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Sub-Saharan Africa Report

FOUO No. 692

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SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA REPORT

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SOUTHERN AFRICAN TRADE TO USE MOZAMBIQUE FACILITIES

Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 17 Sep 80 p 40

[Text] Thanks to the railroad cars from Zimbabwe, it will be possible to export copper from Zambia and Zaire from the Mozambican ports of Maputo and Beira toward the end of 1982. Thus, the declarations of intent on African regional cooperation in the field of transportation are being implemented through concrete projects.

At the end of August, the railroad administrators of five southern and central African countries (Malawi, Mozambique, Zaire, Zambia and Zimbabwe) met in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe's second largest city. As early as 5 September, the first project for cooperation was announced: the construction of a railroad line between the cities of Mchinji in Malawi and Chipata in Zambia; the Canadian Government has been asked to finance this undertaking. On 6 September, the EEC announced it had agreed to finance the purchase by Zambia of 250 railroad cars (over $7 million) manufactured in Zimbabwe. Delivery of these cars will be effected within 9 months. This corresponds approximately to the Mozambican self-imposed deadline for the modernization of its port facilities. As of next year, Maputo--which can accommodate at present only medium-size ships (60,000 tons)--would be able to handle freight amounting to 1.5 million tons, the equivalent of half of Botswana's, Zaire's, Zambia's and Zimbabwe's exchanges now transiting through South Africa.

As is known, Zairian copper, for instance, cannot be exported through Angola any longer due to the closing of the Benguela railroad. Zambia's copper has not been exported through Tanzania ever since the famous Tan-zam became inoperative. The upshot is that instead of decreasing, dependence on Pretoria has only been strengthened, with South African ports serving as a vital element in the Zambian and Zairian economies, and especially in that of Zimbabwe, 78 percent of whose foreign transactions still goes through South Africa.

CSO: 4400

INTER-AFRICAN AFFAIRS

BRIEFS

ARABO-AFRICAN CONFERENCE--Following Madagascar's withdrawal, Mali will be host to the Arabo-African People's Conference (28 November-3 December). The conference, which is under the auspices of Libya, would reportedly be attended by--besides Mali--Angola, Benin, Congo, Ghana, Guinea, Togo, Zambia, the PLO, the Egyptian Patriotic Movement, as well as by the Southern Africa liberation movements. [Text] [Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 24 Sep 80 p 50]

CSO: 4400

ANGOLA

BRIEFS

CEMENT AGREEMENT WITH DENMARK--Angola and Denmark have signed in Luanda a protocol for a cooperation agreement in the cement industry, according to which Denmark will build the fourth oven in the CIMANGOL cement plant. This would significantly increase the production of this Angolan company. The protocol was signed by the deputy minister of finance, Augusto Teixeira and by Jesper Peterson for Denmark. Informed circles in Luanda emphasize the importance of this protocol, since Angola exports several thousands of tons of cement per year. The CIMANGOL production presently exceeds 700,000 tons, as specified by the JORNAL DE ANGOLA citing the ANGOP agency. Jesper Peterson was leading a delegation constituted by members of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and representatives of the DANIDA agency, which specializes in international development. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 12 Sep 80 p 2259]

CSO: 4400

ETHIOPIA

OFFENSIVE IN TIGRE LAUNCHED

JN051829 London REUTER in English 1811 GMT 5 Sep 80

[Article by Dan Connell]

[Text] Khartoum, Sudan, 5 Sep, REUTER--Soviet-backed Ethiopian troops launched a major offensive against anti-government guerrillas in the northern province of Tigre this week, guerrilla officials said. More than 40,000 government troops supported by Soviet tanks, artillery and aircraft were involved in the campaign on four fronts, according to a spokesman for the Tigre Peoples Liberation Front (TPLF).

"This is far [as received] the biggest offensive they have ever made in Tigre, but we are also stronger than we've ever been before," TPLF political bureau member Seyoum Mussa said in an interview in the Sudanese capital.

The guerrilla leader arrived in Khartoum yesterday from the Ethiopian war zone, where he said guerrilla activity had restricted government forces to a few big towns.

The Tigrean guerrillas fighting for autonomy are allied with nationalist guerrillas of the Eritrean Peoples Liberation Front (EPLF) in the neighbouring Red Sea territory of Eritrea.

Spokesmen for the EPLF have been predicting an Ethiopian offensive there since mid-June, but it now appears that the Addis Ababa government, which is also fighting ethnic Somali nati-nalists in the south-eastern Ogaden region, has decided to move first in Tigre.

"They want to clear the supply line to Eritrea before they launch the offensive there," Mr Mussa said.

The guerrilla leader said that Ethiopia's freshly-trained 18th division was sent to Tigre 4 weeks ago to reinforce troops already there. The new unit was specially prepared for mountain warfare, he said.

Three Soviet colonels based in the Tigrean capital of Mekele and in the northern garrison at Axum were advising the Ethiopian forces in the four-pronged assault, according to Mr Mussa.

CSO: 4420

TPLF SPOKESMAN ON FIGHTING IN ETHIOPIA

JN121033 London REUTER in English 1007 GMT 12 Sep 80

[Text] Khartoum, 12 Sep (REUTER)--Secessionist guerrillas in northern Ethiopia said today they had killed 140 Ethiopian troops and blown up an ammunition convoy in a 90-minute battle.

The Ethiopians used helicopter gunships, MIG jets and tanks, the guerrillas said.

A spokesman for the Tigre Peoples Liberation Front (TPLF) said the battle last Tuesday was the second engagement in the first week of a new government campaign against the guerrillas of Tigre Province.

He said Soviet advisers with the Ethiopians' forces were heard using field radios during the fighting and were picked up by helicopters and flown to the local garrison at Aduwa.

The clash began with an ambush of the ammunition convoy eight kms (five miles) south of Aduwa, the spokesman said.

He added that the guerrillas seized large quantities of arms from the convoy.

Last weekend the TPLF said it killed 200 Ethiopian troops in a six-hour battle on the Tigrean section of the main highway linking Eritrea Province with the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa.

The TPLF spokesman said the Ethiopian Government had launched the campaign in Tigre to secure its supply lines through the province in preparation for a renewed offensive against the bigger secessionist guerrilla groups in Eritrea.

CSO: 4420

GABON

'ISLE OF PROSPERITY' TURNS INTO ISLE OF INSECURITY

Paris AFRIQUE-ASIE in French 15 Sep 80 pp 37-39

[Article by Mariam Sysle: "Breaches in the Fortress"]

[Excerpts] The ceremonies marking the twentieth anniversary of Gabon's independence on 17 August gave President Bongo the opportunity to award himself a new certificate of satisfaction in the presence of his friends and ranking guests, President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire and Robert Galley, the French minister of cooperation. Gabon, he stated, enjoys "Africa's most progressive social legislation"; as for the 1977 crisis due to "excessive indebtedness," it has been "surmounted." The recovery and stability plan set up in 1978 and 1979 "has been entirely successful." If any problems still exist, it is only because Gabon "has registered difficulties in finding access to the developed countries' markets and technology and is faced with increasingly prohibitive prices for equipment goods which must be imported for the most part."

Except for this problem--which is indeed real and is shared by all third world countries--everything is fine in the best possible country. True, it would have been easy to be caught in the illusion when seeing the tens of thousands of people who had come to applaud the imposing military parade on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary, followed by that of the "mass organizations" of Bongo's party. It would also have been possible to believe that the Gabonese are unanimously behind their president, who enjoys--as he likes to repeat--the full trust of his people. And yet, what a whirlpool of deep and diverse trends is hidden under this apparent unanimity!

