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FRONT PAGE COMMENT

Gap Between Rich And Poor Nations Growing

Fair trade, not "aid" is what developing countries need

THE gap between the rich and poor nations, the harsh fact that more than two-thirds of humanity exist below the poverty—these are two of the decisive factors in the world today.

It was the aim of the United Nations development Decade, now half-way through, to provide "a focus for action, action to lessen the gap, to speed up the process of modernisation, to release the majority of mankind from crippling poverty, to mitigate the tensions and hostilities which must flow from the world's vast inequalities in wealth, to restore solidarity and hope."

AIM

In its resolution inaugurating the Decade, the United Nations set the modest aim of the attainment by the developing countries of "a minimum annual rate of growth of aggregate national income of 5 per cent at the end of the Decade."

It called upon Member States and their peoples to intensify their efforts to mobilise resources and to support the measures required on the part of both developed and developing countries if this acceleration of economic growth was to be achieved.

It called upon Member States to pursue policies designed to enable developing countries to sell more of their export products at stable and remunerative prices.

It proposed that Member States should adopt measures which would encourage the flow of public and private investment on terms acceptable to both the investor and the reci-

ipient, expressing the hope that the flow of international assistance and capital should be increased substantially so that it might reach as soon as possible approximately 1 per cent of the combined national incomes of the economically advanced countries."

What in fact has happened?

The answer is contained in United Nations Development Decade at Midpoint, a report prepared for the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

It demonstrates that despite all the pious promises, despite all the complacent and self-congratulatory speeches by spokesmen of the industrialised countries in praise of their own "generosity" in giving "aid" to the developing countries, the gap between the rich and poor nations, far from narrowing, is in fact becoming wider.

In the five years 1955-1960, the developing countries as a whole achieved an annual rate of growth of 4.5 per cent—but in the three years 1960-63 this annual rate of growth slowed down to 4 per cent.

GAP

At the same time, the growth rate in the "economically advanced market economies" (the term used by the report to describe the capitalist countries of the West) has accelerated from 3.4 per cent in 1955-60 to 4.4 per cent in 1960-63.

Likewise the gap between the income per head of the population in the developed countries on the one hand and in the developing countries on the other

has also widened in the 1960's.

Between 1960 and 1962 the average annual per head income in the "developed market economies" increased by almost \$100 (just under £36) while that in the developing countries increased by barely \$5 (about 35 shillings).

The two-thirds of the world's population living in the less developed regions still have to share less than one-sixth of the world's income. Income per head of the population in these areas in 1962 averaged \$136 a year (under £50) while that of the population in the advanced capitalist countries of North America and Western Europe averaged \$2,845 (about £950) and \$1,033 (about £344) respectively.

MORTALITY RATE

In terms of the harsh facts of day-to-day living—or dying—this means, for example, that the average expectation of life in the developing countries is still far below that in the advanced countries.

In the most highly developed countries, the mortality rate of children up to five years of age varies from 4.5 to 6.3 per 1,000. But in Latin America, the rates are five to ten times higher and in Africa higher still.

Furthermore, the Report declares, "the misery of much of the developing world is a progressive misery. It threatens to grow worse in the second half of the decade. On present showing the numbers of unemployed men and women suffering from hunger and malnutrition will be markedly greater

in 1970 than today."

This is a prospect which the developing countries cannot accept. We reject a future of ever-increasing poverty, hunger and misery.

We do not agree that the all-too-well known factors enumerated in the Report—population growth, a backward agriculture, mass migration to towns where there are no jobs—need in the case of the first bring such dire consequences in its train or in the case of the second and third continue to operate.

SHAM COMFORT

The author of the Report (according to press reports, a British economist) seeks to comfort the developing countries by recalling that the first decades of the Industrial Revolution in those countries which are now economically advanced produced conditions which closely resemble the divisions and difficulties of the modern world economy.

"In the United Kingdom, for example, in the middle of the nineteenth century, after some fifty or sixty years of rapid economic growth, society was so divided between rich and poor... that it resembled not so much a unified community as two nations..."

But, it continues, "a century has passed and conditions in the developed countries have changed dramatically... It has taken time, but the chasm has been crossed. It can be crossed again." The Report lists many of the factors contributing to this dramatic change: technological change, "the ability of the workers to capture



Poverty and malnutrition—fruit of colonialist exploitation

a much larger share of the economy's production", "changes in governmental policy" and the like.

But it ignores the most important factor of all—the exploitation of the countries which are today called the "developing countries."

It was from this exploitation, from the proceeds of the imperialism which grew up in the last quarter of the nineteenth century that what the Report euphemistically calls the "economically advanced market economies" got the wealth which enabled them to build up their industries—and at the same time buy off

sections of their workers with a share of the loot.

Despite the protestations of imperialism's apologists, this exploitation still continues, though in new guises. The companies in the City of London, Paris, Washington, Brussels, Amsterdam, Bonn and Rome are still drawing fat profits from the cheap labour and the cheap raw materials of the developing countries, and from the sale of industrial products to these countries at ever-mounting prices.

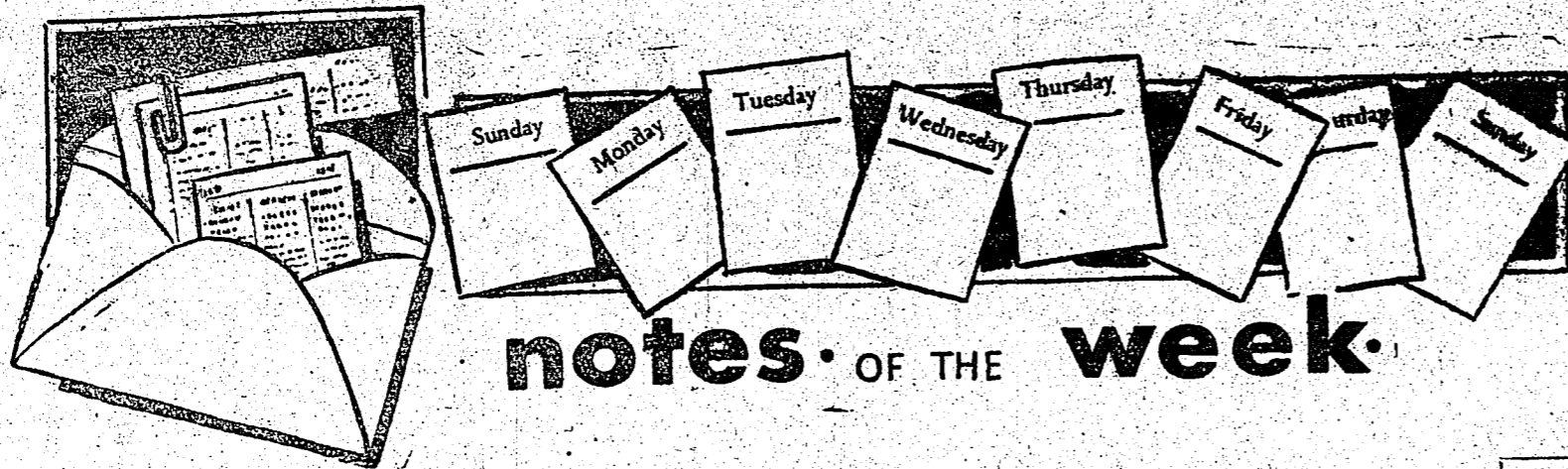
It is this exploitation which must be ended if the developing countries are to go forward at the pace their plight

makes essential. All other remedies can only ease the symptoms without curing the cause.

While this exploitation continues, all talk of "aid" is meaningless. Foreign companies extract far more from the developing countries in the form of profits and dividends than they and their governments ever "give" in the form of "aid"—most of which is in any case in the form of loans subject to high rates of interest.

What is more, even this tainted stream of what the U.N. Report calls "international assistance and capital to developing countries" is drying up:

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PRESIDENT Johnson's forecast that the Vietnam war "will get worse before it gets better", the massive build-up of U.S. forces in Vietnam and the continuing U.S. raids demonstrate the hypocrisy of U.S. protestations of its readiness for negotiations.

An essential condition for any talks is the cessation of U.S. air attacks—but U.S. Secretary of State Dean Rusk has said that the possibility of any pause in U.S. bombing attacks is "almost non-existent." He dismissed any such pause as "merely a gesture" which would make "no contribution to the peace".

