting it as a yearning to undertake a sacred trust for the future of humanity.

During the years after the Boer War, this trusteeship doctrine continued to find support amongst liberal and socialist writers on imperialism. Of these, the most important was J. A. Hobson, whose classic work on the subject, while it criticized the past imperial record, endorsed all the basic tenets of the Fabian creed and further elaborated the argument for trusteeship.

Hobson agreed that Europeans had the right to force the development of the tropics by conquest and the "inducement" of their inhabitants to work. "The real issue," he wrote, "is one of safeguards, of

motives, and of methods."[29] Under what conditions, he asked, may one nation use compulsion to develop the resources of another? His answer was that "Such interference with the government of a lower race [italics mine] must be directed primarily to secure the safety and progress of the civilization of the world, and not the special interest of the interfering nation." It must also be "attended by an improvement and elevation of the character of the people who are brought under this control."[30]

Two further refinements of the theory were added by Hobson. Firstly, he argued that, if European governments refused to organize the development of these territories, they would not thereby save the lower races. On the contrary

> they would let loose a horde of private adventurers, slavers, piratical traders, treasure hunters, concession mongers, who, animated by mere greed of gold and power, would set about the work of exploitation under no public control and with no regard to the future.[31]

Secondly, he held that the fulfilment of the trust "must not be left to the arbitrary will or judgment of the interfering nation, but must proceed from some organized

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[29] J. A. Hobson, Imperialism: A Study (London, 1905), pp. 196-201.

[30] Ibid., p. 204.

[31] Ibid., p. 202.

representation of civilized humanity."[32]

That Hobson was aware of grave objections to this latter line of thought, and that he had misgivings about the whole prospect, is clear. He pointed out that what actually existed everywhere was "selfish, materialistic, short-sighted national competition," and that international collaboration in the past had always had the nature, "not of a moral trust, but of a business 'deal'."[33] For the existing motives and methods of imperialism he held no brief. He must have seen that the evils he complained of, including the abuses by the English Chartered Companies and by King Leopold in the Congo, were being forced by the power of the European Governments themselves, and that, without this state power to back them, private adventurers could often have been resisted by the "lower races." Nevertheless, he seems to have believed in the possibility of bringing imperial policy into line with the principle of trusteeship. Given such reforms, he accepted the right of European civilization to impose its will on inferior peoples.

Keir Hardie, the leader of Labour's left wing, took a somewhat similar stand. Although Hardie insisted

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[32] Ibid., p. 204.

[33] Ibid., p. 212.

that "the exploitation of the coloured races by the white is just as obnoxious to the Socialist as the exploitation of the poor by the rich,"[34] and although he believed that exploitation was taking place, in India, for example, his solution was not withdrawal but a change in policy. Education and an increasing share in administration would "bind the people more closely to us and lead to their becoming a loyal, self-governing part of the Empire."[35] He may not have considered the Indians a coloured race, however, since he thought the fact they were "Aryans like ourselves" had "a very important bearing upon the question of how far the Indian people can be trusted with the right of self-government."[36]

Leslie Haden Guest, a socialist and a member of the Fabian executive, also advocated "Imperial control of the natives." He thought the world was rapidly becoming a single unit, and that the inclusion of all peoples could not be prevented. "The question," he said, "is whether native races can be incorporated in the world-civilization." He maintained that some,

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[34] J. K. Hardie, After Twenty Years: All About the I.L.P. (London, 1913), p. 13.

[35] J. K. Hardie, India, Impressions and Suggestions (London, 1909), p. 126.

[36] Ibid., p. 102.

such as the Bushmen and the North American Indians, were incapable of co-operation or progress in civilization, but that race legislation should be abandoned and all groups brought in "as high up as may be."[37]

The idea that trusteeship was involved in the control of backward peoples was neither new nor specifically socialist. Conservatives traced their adherence to it back to Burke's speech on Fox's India Bill, in which he had maintained "that all political power which is set over men . . . ought to be in some way or other exercised ultimately for their benefit" and that such power "is, in the strictest sense, a trust."[38]

Burke had not been alone in his belief, for Fox and others had expressed similar opinions, and they had had many successors. An 1837 Report of a Select Committee of the House of Commons had said: "As an enlightened and Christian people, we are at least bound to do to the inhabitants of other lands . . . as we should . . . desire to be done by."[39] Palmerston had

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[37] Fabian News, Vol. XXII, No. 6 (May, 1911), p. 42.

[38] Parliamentary History of England, Vol. XXIII (London, 1814), cols. 1316-1317.

[39] H. R. Fox Bourne, The Claims of the Uncivilised Races (London, 1900), p. 3.

told Parliament, in introducing the Government of India Bill of 1858, that it was the nation's duty to use its power in India "in such a manner as to promote, as far as they can, the instruction, the enlightenment, and the civilization of those great populations which are now subject to our rule."[40] And another Select Committee of 1865, considering the government of West Africa, had carried the matter a step further by stating that

> The object of our policy should be to encourage in the natives the exercise of those qualities which may render it possible for us more and more to transfer to them the administration of all governments with a view to our ultimate withdrawal . . .[41]

Nor were these admirable principles confined to the statesmen of the British Empire. By the General Act of the Conference of Berlin, signed on February 26th, 1885, all the Powers of Europe had pledged themselves to act in the spirit of trusteeship in their dealings with the people of Africa.

The declared aim of the Powers was "to regulate the conditions most favourable to the development of

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[40]Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, Third Series, Vol. CXLVIII (1857-58), col. 1292.

[41]Col. No. 248, Gold Coast: Report to His Excellency the Governor by the Committee on Constitutional Reform, 1949 (London, 1949), p. 5.

trade and civilization,"[42] and they bound themselves "to watch over the preservation of the native tribes, and to care for the improvement of the conditions of their moral and material well-being." To this end they were to "protect and favour all religious, scientific, or charitable institutions . . . which aim at instructing the natives and bringing home to them the blessings of civilization."[43] An International Commission, on which all the signatory powers were represented, was charged with the execution of these provisions. The Brussels Conference of 1890 adopted similar clauses, adding that one of the duties owed to the natives was that of initiating them "in agricultural works and in the industrial arts so as to increase their welfare."[44]

Socialist critics of the Empire in the early years of the twentieth century must have been aware of this long tradition. Doubtless it occurred to them to wonder how the abuses they complained of could have survived so many years of devotion to trusteeship. If so, they must have assumed, with Shaw, that socialism

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[42]Sir E. Hertslet, The Map of Africa by Treaty (London, 1909), II, 468.

[43]Ibid., p. 473.

[44]Ibid., p. 491.

was in the process of exorcising evil from the world, and that in the new age the lion and the lamb were to be not only bedfellows, but partners. In any case, they approached 1914, and the end of the world they knew, with undiminished faith in their power to reform the Empire.

CHAPTER III

THE LABOUR PARTY ACCEPTS IMPERIAL TRUSTEESHIP

When the First World War began, the Labour Party had not yet formulated a policy for dealing with the Empire. In this, as in so many other ways, the war quickened trends already under way, and precipitated action. The last forty years had seen a rapid consolidation of national sentiment, as throughout western Europe the workers had been incorporated in the nation. The state had assumed its modern form as the instrument through which the nation could hope to ensure its economic security and social welfare. Although many of its devotees still slumbered on, international socialism was becoming a more and more fantastic dream.

The outbreak of the war at once confirmed, and its course rapidly accentuated, the national character of European socialism. Everywhere the workers and their allies, with rare exceptions, made common cause

with the capitalists of their own country rather than with the workers of the world; national antagonisms were sharpened and deepened by the all-inclusive nature of the war, and by the methods with which it was fought.

Of the latter, perhaps the most significant from this point of view was the manipulation of mass opinion by propaganda. It was Great Britain who first saw how greatly new developments in education and communication had increased the effectiveness of this weapon. Her need of it was also great, since, unlike the continental powers, she could not present the war to her people as a defence against invasion. It was, therefore, all the more necessary to convince them that they were called upon to save civilization from barbarism.

The leaders of the British left were easy marks for this kind of propaganda. In principle they were opposed to war, but their sentiments were with the nation; they could reconcile their principles with their sentiments by identifying the Allied cause with the future of that unified world civilization they thought they were in the process of creating. This they did, and in so doing blinded themselves to the fact that the war itself was destroying the last possibility of

realizing such a world. They prepared themselves to share enthusiastically in that destruction by accepting the diagnosis that the world's ills grew, not from defects in international society, but from a German cancer on the body politic, whose excision would restore its health.

Finally, as the war progressed, and the British Empire more and more assumed the leadership of the allied cause, it loomed ever larger as the remaining nucleus of their organized world. The war had brought the Empire a unity of purpose which concealed from English statesmen the real tendency towards growing national independence, and encouraged them in the belief that Imperial Federation was in the process of realization. Their preconceptions about the probable course of world development led some socialists to confuse the continued existence of the Empire with the future of civilization. Given this premise, the natural corollary of success in making the world safe for democracy was to make it safe also for imperialism, by elaborating a policy for turning the Empire into a sacred trust.

At the same time, other forces were at work whose tendency was in an opposite direction. The colossal destruction of life and property inflicted by the war quickened interest in the Empire from the more

realistic point of view that its labour and resources could be requisitioned to repair the shattered British economy. This trend is best exemplified by the appearance, in October, 1916, of an organization calling itself The Empire Resources Development Committee. The Chairman was Sir Starr Jameson, President of the British South Africa Company, and the Honorary Secretary and leading publicist was H. Wilson Fox, M.P. Fox and his associates recognized the "position of trust" held by the Imperial Government "in relation to native territories," but insisted that the welfare of the natives was not incompatible with the discharge of the duties owed to the Empire by them.[1] The main duty, apparently, was that of supplying the labour to provide Great Britain with profits large enough to pay her war debts.

Fox began by assuming, as had already been done in Southern Rhodesia, that all land in Africa was Crown property, and that Africans had no rights in it whatever. The Colonial Territories would be treated "as estates of the Crown which should be developed for the general benefit of the Empire, and at the same time

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[1]H. Wilson Fox, "The Development of the Empire's Resources," The Nineteenth Century and After, Vol. 82 (October, 1917), pp. 856-7.

of their native inhabitants." How much his plan aimed at benefitting the native inhabitants was indicated by his statement that they might "properly be included in any review of our undeveloped national assets." The success of tropical development, he thought, would depend "upon the extent to which native labour" was available, and "upon its cost and efficiency;" native labourers "should be trained and utilised to the fullest extent which their individual aptitudes" allowed; "the elimination of the slacker" was "as important overseas as it is here." Since there would be few Europeans in the tropics, they would "continue to be primarily overseers of native labour;" under these circumstances, there would be no extension of self-government to such areas, and they could continue to supply the British state with huge profits forever.[2]

At the moment, therefore, when Labour was moving towards the adoption of an imperial policy which would emphasize trusteeship, events were strengthening the already powerful impulse to use imperial power for purposes of economic exploitation. Nevertheless, the party adopted the optimistic view,

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[2]H. Wilson Fox, "The Development of Imperial Resources," Journal of the Royal Society of Arts, (December 15, 1916), pp. 84-86.

promulgated by the Fabians and others since the Boer War, that trusteeship was a viable alternative, and proceeded to formulate a plan based on this premise.

As we have seen, the foundations of such a policy were already in existence; it remained only to give them a more definite form and to incorporate them in the programme of the Labour Party. This process was not accomplished without some difference of opinion, but in the end little that was new emerged.

The Fabian Society, concerned primarily with the problem of establishing permanent peace, and still dominated by the idea of international socialism, was engaged in the creation of blueprints for an international government, which would be set up after the war. As the solution to the African problem, the Society proposed the creation of an International Commission, which would administer all the European Colonies in Africa, for the benefit of their inhabitants and of the traders of the world. The main purpose was clearly to eliminate international rivalry over Africa as a cause of European war, and not to protect Africans from European exploitation.[3]

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[3]Jack H. Mower, The Development of the Colonial Policy of the British Labour Party, 1918-1939 (unpublished Harvard thesis, 1951), p. 32.

A special Labour Party Conference held in London on August 10, 1917, adopted this stand in favour of international administration of colonies in Africa. In view of the fact that it was impracticable to leave the people of Africa to settle their own destinies, the Conference suggested

> the transfer of all the present Colonies of the European Powers in tropical Africa . . . to the proposed Supernational Authority or League of Nations . . . and their administration by an impartial Commission under that Authority . . . as a single independent African State.

This African State would be organized on the principle of the Open Door; it would provide for protection of the natives against exploitation and oppression and spend all revenue for their "welfare and development"; and it would be permanently neutralized to ensure its "abstention from participation in international rivalries or any future wars."[4]

An almost identical statement was drawn up by the Labour Executive and submitted for approval to an Inter-Allied Labour and Socialist Conference held in London in February 1918; the only substantive change consisted in the replacement of the clause concerning

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[4]Labour Party, Report of the Special Party Conference Held in London, August 10, 1917 (London, 1917), p. 36.

the Open Door by one which called for "taking into account, in each locality, the wishes of the people."[5] The Inter-Allied Conference, however, failed to adopt the British proposal for international administration, and declared instead for "a system of control, established by international agreement under the League of Nations", which would respect "national sovereignty" and would be "concerned to safeguard the rights of the natives." The idea of neutralization was also dropped.[6] This was the end of internationalization as a practical policy, and the retention of African colonies as centres of international rivalry and sources of military strength was assured.

After the failure of the socialists of Allied countries to support administration of colonies by the League, the British Labour Party easily reverted to the policy of Imperial Federation, which had always seemed an attractive alternative to the theoretically best policy of internationalization. The Annual Conference of June, 1918, endorsed a statement of party policy, published as a pamphlet under the name

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[5]The Labour Party and the Trades Union Congress, Memorandum on War Aims (London, 1918), pp. 5-6.

[6]Inter-Allied Labour and Socialist Conference, Memorandum on War Aims (London, 1918), p. 13.

Labour and the New Social Order, which incorporated the mythology of empire in its modern form.

The statement repudiated the "Imperialism that seeks to dominate other races," but also dismissed "any conception of a selfish and insular non-interventionism," unregarding of Britain's "special obligations" to overseas people or of "the moral claims upon us of the non-adult races" [italics mine]. "With regard to that great Commonwealth of all races, all colours, all religions and all degrees of civilization, that we call the British Empire," it continued, "the Labour Party stands for its maintenance and its progressive development on the lines of Local Autonomy and 'Home Rule all Around';" each people in the Empire, whatever its colour, should have "all the Democratic Self-Government of which it is capable." It concluded that already the British Empire had become "essentially not an Empire in the old sense, but a Britannic Alliance."[7]

Having thus accepted the doctrine of inferior races, and rationalized the continuation of the Empire into the indefinite future, the Labour Party still had the task of turning the vague moral claims of these

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[7]Labour Party, Labour and the New Social Order (London, 1918), pp. 21-22.

non-adult races into some more concrete form by specifying the action which should be taken to carry out the trust. This was done within the next few years.

A full statement of Labour's conception of the proper policy for the African Colonies was issued in 1920, in a pamphlet entitled The Empire in Africa: Labour's Policy. The booklet was prepared by the Advisory Committee on International Questions under the Chairmanship of Sidney Webb, and was clearly heavily influenced by the ideas of E. D. Morel, a member of the Committee. Notification of its publication was included in the Executive Committee's Report to the 1920 Conference. It first surveyed existing problems in the colonies with special emphasis on the question of land. In this connection it drew attention to the "two land policies," the "African Policy" of reserving the land for the native communities, which was being followed in West Africa, and the "European Policy" of herding the natives into reserves and giving the land to Europeans to be worked with native labour, which, it said, had been adopted in East and Central Africa. Since Europeans could not work the land themselves, this latter policy created a labour problem, which could be solved only by forcing the natives to work,

through land hunger and taxation. The results of the two land policies were contrasted, to the advantage of the African policy, which, it was asserted, not only maintained a healthy native society, but also produced greater "development" in the form of exports than the European policy.[8]

Having made this critical preliminary survey, the statement then set forth Labour's intentions. With regard to land, it proposed: that land should be treated as the property of the native community, and each family should have security of tenure and enough land for its support; that native land tenure should be maintained, all alienation of land prohibited and alienated land repossessed where necessary; that mineral products should be treated as the property of the local administration, to be held in trust for the natives; and that mines and large-scale industries should be run by the state. On the question of labour, it maintained: that compulsory labour should be absolutely prohibited, except where native custom authorized it for native purposes; that "no labour contracts should be enforceable under the sanctions of criminal law;" and that all occupations should be open to everyone on

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[8]Labour Party, The Empire in Africa: Labour's Policy (London, 1920), pp. 2-6.

an equal basis regardless of race, creed, or colour.[9]

A more positive note was struck in the sections on government and education. Labour advocated the establishment of "genuine representation" for natives on the Legislative Councils, and the "gradual transfer of responsibility" after the spread of education; institutions of native local self-government should also be encouraged and developed; and, finally, the principle of trusteeship as defined in the League of Nations Covenant must be extended to all tropical Africa, and the League's right of supervision recognized. The next section stressed the paramount importance of education, since political and economic development depended on it. Education policy, it was said, must include provision for primary education for all children of school-going age, teachers' training colleges, technical and agricultural schools, and a university to provide a sufficient number of lawyers, doctors, accountants, and forestry and agricultural experts.[10]

From the theoretical point of view, this far-reaching programme for the political, social and

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[9] Ibid., pp. 7-8.

[10] Ibid., pp. 9-10.

economic development of the African Colonies left little more to be said on the subject. It incorporated most of Morel's important ideas, including in particular his emphasis on the significance of the land problem;[11] the outstanding exceptions were items which required international agreement, such as the projects for the neutralization of Africa and the internationalizing of commercial activities there. One noteworthy deviation from Morel's programme, however, was the absence of any proposal for the encouragement of native industries.[12] The emphasis in economic development was on the production of raw materials and food, and especially on increasing the volume of exports, where it was to remain throughout the colonial period.

Although doubts on matters of detail were expressed in some quarters, the main outlines of the programme were acceptable to most Labour thinkers. Almost unanimously they agreed that Africans were unable to look after themselves, and that European control was therefore necessary: equally, they rejected international administration in favour of continued rule by the individual states. Some were extremely

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[11] E. D. Morel, The Black Man's Burden (London, 1920), pp. 167-171.

[12] E. D. Morel, The African Problem and the Peace Settlement (London, 1917), pp. 13-15.

critical of existing policies, but all believed that reform in the direction of trusteeship was possible.

One of the most prolific and fascinating of the writers on the subject at this time was Leonard Woolf, Secretary of the Advisory Committee on International Questions, whose views show clearly the dilemma of the European intellectual in the face of the problem of Imperialism. Woolf was among the severest critics of the existing policies of the European Powers, and maintained that these had destroyed viable African social systems and deprived Africans of political and economic freedom.[13] Yet he felt that the European State must remain in Africa as trustee for the native population, since the Africans were "not in a position immediately to take over the entire administration of their countries" and should therefore be governed by mandatories, "whose main purpose should be to promote their material well-being and educate them to govern themselves."[14] Woolf thought internationalization was probably the best solution, but was prepared to accept the Mandate System; he saw that if the economic beliefs and desires of Europe remained the same, it would make

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[13]Leonard Woolf, Mandates and Empire (London, 1920), p. 12.

[14]Leonard Woolf, Economic Imperialism (London, 1920), p. 107.

little difference whether exploitation was carried on under national or international auspices.[15]

In view of his opinions concerning the predatory nature of European aims in Africa, Woolf's expectation that the powers could be prevailed upon to take seriously their "primary duty to educate the African" and "gradually develop a full system of responsible government" is hard to understand.[16] Indeed, one wonders why he did not think it would be as easy to persuade them to go away and leave Africa alone. Since it was only their activities that prevented Africans from being "able to stand alone in the modern world," this solution should have appealed to him equally well. It can only be assumed that he still hoped for the victory of international socialism in the not too distant future. Whatever the reason, his conclusions ranged him on the side of those who accepted the necessity of maintaining imperialism and of imposing European economic, social and political systems on Africa in the guise of a sacred trust. Now, as before the war, there was practically no dissent from this view. The Labour Party's stated policy,

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[15]Leonard Woolf, Empire and Commerce in Africa (London, 1919), p. 361.

[16]Woolf, Economic Imperialism, p. 111.

therefore, was the policy of the whole Labour Movement, which the party was pledged to put into practice when it achieved power.

From time to time the Party Conferences passed resolutions which clarified the policy, and indicated how it might be interpreted when that time arrived. One such resolution was passed at the 1922 Conference: previous conferences had demanded the application of the principle of "democratic self-determination" to India, denied "the right of any government to govern a country against the will of the majority,"[17] and asserted the "right of self-determination of all peoples;"[18] the Twenty-second Conference showed how vaguely these phrases were to be interpreted by approving the Parliamentary Party's support of the Government of India Act of 1919, by virtue of which India was given the privilege of remaining an absolute dictatorship under the Viceroy. The resolution urged the group to support "any legislation in the direction of securing" for India the degree of self-government possessed by Canada, Australia and South Africa, but an amendment leaving out support for the 1919 Act, and calling on the

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[17]Labour Party, Report of the Twentieth Annual Conference, 1920, p. 156.

[18]Labour Party, Report, 1921, p. 207.

Parliamentary Party to press for legislation to give India that position, was defeated.[19]

This cautious approach to the question of Indian self-government was indicative of the thin line separating Labour's policy of Trusteeship from that which the Conservative Government already claimed to be pursuing. In fact, all parties paid lip-service to the principle that Empire was a trust, and the British Government officially committed itself to that view on several occasions in the post-war period.

In 1923, the Government announced that "it recognized in regard to all the African territories under its authority the principles of Trusteeship declared in Article 22" of the League of Nations Covenant.[20] In the same year, a White Paper on "Indians in Kenya" was issued, which declared that Kenya was primarily an African territory and that it was the Government's "considered opinion . . . that the interests of the African natives must be paramount, and that if, and when, those interests and the interests of the immigrant races should conflict, the former should prevail." His Majesty's Government, it continued,

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[19]Labour Party, Report, 1922, p. 204.

[20]Lord Olivier, Imperial Trusteeship (London, 1929), p. 4.

regarded themselves "as exercising a trust on behalf of the African population," the object of which was "the protection and advancement of the native races;" Great Britain's mission was "to work continuously for the training and education of the Africans towards a higher intellectual, moral and economic level." Control of policy must therefore remain in the hands of the Imperial Government.[21]

It is significant, however, that this policy statement arose from the Government's need to find some formula which would quiet Indian agitation for equal rights in Kenya without disturbing the status quo. Since the only point of agreement between the Indians and the European settlers was their supposed devotion to native welfare, this was seized on as providing the excuse to prevent Indian advance. The White Paper pledged maintenance of the White Highlands and an exclusive franchise, and was therefore accepted by the settlers as a victory over the Indians. It had no effect on native policy.[22]

The decision that the United Kingdom Government must remain in control was in line with the prevailing

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[21] Cmd. 1922 (1923), Indians in Kenya, p. 10.

[22] R. G. Gregory, Sidney Webb and East Africa (Berkeley, 1962), pp. 44-50.

view at the time, that the centrifugal forces in the Empire had been nullified by the war and that it was in the process of drawing together again. No territory in Africa was given a Legislative Council with an unofficial majority during the next twenty years of almost continuous Conservative domination.

There still remained the hard reality of the basic economic purpose of Imperialism, in Africa as elsewhere. At this very time Lord Lugard was pointing out that the tropics produced "a class of raw materials and of foodstuffs which . . . are so vital to the needs of civilized man that they have in very truth become essential to civilization." It was this, he said, which had led Europeans to compete for control of the tropics.[23]

As Lord Milner wrote in his despatch of June 11, 1919, the war had caused "depletion of raw materials" and left "vast financial responsibilities;" these facts made it "more than ever necessary that the economic resources of the Empire in general should be developed to the uttermost."[24] One action taken with

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[23]Lord Lugard, The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa (London, 1965), p. 43.

[24]Quoted in Conference of East African Governors, A Report on a Fiscal Survey of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika (Nairobi, 1946), p. 158.

a view to carrying out this aim seems to foreshadow certain developments of the post-1945 period. At the request of the Joint West African Committee of the Liverpool, London, and Manchester Chambers of Commerce, a committee was appointed in 1923 to inquire into the best means of increasing the production of palm oil and palm kernels in West Africa. Its report did not take an optimistic view of the possibilities of cultivating the palm tree under the plantation system.[25]

The most coherent attempt to reconcile economic exploitation with African development was made by Lord Lugard in his book The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa, which is worth examining in some detail, since advocates of Imperial Trusteeship considered it a great success, and still refer to it with admiration today. The Dual Mandate of civilization in Africa, said Lugard, consists of the moral obligation of the civilizing powers to govern, train and protect the natives, and the material obligation to develop tropical resources "for the mutual benefit of the people and of mankind in general."[26]

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[25]Col. No. 10, Palm Oil and Palm Kernels (London, 1925), pp. 3ff.

[26]Lugard, p. 58.

Lugard's view of the moral obligation to the natives was coloured, like that of all Europeans of his day, by the racist approach which precluded any possibility of genuine trusteeship. In his lengthy discussion of the inferiorities of the Negro, which included such gems as the dictum that "centuries of lawless strife have made the African a worshipper of force," he quoted with approval the opinion that his mind was "far nearer to the animal world than that of the European or Asiatic" and concluded that, in Africa, "we are dealing with the child races of the world."[27]

It is, therefore, not surprising that he thought the "era of complete independence" was "not yet visible on the horizon of time," and that African education was important "especially for the ruling class, and for the filling of lucrative posts under Government."[28] The educated ruling class would depend completely upon, and identify itself with, the ruling power; the filling of lower civil service posts with low-paid native clerks would prevent administrative costs from becoming too high.[29] Control would remain

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[27] Ibid., pp. 69-82.

[28] Ibid., pp. 198, 211.

[29] Ibid., pp. 94, 210.

in the hands of the English gentlemen who had made and maintained the British Empire and who would continue indefinitely to protect the natives from injustice and oppression.

Meanwhile, the other aim of creating conditions under which individual enterprise could most advantageously develop the natural resources of Africa would be carried out. "The tropics are the heritage of mankind" said Lugard, and insisted that the races which lived there had "no right to deny their bounties to those who need them."[30] Although he considered the Negroes more industrious than other races, he accepted the view that the tropics would never be developed by the natives themselves. By "development" he meant, of course, development in the interests of Europe through the growth of an export and import trade, and he held that the opening of Africa had been a source of great gain to Europeans and also, although perhaps not to quite as great an extent, to the Africans themselves. Not capitalist greed but the needs of the people of Europe for food and raw materials had made the partition of Africa necessary and right.[31]

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[30] Ibid., p. 61.

[31] Ibid., pp. 608-615.

This crude assimilation of greed and idealism, at the rate of about one part idealism to three parts greed, probably came fairly close to representing the proportion in which the two conflicting elements were present in contemporary thought. If there was a consensus on the subject, and the course of events seems to indicate that there was, Lord Lugard's work must have expressed it almost exactly.

CHAPTER IV

THE ELABORATION OF TRUSTEESHIP

The first Labour Government took office in January, 1924, and resigned early in October. Since Labour held fewer than one-third of the Parliamentary seats, and could carry on only with Liberal support, the Party did not have the power to initiate any drastic changes in policy.

The Secretary of State for the Colonies, the Rt. Hon. J. H. Thomas, does not seem to have considered this a severe limitation on his activities. Although he had personally endorsed the official policy on Africa in a book, When Labour Rules, first published in 1920, Thomas showed no inclination to choose a controversial course. In the first debate on colonial affairs, he said: "The whole trend of the Debate really demonstrates that this question is a non-party question. I have no hesitation in saying that the main work at the Colonial Office could be treated in the same spirit." He expressed himself as being "favourably disposed" towards the appointment of a small committee to study the

training and protection of the natives and the application of the principle of trusteeship, but nothing was done.[1] In his book he had complained that native taxes could be paid only by what amounted to slavery in the white man's interest;[2] yet, when questioned in Parliament concerning direct taxation to force the natives to work, he answered that the native could pay his tax by working on his own account.[3]

Prominent amongst projects for the Colonies were the encouragement of maize and cotton production in East Africa for export, the building of railways there and in Nigeria, and a plan to spend £ 1,600,000 on the development of Takoradi Harbour.[4] All these undertakings were related to the development of Africa in the interests of Great Britain rather than to Trusteeship; a Labour Party pamphlet setting forth the Government's achievements contained only a few sentences on the Colonies, but mentioned that the new development works in Tanganyika would "involve more employment for

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[1] 170 H.C. Deb. 5s., cols. 1082-3.

[2] J. H. Thomas, When Labour Rules (London, 1922), p. 130.

[3] 170 H.C. Deb., col. 1631.

[4] Ibid., 169, col. 1061, 170, col. 310.

labour in Great Britain in the engineering and allied trades."[5]

Until Labour achieved power, the Labour movement as a whole had continued to show little interest in imperial questions. In 1924, however, Leslie Haden Guest took the lead in forming 'The Labour Commonwealth Group', consisting of Labour members of the House of Commons especially interested in Empire affairs. By 1926, the Group had enrolled 100 of the 150 Labour members.[6] Haden Guest believed this new interest arose from the fact that Labour had turned from "the conception of a boss-controlled Empire" to that of a "Labour-controlled Commonwealth" directed by the Labour Party.[7]

Haden Guest has described the views he held on the organization of the Empire in 1926, probably the last moment at which it was possible to consider the subject in the same light as Bernard Shaw had done a quarter-century before. He agreed with Shaw that the imperialism of the late nineteenth century had been one of the developments of world organization then

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[5]Labour Party, Labour's Great Record (London, 1924), p. 26.

[6]L. Haden Guest, The Labour Party and the Empire (London, 1926), p. 24.

[7]Ibid., p. 7.

rapidly proceeding. Making no distinction between the Dominions and the Colonies, he believed the whole Empire was a step towards a world organization of the kind desired by international socialism. "There is now in the Labour Party as a whole," he wrote, "an overwhelming support for the policy of closer economic and political relationship with the Dominions." The Labour Party regarded "the federation of the countries in the Empire not as a step away from a world federation, but as a long step towards it." The Empire Marketing Board, he held, was in effect an Empire Economic Cabinet.[8]

Haden Guest did not think it incongruous that the Colonies and Protectorates were represented on that Board by an English appointee of the Imperial Government. For the tropics, he wanted a socialist development of the policy of trusteeship, under which the Labour Party would be "not only a trustee for the well-being of the native populations, but also a trustee of the resources of the tropics for the Empire, and for the world as a whole."[9] The foundations for what he called a new policy had been laid by the Party

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[8] Ibid., pp. 26-28, 38.

[9] Ibid., p. 18.

Conference of 1925, which had passed a resolution calling for the safeguarding of the natives' rights to the land and for measures to prevent industrial slavery and social and economic demoralization. He stressed, as the mover of the resolution had also done, the need to protect workers at home from competition with low grade labour in the Colonies.[10]

This moment in 1926 represents one of the high points in Labour's enthusiasm for imperialism. As the further development of Dominion Status made it apparent that the belief in the growing integration of the Empire was an illusion, the fever cooled. It does not appear to have reached such a pitch again until the Second World War presented a new challenge which threatened even the last stronghold - Africa.

Policy declarations and events of the next few years confirmed both the equivocal character of Labour's Imperial policy and its practical identification with that of the Conservatives. The 1926 Conference, for example, passed a resolution pledging the Party to educate Africans for self-government; a second resolution, declaring opposition to imperialism and supporting self-determination "even

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[10] Ibid., pp. 13, 83-90.

to the point of seceding from the Empire," was moved by John Gibbons and seconded by Joseph Southall, but it got no support and was easily defeated.[11] A memorandum submitted to the Third Congress of the Labour and Socialist International set forth a policy of continued European rule in Africa, where the inhabitants were not yet in a position to govern themselves; it also advocated the abolition of poll-taxes and of labour contracts enforced by penal sanctions, two items questioned by Morel in 1924, on the ground that these were devices for exacting Labour.[12] The pamphlet on Africa was re-issued under a new title, but otherwise with little change, in 1926, confirming its contents as official Labour Party policy.[13]

With regard to India, where the independence movement was growing rapidly, the 1927 Conference reaffirmed the right of the Indian people to "full self-government and self-determination in the British Commonwealth of Nations."[14] [Italics mine]. At the

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[11]Labour Party, Report of the Twenty-sixth Annual Conference, p. 252.

[12]Labour and Socialist International, Reports and Proceedings of the Third Congress (London, 1928), Section V, pp. 15, 25.

[13]Labour Party, Labour and the Empire: Africa (London, 1926), passim.

[14]Labour Party, Report of the Twenty-seventh Annual Conference, p. 255.

same time, the Party supported and took part in the activities of the Simon Commission, which recommended a practically impossible slowing down of the pace of Indian 'advance'.

In the Parliamentary debates of this period, Labour's main concern was with conditions of labour in the colonies, including direct and indirect compulsion to work; the related question of adequate land was also mentioned, along with such other matters as health and education.[15] Insistence by Labour members that a fair wages clause should be introduced into the Palestine and East Africa Loans Act of 1926 resulted in a Government amendment specifying that fair conditions of labour should be observed.[16]

The election of 1929 was preceded by the issue of a new major policy statement, Labour and the Nation, but, so far as the Empire was concerned, the only change was that health joined education as a service whose development was to be encouraged. A desire to make promises of political advance seem more credible was shown by the appearance of some new phrases. For

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[15] See, for example: 191 H.C. Deb., col. 91; 198, cols. 2399-2401; 200, col. 2330ff.; 227, cols. 1439-40.

[16] Ibid., 200, col. 2437.

India, her status as an equal partner in the Commonwealth was now to come "at the earliest possible moment"; for the Colonies, there was a "firm conviction" that they ought to become self-governing states "as soon as possible."[17] Since these phrases had no precise meaning, the new formulas allowed for the continuance of imperial control into the indefinite future, as before.

By June, 1929, the Labour Party had committed itself to a comprehensive colonial policy in Africa which, if put into effect, would have involved significant changes with regard to land, labour, education and political representation. It was pledged, in particular, to guarantee to the native communities enough land to support them, to abolish penal sanctions for the enforcement of labour contracts, to provide universal primary education and to give natives real representation on Legislative Councils.[18] Elaboration of this last item in the course of Parliamentary debate had established that it involved a common roll franchise in elections. Broadly speaking, the Party had, in effect, promised to eliminate privilege based on colour in economic, social and political affairs.

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[17]Labour Party, Labour and the Nation (London, 1929), pp. 47, 49.

[18]See above, pp. 37-40.

Although the Great Depression had not yet begun when Labour took office for the second time, unemployment was already serious, and economic problems were to dominate the Government's life and bring about its downfall. The little attention that could be devoted to the Empire was bestowed mainly on India, where the Indian National Congress' first great campaign against British rule was reaching its climax. Once again, too, Labour did not have a clear majority, and could govern only with Liberal support. Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that colonial policy changed little more than it had in 1924.

It is true that an important bill was passed which might, at first sight, seem to signal a new departure. The Colonial Development Act of 1929, however, was actually a part of the Government's attack on unemployment, its main purpose being to revive British trade.[19] The Bill was introduced in the House of Commons on July 12, 1929, by the Rt. Hon. J. H. Thomas, Lord Privy Seal, who described it as being to provide money "for the purpose of aiding and developing agriculture and industry in the Colonies or territories and thereby promoting commerce with or industry in the

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[19]Labour Party, What the Labour Government Has Done (London, 1930), p. 3.

United Kingdom." He pointed out that the British Government, as trustee, had a great moral obligation to develop the colonies, and that the new plan would lay "the foundation for a long-range policy of constructive Colonial development," which would be of tremendous advantage "to the improvement of the trade and commerce of this country." His proposals were supported by L. S. Amery, the late Conservative Colonial Secretary, who commented that such a programme had been an important plank in the Conservative election platform.[20]

A Colonial Development Advisory Committee was set up to examine schemes proposed by Colonial Governments and advise as to their acceptance or rejection. In making its decisions the Committee was influenced by the question whether a project "would result in the placing of substantial orders for plant and machinery in the United Kingdom." No provision was made for expenditure connected with education or welfare, although the Bill did have as one of its objects the promotion of public health, which, in the words of the Committee, was considered "essential to economic development." The Committee's first report showed 80% of the recommended expenditure being devoted

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[20] 229 H.C. Deb., Cols. 1255-1262.

to plans for the development of internal transport and communications, harbours and mineral resources. Authorized expenditure up to March 31, 1931, was £ 3,114,923, but of this only £ 487,285 had actually been issued.[21]

The Labour Secretary of State for the Colonies was Lord Passfield (Sidney Webb), a proponent of trusteeship, but not of national independence for colonies. His most significant statement on Colonial Policy was A Memorandum on Native Policy in East Africa. The two great questions currently agitating opinion there concerned land policy and the possibility of a union of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika. Passfield's memorandum quoted with approval the declarations of the White Paper of 1923 concerning the paramountcy of African interests, the need for training and educating the natives, and the British Government's determination to retain control; it also deprecated forced labour, called for taxation in accordance with ability to pay and promised that the White Highlands would be

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[21] Cmd. 3540 (1930), First Interim Report of the Colonial Development Advisory Committee, pp. 17-18, 27; Cmd. 3876(1931), Second Interim Report of the Colonial Development Advisory Committee, p. 8.

maintained but not extended.[22] A companion paper opposed unification of the East African territories, but provided for the appointment of a High Commissioner to supervise the three colonies and advise the Secretary of State on native policy.[23]

The Kenya Government, under Passfield's direction, passed the Native Lands Trust Ordinance of 1930. It confirmed the integrity of the existing reserves against encroachment, except with the consent of the Governor, or, if the Local Native Council objected, of the Secretary of State. It provided that alienated land should be replaced by other land of equal area and value, but made no mention of the exclusion of the natives from the best land, or of restoring land which had already been seized.[24]

Although Passfield's policy statements could hardly be called radical, and involved little change in actual policy, they aroused a storm of protest from white settlers throughout East Africa. A Joint

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[22]Cmd. 3573 (1930), Memorandum on Native Policy in East Africa, pp. 3, 11.

[23]Cmd. 3574 (1930), Statement of the Conclusions of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom as Regards Closer Union in East Africa, passim.

[24]Kenya, Ordinances Enacted During the Year 1930 (Nairobi, 1931), pp. 57, 65.

Parliamentary Committee set up to study the matter was weighted with Conservatives, but its report nevertheless opposed closer union and settler control. Since later Conservative Governments did nothing to reverse these decisions, there would seem to have been little difference of opinion on the matter.[25]

The Labour Party claimed credit for a great change in the situation in India during its term of office, maintaining that it "found in India distrust and suspicion" and left it with its leaders "sitting at St. James' round the table."[26] Technically, this statement is reasonably correct, although the Indian National Congress was represented at only one of the Round Table Conferences. However, there is no evidence either that these Conferences signified a new and different policy, or that distrust and suspicion had in fact been removed. Indeed, the policy of repression and mass arrests, which was justified at the 1929 Party Conference by Dr. Drummond Shiels, Undersecretary of State for India, as necessary to eliminate violence and incitement to violence by

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[25]See R. G. Gregory, Sidney Webb in East Africa (Berkeley, 1962), for an exhaustive account of the whole affair.

[26]Labour Party, Two Years of Labour Rule (London, 1931), p. 47.

Communists in the Indian Trade Unions,[27] was continued and even intensified after Labour came to office. At the next year's Conference, the Parliamentary Report confirmed that the Party's aim was "to see India take its full place in the British Commonwealth of Nations," but a resolution moved by Fenner Brockway, calling on the Conference to recognize India's right to "full Self-Government and self-determination, including the right to Independence," was defeated.[28]

After the formation of the National Government, the Labour Party returned to its critical attitude towards the very policies it had carried out in India when in office. Its 1932 Conference adopted a resolution criticizing the "wholesale internments and imprisonments" and the "intolerable and unjust delays" in criminal procedure. Singled out for special mention with regard to the latter abuse were the Meerut trials, which had been in process throughout the period of the Labour Government.[29]

The next landmark in the development of Labour policy was the Hastings Conference of 1933, which

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[27]Labour Party, Report of the Twenty-Ninth Annual Conference, p. 191.

[28]Labour Party, Report of the Thirtieth Annual Conference, pp. 84, 216.

[29]Labour Party, Report of the Thirty-second Annual Conference, p. 178.

approved a Report on the Colonies prepared by the Advisory Committee for International Questions under the chairmanship of Charles Roden Buxton and published under the title The Colonial Empire. Much of the material in this publication was a repetition of that in the 1920 pamphlet The Empire in Africa: Labour's Policy; the sections on land, labour and education were almost identical. However, the "immediate objectives" of the Labour Party's Colonial Policy were now declared to be "socialisation and self-government"; the aim was to "develop the Empire into a Commonwealth of self-governing Socialist units." Trusteeship must be a reality, and conditions of labour and wages "must allow a good standard of life and opportunity for leisure and self-development." The report returned to an earlier theme by pointing out that the British people must realize that, in raising colonial standards of living, they were not only carrying out principles of justice, but also promoting their own security and welfare.[30]

In presenting this report to the Conference, its sponsors defined the Colonies as only those areas governed by the British Parliament, excluding India and the Dominions. They clearly indicated their belief

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[30]Labour Party, The Colonial Empire (London, 1933), pp. 4-5.

that trusteeship was not yet being practised. The Africans, it was said, had "become landless in their own native land"; they were made to pay taxes, but the money was not spent for their benefit; they were not receiving the education necessary for progress.[31]

This same Conference also reaffirmed the policy of self-determination and self-government for India and demanded the release of all political prisoners.[32] The following year, however, a motion by Krishna Menon, proposing a Party declaration that "self-government for India should be implemented forthwith" and that "a Constituent assembly elected by adult franchise" should draft an Indian Constitution, was defeated.[33]

Although there were some differences of opinion in the Labour Party as to the success achieved by Imperial Trusteeship up to that time, there was almost complete agreement on the fundamental thesis that the 'backward peoples' would require European guidance and control for many years to come. Reforms

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[31]Labour Party, Report of the Thirty-third Annual Conference, pp. 200-201.

[32]Ibid., p. 228.

[33]Labour Party, Report of the Thirty-fourth Annual Conference, pp. 178-179.

which would bear fruit in the distant future were preferable to any commitment which might involve disruption of the Empire; the ultimate objective remained imperial consolidation through the fulfilment of the sacred trust.

CHAPTER V

THE BEGINNINGS OF A NEW COLONIAL POLICY

The years 1936 to 1940 brought a shift in colonial policy towards a greater emphasis on the doctrine of trusteeship. Up to this point the development of the theory had been unhampered by any serious attempt to relate it to practice, but now events both within and without the Empire induced in some quarters the view that action was needed to make its foundations more secure. On the one hand, Germany's campaign for the return of some of her colonies made it necessary to justify Great Britain's retention of a huge empire; on the other, a series of disturbances in the Colonies focussed attention on the deplorable conditions there, and made this justification more difficult.

The question of the restoration of Germany's lost colonies was broached by Hitler in conversations with Sir John Simon on March 25, 1935. The discussion

centered on the conditions under which Germany would return to the League of Nations and resume cooperation with the other powers. One of these conditions, said Hitler, was that Germany should be given equal rights with regard to colonies. If Germany returned to the League without colonies, there would be a position in which Germany, a League member, was thought unfit to administer colonies, while Japan, who was not a member, continued to administer former German colonial territory. He made it clear that his demand was unrelated to the material value of colonies, and that he considered this "a moral question and one of world prestige." Simon replied that the colonial question would be studied, but that the Mandates were not at Britain's disposal and did not depend on her.[1] He later told Parliament that he had informed Germany that the transfer of mandates was "not a discussable question."[2]

Germany's request for the return of her colonies was the subject of numerous questions and statements in Parliament between 1936 and 1939. A few members supported the German case, but the great majority were concerned that the Government should

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[1] D.G.F.P. Series C, Vol. III, pp. 1062-63, 1098.

[2] 301 H.C. Deb., col. 687.

confirm its repeated statements that restoration was not being considered. Reference was made to a speech by Ribbentrop in March, 1937, and to one by Hitler in November, 1938, both of which demanded that concessions be made with respect to colonies.[3]

In January, 1936, the columns of The Times contained two articles by Lord Lugard which discussed and rejected the German claims. Although no one had written more glowingly than Lugard about the wealth of Africa and Europe's need for it, he now deprecated the value of controlling colonial territories and rejected any concession to Germany in this regard. He mentioned the possible necessity for sacrifices to preserve peace, but all he could suggest was that Britain should revert to the Open Door Policy abandoned in 1932. He was opposed to the Labour Party's policy of extending the mandate system to cover all colonies.[4]

The positive note was sounded by Miss Margery Perham in three articles which appeared in February. Miss Perham began by pointing out that, although British policy was characterized as one of "trusteeship,"

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[3]H.C. Deb. 315, col. 1132; 318, col. 2803; 319, col. 1576; 320, cols, 815, 1151; 321, cols. 211, 256, 277, 289, 780, 1684; 329, col. 1877; 341, cols. 138, 154-155, 291, 429.

[4]Lord Lugard, "The Claims to Colonies," The Times (January 14, 1936), pp. 15-16.

if this meant "unqualified service to the interests of our wards" it remained an ideal. Nevertheless, she believed the British were "offering Africans an effective training in self-government" through indirect rule, that the "altruistic conception" was gaining ground, and that the African territories "would have nothing to gain, and much to lose," by being handed over to another power.

While Britain could not consent to transfer colonies, certain steps were possible. She could commit herself still further in African interests, with international endorsement, and she could share with the world the economic advantages of trusteeship; questions concerning economic equality and naval and military bases could be covered by international conventions. Miss Perham thought that "in the face of world opinion it would be difficult for an African Power which was unable to agree to any transfer of territory to refuse indefinitely to ratify these conventions." With regard to trusteeship, which Hitler had recently derided as a "weak conception", Britain's answer "must be to pursue that policy . . . even more openly and deliberately" as the only policy which could "justify her to herself, to most of the world, and to her own subjects in retaining present control of such

large areas."[5]

The Labour Party echoed Miss Perham's view that trusteeship should be made a reality in order to justify the maintenance of the Empire. Attlee, writing in 1937, thought it was necessary to tackle the task "of adapting these communities to western conceptions . . . if the retention of these territories by Great Britain is to be justified." His purpose in advocating new policies was to save the Empire. "Conservatism," he wrote, "estranged Ireland, would have lost South Africa . . . and may yet lose India."[6]

On December 7, 1938, Philip Noel Baker, on behalf of the Labour Party, introduced in the Commons a motion that "no redistribution of Colonial or mandated territory should be made without the consent of the inhabitants." He thought international agreements should be drawn up "extending the application of the mandate system to all Colonial territories which are not ripe for self-government" and "establishing as the primary purpose of Colonial policy the welfare and progress of the Native inhabitants."

Noel Baker made it clear that he was dealing

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[5]Margery Perham, "Our Task in Africa," The Times (February 10, 11, 12, 1936).