Clan struggles, ethnic conflicts based on and exacerbated by a policy of favoritism which fail to cover up the concessions made in haphazard fashion, lassitude and dissatisfaction of those whom the fictitious prosperity created by the manna of the natural resources reserved for export has overlooked; all of this makes up a background which indeed worries the powers-that-be in a country where the activities of secret police agents and of local and foreign businessmen add to the confusion and the instability of the situation. To be sure, as a "pater familias" who knows how to use the carrot and the stick, as a "good boss," Bongo has so far been able to keep the reins of power. His government knows how to snuff out protest movements by either distributing money or striking hard. An entire system of close surveillance and systematic reporting is able to prevent the worse. Corruption, peculation, favoritism take care of the rest, and whenever necessary, the government touches the chord of chauvinism, channeling dissatisfaction on scapegoats: the immigrant workers--preferably from neighboring countries--who must shoulder the responsibility for whatever has gone wrong.

Today, despite optimistic speeches, the malaise is spreading. Due to the economic recession, hundreds of Gabonese have lost their jobs and been compelled to return to their villages where the problem of daily survival is acute. As for the urban population, its purchasing power has been severely eroded. The SMIG/interoccupational guaranteed minimum wage/ has remained stable for the past 3 years and when one is familiar with the exorbitant price reached by basic foodstuffs,--not to even mention rents--one can easily imagine the fears of valor necessary to satisfy daily needs.

Crying Anomalies

Everyone is aware, of course, that only those enjoying extremely high salaries are able to live decently in Gabon. As is common wherever the IMF experts put their hand to the task, it is the Gabonese population which must bear the burden of Bongo's vaunted austerity plan. Economic measures such as the closing of embassies, or demagogic initiatives like raising the price of champagne do not fool anyone. Gabon's social situation is characterized by the fact that the gulf between that handful of privileged persons who are profiting from the current prosperity to enrich themselves and lead luxurious lives, and the majority of the population which must face increasing difficulties, is ever-widening.

Those in power are, of course, quite conscious of the danger this situation entails: since the second extraordinary congress of the PDG (Gabonese Democratic Party), they have been ceaselessly--but vainly--proclaiming the need for "an effort to provide social justice."

In reality, Bongo's Gabon looks very much like a boiling kettle. Last May's troubles constitute proof of the strong social tension pervading the country and of the exasperation felt by the lower rank-and-file of the civil service.

If, indeed, the literacy rate is high, the Gabonese educational system's main characteristic is its total inadaptability to national realities; it fosters the uprooting of people who will almost surely be unable to find employment--unless they have the right connections.

Velleities of Nationalism

When the highest rungs of government provide the example of corruption and of the race to wealth, it is highly likely that any exhortations will, just like in the past, remain ineffective. But the fortress built by Bongo is beginning to present breaches on all sides. In addition to social tension, one can now witness a very perceptible political malaise. Increasing numbers of Gabonese--including some among those in power--are becoming aware that the present policy of development can only lead the country sooner or later, to total ruin. There are also those who are beginning to think that Gabon has nothing to gain from continuing to follow the course of the former French mother-country of which--as is known only too well--it is one of the most zealous servants.

Finally, certain velleities of nationalism are becoming apparent through masked hostility toward French exaptriate cadres and interests, as well as through the search for other avenues of cooperation which would loosen France's hold on the country. However, the survival of Bongo's regime--just like that of Bokassa's empire--depends on France's pleasure, all the more so since Gabon has become a French military basis, especially strengthened by the withdrawal of the Chad occupation forces. Meanwhile, a climate of "settlement of accounts" reigns in Libreville, a city which increasingly resembles Bangui at the time of former "emperor" Bokassa. The extortions of the Moroccan presidential guard are compounded by those of tolerated gangs. The most fantastic rumors are persistently circulating about the sometimes tragic disappearance of persons who have somehow fallen out of favor with the presidential couple or with other influential persons of the regime. This has reached such proportions that Bongo's tiny isle of prosperity has surely become a tiny isle of insecurity, into which one should only venture with caution.

CSO: 4400

NATIONAL PROSPERITY ONLY SERVES MINORITY, FOREIGN INTERESTS

Paris AFRIQUE-ASIE in French 1 Sep 80 pp 42-44

[Article by Mariam Sysle: "A Small Island of Prosperity. A Tiny Little Island: for Foreign Companies and Several Hundred Privileged Individuals"]

[Excerpts] The experts of the IMF, who exercise a close surveillance on the management practices of the Libreville authorities, are satisfied with the Gabon of Mr Bongo. The recovery and austerity plan set up after the years of "overheating" and the excessive expenditures of 1977, for which the OAU conference had been the pretext, has reportedly reached its objectives.

According to some Gabonese financial sources, the gross national product, which had fallen to 600 billion francs CFA, has returned to the level reached during the period of expansion (720 billion francs CFA); the balance of payments, which had registered a deficit of 44 billion francs CFA in 1977 showed a slight surplus (10 billion) in 1979; as for the balance of trade, it presents a largely positive balance, exports having increased from 280 billion francs CFA in 1978 to 377 billion in 1979, while imports have fallen off from 177 billion in 1977 to 113 billion in 1979. Finally, the national debt has gone from 575 billion francs CFA at the end of 1977 to 440 billion at the end of 1979, and it is anticipated that it will not exceed 365 billion at the end of 1980.

Acts of Generosity

As can be seen, everything seems to be getting along fine in Bongo's realm, at least for the foreign interests to which the country is more and more enslaved each day, and for the privileged class which shields them and is inseparably linked to them.

The Specter of Bankruptcy

But above all, beyond the internecine struggles taking place among foreign interests in Gabon, beyond the apparent improvement of the financial situation, one fact demands recognition. Here is a country which is fortunate enough to possess, among other things, three particularly sought-after strategic resources--oil, uranium, and manganese. But instead of being utilized as a driving lever for the harmonious and diversified development of the entire economic sector, and to provide work and a relative well-being to all (which is all the more realizable as Gabon only has a small population of less than a million inhabitants), instead of contributing to freeing the country from foreign domination, these riches have only fostered the emergence of a privileged class totally detached from the basic preoccupations of the population and have helped to further subjugate the country to the domination of extra-African capital.

The recovery plan in progress has no other objective than to perpetuate the present status, that of an Eldorado for the bankers and unscrupulous businessmen of every sort of the capitalist world. Should it be remodeled for increased efficiency, the policy of pillage of national wealth will be intensified: such is the meaning of the solicitude displayed by the banking consortiums and the IMF.

Meanwhile, the squanderings of the past years have not ceased to weigh heavily on the future of the country. The implementation of large economic projects, which had enjoyed noisy publicity, is either slowed (such is the case with the progress of the Transgabonese works), or remains hypothetical. But above all, behind the (sorry) official optimism and the "grandiose accomplishments," it is the specter of bankruptcy which stands out. Even in the ruling circles, there are some who are aware of it. They perceive with amazement that true development has not yet really begun. That is how the Gabonese daily L'UNION last July prepared a catastrophic balance sheet for the agricultural situation. This sector, which still employs close to 80 percent of the population, but which contributes only 4 percent of the gross national product (GNP), "still registers some serious difficulties inherent to the very situation of under development which exists in the whole country," the newspaper noted.

That illustrates clearly the gulf which, in Bongo's realm, separates words from acts, especially when one knows that the head of state has not failed, for more than a decade, to proclaim the priority of the need to develop agriculture, as well as hold out bright prospects through a series of projects, one more wonderful than the next.