* * *

In addition to the continuing build-up of U.S. forces, the Australian Government has called upon officers and N.C.O.s of the Citizens' Military Forces (Territorials) to volunteer for twelve months' service in Vietnam, where Australian troops are already in action.

New Zealand is likewise pushing ahead with plans to send a detachment to Vietnam. Prime Minister Holyoake in a sabre rattling speech delivered in Tokyo has declared that those whom he termed "the Communists"—presumably the South Vietnam National Liberation Front, which embraces people of varied political and religious persuasions—must be "made" to negotiate a peaceful settlement by force.

The Commonwealth Peace Mission has from its inception encountered difficulties because of Mr. Wilson's slavish support for each new aggressive U.S. move. These latest moves by Commonwealth Governments cannot but make its task still more difficult.

All the indications are that public opinion, particularly in the United States, is being prepared for a long war and longer casualty lists.

What is more, the war is entering a new stage of brutality. Step by step U.S.

spokesmen are giving up the pretext that their air attacks are directed only against "military" targets.

"I don't like to hit a village" one American pilot is quoted as saying (*New York Times*, 7.7.65) "You know you're hitting women and children too. But you've got to decide that your cause is noble and that the work has to be done."

Just what is "noble" about the American "cause" in Vietnam, spreading death and destruction among a small people thousands of miles from America's own shores merely because they want to decide their own way of life free from foreign interference, is not explained.

The same report admits that brutality, long part of the stock-in-trade of America's South Vietnam puppets, has "begun to occur among the American troops as well."

"One American helicopter crewman returned to his base in the central highlands last week without a fierce young prisoner entrusted to him."

"He told friends that he had become infuriated by the youth and had pushed him out of the helicopter at about 1,000 feet."

* * *

"When a superior warned him that he would be court-martialed, the crewman changed his story. He said that the prisoner had attacked him and had fallen accidentally."

Not are all American "advisers" setting a good example to their South Vietnamese puppets. When a South Vietnamese battalion fell into an ambush last month, its three U.S. "advisers" evacuated themselves to safety in a helicopter, leaving their "allies" to their fate.

A U.S. military spokesman justified this by declaring that "when a situation has deteriorated to the point where he fears for the safety of the men he is responsible for, it is proper for the adviser to evacuate."

Few would claim that that is the way to keep allies, and some would say that it was cowardice.

French Arms for S.A.

REPORTS in the British and U.S. press indicate that French arms firms are negotiating substantial arms sales to South Africa, in defiance of the United Nations embargo.

The South African Defence Minister, Mr. J. J. Fouché, visited Paris last month accompanied by senior military officers, ostensibly to attend the Paris Air Show. It is, however, believed that the real purpose of his visit was to shop for new weapons for the apartheid republic.

* * *

South Africa already has several squadrons of its Air Force equipped with the French-built *Mirage III*. There have been rumours of the sale of *Mystère* jets and *Alouette* helicopters.

There have been reports that South Africa would

like to buy the French Breguet *Atlantic* for coastal patrol work. This aircraft, incidentally, contains British-made parts.

Negotiations are also said to be underway for the purchase of armoured cars from the firm of Panhard.

The Johannesburg correspondent of the *New York Herald Tribune*, Mr. Arnold Beickman, reported on July 5th.

"An entente cordiale reigns today between France and South Africa."

"It is a relationship which brings joy to French industry particularly its armaments manufacturers, and to the South African Government, happiness for having found at last a friend who does not criticise or badger it over its racial policies."

Mr. Beickman goes on: "Virtually the full South African military defence budget has been

placed in French hands." According to the American correspondent,

"South African spokesmen believe General de Gaulle may provide a key for South Africa's entry into Black Africa despite its unpopular apartheid policies. South Africa feels that General de Gaulle, highly popular with leaders of former French African colonies south of the Sahara, could help it establish economic ties with these countries, particularly since South Africa is now a capital-exporting country."

The London *Financial Times*, however, sees things differently:

"The French-speaking African states are thought to be equally perturbed by reports of French arms sales to South Africa...General de

Gaulle's considerable reputation in the *tiers monde* of developing countries would take a hard knock if he was discovered to be covertly propping up Dr. Verwoerd's apartheid policy" (9.7.65).

The London paper's critical view of these undercover arms deals is, however, not prompted by concern for the welfare of Africans either in South Africa or in other parts of the continent.

It is also prompted by the fact that, to use its own words, the General is "snatching a valuable export market from Britain."

The *Financial Times* also suggests that the General's interest in South African arms deals may be due to his desire to secure assured supplies of uranium from South Africa for his nuclear striking force.

Labour's Cave-in

THE Labour Government has told the Commonwealth that less than 10,000 immigrants a year will be allowed into Britain under a new policy agreed by the Cabinet.

It has thus made a shameful retreat in the face of the thinly-disguised racialist propaganda campaign waged by some sections of the opposition—and in the face of the blatantly racialist propaganda of some sections of the press and of fascist-type groups which have recently been stepping up their activities.

It is not surprising that even some ordinary people should have been influenced by the twisted facts and propaganda which have been a feature of this campaign.

The racists have done their best to create a pic-

ture of a flood of Commonwealth immigrants pouring into Britain.

Authoritative statistics have been difficult to obtain. But statistics show that even before the introduction of the existing restrictions there was no vast or steadily increasing influx of Commonwealth immigrants into Britain.

In 1964 there were only 740,000 people in England and Wales who had been born in Asian, African and Caribbean countries. They make up only 1.6 per cent of the total population—less than two in every hundred people.

The figures show that by far the largest number of immigrants come from Ireland. In the words of the *London Times*, "though immigration has become synonymous with coloured newcomers are still a minority even among minorities."

Soviet Trade Up

INTERESTING figures on Soviet trade with the developing countries of Asia and Africa were given by Foreign Trade Minister Nikolai Patolichev in a recent article in the government newspaper "Izvestia".

He pointed out that the Soviet Union's trade with the developing countries is increasing at a more rapid rate than its foreign trade as a whole.

* * *

During the ten years that have elapsed since the Bandung Conference, overall Soviet trade has increased two and a half times—but its trade with the developing countries of Asia and Africa has increased 11-fold.

The Soviet Union is now doing business with more than fifty developing Afro-Asian countries. With thirty-eight it has inter-governmental trade agreements which enable both partners to look several years ahead

and plan accordingly.

Some Afro-Asian countries such as India and the United Arab Republic are now among the Soviet Union's major trading partners, while there have been substantial increases in trade with Ghana, Algeria, Burma, Somali and Nigeria.

Mr. Patolichev underlined that exports of machinery and other industrial equipment are playing an increasing role in Soviet trade with the developing countries.

They account for 75 per cent of Soviet exports to Indonesia, while in the case of India and the United Arab Republic the figure is 60 per cent.

There has also been a marked increase in the range of goods the Soviet Union is importing from the developing countries. These now include a growing number of manufactured and semi-finished goods.

Mr. Patolichev noted that the Soviet Union is now co-operating in the construction of 600 factories and other undertakings in the developing countries.

July 6

GHANA: Dr. K. M. Sape, senior assistant secretary, Ghana Academy of Sciences, will represent Ghana at the sixth Commonwealth Agricultural Bureaux review conference opening in London on July 19.

ALGERIA: The Algerian Ambassador to Tanzania, Mr. Noureddine Djoudi, has said today in Dar-es-Salaam that there will be absolutely no change in Algeria's support for African Liberation Movement and opposition to Portuguese imperialism in Africa.

SOUTH AFRICA: Louis Mtiokklu, a former member of South African Nationalist Organisation was today jailed for five years by the fascist

Johannesburg High Court for belonging to a banned organisation.

SOUTH-WEST AFRICA: The Federal Republic of Germany's Ministry of Foreign Affairs today denied a Tanzanian charge that Federal Germany is building a rocket base in South-West Africa.

MALAWI: Prime Minister, Dr. Kamuzu Banda, speaking at the celebrations of the first anniversary of the independence of Malawi, told press conference in Limbe today that Malawi is to become a Republic.

GHANA: Members of the Workers Brigade Cultural group entertained guests at a cocktail party held at the Ambassador Hotel, Accra, to mark Zambia's Heroes and Unity Day.