[6]C. R. Attlee, The Labour Party in Perspective, and Twelve Years Later (London, 1949), pp. 166, 170.

with Hitler's demand for colonies, and asked: "What alternative policy shall we offer if we refuse his claims?" Although he disputed the value of colonies to the powers which held them, he was at the same time opposed to increasing the power of aggressors by handing colonies over to them, and said: "We have to prove that we are in earnest when we say that we are trustees for these colonies." His plan of extending the mandate system to all colonies would "preserve for ever, for ourselves and for mankind, everything in the British Empire of which we can be proud."[7]

The internal challenge to the Empire was much less significant and, taken by itself, it would probably have produced little result. Beginning in 1937, and continuing in the following year, there were disturbances in several West Indian colonies which led to questions in Parliament and to the appointment of a Royal Commission to investigate social and economic conditions there. Labour troubles appeared in some parts of Africa, and this led to further Parliamentary questions, and to investigation of labour conditions in some colonies. Colonel J. C. Wedgwood, speaking in Parliament, described the year 1938-1939 as "the worst

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[7]342 H.C. Deb., cols. 1199-1211.

and most troublous year that the Colonial Empire has known in my lifetime."[8] Nevertheless, the Colonial Office was able to point out that unrest had affected a very small fraction of the people in the colonies; it attributed the great public interest in colonial affairs to developments in the international situation.[9]

There can be little doubt that this estimate of the situation was reasonably accurate and that criticism of colonial policy was influenced by the desire to make the Empire secure from outside attack. The Government's sensitivity in this regard was demonstrated by its failure to publish the report of the West Indian Royal Commission, which was presented in 1939 but not laid before Parliament until June, 1945.

Officially, the Conservative Governments of this period maintained that they were, in fact, pursuing the policy of trusteeship to which they were committed. Neville Chamberlain called the idea that the Empire must be administered as a trust the "generally accepted dogma."[10] L. S. Amery, Colonial Secretary from 1924 to 1929, had written a few years

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[8] Ibid., 348, col. 524.

[9] Cmd. 6023 (1939), The Colonial Empire, pp. 1-2.

[10] 355 H.C. Deb., col. 28.

earlier:

> Time was when we thought our duty as colonial administrators satisfied if we abolished slavery and tribal warfare, established law and order, and left the rest to the missionary or the trader. To-day we have a higher conception of our task. We look upon it as a task of education, of sanitation, of agricultural development, of an endeavour in every direction to make the most, not only of the material resources of the vast undeveloped regions which we control, but of the human resources latent in the native populations for whom we regard ourselves as trustees.[11]

Malcolm MacDonald, Secretary of State for the Colonies at the time, insisted in June, 1939, that the primary object being pursued was "the genuine advancement of the best interests of the people of the Colonies themselves."[12] Both he and Amery admitted that Britain derived great benefit from the possession of colonies, but held that this was not incompatible with the welfare of the people who lived there.

There was wide agreement about some of the aims and measures that should be given priority if the policy of trusteeship were to be effective. The aim of training the colonial peoples for self-government at some time in the distant future was accepted by both parties, and MacDonald maintained that such a policy

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[11] L. S. Amery (London, 1935), The Forward View, pp. 170-171.

[12] 348 H.C. Deb., col. 443.

was being pursued "steadily, persistently and faithfully throughout the Colonial Empire."[13]

Agreement that the advance of education was crucial for such training was also practically unanimous. The Report of the Commission on Higher Education in East Africa put it this way:

> The policy of Trusteeship has been proclaimed as the policy of His Majesty's Governments . . . Yet if the concept of Trusteeship, if the method of Indirect Rule, are to be anything more than glib evasions of responsibility, they must assert that the African shall in due course reach full maturity and take his place among the peoples of the world. That aim can only be achieved through education.[14]

W. G. Ormsby-Gore, then Secretary of State for the Colonies, agreed that education was "one of the vital elements of any sound Colonial policy."[15] The Labour Party considered education of the rank and file to be of first importance, and thought that in many colonies primary education could be made universal within a short space of time.[16] On the left, Leonard Barnes listed illiteracy as one of the 'real' obstacles to

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[13] Ibid., 355, col. 409.

[14] Col. No. 142, Higher Education in East Africa (London, 1937), p. 7.

[15] 324 H.C. Deb., col. 1076.

[16] George Lansbury, Labour's Way With the Commonwealth (London, 1935), p. 107.

African freedom.[17]

The importance of social and economic development to raise living standards was also common ground. Lord Hailey advised the Colonial Office that improvement of the economic and social life of the colonial people was "an essential part of the policy . . . of fitting them to achieve a self-governing status."[18] For the Labour Party George Lansbury wrote: "Labour places in the forefront of its policy the raising of the standard of life."[19]

There were, in fact, definite signs of a growing interest in colonial affairs, and of a greater concern to improve conditions in the colonies. The most significant changes came in the field of labour relations, where policy had always been dominated by the view that Africans would remain migrant labourers, and that no permanent arrangements with regard to industrial labour were necessary. An increasing attention to labour problems, and a growing body of industrial legislation from 1937 onwards, heralded a reversal of this policy.

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[17]Leonard Barnes, Empire or Democracy (London, 1939), p. 276.

[18]Lord Hailey, Native Administration and Political Development in British Tropical Africa (London, 1942), p. 5.

[19]Lansbury, p. 105.

In August, 1937, a Colonial Office despatch to the Colonial Governors emphasized the desirability of creating Labour Departments for the inspection and supervision of conditions of labour. At that time, only Kenya and Uganda amongst African Colonies had either a Labour Department or special staff; by 1941, the existence of one or both was universal.[20] The following year, 1942, Major G. St. J. Orde-Browne was appointed to the newly created post of Labour Adviser to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. He soon produced a report on labour conditions in Northern Rhodesia, to be followed later by similar reports on West and East Africa. His recommendations for the provision of education, health services, and housing, bore some fruit.[21]

Trade Unions Ordinances were passed in several colonies before the war, and the trend continued until, by 1943, there was legislation providing for trade union organization in every colony.[22] A model ordinance dealing with Workmen's Compensation was drawn up in 1937, and such ordinances were enacted in some colonies.

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[20]Col. No. 185, Labour Supervision in the Colonial Empire, 1937-1943 (London, 1943), p. 4.

[21]367 H.C. Deb., col. 932.

[22]Col. No. 185, p. 12.

The Labour Party, nevertheless, saw many flaws in the Government's colonial policy, and its spokesmen drew attention to the shortcomings in the practice of trusteeship and called for action which would give the policy real meaning. Their insistence on a free labour policy, including the provision of adequate land for Africans and lower taxation, continued, and the colour bar in parts of Africa was attacked. Arthur Creech Jones, later to become Colonial Secretary in the Labour Government, spoke of tens of thousands of natives in labour servitude enforced by penal sanctions; he also decried the heavy taxation which forced them to leave their homes to work for money.[23] Creech Jones later called for the removal of the colour bar in Southern Rhodesia and other parts of Africa.[24] Attlee took the traditional Labour view, as expressed in The Empire in Africa, that the natives had been deprived of land to force them to sell their labour cheaply to white capitalists, and that heavy taxation had the same purpose; he promised that the Labour Party would end these devices and "impose taxation only for revenue purposes."[25]

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[23] 324 H.C. Deb., col. 1052.

[24] Ibid., 355, col. 353.

[25] Attlee, p. 172.

Other matters raised by Creech Jones concerned white colonization and economic specialization. He questioned the possibility that white colonists could succeed in the tropics without special subsidies and assistance, and called for a re-examination of policy regarding white settlement. Discussing colonial economic development, he attacked dependence on the export trade, and asked why it was not balanced with home production.[26] The party was also critical of the slow advance of education. Official policy aimed at providing universal free education, but Labour questioning elicited the information that on the average only 12 per cent of the population was actually being educated.[27]

Consistent with its view that the object of a rational colonial policy was to make possible the maintenance of the Empire, the Labour Party accepted the general opinion that the development of Africa would be a long, slow process. Labour spokesmen called the development of a self-governing Commonwealth a far distant ideal, and thought its realization would take many generations.[28] Leonard Barnes took the extreme

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[26]314 H.C. Deb., col. 1503; 337, col. 153.

[27]Ibid., 336, cols. 397-398.

[28]Lansbury, p. 112.

view that, if a great enough effort were made, Africans could be prepared for independence in 20 years, but he had little support.[29]

It is evident that, for the most part, the two major parties took their stand regarding colonial policy on common ground. Labour's policy of socialization, mentioned in the declarations of the 1933 Conference, had quickly receded into the background. Despite the insistence of many that there could be no continuity between Conservative and Labour policy, there was no fundamental difference in their attitudes. Their disagreement was on the details of policy, not on its essence.

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[29]Barnes, p. 283.

CHAPTER VI

WAR AND COALITION

The outbreak of the Second World War had little immediate effect on colonial policy, beyond the fact that any plans calling for the diversion of money, manpower or materials to the colonies were likely to be delayed until the war was over. As the war progressed, Africa's great contribution in men and materials brought a fuller realization of the continent's vast potential, the greater part of which was still undeveloped.

The Labour Party, with its traditional concentration on domestic affairs, reacted as it had in the two previous wars, by increasing its interest in the Empire. An intensive study of colonial affairs was undertaken, and an attempt was made to work out an informed approach to the most significant problems in order to prepare the Party for a constructive role if

it should gain power in the post-war period. For this purpose, the Fabian Colonial Bureau was created in 1940, under the chairmanship of Arthur Creech Jones. The Bureau was closely associated with the Labour Party and its publications form an important supplement to official party statements.

There was little political change during the early stages of the war, but consideration was given to its possibility in the near future. Towards the end of 1939, Lord Hailey was asked to undertake a mission to Africa to gather information which would enable him to assist the Colonial Secretary "in considering any proposals which might be made for political change in Africa during or immediately after the war."[1] Hailey's report was received in 1942, but no action was taken for another three years.

The only significant proposals for constitutional development came in West Africa, where new constitutions were drawn up for both Nigeria and the Gold Coast, although neither came into effect until after Labour's post-war victory. In each case, an unofficial majority in the Legislative Council was granted, but the Governor's power was maintained through

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[1]Lord Hailey, Native Administration and Political Development in British Tropical Africa (London, 1942), p. 1.

the devices of veto and certification, which enabled him to prevent or pass any legislation.[2] The development of local government was continued by the establishment of Regional, Provincial or District Councils in some Colonies. Africanization of the Colonial Service was foreseen in the plans made for post-war training,[3] and already some Governors professed a policy of appointing Africans to higher positions where it was possible to find suitable candidates.[4]

The Colonial Development and Welfare Act of 1940, initiated before the war, projected a programme of social and economic development on which a small start might be made in wartime. It provided up to £ 5 million a year for ten years, for developing the resources of the Colonies and promoting the welfare of their people, with an additional £ 500,000 a year for research. Provision was made for the creation of a Colonial Development and Welfare Advisory Committee and of a Colonial Research Advisory Committee to assist the Secretary of State in the appraising of plans.[5]

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[2]See below, pp. 323, 332.

[3]Col. No. 198, Post-War Training for the Colonial Service (London, 1946), p. 4.

[4]Gold Coast, Sessional Paper No. 1 of 1950 (Accra, 1950), p. 8.

[5]H.C. Bills (1939-40), Colonial Development and Welfare Bill (London, 1940), I, 403, pp. i, 2.

The bill included a section designed to ensure the payment of standard wage rates and the prohibition of child labour.

Malcolm MacDonald, speaking for the Bill, pointed out that it broke new ground, since the primary purpose of the Bill of 1929 had been to foster employment in Britain, not to help colonial development for its own sake, while the object of this one was to develop the Colonies into self-supporting units. The new legislation would treat education as part of development, and would supply money for maintenance as well as for capital costs. He mentioned that a social services department had already been established and an education adviser to the Secretary of State appointed.[6] Later in the debate, MacDonald intimated that a necessary change in agricultural policy was a shift in emphasis from export crops to subsistence agriculture, in order that native prosperity should be promoted.[7]

The Labour Party supported this Bill enthusiastically. Arthur Creech Jones attributed it to "a marked change in public opinion regarding the

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[6] 361 H.C. Deb., cols. 45-50.

[7] Ibid., col. 119.

colonies," and spoke optimistically of the progress which could be made in "agricultural improvement, health standards and educational advance."[8] Labour representations resulted in a Lords' amendment which required the Secretary of State, before assenting to any scheme, to satisfy himself "that the law of the colony provides reasonable facilities for the establishment and activities of trade unions."[9]

By the time the Colonial Development and Welfare Act became law, the Chamberlain Government had been replaced by the war-time coalition, and Labourite George H. Hall had become Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, with Harold MacMillan as his chief. Until the end of the war, the Labour Party played a dual role, with one group participating in the making of policy, and another assuming the task of criticizing the administration. However, all sections of the Party were in substantial agreement with much of the National Government's programme.

Little action with regard to development and welfare could be taken during the war, and the Act of 1940 remained largely a promise for the future. In

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[8] Ibid., cols. 55-56.

[9] H.C. Bills (1939-1940), I, 421.

fact, free gifts from the Colonies for the prosecution of the war totalled well over twice the sum spent on development to the end of the 1945-46 fiscal year.[10] The most important immediate effect of the Bill was the remission of payment of a considerable number of loans previously made to various colonies.

As the end of the war approached, however, Colonel Oliver Stanley, Conservative Colonial Secretary in the National Government, established a Development Committee in each colony and called for the submission of five-year plans to be put into effect in the immediate post-war period. The purpose was to plan for the conservation and development of natural resources, adequate communications and an improved standard of living.[11]

Stanley also became convinced that the £ 5 million per annum provided under the 1940 Act would be quite inadequate for the implementation of these plans, and he prepared and introduced in Parliament the Colonial Development and Welfare Act of 1945, which provided £ 120,000,000 over a ten-year period.[12]

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[10]Colonial Office, Colonial Development and Welfare, 1946-1955 (London, 1956), p. 12; 392 H.C. Deb., col. 1528.

[11]Kenya, Report of the Development Committee (Nairobi, 1946), I, 2.

[12]400 H.C. Deb., cols. 1233-38.

Spokesmen for all parties welcomed the new bill and congratulated Stanley on his course of action. The official statement of Government policy, which pledged "the fullest possible political, economic and social development of the Colonies within the British Empire,"[13] was one with which no one in the Labour Party could quarrel.

There was less agreement on specific details, but in many ways the trend was in the direction considered desirable by Labour. The emphasis on trade union organization was continued and, in 1942, the employment of English trade unionists as Labour Officers was begun.[14] By 1944, there were 110 African trade unions, but most of these were in Nigeria.[15] In British Africa, only Southern Rhodesia had no legislation governing the establishment of African trade unions.[16] Penal sanctions for breach of labour contracts, still in force throughout East and Central Africa, were to be abolished as soon as possible.[17] Income tax was

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[13] Ibid., 387, col. 1181.

[14] Col. No. 275, Labour Administration in the Colonial Territories, 1944-1950 (London, 1951), p. 3.

[15] 396 H.C. Deb., col. 1751.

[16] Ibid., 399, col. 2103.

[17] Col. No. 185, Labour Supervision in the Colonial Empire, 1937-1943 (London, 1943), p. 23.

introduced in nearly every colony during the war, although the rates imposed were very low.[18]

The importance of education was recognized by the creation of an Advisory Committee on Education in the Colonies, whose report on the problems of mass education in Africa pointed towards the goal of universal literacy at some time in the future. Plans for post-war educational development were prepared in every colony. Expenditure on education and numbers of children in school increased, although staff problems arising from the war made it hard to maintain standards in some cases.

Labour writers welcomed these trends in colonial policy, and indeed tended to attribute them to the influence exerted by the Labour Party. At times, they intimated that the victory in the battle for colonial freedom had already been achieved. In Fabian Colonial Essays, published in 1945, Rita Hinden commented on the blurring of the lines dividing socialists from others, and noted that all political parties now wanted economic, social, and political progress. Almost ecstatically, she proclaimed: "Civil liberty, local government, preventive medicine, nutrition, mass

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[18]Rita Hinden, Socialists and the Empire (London, 1946), p. 16.

education, literacy, free association, co-operative organization, trade unionism, political representation -- these things have been or are being won."[19]

At the same time, Labour spokesmen in Parliament kept up a continuous barrage of questions designed to point up the shortcomings which existed in practice, if not in policy. The most prominent critic of war-time colonial practice, and the leading architect of the Labour Government's policy, was Arthur Creech Jones. Creech Jones had been active in Labour affairs since the early 1920's, when he had become National Secretary of the Transport and General Workers' Union, and had also served on the Executive Committee of the London Labour Party. From the moment of his first election to Parliament in 1935, he had shown a keen interest in the welfare of colonial peoples, and had directed a steady stream of questions at the Colonial Secretary of the day. When the need for a better-informed approach to colonial affairs became evident, and the Fabian Colonial Bureau was established to study the problems involved, Creech Jones became its Chairman. He retained this position until he became Under-Secretary and later Secretary of State for the

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[19]Rita Hinden (ed.), Fabian Colonial Essays (London, 1945), pp. 14-15.

Colonies in the Labour Government. Any comparison of theory and practice in Labour's colonial policy must therefore treat Creech Jones as a central figure.

An analysis of Creech Jones' performance as parliamentary critic during the war years indicates that he was concerned primarily with conditions of labour. The policy he queried most frequently was the practice of employing forced labour in various African colonies, which was justified by the Government as made necessary by the emergencies of the war; the application of penal sanctions to enforce labour contracts, universal throughout East and Central Africa, was also the subject of numerous questions. Other topics to appear were minimum wage rates and trade union laws and organization. Occasional attention was given to such additional economic matters as the problem of land monopolization for white settlers, price discrimination in favour of white growers and profits made on the sale of cocoa in West Africa. Also mentioned were inadequate social services and education, the colour bar in political, economic and social affairs, and the failure to give political representation to Africans.[20]

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[20]H.C. Deb., question periods in vols. 363, 364, 365, 367, 369, 370, 371, 373, 374, 376, 378, 379, 380, 383, 391, 395, 396, 399, 400, 401, 402, 404, 408, 409.

In a speech delivered on June 6, 1944, he launched a wide-ranging criticism of existing economic policies in the following terms:

> I think that the general situation is depressed by a number of important factors. The first is . . . that the price levels of primary products are far too low. We are not giving the primary producers a square deal. . . . The second is that in regard to taxation we still use it as a lever for industry at the expense . . . of sound agricultural development. Peoples of many areas are taxed well beyond their capacity to pay. . . . But over and above direct taxation there is also indirect taxation as a result of the fiscal dues - the import and export duties imposed on the goods which these people must consume if they are to live at all. Thirdly, there are the scandalously low wages paid over practically all colonial areas.[21]

Creech Jones did not see himself as an advocate of drastic changes in colonial policy. On the contrary, he believed that trusteeship was already the official policy, and that all parties stressed a "positive, constructive and dynamic conception of colonial trusteeship and colonial development."[22] He merely wished to remind the Government of its responsibilities and try to accelerate its progress along the accepted path. The fact that Labour's questions and criticisms had remarkably little effect

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[21] Ibid., 400, cols. 1256-7.

[22] A. Creech Jones, "Labour and the Colonies," African Affairs, Vol. 44, No. 176 (July, 1945), p. 111.

in nudging the Government towards any change in attitude does not seem to have disturbed him unduly.

The first war-time declaration on colonial policy, issued by the Labour Party's National Executive in February, 1940, was concerned with the problems which would face the British economy at the end of the war, and it approached them in the spirit of the 'Dual Mandate.' Noteworthy as one of the very few statements which accurately foresaw the reality which was to underlie the alleged policy of trusteeship Labour would put in practice, it read in part as follows:

> A very grave economic crisis will confront all nations at the conclusion of this war, when the world's productive power must once again be turned to peaceful ends. . . . In addition to national policies of reconstruction, therefore, there must be bold economic and financial planning on a world-wide scale. International public works conferring benefits on more than one nation, and covering also the comprehensive development of great colonial territories now divided between two or more Colonial Powers, as in Africa, must be undertaken. . . . The purpose of such schemes should be to make available greater abundance, both for the inhabitants of these areas and for all mankind.[23]

At the same time, Creech Jones was calling in Parliament for a policy of developing the economic resources of the Colonies so they could "pay their own

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[23]Labour Party, Labour, the War, and the Peace (London, 1940), pp. 8-9.

way."[24] He called the Colonial Development and Welfare Act of 1940 "one of the most imaginative and constructive pieces of work which has been done in the history of our Colonial Empire."[25]

The 1942 Annual Conference passed a colonial policy resolution which advocated equal political, economic and social rights for all citizens of the Commonwealth, the abolition of the status of Colony, and the organization of a system of democratic government in all the territories.[26] Creech Jones, speaking for the Party in Parliament, demanded the recognition of Africans' political rights and an advance in social services, education, and economic development.[27] A policy pamphlet asked for a "long-term policy which actively develops the opportunities for self-government."[28]

A pamphlet issued in 1943, under the title The Colonies, contained what has been called the clearest definition of Labour's policy. Its general principles were largely a restatement of the time worn ideas

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[24] 357 H.C. Deb., col. 1633.

[25] Ibid., 361, col. 1211.

[26] Labour Party, Report of the 41st Annual Conference, p. 155.

[27] 380 H.C. Deb., col. 2046.

[28] Labour Party, Labour Looks Ahead (London, 1942), p. 8.

associated with trusteeship, with some recognition of the new situation created by the war. The usual declaration that the colonial people would not be ready for self-government for some time to come was followed by a call for administration of the colonies as a "sacred trust", whose principal aim would be the "well-being, education, and development" of the inhabitants and their training for self-government "in the shortest possible time."[29] It was recognized that money was the crux of the problem and that capital would have to be made available if significant changes were to take place.[30] A convention guaranteeing the Open Door, impartial access to raw materials and equal opportunity for trade was advocated as a means of ending 'imperial rivalry.' There was also a repetition of the proposal that the Mandate System should be extended to all backward colonial territories.[31]

This pamphlet's statement that self-government would be a long time in coming was amplified by several leading members of the Labour Party. Clement Attlee commented that over large areas the people were not yet

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[29]Labour Party, The Colonies (London, 1943), p. 2.

[30]Ibid., p. 16.

[31]Ibid., pp. 5-6.

ready for self-government;[32] Herbert Morrison thought it would be nonsense "to talk about grants of full self-government to many of the dependent territories for some time to come";[33] Creech Jones held that Britain could not and should not withdraw from the Colonies, being pledged to a policy of "constructive trusteeship", which would lead, he hoped "to partnership inside the British Commonwealth";[34] [italics mine] and Emanuel Shinwell declared himself in "hearty accord" with Churchill on the liquidation of the British Empire, and continued: "Sir, we have no intention, any one of us, of throwing the British Commonwealth of Nations overboard. . . ."[35] Once again, there was complete agreement amongst all parties that the Empire would carry on into the indefinite future, mitigated by a renewed dedication to the policy of Imperial Trusteeship.

Within the confines of this concept of saving the Empire through reform, the Labour Party produced a blueprint which encompassed most aspects of social, economic, and political policy. Various statements

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[32] C. R. Attlee, The Labour Party in Perspective and Twelve Years Later (London, 1949), p. 171.

[33] Herbert Morrison, Prospects and Policies (Cambridge, 1943), p. 16.

[34] 400 H.C. Deb., col. 1250.

[35] Ibid., 399, col. 391.

from time to time set forth some of the priorities which, it was believed, should be established in colonial development. Labour recognized, according to Arthur Creech Jones, that the basic problems of the colonies were ignorance, poverty, and disease, and that without changes in these areas, political freedom would be a sham.[36] Speaking in a Commons' debate on colonial affairs, he emphasized the harsh conditions of soil and climate in Africa, and continued:

> Our great problem in our Colonies then is how to control environment for the decent living of man; how to bring these natural forces under control in order to make life proper. That will involve . . . if we are to create the framework of economic activity and useful living, the expenditure of an enormous amount of capital, and that capital will probably have to come from this country. . . . If you want to create health, that depends upon education, the supply of water and sanitation. Nutrition again, depends on food; food depends upon good agriculture and good water. These, again, depend upon education. All these problems, whether material reconstruction or the building up of social standards, are interlocked and you cannot go far with your material reconstruction without more health and education. . . .
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> We have, therefore, to create the physical basis of work and living, and make substantial grants to the social services in order that the pump shall be primed.[37]

Creech Jones also drew attention to the need for more information about the Colonies if policies were to have

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[36] Jones, "Labour and the Colonies", p. 111.

[37] 400 H.C. Deb., col. 1256.

a solid basis in fact. He pointed out the difficulty of knowing anything about colonial social and economic problems because of the absence of statistics and census figures,[38] and called for a geological survey of the territories.[39]

By common agreement, the first prerequisite to progress was education. The Colonies declared that education was the basis of advance, and that the test of British sincerity was education policy;[40] Clement Attlee wrote that Labour believed the key to native development lay in education;[41] Sir Drummond Shiels called the increase of education the most important consideration for political progress;[42] while Leonard Woolf considered "universal elementary education . . . a sine que non of modern democracy."[43] Education policy and performance may therefore be considered a most important touchstone for judging Labour's achievement in the colonial empire.

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[38] Ibid., 376, col. 546.

[39] Ibid., 400, col. 1259.

[40] The Colonies, p. 12.

[41] Attlee, p. 172.

[42] Hinden, Fabian Colonial Essays, p. 82.

[43] Ibid., p. 96.

The official programme for education specifically promised elementary education for all school-age children, a great extension of secondary, technical and higher education, more teachers' training colleges, adult and community education, and African majorities on Educational Councils. The aim of elementary education would be to prepare the whole population either for a vocation or for advance to further training.[44] Creech Jones was on record as maintaining that "the disparity in education costs between Africans and Europeans ought to be brought to an end."[45]

Health care and other social services were also to be improved. With regard to health, the measures called for were the collection and publication of vital statistics, medical training for Africans, and campaigns against such diseases as sleeping sickness, malaria, leprosy, and tuberculosis.[46] A Fabian Colonial Bureau study associated the health problem with the need for more and better food, and therefore with a higher living standard.[47] Social security

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[44] The Colonies, pp. 13, 14.

[45] 376 H.C. Deb., col. 550.

[46] The Colonies, pp. 15, 16.

[47] Fabian Colonial Bureau, Hunger and Health in the Colonies (London, 1944), p. 3.

provisions such as old age pensions and insurance against ill health and unemployment were virtually ignored by Labour, although they were non-existent in Africa. Specific social service provisions were recommended only in the field of factory legislation. Rita Hinden's view that there should be "a uniform level of social services throughout the whole area of collaboration"[48] was not even useful propaganda for a party which had rarely gone beyond emphasizing the need to spend taxes collected from Africans on African services, thus dividing the poor and the rich in colonies into two separate compartments for this purpose.

The absence of any clearcut prescription for economic development was a noteworthy feature of Labour's blueprint for the Colonies. Beyond declarations of the need to develop colonial resources, and the assertion that this would require capital, there was little indication of the direction development should take. A Fabian Colonial Bureau pamphlet urged the development of local processing industries in the interest of retaining valuable soil nutrients in the Colonies,[49] and Creech Jones wrote of the imperative

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[48]Rita Hinden, The Colonies and Us (London, n.d.), p. 24.

[49]F.C.B., Hunger and Health in the Colonies, pp. 26-27.

need for more balanced economies,[50] but the official programme carefully refrained from suggesting industrialization of any kind. The intention was evidently to develop the colonies as adjuncts to, not competitors with, the British economic system.

In the forefront of particular plans for economic improvement came changes in the organization of labour. The National Government policy of using forced labour in Africa during the war, in violation of the International Convention on Forced Labour, was frequently attacked by independent Labour members of Parliament, although it was loyally supported by George Hall, Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies. The Labour Party supported the enforcement of the convention and abolition of all forms of direct and indirect compulsion, including tribal compulsory labour and taxation aimed at forcing Africans to work. Penal sanctions for breach of contract, long the object of frequent attack in Parliament, were also to be eliminated.[51]

The official policy on wages merely called for weekly payment and "an extensive system of minimum

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[50]Hinden, Fabian Colonial Essays, p. 82.

[51]The Colonies, pp. 11, 12.

wages,"[52] although Arthur Creech Jones was on record as believing that the low wage standards in the Colonies were a "positive scandal" and that higher wages were imperative.[53] Minimum wage laws could, of course, be used to enforce higher wages, if this were considered desirable by the Government of a particular colony, but the likelihood that this would happen was small, in the absence of a Colonial Office policy establishing some objective standard.

The Labour Party was naturally enthusiastic about the establishment of trade unions in the colonies on the English model. Although some unions were already in existence, Labour critics believed the current legislation in many colonies was inadequate and that the unions were often mere window-dressing. The Colonies promised efforts to develop effective unions, and to create conditions under which unions could operate where this was not yet practicable. The colour bar was also to be eliminated by refusing registration to unions which imposed one.[54]

Other proposals included those for the

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[52] Ibid., p. 12.

[53] 400 H.C. Deb., col. 1257, and Hinden, Fabian Colonial Essays, p. 81.

[54] The Colonies, p. 11.

creation or extension of factory and welfare legislation, workmen's compensation, insurance, maximum hours and minimum age legislation, and medical supervision. Labour would also establish a regular Labour Department in the Colonial Office, and staff it with an adequate inspectorate.[55]

Amongst the traditional economic policies most persistently attacked by the Labour Party had been the monopolization of land by European settlers and planters. Throughout the period since 1920, Labour had advocated the repossession of alienated land if this was necessary to ensure Africans of sufficient land. Arthur Creech Jones, in one of several speeches on the subject during the war, said:

> My party has always opposed the white highlands policy and the eviction from those lands of the Africans. We have regarded that as utterly wrong, and we do not countenance it, even at the present time.[56]

The policy programme laid down in war-time pledged the Party to abolish the colour bar as it applied to land ownership and to revise land policy "to ensure every African family enough land for its support."[57] Another

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[55] Ibid., pp. 11, 12.

[56] 395 H.C. Deb., col. 1906.

[57] The Colonies, p. 9.

pamphlet of the period announced the party's opposition to any further alienation of "native land",[58] and a third one declared that Labour was not prepared to agree to any restriction upon the rights of natives to acquire lands.[59] Unequivocal opposition to the policy of European monopoly of land in Kenya and Northern Rhodesia seems to be clearly implied in these statements.

In the matter of taxation, Labour promised an end to discrimination in fiscal policy and a revision of taxation so natives would not be forced to work for pay. To ensure that natural resources should benefit the people of the colonies, minerals were to be brought under state ownership and control, with profits and taxes going to the colonial governments,[60] but no general policy of socialization was contemplated. There was also a sweeping statement of absolute opposition to the colour bar in economic as well as political affairs.[61] A Fabian Colonial Bureau publication emphasized the need for a co-operative movement in the Colonies, but this was ignored in party

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[58] Labour Party, Labour Looks Ahead, p. 7.

[59] Labour Party, The Old World and the New Society (London, 1941), p. 20.

[60] The Colonies, pp. 8-9.

[61] Ibid., p. 7.

policy statements.[62]

An important gap in Labour Party literature is the almost complete failure to mention the monopolization of industry and trade by giant European corporations, and of banking and credit facilities by and for European interests. Rita Hinden thought some curb should be put on the exploiting financial and industrial powers,[63] but no one seems to have considered the possibility of Africans operating as business men in their own countries. This mental blank shows how the thinking of even the most well-meaning Englishmen was conditioned by the idea of indefinite British control, to be followed by self-government within the Commonwealth.

Political policy continued throughout this period to be characterized by vague general statements of aims and objects to be attained when possible.[64] The National Executive Committee's report to the 1943 Conference called for "constant and deliberate progress towards self-government," but considered this a goal

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[62]Fabian Colonial Bureau, Co-operation in the Colonies (London, 1945), p. 193.

[63]Rita Hinden, Plan for Africa (London, 1941), p. 13.

[64]The Colonies, p. 2.

which in many cases could not be near at hand.[65] A resolution urged the abolition of colonial status and the "rapid realization of genuine partnership."[66]

Explicit undertakings, however, promised that there would be no responsible government until natives and Europeans had the same franchise, and that racial discrimination would be ended in political machinery and representation.[67] Somewhat less specific was the insistence that "every occasion" should be used to involve "educated natives in every aspect of government activity, both central and local."[68] Arthur Creech Jones, in his speeches and writings, pressed for the appointment of Africans to posts in the administrative services.[69]

The Labour Party, on the eve of attaining power for the first time, was thus pledged to an extensive programme of reform in the Colonial Empire, a programme which would involve little or no immediate change in the

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[65]Labour Party, Report of the 42nd Annual Conference, p. 4.

[66]Ibid., p. 207.

[67]The Colonies, pp. 3, 7, 8.

[68]Labour Looks Ahead, p. 8.

[69]Fabian Colonial Bureau, A Charter for the Colonial Peoples (London, 1942), p. 7; A. Creech Jones, Downing Street and the Colonies (London, 1942), pp. 70-75.

relationship between Great Britain and her colonies. An indefinitely extended period of education, social welfare, economic development, and political training would eventually prepare the people of Africa for their role as citizens of self-governing states in the British Commonwealth of Nations. Meanwhile, the anxious mother would continue to guide her children through that difficult, European-dominated world, in which they were still, as in 1919, unable to stand alone.

CHAPTER VII

LABOUR IN POWER: GUIDELINES OF POLICY

The Labour Party finally achieved power in a Britain weakened and impoverished by war and faced, in several parts of the Empire, with difficulties she lacked the resources to overcome. In India, her pre-war investments had been replaced by a debt of over a billion pounds, while the task of restraining Indian nationalism had reached almost herculean proportions; in the Middle East, her power was challenged, not only by growing local impatience with foreign control, but also by the competition of the world's two post-war giants, the United States and the U.S.S.R. In Africa, the remains of Empire might yet be salvaged and Britain might find there the primary goods and financial support to repair her shattered economy, and the military strength to promote her return to the ranks of the Great Powers.

The war had clearly demonstrated the vital significance of Africa as a source of goods, raw

materials, wealth and power. By 1944, according to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, West Africa had been providing over 40 per cent of the edible fats used in Britain;[1] Nigeria had played a very prominent part as a supplier of rubber and tin as well as of palm oil and nut products.[2] In addition to their donations of millions of pounds in free loans and gifts, Africans had been forced to contribute over two hundred millions in exports for which they had received no return.[3] Africans had also played a noteworthy military part by contributing 374,000 men to the regular military forces. They had served with distinction against the Italians in Africa and the Japanese in Burma, and had suffered a total of over 30,000 casualties.[4]

His view of the strategic significance of the Colonies was set forth by Oliver Stanley in the debate on the Colonial Development and Welfare Bill of 1945, when he said:

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[1]400 H.C. Deb., col. 1229.

[2]Sir Alan Burns, History of Nigeria (London, 1955), p. 241.

[3]A. D. Hazlewood, "Colonial External Finance Since the War," Review of Economic Studies, XXI (1), No. 54 (1953-54), p. 31.

[4]Cmd. 7167 (1947), The Colonial Empire, 1939-1947, p. 9.

> I do not believe any of us would be here today in this Chamber, doing what we are doing, if it had not been for the Colonial Empire. It is not only their contributions in manpower and material resources. If we had not had the strategic position which the Colonial Empire supplies, if we had not had our convoy assembling point at Freetown or our Trans-African reinforcement routes for the Middle East, I do not believe this country would have survived the period during which we had to stand alone.[5]

Arthur Creech Jones was also impressed with the importance of colonies for defence and "world security," and spoke of "their contributions in terms of manpower, raw material and even as a basis for operations" in an address designed to arouse enthusiasm for colonial 'development'.[6] The continued weakening of Britain's imperial power was to enhance still further the potential value of Africa within the next few years.

There was no lack of appreciation, in the beginning, of the contribution Africa could make to the solution of Britain's economic problems. During the war, a Liberal spokesman had expressed the view that, in debating imperial affairs, the House of Commons was "perhaps discussing the most important issue upon which

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[5] 407 H.C. Deb., col. 2104.

[6] A. Creech Jones, International Trusteeship of Colonies (London, 1945), p. 4.

our post-war prosperity will rest." Emanuel Shinwell had spoken of the vast market available, and urged that advantage be taken of it; and Hugh Dalton had pointed to the great undeveloped resources urgently needing development.[7]

The immense economic value of the colonies and the increased demand for Africa's raw materials had drawn attention to the possibility of more efficient exploitation of these areas, and produced a unanimous demand for 'development'. E. D. Morel's warning of 1920, that the needs of Europe threatened the people of Africa with grave dangers, might have been written with equal force in 1945. "Africa, especially tropical Africa, is the natural home of products in the highest degree essential to modern industry." he had said. "The desire to speed up the supply of these products and largely to increase the output . . . will be very great."[8]

Some kind of planned economic development of the African empire was almost inevitable after the war. There was an unprecedented emphasis on economic problems and on economic planning. The economic crisis,

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[7] 399 H.C. Deb., cols. 397, 411, 477.

[8] E. D. Morel, The Black Man's Burden (London, 1920), pp. 165-166.

which manifested itself mainly as a shortage of foreign exchange, greatly reinforced the need to develop controlled sources of supply for as many imports as possible. The advent to power of a Labour Government ensured that the attempt to derive increased supplies from the colonies would take the form of a large-scale government plan.

An unusually candid declaration of the aims of post-war policy was voiced by John Strachey in the debate on the Overseas Resources Development Bill of 1948, when he said:

> I should like to end this discussion by striking this note, that by one means or another, by hook or by crook, the development of primary production of all sorts, in the Colonial areas, Colonial territories and dependent areas in the Commonwealth, as well as generally throughout the world, in far more abundant quantities than exist today is, it is hardly too much to say, a life and death matter for the economy of this country.[9]

Harold Wilson believed that colonial development could be the most important single factor in redressing the world balance of payments.[10] Ernest Bevin cast the Colonies in an even broader role when he told the Commons that close collaboration with the overseas territories was needed to support the economy of Western

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[9] 446 H.C. Deb., col. 141.

[10] Ibid., 453, col. 334.

Europe, which must have the food and raw materials of these areas to balance its trade.[11]

A straightforward policy of avowed exploitation was precluded by conditions both in Africa and in the outside world. On the international scene, the centre of the stage was held by two ostensibly anti-colonial Great Powers, both highly critical of Great Britain's imperial role. An American committee which included John Foster Dulles among its members had recommended immediate changes in colonies to give Africans elected representatives and to open the Civil Services to them, and had called for an end to racial discrimination and the submission of all colonies to international accountability.[12] Arthur Creech Jones explained in 1946 that Britain was the subject of a good deal of criticism from the representatives of other powers, who did not appreciate her intentions or her constructive work in the colonies, and who demanded more rapid changes in the condition and status of her dependencies. "The world is determined," he said, "that Britain, in the discharge of her imperial responsibilities, shall

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[11] Ibid., 446, col. 398.

[12] The Committee on Africa, the War and Peace Aims, The Atlantic Charter and Africa from an American Standpoint (New York, 1942), p. 105.

not wait."[13]

Meanwhile, in Africa itself, change was coming more rapidly than anyone, in Britain or elsewhere, had anticipated. As early as 1942, Lord Hailey had warned that "the outstanding impression of Africa must be one of rapid change, and of greater changes impending."[14] By the end of the war, there was already considerable unrest in many parts of Africa. This originated partly with the few educated Africans, who were familiar with the propaganda of this war for freedom, but could see no prospect of the extension of that freedom to Africa.

For the greater part of the population, however, the drastic intensification of the exploitation of Africans was almost certainly more important. The exigencies of war had served as the pretext for pushing down the already appalling standards of living, and for the use of forced labour to make Africans work for lower wages. P. T. Bauer has shown in detail the worsening of the terms of trade of West African producers until, by 1945, their produce could be exchanged for about half the quantity of imported goods it would have

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[13] East African Standard (July 24, 1946).

[14] Lord Hailey, Native Administration and Political Development in British Tropical Africa (London, 1942), p. 2.

bought in the mid-nineteen-thirties.[15]

There is a mass of evidence which indicates that real wages went down during the war throughout British Africa. In Kenya, for example, the Annual Report for 1938 lists wages for various categories of workers, with the lowest rate for non-agricultural workers listed as 12s. per month;[16] in June 1944, Colonel Stanley quoted minimum wages of 14s. a month for heavy labour and 10s. for light labour.[17] Since rations and/or housing may have been supplied in either or both cases, exact comparison is difficult, but the Nairobi allowance for rations and housing was only 10s. in 1946.[18] The rise in the cost of living is hard to estimate, but Bauer argues that in West Africa it was of the order of 2-1/2 times,[19] and it seems unlikely that it was much less elsewhere. Economic hardship was therefore an obvious cause of discontent in the African colonies.

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[15] P. T. Bauer, West African Trade (London, 1963), pp. 303-307.

[16] Colonial Office, Report No. 1920 - Annual Report on the Social and Economic Progress of the People of Kenya Colony and Protectorate, 1938 (London, 1939), p. 35.

[17] 401 H.C. Deb., col. 187.

[18] Kenya, Labour Department Report, 1946 (Nairobi, 1946), p. 9.

[19] Bauer, p. 413.

With the end of the war came the return of thousands of African servicemen, who had seen and experienced a better life than they had known before, and who brought back new ideas and a more aggressive attitude. They had developed a political and national consciousness which made them the focal point of the movement against authority.[20] In Africa, as elsewhere, there was hope amongst ordinary people that victory would bring the opportunity to make a new world. The war-time excuses for poverty and deprivation no longer seemed valid, and rapid progress was a universal expectation. The British Government had encouraged these hopes and expectations; it was now required to make a beginning towards their realization.

The policy of Imperial Trusteeship was therefore a practical necessity after Labour's victory in 1945. Perhaps the best summary of the relation between trusteeship and Britain's post-war situation was given by Rita Hinden in 1949. After noting that, in India, Burma, Ceylon, Palestine and Israel, idealism and economic necessity had coincided, she pointed out that in the remaining colonies, a policy of "positive

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[20]Col. No. 231, Report of the Commission of Enquiry into Disturbances in the Gold Coast, 1948 (Aiken Watson Commission) (London, 1948), p. 7.

trusteeship" involving development and welfare had "neatly dovetailed idealism with economic needs." The Colonies could help Britain economically in only one way - "by providing the raw materials, or foodstuffs, or semi-manufactured goods so badly needed in Britain, and in exchange [italics mine] offering markets where British exports could be fairly secure against outside competition." For these purposes, there must be increased productivity and higher living standards, and this required big development and welfare projects.[21] As Arthur Creech Jones said, Britain's "enlightened self-interest" demanded a new policy, and "the incidence of power politics and the new alignments" made it "imperative."[22]

The doctrine of trusteeship was re-affirmed by Clement Attlee, in the traditional terms of the United Nations Charter, immediately after Labour's election victory. Attlee declared that the doctrine, under which the colonial powers accepted the obligation to promote the well-being of the colonial peoples, to ensure their "political, economic, social and educational advancement," and to "develop self-government," had been Britain's guiding policy for

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[21]Rita Hinden, Empire and After (London, 1949), p. 164.

[22]Rita Hinden (ed.), Fabian Colonial Essays (London, 1945), p. 10.

many years.[23]

In the first debate on colonial affairs, Secretary of State George Hall outlined a policy which was so clearly an extension of the programme of the previous government that it aroused considerable enthusiasm amongst the Conservatives. Stanley's good wishes to his successor were followed by many tributes and expressions of support; the only criticism came from Labour members, some of whom were disappointed at the failure to adopt a new policy. Creech Jones concluded the debate by agreeing that there had been little change, but insisting that this was the result of successful Labour propaganda, which had converted the Conservatives to a more human and liberal approach.[24] He thought there was some difference "in tempo and in emphasis, in economic conceptions and in our attitude to racial relations," but nevertheless felt strongly that colonial policy "should be removed from the field of violent party controversy."[25] It was evident that socialism, the panacea which would transform the basis of the Empire, was to have little

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[23] 413 H.C. Deb., cols. 677-678.

[24] Ibid., 425, cols. 238-352.

[25] Ibid., col. 343; A. Creech Jones, Some Current Colonial Problems (London, 1946), p. 4.

part in Labour's colonial policy.

Although Arthur Greenwood assured the 45th Party Conference that it was the definite policy of the Government "to assist the Colonial peoples in their march towards complete political freedom, democratic freedom, economic freedom and social security,"[26] it soon became clear that the marchers were not expected to reach their goal in the foreseeable future. In the summer of 1946, Arthur Creech Jones proclaimed it as the Government's intention "that in the world of today and tomorrow our flag shall not be lowered, that British administration shall be second to none";[27] in 1948 the purpose of his policy was "to guide the Colonial territories to responsible self-government within the Commonwealth."[28] A party policy statement of 1950 declared that, in the colonial territories, "our purpose is to help in creating the economic and social basis for democratic self-government";[29] and five years after Labour lost power the party held that a

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[26]Labour Party, Report of the Forty-fifth Annual Conference, p. 210.

[27]East African Standard (July 24, 1946).

[28]Cmd. 7433 (1948), Report on the Colonial Empire (1947-1948), p. 1.

[29]Labour Party, Let Us Win Through Together (London, 1950), p. 12.

primary duty was to "lay the foundations of full democracy" in the colonies.[30] Since six years of Labour Government had not succeeded in laying the foundations, it was obvious that the construction of the edifice was likely to be somewhat delayed.

The long-standing Labour view that all colonies should be brought under international supervision did not survive the party's accession to power. The fact that this demand had always been hedged with the proviso that the other countries should adopt the same policy hardly explains the Labour Government's determined opposition to any measure of United Nations surveillance. Although Arthur Creech Jones had believed, as late as April, 1945, that the mandate system should be extended to all colonies not ripe for self-government,[31] he strongly opposed an Indian resolution of 1947 that the United Nations Assembly should request the colonial powers to submit Trusteeship agreements for such territories. Jones disputed the assumption that the Trusteeship system offered a better prospect for the people of these territories than the existing conditions, and argued, in effect,

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[30] Labour Party, Labour's Colonial Policy (London, 1956), p. 30.

[31] A. Creech Jones, "Labour and the Colonies," African Affairs, Vol. 44, No. 176 (July, 1945), p. 114.

that the present government of the British Colonies could not be improved upon and that the inhabitants of the colonies would stand stoutly against any suggestion of International Trusteeship.[32]

A report on the Colonial Territories at the end of Labour's period of office explained that the United Nations Charter gave that body no right to supervise any territories not trusteeships, and continued:

> His Majesty's Government have therefore always firmly resisted attempts that have been made at Lake Success to set up a measure of United Nations supervision for such territories akin to that which the Charter provides in relation to trust territories.[33]

Important changes on the international scene help to explain this about-face on the matter of international supervision. Firstly, the United Nations, unlike the old League, was not completely dominated by the colonial powers, and did not conform to their views on the proper treatment for subject peoples; secondly, the war-time fears of United States opposition to imperialism had been partly dispelled by American determination to maintain unrestricted control over the

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[32]Col. No. 228, Information on Non-Self-Governing Territories (London, 1948), pp. 43-46.

[33]Cmd. 8243 (1951), The Colonial Territories (1950-1951), p. 14.

Pacific Islands.[34] These factors, reinforced by the conservative tendencies inherent in the acquisition of power, sufficed to turn the Labour Government into a resolute opponent of international trusteeship, where this was not already in existence.