Nevertheless, the results are there, (considered "catastrophic" by L'UNION), which points out some of the most flagrant evils: decline in productivity, a rural exodus, increased dependency on food imports. At the time of the first five-year plan (1966-1970), the state aid to the agricultural sector was only 1.3 billion francs CFA as opposed to 48 billion for the mining sector. For the second plan (1970-1975), agriculture received only 4 billion francs CFA, that is to say, 1.7 percent of the investment budget provided for by the plan.

Abandoned

In reality, agriculture has been utterly neglected and food crops are by and large in decline.

To be sure, large programs, in the agricultural sector as in the others, are not lacking. Let us cite for example the banana tree project of Ntoum (600 hectares of plantain under production); the Haut-Ogooue Sugar Company (SOSUHO), which ought to supply 30,000 tons of sugar in 1980; the Port-Gentil Agricultural Company (AGRIPOG), whose objective is to ensure the food and vegetable supply of this area and possibly that of Libreville; finally, the reclamation project of the cocoa plantations (SONADECI).

But there again, one has no illusions, since these projects are characterized by improvisation and motivated, in the main, by the profit-making objectives of the foreign interests which have given rise to them and head them. A report, prepared by the staff of the competent ministry entitled "Twenty Years of Agriculture in Gabon" and which the newspaper L'UNION analyzes, is significant in this respect. One notes that the studies to implement the large national agricultural projects initiated in 1975, have been carried out by foreign research firms, on the basis of information furnished by the technicians of the Gabonese Ministry of Agriculture, who, nevertheless, have not at any time been associated in any way with those studies, much less with the implementation of the projects. These, according to the report, are only handed over to them when financial resources are exhausted, as was the case with the market-garden project of Medouneu.

One observes, on the other hand, that foreign participation is in the majority in most cases (as in the case of AGRO-GABON and SOSUHO). Finally, these projects cause an influx of foreign cadres, a fact which "dangerously burdens the budgets allocated for their implementation. Thus, for example, the previously mentioned report states that for the period 1973-1978, on a total investment of 822.2 million francs CFA, the technical assistance for the Woleu-Ntem cocoa culture project alone consumed 509 million... As for the isolated operations launched by the government to alleviate the food shortage, they aim at the introduction of crops reserved for the well-to-do classes such as the market-garden crops of the AGRIPOG project, but one seeks in vain the range of products which comprise the basic nourishment of the majority of the Gabonese people...

It would be difficult to present more glaring proof of the failure of a government solely guided by a concern to give full freedom of action to foreign interests and to satisfy the insatiable appetites of the small class of "nouveaux riches" who direct it.

It would be equally hard to show any better who profits from the much touted "prosperity" of this little island of "peace and stability," as Mr Bongo calls his realm.

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CSO: 4400

GABON

BRIEFS

NEW OIL FINDS--Elf-Gabon has just made two oil finds, the first in the area of Baudroie-Marin and the other in N'Dindi, according to a communique published by the company on 8 September. The Baudroie-Nord-Marin exploration well, located 7 kms northwest of the Baliste field which was recently opened, has hit two oil-soaked layers which have respectively provided 400 and 275 cubic meters daily. This well is owned by Elf-Gabon (operator) and Mitsubishi Petroleum Development Company. The Mwengui exploration well, located 6 kms from the M'Bya Sud platform, also found on oil-soaked layer. Two tests produced between 50 and 115 cubic meters per day. Additional work is needed in order to elaluate the importance of this discovery, the communique states. The production of this well, located in the N'Dindi permit, is shared by Elf-Gabon (55 percent), SNEA [expansion unknown] (30 percent) and Shell (15 percent). [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 12 Sep 80 p 2251]

CSO: 4400

IVORY COAST

CURRENT DEMOCRATIZATION CAMPAIGN DISCUSSED

Paris AFRIQUE-ASIE in French 18 Aug 80 pp 100-102

[Article by Jonathan Kolela: "Ready for Democracy"]

[Text] The Democratic Party of the Ivory Coast-African Democratic Rally (PDCI-RDA), the single political party in power conducted elections in July to replace the secretaries generals of its subsections. This was accomplished by indirect election. Candidates, all eminent party members--or claiming to be such--vied for the votes of village or urban committee members who had themselves been elected by the party's rank-and-file members, in other words the entire population. A young high-level Interior Ministry official explained the procedure to us: "In cities, the district or ward committees correspond to the village committees. Both types of committee are democratically elected on the basis of at least 100 persons per committee. Each committee then meets and in turn elects the subsection secretary general.

The interest aroused by these elections seems to be primarily in the fact that Ivorians view them as holding in themselves the seeds of profound changes. Such is the case, for example, in Agnibilekro, an important village with a population of a few thousand persons, in the prefecture of Abengourou. This village is linked to Abidjan by an asphalt road whose perfect condition immediately surprises the visitor. Like the entire region, this large village owes its prosperity to coffee and cocoa crops, and forestry. The village's name is a reminder that its inhabitants, the Agni--one of the five components of the Akan ethnic group found in several African countries--emigrated from Ghana 2 or 3 centuries ago. The border between the two countries is but a few kilometers away. And as if to highlight the futility of territorial boundaries imposed at the whim of colonial rivalries, populations on both sides of the border continue to live in total symbiosis as their ancestors did. It is not unusual to see farmers from this side daily crossing the border to work in their fields on the other side, and vice versa.

Late this July, Agnibilekro bustled with exceptional activity. In the village center, inside a hall decorated with the Ivorian national colors, villagers were preparing to vote. The prefect addressed them directly as follows: "What you must keep in mind about this open democracy is the complete freedom all party members have and must have in choosing their political representatives at all levels. Nobody is exerting any pressure on you in this voting. The President of the Republic emphasized this point at the meeting of the national council. The political bureau has made no recommendation as to candidates. Any candidate who during his campaign told you he had the backing of the President of the Republic or the political bureau, has lied. The chief of state backs no candidate." The voting which followed was calm and orderly. On four or five occasions, however, the government's emissary did have to consult representatives of the three candiates--also charged with seeing that the election proceeded in an orderly manner--to ask them if a voter who had forgotten his identity papers--but had been recognized by two witnesses--could be allowed to vote. The emissary also had to convince an elderly lady who had obviously never voted before in her life, that she should insert her ballot, and not her identity card, in the ballot box.

From Agnibilekro to Man, from Abidjan and San Pedro to Korhogo and Ferkessedougou, the Ivory Coast seethed with uncustomary excitement throughout the month of July, the period allowed for the election of the party's basic cadres. In some localities there were as many as 18 candidates, but the national average was about three or four. A few rather strange incidents were observed in this country where the family hierarchical structure is so deeply rooted: a woman voted against her husband; and a father and daughter ran against each other. Many of the regime's "political bosses" were defeated after having vainly begged the Old Man--a familiar nickname given Houphouet-Boigny by Ivorians--to give them a lift that would have enabled them to save their positions. The orders given prefects and subprefects to remain strictly neutral seem to have been generally followed. They had been warned a few weeks earlier: "Your career is at stake in these elections." Voting by secret ballot had been recommended, but in some villages, voters who could not read voted by lining up behind the candidate of their choice.

In a country where, since independence in 1960, the political class has known few upsets, and where the party congress serves more as a recording studio than a forum for democratic debate, Houphouet-Boigny's decision to liberalize the country's political life had a bombshell effect.