* Dr. K. Saakwah-Mate, senior medical officer-in-charge of bio-statistic at the Ministry of Health, has flown to Geneva, Switzerland, to represent Ghana at a one-week international conference on "The

classification of disease and the causes of death."

* A two-man German Democratic Republic delegation, led by Dr. Werner Hogn, head of the History Faculty of the G.D.R. Social Unity Party College, has arrived in Accra by air from Berlin on a 10-day visit to Ghana at the invitation of the Party.

TANZANIA: Tanzania will go to the polls on September 21, it was announced in Dar-es-Salaam today. President Julius Nyerere is expected to dissolve the present National Assembly, elected shortly before independence on Saturday according to a report, released in Dar-es-Salaam today.

MALI: President Modibo Keita of Mali in a congratulatory message to Dr. Kwame Nkrumah on his re-election as President of the Republic of Ghana, has said that the re-election would contribute to the consolidation of African Unity of which Osagyefo is one of the architects.

GAP BETWEEN RICH AND POOR NATIONS GROWING

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"the target set by the General Assembly according to which resource transfers to developing countries are to rise to one per cent of the national income of the developed countries has not yet been attained. In fact, the levelling off in the flow of funds to developing countries since 1961 has set back progress towards the target."

What is more, what the Report terms a "new and formidable" problem looms ahead—the problem of the growing indebtedness of the developing countries for the "aid" they have received. By 1963 interest payments on foreign debts absorbed over 13 per cent of the export receipts of the developing countries.

DETERIORATION

The Report comes nearer to the root of the problem when it somewhat obliquely states that "the higher earnings the poor nations must seek is a higher proportion of the gains made in international commerce."

The Report points out that, far from increasing, as the U.N. hoped, the developing countries' share in world trade has declined steadily from nearly one-third in 1950 to only slightly more than one-fifth in 1962.

It spotlights on the one hand the slump in the prices of the goods (mainly primary products) which the developing countries export and on the other the increase in the price of the manufactured goods

which they must buy from the advanced countries.

This unequal trade—a legacy of imperialism—must be ended. Trade on equal terms, with stable and reasonable prices for their products, and not illusory "aid" is what the developing countries want.

Among the solutions advanced by the Report is the priority development of agriculture in the developing countries. The Report disclaims any desire to "keep developing countries dependent"—but it nevertheless has some critical remarks about what it terms "the glamour of factory chimneys."

GLAMOUR

One of its recommendations is that more "aid" should be channelled through international and multilateral channels—and that it should be subject to "some element of discipline and control... to ensure that money is not wasted on projects which give no economic return."

It has, however, been the experience of many developing countries that international "aid" can also have strings, and that projects which in the view of international bodies "give no economic return" are usually those industrial projects which the developing country needs to build up genuine economic independence.

The Report is contradictory on the one hand; it acknowledges that the prices of the agricultural raw materials upon the export of which many developing countries are at present very largely dependent have fallen—

but on the other hand it calls upon them to produce more of them.

We know from our own bitter experience where this policy leads. Since 1950 Ghana and also Nigeria have increased their production of cocoa on an unparalleled scale.

Ghana's production is now over two and a half times what it was in 1950, while that of Nigeria is over three times the 1950 figure—but we have gained nothing whatsoever by this immense effort.

AIMS

The whole of the expected gain from increased production has been lost as a result of the slump in cocoa prices. In fact by increasing production, all we have done is to subsidise the chocolate eaters in the developed countries.

A similar story can be told of almost every country dependent for the bulk of its foreign exchange earnings upon the export of primary products. They have had to run twice as fast in order to stand still.

The aims of the United Nations Development Decade are modest—but it is clear that even these modest aims, which can by no means satisfy the peoples of the developing countries cannot be achieved unless there is an end to imperialist exploitation.

There can be no solution to the foreign trade problems of the developing countries until the pattern of world trade shaped in the heyday of imperialism is shattered and the imperialist policy of "buying cheap and selling dear" is ended.

Ghana Medical Services —Key to a Healthy Nation

What has been done and what still needs to be done

OUR government, in leading Ghana along the road to socialism, has spared no efforts during the eight years since independence to extend free medical services to all.

The Ministry of Health has impressive achievements to its credit. A spokesman for the Ministry said in an interview that the present strength of doctors serving under the Ministry is 342: 164 Ghanaians and 178 non-Ghanaians.

Before independence in 1957 there were only 108: 52 Ghanaians and 56 non-Ghanaians.

There has, in fact, been an increase of approximately 217 per cent over the last eight years.

Pharmacists have increased by about 20 per cent, from 92 to 120—a more moderate increase. But a comparison of the two figures will reveal a significant difference. Of the 92 pre-independence pharmacists only eight were inspecting pharmacists and only three principal pharmacists.

UP-GRADING

But the present total of 108 includes fourteen inspecting pharmacists, five principal pharmacists and one chief pharmacist. The up-grading difference is a result of training abroad and locally.

According to the official, a comprehensive plan to produce enough well-qualified pharmacists is already in operation at the Nkrumah University.

Since independence the training of nurses has been stepped up. A total of 347 State Registered Nurses were trained between 1960-1964, for example. Before independence there were two S.R.N. Training Schools (Accra and Kumasi) and four Q.R.N. Training Schools (Cape Coast, Sekondi, Tamale and Bolgatanga).

Since independence these have been extended and five new schools established at

the regional centres of Koforidua, Ho, Akim Oda, Akwapim Mampong and Tema. The new schools run courses for Q.R.N. Certificates.

Our hospitals have increased from 36 to 42 while the number of Health Centres has soared from 5 to 41 during the eight years since independence.

The £5 million expansion to the Korle Bu Hospital including a Maternity Hospital, a Children's Hospital and a Surgical Hospital, marks a major advance.

With these fully equipped, Korle Bu Hospital will compare favourably with modern hospitals in other parts of the world.

MILESTONE

A significant milestone in the government medical services programme is the establishment of a Medical School at Korle Bu (pre-medical training is being provided by the University of Ghana, Legon). The first batch of students total forty-one—thirty-eight young men and three young women, said the Vice-Dean.

But, he explained, Korle Bu is being used as a Teaching Hospital only temporarily.

Kwame Nkrumah has promised that a Medical Centre will be established soon at Okponglo near Legon. This centre, the Vice-Dean continued, will include a Teaching Hospital, training facilities for technicians, nurses and other paramedical personnel as well as tutors.

On expansion, the Vice-Dean said, in the initial stages the school will enroll 50 students every year, "but we plan to increase our annual intake when we have firmly established ourselves".

There is at present a teaching staff of eight, all Ghanaians. Efforts are being made to recruit more from Britain, Canada, West Germany, Israel, Poland and Hungary, the Vice-Dean said.

by Frank Essel-Cobbah

- A 217 per cent increase in the number of doctors over the last eight years;
- More and better pharmacists;
- More nurses and more new nursing schools;
- Six new hospitals, and existing hospitals enlarged;
- A Medical School for the first "made in Ghana" doctors;
- Fees abolished and other charges slashed.

Facilities have also been created for the training of other medical personnel.

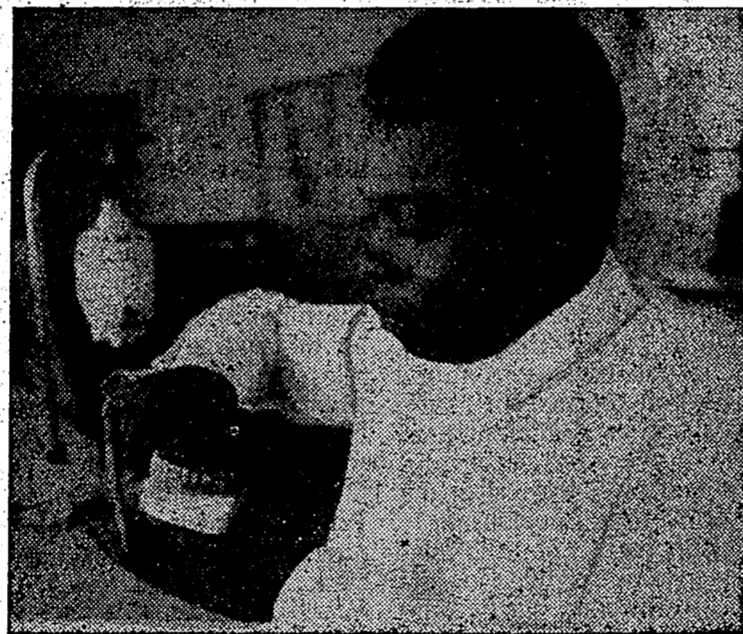
These include Dispensary Assistants (trained for our Local Councils), Leprosy Control Assistants, Laboratory Assistants, X-ray operators and Nutrition officers. Pending the establishment of the proposed Medical

nursing. These students will qualify to become tutors in various Nursing Training Schools.