For the territories formerly under League of Nations Mandate, where international supervision was harder to avoid, it had been possible to create a fairly innocuous Trusteeship Council, half of whose members represented the colonial powers. One noteworthy retrograde step, in comparison with the League plan, was the arrangement for the militarization of the trust territories and their inhabitants. Clement Attlee expressed his enthusiasm for the change in Parliament when he said that, while "the old system of mandates laid down what was in effect a policy of neutralization, forbidding fortifications, forbidding bases, and limiting the training of native troops to local defense purposes," the new one recognized "the positive obligation that the inhabitants of the territories placed under the system should make their full contribution to defense."[35] The trusteeship agreement

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[34]_____ "The Trusteeship System," Round Table, Vol. XXXVI, No. 142 (March, 1946), pp. 127-129.

[35]413 H.C. Deb., col. 668.

for Tanganyika, for example, expressed this provision as follows:

> [The Administering Authority] shall be entitled to establish naval, military and air bases, to erect fortifications, to station and employ his own forces in Tanganyika, and to take all such other measures as are in his opinion necessary for the defence of Tanganyika and for ensuring that the territory plays its part in the maintenance of international peace and security. To this end the Administering Authority may make use of volunteer forces, facilities and assistance from Tanganyika in carrying out the obligations towards the Security Council undertaken in this regard by the Administering Authority, as well as for local defence and the maintenance of law and order within Tanganyika.[36]

In this way, the new agreements made certain that the backward peoples of the world, in their march towards enlightenment, would not lack that crowning glory of European civilization, its unrivalled proficiency in, and addiction to, the art of war.

The broad outline of Labour policy gave little indication that a bright new day had dawned for the African empire. It foreshadowed a long period of slow evolution towards self-government within the Commonwealth, without benefit of that international supervision so long advocated by the Labour Party, and accompanied by a fuller incorporation of Africa into the British defensive system. At the same time, the

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[36]Cmd, 6935 (1945-1946), Revised Draft Terms of Trusteeship for Tanganyika, pp. 3-4.

emphasis on the necessity of exploiting the wealth of Africa in the interests of Great Britain gave clear notice that Africans could expect to reap only incidental benefits from the economic development of the continent. To that economic development we must now turn.

CHAPTER VIII

DEVELOPMENT POLICY

The most important principle of the new idea of trusteeship was embodied in the Colonial Development and Welfare Acts. It involved the abandonment of the concept that each colony must pay its own way, and the adoption of a policy of capital export from Britain to the colonies. This flow of capital would 'prime the pump' and start the colonies on their way towards a modern social and economic system.

Under the acts of 1945 and 1950, a total of £ 140 million was made available for the 10-year period 1946-1955. This seems like a considerable sum, until one realizes that it amounts to about £ 2 for each inhabitant of the colonies, or about 4 shillings per annum. The United Kingdom was spending more than six times this sum on education alone. It is obvious that, even if this amount of capital had actually been transferred to the colonies, it would have accomplished very little.

TABLE NO. 1

AREA AND POPULATION OF AFRICAN COLONIES

Territory	Land Area in Square Miles	Total Population	Africans	Asians	Arabs	Europeans
Gambia	4,030	298,000				
Gold Coast	78,802	4,118,450	4,111,680			6,770
Nigeria	372,674	24,330,000 (est)				
Kenya	219,730	5,405,966	5,251,120	97,687	24,174	29,660
Tanganyika	342,706	7,487,305	7,410,269	46,491	11,952	16,299
Uganda	80,292	4,958,520	4,917,555	33,767		3,448
Northern Rhodesia	290,323	1,870,000 (est)	1,827,000			43,000
Nyasaland	37,000	2,351,000 (est)	2,340,000			
Total	1,425,557	51,502,471				

Information taken from Col. No. 281, An Economic Survey of the Colonial Territories, 1951 (3 vols., London, 1952, 1954)

It was the contention of Government spokesmen throughout the Labour period that, in fact, such amounts were being provided by Great Britain for the development and welfare of her colonies. In 1947, for example, a British representative told the United Nations General Assembly that, far from exploiting her colonies, Great Britain was helping them with loans and grants. He cited the figure of £ 120 million as an outgoing contribution, and asserted that the United Kingdom was receiving no tribute in return.[1]

In view of Great Britain's financial difficulties throughout this period, and of the necessity to accept large sums from the United States in order to maintain solvency, the expectation that considerable amounts would be spent on African development seems unrealistic. It was, of course, possible that the British people could have been persuaded to support a long-range policy which, through immediate sacrifice, would eventually restore Great Britain's economic position through the development of African resources, but the immediate problems involved in diverting money and resources from Britain were great.

In fact, a study of what actually happened

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[1]Col. No. 228, Information on Non-Self-governing Territories (London, 1948), pp. 52-53.

shows that no such diversion took place. Of the 1945 allocation of £ 120 million, £ 54,650,000 was assigned to Africa.[2] Up to the end of 1951, a total of £ 51,500,000 was spent from Colonial Development and Welfare funds, with East and West Africa receiving £ 10.7 million and £ 14.6 million respectively. In the same period, the Overseas Food Corporation spent £ 36 million in East Africa, all on the abortive groundnuts scheme, while the Colonial Development Corporation spent £ 5.4 million in both areas.[3] If we assume an expenditure of £ 5.3 million in Central Africa, which is the amount committed rather than that actually spent,[4] this brings the amount transferred to Africa in six years under all these heads to £ 72 million, including the £ 36 million spent on groundnuts, much of which was pure waste.

It is almost impossible to make any useful estimate of the amount of private investment in the African Colonies at this time, as no figures concerning the flow of capital are available. Philip Bell gives

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[2]Cmd. 6713 (1945), Colonial Development and Welfare, p. 8.

[3]A. D. Hazlewood, "Colonial External Finance Since the War," Review of Economic Studies, XXI (1), No. 54 (1953-1954), pp. 38-41.

[4]H.C. Paper No. 189 (1951), Colonial Development and Welfare Acts, Table IV, p. 51.

tables showing the United Kingdom investments in the Overseas Sterling Area for the years 1945 and 1951. These tables indicate that West African investments were £ 3 million smaller in 1951 than in 1945, while those in East Africa rose by £ 1,700,000. Investment in the Rhodesias grew by £ 30,800,000, but there is no breakdown between Northern and Southern Rhodesia.[5] Lord Rennell estimated, in 1950, that private interests had invested £ 50 million in the African Colonies in the preceding five years,[6] but the basis of his estimate is unknown. If we accept this probably excessive figure, we arrive at a grand total of £ 122 million from all sources.

At the same time, the Labour Government pursued trading and financial policies which drained capital from Africa at a rate which dwarfed this flow of development and investment funds. One noteworthy item in this account is the direct exploitation of African producers through the policy adopted by the Ministry of Food, and not abandoned until Labour lost power, of paying

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[5]Bank of England, United Kingdom Overseas Investments, 1938-48, 1951, quoted in Philip W. Bell, The Sterling Area in the Post-War World (Oxford, 1956), pp. 370-372.

[6]168 Lords Deb., col. 672.

lower than world market prices for certain products.[7] Bauer's estimates of what he calls 'under-realization' are based on his comparison of prices paid by the Ministry of Food for certain products, which he derived from records made available to him by the Colonial Office, with prices paid to other producers or, in the case of cocoa, with the New York price.[8] His tables show that this practice resulted, between 1946 and 1951, in gains on Nigerian produce alone of over £ 15 million on palm oil, nearly £ 29 million on palm kernels and more than £ 29 million on groundnuts, a grand total of £ 73 million,[9] or an amount larger than the sums transferred to all the African Colonies under Colonial Development and Welfare, Overseas Food Corporation and Colonial Development Corporation schemes. The discrepancy in cocoa prices was much smaller, and Bauer calculates it at £ 3 per ton for the entire period, during which a gain of £ 3.5 million was made on cocoa from Nigeria and the Gold Coast.[10]

Similar policies have been described by

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[7] P. T. Bauer, West African Trade (London, 1963), pp. 287-289.

[8] Ibid., p. 400.

[9] Ibid., pp. 401-407.

[10] Ibid., pp. 396-400.

Charlotte Leubuscher in the sale of coffee and cotton, but the lack of adequate information makes it difficult to determine the exact amount of the profit to the United Kingdom in most cases.[11] In 1947, the Ministry of Food bought East African coffee produced by Africans at £ 19 to £ 35 below the world market price.[12] In later years the difference was larger: a United Nations Mission to East Africa reported in 1951 that the Ministry was paying £ 297 a ton for coffee which was selling on the world market at £ 450.[13] The price paid to white planters in Kenya was related to the world price, but there was no such relation for native-grown coffee.[14] Between 1946-47 and 1949-50 the Ministry of Food made a profit of £ 8,783,276 on the sale of coffee and cocoa to other users, but there is no way of determining what proportion of this was derived from coffee.[15] In the case of cotton, which has been described by Leubuscher as being "on the fringe of the

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[11]Charlotte Leubuscher, Bulk Buying from the Colonies (London, 1956), pp. 33-38, 53-66, 72-73.

[12]Kenya Coffee Board, Bulletin (November, 1947), p. 136, quoted ibid., p. 34.

[13]Leubuscher, pp. 35, 38.

[14]Ibid., pp. 33-34.

[15]Trading Accounts and Balance Sheets, 1946 to 1950-1, quoted ibid., p. 26.

United Kingdom's bulk purchase policy,"[16] the gains were much smaller, amounting to £ 1,338,000 on Nigerian cotton in the four years 1948 to 1951.[17] Uganda cotton, which was of superior quality, was actually bought at a higher price than United States cotton, although the prices were sometimes below the auction prices at Mombasa.[18]

As around 90% of Great Britain's food imports were bought under bulk purchase agreements during the years 1946-1952,[19] the total of the subsidies provided by Africans to keep down the prices of British goods must have been very great. It should be noted that the sums involved in this operation appear nowhere as credits to the colonies; they represent clear profit to the British taxpayer on the operations of the Ministry of Food.

Pure gain of this type was, however, only a part of the process of capital extraction. The instrument through which the United Kingdom controlled

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[16] Leubuscher, p. 65.

[17] Nigerian Digest of Statistics, Annual Reports of the Nigeria Cotton Marketing Board; International Cotton Advisory Committee (ed.) Cotton Quarterly Statistical Bulletin, quoted ibid., p. 187.

[18] Leubuscher, pp. 62, 191-192.

[19] Bell, p. 405.

the prices of West African products at all levels was the West African Produce Control Board, set up during the war and continued until 1949, when its functions were taken over by local boards. In the four West African colonies, the boards controlled practically all the agricultural exports produced by Africans.[20] During the time of their operation, the various boards paid producers in Nigeria and the Gold Coast £ 317 million, and held back sums which, including under-realization, totalled £ 308 million.[21] These boards not only sold goods to Great Britain at low prices, but in addition held back from the producers a large part of the proceeds, and thus built up huge surpluses. The surplus on West African cocoa, palm products, groundnuts and cotton was £ 118 million in the four years 1947 to 1951.[22] As these surpluses were invested in sterling securities or deposited in British banks, they were in effect loans to Great Britain from the colonies, which helped to support the economy of the United Kingdom.[23]

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[20] Bauer, p. 276.

[21] Ibid., p. 293.

[22] Ibid., p. 284.

[23] Ibid., pp. 309-310.

Bauer argues, incidentally, that there is no evidence that the United Kingdom Government influenced the policies of the marketing boards, and therefore no evidence of 'deliberate exploitation'.[24] Since he himself describes the Gold Coast Cocoa Marketing Board as "simply an organ of government,"[25] and since colonial governments of that time were entirely under the control of the Colonial Office, only those who need no convincing will be convinced by his argument. In any case, the effects of such policies on colonial economies would be the same, whether they were the result of deliberation or of accident.

The alleged purpose of keeping down the producer prices was stabilization, and the theory was that, when world prices fell, the surpluses would be used to support them. In 1952, for the first time, bulk purchase prices were higher than world prices; in 1953 the policy of guaranteed floor prices was dropped. As Charlotte Leubuscher remarks, "it was unfortunate for the producing countries that the change-over came into force at a stage when world prices of oils and fats had started to decline."[26]

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[24] Ibid., pp. 330, 342.

[25] Ibid., p. 277.

[26] Leubuscher, p. 17.

A further drain of capital from the colonies is shown by an examination of colonial trade during the period 1945-1951, when the generally favourable trade balances resulted in an increase of £ 520 million in the sterling assets of the Colonies, of which £ 280 million accrued to East and West African accounts.[27] The total held by all the African Colonies on December 31, 1951, was £ 550 million,[28] but this included £ 104 million belonging to the various marketing boards, and therefore partly duplicates the item discussed above.[29] These large sums were available for use in Great Britain at a rate of interest which probably averaged less than one per cent.[30]

The Colonial Office insisted that the sterling balances were not blocked, and that they could be withdrawn at will.[31] However, this merely means that no specific agreements for this purpose were made with the Colonies, as had been done in the case of India. The reason for this is very simple: the policies of

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[27]Hazlewood, p. 31.

[28]Col. No. 298, Memorandum on the Sterling Assets of the British Colonies (London, 1953), p. 15.

[29]Hazlewood, p. 50.

[30]Bell, p. 368.

[31]Col. No. 298, p. 2.

of colonial Governments were internal policies of the British Cabinet, and there was no necessity for the Cabinet to make such agreements with itself.

The true situation is shown by Philip Bell, who remarks that the most important change in the sterling area after 1939 was the restricted use of sterling in international trade. He explains that this restriction was accomplished in three ways: (1) through the blocking of balances in London by agreement or persuasion, (2) through control of capital issues in London, (3) through exchange and import restrictions. After mentioning the blocking agreements made with India, Pakistan, Iraq and Ceylon, Bell says that no other formal agreements were necessary, and notes, in conclusion, that no balances were reduced.[32]

Official documents also throw some light on the situation. A 1948 report of the Colonial Primary Products Committee, discussing the problem of Europe's 'dollar shortage', made the following observation:

> It should not, of course, be supposed that the fact that colonial supplies can be paid for in sterling wholly disposes of the matter. The Colonies will wish to spend that sterling. But given the close relationship between the United Kingdom and the Colonial Empire, the problem

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[32] Bell, pp. 19-25.

> should be one of quite manageable proportions[33] [Italics mine].

The Economic Survey for 1948, after noting that the Sterling Area countries were being invited to exercise economy in the use of dollars, stated that limits on the reduction of sterling balances had been "agreed formally or informally with a majority of the countries" holding them.[34] A Colonial Office survey noted that Government trade policy "in line with the general policy of the Sterling Area, is to encourage export to the maximum to North America . . . and to limit import from the Dollar Area to essential needs . . ."[35]

With regard to capital issues in London, activities of the colonies could be completely controlled. In fact, the colonial governments were not allowed to raise loans in London until 1948. By the end of 1951, they had borrowed £ 56 million, of which £ 26 million had gone to East and West Africa.[36]

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[33]Col. No. 217, Colonial Primary Products Committee Interim Report (London, 1948), p. 5.

[34]Cmd. 7344 (1947-48), Economic Survey for 1948, p. 19.

[35]Col. No. 281, An Economic Survey of the Colonial Territories, 1951 (London, 1952), III, 47.

[36]Hazlewood, pp. 35-41.

Further limitations on the ability of the Colonies to raise capital were imposed by the control of the United Kingdom over their banking and financial systems, which were part of the British system.[37] The monetary structure of each major area in Africa was under the control of a Currency Board, whose members were appointed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies and which operated through a London staff. These boards followed a policy of accumulating reserves of over 100 per cent, which were invested almost entirely in London. During the period 1945-1950 the West African Currency Board normally distributed less than half its surplus to the West African Governments, while the East African Board made no distribution of surplus until 1952.[38] The amount of funds immobilized by these practices was £ 310 million at the end of 1951.[39]

At the same time, the bank deposits of European businessmen and the private savings of Africans were being funnelled into the British money market by the British-controlled banks in every colony. The regular banks, which did very little business with

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[37] W. T. Newlyn and D. C. Rowan, Money and Banking in British Colonial Africa (Oxford, 1954), p. 20.

[38] Ibid., pp. 54-65.

[39] Hazlewood, p. 49.

Africans, invested most of their funds in the United Kingdom at low interest rates, and in this way functioned as exporters of capital.[40] Most African savings were deposited in the Government-operated Post Office Savings Banks, which also invested their funds almost entirely in London, thus diverting available African savings to that low-yield market.[41]

Another aspect of this process of directing the flow of capital out of the Colonies was the restriction of imports, which made it difficult for most colonies to spend even the capital available to them. On its positive side, this policy was enforced by requesting colonies to limit their imports and to make purchases on the British market; on its negative side, it was enforced by failure to provide the goods required in the Colonies. The East African Colonies were asked to produce and export more and to restrict their imports, and many import items were placed on suspended or restricted lists.[42] What is probably more significant, however, is that, until 1948-49, no consideration was given to the possibility of requiting

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[40] Newlyn and Rowan, pp. 51, 65, 78-95.

[41] Ibid., pp. 214-217.

[42] Cmd. 7987 (1950), The British Territories in East and Central Africa, 1945-1950, p. 41; The Times (October 13, 1947), p. 3; (November 4, 1947), p. 3.

African exports with a fair share of the goods needed for development. An observation of the Select Committee on Estimates is to the point:

> There is no specific allocation of steel . . . for the Colonies. Their needs are met out of the general allocation for export. The same applies to other scarce materials. In other words, there has been no system for determining the total needs of the Colonies and making an appropriate allocation of resources to them. Without such a system it is clearly impossible to frame or implement efficiently a policy of colonial development.[43]

The Primary Products Committee pointed, in January, 1948, to a capital equipment scarcity in the Colonies, and noted that the United Kingdom was unable to meet fully the colonial demand for exports.[44] According to Rita Hinden, up to 1949 the Colonies were getting less steel than before the war.[45] A report on the situation in 1948-49 noted shortages of iron and steel and heavy machinery, and blamed shortages of essential imports for holding up the rate of economic development.[46] Although there was some improvement in

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[43] H.C. Paper No. 181 (1947-48), Fifth Report From the Select Committee on Estimates: Colonial Development, p. ix.

[44] Col. No. 217, pp. 5, 6.

[45] Rita Hinden, Common Sense and Colonial Development (London, 1949), p. 32.

[46] Cmd. 7715 (1949), Progress Report on the Colonial Territories, 1948-49, pp. 64-65.

1949, these difficulties continued into 1951.[47] In the Colonies themselves, inability to spend the funds available again indicated a shortage of materials. Such shortages were noted in Kenya[48] and Tanganyika[49] in 1948, and in Nigeria in 1949.[50]

It is extremely difficult to estimate the extent of capital outflow from the African Colonies under the Labour Government, but there is unanimous agreement that such a movement did take place. Bell has discussed at length the contributions of the Colonies to the Sterling Area dollar pool, from which all the independent members except South Africa and Ceylon drew funds, and has shown that, on balance, the Colonies lent money to Great Britain at rates of interest lower than those earned by Great Britain on her investments in the Colonies.[51] Hazlewood has concluded that the Colonies were exporting capital,

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[47]Cmd. 8243 (1951), The Colonial Territories, 1950-51, p. 84.

[48]Kenya, Interim Report of the Planning Committee (Nairobi, 1950), p. 2.

[49]Colonial Office, Report to the United Nations Trusteeship Council on the Administration of Tanganyika for the year 1948 (London, 1949), p. 63.

[50]Nigeria, Sessional Paper No. 20 of 1949, quoted in West Africa (June 10, 1950), XXXIV, 511.

[51]Bell, pp. 56-62, 368, 409.

not importing it, and has estimated their total investment in Great Britain in 1951 at £ 1,000 million.[52] A Labour Party pamphlet of 1955 agreed that over the post-war period the Colonies had exported more goods and services than they had received;[53] Lord Listowel noted the fact that Commonwealth cooperation had re-distributed wealth in favour of the richer territories.[54] John Strachey remarked in this connection that:

> If the account between the Colonies and the rest of the members of the Commonwealth were to be closed to-morrow, it would be impossible to deny that the colonial peoples have suffered grave exploitation for the benefit of the self-governing peoples of the Commonwealth.[55]

Thus, despite the supposed changes in the basic attitude of Great Britain towards her colonial empire, it proved impossible in practice for a British Labour Government to allow dependent colonies to use their own resources to build for themselves a better economic base. In a time of financial difficulties for

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[52]Hazlewood, pp. 48-49.

[53]Labour Party, Facing Facts in the Colonies (London, 1955), p. 29.

[54]Lord Listowel, Commonwealth Future (London, 1957), p. 22.

[55]John Strachey, The End of Empire (London, 1959), p. 183.

the United Kingdom, the Government was unable to turn away from the tradition of exploitation, even with the prospect that, in the long run, Great Britain would reap immense benefits from colonial development. The temptation to use political, economic, financial and monetary control to pursue policies of immediate advantage was irresistible. Under these circumstances, the prospects for rapid economic advance in any direction were far from bright.

CHAPTER IX

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Since the supposed 'pump-priming' of the colonial economies did not, in fact, take place, any expectation of rapid economic progress was bound to prove illusory. Nevertheless, in theory, the basis of the whole concept of a new imperial policy lay in economic expansion. Secretary of State George Hall pointed out, in connection with the Colonial Development and Welfare Act, that development was the more fundamental, since welfare depended on economic development.[1] Some colonies were informed that their plans placed too much emphasis on social services, which could be paid for only by increasing taxable capacity.[2] Of course, some social services were relevant in this context, since, as Arthur Creech Jones later said, poor health, education and nutrition

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[1] Cmd. 6713 (1945), Colonial Development and Welfare, p. 5.

[2] Gambia, Sessional Paper No. 14 of 1946. Memorandum on Development (Bathurst, 1946), p. 1; Tanganyika, Development Commission, A Ten-year Development and Welfare Plan for Tanganyika Territory (Dar es Salaam, 1946), p. 2.

"represented great human and economic losses."[3] Hall appointed a Colonial Economic and Development Council to advise him on economic and commercial policy as well as on development; he also established a Trade and Communications Division and a Development Division at the Colonial Office.[4]

There was no doubt about the kind of economic development required: the need of Great Britain for food and raw materials was the governing factor throughout Labour's six years. This meant the development of agricultural products for export. Although Creech Jones spoke of the need for some examination of the possibilities for industrial growth,[5] he felt that agriculture was of fundamental importance, since Britain needed the available foodstuffs and raw materials. When he was criticized for the emphasis on groundnuts, he pleaded the "imperative need to get more fats for this country."[6] Sir Stafford Cripps believed

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[3]Fabian Colonial Bureau, The Way Forward (London, 1950), p. 22.

[4]425 H.C. Deb., cols. 258-259.

[5]A. Creech Jones, Labour's Colonial Policy (London, 1947), p. 13.

[6]A. Creech Jones, Some Problems of Africa, East and West (London, 1948), pp. 11, 15.

that industrial development in the colonies was highly desirable, but that the world shortage of capital goods made it impossible.[7]

The fundamental problem was the inability of the British people to support themselves, and their consequent need of assistance from Africa to keep their standard of living up: this problem manifested itself in the so-called 'dollar shortage'. Creech Jones indicated his idea of the priorities involved when he explained that capital was being directed towards production which was advantageous from the dollar-earning point of view.[8] The Economic Survey for 1949 pointed to colonial development as "an indispensable element in the programme for developing new sources of supply upon which our ultimate hope of solving the dollar problem is largely based."[9] J. B. Danquah evidently believed that the main reason for calling the African Conference of 1948 was to urge the Africans to "redress the balance of old Europe" by redoubling their effort to export raw materials and by restricting their

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[7] Cabinet Office Press Release No. 3 (November 12, 1947), quoted in Rita Hinden, Common Sense and Colonial Development (London, 1949), p. 15.

[8] Jones, Some Problems of Africa, p. 17.

[9] Cmd. 7647 (1949), Economic Survey for 1949, p. 22.

own consumption as much as possible.[10]

This concern for a great increase in the production of primary goods for export is shown in the sending of missions to Africa to investigate the feasibility of large-scale production of various foodstuffs, and by the creation of a Colonial Primary Products Committee to study the possibility of increasing colonial supplies. The Committee's first report paid lip-service to the doctrine of trusteeship by observing that the primary concern of policy must be the benefit of the colonial people, but the commodities it chose to study first were those needed in Britain, and those it considered next in importance were those which could be exported to other countries, particularly the United States. Amongst the obstacles to increased exportation, it noted the fact that, in the case of foodstuffs, local demand competed with world market needs.[11] Unfortunately, Africans could not produce without eating, although it was possible to keep this to a minimum.

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[10] J. B. Danquah, Friendship and Empire (London, 1949), p. 16.

[11] Col. No. 217, Colonial Primary Products Committee, Interim Report (London, 1948), pp. 4, 6.

The following statement shows the Committee's basic outlook:

> Throughout its discussions the Committee has regarded the increase of production in the Colonies not merely as a measure to meet the immediate dollar emergency, but as a long-term contribution to the stability of the sterling area and to European reconstruction plans. It will remain necessary to develop supplies outside the Western Hemisphere and reduce Europe's dependence upon foodstuffs and raw materials from that area, if the pattern of world trade is to be restored to equilibrium and Europe is to recover the ability to meet its dollar needs from current earnings.[12]

It is significant that the Overseas Resources Development Act of 1947 was presented to Parliament by John Strachey, the Minister of Food, and not by the Colonial Secretary. This act established a Colonial Development Corporation, with an initial capital of £ 100 million under the Colonial Office, and an Overseas Food Corporation, with a capital of £ 50 million, under the Ministry of Food.[13] The magnitude of these sums, aimed at developing the production of goods required in the United Kingdom, in comparison with the total of £ 120 million for the development and welfare of the whole colonial empire over a ten-year

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[12] Ibid., p. 5.

[13] H.C. Bills (1947-1948), Vol. IV, Overseas Resources Development Act, pp. 1-7.

period, gives some indication of the relative importance of the various parts of the Government's programme.

The most important single 'development' scheme during the Labour Government's period of office was the groundnut scheme undertaken in Tanganyika by the Overseas Food Corporation. It was primarily intended, not as a colonial development project, but as a plan for increasing Great Britain's supply of fats and oils.[14] The plan was originally put forward by Mr. Frank Samuels, Managing Director of the United Africa Company, who convinced the Ministry of Food that it offered the attractive prospect of producing groundnuts worth £ 40 a ton at a cost of £ 17,18s. The United Africa Company began the enterprise, which was turned over to the Overseas Food Corporation on March 1, 1948. The scheme involved the use of mechanized equipment to clear and work 2,500,000 acres of land, with a labour force of 400 Europeans and 20,000 Africans.[15]

The Corporation's reports show clearly that there was no thought of doing anything to help the

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[14] Cmd. 8125 (1951), The Future of the Overseas Food Corporation, pp. 5, 6.

[15] H.C. Paper No. 252 (1948-49), Overseas Food Corporation, Report and Accounts for 1948-1949, pp. 4-7.

people of Africa. They speak of the need to recruit and maintain African labourers, and explain that the African "has shown a capacity and willingness to learn. . . . Simple mechanical work of a repetitive kind is well within his ability."[16] With regard to the hiring of staff, it was reported that "East Africa was the source of supply for staff experienced in controling African Native labour."[17]

Alan Wood, who was head of the Information Division of the Corporation for eighteen months, has described the conditions of African labour at Kongwa, where the largest clearing was made. Although the Africans were told the new development was for their benefit, after two years they were still living in tents without their families, under worse conditions than those of many Africans on their own farms. By the end of 1948, 200 out of a promised 1000 African married quarters were ready.[18] Since the Africans were without their wives, large numbers of prostitutes soon established themselves at Kongwa.[19] Unskilled labour was paid as little as 15 shillings a month plus food

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[16] Ibid., p. 47.

[17] H.C. Paper No. 147 (1949-50), Overseas Food Corporation, Report and Accounts for 1949-50, p. 33.

[18] Alan Wood, The Groundnut Affair (London, 1950), pp. 170, 175.

[19] Ibid., p. 83.

and lodging; since even these wages were relatively high in comparison with those in the surrounding area, prices were forced up rapidly.[20]

Discrimination was practised against Africans with regard to education and health facilities. The Tanganyika Government paid the full cost of education for Europeans, while for African education it paid 90% of the salary bills and gave a grant to assist in the construction of buildings. Africans were therefore required to pay fees in all the Corporation's schools. Hospital beds were provided at the rate of one for eight European employees and one for 48 African employees. Apparently both groups were accommodated in the same buildings, but in separate areas.[21]

The groundnuts project, which ultimately cost the British Government nearly £ 40 million, was a complete failure. By the fall of 1949, it became apparent that the original plan had been too ambitious, and a new programme was adopted which called for the clearing of 600,000 acres of bush by 1954. Another year of experiment further modified the Corporation's expectations, and forced the Government to abandon the

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[20] Ibid., pp. 76, 83.

[21] Overseas Food Corporation, Report for 1948-49, pp. 53-56.

idea of solving the shortage of fats and oils in this particular way. It was therefore decided to change the whole conception, and to regard the scheme as a colonial development project designed to establish the viability of mechanized agriculture in the tropics.[22] Responsibility was turned over to the Colonial Office on April 1, 1951, and the money advanced to the Corporation up to that time, estimated at £ 36,500,000, was written off. Total clearing was to be limited to 210,000 acres, and it was estimated that the cost over the next seven years would be £ 6 million.[23]

It took the Overseas Food Corporation another three years to establish conclusively that there was no future in mechanized agriculture at any of the three sites where clearing had been undertaken. A memorandum dated April 22, 1954, set forth this conclusion, but reported the success of an experiment in cattle ranching at Kongwa. In 1952-53, while still experimenting with large-scale farms under European supervision, the Corporation had undertaken African tenant schemes at Urambo and Nachingwea, and hoped to have 180 tenants by

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[22]Cmd. 8125, Future of the Overseas Food Corporation, pp. 4-5.

[23]Ibid., pp. 6, 11-12.

the 1954-55 season.[24]

The original scheme had required the construction of a deep water port at Mtwara and of a railway connecting this port with the groundnuts areas. After about £ 3 1/2 million pounds had been spent, the Tanganyika Government was left with the responsibility of completing these facilities, at a capital cost of £ 2 1/2 million, and of assuming the annual deficit associated with the operation of transport facilities which could not expect to pay their way for the next 30 or 40 years.[25] It is difficult to believe that even these costs, let alone the £ 40 million spent by the British Government, were justified by the most optimistic view of the possible benefits to Tanganyika.

The Colonial Development Corporation undertook a much more diversified programme, and by the end of 1950 had approved 50 projects at a cost of £ 3 million, of which £ 18 million had been allotted to Africa, although only about one-third of the total had been spent.[26] Amongst the large undertakings was the Yundum

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[24] Cmd. 9158 (1953-54), The Future of the Overseas Food Corporation, pp. 7-9.

[25] Ibid., pp. 4-5.

[26] H.C. Paper No. 161 (1950-51), Colonial Development Corporation, Report and Accounts for 1950, p. 1.

egg and poultry scheme in the Gambia, which was abandoned in 1951 after a loss of £ 800,000.[27] Another million pounds was spent on a mechanized rice-growing plan, which was also a disaster.[28] Other large-scale projects were a 20,000 acre Tung estate in Nyasaland, with an authorized capital of £ 1,559,000, wattle estates in Tanganyika, with £ 650,000, and a 9,000 square mile cattle ranch, with associated abattoir, in Bechuanaland, at a cost of £ 2,139,000.[29] The only plan which seems to have been aimed at developing production by Africans was the Niger Agricultural Project, a scheme for developing a peasant settlement of 800 farms near Mokwa, in Northern Nigeria, at a cost of £ 450,000, of which £ 200,000 was provided by the Nigerian Government.[30]

The activities of these two corporations typified the kind of development which aroused fear and antagonism amongst Africans. In 1949, Rita Hinden noted the hostility of people in the colonies to

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[27] H.C. Paper No. 167 (1951-52), C.D.C. Report and Accounts for 1951, pp. 72-74.

[28] Harry A. Gailey, Jr., A History of the Gambia (London, 1964), pp. 147-157.

[29] C.D.C., Report for 1950, p. 3.

[30] Ibid., 1951, p. 65.

projects designed to solve Europe's economic problems by increasing African output. The Africans, not unnaturally, wanted to increase production for local consumption and to establish local industries; when these great corporations began operations, they were convinced "they were being subjected to some new and more terrible form of 'exploitation'."[31] The belief that the Government was lukewarm about any development other than production for export was one of the economic causes of unrest observed by the Commission which inquired into the disturbances in the Gold Coast.[32] That Creech Jones was also aware of this feeling was shown by his statement that one of the doubts about the Overseas Resources Development Bill was "the doubt whether Colonial opinion is quite satisfied that the Bill will not be used for purposes of exploitation."[33]

Although the commitment of Colonial Development and Welfare Funds to Africa totalled only £ 38 million under the Labour Government, and actual issues

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[31]Hinden, Common Sense, pp. 39-40.

[32]Col. No. 231, Report of the Commission of Enquiry into Disturbances in the Gold Coast, 1948 (Aiken Watson Commission) (London, 1948), p. 8.

[33]446 H.C. Deb., col. 133.

were smaller still, it is necessary to look at comprehensive plans including much larger expenditures to determine the proportions allotted to various aspects of development. The development plans drawn up by the various colonial governments throughout the Empire by 1946 involved a total expenditure of £ 177 million, of which nearly half was to be devoted to the social services, nearly one-quarter to economic development and one-fifth to communications.[34] The total of funds committed to Development and Welfare schemes up to March 31, 1951, was over £ 67 million, of which more than half was assigned to the African Colonies. The division of this sum amongst the various heads of expenditure was very similar to that for the general plans, with a somewhat larger proportion going to the social services and a smaller share to communications. Actual issues from the Colonial Development and Welfare vote for the five years was £ 41.6 million.[35]

In November, 1945, colonial governments were informed of the sums allocated to them under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act of 1945, and were

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[34] See Table No. 3.

[35] H.C. Paper No. 189 (1950-51), Colonial Development and Welfare Acts, pp. 49-54.

instructed to prepare ten-year development plans which would incorporate these funds, as well as other finances available to them from loans and local resources. These plans would then be reviewed by the Colonial Secretary, assisted by the Colonial Economic and Development Council, and either be approved or returned for revision. The Colonies were instructed to take the view that economic development was more fundamental than welfare, since the former would produce the resources to support the latter.[36]

The plans drawn up were not designed to co-ordinate the various phases of colonial development and produce a balanced growth in which the related aspects of social and economic change would take place at a given rate: rather, they were usually merely lists, prepared by the governments of the Colonies, of desirable acquisitions and developments, with their estimated costs, compiled by the different government departments and added together to produce a total sum. This was particularly true of economic development, which was not a traditional concern of colonial administrations, and for which there were few precedents which could serve as a basis for prediction. It is,

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[36]Cmd. 6713, Colonial Development and Welfare, pp. 2-5.

TABLE NO. 2

TEN-YEAR-PLAN FINANCE

Territory	C.D. & W.[1] Allocation	Loan[1] Funds	Local[1] Resources	Total[1]	C.D. & W. Funds[2] Committed 1946-51	Expenditures 1946-51 Ten-Year Plans	Expenditures 1946-51 C.D. & W.
	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000	£	£	£
Gambia	1,300	250	430	1,980	778,539		
Gold Coast	3,500[3]	4,000[3]	4,000[3]	11,500[3]	1,439,189		400,000[3]
Nigeria	23,000	16,000	16,000	55,000	12,800,651	21,000,000[4]	6,787,116[4]
Sierra Leone	2,900	1,400	956	5,256	1,488,243		
Kenya	5,100	7,000	9,900	22,000	3,161,709	17,600,261[5]	
Tanganyika	7,150	6,879	3,976	18,005	3,064,333	9,976,000[6]	
Uganda	1,717	2,000	1,369	5,086	2,436,202		
Zanzibar	1,064	-	530	1,594	986,722		
Northern Rhodesia	2,728	9,000	5,272	17,000	2,076,852	13,145,418[7]	1,839,251[7]
Nyasaland	2,303	2,500	3,455	8,258	2,837,625	3,276,000[8]	
Total	50,762	49,029	45,888	145,679	31,070,065		

[1] Cmd. 7958 (1950), The Colonial Territories, 1949-50, App. III A, p. 152.

[2] H.C. Paper No. 189 (1950-51) Colonial Development and Welfare Acts, Table IV, p. 51.

[3] Gold Coast figures from Col. No. 281, An Economic Survey of the Colonial Territories, 1951, (London, 1952) III, 47

[4] Ibid., p. 73.

[5] Ibid., II, 43.

[6] Colonial Office, Report to the United Nations on Tanganyika for 1951, p. 39.

[7] Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, I, 33.

[8] Ibid., p. 62.

therefore, difficult to know what the plans were expected to accomplish if successfully completed.

In their strictly economic aspects the plans tended to adhere to the policy of developing the colonial economies as adjuncts to the British economic system. The preoccupation of the United Kingdom authorities with the production of goods for export was shown in the large number of official documents which discussed the problem. These often took the line that, since Great Britain and the Colonies were component parts of an interdependent economic system, their interests were so nearly identical that both could be served at the same time by increasing colonial production of goods required by Britain for consumption or trade. In particular, almost no attempt was made to develop industry, even for the processing of raw materials for export.

This view that the development of the African Colonies should aim at maintaining them as pre-industrial appendages of Great Britain's economic system seems difficult to reconcile with the idea of creating a world commonwealth in which all members would have an equal share. A peculiar blindness to political reality was also involved in imagining that Africans would be satisfied to remain in such a

position indefinitely, and that their trust and co-operation in such development would be forthcoming.

The political implications of this emphasis on export goods for the future of the imperial relationship were also significant, and attention has been drawn to them by at least one Labour writer. Thomas Balogh, deploring the failure of the Colonial Development Corporation and the Overseas Food Corporation, wrote in 1959 that, if successful, they would have reinforced the connection between Britain and the Colonies and strengthened the only bonds which would survive after independence. An opportunity was thus lost "to forge new links and a new economic interdependence."[37]

The individual territories showed a wide variation in the proportion of expenditure devoted to different purposes, depending on social and political, as well as on economic, conditions. West Africa was distinguished from East and Central Africa by the absence of European settlement on any significant scale, with the result that, except for a few United Africa Company plantations, agricultural production was carried on by peasant producers. Although some British

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[37] A. Creech Jones (ed.), New Fabian Colonial Essays (New York, 1959), pp. 104-106.

Governors advanced political arguments against alienation of land to Europeans, economic factors were mainly responsible for West Africa's good fortune in this respect, as is indicated by the fact that the French and Belgian territories with similar conditions exhibited the same phenomenon.[38] The West African Oilseeds Mission recommended the opening of new areas for mechanized production of groundnuts, and suggested that the long-term objective should be to establish peasant communities, since the employment of African labour on a permanent basis would not secure the co-operation of the people.[39] It was proposed that, in Nigeria, this work should be undertaken by "territorial development corporations . . . established by Ordinances passed by the local Legislative Councils," but that, in the Gambia, where the political conditions did not preclude it, United Kingdom Corporations should do the job. The Mission's report concluded, however, that an increase in peasant production "would be a far more substantial contribution to world needs than large-

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[38]Sir Alan Pim, Colonial Agricultural Production (London, 1946), pp. 118-140.

[39]Col. No. 224, Report of the West African Oilseeds Mission (London, 1948), p. 22.

TABLE NO. 3

SUBJECT CLASSIFICATION - TEN-YEAR PLANS and COLONIAL DEVELOPMENT AND WELFARE FUNDS - ALL COLONIES

Classification	Total Provision[1]	Percentage of Total[1]	C.D. & W. Funds[2] Committed 1946-51	Percentage of Total[2]
	£		£	
Communications	34,462,000	19.4	9,833,555	14.6
Economic	41,543,000	23.5	15,708,726	23.4
Social	83,769,000	47.2	33,523,933	49.9
Miscellaneous	17,561,000	9.9	8,135,283	12.1
Total	177,335,000	100.0	67,201,497	100.0

[1] Cmd. 7958 (1950) The Colonial Territories, 1949-50, App. III B, p. 153.

[2] H.C. Paper No. 189 (1950-51) Colonial Development and Welfare Acts, Table I, p. 49.

scale production in restricted areas."[40]

The Gambia was unusual in that over one-third of its Development and Welfare Grant of £ 1,300,000 went to a scheme for housing development in the Bathurst area, with another third going to health and education. Agriculture received £ 175,000, of which £ 119,000 was consigned to the development of mechanized rice farming, the main project being a farm at Jenoi.[41] It was only in the 1950's, after the failure of this and the similar Colonial Development Corporation scheme, that attention was turned to the improvement of peasant rice production.[42] One section of the plan which catered to indigenous interests was a programme of inoculation against rinderpest in cattle, undertaken jointly with Sierra Leone, at a cost of £ 73,000.[43] Another noteworthy item amongst the Gambia's grants was £ 45,000 for the development of industry, which had, however, no significant results.[44] Internal

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[40] Ibid., pp. 43-47.

[41] Col. No. 281, An Economic Survey of the Colonial Territories, 1951 (London, 1952), III, 15.

[42] Gailey, pp. 148-149.

[43] Gambia, Sessional Paper No. 14 of 1946: Memorandum on Development (Bathurst, 1946), p. 3.

[44] Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, III, 15.

TABLE NO. 4

DISTRIBUTION OF EXPENDITURE UNDER THE TEN-YEAR PLANS BY SUBJECT

Territory	Communications	Agriculture	Economic Development	Housing	Water supplies and irrigation	Health	Education
Gambia		£ 735,000[1]		£1,000,000[1]		£ 300,000[1]	£ 250,000[1]
Nigeria	£11,367,000[1]		£4,214,000[1]		£8,000,000[1]	10,438,000[1]	7,673,000[1]
Sierra Leone	700,000[1]		874,000[1]		£910,000[1]	1,000,000[1]	820,000[1]
Kenya	2,000,000[1]	6,250,000[1]			1,250,000[1]	2,000,000[3]	800,000[2]
Tanganyika	6,944,800[4]		1,207,700[5]	300,000[4]	855,000[5]	3,004,000[5]	1,905,000[5]
Uganda		850,000[6]		500,000[6]	575,000[6]	1,500,000[6]	1,500,000[6]
Northern Rhodesia	3,067,188[7]	731,007[7]	1,498,813[7]	1,000,000[7]	293,789[7]	1,700,000[7]	2,444,913[7]
Nyasaland	1,887,000[7]	946,000[7]		300,000[8]		1,000,000[8]	1,029,000[9]

[1]H.C. Paper No. 127 (1946-47), Colonial Development and Welfare Acts, pp. 8, 12, 13.

[2]Kenya, A Ten-Year Plan for the Development of African Education, (Nairobi, 1948) p. 15.

[3]Kenya, Some Aspects of the Development of Kenya Government Services for the Benefit of Africans from 1946 Onwards, (Nairobi, 1953) p. 4.

[4]H.C. Paper No. 127, p. 9.

[5]Tanganyika Development Commission, A Ten-Year Development and Welfare Plan for Tanganyika Territory, (Dar es Salaam, 1946) p. 16.

[6]H.C. Paper No. 166 (1948), Colonial Development and Welfare Acts, p. 3.

[7]Economic Survey, I, 33, 57.

[8]H.C. Paper No. 166, p. 3.

[9]Nyasaland, Education Department Report, 1951, (Zomba, 1952) p. 5.

communications remained primitive, although improvements to ports and wharves were undertaken. There were no railways, and roads were almost non-existent.[45]

The net result of economic development in the Gambia was to leave it a "non-viable monoculture" dependent almost entirely on groundnuts.[46] No attempt was made to diversify peasant agriculture, and the few feeble attempts to develop industry were failures. The improvement of peasant rice production was successfully undertaken long after Labour's downfall.

In the Gold Coast, the original development plan of 1946 called for an expenditure of £ 11 1/2 million, of which £ 3 1/2 million was to be supplied by Development and Welfare grants. These grants were given almost entirely for health and education, with £ 71,000 going to the improvement of rural water supplies.[47] The small attention given to agriculture was a subject of criticism in the Gold Coast, and the Department of Agriculture was believed to be interested only in export crops. The only two research institutes concentrated on cocoa and limes, and the Department gave most of its attention to these two crops.[48] The

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[45]Gailey, pp. 174-175.

[46]Ibid., p. 163.

[47]Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, III, 47.

[48]Col. No. 231, Aiken Watson Commission Report, pp. 8, 57-58.

state of agricultural research is indicated by a Colonial Office statement in 1952 that, "in the absence of more knowledge about the soils of the Gold Coast, it is impossible to estimate with accuracy the possibility of growing individual crops in particular areas."[49] The Gold Coast Agricultural Development Corporation, set up in 1948 with a capital of £ 100,000, concerned itself mainly with large-scale mechanized production.[50] Nevertheless, cocoa exports were approximately the same in 1945-1951 as they had been between 1925 and 1935, and considerably lower than they had been immediately before the war.[51]

The 1946 plan made no provision for industrial growth, but an Industrial Development Corporation was established in 1947.[52] Little manufacturing production was undertaken, however, and this was one of the causes of Gold Coast discontent. The Commission of Enquiry into the Gold Coast disturbances reported a great demand for industrialization. Its report, while maintaining that heavy industry was impracticable, suggested the

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[49]Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, III, 25.

[50]Ibid., p. 30.

[51]W. Birmingham, I, Neustadt and E. N. Omaboe, A Study of Contemporary Ghana (Evanston, 1966), I, 241.

[52]Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, III, 33, 47.

development of a number of light industries.[53] A new plan was launched in 1951 as one of the first acts of the Legislature under the new constitution, and this plan provided for assistance to several small industries. Amongst those assisted were oil pressing, concrete block manufacturing and rice hulling.[54]

The emphasis on export production still persisted, however: in the year 1951-1952, approximately £ 100,000 from Colonial Development and Welfare funds was spent on the Volta River Project, which involved the preliminary processing of bauxite for export.[55] Manufacturing continued to expand more slowly than agriculture, and Ghana retained a colonial economy, exporting raw cocoa and minerals and importing manufactured goods.[56] By 1960 there was one cocoa mill, producing cocoa butter and paste, but not chocolate, and the processing of tobacco, lime and vegetable oils was on a still smaller scale.[57]

The plan also ignored railway development, and allotted only £ 800,000 for roads;[58] the largest

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[53]Col. No. 231, Aiken Watson Commission Report, p. 54.

[54]Gold Coast, Development Progress Report for 1951-1952 (Accra, 1953), p. 5.

[55]Ibid., p.20.

[56]Birmingham et al., I, 28, 58.

[57]Ibid., pp. 73-74.

[58]Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, III, 47.

single item in the plan was the enlargement of Takoradi Harbour at a cost of £ 2 1/4 million.[59] Even when plans were made to expand the railway system, they were mainly concerned with the carrying of cocoa and minerals for export. A Times special correspondent remarked in 1951 that:

> In the Gold Coast, as in Nigeria, the easy movement of goods to and from the country's seaboard is the most important factor in the development of land communications. This has been the main influence in shaping the present road and railway system and it must continue to influence further development for some time to come.[60]

The Nigerian Ten-year Plan proposed an expenditure of £ 55 million, of which £ 23 million was to be provided from Colonial Development and Welfare funds. A total of £ 21 million had been spent by March, 1950, but by that time the original plan would have cost nearly twice as much as had been estimated.[61] The plan called for an expenditure of £ 16 1/2 million on health and education, £ 8 million for the development of rural and urban water supplies, £ 7 million for roads and £ 3 1/2 million on inland waterways and ports, with the main emphasis on ports.[62] Although the great bulk of the population was engaged in farming, less

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[59] Ibid., p. 25.