It all began on 7 December 1979 at Katiola in the Tagouana region. On the 19th anniversary of the country's independence, the Ivorian chief of state gave his fellow countrymen a message of "caution and hope" in which he announced: "In the days to come, I shall apply myself to seeing that the will of our people is expressed more and more freely, and at levels. Our party's structure makes this possible without demagoguery or excesses." Most of his audience underestimated his words of caution because they were no doubt inured to those reforms that are periodically announced as imminent but whose implementation is always deferred. This undoubtedly explains the anxiety which currently reigns within certain leadership circles where there is much speculation about the real extent and significance of the announced changes.

Selection Criteria

When we asked the Ivorian chief of state about these two aspects and about the belated adoption of a measure he had long deemed essential to the PDCI-RDA's survival, he told us: "Immediately after our country's accession to independence, to govern the country with me, I called upon a number of young executive types who had taken no part in our struggle for independence. In fact, some of them were unknown even in their own village. In those days, it was not possible to have them face the voters on their own. Consequently, we adopted the system of a single national slate of candidates, thereby enabling them to be elected along with me.

"At the same time, we encouraged them to make themselves known in their villages. I now believe they have had ample time to do this and we can, therefore, move on to the next stage. The Ivorian people are ready for democracy."

The Ivorian president has repeatedly affirmed there is no place in the Ivory Coast for a multiparty system. So when we asked him how far this new experiment will go, he explained: "We have decided to apply democracy at all levels. Thus there will no longer be a national slate of candidates for the parliamentary elections, although the 147 members of the future National Assembly--compared with its previous membership of 120--will be elected from candidates competing with each other under the single banner of the PDCI-RDA. Municipal elections will be held after the parliamentary elections, and under the same conditions. We shall make no recommendation. And even in the presidential elections after the party congress and before the parliamentary elections, any party members will be able to run against me." As if to give additional weight to his statements, at a recent political bureau meeting, Houphouet-Boigny is reported to have curtly informed a very high-level government official who allegedly intends to seek to succeed Houphouet: "Sir, you know full well that you can run against me!"

As might have been expected, the liberalizing wind sweeping over the Ivory Coast has produced varied reactions. The majority of the Ivorian people seem to have welcomed it enthusiastically. A taxi driver in Abidjan told us "The former system of a single national slate resulted in keeping in office too many persons who instead of serving the country served primarily their own selfish interests. From now on, the only acceptable criteria in selecting public officials will be each one's honesty and devotion to duty." Some 1,000 kilometers from there, in Korhogo, the chief town in the northern region, the same view was expressed. "Things could not go on like this any longer," sighed a young civil servant who felt the president should have taken this action sooner. "We are finally going to be able to get rid of all those corrupt politicians involved in scandals. For you can rest assured the people know who they are. They will not be elected either as secretaries general or as members of parliament."

Close examination of the initial results of the voting thus far, shows they already appear to partially confirm this young civil servant's views. Conversely, many governmental dignitaries, while feigning not to be personally affected by the present wave of purges, are, in private, rather circumspect and even worried. The fact is that politicians themselves, like the man in the street, find it difficult to calculate the extent of the embryonic changes. Although the opposition is scattered and relatively absent from the political scene, it does concur in minimizing the importance of what it calls "eyewash." An official of an organization recently formed "to fight for establishment of a socialist regime in the Ivory Coast and free this country from the lap of French imperialism," told us recently: "The government feels winded. The current democratization campaign is designed mainly to conceal the flaws in the government at a time when Houphouet-Boigny's succession is currently at issue and the parties concerned are unable to reach agreement."

Be that as it may, a few things are certain. First, at government level: Houphouet-Boigny will largely reshuffle his cabinet, with 80 percent of the ministers being drawn from the new legislative assembly. At party level: a secretary general will be appointed. Does this mean the incumbent secretary general, Philippe Yace, long considered the regime's number-two man, will step down in favor of another and retain only the presidency of the National Assembly? It is more than likely. In certain Abidjan circles, the person frequently mentioned as Yace's successor is Jean-Baptiste Mockey who has long been one of Houphouet-Boigny's close associates. J. B. Mockey fell out of favor and was imprisoned following an attempted coup d'etat. No positive proof of his complicity was ever produced. He was fully reinstated and is currently the minister of state charged with public health. Certain facetious or puzzled observers have noted that he is the only incumbent cabinet minister to have run in the elections for the position of subsection assistant secretary general--he was elected--and that, by an irony of fate, he may well eventually succeed the very person whose entry into politics he had sponsored, a person who, so it is said, did nothing to save him from disgrace.

Viewed as almost certain is the foreseeable amendment of the constitution. President Houphouet-Boigny is reported to have the intention of amending the constitution, following the parliamentary elections, and creating the position of vice president of the Republic. Yet no matter how crucial these matters may be, they now appear, on the eve of the preliminary congress, to have been pushed somewhat into the background by the stir caused by financial rehabilitation measures announced at the June meeting of the national council.

Faced with the country's present difficult financial and economic situation, Ivorian authorities decided to put an end to the, alas, inordinately widespread waste and malfeasance. In implementation of the "Ekera Report," 12 state-owned companies were purely and simply disbanded while the charters of 11 others were radically changed. Their personnel, heretofore handsomely paid--

even though financial results did not always warrant these high salaries--will now be paid according to civil service pay scales. This means certain general managers will soon find their salaries cut in half. This also means that on the eve of the seventh PDIC-RDA congress, there is undoubtedly some resentment masked behind Abidjan's present general facade of unanimity.

Oulai Affaire, a Simple Common Law Matter

Should we or should we not mention the "Oulai affaire?" As Pope John Paul II was beginning his visit to the Ivory Coast in May 1980, there were persistent rumors in the Ivorian capital, rumors confirmed by some of the participants in the French-African summit meeting in Nice, an occasion which the Ivorian president did not attend. These rumors were about a plot to overthrow the latter, which had been foiled at the last minute. Its presumed instigator, Zoumana Oulai, a police lieutenant in Bouake, reportedly planned to take advantage of the public ceremonies organized for the pope's tour to assassinate the Ivorian chief of state.

President Houphouet-Boigny assured us: "There never has been an attempted coup d'etat in the Ivory Coast. As in 1967, this particular incident was also a simple common law matter." According to Ivorian officials, Lieutenant Oulai had previously served as commander of the president's motorcycle escort. He had been relieved from that assignment following a series of malversations, and transferred to Bouake. Having once again been found guilty of similar offenses, he found no better defense than to inform some of his superiors, natives of the same region as Oulai, of his intention to overthrow the government. His superiors immediately alerted the government. The chief of state, who had disclosed the incident at the 10 June meeting of the national council, views Lieutenant Oulai as "nothing more than a small scoundrel." He was indicted on two counts of "schemes and actions such as to jeopardize public safety or cause serious political disturbances" and "embezzlement, forgeries, and use of forgeries." In late July, a military court--the only tribunal qualified to try military and police personnel--convicted and sentenced Lieutenant Oulai to 3 years in prison on the second count. Houphouet-Boigny explained: "We have adopted the principle of not shedding the blood of our brothers by carrying out death sentences. We are also making every effort to have no political prisoners. Indeed, the word 'prison' does not exist in the Baoule language."

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IVORY COAST

TWO DECADES OF ECONOMIC GROWTH EXAMINED

Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 27 Aug 80 pp 49-56

[Article: "Assessment of Ivorian Economy Over Period of Two Decades"]

[Text] With the Democratic Party of the Ivory Coast (PDCI) Congress and parliamentary and presidential elections in the offing, this is a convenient time for the Republic of the Ivory Coast, born in 1960, to take stock. Has it been a period of "growth without development," as Samir Amin contended in his highly controversial book published in 1967? Or has there been "an Ivorian economic miracle?" We have asked a group of African and French economists to give us their diagnosis.