The government has taken steps to bring medical charges within the reach of all. It has abolished professional fees, and fees for accident and ante-natal cases. Other charges like dispen-



Healthy children are a key to a healthy nation; accordingly our patriotic midwives spare no efforts in giving them tender care. And the above picture is no exception.



Dedicated to the cause of Socialism, this young Dental Technician puts final touches to his excellent art.

Centre, the government has opened at Legon a department for a two-year course of Post Basic Nursing.

Students in this department specialise in general nursing, midwifery, mental nursing and public health

sary, X-ray, theatre and maintenance have been slashed.

One fact should be noted: while the total number of doctors has increased substantially since independence (from 108 to

342) and while the number of Ghanaian doctors has greatly increased (from 52 to 164) the proportion of Ghanaian doctors has increased by only 1 per cent—from 48 per cent in 1954 to 49 per cent today.

While the government has been taking steps to expand the training of Ghanaian doctors both abroad and at home it has nevertheless had to employ many more expatriates to staff the expanding health services.

But the first "made in Ghana" doctors will receive their first patients just before the end of the Seven-Year Development Plan, and the new Medical School will ultimately meet all our needs.

Mention must be made of the situation in dentistry. There are about fourteen dentists, four dental technicians and two dental technical assistants in the country. The situation, particularly as regards dental technicians and technical

assistants, demands serious study. Dentistry must not be allowed to lag behind the advances being made in other fields of public health.

By its achievements in bringing medical care within reach of the mass of the people, Ghana has won a place in the front rank of progress. No state in Africa and few indeed in the whole world can point to such a proud record of progress within so brief a period.

Our Social Security Scheme

by Andrews O. Marquaye

SOCIALISM among other things, means security for every Ghanaian. It means care in time of sickness and a pension in old age and an end to fear for the future.

Our Social Insurance Security Scheme was first initiated by Mr. Anthony Woode, now Managing Director of the State Insurance Corporation. Last year Kwame Nkrumah referred to plans for the scheme when addressing our Members of Parliament during the Budget discussion in Parliament. On February 17th this year the Minister of Finance, Mr. Kwasi Amoako-Atta, introduced a bill into Parliament; and in April it was passed into law.

Every African (whether Ghanaian or not) not disqualified by age and employed in an establishment covered by the Act, will be registered and contribute at the prescribed rate to become entitled to the benefits. On retirement at the ages of sixty and fifty five for men and women respectively, we shall be entitled

to claim all our contributions, plus not less than three per-cent interest per-annum on our contributions.

The scheme which is jointly under the directorships of the Ministry of Pensions and National Insurance and the State Insurance Corporation, started operating from the first day of this month.

Our Social Security Scheme pays the following benefits:

- a) Sick pay in case of temporary inability to work resulting from illness, an accident at work, occupational disease or in case of quarantine.
- b) Maternity and confinement benefits;
- c) Support in case of temporary loss of employment for which the worker is not blamed;
- d) Pensions upon retirement at old age, in case of complete or partial loss of ability to work as a result of an accident at work or an occupational disease in case of invalidity, and survivor pensions in case of the death of the worker or pensioner.

The Social Security Scheme and Insurance System in

our Socialist Ghana is obligatory,—as in most other countries where such schemes exist.

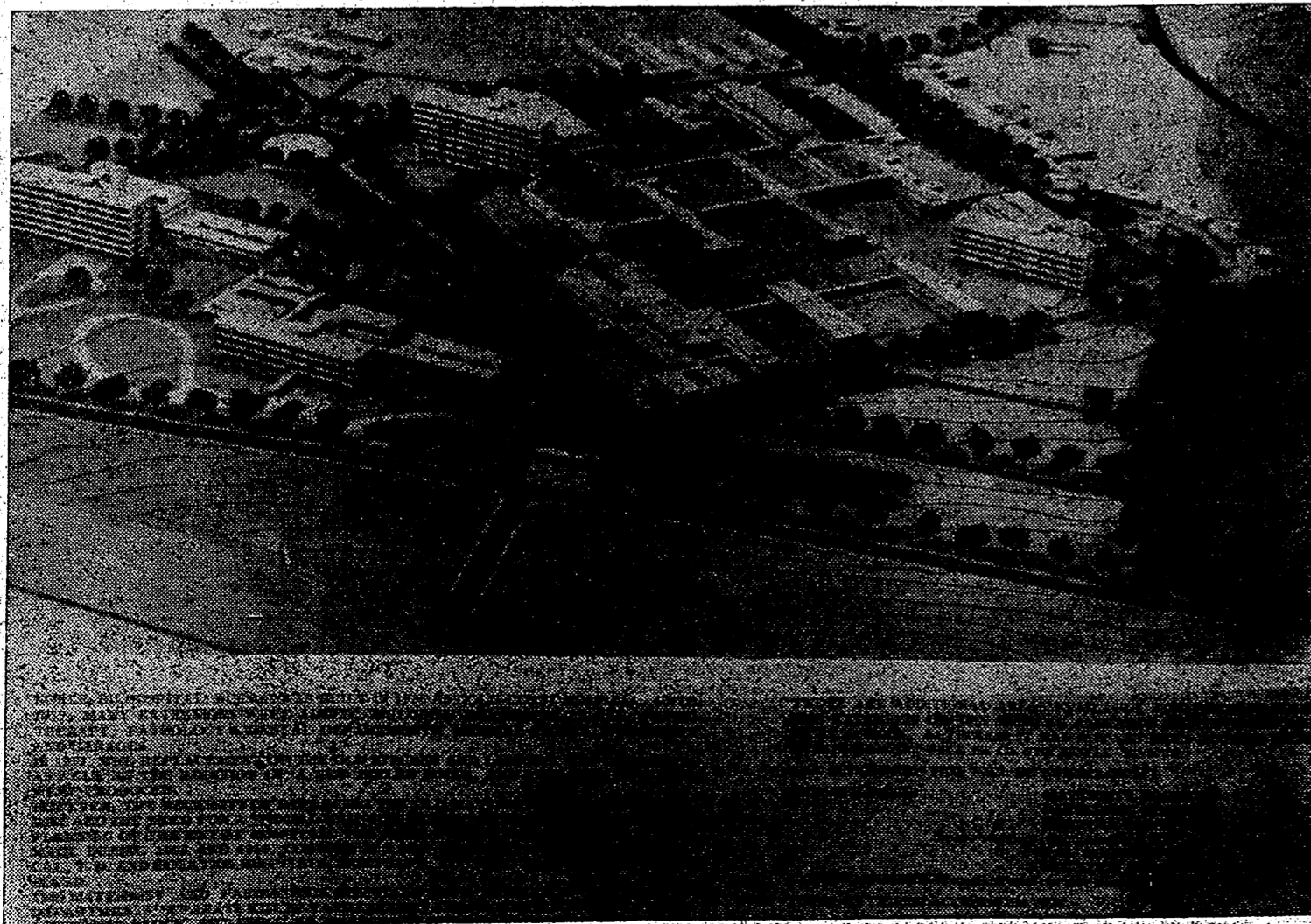
It covers every worker, office employee and apprentice irrespective of the kind of work he does and the amount of money he earns.

It starts from the day a worker starts work. Insurance protection also becomes effective straight away and the worker immediately has a legal claim to cash benefits and benefits such as medical and dental care, medicines and hospitalization.

Workers and office employees pay 7½ per cent of their earnings and while employers pay 15 per cent of their income to the Scheme.

Each worker has a receipt card so that he or his dependants can claim to benefits without difficulty. This card permits every insured person to prove that he is insured.

Each insured person can receive medical or dental care at public health institutions like hospitals, polyclinics and outpatient centres free of charge on production of his card.