[60] "Communications in the Gold Coast and Nigeria," The Times Review of the British Colonies (March, 1951), p. 16.

[61] Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, III, 73.

[62] Nigeria, A Ten-Year Plan of Development and Welfare for Nigeria, 1946 (Lagos, 1946), pp. 9-19.

than £ 2 1/2 million was assigned to agricultural development, and only £ 140,000 to the development of peasant industry.[63]

Nigeria was exceptional in that some of the large items of expenditure on agriculture went into native settlement. At Anchau, in the Northern Provinces, 50,000 people were settled in an area cleared of tsetse fly.[64] More significant, from the investment point of view, was the Niger Agricultural Project, set up by the Nigerian Government in co-operation with the Colonial Development Corporation, with a capital of £ 450,000.[65] The scheme called for the clearing of 56,000 acres for the mechanized production of groundnuts. The labour force was to be created by the establishment of 10 peasant villages, each of about 80 farms. The first village was organized in 1951, with 78 families settled and 1800 acres under crops.[66] This project, of course, was similar in purpose to other schemes for the large-scale production of groundnuts, but in Nigeria it was considered inexpedient on political grounds to use the plantation system.[67] The

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[63] Ibid., pp. 21-26.

[64] Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, III, 74.

[65] Ibid.

[66] Nigeria, Annual Report on the General Progress of Development and Welfare Schemes, 1951-1952 (Lagos, 1953), p. 94.

[67] Col. No. 224, Report of the West African Oilseeds Mission, pp. 21-22.

Nigerian production of groundnuts was increased at this time while that of the other export crops remained approximately the same as in the pre-war period.[68]

Other aspects of agricultural development received little attention while Labour was in office. The Nigerian Livestock Mission noted in 1949 that there were "vast undeveloped tracts of potentially good cattle land," but no steps were taken to develop them, despite the widespread lack of animal protein amongst the inhabitants of Nigeria.[69] By 1951-1952, three experimental farms were being built, but no major soil conservation measures could be undertaken because there was no Soil Conservation Officer or staff. Nothing had been done in the field of drainage and irrigation.[70]

The original plan made no provision for expenditure on industrial projects, but the revised plan of 1951 did include such an item, and the Government invested £ 500,000 in laying the groundwork for industrial advance.[71] By 1951, Nigeria had 28 palm oil mills, some saw mills, and some soap and beer manufacturing establishments.[72] According to a propaganda pamphlet issued in

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[68]Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, III, 57-60.

[69]Col. No. 266, Report of Nigerian Livestock Mission (London, 1950), pp. 7, 69.

[70]Nigeria, Progress Report, 1951-1952, pp. 6-7.

[71]Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, III, 74.

[72]Ibid., p. 62.

1962, however, "significant industrial expansion" did not begin until after 1955.[73]

The emphasis on road development was another noteworthy feature of the Nigerian plan. The main purpose of the existing transportation system was to provide a means of shipping exportable produce. The Ten-Year Plan laid down a comprehensive programme of road development, including the provision of 16,000 miles of new feeder roads, and the improvement of 17,000 miles of existing ones.[74] Since lack of internal transport was one of Nigeria's major problems, hindering economic progress and raising the prices of locally grown foodstuffs,[75] this had considerable significance for the indigenous community as well as for the export trade.

The case of Kenya is especially instructive, since the interests of its large and influential European community could not be ignored as easily as could those of Africans. The Ten-Year Plan projected an expenditure of £ 15 1/2 million, of which £ 3 1/2 million was to come from Colonial Development and Welfare Funds. The highest priority was to be given to the use of soil, water and forests, and over £ 8 million was set aside for this,

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[73]British Information Services, New Nations in Africa: The British Contribution (London, 1962), p. 30.

[74]Nigeria, Ten-Year Plan, pp. 11-12.

[75]Col. No. 266, Report of Nigerian Livestock Mission, pp. 78, 79.

with another £ 2 1/2 million added in the revised plan of 1950, making a total of £ 11 million for the ten-year period.[76]

A progress report in 1952 stated that more than half this sum was being devoted to African areas,[77] which, in view of the fact that there were five million Africans and 30,000 Europeans in Kenya, gives a clear idea of the relative importance of the two communities in the eyes of the Kenya Government. Even this preliminary allocation of expenditures, however, presents a picture too favourable to the Africans. For example, the sums allotted for assistance to settlement were £ 1,600,000 for Europeans and £ 3 million for Africans. However, by December, 1950, £ 1,375,000 had been spent on European settlement while, up to the end of 1952, only £ 794,700 was spent on African settlement, mainly on preliminary investigations and experiments.[78] The Department of Agriculture had three heavy dam construction units, two of which normally worked in African areas; nine large dams were built in North Nyanza, and seventeen in Machakos, a vast semi-arid area.[79] Of £ 3 1/2 million budgeted for the improvement of African water supplies, £ 839,000 had actually been

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[76]Kenya, African Development in Kenya, 1946-1955 (Nairobi, 1953), p. 1.

[77]Ibid.

[78]Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, II, 20-21.

[79]Kenya, African Development, p. 6.

spent.[80] By 1952, the staff of the Agriculture Department had been approximately doubled.[81] The plan called for the building of four new experimental stations, three of them to serve African agriculture, but at the end of 1952 none had yet been built.[82] The Veterinary Department had built four new centres in the African areas, and had expanded its operations there, so that, by 1952, its staff had more than doubled and its expenditures had increased from £ 37,000 to £ 125,000 a year.[83] The Tsetse Survey and Control Section was spending £ 67,000 a year in the African areas. Three thousand acres, nearly 5 square miles, in the coast provinces had been cleared of tsetse fly (the European areas were not in the tsetse belt).[84] By the end of the Labour period, Africans were beginning to increase their participation in the production of some of the main export crops.

With regard to industrial development, Kenya was a special case, since European interests could own and manage industrial enterprises. The Development Committee maintained that Kenya could not become an exporter of manufactures, but could engage in the

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[80] Ibid., p. 34.

[81] Ibid., p. 3.

[82] Ibid., p. 7.

[83] Ibid., p. 19.

[84] Ibid., p. 26.

processing of primary products. Its whole discussion of the matter clearly assumed European-owned industry with an African "labour supply."[85] The question of industrial expansion is therefore largely irrelevant from the point of view of African development. A Rural Industries Officer was appointed in 1949, but, after a survey of existing village industries had been made, the post was abolished in 1953.[86]

The Ten-Year Development and Welfare Plan for Tanganyika called for an expenditure of £ 18 million, of which £ 5 1/4 million was to come from Colonial Development and Welfare funds. The greatest emphasis was to be placed on transportation and communications, which were allotted £ 7 million, and on social services, mainly health and education, where the proposed expenditure was £ 5 1/2 million. An item of £ 3 million for the conservation and development of natural resources placed the greatest stress on agriculture and water supplies.[87] No attention was given to industrial development, despite the fact that Tanganyika had coal and iron in abundance in close

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[85]Kenya, Report of the Development Committee (Nairobi, 1946), II, 183-193.

[86]Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, II, 30.

[87]Tanganyika Development Commission, A Ten-Year Development and Welfare Plan for Tanganyika Territory (Dar-es-Salaam, 1946), pp. 16-17.

proximity to each other, and might have been considered a possible base for an East African industrial region.[88]

Since the reports on Tanganyika give very little information about economic development, it is hard to know what, if anything, was really being done. Actual expenditure for all purposes up to the end of 1950 totalled nearly £ 6 million.[89]

By that time, nearly £ 1 million had been spent on agriculture.[90] In 1947, the two largest Colonial Development and Welfare grants were for water development and tsetse research; in 1953, water development was evidently still at an elementary stage,[91] and 60 per cent of the land area was infested by the tsetse fly.[92] Cotton production, almost entirely in the hands of Africans, was about 20 per cent higher than before the war, but whether this had any relation to development policy is not clear.[93]

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[88]G. N. Stockley, New Coal Discoveries in Tanganyika and Coal Resources of East and Central Africa (Reprint from The Mining Magazine, June-July, 1947), p. 19.

[89]Colonial Office, Report by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom to the General Assembly of the United Nations on the Administration of Tanganyika for the year 1951 (London, 1952), p. 39.

[90]Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, II, 70.

[91]Cmd. 9475 (1955-56), East Africa Royal Commission, 1953-1955, Report, pp. 135-140.

[92]Ibid., p. 257.

[93]Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, II. 56.

Road and railway development did not get beyond the planning stage, although their prominence in the plan indicates that communications were considered one of the key points in economic development. The existing railways, like those in other African territories, ran inward from the coastal ports, and were unrelated to the need for inland transportation.[94] The cost of bringing Tanganyika's road system up to a 'good standard' was estimated by the East African Royal Commission in 1953 at £ 20 million.[95]

Manufacturing industry remained in a rudimentary state, involving little beyond the primary processing of agricultural products.[96] In 1952 it engaged 5 per cent of the Africans in paid employment.[97]

The Uganda development plan proposed an expenditure of £ 16 million, of which over £ 3 million was to come from Colonial Development and Welfare grants. The greatest expenditures were to be on social services and public works, with agriculture

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[94]Cmd. 9475, pp. 260-261.

[95]Ibid., p. 132.

[96]Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, II, 60.

[97]Cmd. 9475, p. 107.

scheduled to receive £ 1/2 million. In December, 1948, a revision of the plan nearly quadrupled the total amount, but there was no increase in the grants.[98] The plan made no provision for industrial expansion, although a development corporation was set up to assist industry. Road and railway development were also ignored in the plan, but some expenditure on roads was undertaken on a year-to-year basis.[99]

There is no evidence that any significant economic development took place in Uganda during these years. Cotton, the principal crop, was grown almost wholly by Africans, and production remained about the same as in the pre-war period. Industry did not advance beyond the processing of primary products;[100] the lack of transportation facilities remained one of the great stumbling-blocks to progress.[101]

The Ten-Year Plan for Northern Rhodesia, originally scheduled to require £ 13 million, was twice revised, with the final sum amounting to £ 19 million, of which £ 2 1/2 million was to be supplied

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[98] Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, II, 103-104.

[99] Cmd. 9475, p. 133.

[100] Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, II, 93.

[101] Cmd. 9475, pp. 119-120.

by Colonial Development and Welfare grants. The largest expenditures were scheduled for health and education, rural development and agriculture.[102]

By 1951, approximately £ 13 million had been spent,[103] but, as in Kenya, it is difficult to know what proportion of funds was spent on Africans, and therefore what significance the plan might have had for them. The largest single item was £ 3 million for communications, and, since the African districts were still substantially without communications in 1962, it seems clear that the bulk of this amount was spent in the European areas.[104] Agriculture, veterinary services and rural development absorbed another £ 2 3/4 million. Judging from the expenditures in 1950, when more was spent on non-African than on African areas,[105] it seems safe to assume that at least half the total went to benefit Europeans.

There is no evidence as to whether any measures taken during this period resulted in the improvement of the economic position of Africans. Since Northern Rhodesia's exports consisted almost

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[102] Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, I, 31, 33.

[103] Ibid., I, 33.

[104] United Kingdom Information Service, Canada, Northern Rhodesia (London, 1962), p, 25.

[105] Cmd. 8235 (1950-51), Central African Territories: Comparative Survey of Native Policy, App. (3) (a).

entirely of minerals, which were in the hands of Europeans, there is no measure of African income from exports. The development of industry, which involved Africans only as unskilled workers, was left to private enterprise.[106]

The development plan for Nyasaland envisaged an expenditure of £ 12 million. The Colonial Development and Welfare share, originally set at £ 2 million, was increased to £ 2 1/2 million in 1949. The largest items were £ 4.8 million for basic services such as roads and electricity, £ 2.8 million for social services, especially health and education, and £ 2 million for economic services, including agriculture and land resettlement. Railways and industry were ignored.[107]

Actual expenditure for the first five years amounted to over £ 3 million, of which £ 600,000 went to agriculture and land resettlement and £ 262,000 to roads.[108] Production of tobacco, the most important cash crop, rose considerably, partly at the expense of cotton, which was less significant than in the

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[106] Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, I, 21, 23.

[107] Ibid., p. 62.

[108] Ibid.

1930's.[109] As there were no reliable statistics on native cultivation, it is hard to make any definite statement regarding the trend of development, but it appears that African producers engaged in the growing of cotton and tobacco may have improved their position.[110]

Since the Labour Party's programme for the economic development of the African Colonies had never been spelled out in clear detail, the specific measures taken cannot be compared directly with party pronouncements. Judgment can be made only on the basis of broad general statements about the need to increase production and raise living standards.

As we have seen, the flow of capital was from the Colonies to Great Britain, and the significant sums which were directed to the Colonies were related to Great Britain's need for fats and oils. Nevertheless, Colonial Governments did give some attention to economic planning, and in most cases some expenditures designed to increase agricultural production and improve communications were made. Inasmuch as these

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[109] Ibid., p. 44. See also United Kingdom Information Service, Canada, Nyasaland (London, 1963), p. 14.

[110] Ibid., pp. 44-47.

were generally aimed at raising the level of exports, no great improvement in the condition of Africans could be expected. Whether or not such improvement did, in fact, take place, is extremely hard to determine definitely in most cases, due to the scarcity of statistical information. Production and exports did rise during the years 1945 to 1951, but the result was usually little more than a return to the pre-war figures.

What is clear is that economic development, as undertaken by the Labour Government, visualized no change in direction for the African Colonies. They were to retain their 'colonial' position as suppliers of food for British workers and raw materials for British industries. Industrial development was ignored, and transportation meant the carrying of goods to ocean ports and their shipment overseas. Control of trade was maintained through preferential tariffs, as in the Gambia,[111] or licensing regulations, as in Nigeria.[112]

An analysis by Gunnar Myrdal throws some light on this subject: Myrdal remarks that the advice

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[111] Ibid., III, 4.

[112] Ibid., p. 52.

and assistance given to poorer countries is often designed to increase their production of primary goods for export, but that, to engender economic development, production should be raised in the agricultural subsistence sectors. Trade, as such, he maintains, does not lead to development, but "rather tends to have backwash effects and to strengthen the forces maintaining stagnation or regression."[113]

As a result of such policies, the dependent position of the colonial economies was maintained and, in some cases intensified. The Gambia, for example, sent 94% of its exports to, and received 60% of its imports from, Great Britain.[114] For the Gold Coast, the corresponding figures were 42% and 59%,[115] for Nigeria 84% and 51%.[116] Economic dependence was further supported by the reliance of many colonies on one or a few export crops. With well over half of West African trade under direct British control, this economic dependence strongly reinforced political domination.

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[113] Gunnar Myrdal, Economic Theory and Underdeveloped Regions (London, 1957), pp. 52-53.

[114] Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, III, 14.

[115] Ibid., pp. 46-47.

[116] Ibid., p. 72.

It is extremely difficult to draw any definite conclusions as to the general significance of the Labour period in the economic progress of the African colonies. Newlyn and Rowan have defined economic development as "growth in real income per capita," which seems to be a reasonable criterion. However, in the absence of any reliable statistics on the subject, it is quite impossible to determine whether or not such growth took place. As will be seen, there was no appreciable increase in wages or in cash-crop income, which in many cases remained below their pre-war level.[117]

The United Nations Review of Economic Conditions described Africa in 1949 as one of the world's least developed areas, with very low production and consumption and with its people amongst the world's worst fed.[118] It noted that agricultural productivity per hectare was only 56% of the world average, compared with 62% before the war.[119] Even where total productivity had increased, Africans had not reaped the benefit: production of fats and oils,

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[117] See below, pp. 204-212, 226-227.

[118] United Nations, Review of Economic Conditions in Africa (New York, 1951), pp. 16, 23.

[119] Ibid., p. 5.

for example, was up 18% over the pre-war figure, but exports were up 19%.[120]

Per capita income, whether rising or falling, remained extremely low. Nigeria, according to a Colonial Office study of 1950-1951, had the relatively high per capita income of £ 20 per annum, but this was based on an estimated population of fewer than thirty million people, while the real figure was probably much higher.[121] The East Africa Royal Commission Report gave the per capita income of Africans in various colonies, in 1951 or 1952, as follows: Kenya, £ 7.5; Uganda, £ 16.6; Tanganyika, £ 8; Northern Rhodesia, £ 9.9.[122] It pointed out that, in the case of Uganda, a considerable proportion of the net product of Africans was not distributed but was held by the marketing boards and that export taxes were included in the net product estimates.[123] In all these territories, the income of non-Africans was many times higher than that of Africans: the comparable

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[120] Ibid., p. 27.

[121] Colonial Office, The National Income of Nigeria, 1950-1951 (London, 1953), p. 81.

[122] Cmd. 9475, E.A.R.C. Report, App. IX, pp. 478-479.

[123] Ibid., p. 480.

non-African incomes were £ 331 in Kenya, £ 385 in Uganda, £ 403 in Tanganyika, and £ 1,817 in Northern Rhodesia.[124] Except in Northern Rhodesia, four-fifths of the non-African population was Asian.

The average per capita income of Africans throughout these four territories was thus in the neighbourhood of £ 10 per annum, at a time when prices had been rising steadily for a decade. It is hard to believe that this can represent an increase in real income per capita over any previous period during which people were able to survive. It is clear that no economic development, as defined above, took place, at least in those areas for which income estimates are available.

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[124] Ibid., pp. 478-479.

CHAPTER X

WAGE LABOUR

When we leave general economic development and proceed to other aspects of Labour's economic policy for Africa, we can compare performance more directly with specific policy statements. Conditions of labour in the Colonies had provided more ammunition for Labour spokesmen than any other subject. The Party was on record as being opposed to compulsory labour in any form and to the colour bar, and in favour of better labour legislation, higher wages and the growth of trade unions.

Policies concerning wage labour had their greatest significance in East and Central Africa. In 1952, East Africa had over one million wage earners in a total population of about 18 million, which would be approximately one of every five males over the age of fifteen, assuming that 40% of the population was under that age. In Northern Rhodesia the proportion was one

in three and in Nyasaland one in seven, if the 192,000 workers who left these two territories to work farther south are left out of account. In the four West African colonies, on the other hand, the number of wage-earners as a proportion of adult males was about one in fifteen, although it was somewhat higher in the Gold Coast.[1]

The Labour Government inherited the policy of forced labour for private enterprise in East and Central Africa from the wartime coalition, which had taken the view that war in Europe produced the kind of emergency in Africa which justified the scrapping of the Forced Labour Convention. Arthur Creech Jones had pointed out during the war that this expedient was merely an alternative to paying Africans reasonable wages.[2]

Once in power, however, the Labour Government was in no hurry to end the practice, and it was continued as long as it could be argued that it derived from wartime measures. When George Hall was asked, in October, 1945, when compulsory labour would be ended he replied that he was in communication with

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[1] See Table No. 5.

[2] 377 H.C. Deb., col. 2201.

the Governors concerned "with a view to its early discontinuance."[3] Later he announced that there would be no recruitment after December 31, 1945 and that all contracts would end not later than September 30, 1946.[4] The recruiting of forced labour thus lasted for several months after the end of the war and its use continued for more than a year.

Compulsory labour for public purposes was allowed by the Forced Labour Convention, and this was continued under Labour rule. For example, the 1947 Report to the United Nations Trusteeship Council on Tanganyika showed 8000 forced labourers employed there between October 1, 1946 and September 30, 1947.[5] This kind of compulsory labour remained legal in most African Colonies throughout Labour's period of power.[6]

The use of penal sanctions to enforce labour contracts was another method of compelling Africans to work for Europeans. Here, again, Labour failed to take action in accordance with its protestations, and

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[3] Ibid., 414, cols. 2470-72.

[4] Ibid., 415, cols. 2276-77.

[5] Col. No. 220, Report by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom to the Trusteeship Council of the United Nations on the Administration of Tanganyika for the year 1947 (London, 1948), p. 121.

[6] Lord Hailey, An African Survey (London, 1957), pp. 1367-68.

penal sanctions remained in force in East and Central Africa wherever white colonists needed African labour.[7] The 1948 report to the United Nations on Tanganyika held that the continuation of penal sanctions was "justifiable and advisable" but noted that the use of abusive or insulting language to an employer had been removed from the list of penal offences during the year.[8] It cited 112 convictions for labour offences, of which 87 were for desertion and 12 for refusal to fulfil a contract.[9] In 1949 there were 151 convictions, 136 for desertion and 10 for neglect of service and misconduct.[10] The Advisory Committee of the Fabian Colonial Bureau added a footnote to this aspect of Labour's policy when, in 1953, it recommended to the Royal Commission on Land and Population in East Africa the abolition of penal sanctions for contract labour.[11]

Finally, there was the system of native taxation which Labour had attacked so often as a means

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[7] Ibid., pp. 1414-16.

[8] Colonial Office, Report to the Trusteeship Council on Tanganyika for 1948 (London, 1949), p. 141.

[9] Ibid., p. 146.

[10] Colonial Office, Report to the Trusteeship Council on Tanganyika for 1949 (London, 1950), p. 129.

[11] Fabian Colonial Bureau, Opportunity in Kenya (London, 1953), p. 48.

of forcing Africans to work. Poll taxes and/or hut taxes prevailed in the East and Central African colonies, and these were retained under the Labour administration. In Kenya and Uganda, however, the rate of tax was not increased significantly, and, in a period of inflation, this had the effect of a reduction.[12]

Although a considerable amount of labour legislation was passed between 1945 and 1951, it does not seem to have been significantly different from much that was already in force. In 1937, a Colonial Office despatch had urged the creation of Labour Departments in the Colonies,[13] and by 1945 this had been done in every important African Colony.[14] In May, 1938, the post of Labour Adviser to the Secretary of State for the Colonies had been created, and in 1939 and 1940 special courses for the training of Labour Officers had been provided. When Labour came to power, all the African Colonies already had Trade Union legislation and provision for the fixing of minimum

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[12]Hailey, pp. 657-667.

[13]Col. No. 185, Labour Supervision in the Colonial Empire, 1937-1943 (London, 1943), p. 1.

[14]425 H.C. Deb., col. 251.

wages.[15] Workmen's Compensation laws were in effect throughout West and Central Africa, although in Northern Rhodesia they applied only to non-natives.[16] The practice of appointing English trade unionists as labour officers had been instituted in 1942.[17]

During the Labour period this legislation was expanded and improved. Workmen's Compensation was introduced in Kenya in 1946,[18] in Tanganyika in 1948[19] and in Uganda in 1949.[20] New Trade Union laws were passed in the Gambia, the Gold Coast, Sierra Leone, Kenya, Tanganyika and Nyasaland;[21] minimum wage laws were enacted in the Gold Coast, Tanganyika, Uganda,[22] Kenya,[23] and Nyasaland.[24]

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[15]Col. No. 185, Labour Supervision, pp. 12-13.

[16]Ibid., pp. 19-20.

[17]Ibid., p. 8.

[18]Kenya, Labour Department Report, 1946 (Nairobi, 1947), p. 3.

[19]Colonial Office, Report to the Trusteeship Council on Tanganyika for 1948, p. 143.

[20]Col. No. 281, An Economic Survey of the Colonial Territories, 1951 (London, 1952), II, 80.

[21]Colonial Office, Index of Labour Legislation in the Colonial Territories (London, 1954), pp. 6, 7, 10, 17-20.

[22]Ibid., pp. 7, 20, 21.

[23]Kenya, Labour Department Report, 1946, p. 3.

[24]Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, I, 41.

Kenya is a good example of a colony where a great deal of labour legislation was introduced at this time. In addition to the Workmen's Compensation, Minimum Wages, Trade Union and Trade Disputes Ordinances, the Colony also received its first factory legislation with the introduction of "The Factories Ordinance, 1950."[25] The effectiveness of all this legislation may be judged to some extent by the activities of African unions and by the general wage level, both discussed below. It may be mentioned in passing, however, that Minimum Wage Boards normally considered the going rate of wages in the community adequate and that Workmen's Compensation was always based on a given number of days compensation at the wage being paid.

Labour spokesmen placed great emphasis on the need to expand and improve trade union organization in the colonies, and a considerable effort was made in this direction. Colonial Governments were instructed to encourage the formation of trade unions, and British trade unionists were sent out to help the workers to organize.

The result of this activity was a fairly

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[25]Kenya, Labour Department Report, 1951 (Nairobi, 1952), p. 10.

rapid increase in unions and union membership in some colonies. The number of trade unions in all the British Colonies increased from 300 in 1943[26] to over 1000 in 1950,[27] and the number of organized workers was 83,000 in 1942, 250,000 in 1947 and 616,000 in 1951.[28] However, as far as Africans were concerned, practically the whole of this numerical increase took place in Nigeria and the Gold Coast. In 1946, Nigeria had 100 unions with 52,747 members;[29] by 1952, there were 123 unions with 152,420 members.[30] During the same period, unions in the Gold Coast increased in numbers from 14 to 69, and in membership from 6,030 to 25,751.[31]

Elsewhere in Africa trade unions remained virtually non-existent in 1951. In East Africa, Kenya had two African unions in 1946 and four in 1949;[32]

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[26]Col. No. 185, Labour Supervision, p. 11.

[27]H.C. Deb. 477, col. 1375.

[28]Labour Party, Facing Facts in the Colonies (London, 1955), p. 10.

[29]Nigeria, Department of Labour Report, 1946 (Lagos, 1947), p. 11.

[30]See Table No. 5.

[31]Gold Coast, Labour Department Report, 1946-1947 (Accra, 1947), p. 9; Table No. 5.

[32]Kenya, Labour Department Report, 1946, p. 9; Legislative Council Debates, 1949, Vol. XXXII, cols. 196-197.

TABLE NO. 5

REGISTERED TRADE UNIONS AND EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATIONS ON 1st JUNE, 1952

Territory	Population	Approximate Wage-earning Population	Number of Employees' Unions	Membership of Employees' Unions	Number of Employers' Associations	Employers' Associations' Membership
Gambia	273,000	5,750	6	1,445	-	-
Gold Coast	4,330,000	215,500	69	25,751	3	141
Nigeria	25,000,000	319,350	123	152,420	12	515
Sierra Leone	1,950,000	70,000	11	16,659	-	-
Kenya	5,365,000	468,500	13	20,688	4	123
Tanganyika	7,707,000	398,250	1	381	-	-
Uganda	5,147,000	200,000	2	n.a.	1	n.a.
Zanzibar	269,000	n.a.	4	556	1	11
Northern Rhodesia	1,947,000	228,250[1]	13	50,000	4	n.a.
Nyasaland	2,330,000	91,040[2]	2	n.a.	1	24
Total	54,318,000	1,996,640	244	267,900	26	814

[1]Does not include 49,000 outside the colony.

[2]Does not include 143,000 outside the colony.

Information from Walter Bowen, Colonial Trade Unions (London, 1954), App. I, p. 27.

Tanganyika boasted one union with 381 members in 1952;[33] Uganda had no unions in 1950 and two in 1952.[34] At the beginning of the five-year period, there were no African unions in either Nyasaland or Northern Rhodesia,[35] but the initiative of African workers rapidly changed the picture in the latter colony, and five unions with 28,000 members had come into being by 1951.[36]

Some Labour Party writers believed that the growth of trade unions was quickly creating new and better conditions for African workers: Rita Hinden, for example, asserted in 1950, that, with this development, the "old exploitation" was no longer possible.[37] Since fewer than 14% of African wage workers were organized in any way,[38] this assessment seems a trifle optimistic. It also ignores the fact that the existing unions operated under difficulties which rendered them largely ineffective.

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[33] Table No. 5.

[34] H.C. Deb. 482, col. 1139; Table No. 5.

[35] Nyasaland, Labour Department Report, 1946 (Zomba, 1947), p. 9; Northern Rhodesia, Labour Department Report, 1946 (Lusaka, 1947), p. 8.

[36] Cmd. 8235 (1951), Central African Territories: Comparative Survey of Native Policy, p. 62.

[37] Fabian Colonial Bureau, The Way Forward (London, 1950), p. 8.

[38] See Table No. 5.

Although there were still some weaknesses in colonial labour legislation, and trade union laws generally covered only registration and protection of funds,[39] the main problems were practical rather than legal. The most important of these was the lack of a sympathetic attitude on the part of local governments and employers.[40] This point may be illustrated by reference to conditions in Kenya and Nigeria.

Kenya had a larger proportion of wage-earners than any other colony except Northern Rhodesia, but only 20,000 of the 468,000 workers were union members.[41] Tom Mboya asserts that trade unions were not recognized by employers, and not represented on committees which investigated labour problems, such as the Carpenter Committee and the Central Housing Committee.[42] Shortly after Mboya began to work for the Nairobi City Council in 1951, James Patrick was sent out as Trade Union Adviser. Mboya states that the Labour Commissioner agreed with the whites in Kenya that he should come back in twenty years, as the Africans were not ready

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[39] 168 Lords Deb., col. 722.

[40] Walter Bowen, Colonial Trade Unions (London, 1954), p. 25.

[41] See Table No. 5.

[42] Tom Mboya, The Kenya Question: An African Answer (London, 1956), pp. 43-44.

for trade unions.[43] He further maintains that, until 1955, "the Kenya Government was fighting against the building of a trade union movement."[44] The Mombasa dock strike of that year produced the first tribunal ever appointed under the Trades Disputes Arbitration Ordinance, and for the first time the workers were represented by a trade union leader in the settlement of a dispute.[45]

Mboya's view of the situation is borne out by two incidents of the year 1950. A strike in Nairobi brought the arrest of the President and Secretary of the East African Trades Union Congress, which had been refused registration under Kenya law. The Minister of State for Colonial Affairs, replying to a question in Parliament, declared that the striking unions had a membership of less than 5,000, and that the E.A.T.U.C. was largely communist, and not representative of the majority of workers in Kenya. When asked how many workers belonged to other unions, for comparison, he was unable to give any answer, which clearly indicated that he had no solid information on which to base his

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[43] Tom Mboya, Freedom and After (London, 1963), p. 31.

[44] Mboya, Freedom, p. 199.

[45] Ibid., p. 40.

previous statement.[46] A short time later, further questioning elicited from Secretary of State James Griffiths the information that some striking workers at Limuru, near Nairobi, had been dismissed and hired at reduced wages. These workers, whose wages had averaged 31s. to 37s. a month, including food and housing, had been employed in essential services, and had committed an offence by striking without notice.[47]

After Labour lost power, the Fabian Colonial Bureau was less optimistic about trade union development. A 1953 pamphlet noted that the Kenya Government had been "widely regarded as hostile to trade unionism" and agreed that this impression had "some foundation." It quoted Kenya African Union demands, which included a request that "Trade Unions be allowed to function freely, that registration be optional and not compulsory, and combination of trade unions be permitted."[48]

Nigeria's small labour force was the most highly unionized in Africa, with 152,000 union members

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[46] 475 H.C. Deb., cols. 2050-52.

[47] Ibid., 478, col. 66.

[48] Fabian Colonial Bureau, Opportunity, pp. 29, 40.

out of a total of 319,000 workers.[49] The colony was beset by labour troubles throughout the Labour Government's term of office, but the highlight of the period was the series of events at the government owned and operated Enugu Colliery, which culminated in the death by shooting of 20 miners on November 18th, 1949. The story begins with the institution of piece rates of pay for hewers and tubmen, which came into effect on April 1, 1945, under what was known as the Long Award.[50] Although the Enugu Colliery Workers' Union had accepted the award, the miners refused to work it, with the result that the mine management illegally withdrew its recognition of the union, on the ground that it did not represent the workers. At the same time, the workers were dismissed and many rehired on the management's terms, without union representation.[51] Recognition of the union was restored in 1947, and in December of that year a new agreement, effective January 1, 1946, was reached. This agreement was violated by the mine management in some respects, and

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[49] See Table 5.

[50] Colonial Office, Enquiry into the Disorders in the Eastern Provinces of Nigeria, Proceedings of the Commission (London, 1950), I, 12.

[51] Ibid., pp. 37, 101, 103.

misunderstood by the workers in others. Foremen were not regraded as specified in the agreement, nor were the junior technical employees paid the agreed overtime.[52] Other workers believed, incorrectly, according to the management, that additional pay was due them, which they had been unable to collect.

It was very hard for the workers to discuss their grievances with the Personnel Manager, as his office was five miles from one mine and seven from the other, and there was no public transportation.[53] One man who wrote to the Accountant regarding arrears of pay received a reply which read, in part, as follows: "Any further letter by you on this subject will be treated as a breach of discipline and will be severely dealt with."[54]

Whatever the sentiment of the Government may have been, the evidence given before this Commission reveals an early nineteenth century attitude towards labour on the part of the managers of the Enugu Colliery. Wages were never agreed upon, but were "fixed by

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[52] Ibid., pp. 146-147, 161.

[53] Ibid., p. 188.

[54] Ibid., p. 209.

Government direction."[55] There was evidence of the beating and shooting of workers on various occasions.[56] The view taken in November, 1949, was that no wage concessions could be made, and that further discussions with the union "would be interpreted as a sign of weakness."[57] Real wages at this time were lower than they had been in 1938; hewers were paid 3s. a ton to hew coal which was worth 25s. at the pithead and 65s. in Lagos.[58] No start had yet been made on the building of workers' housing for which money had been voted in 1947.[59]

Meanwhile, the men were convinced by the events of 1947 and 1948 that strike action was the only way they could get attention to their grievances. The machinery for dealing with their complaints was slow, cumbersome and ineffective, while on several occasions they had received concessions after instituting go-slow strikes.[60] This was the method they tried once again

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[55] Ibid., p. 38.

[56] Ibid., pp. 22-25.

[57] Ibid., p. 324.

[58] Ibid., pp. 76, 160.

[59] Ibid., pp. 111, 164.

[60] Col. No. 256, Report of the Commission of Enquiry into the Disorders in the Eastern Provinces of Nigeria, November, 1949 (London, 1950), pp. 21-22.

in November, 1949.

The reaction of the mine management to the go-slow strike was to refuse to negotiate and to begin immediate dismissals of some workers.[61] No time was given for the two African members of the Colliery Board to persuade the men to go back to work: the go-slow began on November 8th, and the first dismissals were made on the 10th.[62] The management also made up its mind, without evidence, that the strike was the result of political agitation.[63] On November 13th, it was decided to lock out the miners by closing the mine;[64] the next morning outside police reinforcements were sent for, and by November 17th, the police force had been increased from 200 to 900 men.[65] The next day, in connection with an attempt to remove explosives from the mine, preparatory to closing it, police opened fire on a crowd of miners, unarmed except for the tools of

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[61] Ibid., p. 29.

[62] Proceedings, pp. 63-65.

[63] Col. No. 256, Report, p. 34.

[64] Proceedings, pp. 95, 223.

[65] Ibid., pp. 224, 245.

their trade,[66] killing 20 and wounding 51, while sustaining no injuries themselves.[67] The Commission of Enquiry concluded that the officer in charge had "made an error of judgment" in ordering his men to open fire.[68]

Events in both Kenya and Nigeria at this time indicate that trade unionism was almost unrecognized and, for the most part, ineffective. This was partly the result of the inefficiency and irresponsibility of union leaders and of the ignorance and illiteracy of their followers, as well as of the state of mind of officials and employers. The results of the attempt to "foster" trade unions in Africa strongly suggest that such an undertaking cannot succeed under such backward social, economic and political conditions as existed in the African Colonies in 1951. Perhaps the real purpose of the Labour Government's solicitude for trade unions is to be found in a statement made by Sidney Webb many years earlier, when he said:

> There is a danger that without sympathetic supervision, organizations and labourers without experience of combination for any social or economic purposes may fall under

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[66]Col. No. 256, Report, p. 40.

[67]Proceedings, pp. 175, 401.

[68]Col. No. 256, Report, p. 40.

> the domination of disaffected persons by whom their activities may be diverted to improper and mischievous ends.[69]

The most significant aspect of Labour policy, from the point of view of judging Labour's performance in the colonies, was the trend in wages. If any economic improvement was taking place, it should have shown itself in the form of rising incomes for Africans.

Although all the African Colonies had laws providing for the fixing of minimum wages,[70] actual regulation of wages was generally confined to a few large towns. In the Gambia and the Gold Coast, a minimum wage of 2s. 9d. per day was prescribed for unskilled labour in towns;[71] in Nigeria, minimum wages were established for some occupations.[72] In Kenya, a new minimum wage ordinance was adopted in 1946, and in 1947 regulations under it were laid down for Nairobi and Mombasa.[73] Provision for the establishment of minimum wage boards in Tanganyika was included in an

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[69]Bowen, p. 4.

[70]Col. No. 185, Labour Supervision, p. 13.

[71]Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, III, 5, 35.

[72]Ibid., p. 63.

[73]Kenya, Report of the Committee on African Wages (Carpenter Report) (Nairobi, 1954), p. 21.

Ordinance passed in 1951, but no further action was taken;[74] only the towns of Kampala and Jinja were subject to minimum wage laws in Uganda.[75] There was no fixing of wages in Central Africa.

The actual wages paid in all colonies were well below the rates requires for satisfactory nutrition and reasonable living conditions. Even where wages were fixed by law, they were calculated on the basis of the amount required to support a single man at an extremely low standard. Wages paid in connection with government contracts and services were merely required to be the same as those generally paid in the surrounding district.

Direct comparison of pre-war and post-war wage rates is often very difficult, because information is inadequate for the earlier period. However, a 1946 enquiry into the cost of living in Nigeria produced a report which observed that African Trade Unions were not asking for a return to pre-war standards, but only for a restoration of consuming capacity "to some extent."[76] In 1938, casual day laborers were paid as little as 5d. per day, and Government employees a low

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[74]484 H.C. Deb., col. 63; Bowen, p. 18.

[75]Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, II, 96.

[76]Col. No. 204, Enquiry into the Cost of Living and the Control of the Cost of Living in the Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria (London, 1946), p. 8.

of 11s. per month.[77] By 1950, the lowest rate for general labour was 9d. per day,[78] and the minimum wage at the Government-operated Enugu Colliery was £ 2 a month.[79] In 1948-1949, the average daily wage of hewers at this mine was slightly more than double the 1938 level.[80] As the official cost of living index, on a pre-war base, reached 225 in 1946, and continued to rise thereafter,[81] it seems clear that, even at the very bottom of the wage scale, wages were lower throughout this period than they had been before the war. The following comment, made by the Nigerian Livestock Mission in 1950, is to the point:

> It is estimated that a good diet, such, for instance, as would bring nutritional standards into line with the I.R.F.A. (Indian Research Fund Association) recommended dietary, could only be provided at a cost of fourpence to fivepence per adult per day, on account of the high price of meat, milk, eggs, fish, ground beans and palm oil. This cost is well above anything the average Nigerian could afford to pay at wage levels which in the best of urban

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[77] Col. Annual Report No. 1904, Nigeria, 1938 (London, 1939), p. 59.

[78] Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, III, 63.

[79] Nigeria, Report of the Department of Labour, 1951-1952 (Lagos, 1952), p. 47.

[80] Col. No. 256, Report, p. 15.

[81] Nigeria, Department of Labour Reports, 1946, p. 3, and 1951-1952, p. 32.

> areas seldom exceed 2/7d. per day and in the rural areas are very much lower.[82]

A similar situation existed in the Gold Coast, where the available information is equally conclusive. The Commission of Enquiry into the 1948 disturbances reported that wages were from 1 1/2 to 2 1/2 times the pre-war rates, while the cost of food had increased 2 1/2 times and that of imported goods 3 to 3 1/2 times.[83] In 1938, unskilled labourers had received from 1s. to 2s. a day;[84] in 1950, miners were paid as little as 2s. 6d.[85] A recent study of the economy of Ghana gives a wage index for unskilled labourers in Accra which indicates that, during the whole period from 1941 to 1957, wages remained below their 1939 level, reaching their lowest point in 1951.[86]

In Kenya, a survey among African railway workers in Nairobi resulted in a report whose authors maintained that minimum, but not other, wage rates had increased as much as the cost of living since

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[82]Col. No. 266, Report of the Nigerian Livestock Mission (London, 1950), p. 71.

[83]Col. No. 231, Report of the Commission of Enquiry into Disturbances in the Gold Coast, 1948, pp. 38, 103.

[84]Col. Annual Report No. 1919, Gold Coast, 1938-1939 (London, 1938), p. 70.

[85]Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, III, 35.

[86]W. Birmingham, I. Neustadt and E. N. Omaboe, A Study of Contemporary Ghana, I, 141.

1938.[87] If so, these railway employees must have been unusually fortunate. This survey showed the minimum wage, including allowances, as 44s. per month. However, the following year, the Economic Survey gave 46s. as the average monthly wage of labourers in Nairobi,[88] which must mean that a great many received considerably less. The Nairobi minimum wage at the time was 43s. for 30 days work, i.e., a period of 42 days.[89] Wages of skilled workmen had ranged from 13s. to 35s. per month in Kenya in 1936,[90] but it is hard to determine whether these figures refer to workers of the same categories. By 1951, the Mombasa retail price index had reached nearly three times its 1939 level,[91] which makes it probable that the actual cost of living had increased still more. A Kenya African Union statement of October, 1952, included a demand for "the provision of adequate housing accommodation for the thousands of houseless and bedless African

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[87]Col. Research Publication No. 3, C. H. Northcott (ed.), African Labour Efficienty Survey (London, 1949), p. 115.

[88]Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, II, 42.

[89]Kenya, Department of Labour Report, 1950 (Nairobi, 1951), p. 6.

[90]Col. Annual Report No. 1920, Kenya, 1938 (London, 1939), p. 35.

[91]Carpenter Report, p. 41.

workers in Nairobi and Mombasa."[92]

The Carpenter Report was the most thorough and comprehensive study of African wages made in any colony during this period, and it gave a clear picture of the plight of Africans in Kenya during a time of rapidly rising prices. The Report noted that minimum wage rates, where they had been established, had been based on the assessment of a living wage for "an adult male African living as a single person, under urban conditions."[93] On this basis, the Committee maintained that a wage of 69s. per month, exclusive of housing, was required to meet the needs of the urban worker.[94] It concluded that about half of the workers in private industry and one-quarter of those in the Public Services were "in receipt of wages insufficient to provide for their basic, essential needs." It added, that, if the needs of the worker's wife and children were to be taken into account, the picture would become "grim indeed."[95] The Report observed that, "in all cases, approximately 72% of income was spent on food," that

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[92]Fabian Colonial Bureau, Opportunity, p. 40.

[93]Carpenter Report, p. 22.

[94]Ibid., p. 38.

[95]Ibid., p. 32.

this proportion was about "half as much again as that allowed for in the minimum wage formula," and that "a large proportion of workers had little or nothing to eat for the last two or three days of the month."[96] Finally, the authors of the Report believed that a large section of the labour force was paid too little in relation to the work performed and that, in the case of agricultural workers, labour costs in Kenya were only about two-thirds of those on British farms.[97] However, the Committee felt that real wages had not declined between 1944 and 1953.[98]

It is impossible to determine whether wage increases kept pace with the cost of living in Tanganyika. In 1946, however, forced labourers were paid 12s. per month, plus rations and accommodation, and 6s. for regularity of turnout. It was therefore possible for such workers to earn nearly £ 11 a year, in addition to room and board.[99] Alan Wood has described the wages paid to the workers on the ground-nut scheme, as little as 15s. a month plus food and

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[96] Ibid., p. 32.

[97] Ibid., pp. 33, 40.

[98] Ibid., p. 177.

[99] Col. No. 193, Labour Conditions in East Africa (London, 1946), p. 46.

lodging, as being so high that they led to price increases of two and one-half times for milk and five times for eggs.[100] By 1951, the Colonial Office maintained that the lowest unskilled workers were getting 25s. a month including rations.[101] In the sisal industry, cutters' wages for a 30-day ticket rose from 15s. plus quarters and rations in 1945 to 21s. plus rations in 1950.[102] These various items are not strictly comparable, but it seems clear that there was little increase in money wages between 1945 and 1951, when prices must have been rising fairly rapidly. The fact that a workers' wage as low as £ 15 a year could include rations gives some indication of the way in which Africans were expected to live.

Little or no information is available on the cost of living in Central Africa, but once again the rise in wages seems very small. The wages of agricultural workers in Nyasaland rose from 20s. a month in 1946 to 25s. in 1951, while those of unskilled railway workers declined from 25s. to 24s.[103] In

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[100] Alan Wood, The Groundnut Affair (London, 1950), pp. 76, 83.

[101] Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, II, 65.

[102] 410 H.C. Deb., Col. 2292; 474 H.C. Deb., Col. 1677.

[103] Nyasaland, Department of Labour Reports, 1946, p. 10; 1951, p. 18.

1950, the minimum wage for unskilled workers was 17s. 6d. per 30-day ticket, or about £ 8 a year, plus food and housing.[104] For Northern Rhodesia, there are no figures on which to base any reliable statement concerning changes either in wages or in the cost of living.

It is clear that there was little real change in the position of workers under Labour rule, although trade union development was fostered and a considerable amount of labour legislation was passed. Forced labour was continued for private purposes for a year and a half, and for public purposes throughout the entire period; penal sanctions were retained as a means of compelling Africans to work; minimum wages remained below the subsistence level everywhere, and the practice of calculating them on the basis of the requirements of a single male continued. Trade unions increased their membership in some areas, but were still negligible in the colonies where they were needed most, and ineffective everywhere.

The real test of Labour's policy lies in the fact that no improvement in the economic condition of African labourers took place. There can be little doubt that there was no rise in African wages between

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[104] Cmd. 8235, Central African Territories: Comparative Survey, p. 62.

1945 and 1951, and it seems certain that, in many cases, real wages were lower in 1951 than they had been in 1939. The wages actually paid to a large proportion of workers were insufficient to supply their own basic needs for food, clothing and shelter, without taking into account the support of a family. Six years of Labour Trusteeship had brought African wage workers a standard of living lower than that of the crisis years 1938 and 1939, during which the Labour Party had deplored the slum conditions into which Conservative mismanagement had plunged the Empire.

CHAPTER XI

LAND, AGRICULTURE AND MINERAL WEALTH

Another facet of imperial policy which had come under severe attack by the Labour Party was the land policy established in parts of East and Central Africa. With regard to Kenya, in particular, a statement made by Arthur Creech Jones, in December, 1943, had reiterated the Party's opposition to the White Highlands policy, describing it as "utterly wrong." Creech Jones had declared, at that time, that only 10 per cent of the 7 million acres held by Europeans was cultivated, and that European colonization had been "largely sustained by a system of privileges and subsidies."[1]

In an address to the Fabian Colonial Bureau, in January, 1946, Creech Jones described the problems of East Africa, including European settlement and land policy, as "touchstones in British Labour Policy,"

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[1] 395 H.C. Deb., col. 1906.

which would be viewed as a test of the previous protests and declarations of the Labour Movement.[2] Nevertheless, he soon made it clear that the responsibilities of office had already produced a drastic change in his attitude. He now took the view that the allocation of certain lands to Africans and to Europeans, having been confirmed by successive governments, could not be reversed. He also believed that European settlement was of great value to Kenya, as well as a safeguard of Great Britain's position in the Middle East, and he was an enthusiastic supporter of the Labour Government's plan to settle 500 additional European farmers in Kenya.[3] In Parliament he endorsed the policies set forth in Kenya Sessional Paper No. 8 of 1945, which assumed the maintenance of the White Highlands as a European preserve.[4] By mid-summer, he was assuring the Kenya settlers that they were entirely wrong in their feeling that the Labour Government was out to undermine this position, and telling the Kikuyu that what they wanted was not just more land, but to learn

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[2] A. Creech Jones, The Labour Government and East Africa (Address to the Fabian Colonial Bureau, January 9, 1946, mimeographed), p. 1.