President Houphouet-Boigny is fond of saying that "in the Ivory Coast, we must not have our Third World and our privileged groups (the haves)." The Ivory Coast has neither a Green Book nor a Red Book. Nevertheless, all newspapers, magazines, and radio broadcasts to begin with a thought from the president. And this fact summarizes better than a long and erudite speech what is perhaps the only real major problem already facing the country.

An observer need only have followed the Ivory Coast's evolution over the past 20 years under the tenacious and ambitious leadership of Houphouet-Boigny, "the entrepreneur," to realize that the disparity between developing areas--primarily urban--and lagging areas--mainly rural with the exception of the large plantations--constituted a risk from the very beginning. Much has been done to reduce this disparity, but it has not disappeared.

Performances

The gap between--at least--two worlds or communities is very obvious to the visitor whose first steps in the Ivory Coast are taken in Abidjan, or "Little Manhattan" as it is called. The capital reminds him more of Western or Latin American metropolises on other continents. But some of Abidjan's inner suburbs, Treichville in particular, offer him a view of a different urban Africa, even if these suburbs no longer have the same shantytowns of old. And the contrast will be just as glaring between Yamoussoukro--a sort of Brasilia, wrote Bechir Ben Yahmed in 1976--or Bouake, the center's chief city, and their surrounding areas. Nevertheless, the emphasis given to developing and diversifying agricultural production has contributed to narrowing the gulf between the urban and rural communities. Today, however, recriminations, a reflection of the gulf separating the classes, are generated more by the overall development effort, likewise diversified in all sectors, which has increased people's needs but produced wider and sharper discrepancies between standards of living. These recriminations are perhaps more discernible because they emanate from a new middle class. They have also reached a high pitch in this period of economic crisis, even though the latter may be less pronounced than in other African countries.

A recently released International Monetary Fund (IMF) report enables us to better grasp the present economic and social situation in the Ivory Coast as that country stands on the threshold of its third decade of development.

In a Third World prey to all kinds of upheavals, the Ivory Coast remains a "special case." It annoys, fascinates, exasperates, or compels respect, but leaves nobody indifferent. With no exceptional natural resources, it has achieved one of the world's best levels of economic growth for 20 consecutive years. It does not claim to be socialist and yet it successfully distributes its national wealth better than the supposedly socialist countries. It calls upon the help of private enterprise. It flaunts its arrogant liberalism. Yet at the same time, it develops a powerful state-controlled sector, without the latter interfering with the former. It is statistically on the verge of a real economic take-off, yet continues to remain underdeveloped in many respects.

In its 20th year, the age of maturity, this country covering an area of 322,500 square kilometers, somewhat smaller than Japan (369,000), larger than Italy (311,000), and slightly more than half the size of France, now has a population of 7.9 million, 2 million of whom are foreigners.

The 'Miracle'

In 1979, its gross domestic product (PIB) totaled 1.942 trillion CFA francs. Since independence its PIB has increased at an average annual rate of 7.5 percent (in real terms). Per capita, the 1979 PIB comes to about 245,600 CFA francs or 1,169 dollars. It has grown at an annual rate of 4 percent, while the population too has increased at an annual rate of 4 percent. These results are quite simply remarkable for a country that up to now has had neither oil, nor uranium, nor any other abundant natural mineral resources. Consequently some observers unhesitatingly refer to "the Ivorian miracle."

A few comparisons are enough to convince oneself of this "miracle." The 1979 per capita Ivorian PIB ranks, in Africa, just below those of Libya, Algeria, and Gabon--oil producing countries--and Tunisia.

Even more significant is the Ivorian PIB's annual rate of growth. With a rate of 7.5 percent per year, the Ivory Coast ranks among the world's lead group of countries in this respect. It is almost on a par with Japan, slightly surpassed by such countries as Korea (9.5 percent) and Brazil (8 percent), but ahead of all European countries, Canada, and the United States, and very far ahead of most African countries like Ghana (1.5 percent), Senegal (2.7 percent), Tanzania (5.2 percent), Cameroon (4 percent), Nigeria (5 percent), and Algeria (4.8 percent), to mention but the best.

'Until Tired'

The PIB's per capita growth rate has been slowed by an especially high increase in population. Yet with a 4 percent annual growth rate, the Ivory Coast also holds a respectable position in comparison with Japan (7 percent), Brazil (4.9 percent), France (4.2 percent), Tunisia (4.3 percent), Algeria (2.1 percent), Nigeria (3.6 percent), Ghana (-0.3 percent), Senegal (-0.2 percent), as well as with all other African countries that hardly reach the level of 2 percent.

Yet do these figures justify calling this economic performance a miracle? Yes, if we accept the fact that simple common sense has miraculous virtues. The secret thereof is primarily the remarkable stability of the country's economic policy. President Houphouet-Boigny defined his development strategy at the very beginning of his country's independence and steadfastly followed that strategy "until tired." This strategy was based essentially on a sector of the economy in which the country had already proved itself, namely export-oriented agriculture. But it was also a strategy consistent with "the entrepreneur's" personality. A physician by formal training, Houphouet was also a planter and took pride in being recognized as such. He knew what could be expected from a well-kept plantation. He knew how to convert good annual rainfall into CFA francs.

Under the colonial regime, the Ivory Coast had already very successfully grown and marketed coffee and cocoa. Why should it now deprive itself of this expertise? The colony was also renowned for its fine timber. The republic continued to harvest timber without the slightest regard for the principles of good forest management, so much so that its forests are now severely damaged and it will take a few decades to restore them.

Coffee, cocoa, and timber were thus the starting point of the "Ivorian miracle." In addition, a stabilization fund was established to give producers a guaranteed price, but also to retain surpluses when world prices are particularly favorable.

This system very quickly enabled the government to show increasingly larger financial surpluses that were used to support capital investment budgets. The record surplus was achieved for the 1976-1977 farming season when, with the help of particularly high world prices, coffee and cocoa crops left the government with a surplus of 230 billion CFA francs. This initial development strategy has been remarkably successful. The Ivory Coast is now the world's third largest producer of coffee and cocoa with 5.7 percent of world coffee production and 20 percent of cocoa production. It was, therefore, on a firmly proven base that the country subsequently initiated the indispensable diversification of its agricultural activities and a spectacular "redeployment" of its development programs.

New Crops

Export crops were diversified. Limiting export earnings to two or three products could only increase the system's vulnerability (which is still evident) and its dependence on the vicissitudes of world markets. To expand the base of the country's foreign currency income, new crops were introduced: pineapples, oil palms, cotton, and rubber. At the same time, banana production was increased. Insignificant in 1960, these crops accounted for 8.2 percent of total export revenue in 1975. On the other hand, the percentage respresented by coffee and cocoa dropped from 74 percent to 60 percent.

Subsistence crops were then diversified. The country's sustained population growth and intense urbanization demanded such diversification. In addition to expanding traditional food crops, two new products were introduced. The first was rice, in which the country can expect to be self-sufficient by 1985. The other was sugar which will be an export crop by 1980. This diversification policy has made it possible to maintain the relative magnitude of food imports at a stable level. In 1960, food accounted for 11.5 percent of total imports. In 1977, the figure was still 10.9 percent, but that same year, rice and sugar imports represented 22 percent of all food imports. Hence substantial improvement still has to be made.