FIGHTER FOR JUSTICE AND SOCIALISM

IT IS with great pleasure that "The Spark" welcome the appearance of the first volume of the autobiography of D. N. Pritt. The book, the first of three, bears the title "From Right to Left" (Lawrence and Wishart; London, 42s.) and in tracing his life from boyhood to 1944, it shows exactly that direction in political development.

Written in the form of a succession of episodes around various themes which form the dominant motifs of D. N. Pritt's life and activity, this volume shows how he grew from being a young man, uncritically accepting his family's Tory opinions, into a militant socialist, serving as a Labour M.P., as a member of the Executive Committee of the Labour Party from which he was expelled, and a convinced Marxist.

WISDOM

From Right to Left is more than an autobiography. It is more than a collection of memories by a man who has lived a very interesting and active life. As we read we are brought into direct contact with the views, experiences and wisdom of a profoundly sincere man, a brilliant lawyer and a shrewd fighter.

As he discusses the succession of historical events in which he has personally participated, he illustrates profound, general political truths, applicable to all places and circumstances, about the fight on behalf of the oppressed for justice, for freedom and for Socialism.

Pritt has written the book precisely because the account of his life will reveal these basic political lessons. He does not brag about himself, he is generous in his praise of others, he never conceals his contempt for the oppressors, for the political crooks, for the cowardly, against whom he has fought for so long.

FIRM STAND

It is almost accidentally that he reveals what he himself suffered because of his fight for principle. Offered some of the highest offices in Government if only he would be "toe the line," he steadfastly refused. Seeing the dwindling of his practice as commercial firms and foreign governments refused to employ him because of his socialist reputation, he nevertheless stood firm.

"I was able to observe, as I gradually became known as a member of the Labour Party, and latter as a Left-winger and as a friend of the Soviet Union, that more and more clients of the type from which I was then drawing most of my work, banks, insurance companies, shipping companies, and other large concerns who employed me simply because they wanted good legal advisers and thought that I was good enough began to withdraw their work from me, until it is probably true to say that for the last twenty years of my practice I didn't have more than two or three cases in all from that field. Some of the clients told me quite

FIRST VOLUME of PRITT'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY

by a Spark Correspondent

frankly why they were taking their work away from me; more often, of course, the solicitors told me why, often with regret, and occasionally with suggestions that if I would only 'reform', I could have the work. And at one time, I had an interesting little collection of copies of letters from solicitors to their clients, explaining that I was very good at my work, but that they really could not advise their clients to employ a person of such pernicious political views."

Of course there were many slanders circulated by his enemies. Perhaps the most comic appeared in a West German paper to the effect that he was a Communist millionaire with three convictions for forgery, married to "a Duchess of Wellington" (Mrs. Pritt has assured her husband she is not a member of the British aristocracy).

Pritt was one of those fortunate men, as he says, who can combine the fight for their principles with the practice of their profession.

As a lawyer Pritt has made legal and political history, in courts in Britain and in what used to be the British Empire.

During the Second World War he worked on behalf of troops being court-martialled, he defended trade union rights, and he appeared for the *Daily Worker* when it was being used for libel by a well-known Right wing Trade Union leader.

Among the many events described in this volume, perhaps the most outstanding work he did in his capacity as a progressive lawyer, was the part he played as President of the Commission of Enquiry into the Reichstag Fire.

POLICY

As part of their policy of suppressing all working-class and progressive organisations, the Nazis launched an attack on the Communists by accusing them of burning down the Reichstag (Parliament Building). George Dimitrov famous Bulgarian Communist, two others of his Bulgarian comrades and a German Communist were charged, along with a madman, with this crime.

While the trial was being conducted in Leipzig in an atmosphere of prejudice and terror against the accused, the Commission in London made up of Lawyers from many countries, set to work to examine the evidence.

They came to the conclusion not only that Dimitrov and his comrades had not burned down the Reichstag Building, but also that on the contrary, the Nazis themselves had done it.

The publication of this conclusion caused a great sensation in the world's press. It greatly worried the Nazi Government considerably.

This, combined with Dimitrov's historic and courageous defence of himself and his comrades, in which he turned accuser and exposed the Nazis for the monsters that they are, led to the acquittal of all the accused except the Dutch madman Van der Lubbe, a pathetic victim of Nazi brutality.

This event is vitally sig-

nificant in itself as one of the victories of the anti-Fascist Movement of the 1930's and it was a decisive stage in Pritt's own development.

Furthermore, the retelling of the story, by a direct participant, is at this time particularly valuable.

Now in the West, journalists and self-styled "historians" have a big new job; they are hard at work trying to make the Nazis "respectable", trying to create the conditions in which the people will accept a West German imperialist state which advances many of the demands that the Nazis put forward.

PERSUASION

To convince public opinion that West Germany is now harmless, (when of course it isn't) to persuade the British people to sacrifice some of the gains of the Second World War, it is necessary to try and discredit those who right from the beginning, fought the Nazis.

One aspect of this is the white-washing operation was the visit of the British Queen to West Germany recently. Another aspect of it is the attempt to re-write history and to "prove" among other things, that the Nazis were not guilty of the crimes they committed.

One aspect of the vast attempt to show that Nazis did not burn the Reichstag, and that the Commission of which Pritt was President relied on forged documents.

The answer to this despicable campaign is here in Pritt's book. New generations of young men and women, who may never have heard of the Reichstag Fire, or Dimitrov, will learn a profound political lesson in reading Pritt's account.

Pritt was decorated after the Second World War by the Bulgaria Socialist State of which Dimitrov himself was the first President.

When the Fascist General Franco, backed by Hitler and Mussolini, rose in rebellion against the legally elected Spanish Republican Government, thousands of people began to understand that Fascism was not an internal matter for Germany and Italy, but was threatening world peace.

ORGANISATION

They organised medical relief and helped to save refugee children. Some joined the Republican Army and laid down their lives in the anti-Fascist struggle.

Pritt was among those leading members of the British Labour Party who, in spite of the indifference of the official leadership joined with Communists Left-wingers of all kinds trade unionists, cooperators, liberals and those of no party whatsoever, to rouse public opinion and mobilise help for the Spanish people.

As a lawyer, too, he conducted cases in Gibraltar in defence of the Spanish Republic's cause against actions by the British Government.

In 1932 Pritt made his visit to the Soviet Union. The impact on this shrewd, honest socialist was clearly tremendous and his own

words are most effective in conveying this:

"All sorts of minor things were being done inefficiently, but every major thing was done well, and those in charge of anything of any importance were extremely intelligent. The whole atmosphere gave a marvelous contrast to the flat pessimism of slump-ridden Western Europe, and it was easy to see why Lincoln Steffens had, many years before, made his famous report 'I have seen the future, and it works'."

A basic touchstone of a genuine socialist who is really clear about politics at home and abroad, is his attitude to the existing socialist world.

A scientific socialist recognising the great breach made in the system of Imperialism by the Soviet Revolution and the development of new socialist countries after the Second World War, knows that one of his basic tasks is to defend the socialist system from all the attacks, lies and slanders which are churned out by the tame Imperialist propaganda machine of the Press, radio, television.

Sometimes the meaning of some events which take place may initially be difficult to grasp but our confidence in socialism can never be shaken if we understand that the new countries of socialism are different in every possible way from imperialism and that their very existence is a guarantee of the further, inexorable development of the rest of the world towards socialism.

Pritt was among the relatively few people in the British Labour Party who understood this. In the end it was this basic difference of approach which separated him from his colleagues on the Labour Party Executive.

It was his defence of the Soviet Union, in the first

days of the Second World War, which was the basic reason for their expelling him from the Labour Party:

"... I had no idea that so many of them (the leaders of the Labour Party—Ed.) cherished, or were going to cherish, hostility for everything that can fairly be called Socialist. I did know that they were anti-communist but I did not realise how deep this went in them, nor that one can't really be anti-communist without becoming anti-Soviet and hostile to genuine socialist development."

We get in the book a brief glimpse of that splendid man, Ivan Maisky, Soviet Ambassador to Britain who worked so hard for the friendship of the Soviet and British people and who was to become a firm friend of the Pritts.

After the attack by Hitler on the Soviet Union, with the acceptance by official Britain of the Soviet Union not, be it noted, initially as an ally but as a "co-belligerent", the atmosphere to the heroic Soviet people changed.