[3] Ibid., p. 6.

[4] 420 H.C. Deb., cols. 129-130 (w.a.).

to make better use of the land they had.[5]

In fact, the Labour Government's policy in Kenya was a betrayal of party principles of twenty years standing. Independent African farmers had already been driven from the Highlands under the Highlands Order-in-Council of 1939, but the elimination of squatters still had to be undertaken. This required a tightening of the screws on resident labourers by reducing the amount of land they could cultivate and the number of cattle they could keep, a process which went on continuously after 1946.[6]

When it was pointed out in the House of Commons that the only concrete proposals for land settlement in Kenya concerned the white settlers, while the plans for assisting Africans were hazy and indefinite, Creech Jones gave as a reason for this the fact that the European settlement scheme involved people who had much of their own capital, while African settlement required the expenditure of public money.[7] In view of the fact that twice as much public money was being spent on European settlement as on African

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[5] East African Standard, July 25th and August 2nd, 1946.

[6] Cmd. 9475 (1955-56), East Africa Royal Commission, 1953-1955, Report, pp. 163-170.

[7] 418 H.C. Deb., cols. 1336-1341.

settlement, the explanation seems somewhat equivocal. Although Creech Jones followed this statement by saying: "We are opposed, as a general policy, to racial discrimination," this did not deter a Conservative spokesman from expressing his pleasure at the fact that there had been no fundamental change in East Africa and, in particular, that there was "continuity of policy in the treatment of the white settlers."[8]

This new Labour policy in Kenya is a clear case of surrender to the wishes of the Kenya settlers, without regard either to previous promises or to the facts of the matter. Of about 65,000 square miles of land in Kenya suitable for cultivation, 13,500 square miles were set apart for 2,500 European farmers, who actually cultivated about 1,500 square miles.[9] In other words, 12,000 square miles of the best agricultural land in Kenya was held as a preserve for future generations of Europeans, while the cultivable native lands amounted to a total of 34,722 square miles.[10]

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[8] Ibid., Col. 1342.

[9] Col. No. 281, An Economic Survey of the Colonial Territories, 1951 (London, 1952), II, 18, 20, 23.

[10] Sir Philip Mitchell, The Agrarian Problem in Kenya (Nairobi, 1947), p. 12.

The areas actually cultivated by Europeans had suffered considerable damage from faulty agricultural practices "owing to the lethargy, ignorance or greed for money profits of some farmers, or to absentee ownership."[11] Since there was no evidence to support the view, repeatedly expressed by Creech Jones after Labour came to power, that European farmers made a uniquely valuable contribution to the economy of Kenya,[12] it would appear that racial and political considerations were the decisive determinants of policy.

Another significant aspect of agricultural policy was the series of regulations designed to prevent Africans from growing cash crops. Regulations prohibiting the growing of coffee by Africans in certain areas were issued as late as 1949, and at that time the Government accepted the allegation of the Kenya settlers that the purpose was to prevent disease,[13] although Michael Blundell has stated that such African enterprise was discouraged for fear the labour supply would dry up.[14] The principal device

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[11] Ibid., p. 13.

[12] Sir Alam Pim, Colonial Agricultural Production (London, 1946), p. 169.

[13] 484 H.C. Deb., cols. 1288-1289.

[14] Sir Michael Blundell, So Rough a Wind (London, 1964), p. 77.

used to hinder the Africans, where there was no direct prohibition, was the imposition of a system of licensing for the growing of coffee, sisal, pyrethrum and tea.[15] The issuance of licenses was controlled by boards on which there were no African members. In addition, there were license fees as high as 50s. (pyrethrum), which were large enough to present a serious obstacle to farmers for whom such a sum might represent the cash income of a whole year. The penalties imposed for violation of the laws invariably involved jail sentences for Africans, since the alternative fines ranged from 2000 to 4000 shillings.[16]

While there was no wholesale abandonment of this policy of excluding Africans from cash-crop farming, some change became evident in the later years of the Labour regime. By late 1949, new areas were being scheduled for African coffee-growing and quite a number of new licenses were being issued.[17] There were 8,208 licensed African coffee-growers in 1951, compared with 474 in 1946;[18] some licenses for the growing of

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[15] Sir Donald Kingdon, The Laws of Kenya (Nairobi, 1948), III, 2648-2693.

[16] Ibid.

[17] 484 H.C. Deb., col. 1288.

[18] Kenya, Department of Agriculture Report, 1947 (Nairobi, 1948), p. 43; 1951 (Nairobi, 1952), p. 11.

sisal and pyrethrum had also been issued, and, although the amounts actually grown were still small,[19] it was evident that some deviation from the policy of cutting Africans off from all sources of cash income in order to force them to work for Europeans was beginning to appear. However, there were as yet no African members on the various boards which controlled licensing, nor were African representatives admitted to the Annual Coffee Conference.[20]

Thus, although the Labour Government made a small beginning in the direction of emancipating Africans from settler domination, it left settler ascendancy virtually intact in 1951, and it failed to take any steps whatever to upset the existing plan of allotting land on a racial basis. The extent of this failure was revealed in a pamphlet published by the Fabian Colonial Bureau in 1953, which discussed the existing race system and advocated that "Kenya should begin to take steps towards its eventual abandonment."[21] [Italics mine].

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[19] Kenya, African Development in Kenya, 1946-1955 (Nairobi, 1953), p. 13.

[20] Fabian Colonial Bureau, Opportunity in Kenya (London, 1953), pp. 21-22.

[21] Ibid., p. 9.

In Tanganyika there were no statutory native reserves, and all land was controlled by the Governor, who allowed its alienation to non-natives only if it were not required for native use.[22] Nevertheless, over 3,000 square miles had been alienated, in a colony where the total area of arable land under cultivation was less than 10,000 square miles.[23] Further steps in this direction were taken in 1946, with the appointment of the Arusha-Moshi Lands Commission. The Commission was to "examine and consider the present distribution of alienated lands and tribal lands in the Moshi and Arusha districts, and to make comprehensive plans and recommendations for the redistribution of such lands . . ." It was also to advise "as to the availability or otherwise of land in the areas in question for further non-native settlement . . ."[24]

In September, 1946, the Chagga Council of Chiefs presented Justice Mark Wilson, the Commissioner, with a memorandum on the inadequacy of Chagga land for

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[22]Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, II, 52.

[23]Ibid., p. 53.

[24]Tanganyika, Report of the Arusha-Moshi Lands Commission (Dar es Salaam, 1947), p. 5.

the present and future population. The Chiefs complained of the many large areas of land alienated to Europeans and to missions, in the face of a "desperate shortage" of land for their people. The already severe shortage, they maintained, left no land available for 56,000 young men who would need allotments in the next ten years.[25]

The Commission took the view that non-native settlement should be encouraged, as conducive to economic development, although it allegedly assumed that native need for land should have preference over that of non-natives.[26] There were recommendations for the re-alienation of 54,000 acres of former German lands, and for the "concentration" of the Masai; in all the Commission proposed to add 94,000 acres to the 183,000 already alienated in the Moshi district, increasing the alienated area by fifty per cent.[27] It noted that 30,000 acres of the already alienated land was entirely undeveloped, and that the natives resented whites owning unused land.[28] The Commissioners thought homogeneity

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[25]United Nations, Trusteeship Council, Fourth Session, Annexes (New York, 1949), p. 321.

[26]Tanganyika, Lands Commission Report, p. 8.

[27]Ibid., pp. 52, 101-104.

[28]Ibid., pp. 63, 104.

of settlement was neither possible nor desirable, but nevertheless recommended the joining of three non-native settlements in a homogeneous block, which involved moving some of the Meru people to other land.[29] Compulsion was to be used in the removal of Africans wherever necessary.

The forcible removal of the Wa-Meru people from their land was the subject of numerous petitions to the United Nations Trusteeship Council in the summer and fall of 1951. Although the actual removal was not undertaken until November, 1951, after the Labour Government had lost power, the events of that month unmistakably represent the carrying out of previously determined policy.

The Wa-Meru tribe's memorandum of September 12, 1951, maintained that the land being taken for European settlers was their most fertile land, while the areas to which their people were to be moved were places where European settlement had failed owing to dryness.[30] A despatch of November 21st described the beginning of the forcible eviction, and stated that the police had "started pulling down our huts with motor

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[29] Ibid., pp. 90, 93.

[30] United Nations, Trusteeship Council, Eleventh Session, Annexes, Doc. T/PET. 2/99 (New York, 1952), p. 125.

lorries setting them [on] fire on the ground."[31]

On January 14, 1952, Munya Lengoroi, a barrister, wrote to the Trusteeship Council concerning the whole affair. He had visited the area in December, and had seen three different villages, one of which had contained 600 houses, where nothing was left but ashes and cinders, with bits of food, broken pots and implements among the ruins. The people told him:

> Our homes have been burned, our cooking pots broken and our beds strewn out in the open -- our cattle milked, slaughtered or taken away -- our crops destroyed in the field. The very old perished in the trucks as your askaris forcibly removed them from the shadow of Meru. We are forbidden to return -- except as servants to the new masters in our old homes.[32]

They insisted the new land they were being sent to was already their own, but was dry and tsetse infested, and that they would willingly relinquish it for European settlement. In March, 1952, they described themselves as being homeless, dying from malaria, and destitute of food, their cattle, sheep and goats having died or been lost during the move.[33]

The United Kingdom, in its observations as

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[31] Ibid., pp. 126-127.

[32] Ibid., p. 129.

[33] Ibid., p. 128.

administering authority, maintained that the new land given to the Wa-Meru people was better than the old and that they were being provided with free transportation, assistance in getting established, and free food for a reasonable period. No mention was made of the incidents connected with the forcible removal, about which the Trusteeship Council expressed "regrets."[34] Once again, as in Kenya, the change resulting from the enlightened Labour policy of Imperial Trusteeship is difficult to see.

In Northern Rhodesia, the only other area where European settlement was significant, there was also no change in land policy during the Labour period of office. Of the total land area of 288,000 square miles, 180,000 were infested by tsetse fly, and of this area, 171,000 square miles were set aside as "Native Trust Land." The Native Reserves and Barotseland occupied 100,000 square miles; the remaining 16,600 square miles was Crown land, which could be held by Africans legally but which was in practice reserved for Europeans because of its shortage.[35] The total population was estimated at 1,870,000, of whom 1,827,000

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[34] Ibid., Doc. T/953, p. 2.

[35] Cmd. 8235 (1950-51), Central African Territories: Comparative Survey of Native Policy, pp. 13-14; App. I, p. 66.

were Africans; there were 700 European farmers, whose holdings averaged about 6,500 acres each.[36] In 1951-1952, less than 5% of the European area was under crops.[37]

In West Africa, there was no problem concerning the alienation of land to Europeans, but there was a trend towards the private ownership of land. The commission which investigated the Gold Coast distrubances reported a general fear on the part of Africans that the continued alienation of tribal lands would create a landless peasantry.[38]

More important in the short run, however, was the use of the power of government to lower the incomes of African farmers. Bauer has discussed this problem at great length, and has distinguished three types of levy on West African producers. These are the surpluses of the marketing organizations, the export duties and the differences between world prices and the prices actually paid.[39] He points out, for example,

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[36]Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, I, 8, 15.

[37]C. H. Thompson and H. W. Woodruff, Economic Development in Rhodesia and Nyasaland (London, 1954), p. 130.

[38]Col. No. 231, Report of the Commission of Enquiry into Disturbances in the Gold Coast, 1948 (Aiken Watson Commission) (London, 1948), p. 69.

[39]P. T. Bauer, West African Trade (London, 1963), pp. 287-288.

that in 1950 and 1951, copra sold at £ 87 a ton in the French colonies, compared with £ 40 in the Gold Coast; for palm kernels, the corresponding prices were £ 70 and £ 21.[40] He shows that the terms of trade were worse than in the years 1935-1937 for all West African products until 1947, and for all except cocoa up to 1951,[41] and thoroughly supports his contention that there was "a marked reduction in the real incomes of the producers of West African exports through a sharp deterioration in their real terms of trade."[42] The decline in the wages of workers throughout Africa was therefore paralleled by a fall in the incomes of African farmers, who thus shared in the continued deterioration of the standard of living under Labour rule.

Another object of Labour scrutiny had been the extraction of mineral wealth from the colonies without proper return. In 1946, Creech Jones promised an end to economic exploitation of natural resources,[43] and the Colonial Office issued a policy statement which

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[40] Ibid., p. 299, footnote.

[41] Ibid., p. 307.

[42] Ibid., p. 249.

[43] A. Creech Jones, Labour's Colonial Policy (London, 1947), p. 6.

declared that, minerals being gifts of nature, "their benefits should be shared by the community generally," and mineral rights should therefore be vested in the Crown. Provision had already been made for the reservation of these rights in future sales, but payment would have to be made for rights previously alienated. The statement also called for the retention of an "adequate share" of mining proceeds in the colonies.[44]

In fact, the only significant change in any colony under Labour was the Nigerian Government's acquisition of the Royal Niger Company's right to one-half the mineral royalties of Nigeria. The price of this concession was £ 1 million, or nearly as much as the company's revenue from this source for the ten years ending in 1942.[45]

The most interesting case is that of Northern Rhodesia, where the exploitation of mineral wealth with little return to the Africans had been the subject of many Labour tirades in former years. In 1940, for example, Creech Jones had pointed out that, of £ 12 million realized from the sale of copper in 1937, only

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[44]Col. No. 206, Memorandum on Colonial Mining Policy (London, 1946), pp. 4-5.

[45]Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, III, 61; 385 H.C. Deb., col. 1544.

£ 1 million had found its way to Africans.[46] By 1949, the rate of exploitation had increased so that, in that year, Africans received £ 2 million of a total of £ 36.7 million.[47]

The Labour Government did succeed in making an agreement with the British South Africa Company for the eventual surrender of its mineral rights in Northern Rhodesia, but the effective date was 1986, and in the meantime the company was required to pay only 20 per cent of its net revenue to the Northern Rhodesian Government.[48] Since the Company's right to these revenues was originally based on a treaty of doubtful legality signed with the King of the Barotse, this treatment of its claim seems reasonably generous.[49] In any case, these royalties represented about one-twentieth of the wealth derived from Northern Rhodesian copper, most of which still found its way to the United Kingdom, partly in the form of taxation.[50] The Company

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[46] 361 H.C. Deb., col. 58.

[47] John Strachey, The End of Empire (London, 1959), p. 178.

[48] Col. No. 272, Northern Rhodesia: Agreement with the British South Africa Company (London, 1951), p. 3.

[49] 361 H.C. Deb., cols. 58-59; Roy Welensky, Address at a Private Meeting of the Colonial Affairs Study Group of the Empire Parliamentary Association (London, 1946), p. 15.

[50] Welensky, pp. 14-16.

retained its mineral rights in Nyasaland.[51]

The Labour Government's mining policy thus showed little change from that of its predecessors. Where changes did take place, there was an unexpected tenderness towards vested interests, including the interest of the British Government in the retention of tax revenues from companies operating in Africa but incorporated in Great Britain.

Labour's policy relating to European settlement and the monopolization of land by Europeans was little different from that followed by previous governments. In Kenya and Northern Rhodesia the racial basis of land division remained intact, and in Tanganyika the interests of white settlers were advanced at the expense of the native tribes. With regard to the control of mineral wealth in the interests of the colonies, the one positive step was the elimination of the Royal Niger Company; the far more significant exploitation of the mines of Northern Rhodesia proceeded much as before.

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[51]Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, I, 41.

CHAPTER XII

TRADE, FINANCE AND CREDIT

One important aspect of the colonial economic system in which the Labour Party had taken little interest was the monopolization of trade and industry by powerful European firms. It was not, therefore, to be expected that anything would be done to change the situation. Nevertheless, these companies played such a significant part in the economic subjection of Africans that no discussion of the economic development of the African Colonies can ignore them.

Newlyn and Rowan remarked of West Africa that expatriate enterprise dominated the export and import trade, wholesale distribution, mining, shipping and banking.[1] What was true of West Africa was true of all British Africa; even where African peasants produced the main crops for export, they were at the mercy of

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[1] W. T. Newlyn and D. C. Rowan, Money and Banking in British Colonial Africa (Oxford, 1954), p. 14.

foreign middlemen, who absorbed the bulk of the profits.[2]

About 90% of the West African import trade was in the hands of expatriate companies, of which the United Africa Company was the largest.[3] The big importing firms were dominant in the Gold Coast, where operations were conducted by 146 limited liability companies registered overseas.[4] Non-resident firms, including 93 British companies with a share capital of £ 37 million, handled over 90% of the external trade of Nigeria.[5]

According to Bauer, the West African Marketing Boards strengthened the position of the trading firms as against the peasants and increased their profits by "restraining competition among established firms and barring the entry of newcomers." He points out that the cocoa control scheme was submitted to the Colonial Office by the Association of West African Merchants, clearly implying that it was a scheme to protect and enhance their monopoly position.[6] Amongst the ten

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[2]Sir Alan Pim, Colonial Agricultural Production (London, 1946), p. 11.

[3]Newlyn and Rowan, p. 13.

[4]Col. No. 281, An Economic Survey of the Colonial Territories, 1951 (London, 1952), III, 33, 40.

[5]Ibid., pp. 63, 67.

[6]P. T. Bauer, West African Trade (London, 1963), pp. 256-257, 266.

members of the West African Produce Control Board in November, 1945, were John Cadbury of Cadbury Brothers Ltd. and Mr. G. B. Spry of Messrs. Frank Fehr and Company.[7]

Complaints about the high cost of imported goods were very prominent in the report of the Commission which investigated the 1948 disturbances in the Gold Coast. The Report speaks of the "hated organization," the Association of West African Merchants, which had been formed "at the instigation of the West African Governments," and which was thought to be keeping prices outrageously high, with the connivance of the Government.[8] Since the Government had agreed to allow the importers a 75% markup on textiles, it is rather hard to understand the Commission's denial of Government complicity.[9]

Throughout East and Central Africa there was still more thorough exclusion of Africans from industry and trade. In Kenya and Uganda the European monopoly of industry was complete, so much so that in Uganda the

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[7]415 H.C. Deb., col. 1416.

[8]Col. No. 231, Report of the Commission of Enquiry into Disturbances in the Gold Coast, 1948 (Aiken Watson Commission) (London, 1948), pp. 35, 41.

[9]Ibid., p. 35.

African cotton cooperatives were not even allowed to own cotton ginneries until 1952. Industry in Northern Rhodesia was confined to the processing of copper, again a European preserve. Elsewhere there was no industry worth mentioning.[10]

Unlike West Africa, most of the local trade in Kenya, Uganda and Nyasaland was carried on by Indians, so that Africans were almost excluded even from the retail trade.[11] The 1949 Report on Tanganyika described Africans as having no part in the wholesale trade, but taking an increasing interest in the retail trade, and this statement was merely a repetition of those made in 1947 and 1948.[12] A petition received by the United Nations Visiting Mission suggested that rural trade should be in African hands and that, in the towns, Africans should be allowed plots for commercial business.[13]

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[10] Newlyn and Rowan, pp. 15-18.

[11] Ibid., pp. 16, 19.

[12] Col. No. 220, Report to the Trusteeship Council of the United Nations on the Administration of Tanganyika for the year 1947 (London, 1948), p. 67; Report for 1948, p. 90; Report for 1949, p. 64.

[13] U.N. Trusteeship Council, Fourth Session, Annexes, Document T/PET. 2/51, Petition from twenty-two Shinyanga Township Africans (New York, 1949), p. 286.

The inability of Africans to obtain credit was a serious obstacle to business activity, as well as to the expansion and improvement of agricultural operations, since there were almost no facilities anywhere in British Africa for lending money to African farmers and business men. The commercial banks existed to serve European interests, and did virtually no business with Africans: they paid interest rates of 1% or less on deposits, and lent on terms which few Africans could meet.[14] Indigenous banks developed only in Nigeria, and even here they declined steadily after 1948, due to the failure of the Government to introduce legislation to control them.[15]

Most of the colonial governments provided some credit facilities, but in many cases their assistance was available only to Europeans. In the Gold Coast, an Industrial Development Corporation made loans to establish or expand local industries, and these were available to Africans. The Agricultural Development Corporation, however, lent only for large-scale operations, and it was not until December, 1950, that an Agricultural Loans Board was set up to provide

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[14] Newlyn and Rowan, pp. 76-95.

[15] Ibid., pp. 96, 238-240.

credit for farmers.[16] Regional Development Boards were established in Nigeria in 1949, and in the next two years they advanced nearly £ 400,000, of which £ 41,000 went to agriculture.[17]

In Kenya and Tanganyika there were Land and Agricultural Banks, but their operations were confined to the European sector.[18] A question in the Kenya Legislature in 1948 elicited from the Deputy Financial Secretary the information that no African had ever borrowed money from the Land Bank and that under existing conditions none could do so. He added that the question of providing agricultural credit for Africans was "receiving consideration."[19] The following year, in response to growing demands from Africans, the Kenya Government set up a committee to study the feasibility of making loans to African farmers, with the result that in 1950 a sum of £ 60,000 a year was made available, of which nearly £ 3,000 was actually used in 1951.[20] In Tanganyika, an Ordinance passed in 1947 made credit available to Africans through the

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[16] Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, III, 41.

[17] Newlyn and Rowan, pp. 127-129.

[18] Ibid., pp. 123-124.

[19] Kenya, Legislative Council Debates, Second Series, Vol. XXX, 1948, cols. 53-54.

[20] Newlyn and Rowan, pp. 246-247.

the Land Bank, at least in theory, but there was little change in practice.[21] A Credit and Savings Bank was established in Uganda in 1950, and by December, 1951, it had outstanding loans of £ 126,142, of which £ 44,639 had been lent to farmers.[22] It does not appear that Central African Governments made any provision for loans to Africans.

Since the availability of credit was obviously of crucial significance if Africans were to play a part in economic development, it is clear that the economic planners did not assign them any important role. They were seen as passive instruments to be manipulated, rather than as effective agents whose energies might be utilized. This explains the failure of colonial governments to give Africans a feeling of involvement, and to convince them that the plans had any relation to their welfare.

One possible method by which credit facilities might have been provided was through the creation of cooperative credit societies and, in fact, the development of cooperatives took a fairly important

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[21] Col. No. 220, Tanganyika Report, p. 63.

[22] Newlyn and Rowan, pp. 125-126.

place amongst the Labour Party's remedies for the economic backwardness of Africans. A Fabian Colonial Bureau pamphlet of 1945 described cooperation as being "all but non-existent in the majority of the colonies," and recommended the setting up of co-operative departments in all of them, with a central department at the Colonial Office.[23]

Amongst the aims to be achieved by co-operation, the Bureau had listed the following:

1. Lowering of the costs of production, distribution and marketing.
2. Obtaining credit on reasonable terms.
3. Ending the monopolization of trading by big European firms.
4. Improving agriculture by the use of better stock and seeds, and by the use of fertilizers, machinery, etc.[24]

Cooperation had not been altogether ignored by the previous government, and a beginning had already been made. Cooperative departments had been set up in Nigeria (1943) and the Gold Coast (1944);[25] an official had been sent to Kenya to advise the Government on the creation and development of cooperative societies

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[23]Fabian Colonial Bureau, Cooperation in the Colonies (London, 1945), pp. 14, 193.

[24]Ibid., p. 23.

[25]Ibid., p. 34.

amongst Africans.[26] Nevertheless, as a result of government controls, cooperation had declined during the war in West Africa, the only area where it had attained any significance.[27]

The Labour Government soon undertook to foster a more rapid growth of cooperation. Early in 1946, George Hall sent dispatches to all Colonial Governments detailing action to be taken in this direction. He thought each Government should appoint a Registrar of Cooperative Societies, with an appropriate staff, and suggested the creation of separate cooperative departments. Hall also circulated a model draft Cooperative Ordinance, and requested an annual report on progress made.[28] The following year, an Adviser on Cooperation was appointed to the Colonial Office, and a special 9-month course for staff members of cooperatives in British dependencies was inaugurated.[29] By 1951, there were Cooperative Departments and Registrars in all the colonies.[30]

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[26] 410 H.C. Deb., col. 1112.

[27] Fabian Colonial Bureau, Cooperation, p. 69.

[28] Col. No. 199, The Co-operative Movement in the Colonies (London, 1946), pp. 4-5.

[29] British Information Services, New Nations in Africa: The British Contribution (London, 1962), pp. 25-26.

[30] Newlyn and Rowan, p. 132.

An impressive growth of cooperative societies took place during the Labour years. In the Colonial Empire as a whole the number of societies more than trebled and membership increased 150%.[31] The greatest advances in Africa were in Nigeria and the Gold Coast, the only two colonies where cooperation had begun during the war. In Nigeria, the increase was from 580 societies with 35,263 members to 1,091 societies with 64,294 members;[32] in the Gold Coast, the comparable figures were from 124 societies to 329 and from 11,102 members to 30,189.[33] Kenya had 5 rudimentary African societies in 1945, and 246 in 1951;[34] for Tanganyika the respective figures were 61 and 128.[35] In Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland cooperatives for Africans were begun in 1947 and had developed substantially by 1951.[36]

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[31] Marjorie Nicholson, Co-operation in the Colonies (Manchester, 1953), pp. 90-91.

[32] Ibid., pp. 49, 90-91.

[33] Ibid., pp, 90-91; Gold Coast, Report of the Department of Cooperation, 1946-1947 (Accra, 1947), p. 1.

[34] Kenya, Report of the Registrar of Cooperative Societies, 1946 (Nairobi, 1947), p. 1; Fabian Colonial Bureau, Opportunity in Kenya (London, 1953), p. 23.

[35] Col. No. 220, 1947 Report, p. 245; Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, II, 62.

[36] Venture, Vol. 4, No. 2 (March, 1952), p. 6; Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, I, 53; Nicholson, pp. 90-91.

In view of the failure of Africans to improve their economic position during these years, it is pertinent to inquire what significance can be attached to this striking development of the co-operative movement. Several of the stated aims of the programme were evidently beyond the power of Africans to accomplish without political independence. Points 1 and 3 are clearly related, as a lowering of the costs of distribution and marketing could perhaps have been effected by ending the European trade monopoly.

We have seen how the British control of banking and finance made it difficult for Africans to obtain credit on reasonable terms. Significantly, there were very few credit cooperatives anywhere except Nigeria, which had 423 of the 457 societies registered under that heading in 1951,[37] and even here only a small beginning was made towards the solution of the credit problem. In 1949-50, lending by Nigerian cooperative societies amounted to a total of £ 86,000, of which about £ 25,000 went to farmers, mainly through marketing associations.[38] Marketing societies in Northern Rhodesia supplied credit

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[37]Nicholson, pp. 90-91.

[38]Newlyn and Rowan, pp. 133-135.

to the amount of £ 897 in 1950.[39] Pim describes the compulsory credit societies in the French Colonies as "one of the principal agencies in the programme for the extension of native production," and remarks that experience in the British Colonies demonstrates the slow progress and uselessness of voluntary cooperation under colonial conditions.[40]

The bulk of the societies in Africa consisted of producers marketing cooperatives. For the most part, they were very small, averaging fewer than 100 members in every colony except Kenya and Northern Rhodesia, where there were a few large European co-operatives.[41]

The system of taxation of Africans in vogue in most colonies, an object of frequent attack by Labour spokesmen, was retained in its entirety by the Labour Government. The only significant change from the pre-war period, the introduction of income taxes, had been made during the war by the coalition. The 'native' poll taxes survived throughout East and Central Africa, as well as in Sierra Leone and the Gambia.[42]

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[39] Ibid., p. 133.

[40] Pim, pp. 123-124.

[41] Nicholson, pp. 90-91.

[42] Journal of African Administration, Vol. III, No. 1 (January, 1951), pp. 30-32.

However, the significance of these taxes in relation to total taxation generally declined, as the amounts collected remained relatively static during a time of rising prices and revenues. In Kenya, for example, the poll tax produced a revenue of £ 523,589 in 1939 and £ 826,772 in 1951, but the proportion of total revenue provided by it fell from 27% to 6%.[43]

At the same time, income taxes produced a growing proportion of the revenues of most colonial governments. In Nigeria, the part of revenue produced by income tax grew from 2% to 14% between 1939 and 1950;[44] in the Gold Coast the increase was from zero to 27%,[45] and in Kenya from 7% to 29%.[46] The rates of taxation, however, remained very low,[47] and it could hardly be said that the richer people in the colonies were paying their fair share.

In some colonies, heavy taxation of imports and/or exports provided a major portion of tax revenue, and these taxes fell heavily on Africans. Once again, however, there was a tendency for these revenues to

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[43]Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, II, 34.

[44]Ibid., III, 65.

[45]Ibid., p. 37.

[46]Ibid., II, 34.

[47]Colonial Office, Appointments in His Majesty's Colonial Service (London, 1950), pp. 98-99.

fall as a proportion of the total. In the Gambia, the decline between 1938 and 1951 was from 55% to 38%,[48] and in the Gold Coast from 71% to 54%.[49] The trend in Nigeria was in the opposite direction, with customs and excise taxes providing a slightly larger part of the revenue in 1950 than they had in 1939.[50] Very heavy export taxes were levied on the producers of cocoa in Nigeria and the Gold Coast, these rates being much higher than they had been in 1939.[51]

Generally speaking, it seems that direct taxation rested somewhat less heavily on Africans than had been the case in the pre-war period. This resulted from the inauguration of income tax and from inflation rather than from any policy instituted by the Labour Government. The most that can be said is that the effects of inflation were not offset by adjustments in the poll tax, and that the importance of this form of taxation was lessened.

Labour rule produced little change in the position of Africans in relation to business, commerce

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[48]Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, III, 9.

[49]Ibid., p. 37.

[50]Ibid., p. 65.

[51]Bauer, p. 285.

and finance. At the end of the period nothing had been done to end the monopoly of trade by Europeans and Asians, and credit facilities which might have enabled Africans to expand their business activities were still virtually non-existent. Cooperative societies increased their membership, but the increase in their significance was proportionally much less. Although a decline appeared in the weight of taxation directed specifically at Africans, the main outlines of the previous system remained.

CHAPTER XIII

THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION

Social advance in the colonies, it was widely agreed, was closely related to economic development. According to Secretary of State George Hall, social and political progress depended heavily on economic growth and, at the same time, improved social services, particularly education, could contribute greatly to increased productivity.[1] Arthur Creech Jones thought Labour could win the confidence and cooperation of the people of the colonies by emphasizing health, education, housing and community life and other social services.[2] In other words, if Africans were to support 'economic development' designed mainly to benefit Great Britain, they would have to be persuaded that their own social conditions were being improved.

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[1] 425 H.C. Deb., col. 261.

[2] A. Creech Jones, "Labour and the Colonies," African Affairs, Vol. 44, No. 176 (July, 1945), p. 112.

In some colonies, the original plans submitted to the Colonial Office were more heavily weighted in the direction of the social services than officials in London considered economic, and 'financial difficulties' necessitated the revision of these plans by the colonial governments concerned. Uganda's ten-year plan, for example, envisaged an expenditure of £ 1 million on general education during the first six years, but a revision in 1948 reduced this to £ 705,900 for the ten years 1947 to 1956.[3] Similarly, Northern Rhodesia was forced to reduce its planned expenditure on African education from £ 2,413,700 to £ 1,486,000.[4] In Tanganyika, a 1950 revision of the plan cut the amount allotted to the social services from £ 5,250,200 to £ 2,934,000.[5]

There was general agreement that education was the most important vehicle of social, as well as political and economic, progress. Many believed that literacy was the necessary base for advance in almost

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[3]Uganda, Joint Report of the Standing Finance Committee and the Development and Welfare Committee on Post-War Development (Entebbe, 1945), p. 6; Col. No. 281, Economic Survey of the Colonial Territories, 1951 (London, 1952), II, 103.

[4]Northern Rhodesia, Annual Report on African Education for 1946 (Lusaka, 1947), p. 6.

[5]Col. No. 281, An Economic Survey of the Colonial Territories, 1951 (London, 1952), II, 70.

TABLE NO. 6

EXPENDITURES ON EDUCATION, 1945-1951

Territory	10-Year Plan	C.D. & W. Allotment	C.D. & W. Approved Schemes 1946 - 1951	Capital Expenditure	Ordinary Expenditure 1946	Ordinary Expenditure 1951
West Africa - General		£2,750,000[3]	£1,541,188[1]			
Gambia	£250,000[2]	162,000[5]	98,200[1]		£20,000[5]	£54,000[5]
Gold Coast	£2,166,000[6]	1,803,000[6]	667,100[1]			
Sierre Leone	820,000[2]		599,822[1]			
Nigeria	7,112,793[7]		620,171[1]		615,663[8]	2,412,239[8]
East Africa - General			1,055,696[1]			
Kenya	800,000[9]		39,055[1]	£874,000[10]	226,688[10]	632,828[10]
Somaliland			66,662[1]			
Tanganyika	1,905,000[11]	332,000[12]	352,000[1]		510,050[13]	2,397,971[13]
Uganda	705,900[14]		77,000[1]			843,824[15]
Central Africa - General			49,846[1]			
Northern Rhodesia	1,486,000[16]	48,136[16]	589,563[1]		149,450[16]	413,100[17]
Nyasaland	1,029,000[18]	245,000[19]	103,500[1]	90,000[18]		

[1] House of Commons Papers No. 127 (1947), 166 (1948), 211 (1949), 107 (1950), 189 (1951), Colonial Development and Welfare Acts, Return of Schemes.

[2] H.C. Paper No. 127, p. 113.

[3] Cmd. 8243, The Colonial Territories, 1950-51, p. 4; Nigeria, Department of Education Report, 1951-52 (Lagos, 1952), p. 51.

[4] Economic Survey, III, 15.

[5] British Information Services, The Gambia (1963), p. 18 (1964), p. 21.

[6] Economic Survey, III, 47.

[7] Nigeria, Sessional Paper No. 24 of 1945 (Lagos, 1946), p. 143.

[8] Nigeria, Department of Education Report, 1951-52, p. 20.

[9] Kenya, A Ten-Year Plan for the Development of African Education, p. 15.

[10] Kenya, Some Aspects of the Development of Kenya Government Services for Africans from 1946 Onwards, p. 3.

[11] Tanganyika Development Commission, A Ten-Year Development and Welfare Plan for Tanganyika Territory, p. 17.

[12] Tanganyika, Report to the United Nations for 1948, p. 15

[13] Economic Survey, II, 49 (1952 figures)

[14] Ibid., II, 103.

[15] Colonial Office, Report on Uganda for the Year 1951, p. 54.

[16] Northern Rhodesia, Annual Report on African Education for 1946, pp. 2,6,9.

[17] Ibid., 1951, p. 7.

[18] Nyasaland, Education Department Report, 1951, pp. 3,5.

[19] Economic Survey, I, 62.

every field, and, since the literacy rate was 10% or less for the African colonies as a whole, the room for improvement was great.

Colonial Development and Welfare grants for educational development in Africa amounted to nearly £ 6 million in the five-year period from April, 1946 to March, 1951.[6] As this was equivalent to about one shilling per annum for each child of school age, the amount does not appear excessive. In addition, a Colonial Inter-University Council was created to assist in the development of university education, and a council on Science and Technology to extend technical education.[7]

Since some educational facilities of every kind were already in existence in most colonies, planning involved little more than expansion of an already working system. Education plans were, therefore, relatively coherent, in the sense that different parts of the system, such as teacher-training and the need for teachers, were dovetailed together. This does not necessarily mean that the plans were related to the needs of colonial societies, except in a very general

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[6]See Table No. 6.

[7]A. Creech Jones (ed.), New Fabian Colonial Essays (New York, 1959), p. 30.

way: in particular, the excessive emphasis on universal primary education would seem to have had its basis in traditional European practice, adopted with the political aim of gaining African confidence rather with social and economic considerations in view.

The African school system, as it existed at this time, provided for eight years of kindergarten and primary education and six years of secondary school. The classes of the first two years, although they were usually considered part of the primary system, were essentially infant schools, the name by which they were actually known in the Gold Coast. They were called 'sub-grades' in Uganda and 'sub-standards' in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, but everywhere pupils required eight years of schooling to reach Standard VI, the end of primary school. The six years of secondary school were normally divided into four years of junior and two years of senior secondary education.

African education was mainly in the hands of voluntary agencies, usually Christian missions, who operated either independently or with government assistance grants. Missionary societies were responsible for three-quarters of the schools throughout East Africa, including practically all of those in Uganda.

In Northern Rhodesia they conducted nearly 95% of the government-aided schools, and in Nyasaland they carried on 90% of all education.[8] This emphasis on mission schools was the subject of a memorandum from an African Chief in Tanganyika to the United Nations Visiting Mission in 1948. He attacked the "inordinate influence of the missions" and the gigantic allocation of funds proposed for them in the Ten-Year Plan, concluding that the plan was "studiedly directed to the placing of overwhelming power and control over the education of the African in the hands of the missions." It was asserted that many African parents resented a system whereby their children had to repudiate their faith to receive an education.[9]

The intermingling of the infant and primary schools creates some confusion, since it is sometimes not clear whether a discussion of the numbers of children in various grades took Standard I or the Substandards as its starting point. As it was generally agreed that four years was the minimum period required

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[8]Cmd. 7987 (1950), The British Territories in East and Central Africa 1945-1950 (London, 1950), p. 111; Cmd. 9475 (1955-56), East Africa Royal Commission, 1953-1955, Report, p. 174.

[9]United Nations Trusteeship Council Annexes, 4th Session (New York, 1949), pp. 312-317.

to produce literacy,[10] it would be interesting to know for certain whether this meant education to Standard II or to Standard IV. It is assumed here, for purposes of argument, that the four years included the substandards and that graduation from Standard II gave literacy.

The distinction between 'assisted' and 'unassisted' schools is another cause of confusion, since it is hard to determine whether alleged increases in primary school enrolment involved an actual expansion of the school system or merely a transfer of unassisted schools to the assisted group. Official sources seem to have used enrolment figures from either category indiscriminately, often without any indication as to whether they referred to one or both. Since the information given is rarely complete, it is virtually impossible, in many colonies, to find out what happened.

One of the complicating factors in education throughout East and Central Africa was the necessity to accommodate the various races in different schools. Although only Northern Rhodesia had separate education

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[10] A. L. Binns, B. A. Fletcher and F. H. Gwilliam, Study of Educational Policy and Practice, East and Central Africa (no publication data, but written in 1952), pp. 45-46.

departments for Africans and Europeans, there were separate schools for the two races everywhere, with additional facilities for Arabs and Indians where necessary.

Once again, as in the case of land, definite Labour promises to end discrimination were disregarded. In a situation in which one of the most important factors limiting the expansion of education was the shortage of money,[11] the sums spent on the education of Europeans and, to a smaller extent, of Asians was far out of proportion to their share of the population.

The discrepancy between African education and that of the other races was most glaring in Kenya, where Africans formed 97% of the population but were allotted a little over one-third of the expenditure on education. During the entire period 1946 to 1953, just under 35% of the Kenya Government's outlay on the development of education went to Africans[12] and, up to 1950, according to a statement made by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, James Griffiths, more capital expenditure had been made on European education

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[11] Cmd. 7987, East and Central Africa, 1945-1950, p. 109.

[12] Kenya, Sessional Paper No. 51 of 1955 The Development Programme, 1954-57 (Nairobi, 1955), p. 25.

than on that of Asians and Africans combined.[13] Of £ 141,600 of Colonial Development and Welfare Funds spent on education in 1951, £ 50,350 went to Africans;[14] in that year, the Development and Reconstruction authority spent £ 344,646 on educational buildings for Europeans and £ 27,883 on those for Africans.[15] In 1950, the Kenya Government's education expenditures per head were £ 59 for Europeans, £ 14/16s. for Asians and £ 1/10s. for Africans.[16] At the same time Government of Kenya bursaries for training in the United Kingdom were held by 38 Europeans, 24 Asians and 13 Africans.[17]

The number of Europeans and Indians was much smaller in Tanganyika, but a significant part of the outlay on education was allotted to them. Africans, who comprised 99% of the population, were assigned only 54% of the funds in 1951. In proportion to

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[13] 481 H.C. Deb., col. 120 (w.a.).

[14] Kenya, Education Department Report, 1951 (Nairobi, 1952), p. 17.

[15] Kenya, Development and Reconstruction Authority Report, 1951 (Nairobi, 1952), pp. 18-19.

[16] 480 H.C. Deb., cols. 168-169 (w.a.) (Statement by John Dugdale, Minister of State for the Colonies).

[17] 481 H.C. Deb., col. 54. (Statement by James Griffiths).

population, the Government spent 147 times as much on European education and 85 times as much on Indian education as on that of Africans.[18] To some small extent, this imbalance reflected the fact that the missions absorbed part of the cost of African education.

In Central Africa, again, little advance was made in ending the disparity in education costs between Africans and Europeans. Africans made up 98% of the population of Northern Rhodesia, and they were assigned 60% of education funds under the Ten-year Plan.[19] For the fiscal year ending December 31st, 1950, ordinary expenditures were, for African education £ 623,497, for European education £ 462,222;[20] this amounted to £ 10/15s. per capita for the European population and 7s. for Africans. In Nyasaland, 1946 expenditure per head of population was £ 4-2-6 for Europeans and £ 0-5-2 for Africans;[21] by 1950, spending on Africans had risen 6% while that for Europeans had doubled.[22]

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[18] Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, II, 47-49.

[19] Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, I, 33.

[20] Cmd. 8235 (1951), Central African Territories: Comparative Survey of Native Policy, p. 70.

[21] Nyasaland, Education Department Report, 1946 (Zomba, 1947), p. 12.

[22] Cmd. 8235, Native Policy, p. 71.

Despite this failure to end discrimination, it is, nevertheless, evident that there was a great deal of activity aimed at the education of Africans under the Labour Government. Many schools were built, large numbers of teachers were trained and primary school enrolments were greatly increased; throughout East and West Africa there was a relative increase in secondary and higher education and, in a few places, adult education programmes were undertaken; everywhere, except in Northern Rhodesia, a small beginning was made in technical and vocational training. Ordinary annual expenditure on education multiplied three or four times in most colonies between 1946 and 1951.[23]

The great educational effort was made at the primary level, particularly in the first four years, and planned expansion of this stage of education was achieved or exceeded in every colony where specific figures are available. Official reports indicate that total enrolments rose about 75% in the five years under review, with some increase in every colony but Northern Rhodesia. The number of primary school pupils was approximately doubled in Nigeria and significantly expanded in Kenya. The official figures seem to show

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[23]See Table No. 6.

a similar growth in Tanganyika, but the fact that only one school building was completed in 1947, and none in 1948 or 1949,[24] makes it probable that the big change was in the extension of assistance to formerly unassisted schools. There was also a big increase in enrolment in assisted schools in the Gold Coast and Uganda, at least partly for the same reason.[25] In the Gold Coast, for example, only 48 schools with 362 classrooms were built, while the number of pupils in assisted schools rose by more than 150,000.[26] The decrease in the number of primary school pupils in Northern Rhodesia was brought about by a large reduction of enrolment in Substandard A, a constructive development which lowered costs without any real loss to education.[27] Nyasaland made very little advance in the total of pupils attending school, although the number of primary schools increased from 210 to 450.[28]

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[24]Col. No. 220, Report to the Trusteeship Council of the United Nations on the Administration of Tanganyika for the Year 1947 (London, 1948), p. 153, Report for 1948, p. 189, Report for 1949, p. 167.

[25]See Table No. 7.

[26]Gold Coast, Development Progress Report, 1951-52 (Accra, 1952), p. 19.

[27]See Table No. 7.

[28]Nyasaland, Education Department Report, 1951 (Zomba, 1952), p. 5.

TABLE NO. 7

PRIMARY EDUCATION - CHILDREN IN SCHOOL

Territory	Estimated Number in Age Group	Total in School		Total in Assisted Schools		Total in First 4 years		Primary School Leaving		
		1946	1951	1945-6	1951	1946	1951	1945	1946	1951
Gold Coast			300,705[2]	79,454[1]	220,535[1]		234,492[2] (5 years)		4,532[2]	
Nigeria	4,000,000[4]	555,000[5]	1,002,533[6]							
Kenya	800,000[7]	208,185[7]	360,279[8]				262,517[8]	812[7]	933[7]	
Tanganyika	1,589,000[9]	110,000[10]	236,011[9]				213,991[9]			
Uganda	1,400,000[11]	200,000[11]		97,000[12]	203,788[13]		136,832[14]			
Northern Rhodesia	312,000[15]		161,998[16]	170,430[17]	144,751[16]	158,431[17] (assisted only)	126,003[16]			912[16]
Nyasaland		214,344[18]	240,624[19]	75,307[18]			78,624[14] (assisted only)	113[18]	199[18]	

[1] Gold Coast, Development Progress Report, 1951-52 (Accra, 1953), p. 19.

[2] Gold Coast, Education Department Report, 1951-52 (Accra, 1952), p. 6.

[3] Ibid., 1946-47, p. 9.

[4] H.C. Paper No. 181, Fifth Report from the Select Committee on Estimates (1947-48), p. xix.

[5] Nigeria, Department of Education Report, 1945-46 (Lagos, 1946), p. 9.

[6] Ibid., 1951-52, p. 26.

[7] Kenya, Education Department Report, 1946 (Nairobi, 1947), pp. 2,8,12.

[8] Ibid., 1951, pp. 41, 45.

[9] United Nations Trusteeship Council, Annexxes, 13th Session, Agenda Item 3, pp. 3,5. (1952 figures).

[10] Bruce Hutt, A Ten-year Plan for the Development of African Education (Dar es Salaam, 1947), pp. 4-5 (1947 figures).

[11] Estimates based on percentages of children in school given by Uganda Education Department, Outline Scheme of Development for African Education, 1944-1954, (Entebbe, 1943), p. 11 and E.B. Worthington, A Development Plan for Uganda (Entebbe, 1946), p. 51.

[12] Uganda Education Department, Outline Scheme, p. vi.

[13] Colonial Office, Report on Uganda for the Year 1951 (London, 1952), p. 55.

[14] A.L. Binns, B.A. Fletcher and F.H. Gwilliam, A Study of Educational Policy and Practice in East and Central Africa (no publication data), p. 45.

[15] Colonial Office, An Economic Survey of the Colonial Territories, 1951 (London, 1952), I, 10.

[16] Northern Rhodesia, Annual Report on African Education for 1951 (Lusaka, 1952), pp. 23, 42.

[17] Ibid., 1946, p. 30.

[18] Nyasaland, Education Department Report, 1946 (Zomba, 1947), p. 3.

[19] Ibid., 1951, p. 26.