Imbalance

An intelligent and dynamic agricultural policy will remain the keystone of Ivorian economic growth for a long time to come. For the first 20 years of independence, this policy has enabled the country to maintain a continuous favorable balance of trade with exports exceeding imports by a margin varying from 110 percent to 120 percent. And all this has been achieved despite a capital investment policy carried to the ultimate, often to the limit of what is reasonable.

In 1960, total capital investment compared with the PIB was 13.7 percent. It rose to 18.4 percent in 1965. It stayed between 19 percent and 22 percent from 1970 to 1976 and then suddenly climbed to 25 percent in 1977, 31 percent in 1978, and 32.6 percent in 1979, i.e. more than 600 billion CFA francs in absolute value. Until 1976, this investment effort was the most conspicuous indicator of a degree of dynamism which enabled the Ivory Coast to stand comparison even with the most industrialized countries.

The post-1976 excessive increase in capital investment beyond the country's capacity to absorb it did not fail to create serious problems all at once. We shall discuss this aspect later. For a long time, the public and private sectors shared the financing of the investment effort on nearly a 50-50 basis. As of 1975, however, an imbalance appeared, and by 1979, the public sector's share exceeded 75 percent.

This "omnidirectional" investment effort literally changed the appearance of the country, its cities as well as its rural areas. It was applied to all sectors without exception and produced spectacular results. Its achievements were considerable in the field of highway, rail, air, and sea transportation. By enhancing the flow of persons and goods, these achievements also constituted a basic contribution to economic development.

More Balanced Growth

In the energy sector, large-scale oil exploration programs have produced favorable results. In the 1960's, hydroelectric power represented only 25 percent of the total power generated annually. It now represents more than 70 percent, thanks to the dam-building policy.

Urban capital investments were amply justified by the rapid tempo of urbanization. The urban population has increased from 20 percent of the total population in the early 1960's to currently more than 35 percent. In some cases, however, one may legitimately speculate about the full implication of certain projects. The city of Yamoussoukro is one such example. It was built from scratch and at a cost of certainly tens of billions of CFA francs. Will it eventually share the role of capital city with Abidjan?

Education is another sector that has benefited from these investments. In 1960, there were 200,000 students enrolled in elementary schools, 8,300 in secondary schools, and only 48 in institutions of higher learning. In 1979, enrollments had risen to 892,000, 143,000, and 9,600 respectively, for an average annual growth rate of 8.5 percent, 16 percent, and 32 percent respectively.

Among the productive sectors, the industrial sector has been the principal beneficiary of investment spending. Begun in the mid-1960's, industrial activity has concentrated on producing goods to replace imports, and also on processing and enhancing the value of the country's agricultural products. Industrial projects are both many and varied. They range from cement to textiles--mills are almost totally integrated, thus permitting raw cotton to be transformed into printed fabrics--and include palm oil, chocolate, instant coffee, canned fruits, shoes, wood finishing plants, building materials, etc.

The main objective of this ambitious investment program was and remains a more balanced economic growth by sector and by region. And here also, results are most eloquent. In 1960, the primary sector's--agriculture, forestry, and fisheries--share of the PIB was 43.5 percent versus 14.1 for the secondary sector i.e. industry, power generation, and construction firms. From 1960 to 1979, these two sectors evolved in different directions, and now at the end of the second decade, the primary sector accounts for 25 percent of the PIB, the secondary sector for 22 percent. During this same period, industry's share rose from 4 percent to 13 percent.

Subsidies

The situation at regional level is marked by a very great disparity (that persists) between the coffee-producing and cocoa-producing richly forested regions and the rest of the country. For this reason, all new agricultural activities are located mainly in the most deprived regions of the center and north. This policy oriented toward better regional balance is being actively pursued. It is supported by a policy of almost systematic subsidization of all new agricultural activities: rice, sugar, cotton, oil palms, rubber, etc. Results in this field are necessarily slow, and advancement can only be commensurate with the system's financial capabilities.

An unfailing, reasonably controlled liberalism, a very flexible--de facto if not de jure--tax system, and extremely liberal foreign exchange regulations have enabled the national private sector and (above all) the foreign private sector to contribute actively to the development effort and derive substantial profits therefrom in return. Nevertheless, the private sector's dynamism has not always been on a level with Ivorian ambitions. Consequently the government has been gradually compelled to intervene directly, and undoubtedly much beyond the limits it had initially set for itself.

War Against Underdevelopment

This entire magnificent machinery for waging war against underdevelopment has operated wonderfully for 20 years in what resembles a veritable pitched battle that is perfectly planned and executed. Admittedly with the help of some luck, results have been spectacular and have frequently exceeded expectations.

And yet the system now shows signs of slackening. There is said to be a certain malaise almost everywhere. People are worried. The future is less certain and even the most dyed-in-the-wool believers have doubts about their own success. What are the whys and wherefores of this attitude?

Leaving the political aspect aside, the problem is basically economic. Ivorian economic growth is highly dependent on foreign production factors. This initially obvious--and accepted--dependence has considerably increased concurrently with economic growth itself. Has it now reached an intolerable point? This dependence exists in three areas: markets, financing, and human resources.

The markets first: 20 years of diversification effort have not appreciably lessened a healthy Ivorian economy's dependence on the caprices of foreign markets. Agriculture continues to be powerfully dominated by export crops despite efforts to diversify. It still weighs heavily in the PIB. In addition, though the country still has an enormous agricultural production capacity, it realizes that it cannot easily move forward without the blessing of its "allies." And today its "association" with the Common Market is proving to be a bitter experience. In this connection, its recent experiences with sugar and cocoa are glaring examples. Europeans--and others--are scrambling to sell their "hardware" to the Ivory Coast at high list prices and with all sorts of promises, but when the country asks to participate in the Common Market-ACP (African, Caribbean, Pacific countries) sugar agreement, "its request remains unanswered, except by its own echo."

As for cocoa, when the Ivory Coast attempted to retain stocks of that commodity in the face of the disastrous collapse of world prices, the same Common Market's most authoritative spokesman did not hesitate to state in Abidjan: "We are surprised to see that the country decided to fight this battle without prior consultation with its friends, its allies." A statement whose arrogance is equalled only by its hypocrisy.

Even more serious is the fact that when Ivorian industry is in a position to expand its import-replacement industry into a more sophisticated export industry, the Common Market will certainly not be the one to make this task any easier. All of these things tend to confirm reports that President Houphouet-Boigny is feeling more and more bitter toward his allies, his partners. This bitterness is all the more understandable in that unfortunately there is hardly no available alternative to "European generosity."

Frenzy

The Ivorian economy is dependent on external financing. This dependence emerged in a way that was as brutal as it was unexpected. The Ivory Coast could easily provide for its economic growth with marginal external financing. Unfortunately, in 1976 it quite simply fell victim to uncontrolled euphoria.

The fact is that coffee prices began skyrocketing in 1976. By 1977 they had reached the highest levels in history. The coffee stabilization fund recorded unprecedented revenue. The country experienced the equivalent of an "oil boom." Investments zoomed. For the period 1977 to 1979, the first 3 years of the 1977-1981 Five-Year Plan, total investments exceeded plan estimates by 35 percent.

This investment frenzy did not take long to absorb all surplus liquid assets. Oddly enough, the Ivory Coast's indebtedness increased most at a time when the country was wealthier than ever. We could comment ad infinitum on the Ivorian foreign debt, its unexpected and equally unwarranted growth, its impact on the future and the country's solvency, etc.