MEETINGS

People all over Britain were anxious to hear about this great country and who were more able to tell them than Mr. and Mrs. Pritt?

In addition to meetings and lectures, they worked hard on the Joint Committee for Soviet Aid raising enormous sums of money for buying and sending supplies to the Soviet people. Mrs. Pritt was decorated by the Soviet Union for her work in this great cause.

Intensely interesting is Pritt's description of the strategy of British foreign policy before the Second World War. Stage by stage he traces the shameful negotiations that went on between Chamberlain's Tory Government and Hitler's Nazi Government.

The British capitalist class tried to build up and en-

courage Hitler in the hope that he would turn against the Soviet Union and smash her. He shows the sympathy that existed for the aims of Nazism among some members of the Government and how they lied and cheated the British people as well as how they gave up whole countries of Europe, Austria, Czechoslovakia areas of Poland, as bribes to Hitler.

Even when the war began in earnest, even after the attack on the Soviet Union, even after the dismissal of the Chamberlain Government, there were still some politicians who hoped that they would be able eventually to do a deal with Germany at the Soviet Union's expense.

We see the reluctance of the British to open this Second Front in Europe to relieve the Soviet Army of the terrible pressure of the Nazi onslaught hoping that while the Germans would be defeated the Soviet Union would be so weakened as to be impotent in shaping any post-war settlement.

It does no harm to be reminded of the admission made by Churchill in November, 1954 about his instructions in 1945 just as the war was ending:

"Even before the war had ended and while the Germans were surrendering by hundreds of thousands, I telegraphed to Lord Montgomery directing him to be careful collecting the German arms, to stack them so that they could easily be issued again to the German soldiers when we should have to work with if the Soviet advance continued."

The British Tories, Churchill among them, were already preparing the Cold War against the Soviet Union. Any reader seeking to understand the international situation today with its tensions and dangers of war, can do no better than read this section very carefully.

He will recognise what were the broad guiding lines of imperialist strategy before the Second World War and how the governments of Western Europe and the United States resumed the same policies as soon as they could after 1945.



D. N. PRITT,
Presidential Professor,
University of Ghana.

The book deals not only with international events, but also with the problems of the British people in a time of mass unemployment, poverty and Tory rule.

We see the basic weaknesses of the Labour Party leadership which helps us to understand their policies today.

We see Pritt, as a busy lawyer, also active as Member of Parliament taking up cases for his constituents and for others helping to sort out their personal among the mazes of the bureaucracy. No problem was too small for him, no challenge too great.

For anybody interested in contemporary history this book is essential reading. Above all, for Socialists, young and old who want to know how a socialist should conduct himself both professionally and politically in the fight for Socialism here is the answer.

INSPIRATION

This book will inspire many men and women all over the world or re-dedicate themselves to the great cause for which Pritt has fought for most of his life—the cause of justice and socialism.

For us in Ghana, where D. N. Pritt is now working as Presidential Professor of Law in the University of Ghana this book is especially welcome. We are sure that this first volume, harbinger of yet more good things to come in the next two, will be widely read here. It should be in every one of our bookshops and libraries and on the personal bookshelf of everyone who can get it.

Pritt recalls two cases of Sekogome and Ho Chi Minh

I GO back fifty-four years for the first of the two short cases I write about in this article. I had just been called to the Bar when in 1910 I found myself in a case called *Rex v. Lord Grewe, ex parte Sekogome*.

Lord Grewe was Secretary of State for the Colonies, and Sekogome was an African Chief in the Bechuanaland Protectorate who had in some way displeased the British authorities; they had retaliated by simply imprisoning him, on the basis of a Proclamation issued by themselves, giving them power to lock him up without charge or trial—a method of arguing with one's political opponents which has since become fashionable.

It looked as if Sekogome would sit in prison indefinitely, but he had friends who were prepared to test the matter in the courts if they could. It was not of much use trying to do this in the

courts of British Bechuanaland, but they thought that they might invoke the British courts either by applying for *habeas corpus* or by an action for false imprisonment.

The difficulty was that those directly detaining Sekogome were in Bechuanaland and not in Britain, and that nobody who could be said to have power to release him, and therefore to have "custody" of him so as to be subject to *habeas corpus* procedure, was likely to be in Britain except the High Commissioner for South Africa, Lord Selborne, who might be home on leave.

It was learnt that he happened to be in England at the moment, and on the point of leaving for South Africa; so a writ was prepared and given to a writ-server, but Lord Selborne managed by various manoeuvres to dodge the writ-server, and Sekogome's friends had to think of something else.

They decided to bring *habeas corpus* proceedings

against Lord Grewe, whose order to release Sekogome, if he gave it, would certainly be obeyed, so that, it was argued, he could be said to be a proper subject for such proceedings.

The case came up in the King's Bench Division of the High Court, and then in the Court of Appeal. I was naive enough to be surprised that the Government took the technical point that *habeas corpus* proceedings would not lie against Lord Grewe because he did not in law have "custody" of Sekogome, instead of merely arguing the real question as to whether the Proclamation was valid, for I had been brought up in the old-fashioned belief that Britain governed the colonies and protectorates for the benefit of the "natives", treating them all gently and fairly, and that it was devoted to the principles of civil liberty.

And here I had to listen whilst the Attorney-General of a Liberal Government argued that, on the basis of our constitutional law, as

Bechuanaland had been acquired by conquest, the King had the rights of an uncontrolled despot, and that if he chose to intern anyone he was legally entitled to do so! The courts decided that the detention was lawful, so that the question whether *habeas corpus* could be used against the Colonial Secretary was left undecided.

Over forty years later, when the British Government treated another chief from Bechuanaland, Seretse Khama, in much the same fashion, I learnt that Sekogome was Seretse's uncle!

Another surprise for me was to hear a number of young Tory barristers in court asserting that the proper treatment for such persons as Sekogome—and for their lawyers—was not to hear their cases argued, but to take them out and shoot them; if any of these young men got into Parliament in later years, they would find themselves quite at home on the Tory back benches.

Continued on page 6

WHAT THE COMMON MARKET HAS MEANT FOR AFRICA

The six-nation European Common Market faces a new crisis. Its propagandists have tried to present association with it as the key to the solution of Africa's economic problems. In fact, it is merely a new and more dangerous form of colonialism—collective colonialism.

says a SPARK CORRESPONDENT.

THE six-nation European Common Market is facing crisis. France has withdrawn her Ambassador and French officials have declared that France is determined to block any development of the Common Market until her five partners honour their pledge to settle financial arrangements for agriculture.

The Common Market has regulations governing the spending of member-governments on price supports, and assistance to farmers. Regulations also lay down how the Market's agricultural guidance and guarantee fund shall get its revenues.

The focal point of the disagreements concerned the duration of the new regulations on these and related matters. Italy insisted on not more than two years, while France insisted on five to cover the period to 1970, when the transition to the goals of the Treaty of Rome establishing the Common Market is supposed to be completed.

DIFFERENCES

These goals include the free movement of industrial and farm produce between the six members (West Germany, France, Luxembourg, Italy, Belgium and the Netherlands) and a common tariff on imports from non-member countries.

Apart from these differences regarding the duration of the agricultural regulations there were also deep differences on the amount of sovereignty over financial matters that the members were prepared to surrender to the European Parliament.

It is, in fact, in the words of the London Daily Telegraph (5.7.65) "becoming clear that the present impasse is due to fundamental differences between France and the rest. This is over the future shape of Europe which the project of a federal budget for the farm pool brought to a head."

The crisis in the Common Market is of interest to Africa if only because countries covering more than one-third of our continent are in one form or another already "associated" with the Market.

The mainly French-speaking "associated" coun-

tries account for more than half the diamonds, nearly half the cobalt ore, over one-tenth of the gold, about one-twelfth of the copper and approximately one-fifteenth of the tin concentrate mined or produced in the capitalist world, apart from large quantities of other valuable minerals such as manganese and tungsten.

They produce about one-quarter of the world's output of palm oil and nuts, about 15 per cent of the cocoa, 8 to 9 per cent of the coffee and approximately 13 per cent of the ground nuts produced in the capitalist world. They account for about 13 per cent of Africa's total foreign trade. But it is an unequal partnership.