These great strides forward in primary education left the bulk of students concentrated in the lower grades, where they did not receive enough schooling to become literate. In the five colonies for which fairly exact figures are available, three-quarters of primary school pupils were enrolled in the substandards and in Standards I and II.[29] In the Gold Coast, 44% were in infant schools;[30] in Nigeria, no figures are given for registration in the various grades, but the fact that the primary school population was more than forty times that in the secondary schools indicates a heavy concentration at the lower levels.[31] In East and Central Africa, the percentage of children completing the fourth year was 31 in Kenya, 16 in Tanganyika, 20 in Uganda, 39 in Northern Rhodesia and 10 in Nyasaland.[32] The retention rate in Northern Rhodesia must have been rising very rapidly, since 87% of the pupils were registered in the first four years in 1951.[33]

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[29] See Table No. 7.

[30] Gold Coast, Education Department Report, 1951-52, p. 6.

[31] Nigeria, Department of Education Report for 1951-52 (Lagos, 1952), p. 26.

[32] Binns, et. al., p. 41.

[33] See Table No. 7.

Secondary education was expanded significantly in several colonies, but the base from which it began was very small and advance was limited by the scarcity of students being graduated from the elementary schools. In general, its growth failed to keep pace with the planned increases, in contrast with the unexpectedly rapid rise at the elementary stage.

The Gold Coast was the most advanced colony in the provision of secondary schools. Some schools had been begun by Africans before 1900, and all four of those in existence in 1938 had been founded and staffed by them. The number grew quickly in the next decade, and by 1950 there were 57, of which the government operated two and assisted eleven, while the remainder were privately owned and staffed.[34]

The number of secondary school students was more than doubled in Nigeria and Nyasaland, and quadrupled in Kenya and Northern Rhodesia. In the two latter cases, however, the expansion was smaller than had been expected: in Kenya, the ten-year plan had aimed at providing primary education for 320,000 children and secondary education for 10,800;[35]

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[34]Philip Foster, Education and Social Change in Ghana (London, 1965), pp. 102, 115.

[35]Kenya, A Ten-Year Plan for the Development of African Education (Nairobi, 1948), p. 6.

TABLE NO. 8

SECONDARY AND HIGHER EDUCATION - NUMBER OF STUDENTS

Territory	Secondary school pupils Assisted 1945-6	Secondary school pupils Assisted 1951	Secondary school pupils Total 1945-6	Secondary school pupils Total 1951	Cambridge School Certificate 1946	Cambridge School Certificate 1951	Technical and Vocational school pupils 1945	Technical and Vocational school pupils 1951	Teachers in Training 1946	Teachers in Training 1951	University Students 1945	University Students 1951
Gold Coast		2,709[1]		6,673[1]	263[1]	539[1]		273[2]				339[1]
Nigeria			10,000[3]	24,225[4]				1,395[4]		7,200[4]		322[4]
Kenya			395[5]	1,908[5]				834[6]	738[5]		50[5]	86[5]
Tanganyika	2,543[7]			2,725[8]			350[7]	1,091[8]			25[7]	49[7]
Uganda		5,517[9]		6,569[9]		143[9]		358[9]		2,181[9]		
Northern Rhodesia			99[10]	386[10]								
Nyasaland	76[11]	170[11]					1,061[11] (includes teachers in training)	1,319[11]	(697)[11] (included in voactional schools figures)			

[1] Gold Coast, Education Department Report, 1946-47 (Accra, 1947), p. 10; 1951-52 (Accra, 1952), p. 6.

[2] Economic Survey, III, 19 (1950 figures)

[3] Parliamentary Reports (1947-48) No. 181, Fifth Report from the Select Committee on Estimates - Colonial Development, p. xix.

[4] Nigeria, Department of Education Report, 1951-52 (Lagos, 1952), pp. 26, 51.

[5] Kenya, Education Department Report, 1946 (Nairobi, 1947), pp. 8, 12; 1951 (Nairobi 1952), pp. 5, 19.

[6] Cmd. 9475 (1955) Report of the East African Royal Commission, p. 181.

[7] Bruce Hutt, A Ten-Year Plan for the Development of African Education (Dar es Salaam, 1947), pp. 5-6, 10.

[8] United Nations Trusteeship Council, Annexes, 13th Session, Agenda Item 3, p. 6.

[9] Colonial Office, Report on Uganda for the year 1951 (London, 1952), pp. 55-57.

[10] Northern Rhodesia, Annual Report on African Education for 1946 (Lusaka, 1947), p. 30; 1951 (Lusaka, 1952), p. 19.

[11] Nyasaland, Education Department Report, 1946 (Zomba, 1947), p. 12; 1951 (Zomba, 1952), pp. 4, 26.

actual attendance in 1951 was over 360,000 primary and under 2,000 secondary school pupils.[36] In Northern Rhodesia the numbers involved were minute: enrolment reached a total of 386 in 1951, with the aim for the ten years set at 600.[37] The rate of growth in Uganda is hard to determine, but the secondary school population in 1951 compares favourably with that in the Gold Coast.

The output of the secondary schools was everywhere inadequate from the point of view of providing a flow of graduates for higher education and absorption into government and industry. In the Gold Coast, where the situation was most favourable, a government paper of 1950 projected the number of university graduates to 1959, estimating a total of 180 in that year. It pointed out, however, that even an optimistic view of the maximum output of the secondary schools indicated that there would be too few students to provide for this many university graduates.[38]

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[36]See Tables No. 7 and No. 8.

[37]Northern Rhodesia, Report on African Education for 1946, p. 6.

[38]Gold Coast, Sessional Paper No. 1 of 1950 (Accra, 1950), pp. 14, 36.

Uganda came closest to rivalling the Gold Coast in secondary education, but the flow of graduates was too small to supply the civil service with professional and administrative recruits, to say nothing of providing for other fields of activity.[39] A commission reporting on the civil services of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, in 1947, thought it would be many years before an appreciable number of Africans could qualify for any of the higher posts.[40]

Technical and agricultural education was extremely backward throughout the African colonies, partly because Africans were not interested in it. At the time of the 1948 disturbances in the Gold Coast, there were complaints about the almost total lack of technical and vocational training and of advanced agricultural education,[41] but the pressure for academic education had originally come from the Africans themselves, in the face of pressure from British educationists for vocational training. As Philip Foster remarks,

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[39] Cmd. 9475 (1955-56), East Africa Royal Commission, 1953-1955, Report, p. 180.

[40] T. Fitzgerald, Report of the Commission on the Civil Services of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, 1947 (Lusaka, 1947), p. 7.

[41] Col. No. 231, Report of the Commission of Enquiry into Disturbances in the Gold Coast, 1948 (Aiken Watson Commission) (London, 1948), pp. 8, 57.

"African parents . . ., like those elsewhere, did not send their children to school to meet the needs of economic growth; they sent them there to maximise their children's opportunities within the emergent occupational and prestige structure created by colonial rule."[42]

Some progress was, nevertheless, made in the 1945 to 1951 period, particularly in Nigeria. Colonial Development and Welfare Funds totalling £ 1,250,000 were allocated for Colleges of Arts, Science and Technology in the Gold Coast and Nigeria, and building was begun in 1950.[43] Trade centres for the training of apprentices were established in Nigeria, as well as a Handicraft Centre and a Technical Institute.[44]

In East Africa, Europeans and Asians had an effective monopoly of skilled mechanical work, and technical education was established on a very small scale.[45] However, Kenya had three technical and trade schools in 1952, with 834 boys in training, mostly as

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[42]Foster, p. 105.

[43]Cmd. 8243 (1950-51), The Colonial Territories, 1950-1951, p. 4.

[44]Nigeria, Annual Report on the General Progress of Development and Welfare Schemes, 1951-1952 (Lagos, 1953), p. 27.

[45]Cmd. 9475, Royal Commission Report, p. 183.

carpenters and masons,[46] and plans were being made to set up an inter-racial college at Nairobi for training in science and technology.[47] In addition, three new schools for the training of African agricultural instructors had been built, at a cost of £ 33,000.[48] Five industrial and vocational schools were established in Tanganyika during the year 1949, and enrolment in such schools doubled between 1948 and 1951.[49] Uganda's relatively backward position was improved by the addition of five Junior Secondary Technical Schools, bringing the total number to eleven.[50]

There was also little technical education in Central Africa. Nyasaland had 622 pupils in vocational schools in 1951,[51] but this education must have been at a very low level, considering the small

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[46] Ibid., p. 181.

[47] - - - -, The Times Review of the British Colonies, "Technical Education" (March, 1951), pp. 11, 12.

[48] Kenya, African Development in Kenya, 1946-1955 (Nairobi, 1953), p. 13.

[49] U.N.T.C., Annexes, 13th Session - Doc. T/1091, Observations of UNESCO on Reports for 1952 from 6 African Trust Territories, Agenda Item 3 (New York, 1954), p. 6.

[50] Colonial Office, Report on Uganda for the Year 1951 (London, 1952), p. 56.

[51] Nyasaland, Education Department Report, 1951, p. 4.

number of primary school graduates.[52] No provision was made for the technical training of Africans in Northern Rhodesia, which is not surprising in view of the fact that occupations requiring such training were closed to them in any case.[53]

In view of the relative insignificance of secondary schooling, it is evident that very few potential university students could be produced. In fact, the total for all the African territories was under one thousand in 1951, which represented a considerable advance in five years.[54] The greatest progress was made in West Africa, and Central Africa lagged farthest behind, as it did in other aspects of education.

The Secretary of State for the Colonies had wished to establish a single University at Ibadan for the whole of West Africa, but, under pressure from the Gold Coast, he agreed to allow separate establishments in that colony and in Nigeria. The University College of the Gold Coast and the Nigerian University College at Ibadan were both opened in 1948, with the

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[52] See Table No. 7.

[53] See below, p. 299.

[54] See Table No. 8.

assistance of Colonial Development and Welfare Grants of £ 96,000 and £ 1,500,000 respectively.[55] Each had over 300 students in 1951, a relatively much larger number for the Gold Coast, with its smaller population.

Makerere College in Uganda provided higher education for East Africa, and a significant expansion of its facilities was undertaken at this time, during which Colonial Development and Welfare commitments totalling £ 532,850 were made, including £ 102,000 for the extension of the medical school.[56] The number of students, however, remained extremely small. Uganda was the only territory where any considerable number of Africans had previously taken medical training: of 57 holders of the Diploma of Medicine from Makerere College in 1946, 52 were Ugandans, while 57 of 66 medical students were also from that colony.[57] There was no provision for higher education in Central Africa.

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[55]Gold Coast, Education Department Report, 1951-1952, p. 6; Nigeria, Education Department Report, 1951-1952, p. 51.

[56]H. C. Papers No. 127 (1947), 211 (1949) and 189 (1951), Colonial Development and Welfare Acts, Return of Schemes.

[57]422 H.C. Deb., cols. 1846-1847 (Statement by Secretary of State George Hall).

Since one of the most severe limitations on the growth of education was the shortage of teachers, a great effort was made to increase the output of teacher training schools, with worthwhile results. In Nigeria, where fewer than one-quarter of the 40,000 teachers were trained,[58] the output of trainees in the Eastern Region reached between 1300 and 1400 by 1951.[59] Kenya's expenditure on teacher training was nearly double the planned figure in the first seven years, with the result that the output of teachers rose from 340 to 900.[60] Training schools in Uganda and Northern Rhodesia produced 573 and 383 teachers respectively in 1951.[61]

Adult literacy campaigns were also conducted in a number of territories, and in some an effort was made to provide vernacular reading material, in order that literacy might be maintained. In Nigeria, for

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[58]Nigeria, Education Department Report, 1951-1952, p. 26.

[59]Nigeria, Report on the Progress of Development and Welfare Schemes, 1951-1952, p. 23.

[60]Kenya, Some Aspects of the Development of Kenya Government Services for the Benefit of Africans from 1946 Onwards (Nairobi, 1953), pp. 1-3.

[61]Colonial Office, Report on Uganda, p. 57; Northern Rhodesia, Report on African Education for 1951, p. 30.

example, there were 33 campaigns in 1950, in which 52,700 persons were instructed.[62] The Uganda Department of Social Welfare began a literary drive in 1948, and by the end of 1951 a total of 3,769 literacy certificates had been issued.[63] An East African Literature Bureau and Publishing Fund was established in Tanganyika, with the assistance of a Colonial Development and Welfare Grant of £ 99,000,[64] and a Publications Bureau in Northern Rhodesia received assistance amounting to £ 47,000.[65]

It is when we come to assess the significance of all this expenditure of energy and money on African education that questions begin to arise. In particular, one wonders what purpose was to be served by the feverish rush to press all African children into the first four years of elementary school, where fewer than one-third of them stayed long enough to achieve literacy. It is hard to escape the conclusion that by far the larger part of the money spent on primary

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[62] Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, III, 50.

[63] Ibid., II, 76.

[64] Reports on Tanganyika, 1947 and 1948, pp. 163, 199.

[65] H.C. Paper No. 211 (1949), Return of Schemes.

education was completely wasted, since many even of those who did become literate were likely to relapse quickly into illiteracy after they left school. For the greater part of the population, trade and agricultural schools at a fairly elementary level, possibly supplemented by an apprentice system, would have made much more reasonable use of available funds.

At the higher levels, a minute proportion of the population was receiving education, partly because so few passed through the elementary schools. The number of people who had a chance to become administrators, agricultural experts, doctors, veterinaries or engineers was so completely inadequate that local people could not be expected to supply more than a small fraction of the need for many years to come.

It is quite clear that whatever limitations were placed on the expansion of education by a shortage of money, a more fundamental lack was the shortage of ideas and aims. The officials actually occupied with education were engaged in a sincere attempt to 'educate' more and more Africans, but there was little relation between educational policy and other parts of the development plans, The people were to be trained neither for a permanently inferior status under

European domination, nor for the rural society envisaged in the economic plans. If enough money had been available they might, in time, have been educated for life in industrial England, but this was beyond the means of any colony. Thus, in the one area where some genuine effort was made, at least by those directly involved, to carry out a policy of trusteeship, it remained largely incoherent and irrelevant.

Under these circumstances, Governments pursued education without any logical social purpose in view, other than to satisfy people by pretending that something was being done to improve their situation. The simplest procedure was to funnel as many children as possible into the primary schools, in accordance with the normal practice in European countries. The natural tendency, with no particular end to be served, was to follow the line of lowest cost and least resistance: it was easy to persuade parents to send very young children to school, and no problem concerning future employment was created, as might have been the case if clerks and artisans had been trained to compete with Europeans. Conflict with the missions, which controlled most education, could also be avoided. The largest number of people could be brought into contact with education at the lowest possible cost and with the

least disruption of society.

Another factor involved was obviously the European obsession with literacy, which was looked upon as a cure-all for society in general, and as a pre-requisite to self-government, since people could understand politics only if they were able to read and write. It did not occur to Europeans that the bare literacy acquired in four years was irrelevant to people who had nothing to read and little reason for reading, and no one seems to have realized that western experience had proved conclusively that even twelve years of education does not confer on its victims the ability to understand politics. In any case, training for democracy, under existing conditions, must have appeared to Africans to be completely unrelated to reality.

However, even if it had been possible to decide where African society was going, and to devise an appropriate educational system, Africans would have been unable to utilize it without the fulfilment of certain other conditions. First, and most important, it is evident that peasants or workers living in dire poverty could not afford to keep children in school after they were old enough to work, particularly if they were not motivated by seeing any useful purpose in the

education available. Only significant economic advance would have enabled most Africans to send their children to schools of any kind, and, at the same time, opened up the opportunities which would have made education a worthwhile investment.

In addition, a social revolution was needed, to eliminate the artificial barriers which prevented full participation by Africans in the social, economic and political life of their respective communities. In other words, any educational programme could have operated effectively only if it had been integrated into a comprehensive plan for the improvement of all aspects of society. In theory, the Labour Government had such a plan; in practice, the failure to imagine the possibility that Africans were capable of a genuinely independent existence prevented its becoming a reality.

CHAPTER XIV

HEALTH SERVICES

Improvement of health services was the only other important item in Labour's social policy for the African colonies. Although the economic losses resulting from poor health had been noted by the Labour Party as early as 1929, health was generally considered a less significant factor in colonial development than education. Nevertheless, when the Joint East African Board mentioned, in 1943, an estimate that half the efficiency of the native population was being lost as a result of numerous chronic diseases, it was expressing a widely held view.[1]

One of the problems involved in any discussion of the health of Africans is the almost complete absence of any accurate information on the incidence of disease. Despite Labour's insistence on the need for the

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[1]Joint East African Board, Memorandum on Post-war Problems in East Africa (London, 1943), p. 14.

collection of vital statistics, the situation was little better in 1951 than it had been six years earlier. Normally, the only statistics available are those which show the number of patients treated for various diseases at hospitals and dispensaries. These do not, however, indicate the full incidence of a given disease amongst hospital patients: each person is listed as being treated only for one principal disease, while he may also be suffering from several others, of which no record is made. It should be noted, also, that an increase in patients treated does not prove an increase in the occurrence of a disease, but may indicate, rather, the growth of facilities for treatment. It is, therefore, necessary to depend largely on guesses and opinions in trying to determine major trends in the health of the African population.

In the Gambia, the original assumption of the local government, that the development programme should be weighted on the side of the social services, was overruled by the United Kingdom government, in favour of a greater emphasis on economic development.[2] Nevertheless, the development of health services still ranked as the second largest item in the Colonial Development

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[2]Gambia, Sessional Paper No. 14, 1946 (Bathurst, 1946), p. 1.

and Welfare grants to that colony.[3] At the same time, ordinary expenditure on medical services in the Protectorate increased by two-thirds between 1945 and 1951,[4] although inflation undoubtedly accounted for much of this gain.

The results achieved indicate that a much larger effort would have been needed to produce significant improvement. In 1951, there were two hospitals, which would have a total of 200 beds on completion of the new building at Bathurst in 1953; there were also 7 doctors, 1 dentist and 46 nurses, for a population of 300,000 people. Malaria was universal, and no anti-malaria campaign had been begun; a survey in representative villages showed 44% of those examined infected with sleeping sickness.[5] A 1947 survey had shown a leper incidence of 2.5% in the whole population, and there is no evidence that any attempt to combat the disease was made;[6] preliminary studies indicated an infant mortality rate of 500 per thousand

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[3]Col. No. 281, An Economic Survey of the Colonial Territories, 1951 (London, 1952), III, 15.

[4]H. A. Gailey, A History of the Gambia (London, 1964), p. 214.

[5]Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, III, 2, 7.

[6]Gambia, Sessional Paper No. 2, 1948 (Bathurst, 1948), p. 6.

in some areas as late as 1961.[7]

The Gold Coast development plan of 1946 envisaged an expenditure of £ 1,626,000 on the development of medical services, or about 14% of the total.[8] Although this was a much smaller sum, relative to population, than that allotted in the Gambia, only a small part of it was actually spent. It is impossible to determine what medical facilities were established, since the annual reports give no information on the matter.

What can be said with certainty is that ill health, as an important factor in reducing labour efficiency,[9] posed a very serious problem, and that no visible progress was made towards its solution. According to the Seers Ross Report, a survey of a typical cocoa village, made in 1950, showed that 32% of the people had malarial infection, 52% hookworm, 76% arcana and 75% yaws.[10] The medical reports indicate that the two most important

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[7]Gailey, p. 176.

[8]Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, III, 47.

[9]Ibid., p. 19.

[10]W. Birmingham, I, Neustadt and E. N. Omaboe, A Study of Contemporary Ghana (Evanston, 1966), I, 158.

diseases were yaws and malaria, followed by venereal diseases, leprosy and dysentery. Between 1946 and 1951, there was an increase in the number of patients treated for malaria, gonorrhea, syphilis, leprosy, dysentery and tuberculosis, while the number of those treated for yaws, sleeping sickness and smallpox declined. More significant is the fact that, in 1951, over 100,000 people were treated for malaria, compared with 48,000 in 1946, and that 130 of each 1000 registered deaths were caused by this disease alone.[11] Since malaria was now a preventable disease, which was being rapidly wiped out in many parts of the world, such a large increase in the number of patients treated seems to indicate a remarkable failure in the field of preventive medicine.

The serious shortage of medical facilities in Nigeria was recognized by the allocation of nearly £ 9 million for the development of health services over the first ten years, a slightly larger proportion than was allotted in the Gold Coast.[12] Colonial Development and Welfare grants for 1946-1951 amounted to £ 1,600,000,

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[11]Gold Coast, Medical Department Reports, 1946-1947 (Accra, 1947), p. 9; 1951-52 (Accra, 1952), p. 2.

[12]Nigeria, A Ten-Year Plan of Development and Welfare for Nigeria, 1946 (Lagos, 1946), p. 15.

including large sums for the continuation of an anti-leprosy campaign.[13] Ordinary medical expenditures grew from £ 732,000 in 1945-1946 to over £ 2,000,000 in 1952-1953.[14]

The considerable growth in medical and health facilities during the first five years served mainly to point up the magnitude of the problem and the futility of such a small scale attack upon it. The building or extension of 25 hospitals was undertaken,[15] and the ratio of population to hospital beds was decreased from 5000 to 3000; the number of doctors in service grew from 171 to 509. The provision of adequate services would have required fifteen times as many hospital beds and thirty times as many doctors. Since the maximum output of the medical schools was 48 doctors, they could have produced the requisite number in about 300 years.[16]

The number of patients treated for all reported diseases was higher in 1951 than in 1946, but

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[13] Ibid., p. 34.

[14] United Kingdom Information Service, Nigeria: The Making of a Nation (London, 1960), p. 17.

[15] Nigeria, Annual Report on the General Progress of Development and Welfare Schemes, 1951-1952 (Lagos, 1953), pp. 40-41.

[16] Nigeria, Ten-Year Plan, p. 67; Medical Services Report, 1951-1952 (Lagos, 1952), pp. 6-7.

cases of, and deaths resulting from, smallpox were down from the previous year, probably as a consequence of the increasing number of vaccinations, of which there were over three million in 1951. Once again, there was little progress in the fight against malaria, and 50,000 children a year still died from it, while treated cases grew from 100,000 to 157,000 in the five years.[17] Field surveys produced estimates that one-third to one-half or more of the population was infested with worms; yaws was endemic in the east and widely spread throughout the south; it was estimated that four-fifths of the population suffered from venereal disease; there were some 400,000 lepers.[18] Evidently, the effort so far being made could do no more than touch the exposed tip of Nigeria's iceberg of disease.

Kenya's development programme called for an expenditure of £ 2 million on health services, three-quarters of which was to be spent on facilities for Africans.[19] Since there was already one hospital bed

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[17]Nigeria, Medical Services Reports, 1946, p. 5; 1951-1952, p. 7; Health Services Report, 1951-1952, pp. 17-18, 41-43.

[18]Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, III, 50; Nigeria, Health Services Report, 1951-1952, p. 19.

[19]Kenya, Some Aspects of the Development of Kenya Government Services for the Benefit of Africans from 1946 Onwards (Nairobi, 1953), p. 4.

per 1000 of population, the building of hospitals was considered to have low priority, and more emphasis was to be placed on the creation of health centres, the expansion of African training facilities, and on the improvement of existing conditions in hospitals. There were segregated health facilities for Europeans, Asians and Africans, and the plan aimed at the provision of 10 beds per 1,000 Europeans, 3 per 1,000 Asians and 1.5 per thousand Africans.[20]

During the five years 1946-1951, development funds of £ 750,000 went to health services, and the ordinary expenses of the medical department more than doubled, with 85% of these latter costs being applied to African services.[21] The number of hospital beds for Africans was increased from 4,085 to 5,828,[22] and a tuberculosis and chest hospital was opened in 1951 for all races; the number of beds for African mental patients was more than doubled.[23] There was now one

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[20]Kenya, Report of the Development Committee (Nairobi, 1946), pp. 67, 149.

[21]Development of Kenya Government Services, pp. 4, 8.

[22]Kenya, Medical Department Report, 1946 (Nairobi, 1947), p. 7; 1951 (Nairobi, 1952), p. 23ff.

[23]Development of Kenya Government Services, pp. 6, 8.

hospital bed for each 722 Africans, and one for each 72 Europeans.[24] In addition, four training schools for dressers, two for midwives and one for African health assistants had been built.[25]

Although Kenya's relatively good medical services were thus further expanded during the period of Labour rule, little progress was made in improving the health of Africans. Statistics on hospital treatment are scarce, and many prevalent diseases are not mentioned in the medical reports. The Joint East African Board had noted, in 1943, that malaria, black-water fever, hook-worm, bilharzia, yaws, leprosy, sleeping sickness and venereal diseases were endemic in East Africa,[26] and there is nothing to indicate that any significant change took place at this time. It was generally agreed that the incidence of tuberculosis was on the increase,[27] and the statistics on cases treated indicate a similar trend for venereal diseases.[28]

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[24]Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, II, 14.

[25]Development of Kenya Government Services, p. 6.

[26]Joint East African Board, Memorandum on Post-War Problems, p. 14.

[27]Kenya Colony, Tuberculosis in Kenya (Nairobi, 1951), p. 115.

[28]Kenya, Medical Department Reports, 1946, p. 12; 1951, pp. 23-30.

Malaria cases declined from 103,000 in 1946 to 65,000 in 1951, but the fact that there were over 100,000 cases again in 1962 shows that this was not the result of a successful campaign to eradicate the disease.[29] No information on the other diseases mentioned is available.

Little attention was given to the development of health services in Tanganyika. Although the Development Commission had scheduled an amount of £ 3 million for this purpose,[30] only £ 47,000 was actually spent up to the end of 1950, and the revised plan of that year drastically scaled down the proportion of development funds intended for the social services.[31] Nevertheless, there was an alleged increase of 21 hospitals with 900 beds between 1947 and 1948.[32] Perhaps this merely serves to point up the unreliability of colonial statistics.

The Tanganyika Government reported a decline in epidemic diseases, such as smallpox and meningitis,

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[29] Kenya, Medical Department Reports, 1946, p. 12; 1951, pp. 23-30; Ministry of Health and Housing Report, 1962 (Nairobi, 1963), pp. 46-60.

[30] Tanganyika Development Commission, A Ten-Year Development and Welfare Plan for Tanganyika Territory (Dar es Salaam, 1946), p. 17.

[31] Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, II, 70.

[32] Ibid., p. 49.

and an increasing number of treated cases of malaria, pneumonia, gonorrhea, syphilis, yaws and pulmonary tuberculosis: sleeping sickness was thought to be increasing, although there was a decline in the number of patients treated. The three most prevalent diseases, according to the treatment statistics, were malaria, yaws and syphilis: the medical reports showed the number of cases as 132,000 for malaria, 60,000 for yaws and 41,000 for syphilis. Surveys "suggested" that there were 100,000 lepers.[33] About 60% of the African population was thought to be suffering from trachoma.[34]

The Uganda Development and Welfare Committee recommended an expenditure of over £ 1 million on health services, with special campaigns against malaria, venereal disease and tuberculosis.[35] It is impossible to tell whether or how this money was spent, but, in 1951, malaria was still the most widespread illness, and venereal disease continued to gain ground.[36]

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[33]Colonial Office, Report by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom to the Trusteeship Council of the United Nations (London, 1949), p. 160; 1949 (London, 1950), p. 141.

[34]H.C. Paper No. 252 (1948-49), Overseas Food Corporation, Report and Accounts for 1948-49, p. 155.

[35]Uganda, Joint Report of the Standing Finance Committee and the Development and Welfare Committee on Post-War Development (Entebbe, 1945), p. 8.

[36]Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, II, 76.

The Northern Rhodesia development plan proposed an outlay of £ 1,700,000 on health services, of which £ 573,000 was to be provided from Colonial Development and Welfare funds.[37] During the first six years three new hospitals were built and the number of medical officers grew from 26 to 35.[38] About two-thirds of actual expenditure on ordinary account and for development went for African health services.[39]

The number of Africans treated at hospitals and dispensaries continued to rise, but this had no significance beyond the fact that facilities were increasing.[40] Malaria, hookworm and bilharzia were common everywhere, and venereal disease, sleeping sickness and leprosy were important in some areas.[41]

A relatively small proportion of Nyasaland's development funds were devoted to health, and less than one-fifth of the £ 1 million set aside for this purpose

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[37] Ibid., I, 33.

[38] Northern Rhodesia, Health Department Report, 1951 (Lusaka, 1952), pp. 12, 15.

[39] Cmd. 8235 (1951), Central African Territories: Comparative Survey of Native Policy, p. 70.

[40] Northern Rhodesia, Health Department Report, 1946 (Lusaka, 1947), pp. 7, 32-34.

[41] Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, I, 10.

was actually used in the first five years.[42] Four health units were built in that time, but staff shortages prevented three of them from becoming fully operational, and two had only dispensary services. A training school for medical aides was opened late in 1951.[43]

Medical statistics show a continuous increase in the total number of patients treated, with a particularly rapid rise in cases of malaria and venereal disease, but this is attributable to enlarged facilities and to propaganda. In 1951, the hospital and dispensary staff recorded 92,833 cases of malaria, 28,653 of venereal disease and 21,662 of bilharziasis. A survey begun at Karonga in 1950 showed that between 30% and 50% of all patients admitted to hospitals were infested with worms.[44]

It is evident that, despite a continued and, in some cases, substantial increase in medical facilities, little improvement in the health of Africans was actually accomplished, nor was any significant step taken towards the elimination of

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[42] Ibid., p. 62.

[43] Nyasaland, Medical Department Report, 1951 (Zomba, 1952), p. 4.

[44] Ibid., pp. 8-13.

eradicable diseases. In particular, the proposed campaign against malaria had not yet got under way in Africa, and medical staffs treated 547,000 people for this disease in 1951 in the five colonies for which the statistics are available.

The single most important obstacle to the further expansion of health services, in addition to lack of funds, was the shortage of qualified staff. This is clearly related to the backwardness of education in the colonies, which meant that doctors had to be obtained from the United Kingdom. George Hall reported to Parliament, in May, 1946, that there were 128 vacancies in the colonial medical service, and that appointments exceeded retirements by 15 a month.[45] However, many applicants were unwilling to serve in some parts of Africa, which could, therefore, be adequately supplied only if locally trained doctors were available.[46] The shortage of such local training in Nigeria has already been noted: similar conditions existed in the Gold Coast, which had the money to train doctors, but could not find places for them in medical

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[45] 422 H.C. Deb., col. 1858.

[46] 419 H.C. Deb., col. 258 (w.a.).

schools.[47] In East and Central Africa there were no fully trained African doctors, but 57 Africans held the East Africa Diploma of Medicine, and 61 more were in training. Nearly all of these were in Uganda, and the remainder were in Tanganyika; there were no Africans who held even this diploma in Kenya, Southern Rhodesia or Nyasaland.[48]

A much more significant factor in the appalling health conditions, however, was the poverty which made it impossible for Africans to receive an adequate diet. In the words of the Economic Survey, relating to Gambia, there was "a vicious circle of poverty, malnutrition, infestation with parasites and infections."[49] A survey in Niger Province of Nigeria showed nutritional deficiencies "so widespread as to lead to a vast amount of ill-health, lack of efficiency, and an extremely high infant mortality rate." One of the conductors of this survey maintained that 51% of children born were dead by the end of their fifth year, and figures showed that 13% of all children under three years old

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[47] J. B. Danquah, Friendship and Empire (London, 1949), p. 13.

[48] 422 H.C. Deb., cols. 1846-1847.

[49] Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, III, 2.

admitted to hospital died solely from malnutrition.[50] The cost of an adequate diet was well above anything the average Nigerian could afford to pay.[51] The Carpenter Committee reported a similar inability to buy enough food on the part of workers in Kenya.[52] The Overseas Food Corporation found evidence of nutritional deficiency in all its labourers, but was certain they were better off in this respect than the surrounding African population.[53]

Once again, it is clear that the health of Africans could be significantly bettered only in the context of drastic changes in the whole of their society. Until poverty and ignorance were relieved by economic development and educational advance, the most devoted medical officers could do no more than provide a little comfort in the sufferings which social conditions made inevitable.

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[50] Col. No. 266, Report of the Nigerian Livestock Mission (London, 1950), p. 69.

[51] Ibid., p. 71.

[52] Kenya, Report of the Committee on African Wages (Nairobi, 1951), p. 32.

[53] H.C. Paper No. 147, Overseas Food Corporation, Report and Accounts for 1949-50 (London, 1950), p. 42.

CHAPTER XV

SOCIAL WELFARE

When we come to examine the other social services, we find an almost complete absence of any attempt to protect Africans in sickness, unemployment or old age, as well as of any provision for the support of blind, crippled or otherwise disabled members of the community. The idea that such social services were required in African society was rejected, both in London and by colonial administrators. A Colonial Office memorandum of 1945 had pointed out the need for action to develop new techniques of social welfare, since the breakdown of tribal society had caused the collapse of the traditional system and the growth of cities had raised new social problems such as destitution, child vagrancy and delinquency.[1] It does not appear, however, that these problems were taken very seriously.

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[1]Colonial Office, Social Welfare in the Colonies (London, 1945), pp. 2, 3.

The Colonial Office, it is true, did pay lip service to the idea that social welfare was a government responsibility. Early in the Labour period, George Hall reconstituted and enlarged the Colonial Social Welfare Advisory Committee and recruited 25 additional social welfare workers from the United Kingdom, 10 of whom went to Africa,[2] but it is difficult to know what such workers could have done under the existing conditions. By 1950, the Colonial Office maintained that social welfare work was being organized in most colonies,[3] but, if so, few results were obtained.

West African governments paid no attention whatever to social security. Although the Gold Coast had a Department of Social Welfare and Community Development, its first report, for 1946-1951, made no mention of any activity beyond the preparation of a plan for mass education,[4] and there was no provision for any kind of social security.[5] Conditions were

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[2]425 H.C. Deb., cols. 251-252.

[3]Colonial Office, Appointments in His Majesty's Colonial Service (London, 1950), p. 57.

[4]Gold Coast, Report of the Department of Social Welfare and Community Development, 1946-1951 (Accra, 1952), p. 7.

[5]Gold Coast, Labour Department Report, 1951-1952 (Accra, 1952), p. 10.

similar in Nigeria, where social security was provided by "the indigenous system of family solidarity".[6]

The one colony in Africa which took any notice of the need for social welfare was Kenya, where the government provided £ 15,000 a year to maintain destitute people not aided by voluntary organizations. In general, however, social security for Africans was supplied by the family or tribe.[7]

Elsewhere in East Africa, social welfare referred only to health and education. The reports on Tanganyika stated that no services were "provided or contemplated with respect to widows' pensions, old age pensions, maternity benefits, health benefits, unemployment benefits, relief or other forms of protection." All these were a "tribal responsibility."[8] Detribalized Africans were cared for by the missions, or, in a few cases, by township authorities.[9] In Uganda, the avowed policy was "to leave the care of the destitute and disabled in the hands of the tribal, clan

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[6]Col. No. 281, An Economic Survey of the Colonial Territories, 1951 (London, 1952), III, 51.

[7]Ibid., II, 15.

[8]Colonial Office, Report by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom to the Trusteeship Council of the United Nations for 1949 (London, 1950), p. 151.

[9]Ibid., 1948, p. 174.

and family organizations which have traditionally accepted this responsibility."[10]

The Central African territories also had no social services for Africans outside health and education, and the traditional social system was expected to provide security.[11] In Northern Rhodesia, the first homes for aged Africans were opened in 1963;[12] in Nyasaland, protection against sickness, old age, unemployment and widowhood remained a family responsibility, at least until 1960.[13]

This policy of ignoring the need for African social security, in the context of the breakdown of tribal society and the growth of an urban working class, reflects to some extent the view that African workers were interlopers in towns and cities, or on European farms, and could be treated as transients who had no right to family life outside their tribal villages. Wage scales made no allowance even for the

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[10] Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, II, 77.

[11] Cmd. 8235 (1951), Central African territories: Comparative Survey of Native Policy, p. 58.

[12] Northern Rhodesia, Report of the Department of Social Welfare, 1963 (Lusaka, 1964), p. 5.

[13] Nyasaland, Labour Department Report, 1960 (Zomba, 1961), p. 44.

support of a family, much less for the possibility of setting aside any portion of earnings to provide for illness, unemployment, or old age. Employers escaped any responsibility for producing or maintaining a permanent labour force, since the indirect social costs were borne entirely by African village society. Africans were treated as a people apart, with none of the rights of ordinary human beings.

This idea of the separation between Europeans and Africans leads naturally to a consideration of one last aspect of social development, the elimination of the colour bar. There were few questions on which the Labour Party and its spokesmen had expressed themselves so clearly as on the need to put an end to any kind of privilege based on race: there were also few areas in which the Labour Government did less to put principle into practice.

Arthur Creech Jones was one who took a strong stand on the matter of race discrimination. Just before Labour came to power, he made a statement opposing "segregation, colour bars and racial political superiority," and spoke of these as problems presenting great difficulties.[14] Apparently, he found the

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[14] A. Creech Jones, "Labour and the Colonies," African Affairs, Vol. 44 (July, 1945), p. 111.

difficulties insuperable when he assumed office: in 1947, he told the Fabian Colonial Bureau that he would not be satisfied until conditions of common citizenship and non-discrimination had been achieved, and spoke of settlers in Kenya who were able to "flout the proposals and decisions of the Colonial Office."[15] The Labour Party Conference that year failed to sympathize with him, and passed a resolution which urged on the government that "coloured races . . . be given equal status and opportunity with the white race."[16]

In practice, it did not prove possible even to end discrimination in government employment, which continued, in East and Central Africa, throughout the years of Labour rule. Creech Jones asked the colonial governments, in 1947, "to consider fixing a salary or range of salaries for a job irrespective of the race of the person doing it,"[17] but, while this may have been

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[15] Fabian Colonial Bureau, Kenya Controversy (London, 1947), p. 16.

[16] Labour Party, Report of the Forty-Sixth Annual Conference (London, 1947), p. 114.

[17] A. Creech Jones, Labour's Colonial Policy (London, 1947), p. 12.

considered, it was done only in West Africa, where the local authorities were prepared to accept it.

A report prepared by Sir Walter Harragin, Chief Justice of the Gold Coast, in 1946, recommended, for all civil servants in West Africa, the same basic pay plus expatriation pay for overseas officers at the rate of one-third of basic salary.[18] This recommendation was adopted and the West African civil service became, at least nominally, non-racial in character.[19] There still remained, partly by virtue of the scarcity of educated Africans, the division between the senior and junior services, with Africans concentrated mainly in the junior.[20]

The commissions which investigated the civil services of East and Central Africa, however, advised that separate rates of pay for different races should be maintained. In East Africa, this advice was justified on three grounds: firstly, it was argued that the economy of the area would be disrupted if the

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[18] Col. No. 209, Report of the Commission on the Civil Services of British West Africa, 1945-1946 (London, 1947), p. 10.

[19] A. L. Adu, The Civil Service in New African States (London, 1965), p. 18.

[20] K. Nkrumah, Autobiography (London, 1957), p. 148; Nigeria, Report of the Commission on the Public Services of the Governments in the Federation of Nigeria, 1954-1955 (Lagos, 1955), pp. 32-38.

government paid salaries four or five times as high as those available in outside employment; secondly, the law of supply and demand required that Europeans and Asians receive higher wages; thirdly, Africans were less efficient workers than the others, and were therefore worth less.[21] The commission recommended that the three separate services for Europeans, Asians and Africans should be consolidated into one service, but that no change be made in the racial basis of the salary scale.[22] Continued discrimination against Africans in the matter of salaries was also recommended in Central Africa, on the ground that so few Africans had the educational qualifications for entry into the unified services or any of the higher posts in the overseas service that there was no point in considering the question of new rates of pay for them.[23]

The Labour Government tamely accepted these recommendations, thus ensuring the continuation of such situations as that reported by Fenner Brockway, in

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[21]Col. No. 223, Report of the Commission on the Civil Services of Kenya, Tanganyika, Uganda and Zanzibar, 1947-1948 (London, 1948), pp. 24-25.

[22]Ibid., p. 28.

[23]T. Fitzgerald, Report of the Commission on the Civil Services of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, 1947 (Lusaka, 1947), pp. 7-9.

which African veterinary surgeons working in the Kenya Department of Agriculture under an unqualified European were paid a lower salary than he was.[24] The Kenya civil service was finally opened to all races on an equal basis in 1955,[25] and the same step was taken in Northern Rhodesia in 1961.[26]

Following the lead of the colonial governments, other employers naturally maintained the differential pay system also. Tom Mboya mentions, for example, that when he began to work as a sanitary inspector for the Nairobi City Council, in 1951, he was paid one-fifth of the salary of European inspectors for the same job.[27] In its operations at Kongwa, the Overseas Food Corporation established different rates of pay for European, Asian and African workers,[28] and, in Northern Rhodesia, European trade unions successfully resisted "equal pay for equal work."[29]

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[24]F. Brockway, Why Mau Mau?, p. 8.

[25]British Information Services, Kenya (London, 1963), p. 35.

[26]United Kingdom Information Service, Canada, Northern Rhodesia (London, 1962), p. 15.

[27]Tom Mboya, Freedom and After (London, 1963), p. 30.

[28]H. H. Armstrong, Report on a Visit to Kongwa, Tanganyika Territory (Mauritius, n.d.), p. 6.

[29]United Kingdom Board of Trade, The African Native Market in the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland (London, 1954), p. 8.

Northern Rhodesia also had an institutionalized system of reserving certain posts exclusively for Europeans. A commission appointed to inquire into the advancement of Africans in industry recommended that some semi-skilled jobs should be opened to Africans, but the recommendation could not be put into effect.[30] This system was supported by the racial organization of trade unions, which was common throughout East and Central Africa.[31] In 1955, an agreement was reached which opened 24 categories of European jobs to Africans.[32]

When prices for agricultural produce were fixed or subsidized, again there was racial discrimination. The Ministry of Food, in signing contracts for the purchase of coffee, related the price paid to European growers to the New York price, but made no such relation in the case of African-grown coffee, which was bought at a much lower price. When the Ministry increased its prices, they were increased less for African coffee than for that grown by Europeans.[33]

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[30]Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, I, 23.

[31]Colonial Office, Trade Unions in the Overseas Territories (London, 1961), pp. 5-14.

[32]U.K.I.S., Northern Rhodesia, p. 27.

[33]Charlotte Leubuscher, Bulk Buying from the Colonies (London, 1956), pp. 34-36.

In Northern Rhodesia, the sale of maize was regulated by a Maize Control Board, which subsidized prices and paid about 50% more for European maize than for that sold by Africans.[34]

Social segregation was practised to some extent in all the African colonies, but was much less strongly entrenched in West Africa than elsewhere. Exclusive clubs for Europeans were the rule even there, however, and Sir Alan Burns, who was "practically born into the Colonial Civil Service," argued that "European clubs in West Africa are no more unreasonable than are British clubs in the United States or American clubs in Great Britain."[35] A member of the House of Commons, talking about colonial education problems with a British professor in 1950, was told how, when he wished to have a discussion with some of his former students, the professor was forced to walk up and down the street with them, since his European host would not invite them to his home, and he could not take them either to the club or to the hotel.[36]

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[34]Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, I, 16.

[35]Sir Alan Burns, Colonial Civil Servant (London, 1949), pp. 9, 58.

[36]477 H.C. Deb., cols. 1435-1436.

Segregation in schools and hospitals in East and Central Africa has already been noticed, along with the fact that much better and more costly services were provided for Europeans. The Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies explained to the House of Commons, in 1950, that separate secondary schools for the various races were desirable in Kenya because of differences in language and cultural background.[37] A few years earlier, the Kenya Development Committee had recommended that separate health services be continued because of "disparities in standards of living and social habits."[38] No change was made in any of these arrangements under Labour rule.

Although James Griffiths, as Colonial Secretary, expressed the desire and the hope that racial discrimination would soon disappear,[39] the colour bar remained in such places as hotels and restaurants. When the Chief Secretary was asked in the Kenya Legislative Council whether he would introduce a measure to end this practice, he answered that he would not do so, since

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[37] 480 H.C. Deb., col. 169 (w.a.).

[38] Kenya, Report of the Development Committee (Nairobi, 1946), pp. 141, 149.

[39] 478 H.C. Deb., col. 2764.

"such matters as changes in social custom cannot be effectively dealt with by legislation too far in advance of public opinion."[40] One of the worst blunders made at Kongwa was the building of a new and swanky European shop, to which Africans were not admitted.[41] It was only after the Kenya Government introduced non-racial conditions in the civil service that some hotels in Nairobi began to relax their colour bar practices.[42] Rapid changes came at a later period, as evidenced by the fact that Northern Rhodesia passed legislation, in 1959, requiring that Africans must be admitted to public places, such as cafes.[43]

Another example of the difficulty of changing racial attitudes is found in the continuation of the use of flogging as a punishment. The problem of corporal punishment in the African colonies was a very frequent subject of question in the House of Commons when James Griffiths was colonial secretary, following

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[40]Kenya Legislative Council, Debates, Second Series, XXXII, col. 164.

[41]Alan Wood, The Groundnut Affair (London, 1950), p. 171.

[42]Tom Mboya, The Kenya Question: An African Answer (London, 1956), p. 15.

[43]R. W. Paule, former District Commissioner and Provincial Commissioner in Northern Rhodesia. Personal Interview (January 27, 1966).

the passage by the United Nations Assembly, in November, 1949, of a resolution urging Great Britain and Belgium to abandon the practice in their territories. Griffiths stated that the British Government supported the resolution, and that he had ordered an examination of the whole question of corporal punishment in the colonial empire.[44] Nevertheless, Griffiths did not succeed in bringing the custom to an end, in the face of opposition from the old colonial administrators, who considered that the natives were children, who had to be disciplined like children, if order were to be maintained.[45] At that time, the power to inflict corporal punishment on adults and juveniles was vested in the courts of every African colony except Nyasaland, and it was being regularly used in several territories.[46]

After Labour lost power, the failure to end racial discrimination was recognized in the Party's literature and policy statements. A Fabian Colonial Bureau pamphlet of 1952 proposed, for Kenya, equal

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[44] 473 H.C. Deb., col. 135; 474, col. 944.

[45] Rt. Hon. James Griffiths, Personal interview (December 15, 1965).

[46] 474 H.C. Deb., col. 128.

opportunity for all citizens in the holding of land and an end to racial segregation in the towns;[47] the following year the Bureau proclaimed that the time had come "to embark definitely on the course of equality," and thought Kenya should "begin to take steps towards . . . eventual abandonment" [Italics mine] of the system of allocating land by race.[48] In 1956, a Labour Party policy statement described racial discrimination as being "strongly entrenched in East and Central Africa," although it was said to be in the process of breaking down in hotels, restaurants and shops. It was admitted that hospitals, schools the residence allocations were still segregated, and recognition that this had official support was shown in the promise that the next Labour Government would "direct all colonial governments to remove all administrative and statutory discriminations. . . ."[49]

Labour's social policy gives little indication that there was any real intention of treating Africans as partners in the development of a multi-racial

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[47]Fabian Colonial Bureau, East African Future (London, 1952), pp. 18, 19.

[48]Fabian Colonial Bureau, Opportunity in Kenya (London, 1953), p. 9.

[49]Labour Party, Labour's Colonial Policy (London, 1956), pp. 14, 17, 42.

commonwealth in which all would have an equal share. The ideal of extending equal social services to all members of such a commonwealth, far from being put into practice, was not even contemplated. No attempt was made to integrate African workers into urban society, or to end social discrimination. The dream and the reality remained as far apart as ever.