Correct Present Course

A few figures will help the reader better understand this debt situation. In 1966, some 6 years after independence, the real debt for loans received amounted to 205 million dollars, and the annual debt service--payment of the interest and of such installments of the principal as are legally due--represented less than 5 percent of foreseeable annual export income.

By the end of 1975, these figures had risen to 958 million dollars and 6.8 percent respectively. At end-1979, according to the IMF report, they were 3.786 billion dollars and 16.6 percent. Can it be said, as some experts readily contend, that the Ivory Coast has now definitely reached the danger point and that the change in its foreign debt situation is liable to affect its solvency and its credit rating with international financiers?

Why should a ratio of 17 percent place the Ivory Coast in the danger zone when much higher ratios are (almost) accepted without batting an eye for most Latin American countries such as Bolivia, Chile, Peru, Mexico, Brazil, and Uruguay where the ratio of debt service to export income varies from 30 to 50 percent? In defense of the pessimists, it must be acknowledged, however, that: first, the sudden and sharp increase in the debt, especially from 1977 to 1979, is bound to be disturbing; second, considering the size of the debt, the Ivory Coast is liable to find itself by 1981 with a debt service of slightly more than 25 percent; third, and above all, the quality of recent investments is not commensurate with the financing effort which has been made.

In other words, these past few years in the Ivory Coast there have been more infrastructure--indeed, even prestige--capital investments and less and less productive investments, in relative value, of course. It must be anticipated, therefore, that this investment effort and especially this financing effort will not have the same impact on the Ivorian economy as in the past. The Ivory Coast will have to correct its present course by improving the quality of investments and absolutely reducing the size of its investment program.

The problem is more difficult than it appears at first glance. Any reduction in the growth rate of investments, even in a rate deemed excessive, would immediately trigger a recession scare with all its negative effects, particularly at the social level. Such being the case, no matter what the

Ivory Coast's real or apparent financial difficulties may be, representatives of international financial interests are continuing, nevertheless, to haunt the outer offices of cabinet ministers in an effort to submit tempting and equally ruinous proposals. There is no doubt that Ivorian officials are still finding it more difficult to politely get rid of these businessmen than to seek their support.

Easy Way Out

The third and by far the most serious dependence has to do with human resources. In 1979, the Ivory Coast's total population of 7.9 million included no less than 2 million foreigners, or more than 25 percent. About 50,000 of these 2 million foreigners are Europeans, mainly Frenchmen. Some 100,000 are Lebanese and Syrians. The remainder are Africans: Upper Voltans, Malians, Guineans, but also Mauritanians, Senegalese, Ghanaians, etc.

The Europeans are in top-level positions, primarily as technical assistance personnel in the ministries and public enterprises. While in many cases they are more than abundantly present, they are actually the administration's driving element at the conceptional, managerial, and even executive level. Most of them being technical advisers, Europeans also occupy positions of authority or command. Their number has noticeably increased since independence and the importance of their role is certainly the expression of a political decision dictated by the insufficiency--or incompetency--of Ivorian executive and managerial personnel.

Europeans also hold positions in the private sector which is largely dominated by foreign interests. Europeans constitute the large majority of executive and managerial personnel in this sector. As general managers, engineers, administrators, and often even in less lofty positions, they exercise almost total control over the private sector, a control that is seemingly not unduly contested.

European technical assistance personnel have definitely played a positive role in the past. Today, however, they are the most visible curb on the training and advancement of a responsible corps of Ivorian executives, managers, and administrators. Ivorian authorities have too long taken that easy way out which makes it more convenient, even if it is more costly, to employ a foreign expert than to train an Ivorian one. This policy thus neutralizes to a large extent the noteworthy investment effort made in the Ivorian educational system and creates a situation that is explosive right now and which even the smallest protest movement is liable to exploit.

Aggressive Dynamism

The Lebanese and Syrians are engaged mainly in the wholesale and even the retail trade. A considerable number of them are in the food, textile, and ready-to-wear clothes sectors. They are, however, present nearly everywhere, from the real estate business to the taxi buisness. Active canny, and resourceful, they have a temperament which adapts itself quite well to the Ivory Coast's economic liberalism. While they do make--and transfer--substantial profits, most of them do not arrive empty-handed and do not hesitate to invest in the country. A large community ever since independence, their number has increased considerably since civil war has ravaged Lebanon. They too have contributed to the Ivorian economy's aggressive dynamism, but they too are largely blocking Ivorians from access--which would otherwise be easy--to the middleman or retail trade, as well as to other fields in the service sector.

The bulk of the non-Ivorian Africans represent the country's cheap labor force. Doomed in their own country to hopeless unemployment, or fleeing a lasting drought, they are entering the Ivory Coast at a rate of approximately 100,000 per year, having nothing to offer but their willingness to do manual work. They are found primarily in the countryside where they constitute most of the unskilled labor working in commercial or village plantations. Some also live in the city where they are willing to work for employers who unlawfully pay them less than the guaranteed minimum wage, and where they completely monopolize all of the most menial jobs: attendants, cleaners, domestics, stokers, porters, stevedores, etc. There are very few Ivorians who work at such tasks.

Local authorities have reacted against this "invasion" and the Labor Office now authorizes the (official) hiring of a foreigner only when it is proved that no Ivorian is available for the job.

This mass of human resources currently is a dominant factor in the Ivorian situation which has defintely reached the point of no return. Experts have estimated that of the modern sector's 239,000 permanent jobs in 1978, 33 percent were filled by non-Ivorian Africans, 4.5 percent by non-African foreigners, and 62.5 percent by Ivorians. This listing itself represents only about half the total of all permanent jobs indentified, to which must be added the traditional sector and all "clandestine" employment.

Ponderous Presence

These foreign human resources unquestionably represent a decisive "striking force" in the country's economic growth and it is not wrong to say that the country has developed in part because of foreign brains and labor. It is just as evident, however, that this foreign manpower creates problems at least equal to its contributions.

First of all, it is almost certain that the country can no longer look forward to sustained economic growth without permanent and progressive recourse to non-Ivorian African manpower. But a question of greater concern is whether the country will be able to limit this manpower influx to its actual needs. Given the situation of its neighbors and the permeability of its borders, the answer is certainly negative. Hence the country must accept the fait accompli and learn to live with it. Back in 1965, Houphouet-Boigny had proposed to grant Ivorian nationality to any African citizen settled in the country. This was one of the rare occasions on which he was disavowed by almost unanimous adverse national reaction.

While the ponderous presence of foreign technical assistance personnel at higher levels can be lightened first by an assertive political will and then by sustained action to train an Ivorian corps of executive and managerial personnel, the same is not true for the private sector. The disappointments experienced in the management of state-owned companies--what country has not had similar blighted hopes?--and the courageous, but excessive in some instances, decision to disband most of these companies is liable, on the contrary, to substantially increase the role of the private sector at a time when the national middle class is not yet ready to take over. Consequently the country will once again turn to foreigners, thereby intensifying their hold on the national economy.

Where then does Ivorian society fit in this overall picture? Served by a cheap lumpenproletariat, guided if not manipulated by generously paid leaders, it has become, slowly but surely, the country's soft underbelly.

From the businessman, who usually is no more than a figurehead, to the student who prefers to buy his exams or the worker who balks at performing certain tasks, this society is characterized more often than not by disconcerting complacency, the absence of civic-mindedness, a limited sense of responsibility, and the hidebound obsession with easy money. And that is certainly wherein lies the most serious danger to the country's future. There are, of course, some exceptions, but do they confirm the rule or are they a ray of hope?

What Does the Future Hold?