While about two-thirds of their trade is with the member countries of the Common Market, trade with them accounts for only about 2 per cent of the Common Market countries' total.

Common Market propagandists argue that the economic problems confronting the African countries can be solved if they co-operate with the six Common Market countries.

The Common Market is an arrangement between states, each of which is dominated by a handful of monopolies, and each of which, with the exception of Luxembourg, was in the past or remains to this day a colonialist power.

POLICY

One of the Common Market's most important aims is to implement a policy of collective neo-colonialism, to replace the old direct forms of colonialist exploitation with new forms.

The Six want to replace the old classical form of bilateral colonial relations between the metropolitan country and its colonies by a collective colonialism based on a system of multilateral agreements in which the functions of the metropolitan country are performed jointly by all the Common Market countries.

This is done through what is termed the "association" of the developing countries with the Common Market.

The first requirement of "association" is "equality" with regard to tariffs. The gradual reduction and even-

tual abolition of tariffs on imports from fellow members by the six West European members of the Common Market also applies to imports from associate members.

The latter must in their turn reduce their tariffs on goods imported from the Six.

By the middle of 1963, a number of associated states had already reduced their customs duties on goods imported from the Common Market countries by 40 per cent.

EXCHANGE

Outwardly, this seems fair and just. But in fact it is the "equality" of the weak and the strong—and equality which gives considerable advantages to the economically advanced countries of the Common Market.

The "equality" of tariffs against the background of the growing gap between the prices of the traditional commodities exported by the developing countries to the industrially-developed countries of the Common Market on the one hand and the prices of the manufactured goods which they import from the Common Market countries in fact amounts to a further extension of the non-equal exchange which is the traditional colonialist technique.

This hampers the efforts of developing countries to build up their own industries; the new industries are unable to compete with those of the more advanced West-European countries.

True, the Treaty of Rome refers to the right of associated members to charge duties "necessary for their development and according with the needs of their industrialisation"—but even these have to be gradually reduced.

Thus, the tariff privileges which in the period of colonial rule were enjoyed by only one metropolitan country in each colony are replaced by privileges enjoyed by all six of the Common Market countries.

The hopes of benefits resulting from the Common Market countries' reductions of tariffs on imports from the associated states have likewise proved illusory.

The principle of granting customs preferences to the



General de Gaulle

African associated states, declared to be the cornerstone of their association with the Common Market, has been flouted by the Six whenever their commercial interests have been threatened.

EXEMPTION

Whenever any one of the Six found it unprofitable to increase purchases of a particular commodity from associated states, it secured the appropriate exemption.

For example, Italy secured exemption within certain limits from granting more favourable customs duties on coffee imports from associated countries. Likewise West Germany found it more profitable to buy bananas from non-associated countries.

West Germany and other Common Market countries

have also resorted to the trick of nullifying the reduction of import duties by imposing other taxes of one kind and another, thus preventing any increase in sales and hence of imports.

In addition, countries like France and Italy have retained the privileges they still enjoy in a number of their former colonies which are not associated with the Common Market.

As a result, association with the Common Market has failed to justify hopes that it would lead to an expansion of exports to the Six.

The share of the associated countries in the Common Market's total imports from developing countries in fact fell slightly between 1957 and 1961, while in the case of individual tropical products the decline was substantial—fruit from 13.7 per cent to 8 per cent, spices

from 15.5 per cent to 11.1 per cent for example.

On the other hand, the trade between West Germany, a leading Common Market country, and non-associated countries was increasing faster than her trade with the associated countries.

While West German imports from all developing countries rose by 44 per cent between 1955 and 1960, her imports from the African countries associated with her through the Common Market increased by only 36 per cent.

Nor have the hopes of increased aid proved any more well-founded. When in 1963 a new convention on association was drawn up, the African partners demanded an increase in the amount and effectiveness of the aid given by the Six.

EXPLOITATION

They proposed that the amount for the five-year period 1963-67 should be 1,700 million dollars, that the procedure for granting aid should be revised and that it should include technical assistance.

Instead of 1,700 million dollars, they got only about 730 million dollars—the bulk of it to be spent on infra-structure—roads, bridges, port installations and communications.

These will facilitate the export of traditional commodities, and leave more profitable fields open for private investors.

The amounts to be spent on industrial development—the only genuine path to economic independence—are severely restricted, in the initial period to not more than 75 per cent, shrinking to 20 per cent in later stages.

Africa is in fact cast in the role of an appendage of Europe, whose job is to provide cheap raw materials and foodstuffs for the Six.

The Common Market has also had serious political consequences in that it has

fanned differences between associate and non-associate states.

African states which are associated with the Common Market, for example, enjoy certain (albeit dubious) privileges in exporting a number of tropical raw materials and foodstuffs to the Six.

This is naturally bound to have an adverse effect on the exports of these commodities to the Common Market countries (which are in many cases among the most important markets for these products) from non-associated countries.

These artificially induced differences between African countries made themselves felt, for example, at the second session of the U.N. Economic Commission for Africa's Standing Committee on trade in November 1963, where the African countries were split into two groups—associates and non-associates.

The former championed co-operation with the Common Market, pointing to the "benefits" of lower tariffs, while the latter correctly pointed out that solution to Africa's trade problems lay through tackling the problem of unequal exchange and the eradication of such legacies of colonialism as excessive dependence on one crop.

The creation of this exclusive trade bloc in the centre of Europe has in fact done great damage to the interests of every developing country in Africa and to the cause of African unity.

Many similar associations of capitalist states have in the past broken up because of the irreconcilable nature of the contradictions that divide one capitalist from another and one capitalist state from another.

What many are now asking is the fate that awaits the Common Market, torn above all by the contradictions between the French and West German monopolies—the latter, many believe, enjoying the backing of their U.S. Big Brothers.

What it is and Who is in it

THE Common Market or, to give it its official title, the European Economic Community (E.E.C.) came into being on January 1, 1958 following the ratification of the Treaty of Rome signed on March 25, 1957.

Its members are: Belgium, France, West Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands, often referred to as "the Six".

INTEGRATION

The aim of the Common Market is to integrate the economies of the member-states during a transition period of 12-15 years.

The implementation of the Treaty of Rome rests with a nine-member Commission under the chairmanship of Dr. Hallstein of

West Germany.

The Commission is advised by an Economic and Social Committee of 101 members. There are also consultative bodies dealing with transport and monetary policy.

Major decisions are taken by the Council of Ministers, one from each member-country, the minister concerned depending on the subject under discussion. At present France, West Germany and Italy have four votes each, Belgium and the Netherlands two each and Luxembourg one. Decisions are usually taken by a qualified majority—that is, by twelve votes out of seventeen.

The Council of Ministers has agreed that the Common Market, the European Coal and Steel Community and Euratom (the European Atomic Energy Committee) shall merge and a new treaty creating a single

European Community come into being by January 1, 1967.

In 1962 Britain, which had hitherto sponsored the rival European Free Trade Association ("the Seven"—Austria, Denmark, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom), applied for membership.

OPPOSITION

Britain's application aroused great opposition in Britain itself and among the Commonwealth countries. As a result of this, and as a result of French opposition negotiations for British entry were broken off in January, 1963.

This led to a crisis in the Common Market which was only partly overcome when in July of the same year the Council agreed on a new "synchronised" programme, especially on agriculture. By the end of that year agreement had been

reached on new marketing arrangements for beef and veal, rice and dairy products and on the operation of the Agricultural Fund.

It is the next steps in this field which are the cause of the present crisis.

The Common Market provides for the "association" of overseas territories and communities. A new Association Convention to replace that first signed in 1962, was drawn up in July, 1963 and signed by eighteen African states: Ivory Coast, Burundi, Upper Volta, Gabon, Dahomey, Cameroun, Congo (Brazzaville), Congo (Leopoldville), Mauritania, Mali, Malagasy Republic, Niger, Ruanda, Senegal, Somali, Togo, Central African Republic and Chad.

Nigeria last week completed negotiations to become the first Commonwealth country to enter into an association agreement with the Common Market.

Nkrumah's Comment on E. E. C.

"If we throw in our lot with the Common Market, we shall doom the economy of Africa to a state of perpetual subjection to the economy of Western Europe. This will of course hinder the industrialisation of our young African states.

"It is impossible to think of economic development and national independence without possessing an unfettered capacity for maintaining a strong industrial power.