CHAPTER XVI

CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Although it was generally agreed that political advance must be rooted in social and economic development, there was no doubt that it was in the realm of politics that Great Britain could play her most significant role in the development of backward peoples. The distinctive British contribution to modern political practice was 'responsible government', based on the fusion of the legislative and executive powers of government through a cabinet, which acted as the real executive, while at the same time it was part of the legislature and depended on that body for its tenure of office. A ceremonial head of state, in the person of a king or governor, was the nominal executive, but carried out his functions on the advice of the cabinet.

The outstanding characteristic of the system was its flexibility, which was derived from the fact

that the same forms could be used for various stages of self-government, depending on the relations between the parts, If the executive power was independent of legislative control, so that the people had representation but no power, the result was 'representative government'. This came about when the cabinet was not responsible to the legislature, or when the head of state was not required to act on the cabinet's advice, or when both these conditions prevailed. The key to the assumption of any significant degree of power by the people was the transition from representative to responsible government.

Representative government on the British model never worked satisfactorily anywhere in the British Empire, but produced friction everywhere, from seventeenth century Britain, through eighteenth century America and nineteenth century Canada, to twentieth century India. Its significance in the constitutional development of the Empire was that the representative legislature had frequently acted as a focus of discontent and agitation, which had exposed the unworkability of the system and led either to changes in the power structure or to revolution.

Since this sequence of events was already familiar, it must be assumed that moves towards

representative government were now considered a means of directing agitation into the proper constitutional channels, through which it would eventually emerge as self-government on the British model, under the control of pro-British moderates. The system served the double function of checking violence and slowing down the drive towards popular control.

In African government, executive power was normally exercised by a Governor, appointed by the Crown and responsible to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and an Executive Council, appointed by and responsible to the Governor. The members of this council were usually senior government officials. Legislative power was vested in the Governor and a unicameral body called a Legislative Council, which was created by the appointment or election of additional members to the Executive Council. In this way, the formal unity of the legislative and executive powers was preserved, but power flowed down from the Governor rather than up from the legislature.

When the Labour Government came to power, a majority of appointed government officials sat on every Legislative Council in British Africa.[1] Since

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[1]Martin Wight, British Colonial Constitutions (Oxford, 1952), p. 52.

these officials voted automatically on the instructions of the Governor, the legislatures were largely rubber stamps, with a mainly propaganda function, although they did serve to associate a few important members of the community with the colonial governments. This practice of appointing an official majority, in order to ensure the unobstructed conduct of government policy, was preferred, in Africa, to the alternative procedure of enforcing official policy by Orders-in-Council, reserved powers or powers of certification.[2]

The period of responsible government was very short, and was not reached until after the defeat of the Labour Government, although the Gold Coast moved to the verge of the transition with the constitution of 1951. The developments which took place in African constitutions at this time, therefore, involve no change in the substance of power, but consist solely of manipulations of a representative or pseudo-representative system, designed to alter the basis of representation or the method of appointment or election. When these proceeded far enough to produce an elected majority, they were sometimes accompanied by measures increasing the powers of the Governor, to enable him to

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[2]Lord Hailey, Native Administration and Political Development in British Tropical Africa (London, 1942), p. 59.

prevent or pass legislation. Governors normally had the power to veto a bill or to reserve it for crown consent, but they could also be given the power of certification, which meant that they could certify a bill as being passed without a vote of the legislature. When it became expedient to establish some measure of responsible government, the Governor could be given 'reserved powers' over some subjects, so that responsibility would be limited to relatively unimportant matters.

The essentially conservative character of Labour's policy was foreshadowed in a talk by Arthur Creech Jones on the eve of power, when he said Labour did not believe in "disintegrating the Colonial Empire", but that world conditions and influences made "more rapid progress imperative", and that only forward policies, including the advance of "representative government", could justify Britain's being in the colonies at all.[3] This conservatism was underlined by such statements as that contained in a command paper of 1948, which said that the purpose of government policy was "to guide the Colonial territories to responsible

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[3] A. Creech Jones, "Labour and the Colonies", African Affairs, Vol. 44, No. 176 (July, 1945), pp. 113-114.

self-government within the Commonwealth. . . ."[4] The Colonial Secretary, a short time later, commenting on the Coussey Report, stated that his observations were made "with the sole object of helping and promoting the progress of the Gold Coast to responsible government within the British Commonwealth."[5] In July, 1950, James Griffiths expressed his view of the aims of policy in almost exactly the same terms.[6]

It is clear that no change from the policy of the previous government was intended by Labour. George Hall was congratulated, early in his term of office, on the continuity he had established with the enlightened policy of his predecessor, Colonel Stanley.[7] Some time later, Hall thankfully acknowledged Stanley's assistance, and agreed that he had laid the foundations for much that Labour had done during the first year of power.[8] The plans for new constitutions in Nigeria and the Gold Coast, the only places where significant

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[4]Cmd. 7433 (1948), Report on the Colonial Empire (1947-1948), p. 1.

[5]Col. No. 250, Gold Coast: Statement by His Majesty's Government on the Report of the Committee on Constitutional Reform (London, 1949), p. 2.

[6]477 H.C. Deb., col. 1368.

[7]Ibid., 416, col. 167.

[8]Ibid., 425, col. 239.

changes came under Labour, had been inherited from Stanley's régime.

The initial reaction of the Labour Government to the strong swell of political feeling in Africa was to consider political activity subversive and to repress it. The Zikist movement in Nigeria, for example, was outlawed as a subversive organization.[9] Since the experts were almost unanimous in the view that no political consciousness existed,[10] it was natural for them to assume that a few agitators were stirring up trouble. The Governor of the Gold Coast, for instance, attributed the disturbances there to communism.[11] Colonial governors were given full discretion in such matters as the suppression of allegedly seditious publications or the outlawing of political associations.[12] Under dictatorial governments, which could be overthrown only by violence, any opposition was inevitably considered incitement to revolution, which must be answered by repression.

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[9] Ibid., 474, col. 949.

[10] A. Creech Jones, "The International Background to Britain's Post-War Colonial Policy", East African Standard (July 24, 1946).

[11] Col. No. 231, Report of the Commission of Enquiry into Disturbances in the Gold Coast, 1948 (Aiken Watson Commission) (London, 1948), App. 10, pp. 89-90.

[12] 474 H.C. Deb., cols. 933, 949.

The Labour Government, however, was not prepared to undertake the suppression of colonial independence movements by large-scale military action, which was ruled out on both economic and political grounds. Colonial wars would not only have involved considerable expenditures in a time of extreme financial stringency but would also have frustrated plans for developing the colonial economies in the interests of Great Britain, which required, according to Creech Jones, African cooperation. At the same time, opinion in the United States, which was supplying Great Britain with grants and loans, would have been alienated by the diversion of funds for such purposes.

These considerations made significant constitutional change unavoidable where it appeared that the only alternative was revolution. Thus, although the immediate reaction to the disturbances in the Gold Coast was the dispatch of troops, this was soon followed by measures leading to the most far-reaching political advance which took place in any colony under Labour rule. Whether the result would have been the same in a colony of white settlement is hard to say, since, by the time violence erupted in Kenya, the financial situation had eased somewhat and Labour was no longer in power.

Even before the outbreak of violence, it was becoming evident that, contrary to the prevailing opinion of colonial officials, political opposition had widespread popular support.[13] The disturbances in the Gold Coast and Nigeria underlined this fact, and produced investigating commissions which drew attention to the causes of African agitation. The Aiken Watson Commission described at length the political, economic and social causes of unrest in the Gold Coast, and recommended changes in all three areas, including "a substantial measure of constitutional reform."[14] Although a similar report on the Nigerian disorders insisted that there was an "extremist" political group which did not have majority support, it nevertheless drew attention to some grievances. Significantly, it spoke of a revolution, caused by World War II, in the relation between Europeans and their colonies, and continued: "Not only would it be morally wrong, but it would, from the practical point of view, be impossible to halt that revolution now."[15] Reluctance or inability

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[13]Jones, "The International Background to Britain's Post-War Colonial Policy."

[14]Col. No. 231, Aiken Watson Commission Report, p. 24.

[15]Col. No. 256, Report of the Commission of Enquiry into the Disorders in the Eastern Provinces of Nigeria, November, 1949 (London, 1950), p. 11.

to employ force on a large enough scale to maintain control thus led to the beginning of meaningful constitutional change in West Africa. At the same time, less important variations of a nominal character continued at a much slower pace in other colonies.

Political developments in the Gambia, where there were alterations in the composition of both the Legislative and the Executive Councils, are interesting as examples of the way in which the British system can be used to produce the appearance without the reality of change. The Gambian constitution of 1946 gave an unofficial majority in the Legislative Council, and provided that one member should be elected, on a limited franchise, to represent the Bathurst and Combo area. In 1951, the number of elected members was increased to three and these were also appointed to the Executive Council.[16] The Executive Council remained a purely advisory body, responsible to the Governor rather than to the legislature.

The changes in the Gambian Legislative Council are instructive, as they are representative of the attitudes and reactions of the Colonial Office to the African situation at this time. The constitutions of

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[16]British Information Services, The Gambia (London, 1964), pp. 8-9.

1946 and 1951 granted 'unofficial' majorities, of seven to six and eight to seven respectively, in a powerless Legislative Council. Under the 1946 constitution, six of the seven unofficials were appointed by the Governor, and thus twelve of the thirteen members were government nominees, although only six were civil servants. The unofficial appointees, in 1947, were three chiefs, an Anglican clergyman, a Muslim and a European.[17] The later increase to three elected members, and the appointment of these to an Executive Council with advisory functions, was equally insignificant. Under the proper conditions, this kind of manipulation could continue indefinitely without any real change in the focus of power.

It has been said that the Gold Coast was the most advanced colony in British Africa, and that this accounts for the fact that it was the only one to move beyond the preliminary stages on the road to responsible government at this time. If this is taken to mean that education was more widespread than elsewhere, or that administration was in the hands of Africans, it would be hard to make any such case. It is true that the absence

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[17] Ibid., p. 8.

of European settlers had enabled Africans to make greater advances into the civil service in West Africa than elsewhere, but even here the senior service was still monopolized by Europeans. Africans in the Gold Coast had had an unusual political experience, however, since that colony had been given, in 1925, a Legislative Council of 30 members, with 14 unofficials, of whom 11 were elected in various ways.[18]

Sir Alan Burns, war-time Governor of the Gold Coast, initiated the first step towards further African participation in government. In 1942, he appointed two Africans to his Executive Council, apparently against the advice of the Secretary of State,[19] and the following year he began a review of the constitution which resulted in the adoption of a new system in 1946.

Some Africans were brought into the discussions concerning the new Constitution, but they were generally unrepresentative of the main political movements.[20] The result was that the 1946 constitution

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[18]Central Office of Information, Constitutional Development in the Commonwealth (London, 1951), II, 26.

[19]Sir Alan Burns, Colonial Civil Servant (London, 1949), p. 195.

[20]Marjorie Nicholson, West African Ferment (London, 1950), p. 34.

was left behind by popular opinion as soon as it came into force, and was described by the commission which investigated the disturbances of 1948 as "obviously conceived in the light of pre-war conditions."[21]

This constitution established a Legislative Council of 30 members, of whom 12 were appointed and 18 elected. Of the 12 appointees, six were officials, these being the Colonial Secretary, the Attorney General, the Financial Secretary and the Chief Commissioners of the Colony, Ashanti and the Northern Territories. Five members were directly elected to represent the four largest towns, nine were elected by the Joint Provincial Council of the Colony and four by the Ashanti Confederacy Council.[22] In the first case, election rested on the same franchise as in municipal elections,[23] in the latter two the representatives were indirectly elected by bodies composed mainly of chiefs.[24] A system of indirect election is designed to strain democracy and prevent the election of demagogues: the chiefs were a conservative force, who would help to maintain the existing order of things.

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[21]Col. No. 231, Aiken Watson Commission Report, p. 24.

[22]Burns, pp. 285-286.

[23]Martin Wight, The Gold Coast Legislative Council (London, 1947), p. 203.

[24]Nicholson, p. 35.

No real change was made by this 'new' constitution, which did nothing to diminish the power of the Governor and his appointed officials. The Coussey Report on constitutional reform called it "a step forward in the direction of representative government", but pointed out that, since there was no responsibility, the representatives "were powerless to influence policy".[25] The Aiken Watson Commission noted the failure of the Government to realize that "the star of rule through the Chiefs was on the wane", and reported "a feeling of political frustration among the educated Africans, who saw no prospect of ever experiencing political power under existing conditions and who regarded the 1946 constitution as mere window-dressing. . . ."[26]

Although this reformed constitution was expected to last ten years, the development of political agitation made a much earlier review necessary. The Aiken Watson Commission thought further substantial amendments were necessary, in order to give every able African a chance to help govern the country, and

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[25]Col. No. 248, Gold Coast: Report to his Excellency the Governor by the Committee on Constitutional Reform, 1949 (Coussey Report) (London, 1949), pp. 7-8.

[26]Col. No. 231, Aiken Watson Commission Report, pp. 7-8.

believed anything less would only provoke more unrest. They recommended that there should be a representative assembly, consisting mainly of members indirectly elected by regional councils, and that a majority of the Executive Council should be chosen from and responsible to the assembly. However, the official members of the Executive Council, who were in control of law and order, were expected to continue to be responsible to the Governor, who would also retain the powers of veto and certification.[27]

The Secretary of State for the Colonies disputed many of the commission's views on the 1946 constitution, and rejected any idea that it had not been a genuine attempt at reform. He described its provisions as "a necessary and accepted step in constitutional advancement" and called the granting of an unofficial majority in the Legislative Council a "notable . . . step forward." He thought the chiefs played an important role as traditional leaders, and that they had popular support.

When he came to discuss the proposals for constitutional change, he dismissed the notion that any members of the Executive Council should depend on

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[27] Ibid., pp. 24, 26, 29.

the legislature for either appointment or tenure, and set aside any responsibility of the Governor to his council. The Labour Government thus came down on the side of conservatism and against any advance towards responsible government.[28]

Nevertheless, the sequel was the appointment of the Coussey Committee to study the proposals made in the Commission's report and to advise whether they should be accepted and, if so, how they should be carried out. This committee, which numbered 40 members, was composed entirely of Africans, of whom 28 were nominated by the Governor and 12 were elected by the three District Councils. Its conservative composition ensured that any recommendations it might make would be moderate in tone.[29]

The Coussey Committee recommended that the Gold Coast should have a bicameral legislature, consisting of a Senate and a House of Assembly. The Senate was to have 38 members, with nine elected by each of the four regions (a new Transvolta-Southern Togoland region was to be set up) and one each by the Chamber of Commerce and the Chamber of Mines. At least one-third of the elected

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[28]Col. No. 232, Statement by His Majesty's Government on the Report of the Commission of Enquiry into Disturbances in the Gold Coast, 1948 (London, 1948), pp. 4, 6, 7, 9.

[29]Nicholson, p. 36.

members were to be non-chiefs. Of the House of Assembly's 78 members, 75 were to be elected, 29 from the Colony, 19 each from Ashanti and the Northern Territories and eight from Transvolta-Southern Togoland. In the existing municipalities there would be direct election, elsewhere delegates to an electoral college would be elected by adult suffrage, and these would elect the Assembly representatives. If a unicameral legislature should be decided on, it was recommended that one-third of its members should be elected by the existing Territorial Councils.[30]

The Coussey Committee's most radical suggestions concerned the Executive Council and its relation to the Governor. The Council was to be collectively responsible to the House of Assembly, from which six of its nine members were to be chosen, including the elected Leader of the House. These six would be required to leave office on a vote of no confidence supported by two-thirds of the Assembly. The ex-officio members, who would be the Chief Secretary, the Financial Secretary and the Legal Secretary, could be removed on the basis of a memorial signed by two-thirds of the members of both houses.[31]

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[30] Col. No. 248, Coussey Report, pp. 55-56, 61.

[31] Ibid., p. 62.

As a safeguard against democracy run riot, the Committee advised the retention of the Governor's powers of certification, veto and reservation. These powers, however, were to be used only on the advice of the Executive Council or of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, except in case of emergency.[32]

These proposals were too radical for the Labour Secretary of State, who rejected the responsibility of the Executive Council to the Assembly, but agreed that the unofficial members might be separately removable by an adverse vote. He also insisted on the "ultimate responsibility" of the Governor and his right to act against an Executive Council decision, but thought this would be unusual, and that, normally, government would be carried on by agreement of the Governor, Executive Council and Legislative Assembly. It was hoped that the Governor would need to exercise his reserve powers rarely. Creech Jones also declined to accept the election of the Leader of the Assembly by that house, and favoured his election by the Executive Council. The Governor would thus choose the Council members from the Assembly without advice from that body, and the Assembly would have the opportunity only to accept

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[32] Ibid., p. 65.

or reject each one by resolution.[33]

The constitution adopted in 1951 retained a unicameral legislature, to be known as a Legislative Assembly. Of its 84 members, 75 were elected, as follows: five municipal members were elected by direct vote, 33 rural members indirectly through electoral colleges, 18 territorial members by the Territorial Councils of Ashanti and the Colony, and 19 Northern Territories members by an electoral college made up of the Northern Territories Council and delegates nominated by the District Councils. Three of the remaining nine were ex-officio members, three were elected by the Chamber of Commerce and three by the Chamber of Mines. The Executive Council of 11 members had eight representatives from the Assembly and three officials, the Ministers of Defence and External Affairs, of Finance and of Justice.[34] The Governor retained his powers of veto and certification and the subjects reserved for his direct control included internal security.[35]

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[33]Col. No. 250, Statement by H.M.G., pp. 7-10.

[34]Cmd. 8243 (1951), The Colonial Territories (1950-51), pp. 25, 27.

[35]Sir Charles Arden-Calrke, "Eight Years of Transition in Ghana", African Affairs, Vol. 57, No. 226 (January, 1958), p. 34; "Gold Coast into Ghana", International Affairs, Vol. 34, No. 1 (January, 1958), p. 55.

Kwame Nkrumah and his Convention People's Party refused to accept the new constitution, and embarked on a programme of 'positive action' aimed at forcing the adoption of a more liberal policy. The Government took "prompt and firm action" to restore "law and order", and the leaders of the C.P.P. were soon in prison.[36] However, Nkrumah took part in the elections when they were held, in February, 1951, and his party emerged with a resounding victory, winning 33 of the 38 popularly elected seats, including all five of the municipal seats.[37]

Nkrumah, released from jail to become 'Leader of Government Business', held a press conference at which he described the new constitution as "bogus and fraudulent" because the ministers had no power, but he and his party nevertheless accepted eight ministerial positions. He thought "ultimate self-government had become a certainty", but that, until it came, he could "only scratch at the surface of the problems which confronted the country."[38]

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[36]Arden-Clarke, "Eight Years of Transition", p. 32.

[37]Cmd. 8243, p. 26.

[38]Kwame Nkrumah, I Speak of Freedom (New York, 1961), pp. 23, 26.

In fact, the Gold Coast moved forward rapidly towards independence. In 1954, a new constitution was adopted which produced an all-African cabinet, and three years later the Gold Coast acquired political independence as the state of Ghana. Nkrumah talked, in 1955, of his party having been in power for four years, and of all he had accomplished in that time.[39] Evidently the constitution worked better than he had expected, and he was able to carry out at least part of his programme.

Since the Governor clearly had the legal power to take arbitrary action if he wished to do so, a great deal depended on the appointment of a Governor of outstanding ability, who could be given a free hand to use his judgment in handling a difficult situation. The Gold Coast seems to have been fortunate in the appointment of Sir Charles Arden-Clarke as Governor in the summer of 1949. Sir Charles, who had spent nearly thirty years in the Colonial Service, believed that independence was "the natural and inevitable outcome of British Colonial Policy", and he was prepared to follow this belief to its logical conclusion. He had been given to understand in London that the Gold Coast was "on the verge of revolution" and that he was "expected

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[39] Ibid., p. 45.

to go and do something about it." He thought force was the only alternative to government by consent, and apparently it had been decided that the continued use of force was inexpedient. His judgment, therefore, led him to the view that he should avoid any confrontation which would lead to violence. This meant that he had to work in cooperation with Nkrumah, which he was able to do with great success.[40]

According to Sir Charles' account, all Cabinet decisions were taken by majority vote, so that Nkrumah and his associates had the real power. This soon dispelled their initial suspicion and distrust, and "within three months the Cabinet was just like one happy family." In eight years as Governor, Sir Charles never used his reserve powers or exercised his veto.[41] At the same time, however, the years under this constitution were ones of perpetual crisis, and it was soon obvious that further political changes would have to come in the near future.[42]

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[40]Arden-Clarke, "Eight Years of Transition", pp. 31-33.

[41]Arden-Clarke, "Gold Coast into Ghana", pp. 51-52.

[42]Arden-Clarke "Eight Years of Transition", p. 35; "Gold Coast into Ghana", p. 53.

The explanation of this seeming paradox is quite simple: Sir Charles Arden-Clarke, as a man of courtesy, intelligence and flexibility, was able to direct affairs in such a way as to conciliate Nkrumah and run the government machine smoothly and efficiently. He was prepared to cooperate in carrying out any C.P.P. policy which did not plainly clash with the measures he thought necessary. Moderation was imposed on him by the fear of revolution, and on Nkrumah by the realization that an extreme position would force the Governor to use his ultimate power. Sir Alan Burns, in introducing the constitution of 1946, had asked the Legislative Council not to take up an attitude of "uncompromising opposition to all Government measures", as this "would drive the Governor to use his reserve powers."[43] Exactly the same considerations applied to the situation in which his successor found himself: both sides had little to gain by provoking violence, if agreement could be reached on measures which would satisfy some Gold Coast opinion without going to extremes. The stage was thus set for the quiet transition to genuine self-government and eventual independence, when it became apparent that the people of the Gold Coast

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[43] G. E. Metcalfe, Great Britain and Ghana (London, 1964), p. 682.

would settle for nothing less.

Nigeria was the scene of the most significant political changes in any of the remaining African colonies. A constitution introduced in 1922 had authorized a Legislative Council, for the Colony and the Southern Provinces, with four elected members representing Lagos and Calabar.[44] By 1943, when Sir Arthur Richards arrived as Governor, there was strong agitation for reform. Sir Arthur recognized the need for action and proceeded to draw up proposals for a new constitution, without, however, making any attempt to consult popular opinion.[45] The constitution which came into effect in 1947 embodied his recommendations, and was therefore known as the Richards constitution.

Sir Arthur Richards' aims were to promote the unity of Nigeria while providing for its diverse elements, and to allow Africans to take part in discussing their own affairs. He envisioned no change in executive or legislative power. Unity was to be promoted by extending the jurisdiction of the Legislative

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[44]United Kingdom Information Service Canada, Nigeria: the Making of a Nation (London, 1960), p. 28.

[45]Joan Wheare, The Nigerian Legislative Council (London, 1949), p. XI.

Council to include the whole of Nigeria, while the various parts were to be provided with Regional Councils, by and from which their representatives in the Legislative Council would be elected. The Northern Provinces Regional Council would have two houses, a House of Chiefs and a House of Assembly, while those for the Eastern and Western Provinces would have only one, a House of Assembly. It was proposed that the unofficial members of these regional houses, in turn, should be elected by the local Native Authorities from their own membership.[46]

In all cases, it was suggested that these representative bodies should have a majority of unofficial members. The Legislative Council would have 20 officials and 29 unofficials, of whom 22 would be elected, as follows: four Emirs, nominated by the House of Chiefs of the Northern Provinces, five nominees each from the House of Assembly of the Northern and Eastern Provinces, four from that of the Western Provinces, and four elected by the municipalities of Lagos and Calabar. Of the other seven unofficials, all nominated by the Governor, two would be chiefs from the Western Provinces, one would represent the Colony of

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[46]Nigeria, Sessional Paper No. 4 of 1945. Political and Constitutional Future of Nigeria (Lagos, 1945), p. 2.

Lagos, and the remaining four would represent Banking, Industry and Commerce, Shipping and Mining. The provincial houses were each to be given an unofficial majority of one, with a total in the three houses of 49 unofficials, 30 elected by the Native Authorities and 19 appointed by the Governor.[47]

As can easily be seen, the extent to which such a system could be called representative is questionable, to say the least. In every case, a majority of the legislature was to be appointed by the Governor, while, for the elected members, indirect election was the rule. Indeed, the representatives of the various regions on the Legislative Council were to be indirectly elected by bodies which were also indirectly elected by local groups which were themselves undemocratic. There was little danger that any idea expressed in such a Legislative Council would reflect the influence of the popular will.

No alteration in the existing form of government was recommended. The Executive Council would be responsible to the Governor, as before. Regional Houses of Assembly would have no power of any kind, but would be merely debating bodies.

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[47] Ibid., p. 3.

The constitution which came into force in 1947 deviated very slightly from Richards' recommendations. What deviations there were, however, were in the direction of liberalization. The number of officials on the Legislative Council was decreased from 20 to 16, and the four members nominated to represent special European interests was decreased to three, to represent any interest decided on by the Governor. At the regional level, provision was made for an increase of four in the number of unofficial members in each House of Assembly, at the discretion of the Governor. In no case, however, was a majority of elected members possible, and the various methods of election and nomination remained unchanged.[48]

Sir Arthur Richards' views on the relation between the Governor and his councils appeared intact in the constitution. The Executive Council remained an advisory body independent of the Legislative Council and dependent on the Governor. Since the Legislative Council no longer had an official majority, the Governor's power to pass any necessary legislation was assured by the addition of the power of certification to those of veto and reservation, which

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[48]K. Ezera, Constitutional Developments in Nigeria (Cambridge, 1960), pp. 68-69.

he already possessed.[49] There was thus no advance towards responsible government and even the small degree of representative government granted was counterbalanced by the extension of the Governor's powers.

One noteworthy feature of this constitution was the way in which the local government system of administration through native councils was brought into relation with the central government through the election of representatives to the Legislative Council. This was widely hailed as a solution to one of the significant problems of African government, that of integrating these two separate organizations to provide continuity in African political experience, and persuade educated Africans to enter politics at the local level. It was an even better solution to a much more pressing problem facing British administrators, that of isolating a so-called representative body from the influence of 'nationalist agitators' by closing off the avenues through which they might enter. Certainly, the immediate effect was to ensure that legislatures so constituted would be dominated by conservative elements inexperienced in national politics and largely uninterested in them.

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[49] Wheare, pp. 173, 181.

Although the Richards Constitution was drawn up under the administration of Oliver Stanley, it was approved and put into operation by the Labour Government. Arthur Creech Jones' statement to Parliament that the Nigerian Government was "increasingly an expression of the will of the Nigerian people" gives some indication of the air of unreality which permeated his view of African self-government at that time.[50] The negative reaction of Nigerians to this constitution, and the subsequent disorders in the country, no doubt did something to convince him that Nigeria was not in the mood to be pacified so easily.

It was intended that the Richards Constitution should last for nine years, but it was clear from the beginning that nothing had been done to satisfy the hope of educated Nigerians that they would be given some share in government. The National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons, under the leadership of Nnamdi Azikwe, carried on a determined campaign to arouse public opposition to the constitution, and eventually proceeded to London, where they presented Creech Jones with a "Memorandum on the New Constitution of Nigeria", which set forth their objections.[51] The

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[50] 416 H.C. Deb., col. 166.

[51] Ezera, pp. 79-80.

main complaints concerned the appointment and method of election of the unofficial members of the various representative bodies. The N.C.N.C. maintained that chiefs, and government appointees generally, were really official rather than unofficial members, and called for real unofficial majorities, elected by adult suffrage.[52] They got no encouragement in London, and returned to Nigeria temporarily discredited.

Nevertheless the Secretary of State reacted to the Nigerian agitation by appointing a new and more liberal governor, Sir John Macpherson, in 1948. Acting in an atmosphere of unrest throughout West Africa, Sir John almost immediately proposed that further constitutional changes should be made in 1950, and the preliminary steps towards this end were taken in 1949.[53]

In view of the widespread criticism of Sir Arthur Richards' failure to consult popular opinion before drafting his constitution, elaborate provisions were made for public discussion at all levels. Villages and districts sent representatives to divisional meetings, which in turn elected members to attend

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[52]Wheare, pp. 176-178.

[53]Ezera, p. 87.

provincial conferences. Representatives from the provincial conferences then joined members of the regional houses in regional conferences, which studied the constitutional issues in the light of the views sent forward by the previous bodies, and appointed representatives to a general conference, where they met together with the unofficial members of the Legislative Council. The regional conferences also appointed the members of a drafting committee, which was to draw up constitutional recommendations for study by the general conference.[54]

The drafting committee recommended a federal system of government, based on the three existing regions, with the regional legislatures being given power to legislate on local matters, subject to the overriding power of the central legislature. At the centre, it proposed an indirectly elected House of Representatives as before, with an executive, to be called the Council of State, composed of six ex-officio members and twelve from the House of Representatives. There were no recommendations affecting either the responsibility of the executive or the Governor's reserve powers.[55]

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[54] Ibid., pp. 107-109.

[55] Ibid., pp. 112-114.

The general conference, held at Ibadan in January, 1950, substantially followed the recommendations of the drafting committee, with the added suggestion that ministers should be made responsible, and removable by a two-thirds vote in the legislature. It was unable to reach agreement on regional representation at the centre, which was left to be decided by the existing Legislative Council, or on regional boundaries, which were to be determined by the Governor.[56]

The Secretary of State for the Colonies accepted most of the proposals of the conference, but rejected ministerial responsibility, although he expressed the hope that Nigeria would soon develop a party system, which would make responsible government possible. He also insisted, as had been done in the Gold Coast, that the official members of the Council of State should not be removable by a vote of the legislature.[57]

The constitution enacted in 1951 actually made responsible government virtually impossible in Nigeria. The elected members of the House of Representatives were elected by the regional legislature, and each region was, therefore, represented entirely by members of the

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[56] Ibid., pp. 115-117.

[57] Ibid., pp. 120-121.

group which had a majority in its legislature. In effect, the members represented regions, not parties, and no party system could develop. In addition, the unofficial members of the Council of Ministers, as the Executive Council was now called, were nominated by the Lieutenant-Governors of the regions, on the approval of the regional legislatures, and so could not be responsible to the House of Representatives.[58]

This so-called House of Representatives was no more representative of the popular will than the previous Legislative Council. At the smallest Native Authority unit, all taxpayers were qualified as electors or candidates. From this point on, the electoral process went as follows:

> Those elected from the primary electoral areas formed together a divisional electoral college, which elected representatives to the provincial electoral college, which in turn elected members to the House of Assembly in each Region. Finally, the House of Assembly in its turn elected, from among its members, the unofficial members to represent the Region in the House of Representatives.[59]

In fact, the last sentence presents a too favourable view of the election scheme, since, of the 136 elected members of the House of Representatives, half were

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[58] U.K. I.S., Nigeria, p. 30.

[59] Ibid.

elected to represent the Northern Region, not by the House of Assembly, but by the Joint Council in which the House of Chiefs had equal representation with the lower house.[60]

The kind of parliamentary government produced by this system was the end result of the abortive attempt to graft a central legislature onto the structure of local government. The next constitutional change saw the abandonment of this idea and the institution of separate elections for the House of Representatives. This change, however, was brought about under the succeeding Conservative government.[61]

In much of East and Central Africa, constitutional change was complicated by racial problems. In particular, the relatively large European communities in Kenya and Northern Rhodesia formed interest groups which were determined to prevent Africans from acquiring any political power. The United Kingdom Government, despite the Labour Party's alleged opposition to white domination, proved extremely sensitive to pressure from European settlers, and accommodated itself to their

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[60]Ezera, p. 134.

[61]U.K.I.S., Nigeria, p. 31.

wishes at every point.

The first test of Labour's resolve to follow the supposed party policy came in connection with a proposal, originated under the previous government, for the setting up of an East African High Commission, consisting of the three Governors and a Central Legislative Assembly, to deal with common problems of the three territories. The original paper on the subject, published in 1945, had proposed that the unofficial majority in the Legislative Assembly should include six representatives of each of the three main races, European, Indian and African.[62] Although equality in numbers meant gross overrepresentation for Europeans, this equality for Africans and Indians was protested by the European elected members of the Kenya Legislative Council.[63] The Labour Government thereupon changed the basis of representation by reducing the unofficial membership and allowing for the appointment of only one African and one Indian from each territory out of a total of fifteen.[64] Since the Kenya member from

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[62]Col. No. 191, Interterritorial Organization in East Africa (London, 1945), pp. 7-8.

[63]Sir Philip Mitchell, Current Affairs in East Africa, pp. 6-7.

[64]Col. No. 210, Interterritorial Organization in East Africa (London, 1947), p. 6.

the Legislative Council was certain to be a European, and none was likely to be an African, this concession ensured the European community against equal representation for Africans. These changes were accepted by the members of the Kenya Legislative Council as meeting their objections to the first plan.[65] As this Legislative Assembly had no power, and was therefore of little importance in any case, the incident is significant only for its exposure of the hollowness of Labour's professions of concern for racial equality.

The main constitutional developments took place separately in each territory, in accordance with the overall policy for East Africa. A government statement pointed out that, for this area, the objective of self-government within the Commonwealth "must include proper provision for all the main communities which have made their home in East Africa." It was therefore necessary, not only to train Africans so they would be able to take part in political life, but also to create conditions under which the other communities would feel secure about their future in East Africa, before Africans could participate in government. This would take some time, and, meanwhile, Great Britain would remain in

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[65]Kenya, Legislative Council Debates, Second Series, XXVI, col. 44.

control.[66]

In practice, the policy followed involved the appointment of additional African members to Legislative and Executive Councils. These Africans were appointed, not elected, and were always in a small minority on councils which had official majorities except in Kenya, where there was a significant number of elected Europeans.

The first African appointment to the Kenya Legislative Council was made in 1944, and the number was increased to two in 1946 and four in 1948.[67] This last development was accompanied by the granting of an unofficial majority. Finally, the Secretary of State for the Colonies announced, in May, 1951, that the number of African members would be increased from four to six, while increases would also be made in the representation of Europeans and Indians, as well as in the number of official appointees.[68] When this plan was implemented, in 1952, it produced a Legislative Council of 54 members, of whom 28 were unofficials.

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[66] Cmd. 8243, The Colonial Territories (1950-51), pp. 29-30.

[67] British Information Services, Kenya (London, 1963), p. 26.

[68] 488 H.C. Deb., col. 409.

Twenty-one of these were elected, comprising 14 Europeans, six Indians and one Arab: six Africans and one Arab were nominated by the Governor, with the Africans being chosen from lists presented to him by the Native Councils.[69] There was no African appointment to the Executive Council until 1952.[70]

Although the Labour Party had advocated the adoption of a common electoral roll in Kenya since the 1920's, no move was made towards the creation of any system of election in which Africans would participate. Arthur Creech Jones maintained, in 1951, that the introduction of a common franchise roll would only emphasize the racial divisions.[71] African nationalists were prepared to accept a limited franchise, based on literacy or property qualifications, but even this was considered beyond the realm of practical politics by Labour.[72] The Labour Party's failure in this respect is emphasized by a policy statement, issued in 1956,

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[69]Col. No. 281, An Economic Survey of the Colonial Territories, 1951 (London, 1952), II, 15.

[70]B.I.S., Kenya, p. 26.

[71]A. Creech Jones, The Future of the African Colonies (Nottingham, 1951), p. 19.

[72]Kenya African Union Statements of October 27, 1952, quoted in Fabian Colonial Bureau, Opportunity in Kenya (London, 1953), p. 40.

which called the common roll "the vital test of democracy in the plural society", but cautioned against the expectation that it could be established immediately everywhere.[73]

The Kikuyu were the most politically advanced and active tribe in Kenya, and it is obvious that their expectations were well ahead of Colonial Office thinking. Frustration at the failure of the Kenya Government to provide any scope for political action by Africans, combined with economic hardship resulting from a shortage of land, left them ripe for the kind of irrational action embodied in the so-called Mau Mau movement. The resulting emergency in Kenya underlines the failure of the Labour Government to deal with the racial problems of this plural society.

In Tanganyika, political progress consisted of the appointment of Africans to the Legislative Council. Two were appointed in 1945, one was added in 1947 and a fourth in 1948.[74] At the end of Labour rule, 14 of the 29 members were unofficials, all appointed, of whom seven were Europeans, four were Africans and three were Asians. The Governor had the

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[73]Labour Party, Labour's Colonial Policy (London, 1956), p. 35.

[74]C.O.I., Constitutional Development, II, 21.

usual powers of veto, assent, dissent or reservation, which, in addition to his official majority, assured his retention of absolute power.[75] Within these limitations, the Legislative Council was "a sovereign legislature with full legislative and budgetary powers within the territory."[76] There was one Indian, but no African, on the Executive Council.[77] A Committee on Constitutional Development was appointed in December, 1949, and its report was under consideration when Labour lost power.[78]

A greater degree of African participation was allowed in Uganda where, beginning in 1945, a progressively larger number of Africans was added to the Legislative Council, until, by 1950, eight of the sixteen unofficial members were Africans, as against only four Europeans and four Indians. These African members were not appointed by the Governor, but were nominated, as follows: two each by the Western and

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[75]Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, II, 50.

[76]Col. No. 220, Report by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom to the Trusteeship Council of the United Nations on the Administration of Tanganyika for the Year 1947 (London, 1948), p. 15.

[77]C.O.I., Constitutional Development, II, 21.

[78]Colonial Office, Report by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom to the General Assembly of the United Nations on the Administration of Tanganyika for the Year 1951 (London, 1952), p. 31.

Northern Provincial Councils, one by the Western Provincial Council, two by the ruler of Buganda and one by the states of Ankole, Bunyoro and Toro in turn. The membership of the Council was equally divided between officials and unofficials. The Executive Council had no African members.[79]

In Northern Rhodesia, where the basic situation was similar to that in Kenya, but without the complication of a large Asian population, an unofficial majority in the Legislative Council was granted in 1945. African representation came three years later, with the appointment by the Governor of two Africans selected by the African Representative Council.[80] At the end of the period, this Legislative Council had 23 members, of whom 14 were unofficial. Ten of the twelve Europeans were elected, and the other two were appointed to represent African interests. One of these latter two was also appointed to the Executive Council, on which there were no Africans.[81]

The first Africans were appointed to the Nyasaland Legislative Council in 1949, when two were chosen by the Governor from a panel of five nominated

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[79] C.O.I., Constitutional Development, II, 22.

[80] See below, p. 367.

[81] Col. No. 281, Economic Survey, I, 11.

by the African Protectorate Council, an advisory body composed of 20 Africans nominated by the African Provincial Councils. An Indian member was also appointed from a panel of three chosen by the Indian Chamber of Commerce. The remaining members were Europeans, and there was an official majority. No changes were made in the Executive Council or in the relations between it and the Governor.[82]

It is readily apparent that, so far as the central governments of the various colonies were concerned, no significant development in the direction of African self-government took place in East or Central Africa under the Labour régime. Progress was made in the acceptance of the proposition that some Africans should take a direct part in government by sitting on Legislative Councils. Appointment to these bodies was adopted everywhere and, by 1951, African membership on the five councils totalled 22 out of 157. At the same time, the official membership was 76 and the unofficial European membership 43. Only in Uganda, where Africans made up one-quarter of the council, was the unofficial European membership exceeded by that of Africans. The communal principle was accepted as the basis for representation throughout the

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[82]C.O.I., Constitutional Development, II, 24-25.

area, and racial divisions were thus emphasized and reinforced.

No steps were taken to introduce electoral procedures which might have related this development to the ordinary African. The African members were normally appointed by the Governor, but, in three cases, his appointments were made from lists submitted by African bodies. Uganda was again exceptional, in that the members were chosen by Africans.

Assuming, however, that some of the African members represented some section or other of the African community, they were nowhere present in large enough numbers to be important. Except in the colonies dominated by European settlers, the Governor and his officials controlled the legislatures. Even if the Governor and his Executive Council had been responsible to these legislatures, African influence would have been negligible.

A few Africans were gaining experience in the practice of parliamentary government and in debate, which might prove useful if these same individuals were later elected to sit in the legislature of a free African state. It is difficult, however, to assess the value of such experience for a participant who can influence neither legislation nor

the conduct of government.

When the Labour Government came to power, it accepted the prevailing view that African political consciousness was as yet undeveloped and that British rule would continue for a long time to come. Africans, it was believed, required many more years of training before they would be prepared for self-government. Meanwhile, gradual changes involving them in some form of 'representation' would be sufficient to persuade them that independence would come when they were ready for it.

The development of political activity in West Africa convinced the Colonial Office that more rapid change was needed to avoid revolution, but not that the training process had been completed. On the contrary, most British observers agreed that African agitation was forcing a much too rapid pace of advance, and after independence they continued to regret that Britain had not been able to stay long enough to complete her task.

If preparation for self-government meant the creation of a society in which the British parliamentary system would be relevant, it is clear that the foundations of such a society were barely laid anywhere

in Africa. Under existing social and economic conditions, this system could only produce domination by a small minority with some wealth and education. Ultimately, this domination would have to be maintained by force, since the instruments for maintaining it by persuasion were not available. British officials in the colonies saw this and deplored the premature devolution of power.

On the other hand, preparation for self-government from the imperial point of view required only that power should eventually be handed over to westernized, British-oriented Africans, who would adopt policies consistent with British interests. There was still a possibility of achieving this more modest aim by delaying the transfer of power as much as possible without using force, while endeavouring to ensure the succession of pro-British elements.

West Africa experienced some genuine political changes between 1945 and 1951. In both the Gold Coast and Nigeria the Legislative Councils acquired a mainly African composition, and in the Gold Coast nearly half the members were elected, either directly or by directly elected electoral colleges. In the Gold Coast there was, in practice, some measure of executive responsibility.

The influence of the Colonial Office was exerted in a conservative direction, particularly with regard to maintaining the Governor's independence from the control of the legislatures. Although these were given unofficial majorities, full responsible government was refused and the Governors were given additional powers. Nevertheless, this opposition to the advance of African power was not carried to the point of provoking revolution, and the Gold Coast was allowed to proceed in the direction of self-government.

In East and Central Africa, political advance of any kind was nominal and relatively insignificant. So far as Africans were concerned, representative government was embryonic, except in Uganda, where it was in its infancy. A few Africans were appointed to sit on powerless councils, where they were in a small minority. There is no indication that any training for self-government was taking place or was contemplated in the near future.

The changes which took place in West Africa do not support the view that there was any planned programme of constitutional advance. In theory, political development was supposed to be dependent on progress in other fields, particularly in education. It is hard to see any significant correlation in

practice, since there is no evidence of the kind of social and economic development which might have been expected to pave the way for independence. The only factor particularly favourable to West Africa was the relatively greater progress in Africanization of the civil services. While the ability of Africans to take over the administrative process had usually been considered important, it had never stood alone as the main criterion to be used in judging their fitness for self-government.

CHAPTER XVII

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Political advance in the Colonies did not depend, in Labour's view, entirely on changes in the institutions of central government. Involvement of Africans in the conduct of local government was considered equally, if not more, important. As early as 1920, Colonel Wedgwood had advocated the introduction of an element of representation at the local level as part of the development of native administration in West Africa.[1]

It was understood, however, that the existing system of indirect rule, as begun by Lord Lugard, did not, in practice, contribute much to the political training of Africans. Wedgwood had described it, just before the war, as a system of "the bolstering up of landlord and aristocrat domination."[2] Lord Hailey's

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[1] 128 H.C. Deb., col. 940.

[2] Ibid., 348, col. 527.

report on native administration, written in 1942, had shown that the District Officers were virtually absolute rulers in their areas, and that their so-called advice could not be disregarded. Hailey did not believe that the local authorities should be considered the basis of central government, but thought they should be treated as agencies with delegated functions, and that central organs should be built up independently. He held that the opinion that politically minded Africans should work with the local authorities was wrong.[3]

The Labour Government adopted the belief that a reformed local government system could become the basic political training ground for Africans.[4] Arthur Creech Jones initiated a series of important reforms with a despatch to the colonial governors on February 25, 1947. He had been considering some of the problems of African administration, and had concluded that the success of the development programmes depended on getting African co-operation. This, he thought, could be achieved through efficient and democratic local

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[3]Lord Hailey, Native Administration and Political Development in British Tropical Africa (London, 1942), pp. 20-23.

[4]Col. No. 216, Education for Citizenship in Africa (London, 1948), p. 17.

government, which, he said, "must at once provide the people with their political education and the channel for the expression of their opinions."[5] James Griffiths later agreed with Creech Jones in regarding local government as being "the key to successful administration." He thought universal primary education was impossible unless it was carried on by local government, and that agricultural reforms needed for economic development must be enforced at the same level.[6]

Creech Jones instructed the colonial governors to set up an African Affairs branch in each territory, which would be responsible for giving the Governor information and advice on local government. He also insisted that the District Commissioners and their staffs should give top priority to this problem.[7]

His despatch announced that a Summer School on African Administration would be held at Cambridge in August, at which the main aspects of local government

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[5]Colonial Office, Despatch from the Secretary of State for the Colonies to the Governors of the African Territories (February 25, 1947), p. 1.

[6]James Griffiths, "Opening Address to the 1951 Cambridge Summer Conference on African Administration", Journal of African Administration, Vol. III, No. 4 (October, 1951), pp. 154-156.

[7]Colonial Office, Despatch of February 25, 1947, p. 3.

would be discussed. In particular, he was interested in finding ways of getting the best qualified African leaders into local government, developing financial responsibility at that level, and in extending the system to urban areas.[8] This summer school was opened, on August 18, 1947, by Ivor Thomas, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, who described its main theme as being "the education of Africans in managing their own local affairs as a preparation for self-government."[9]

Mr. G. G. Shute, of the Colonial Office, pointed out that under the existing system, with the indigenous governments merely acting as agents of the central government for reasons of economy and efficiency, no sense of responsibility and initiative could develop. It was necessary to remove the idea that the government was "remote and unapproachable", and that the British were an alien ruling group with separate interests. "The people and particularly the political leaders of the new classes", he said, "must be given a sense of identity with the government, which they must come to look on as their own government

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[8] Ibid., p. 2.

[9] Colonial Office, African No. 1173, Colonial Office Summer School on African Administration (August 18-28, 1947), p. 9.

rather than the government of the United Kingdom in Africa."[10]

The broad general plan aimed at transforming the system of indirect rule into one embodying genuine local government, by replacing the "traditional authorities" with elected representatives. In many cases, these so-called traditional authorities had no roots in African custom, but had been artificially created to act as government agents, with the result that native democracy had been replaced by more autocratic institutions.[11] Where this was so, Africans had acquired little attachment to the system and it could easily be replaced.

The Native Authorities in the Gold Coast, as they operated in 1945, were appointed, deposed and given their powers by the Governor and, within the area of these authorities' jurisdiction, the Provincial Commissioners were authorized to make, amend, revoke or suspend any order.[12] The District Commissioners,

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[10] Ibid., pp. 42-43, 129.

[11] Journal of African Administration, "Local Government Reorganization in the Eastern Provinces of Nigeria and Kenya", Vol. I, No. 1 (January, 1949), pp. 18-19.