In the course of the past 20 years the Ivory Coast has set the finest example of economic development for the African continent, an example that could be followed by many other countries. Its future may be even more promising than its past. Recent oil discoveries already assure it a minimum annual production of 7 million tons by 1985. This represents an exceptional potential for the future in a country where new project plans are being steadily initiated and implemented, a country that has been able to give agriculture its rightful place.

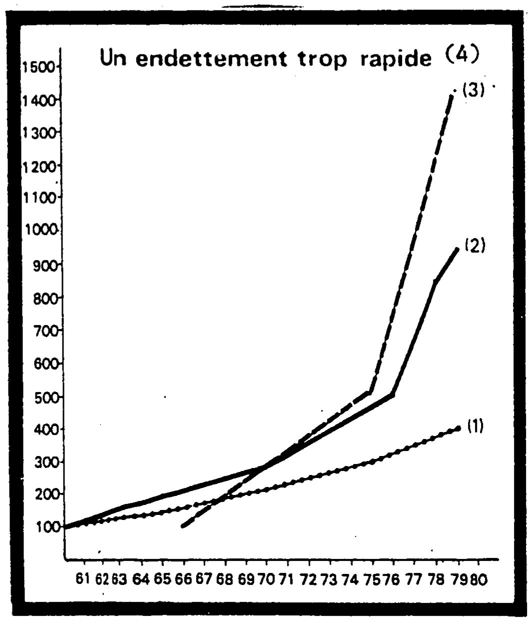
The image of an Ivory Coast in the year 2000 as a rich and flourishing country of 20 million people, a highly industrialized country comparable to a medium-size European country, is by no means farfetched. On the necessary condition--the sine qua non--that Ivorians take full cognizance of their responsibilities.

Will they eventually fall victim to their own success? Their borders will of necessity remain open. But will they be able first to control and then to integrate all of this influx of manpower which is currently the backbone of the country? Lastly, will the Ivory Coast be able to integrate its "Third World" and its "privileged groups," two elements whose opposition to each other has already approached the explosive stage?

1 — *Croissance du PIB en termes réels (base 100 en 1960)*

2 — *Courbe des investissements en pourcentage du PIB (base 100 en 1960).*

3 — *Courbe de croissance de l'endettement en dollars constants (1966) (Base 100 en 1966).*



Key: 1. Growth of gross domestic product in real terms (base of 100 in 1960)
2. Capital investment as percentage of gross domestic product (base of 100 in 1960)
3. Growth of public debt in constant 1966 dollars (base of 100 in 1966)
4. Public debt grows too rapidly

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NIGERIA

UK FINANCIAL PAPER INTERVIEWS FOREIGN MINISTER

LD301235 London FINANCIAL TIMES in English 30 Sep 80 FINANCIAL TIMES survey: Nigeria p 32

[Interview with Professor Ishaya Audu, Nigerian external affairs minister by Bridget Bloom, in Lagos in September; no day given]

[Text] Nigeria's civilian government would nationalise foreign oil interests if it became convinced that this was "the only effective weapon" to gain its foreign policy objectives. So said Professor Ishaya Audu, Nigeria's foreign minister in an interview in Lagos earlier this month.

Professor Audu, once vice chancellor of one of Nigeria's premier universities, is a mild mannered man. His tone was far from belligerent and he made it clear that Nigeria had no intention of taking any such action now. But he wanted to make the point that neither the country's foreign policy options nor its policies had changed in the year since the military retired to barracks.

Eighteen months ago, the then military government nationalised British Petroleum's share in oil exploration, because it said, BP had flouted Nigerian policy on trade with South Africa. "We certainly would not rule out taking similar action for similar reasons," Professor Audu said.

Hostility towards continued white rule in southern Africa has been one of the consistent themes of Nigerian foreign policy over the years; to make sure that Nigeria backed the successive attempts to settle the Rhodesian problem had long been an objective of British policy in Africa.

But that hostility remains despite Zimbabwe's independence. "No one can deny Zimbabwe is progress," Professor Audu said: "though the outcome of the election was not what Britain wanted, they honorably accepted it and we wholeheartedly commend them.

"But there is still Namibia--and South Africa itself. We are still hoping that Britain, which has more investment in South Africa than any other European country, will use its influence more effectively. But we don't believe that when it comes to the crunch, and we are trying to enforce embargoes and the like, that Britain will be serious."

Trade Partners

Professor Audu would not be drawn on specific action Nigeria might take, although he said that government was alarmed at its trade imbalance with Britain, in particular, and was studying the possibility of switching to alternative trade partners in certain areas in the longer term.

Professor Audu was in London in July on a diplomatic fence-mending visit; relations between Britain and Nigeria plummeted in 1976 when Nigeria alleged that Britain had intervened to help the would be coup makers; they remained formally uneasy, mainly because of Rhodesia, even into the early part of this year. The London visit apparently went well, though with [word indistinct] meeting of minds. Professor Audu felt the need for a tougher approach to South Africa. He met Mrs Thatcher and Lord Carrington. "I put our message across strongly, but I got the message back 'okay, you've made your point. We're sticking to our guns.'"

Nigeria, perhaps more than other African states, remains suspicious of current role of the former European colonial powers in Africa. Professor Audu reserved his most stinging rebuke for France, not Britain.

While he criticized Britain's attitude towards Nigerian students (believing that the raising of university fees for commonwealth and not EEC students had essentially racist "Powellite" motives), the foreign minister declared that Nigeria had "more immediate foreign policy problems generated from the French than from anyone else."

France "has put a spoke in our wheel for years, quite unequivocally and in every conceivable way," Professor Audu said. "They do it directly, or more often they use their 'satellites,' their former colonies." Asked to be specific, Professor Audu declared that but for the French failure to honour the agreement, the accord on Chad, signed in Lagos a year ago, could have ended the strife there.

Common Market

He also insisted that France was impeding agreement between Nigeria and the Cameroon, a former French colony, on their joint maritime borders and that France continually "stirred up disagreement" within the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)--the [word indistinct] attempt to form a common market to bridge the economic barriers between the Nigerian giant and its much smaller neighbours.

Finally, Professor Audu charged that France's espousal of the trilateral commission, to involve African and European states and members of OPEC was "a deliberate effort to break up what might have developed as a result of the Organisation of African Unity economic summit," which was held in Lagos earlier this year.

Turning to Nigeria's own role in Africa, Nigeria's foreign policy priority had to be to make sure that its relations with African, and in particular west African states, ran smoothly. Professor Audu declared: "We do not seek leadership, and if we're not necessarily resented we certainly don't get love from our smaller neighbours."

But a greater degree of cooperation, such as that provided for in ECOWAS, was essential, and often of more value, for the smaller states than for Nigeria. "Nigerians don't seek work in other countries, but everyone comes here for the oil boom."

Had Nigeria's policies towards military governments elsewhere in the continent changed? It had been widely reported that Nigeria had been instrumental in keeping master sergeant Doe, who took power in a bloody coup in Liberia last April, from attending a series of African summits. Not so, Professor Audu maintained. Nigeria still endorsed the OAU's belief in non-intervention in the internal affairs of member states.

Clearly, however, the government found it distasteful. "President Shehu Shagari said: 'You cannot kill my brother today and expect me to sit down to breakfast or lunch with you tomorrow.' That's it. That's what we were saying."

Professor Audu declared that the action of the Liberian soldiers, who had "lined people up and shot them like rabbits" was repugnant. But had not an earlier admittedly military government in Nigeria done the same thing when it publicly executed alleged plotters on a beach near Lagos? "I do not and will never uphold such conduct by anyone" Professor Audu retorted.

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