"The activities of the Common Market are therefore fraught with dangerous political and economic consequences for the independent African states. The organisation constitutes an attempt to replace the old system of colonial exploitation by a new system of collective colonialism which will be stronger and more dangerous than the old evils we are striving to liquidate from our continent."

Kwame Nkrumah at the Conference of African Freedom Fighters, Accra, June 4, 1962

OMINOUS ECHOES OF NAZI AGGRESSION

OMINOUS echoes of Nazi aggression were stirred in the West German city of Stuttgart last month. The occasion was a rally of Germans who had once lived in the Sudetenland in Western Czechoslovakia.

Prior to 1938 these so-called Sudeten Germans had enjoyed greater political, economic and cultural rights than any other national minority in central or western Europe.

But they betrayed the country that had given them a home. A powerful Nazi organisation, created on Hitler's orders and acting on his instructions, taking advantage of the democracy it was intent on overthrowing, fanned hostility to the Czechoslovak authorities, calling upon Hitler to "save" them from their "Czechoslovak oppressors".

In March, 1938 the campaign was taken up in Nazi Germany. Nazi troops began to mass on the Czechoslovak frontiers, while Hitler and other Nazi leaders hurled abuse and threats at the Czechoslovak Government.

ALLY

The Czechoslovak Government looked to Britain and France for support—but Britain and France, who had done nothing about earlier Nazi acts of aggression, were not prepared to act against Hitler, whom they saw as an ally against the Soviet Union.

Few episodes in Britain history have been more shameful. On the one hand, the British Minister Chamberlain and his Foreign Secretary Halifax were making the most servile promises to Hitler that he could get all he wanted "without war and without delay".

On the other, they exerted the most brutal and unrelenting pressure on Czechoslovakia to make her hand over to Germany the Sudeten regions—which contained Czechoslovakia's defensive fortifications and much of her heavy industry.

At the same time, ten public and fourteen private offers from the Soviet Union of co-operation in defending Czechoslovakia against Nazi aggression, with many offers of military staff talks to give the co-operation teeth, were refused.

Instead Chamberlain sent Lord Runciman, a big capitalist shipowner to Czechoslovakia in July, 1938, as an "independent mediator".

This "independent mediator" bullied the Czechoslovak President Benes, listened attentively to Henlein, Nazi boss of the Sudeten German minority, and spent his week-ends with German-speaking noblemen who were Hitler agents.

SURRENDER

Not surprisingly, in September, 1938 he duly reported to Chamberlain that the Czechs should surrender to Hitler. When on September 21 they refused, President Benes was roused from his bed at 2 a.m. by the British and French Ministers to be told that if he didn't give way, Hitler would have a free hand against his country.

Although the Soviet Union indicated it would help single-handed if asked—Hitler's forces were vastly inferior at that time—Benes and his capitalist supporters were overawed and gave way.

The Czechs people, in mighty demonstrations on the following day swept aside the government that had yielded—but its successor pursued the same policy, terrified by the desertion of Britain and France, on whom the Czech capitalist had depended since Czechoslovakia was first founded in 1919.

On September 29, 1938 Chamberlain and his French counterpart Deladier met Hitler and Mussolini at Munich and in the early hours of the following day signed an agreement carving up Czechoslovakia and leaving her defenceless against the Nazi troops, who began marching in on the next day.

From that time the name of Munich has become a synonym for betrayal and appeasement of aggression, while the behaviour of the Sudeten German minority in Czechoslovakia is remembered as an example of the role a minority can play in furthering aggression.

But the Western Powers' attempts to appease Hitler failed. Within a year World War Two had begun.

When it ended in 1945, the newly-liberated Czechoslovakia not surprisingly wanted to rid itself of the German minority which had so abused its hospitality seven years before. Under the terms of the postwar agreements endorsed by all the victorious Powers, the Sudeten Germans were transferred to Germany.

But just as Hitler once used them as pretext for

aggression, so there are today revenge-seekers in West Germany who fan old hatreds and foster vain hopes that Germans will once again live in the Sudetenland—hopes which, like the similar revenge-seeking dream of re-annexing territory which under the postwar agreements is now Polish and Soviet, can be realised only by war.

It is by such rallies as that at Stuttgart last month that these dangerous dreams are kept alive and nourished. The rally adopted a declaration calling for the return of the Sudeten territories seized by the Nazis in 1938.

AGREEMENT

Official West German spokesmen claim that West Germany has no territorial claims against Czechoslovakia. They attempt to dismiss rallies like that at Stuttgart as simply the work of individuals of no real importance.

But only a year ago a West German Minister, Seehofer, declared that the Munich agreement was still in force, and West German spokesmen have frequently argued that this Nazi-imposed agreement is still operative.

What is more, the same Minister Seehofer was on the platform at the Stuttgart rally and again declared his support for the "right" of the Germans to return to the Sudetenland, while West German Chancellor Erhardt sent a mes-

sage of greetings and support.

Not only does West Germany refuse to renounce the Munich agreement dictated by Hitler and encourage anti-Czechoslovak activities on its territory; it even refuses to establish normal diplomatic relations with Czechoslovakia.

By contrast, the most cordial relations and the closest co-operation in all fields have grown up between Czechoslovakia and the German Democratic Republic—the first German Socialist state of workers and farmers, which has renounced every vestige of the Nazi past.

Just as in 1938 there were those in the West who were ready to "appease" Hitler because they saw him as an ally against Socialism and the Soviet Union, so there are today those who are ready, in violation of all the postwar agreements, to re-arm West Germany and to encourage the revenge-seekers because they see them as allies against not only the Soviet Union, but all the Socialist countries of Europe.

These latter-day appeasers minimise or deny the

West German revenge-seekers' territorial claims but the facts tell a different story.

Powerful forces in West Germany are dreaming of regaining Hitler's lost frontiers. They see access to nuclear weapons as a vital step towards the realisation of their schemes.

It cannot be too often emphasised that West Germany is the only European country seeking a revision of the postwar frontiers—a revision which can only be brought about by war.

THE CASE OF HO CHI MINH

(Continued from page 4)

ANOTHER interesting case illustrating the mentality of British colonial rulers came to me in 1930, from Hong Kong. My client was one Nguyen Ai Quoc, a prominent member of the revolutionary movement against French rule in what was then Indo-China (now Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia).

I learnt only many years later that Nguyen Ai Quoc was in fact Ho Chih Minh, now President of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, a very remarkable man whom I have since had the pleasure of meeting both in Peking and in Sofia.

The Government of Hong Kong, probably following policy laid down for it in

London, was helping the cause of colonial oppression by seeking to hand Ho Chih Minh over to the French Government of Indo-China, which was anxious to get hold of him and put him to death, with or without a trial. He had been living in Hong Kong for seven months without a permit.

EXTRADITION

The Hong Kong Government, which had every right to tell him to leave the colony, and to make sure that he did so, was not content simply to do that, but made an Order expressly directing that he should be put on a named French ship which was due to sail from Hong Kong direct to a port in Indo-China.

The French authorities could not get an extradition order from the court in Hong Kong, since any offence with which it could

charge him would be a political one, and extradition is not granted for political offences.

The Hong Kong Government was thus in effect conspiring with the French to give them the advantages of extradition by underhand means, although its only legitimate interest as the Government of the colony was to ensure that he left it.

The matter was tested in the Supreme Court of the Hong-Kong by *habeas corpus* proceedings, in which Ho's counsel, briefed by a well-known solicitor, Mr. F. H. Loseby, who was still in practice when I visited the colony thirty years later, proved that the deportation order was invalid on various grounds.

APPEAL

The Government, determined not to lose its prey—or rather the prey of its French friends—made a

new Order, which the court finally decided to be valid, and the proceedings were dismissed.

The only thing left for Ho to do so was to appeal to the Privy Council. He did so, and his case was brought to me; the Hong-Kong Government briefed Stafford Cripps, then the Solicitor-General.

It did not take him long to see what a very bad exposure of the Hong-Kong Government and the Colonial Office would be made if the case was argued in court in London, and he approached me with the suggestion that the matter should be compromised by letting Ho Chih Minh leave the colony "under his own steam", and go wherever he wished.

He had of course always been willing to do this, and there was thus no difficulty in following this course; and the case was never argued in court in London.

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