[12] Gold Coast, Ordinances, 1938-1944, Ordinance No. 21 of 1944, pp. 85-90.

according to Nkrumah, were actually "little governors", many of whom were hated.[13]

The commission which enquired into the Gold Coast disturbances recommended that Local Authorities and Regional Councils should be elected, and that they should resemble town and county councils in the United Kingdom.[14] The Coussey Committee also suggested a more democratic composition of the Native Authorities, with a less dominant role for the chiefs and a wider basis of representation.[15]

No change was made until 1951, when the Gold Coast election was followed by a reconstruction of the whole local government system and the setting up of new local, urban and district councils, a majority of whose members were elected. The Chief Commissioners were now called Regional Officers, and the District Commissioners renamed Government Agents. These latter officials were not even allowed to be members of the new councils, and their new job was to provide communication between the central government and the local councils.[16] While the

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[13] K. Nkrumah, Autobiography (London, 1957), p. 151.

[14] Col. No. 231, Report of the Commission of Enquiry into Disturbances in the Gold Coast, 1948 (Aiken Watson Commission) (London, 1948), p. 27.

[15] Col. No. 248, Gold Coast: Report to his Excellency the Governor by the Committee on Constitutional Reform, 1949 (Coussey Report) (London, 1949), pp. 9, 14.

[16] Nkrumah, pp. 152-155.

political liberalization of the Gold Coast was thus extended to all levels of Government, it is noteworthy that, at least in this case, it was not training and experience in local government that prepared Africans to participate at the centre, but a growing degree of African influence in the central government that paved the way for changes throughout the system.

Lord Lugard's institution of indirect rule in Northern Nigeria through the association of the Emirs and chiefs with the British administration laid the basis for the development of similar institutions elsewhere. In Eastern Nigeria, where no strong traditional authorities existed, they had to be created by building up the power of clan elders and turning them into chiefs.[17] As Lugard was merely trying to make British rule more palatable and economical, there was no pretense that his system was intended to produce democracy and, in fact, one observer who spent forty years in Nigeria insisted, in 1947, that the tendency was in the opposite direction.[18]

Since the Nigerian Legislative Council, under the Richards and Macpherson constitutions, depended for

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[17] Journal of African Administration "Local Government Reorganization", p. 18.

[18] Walter R. Miller, Have We Failed in Nigeria? (London, 1947), pp. 27-29.

its representative quality on elections which began at the local level, changes were needed if popular opinion were to have any effect at that stage. The first demand for reform came from the Eastern House of Assembly, where a committee, appointed in 1948 to sound out local opinion and advise on appropriate action, recommended the creation of elected county and district councils on the English model.[19] The result was a series of regional ordinances which produced mainly elected local authorities in Eastern and Southern Nigeria.

The only significant legislation introduced during the Labour period was the Eastern Region Local Government Ordinance of 1950, which provided for the establishment of popularly elected Native Authority councils with expanded powers.[20] Similar laws were passed in Western Nigeria in 1952 and in Northern Nigeria in 1954. In the North, however, a limited degree of popular election was instituted, and the Emirs and Chiefs maintained their positions as chairmen of councils consisting largely of traditional and nominated members. As late as 1962, only slightly more

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[19] G. O. Orewa, Local Government Finance in Nigeria (Ibadan, 1966), p. 25.

[20] Ibid.

than half the members of these councils were elected.[21]

The new Native Authorities received increased revenues through the addition of the power to collect rates and fees to their former right to a share of personal income taxes. Subject to the supervision of the regional governments, these authorities were responsible for education, medical and health services, water supply, trade and industry, and maintenance of roads, bridges, waterways and markets.[22] They also had the power to create subordinate district, village and town councils to which some functions could be delegated.[23]

This system of local government depending on direct election was fully established in Eastern Nigeria by 1954 and in Western Nigeria the following year.[24] The change did not, therefore, come soon enough to provide a basis of popular election for the regional representatives on the Legislative Council, however successful it may have been in training local politicians or in mobilizing public support for measures related to social and economic development.

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[21] Ibid., pp. 15-16.

[22] Ibid., p. 14.

[23] Ibid., p. 12.

[24] Ibid., pp. 22, 25.

In Kenya, where Europeans had found a strongly democratic tribal organization, it had been necessary to establish and impose the institutions of local government. A system of Native Councils, presided over by European District Commissioners had been instituted, and chiefs had been created to assist the District Commissioners. The people felt no attachment to this artificial system, and there was a growing separation between them and the native authorities.[25]

The democratization of local government in Kenya began in 1948 with the passage of the African District Councils Ordinance. Provision was made for popular election, and by 1951 every council had an elected majority.[26] These councils were responsible for a wide range of local services, including education, health, water supplies, agricultural services, roads, markets and welfare services. They derived revenues from rates and taxes, license fees and court fines, as well as from government grants.[27]

African nationalists took the view, nevertheless, that democracy had not been established at the

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[25]Kenneth Ingham, A History of East Africa (London, 1962), p. 371.

[26]Fabian Colonial Bureau, Opportunity in Kenya (London, 1953), p. 34.

[27]Rita Hinden, Local Government and the Colonies (London, 1950), pp. 129, 131.

local level. In October, 1952, the Kenya African Union demanded, amongst other things, that the elective system be applied to local government, and another African spokesman called, in the following year, for the application of "political democracy" there.[28] Since the District Commissioners continued to preside over the District Councils in every case until 1959,[29] it seems likely that, at least in African eyes, they were still in control.

The African politicians may, however, have been referring to municipal politics, where the few Africans who sat on city councils were appointed by the Governor. A bill passed in 1946 had authorized such appointments, and two Africans had been appointed to Nairobi Municipal Council and one to the Municipal Board of Mombasa.[30] This makes a rather interesting contrast with the situation in West Africa, where election of Africans to municipal councils began in the 1920's, while the introduction of similar institutions in rural areas had to wait until 1950 and after. Since there can hardly be any doubt that education was more

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[28]Fabian Colonial Bureau, Opportunity in Kenya, pp. 40-41.

[29]British Information Services, Kenya (London, 1963), p. 35.

[30]Hinden, pp. 135-136.

common in the cities than in the countryside, it is obvious that, in the case of Kenya, the granting of the ballot was unrelated to the ability of Africans to understand and use electoral procedures. It appears that popular political activity was acceptable only in purely African areas, where local European influence was not involved.

Elsewhere in East Africa there were no significant changes in local government, and the autocratic system continued to flourish. A Colonial Office paper on Tanganyika, issued in 1951, throws a considerable amount of light on developments there and on the thinking of colonial officials on this important subject.

In Tanganyika, the District Councils were the only institutions of local government common to the whole country, since the subordinate Divisional Councils were non-existent in some areas. Where the latter bodies did exist, they were artificial creations which were short of functions.[31] The District Councils were responsible for education, medical and health services, water supply, roads and bridges and other minor

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[31]Col. No. 277, Development of African Local Government in Tanganyika (London, 1951), pp. 23, 27.

matters.[32]

According to the Governor of Tanganyika, E. F. Twining, there had been little change in local government since 1925, but recent trends had been in the direction of greater autocracy, particularly during the war.[33] The existing District Councils usually had an official majority, and expenditures were controlled and books kept by the District Commissioners.[34] A new Native Authority Ordinance of 1951 left the native authorities under the absolute control of the Governor, who had the power to establish, change or abolish them.[35]

The Governor's remarks on the development of democracy in local government showed the difficulty such officials experienced in maintaining a rational opinion concerning the character and abilities of Africans. On the one hand, he described the passive attitude of the people, who had to learn the need for the development of democratic institutions, and maintained that action taken by the government to associate popular representation with the Native Authorities had been ahead of public

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[32] Ibid., p. 44.

[33] Ibid., pp. 4-5, 9.

[34] Ibid., pp. 23, 38.

[35] Ibid., p. 48.

opinion.[36] On the other hand, he noted the lack of control these authorities had over their treasuries, and, with regard to urban councils, wrote:

> It is inevitable . . . that a system which allows these bodies very limited control over expenditures and no revenues of their own should fail to stimulate any vital sense of civic responsibility.[37]

When it was possible to move towards a degree of popular representation, the people immediately became interested, and, in some cases, their eagerness to look after their own affairs caused officials some concern.[38] Evidently, public apathy was the natural result of the belief that the Native Authorities were instruments of the Government, with no power of independent action.

Strictly speaking, Northern Rhodesia experienced little change in local government at this time. An attempt was made to create a basis for African representation on the Legislative Council through successive stages of election or nomination, beginning with the local authorities, as in Nigeria.

This programme had been begun in 1942 with the formation of African Provincial Councils, with purely

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[36] Ibid., pp. 7-8.

[37] Ibid., p. 13.

[38] Ibid., pp. 8, 21-22.

advisory powers, to represent the Native Authorities at the Regional level. These bodies met for a few days once or twice a year under the chairmanship of the Provincial Commissioners.[39] Local government was carried on, as before, by the previously existing Native Authorities.

The next step was the setting up, in 1946, of an African Representative Council, consisting of delegates from the Provincial Councils, for the whole territory. This body, too, functioned only in an advisory capacity, not as an agent of government. It carried out what was apparently its most important purpose when it nominated the two African representatives who were appointed to the Legislative Council in 1948.[40] Since the local authorities had been reformed in 1947, to allow Africans who were not hereditary chiefs to take part,[41] there was a possibility that the views of ordinary Africans might eventually find some means of expression through this machinery.

Nyasaland followed much the same path as Northern Rhodesia but at a slightly less advanced stage.

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[39]Hinden, pp. 190-191.

[40]Ibid., pp. 191-192.

[41]United Kingdom Information Service, Canada, Northern Rhodesia (London, 1962), p. 13.

African Provincial Councils, with the Provincial Commissioners as chairmen, were set up in 1945 and 1946. Each council had 25 members, of whom 20 were chiefs nominated from their own number at district meetings, and the remaining five were appointed by the Governor in consultation with the chiefs.[42] The Provincial Councils later nominated members to the African Protectorate Council, which in turn nominated the slate from which the Governor appointed Africans to the Legislative Council.[43]

If we look at the African colonies as a whole, we find that the changes in local government involved two quite different trends. In the Gold Coast, Kenya and parts of Nigeria, there was democratization through the introduction of elected representatives. In Nigeria, Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, there was an attempt to devise electoral college systems, based on the Native Authorities, which would work up through successive levels to produce African representatives on the Legislative Councils. The two trends met only in

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[42]Colonial Office, Native Administration in Central Nyasaland (London, 1952), p. 13; 407 H.C. Deb., col. 812.

[43]See above, p. 347.

Nigeria, and there the electoral system was abandoned at the moment when the democratization of the local authorities was taking place.

The aim of giving Africans political education through experience in local government seems applicable, in practice, only to Kenya, where they took virtually no part in central government. In the Gold Coast, African advance at the centre preceded that at the local level, and in Nigeria it at least matched it. In any case, most Nigerian politicians ignored the opportunity to acquire experience in local politics.[44]

With regard to the expression of African opinion, the introduction of elected representatives must have had some positive result in the Gold Coast and Nigeria, where the Africans obtained some power. Its effect in Kenya, where the District Commissioners retained a strong position, is more problematical. Whether the acquisition of authority in local government persuaded West Africans that the colonial governments were their governments, and induced them to cooperate in the development schemes, is difficult to say, since growing African influence at the centre would probably have had this effect in any case.

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[44] A. H. M. Kirk-Greene (ed.), The Principles of Native Administration in Nigeria: Selected Documents, 1900-1947 (London, 1965), p. 245.

CHAPTER XVIII

AFRICANIZATION OF THE CIVIL SERVICES

One other significant change was necessary, if Africans were to govern themselves efficiently in the foreseeable future - namely, the training of an African civil service. In every colony, the upper ranks of the administration were manned almost exclusively by Europeans, although there were many Africans in clerical jobs, since the cost of importing Europeans for all such positions would have been prohibitive. The scarcity of educated people had led to the employment, in these junior posts, of almost anyone who could read and write, with the result that many did not have the qualifications to rise.[1]

It had been recognized during the war that some advance in this area was to be expected. Lord Hailey had commented, in 1942, on the difficulty of allowing Africans to occupy "posts of control", but had

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[1]Sir Alan Burns, The History of Nigeria (London, 1955), p. 257.

continued: "It is in our readiness to admit Africans to such posts that they will see the test of the sincerity of our declared policy of opening to them the road to self-government."[2] A report prepared by a committee set up in 1944 to study training for the colonial civil service had worked on the assumption that the number of recruits from the colonies themselves would increase sharply after the war.[3]

Sir Alan Burns had decided in 1941 that Africans should enter the administrative service in the Gold Coast, and the following year he had appointed two as Assistant District Commissioners. In his opinion, the most important duty of European officials was to train Africans to take their place.[4]

Although the Africanization of the civil services was not mentioned in Labour's official policy statements, leading figures in the party had endorsed such a policy. Their view was reinforced by the practical difficulty of recruiting enough Europeans to

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[2]Lord Hailey, Native Administration and Political Development in British Tropical Africa (London, 1942), p. 47.

[3]Col. No. 198, Post-war Training for the Colonial Service (London, 1946), p. 4.

[4]Sir Alan Burns, Colonial Civil Servant (London, 1949), pp. 195, 323.

fill the available posts, and this difficulty continued throughout the post-war period. The Secretary of State for the Colonies informed Parliament in 1950 that, at the end of the previous year, there had been over 1,100 unfilled vacancies in the Colonial Service.[5]

The Colonial Office view was set forth in a report issued in 1946, as a result of an initiative by Colonel Stanley, which was endorsed and implemented by the Labour Government.[6] This paper accepted the idea that the staffing of the public services by local candidates was related to the development of self-government, and asserted the principle that all positions should be open to any qualified candidate. Since the possibility of local appointments was limited in some cases by lack of training, it was necessary to expand educational facilities, and Colonial Development and Welfare funds were to be provided for this purpose. One of the principles which was desirable, but not immediately universally applicable, was that salaries should be based on the work performed, regardless of race or domicile.[7] A Public Service Commission was to

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[5] 477 H.C. Deb., col. 1381.

[6] A. Creech Jones, Some Current Colonial Problems (London, 1946), p. 10.

[7] Col. No. 197, Organization of the Colonial Service (London, 1946), pp. 3-7.

be established in each colony, and local appointments would be made by the Governor, while the Secretary of State would continue to control the higher administrative and professional appointments.[8]

The training of colonial civil servants was undertaken by the universities of Oxford, Cambridge and London, with the cost being underwritten by the colonial governments, assisted by Colonial Development and Welfare grants.[9] By 1950, 79 people from the colonies were taking these courses, this number forming about one-third of the total in training at that time.[10] Of a total of £ 2 1/2 million allotted to the scheme, at least one million was to be spent on the training of 'natives'.[11]

The African civil services were generally divided into four categories, with the top one consisting of administrators requiring professional or scientific qualifications and the second one of technicians with lower, but still extensive, training. These two categories were filled almost entirely by

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[8] Ibid., p. 9.

[9] Ibid., p. 5.

[10] 477 H.C. Deb., col. 1382.

[11] A. Creech Jones, Labour's Colonial Policy (London, 1947), p. 12.

Europeans, while the two lower ones were staffed in West Africa by Africans, and in East Africa by Africans and Asians, with Asians holding most of the more responsible positions.[12] Appointments were divided into three classes, with administrative and technical appointments at the top, and the remainder divided between officers earning £ 600 per annum or more and those earning a smaller amount. Only class III officers were appointed locally, while the Secretary of State made appointments to the first two groups.[13]

The Labour Government appointed investigating commissions to examine conditions in the civil services of all the African colonies and make recommendations for reforms. The West African commission suggested a new division of the service into two main classes by the amalgamation of the previous categories I and II into one class and III and IV into the other. It recommended the same pay for local and overseas employees, plus expatriate pay for overseas officials at the rate of one-third of basic salary. It pointed out that the

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[12]Col. No. 209, Report of the Commission on the Civil Services of British West Africa, 1945-46 (London, 1947), p. 10; Col. No. 223, Report of the Commission on the Civil Services of Kenya, Tanganyika, Uganda and Zanzibar, 1947-48 (London, 1948), pp. 10-11.

[13]Col. No. 209, p. 30.

existing salaries of Africans enabled them to live only at the subsistence level and condemned as completely unjustified such practices as that of paying doctors qualified in Nigeria £ 120 and those qualified in the United Kingdom £ 400 for doing exactly the same work.[14] These recommendations regarding pay and reclassification were accepted, and the West African civil services henceforth consisted only of junior and senior appointees, although there was still a division between European and African appointments.[15]

In the Gold Coast, the most politically advanced colony, Africans already filled some senior positions. In April, 1948, there were between 1300 and 1400 senior appointments in the administration and, of these, 98 were held by Africans. There were also 171 Gold Coast students being trained in the United Kingdom, which held forth the prospect of a significant increase in African appointments in the future.[16] By June 1, 1950, an additional 171 appointments had, in fact, been

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[14] Ibid., pp. 10-11, 18.

[15] Gold Coast, Sessional Paper No. 1 of 1950, Report of the Select Committee of the Legislative Council on the Africanization of the Public Services (Accra, 1950), p. 15.

[16] Col. No. 231, Report of the Commission of Enquiry into Disturbances in the Gold Coast, 1948 (Aiken Watson Commission) (London, 1948), p. 30.

made, raising the total of Africans in the Senior Service to 269.[17]

Nevertheless, Africans doubted the good faith of the Government's announced Africanization policy. The Aiken Watson Commission reported "a universal feeling that Africanization was merely a promise and not a driving force in Government policy", and a suspicion that education was being directed in such a way as to slow its implementation.[18] It recommended a forward policy, which would involve the appointment of overseas civil servants only where no qualified African could be found.[19] The United Kingdom Government, in its commentary on the report, stated that this was already an established rule,[20] but Africans evidently did not believe the rule was being followed.

When Nkrumah became government leader in 1951, the senior positions were still held largely by Europeans. According to him, the African employees were mainly in the junior service, and it looked as

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[17]Cmd. 8243 (1951), The Colonial Territories, 1950-51, p. 27.

[18]Col. No. 231, Aiken Watson Commission Report, p. 8.

[19]Ibid., p. 26.

[20]Col. No. 232, Statement by His Majesty's Government on the Report of the Commission of Enquiry into Disturbances in the Gold Coast, 1948 (London, 1948), p. 10.

though it would be many years before they could take over the responsible positions.[21] Sir Charles Arden-Clarke, the Governor at that time, has noted the fact that the senior civil servants all came from overseas, which, he says, tended to make nonsense of the claim that the Gold Coast was getting independence.[22]

In fact, far too few educated Africans were available to fill more than a fraction of the expected vacancies. Nkrumah realized that he had to retain the services of as many overseas officers as possible, since there was no one to take their place.[23] An article in West Africa, in June, 1950, had quoted an estimate that over 1,000 openings were expected in the Gold Coast service in the next ten years, and pointed out that these could be filled only if there were "serious 'middle-class' unemployment in Europe."[24]

When Sir John MacPherson became Governor of Nigeria in 1948, one of his first acts was to appoint a commission to inquire into the problem of

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[21] Kwame Nkrumah, Autobiography (London, 1957), p. 148.

[22] Sir Charles Arden-Clarke, "Eight Years of Transition in Ghana", African Affairs, Vol. 57, No. 226 (January, 1958), p. 35.

[23] Nkrumah, p. 148.

[24] "The Gold Coast Gap", West Africa, No. 1737, Vol. XXXIV (June, 1950), p. 505.

Nigerianization of the civil service and recommend means to implement such a policy. The commission noted that the appointment of Nigerians was restricted chiefly by the small number of qualified university entrants, and recommended "a planned and sustained effort" to improve the educational system and "enable Nigerians as rapidly as possible to obtain the necessary qualifications."[25] It suggested a programme of scholarships and training awards which would assist 385 candidates in the next three years.[26]

The number of Nigerians in the senior service, as newly defined, increased considerably in the next few years, from 245 in 1948 to 685 in 1952, and the percentage of Africans rose from under 10% to over 19%. However, in absolute numbers, more expatriates than Africans were added to the staff, 788 as against 440.[27] By the middle of 1954, the establishment was as follows:

Nigerians	824
Overseas Officers	3,285
Vacancies	1,028
Total	5,137[28]

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[25]Nigeria, The Nigerianization of the Civil Service (Lagos, 1954), p. 12.

[26]Nigeria, Report of the Commission on the Public Services of the Governments in the Federation of Nigeria, 1954-55 (Lagos, 1955), p. 32.

[27]Nigerianization of the Civil Service, p. 37.

[28]Report of the Commission on the Public Services, p. 32.

The most interesting figure is undoubtedly that showing over 1,000 vacancies, almost exactly one-fifth of the total, which indicates both the shortage of qualified Nigerians and the difficulty of finding recruits from Britain. Since it was hoped that, by 1956, the University of Ibadan would be graduating 60 students a year, of whom half might enter government service, it was likely to be several years before enough Africans would acquire the currently accepted qualifications.[29]

The problem of Africanization was much more complex in East Africa, where European civil servants were more easily available and the prejudice against Africans very strong. In Kenya, in particular, the more highly paid posts went automatically to Europeans, without consideration of the need for promoting Africans. The Lidbury Commission noted especially the number of Europeans who obtained large salaries for performing minor duties.[30]

Of the four civil service groups, the first two were composed almost entirely of Europeans, and in the other two the higher posts went to Asians, although

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[29] Ibid.

[30] Cmd. 9475 (1955-56), East Africa Royal Commission Report, p. 180.

there were some Africans in the third group serving as assistant medical officers and assistant agricultural officers. There were three separate services for the three races in Kenya, while the Asian and African services were partly fused in Tanganyika and Uganda. In all three colonies, however, salaries were paid on a racial basis.[31]

The Commission on the Civil Services of East Africa recommended the creation of a single service instead of three, but with three different rates of pay based on race. Its report contained elaborate reasoning to support this recommendation, including the argument that the higher value of European and Asian workers was proved by the fact that private employers actually paid them higher wages. The introduction of the same basic salary scale for Asians and Africans in Tanganyika and Uganda was criticized as "premature", although its evil effects were mitigated by the practice of allowing Asians to enter at a higher point in Tanganyika, and by giving them a cost-of-living bonus in Uganda.[32]

The Labour Government evidently accepted the basic premises underlying the Commission's arguments,

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[31]Col. No. 223, Report on East African Services, pp. 10-11, 23.

[32]Ibid., pp. 23-26, 29.

since the racial system was retained intact.[33] The report to the United Nations on Tanganyika for 1948 showed 10,517 Africans in government employment, but not a single one in a top post, or anywhere near it: the 1951 report asserted that the number of Africans in the administration was increasing, but gave no figures.[34] In the latter year, five Africans held senior government posts in Uganda.[35] A Fabian Colonial Bureau pamphlet, published in 1952, suggested that there should be equal opportunity of entry and one basic salary scale for all races in the East African civil services.[36]

In Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, so few Africans received secondary education that the question of admitting them to the higher civil service posts was purely theoretical, and was expected to remain so for many years. The Commission on the Civil Services favoured continued division on a racial basis and continued wage discrimination against Africans. It

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[33] Cmd. 9475, E.A.R.C. Report, p. 180.

[34] Colonial Office, Report by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom to the Trusteeship Council of the United Nations on the Administration of Tanganyika for the Year 1948 (London, 1949), pp. 217-231; ibid., 1951, p. 23.

[35] D. A. Low and R. C. Pratt, Buganda and British Overrule, 1900-1955 (London, 1960), p. 284.

[36] Fabian Colonial Bureau, East African Future (London, 1952), p. 14.

declined to suggest rates of pay for Africans in the senior services, on the ground that no appreciable number of Africans had suitable qualifications for entry.[37] In 1961, the Northern Rhodesia civil service employed a total of 735 Africans on a staff of 4,896.[38] By 1960, there were 104 Africans in the Nyasaland senior service, of whom nine held professional or administrative posts.[39]

The Africanization of the civil service was hindered everywhere by lack of education, compounded in East and Central Africa by racial bias. The result was that the growth of local services lagged behind even the slow pace of constitutional development.[40]

When the admission of large numbers of Africans to the senior service became inevitable, it soon appeared that the reasons for their exclusion had been to some extent artificial. In some cases, Africans had done the work while Europeans had earned the salary. Sir Alan Burns, for example, referring to an early

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[37] T. Fitzgerald, Report of the Commission on the Civil Services of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, 1947 (Lusaka, 1947), pp. 7-9.

[38] United Kingdom Information Service, Canada, Northern Rhodesia (London, 1962), p. 15.

[39] United Kingdom Information Service, Canada, Nyasaland (London, 1963), p. 8.

[40] A. L. Adu, The Civil Service in the New African States (London, 1965), p. 12.

stage of his service career, wrote: "My Customs duties were very light, especially as I had an excellent African clerk who was well up in Customs routine."[41] In 1963, when independence became imminent in Northern Rhodesia, a crash training programme made it possible to replace all the Resident Secretaries and Permanent Secretaries with Africans in nine months. It was found that many bright Africans were capable of doing administrative work without further training.[42] When Nigerians began to enter the senior service in larger numbers, the main source of supply was the junior service.[43] Not lack of education alone, but also race prejudice and the desire to preserve highly paid positions for Europeans, had barred African advance.

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[41]Sir Alan Burns, Colonial Civil Servant (London, 1949), p. 36.

[42]R. W. Paule, former District Commissioner and Provincial Commissioner in Northern Rhodesia - Personal interview, January 27, 1966.

[43]Nigeria, Report on the Public Services, 1954-55, p. 36.

CHAPTER XIX

CONCLUSION

An assessment of Labour's theory and practice in the field of Imperial Trusteeship involves judgment on three distinct but interrelated problems. Firstly, it is necessary to examine the theoretical basis of the policy in order to establish its relation to reality; secondly, we must determine the extent to which the stated policy was actually applied; thirdly, the relation between trusteeship and the final results achieved must be estimated. With these three questions answered, it should be possible to pass some judgment on the significance of Labour's trusteeship policy for the British Empire in the twentieth century.

The general idea that rule over subject peoples involved a trust was in existence before the creation of the Labour Party. It was based on the reality that, given Europe's technological superiority, the expansion of European power was inevitable.

Theoretically, it rested on the assumption that European civilization was superior in all its aspects, and that this superiority stemmed from the inherent biological advantages of the white race. In its early form, however, it was little more than a pious platitude which served to rationalize conquest.

The basic characteristics of the Labour view of trusteeship grew out of the ideas expressed by Bernard Shaw at the turn of the century, ideas which reveal an interesting combination of realism and illusion. Shaw quite rightly accepted the inevitability of European expansion, but completely misjudged the direction of European political development. He believed that socialism was in the process of welding the people of the world into a single community, in which individualism and nationalism would be submerged and in which all would work together for the common good. Imperialism was one of the instruments of world consolidation and, in this ideal world, Europeans would use their power to create a civilization in which the subject groups would have equal rights and privileges with themselves. Shaw, therefore, enthusiastically embraced imperialism as a partner in the drive towards utopia.

At least two significant difficulties were inherent in this theory. In the first place, Shaw and those who came after him accepted the prevailing view that the coloured peoples were inherently inferior to the white race. This inevitably implied that, if a divergence of interest appeared, the interests of the superior, and therefore more valuable, group must prevail. It also meant that, at least for an indefinitely long period, Europeans would remain in control of the world community, to whose civilization they would make by far the greatest contribution. To refrain from abusing such a position would surely require superhuman restraint on their part.

Even more serious was the fact that Shaw's socialist world community was purely imaginary and that the actual trend was in the opposite direction. Given the real situation, in which nationalism and national rivalries were being intensified, and the demand for material goods was rising rapidly amongst all classes in European society, the idea that powerful nations would sacrifice their own advantage for the benefit of a world community was completely unrelated to reality.

By the time the Labour Party found it necessary to formulate an imperial policy, the

nationalization of socialism had already demonstrated the absurdity of Shaw's world view. When the proposal for the international administration of African colonies failed to gain acceptance, however, the Party did not consider adopting an anti-imperialist platform: it merely recognized the British Empire as the end rather than the beginning, with the proviso that it should be perfected by reform.

Proposals for such reform were elaborated over the next twenty-five years, with little regard for the disappearance of their main theoretical base. Labour trusteeship now rested on the same foundation as that of any other party. In the absence of the prospect of organizing the world as a unit in the interests of all its people, hope of reform depended almost entirely on pure altruism. Since competition was the dominant ethic, even within the individual nations, the likelihood that altruism would reform imperialism was remote.

To some extent, the theoretical gap was filled by the liberal theory of the harmony of interests, which made possible the comfortable view that colonies could remain separate political, social and economic entities and be developed in the best interests both of their own people and of those of Great Britain. The old argument that low wages in colonies threatened the wages

of British workers was trotted out from time to time, but it was obvious that no one took it very seriously. The main legacy from the earlier period was the mystic belief that the British Empire would eventually evolve into a world community, which justified Labour's insistence that the Empire must be retained and that the Colonies would one day have 'self-government within the Commonwealth'.

Under these circumstances, Labour's imperial policy tended to become indistinguishable from that of the Conservatives. It retained a generous measure of that self-righteousness which induces leftists to assume that they have a monopoly on morality, but this meant only that Labour was committed to realizing the ideal to which all paid lip service. It also seemed likely that Labour rule would produce some measure of nationalization, in the colonies as well as in Great Britain, although no specific proposals were made in this regard. So far as their stated policies were concerned, the differences between the two parties could be explained mainly by the fact that Labour had not yet enjoyed the responsibility of power, although some of its members had been in office.

The last years before the Second World War witnessed the growth, in both parties, of the belief

that changes were needed if the Empire were to be maintained. At the same time, the world economic crisis produced an increased faith in government intervention as a panacea for all the ills of society. The result was an active policy of developing the Empire in such a way as to ensure its continuance, a policy enthusiastically supported by the Labour Party.

The war generated another great wave of interest in imperialism within the Labour Party, and brought forth the most detailed exposition of party policy yet seen. There was, however, no change in emphasis, which was still on consolidation through reform, an emphasis confirmed by the significant role played by some colonies during the war.

The Labour Government which assumed power in 1945 was faced with grave economic problems, and it was in this context that it undertook the 'development' of the Empire. The main purpose of that development was to derive from the colonies maximum support for the British economy. Since this required initial investment in the hope of long-term gains, assurance was needed that the Empire would not be liquidated before the investment began to pay. To conciliate the people of the colonies and to induce them to cooperate in the Government's plans it was necessary to persuade them

that they were moving towards greater prosperity and freedom.

The programme undertaken by Labour attempted to combine economic development aimed at increasing the production of goods for export with advances in education and health services designed to appease African opinion. However, since Great Britain was prepared to supply neither capital nor goods, but rather insisted on extracting capital from the colonies, little development actually took place. There were modest increases in the production of a few export commodities, but, generally speaking, exports showed no significant growth over their pre-war volume. Even the self-seeking goal of increasing the ability of the colonies to serve British needs was, therefore, not attained.

Other aspects of colonial economic life also changed very little. African standards of living remained at or below the 1938 level; there was no increase in wages and little change in conditions of labour; the European monopoly of trade, industry and finance was maintained; colonial economies retained the distortions associated with their position as suppliers of raw materials for advanced industrial countries; and the system of racial discrimination, economic as

well as social, was preserved throughout the area of European settlement.

Since it was agreed that social advance must be supported by economic development, little progress in health and education was to be expected. The ten year plans earmarked about fifteen shillings *per capita* for these two services, or about 1s.6d. *per annum*. Within these financial limitations, the colonial governments made considerable efforts to improve the extent and quality of the services, but with results so inadequate that their significance, if any, is hard to estimate. There was no visible decline in the extremely high incidence of disease, and the extension of education was mainly at the junior primary level.

Labour's economic programme for Africa shows clearly that socialists, like other men, tend to follow policies which are advantageous to themselves and to their nation, and that this tendency is unlikely to be offset by altruistic impulses. Individual altruism might work to improve some aspects of African life, but success would be limited by the necessity of maintaining or increasing the level of economic exploitation.

In the absence of significant social and economic development there was, according to the frequently expressed opinion of Labour spokesmen, no

basis for rapid political change. Logically, there should have been little or no progress towards self-government anywhere in Africa, either during the Labour period or for some years thereafter.

Nevertheless, one colony, the Gold Coast, moved definitely in the direction of responsible government by 1951, and its eventual independence was followed by that of every British colony in Africa within twenty years of Labour's first assumption of power. If one takes the trusteeship formula at its face value, this outcome must represent its perfect vindication, since it appears that Africans were finally prepared for self-government, which was then duly bestowed upon them.

In fact, it is evident that Africans were little better prepared for independence in the 1950's and 1960's than they had been twenty, thirty, or even a hundred years before. Economically, they had become backward dependencies on Europe's industrial system, with the main framework of their economies controlled by Europeans. Tribal society had been to some extent broken down, but it had not yet been replaced by a viable alternative. For the great majority, the educational system was economically, socially and politically irrelevant. Political participation had, in most cases, been less direct and less significant under colonial

rule than in tribal society.

Virtually everyone concerned with colonial affairs had expected a far longer period of British overlordship, and all were agreed that, when independence came, it was premature. Lord Hailey had pointed out, in 1942 that many colonial officials thought the "conception of self-government" was so idealistic, or so far from being realized, that it did not "form an issue of immediate importance."[1] Sir Charles Arden-Clarke wrote in 1958, that "Few, if any, of us ever dreamed forty, thirty, or even twenty, years ago that within our own working lifetime we would see the translation of an African Colonial Territory into a free and independent state. . . ."[2]

When new constitutions were introduced in West Africa, they continually lagged behind African expectations, and it was invariably necessary to make further changes far sooner than had been anticipated. Marjorie Nicholson noted, in 1950, that there were "grave misgivings in many quarters at the pace of this 'forward march'"; she thought the West African

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[1]Lord Hailey, Native Administration and Political Development in British Tropical Africa (London, 1942), p. 50.

[2]Sir Charles Arden-Clarke, "Eight Years of Transition in Ghana", African Affairs, Vol. 57, No. 226 (January, 1958), p. 30.

territories had still some way to go if they were to proceed to self-government by "orthodox stages."[3] James Griffiths, Colonial Secretary in 1950-51, did not believe the Gold Coast had been adequately prepared for the 1951 constitution, but was forced to give in to what he called "the irrestible wave of nationalism." To resist meant colonial wars, which he thought the people of Great Britain would not stand for and which, in any case, would defeat their own purpose.[4]

The prognosis for East Africa was even less optimistic. Sir Philip Mitchell thought, in 1954, that, "for generations to come," the tribes in that area could hope for civilized government only "under the forms of colonial government . . . administered by a strong and enlightened colonial power."[5] Margery Perham, a long-time advocate of trusteeship, wrote, in 1956:

> Students of history or sociology, indeed any thoughtful onlookers, would possibly agree that it would have been much better if Negro Africa could have had another century at least of British rule, of order, education, unification, economic development, at the hands of beneficent and expert trustees. But [6] . . . we cannot have these desirable conditions.

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[3]Marjorie Nicholson, West African Ferment (London, 1950), pp. 31, 40.

[4]Rt. Hon. James Griffiths, Personal Interview, December 15, 1965.

[5]Sir Philip Mitchell, African Afterthoughts (London, 1954), p. 276.

[6]Tom Mboya, The Kenya Question: An African Answer (London, 1956), Foreword, pp. 4-5.

Miss Perham considered the tribes of Kenya far behind those of West Africa, and advocated a long interval during which the British Government would strengthen its relaxing control over the country.[7] Rita Hinden, one of the keenest observers of African affairs, agreed, in 1965, that the pace had been too fast, and that the Africans had not been ready when independence came.[8]

The experience of Great Britain's African subjects, far from supporting the view that the rise and decline of British rule represented the undertaking and successful completion of a period of tutelage, suggests that such tutelage, even if belatedly embarked upon, can never be realized. If we accept the year 1940 as the watershed between the passive and the active stages of Imperial Trusteeship, it is clear that the concept failed to establish its validity in either period. Before 1940, however sincere the ultimate intention, virtually nothing was done to make progress of any kind a reality; after 1940, when a half-hearted attempt was made to use the power of government to stimulate social and economic change, it was impossible

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[7] Ibid., pp. 8-9.

[8] Dr. Rita Hinden, Personal Interview, December 3, 1965.

to carry it through.

It may be argued, however, that the main factor limiting social and economic advance was the tendency to use the power of government for purposes of exploitation, and that, if different policies had been adopted, success might have been achieved. The point is a crucial one, since it was almost an article of faith with British administrators that social and economic development must precede political change. The Commission of Enquiry into the disturbances in Nigeria, for example, insisted that civilized government could not be carried on just by drafting a constitution, and continued:

> The people must first have available the economists to advise on how to keep the ship of state from bankruptcy -- they must have the engineers to build the lines of communication and harness the resources; they must have the doctors to look after the health of the nation and the teachers to teach the children.[9]

In a similar vein, the Governor of Tanganyika maintained that ". . . whatever steps are taken to broaden the basis of tribal constitution from the political aspect, there must be no sacrifice of administrative efficiency if economic and social advancement is also to be

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[9]Col. No. 256, Report of the Commission of Enquiry into the Disturbances in the Eastern Provinces of Nigeria, November 1949 (London, 1950), p. 12.

maintained."[10] Rita Hinden echoed these official views when she wrote, in 1950, that "The vicious circle of poverty, disease and ignorance has not yet been broken, and until it has, constitutional progress is bound to lack any immediate reality."[11]

The question which cannot fail to arise is, whether significant economic development is ever possible under colonial conditions, however sincere the altruism of the ruling power. There can be little doubt that, in the context of the current theories of trusteeship, the answer should be a resounding "No!" It is quite plain that one of the basic assumptions of trusteeship in its recent form is that the economic development of 'backward' peoples is consistent with the maintenance of their position as suppliers of raw materials for the 'advanced' industrial countries. Even if the policies followed by Great Britain had succeeded in their aim of greatly increasing the production of primary goods for export, this would have meant little to the people of the colonies. No attempt was made to increase the productivity of subsistence agriculture or

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[10]Col. No. 277, Development of African Local Government in Tanganyika (London, 1951), p. 10.

[11]Rita Hinden, Local Government and the Colonies (London, 1950), p. 33.

to involve colonial people in manufacturing industry. In the absence of such activity, even a huge inflow of capital would have changed their position only to the extent that it would probably have created a larger class of labourers -- but at the same miserable wages being paid to those already so engaged. In the absence of alternative economic activities which would raise the price of labour, the suppliers of capital would absorb any benefits which might accrue, leaving the wage-earners no better off than before.

Some of the scholars who have studied trusteeship seem to have had an inkling of this reality. Marjorie Nicholson, for example, asked: ". . . how can economic advance be achieved without a great surge of effort on the part of the people, and how can this surge be stimulated except by governments in touch with the people?"[12] Even Rita Hinden remarked, on one occasion:

> It may be that the only answer is in the transfer of an increasing measure of constitutional power to the colonial peoples. Ultimately, it will only be when the people are in control of their own governments that they will also control their economic development.[13]

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[12]Nicholson, p. 40.

[13]Rita Hinden, Common Sense and Colonial Development (London, 1949), p. 43.

When we come to examine the possibilities for political training or education for self-government, we find a similar situation. The conditions of colonial rule ensured that any success achieved in these areas would work towards bringing that rule to a 'premature' end. Since the governments were unable to gain the confidence and support of the people, education tended to produce nationalist agitators determined to end British control. The most important effect of the small changes which did take place was therefore to foment revolution.

The potential for political training can be measured from two points of view, depending on whether the aim was to develop completely independent nations or to equip colonial societies with a Europeanized educated class which would maintain a political and economic system advantageous to Great Britain. The evidence indicates that neither end was possible in the middle of the twentieth century.

In the first case, it seems unlikely that any colonial power would ever consider its subjects ready for genuine independence. If there is little or no education, then foreign rule is obviously necessary: if education is going forward rapidly, then the beneficent régime which fosters it must be maintained

a while longer. If there is no political activity, then the people are so uninformed or apathetic that it is ridiculous to suppose they can govern themselves: if political agitation is widespread, it is unsafe to leave the people at the mercy of unprincipled demagogues. In short, almost any conceivable condition may be taken to justify the continuance of colonial rule.

In vindication of this point of view, it must be admitted that there is something inconsistent about the whole idea that foreign rule teaches people to govern themselves. The concept of training people for democracy through autocracy is a contradiction in terms. It is doubtful whether any people have ever learned to govern themselves, but, if so, they have learned by doing it, not by being subjects of an imperial power.

There is, however, a considerable body of evidence which suggests that there was never any intention of preparing Africans for a genuinely independent existence. Labour's expressed aim, as we have seen, was invariably to lead the colonies to 'self-government within the Commonwealth.' Lord Hailey described colonial administrators, in 1942, as having little faith that self-government was ever possible in Africa on terms which would benefit the people or

"avoid prejudice to their connection with Great Birtain."[14] J. H. Hall, the Governor of Uganda, wrote a foreword to that country's development plan in which he said: "If we succeed, we may hope to have in Uganda a friendly, co-operative and progressive people bound to Britain by ties of gratitude and common purpose."[15] Rita Hinden declared, in 1950, that the colonial problem was "narrowed down to one simple question: Can we so act . . . that when we leave they will themselves wish to remain as free partners within the Commonwealth?"[16] James Griffiths expressed his agreement by asking: "Can we, in partnership, harness their great growing force of nationhood to build democratic states in all these countries? If we cannot, we shall fail. . . ."[17] Finally, Colin Legum, writing in 1954, put it this way:

> Transfer of power under conditions that must weaken Western influence is an act of surrender or abdication; transfer of power that increases the possibility of maintaining Western influence is an act of statesmanship.[18]

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[14]Hailey, p. 50.

[15]E. B. Worthington, A Development Plan for Uganda (Entebbe, 1946), p. XII.

[16]Fabian Colonial Bureau, The Way Forward (London, 1950), p. 6.

[17]480 H.C. Deb., col. 521.

[18]Colin Legum, Must We Lose Africa? (London, 1954), p. 152.

Unfortunately for this point of view, the time when it might have been possible to relinquish power to a British-oriented élite was long since past. In the nineteenth century, when European prestige was high, and many Asians and Africans believed in European superiority, European education did succeed in producing, in some places, a pro-British educated class. In the twentieth century, it produced anti-British nationalists.

The educated élite formed a very small part of the total population, estimated by Colin Legum at not more than two per cent, which he called "the total effective strength of the west in Africa."[19] This two per cent, however, was almost completely alienated from the Colonial administrations, and was leading the struggle for independence. Sir Ralph Furse, the creator of the Colonial Service, admitted that his men were much more successful in dealing with the "unspoilt native" than with the "new intelligentsia."[20] This mutual antagonism is not hard to understand, since both groups aspired to the same position, the leadership of colonial society.

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[19] Ibid., p. 145.

[20] Col. No. 198, Post-War Training for the Colonial Service (London, 1944), p. 26.

It must be concluded that Imperial Trusteeship has had no real relation to civilizing backward peoples and endowing them with European political, economic and social institutions, at least in recent times. However, since it can hardly be imagined that such a well constructed ideological system had no purpose, it still remains to be determined what that purpose was, and whether any results related to it were achieved.

The real significance of the trusteeship formula is not hard to find. Its main role was to assist in the preservation of white supremacy by convincing subject peoples that their position stemmed from their cultural inferiority, and that assimilation of the superior European civilization would fit them for equality of rights. As long as Africans believed in white superiority and in the sincerity of the British intention to share rule with them when they became civilized, the prescription met with some success. As European power and influence waned, and some Africans began to receive higher education and to demonstrate, at least to their own satisfaction, that they had abilities equal to those of Europeans, they lost faith in both the superiority and the sincerity of their rulers. When the time for translating promises into

reality came, and African advance was still delayed, the trusteeship formula ceased to perform the function of maintaining white supremacy, and became a liability instead of an asset.

Imperial Trusteeship may be credited with two other consequences, one positive and one negative. On the positive side, it has been argued that the moral influence exerted on the British public by 'anti-imperialist' arguments was responsible for the peaceful demise of the British Empire. In the absence of this tradition, says John Strachey, "we should almost certainly have been doomed to fight out a series of rearguard actions which would have ruined us, without preventing, or even significantly postponing, the dissolution of the empire."[21]

It is, indeed, evident that the development of a revolutionary situation, not training for self-government, enabled the African colonies to gain their independence. Great Britain could have decided to oppose its realization by force, a line which was followed by France in Algeria and which is still maintained by Portugal in her colonies. The fact that she did not do so must arise either from a different

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[21] John Strachey, The End of Empire (London, 1959), p. 215.

situation in the British territories or from elements which distinguish the British political tradition from that of other countries.

It could be argued that the absence of vital raw materials, such as uranium and oil, in the British colonies militated against an all out effort to maintain control at any cost. There is, however, no reason to believe that such a calculation entered into the equation, Geological surveys were by no means so complete as to ensure against future mineral discoveries, and no mention of this factor as a determinant of British policy was made by any responsible official.

There is certainly some truth in Strachey's view of the role played by what he calls anti-imperialism. Whether it was well founded or not, the belief of James Griffiths, that the British public would not support colonial wars, was no doubt one of the influences on policy. It is undeniable that, in the heyday of imperialism, most Englishmen were sincerely convinced of their superiority and of their right to rule. It is probable that the twentieth century's two great European wars resulted in a decline of confidence and a loss of morale. No doubt, many people who had supported imperialism because they believed in its moral validity could no longer persuade themselves to

do so, and therefore joined those who opposed the maintenance of the empire by force.

At the same time, we must take into account the strong pragmatic tradition in British politics, which might well have produced a similar result regardless of moral ideas. Great Britain, in straitened economic circumstances, could afford the military effort needed to maintain control only if the success of the development plans seemed certain to offset the costs within a reasonably short time. Since the economic progress being made was not encouraging, and revolutionary wars would inevitably make conditions worse, there was little point in using military force on a large scale. Strachey's conclusion that a war policy would have ruined the country without preventing the unavoidable end points, in retrospect, to an opinion held by some observers at least a decade earlier. Already, by the time the Gold Coast began its progress towards independence, the difficulties of France's position in Indo-China, for example, were becoming only too apparent.

The negative legacy of trusteeship is to be found in its continued influence on the minds of men of European descent throughout the world. Men's belief in the superiority of their particular group

arises easily and dies hard. Even the great spectacles of our age, in which Europeans have demonstrated their barbarism by the slaughter of fifty million members of the 'superior' race, many millions of them in cold blood, have failed to shake the faith of most Europeans that the future of humanity depends on their continued domination. The doctrine of racism maintains its sway, still justifying the oppression of men of colour, still leading white men across the oceans to impose their will on 'lesser breeds'. Far more numerous than those who have lost faith in the European right to rule are those who believe that, where European power has been relinquished, it should have been maintained. Many see, in almost every newspaper report from Africa, the vindication of their view that European overlordship of that continent should continue till the end of time.

This negative legacy plays an important part in maintaining the divisions which plague mankind, and which preclude any coherent attempt to solve many of our pressing problems. Men are obsessed with the necessity of preserving enclaves of privilege on the one hand, or struggling for equality on the other, and expend their greatest energies on present or prospective conflicts with other men. A clean break with the philosophy that provides an excuse for the continuing

European attempt to dominate the world is one of the imperatives of our time.

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